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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 center.
Watch out for dengue warning signs!
 A drop in body temperature accompanied by any of the following symptoms:
 - Increased and continuous abdominal pain
 - Persistent vomiting
 - A drop in body temperature
 - Disorientation
 - Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool
 - Redness in eyes
 If you have any of these symptoms, go to the nearest medical center IMMEDIATELY

JINDRAH IMAGES

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SANJY-2024: LG visits Nunwan, Chandanwari base camps

Interacts with pilgrims, service providers, takes stock of yatra arrangements

JI NEWS SERVICE
PAHALGAM, JUL 09

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Tuesday visited the Nunwan and Chandanwari base camps and reviewed the arrangements for the ongoing holy yatra of Shri Amarnath Ji. The Lt Governor interacted with the pilgrims, and enquired about their pilgrimage experience.



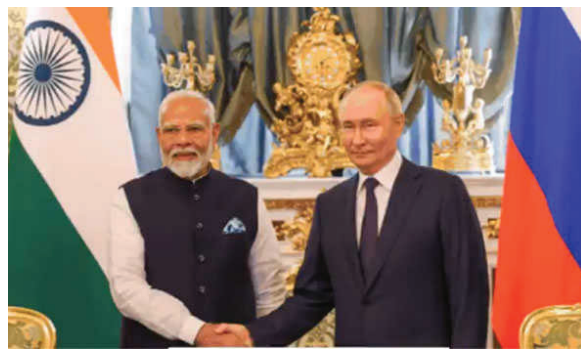
At the Base Camps, the Lt Governor also interacted with the service providers, doctors, sanitation workers, administrative and security officials and took appraisal of various services like lodging, langar, power and

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India, Russia for resolution of Ukraine conflict through dialogue, diplomacy: Joint Statement

AGENCIES
MOSCOW/NEW DELHI, JULY 9

India and Russia highlighted the imperative of peaceful resolution of the conflict around Ukraine through dialogue and diplomacy including engagement between both parties, a joint statement issued after talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin said. The joint statement, titled 'India-Russia: Enduring and Expanding Partnership', also strongly condemned the recent dastardly terrorist attack on an Army convoy in



Kathua area of Jammu & Kashmir on 8th July 2024, in Dagestan on 23rd June and on the Crocus City Hall in Moscow on 22nd March and stressed that these terrorist attacks are a grim reminder for further strengthening cooperation

to combat terrorism. The joint statement "highly appreciated the special nature of this time-tested relationship which is based on trust, mutual understanding and strategic convergence". In the sphere of trade,

the two Sides noted with satisfaction the significant growth of bilateral trade in 2023 which is around double of the bilateral trade target of USD 30 billion set by the Leaders for 2025. The Leaders agreed to set the bilateral trade target of USD 100 billion by 2030. The Leaders instructed the concerned agencies to prepare a Programme for the development of promising areas of Russian-Indian economic cooperation till 2030 (Programme-2030). The Sides agreed to

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Encounter breaks out in Doda forests, Ops on

An encounter broke out between terrorists and security forces in Goli-Gadi forests in the upper reaches of Doda district this evening, officials said on Tuesday. An official told the news agency, that following inputs about the presence of terrorists in the area, a cordon and search operation was launched in Goli area. He said during the search operation, the hiding terrorists fired upon security forces, which was retaliated, triggering an

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Kathua Attack: Massive manhunt launched in Kathua forests

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JUL 9

A massive manhunt has been launched in the woods of Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district to track down the terrorists involved in the attack on an army vehicle that led to the killing of five soldiers and injuries to five others. Officials told news agency, that joint teams of army and police launched a massive combing operation in and around the incident site at Badnota in Kathua district. "Director General of Police (DGP) RR Swain, ADGP Jammu

DGP Swain, ADGP, Army officials visit incident site
Slain soldiers hail from Uttarakhand
Prez Murmu condemns attack, Uttarakhand CM pays tributes to fallen soldiers

Anand Jain and senior army officials visited the incident site and moni-

tored the search operation in the area," they said. Five soldiers were killed in the Kathua attack and five others were injured as well. The slain soldiers hailed from Uttarakhand. They were identified as Rifleman Anuj Negi from Pauri Garhwal, Nayab Subedar Anand Singh Rawat from Rudraprayag, Naik Vinod Singh from Tehri, Kamal Singh from Pauri and Adarsh Negi from Tehri. The attack took place on Monday when a group of heavily-armed terrorists ambushed a patrolling party in Badnota area

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Kathua Attack: NIA teams join investigations

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JUL 9

National Investigation Agency (NIA) has taken up the investigation of the Kathua terror attack that left five soldiers dead and five others injured even as J&K LG Manoj Sinha said that the perpetrators of the attack will be punished soon. As per news agency, drone surveillance, sniffer dogs, sharpshooters and experts in mountain combing and warfare are part of the massive CASO going on in the area. Officials said that the terrorists are believed to



be a group of three who have taken cover of the thick foliage on a hill to surprise the troops who

retaliated immediately, responding with gunfire and fighting back till the terrorists disappeared into

the dense woods, adding, "They are part of the same group which was involved in Basangarh attack in which a village defence guard Mohd Sharief was killed in an encounter with terrorists on April 28 in Panara village," Officials said. The incident took place at the inter-formation boundary between Northern and Western Command. The soldiers who came under attack were among additional troops who had been deployed in the area a few weeks ago. The administrative convoy was attacked from

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3 killed as many injured after vehicle falls in gorge at Kishtwar

JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, JUL 09

At least three people died while three others were injured after a vehicle they were travelling in met with an accident at Dachen area of Kishtwar district on Tuesday, officials said. An official told the news agency that the vehicle rolled down into a gorge, resulting in the death of three persons and injuries to three others. He said that the vehicle was on its way

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Chief Secretary takes stock of progress made on construction of Highways across J&K

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 09

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Tuesday held a detailed meeting with representatives of various executing agencies like NHAI, NHIDCL, BRO, Beacon and Project SAMPARK to take stock of progress made so far in laying out of vast network of National Highways across the length and breadth of Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting was also attended by senior functionaries from J&K government including ACS, Forests; Principal Secretary, APD; Divisional Commis-



sioner, Kashmir/Jammu; Secretary, R&B; Secretary, Revenue; Deputy Commissioners; Chief Engineers of PWD, besides other concerned officers. During this meeting, the Chief Secretary impressed upon the concerned executing agencies to improve their performance with

regard to showcasing physical progress on ground. He observed that frequent change in timelines is not a good sign and should be corroborated with clear justifications. He maintained that such unilateral change in deadlines should be avoided in

future. Dulloo directed the concerned Divisional and District administrations to regularly monitor the pace of work on these important road projects for their timely completion. He also urged them to extend full

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Farming Resumes After 12 Years Near Zero Line on Indo-Pak Border

500 of 800 Kanals of Barren Land Being Made Suitable for Cultivation

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 09

The changing environment in Jammu and Kashmir is yielding positive results in the agricultural sector. For the first time in 12 years, farming has resumed near the zero line on the India-Pakistan international border in Samba. As per the news agency years of fear stemming from frequent firing from Pakistan had forced farmers to abandon their fields along the border. As a

result, 800 kanals of fertile land became barren. However, with the renewed efforts of the Border Security Force (BSF), 500 kanals have been leveled and made suitable for cultivation, with ongoing efforts to prepare the remaining 300 kanals. Reports inform that Agriculture Department officials visited the site to distribute free seeds to farmers, encouraging them to resume farming activities. Previously, crops such as wheat and sesame were grown in

these areas. BSF personnel, who monitor the border, provided security and assistance, helping farmers plow their land safely. Farmers said that there was a time when the land beyond the fencing was left uncultivated due to the constant threat from Pakistani Rangers. The fear, they said, of being shot at while working in the fields led many farmers to abandon their land, rendering it barren. Officials emphasized that the resumption of

farming would bolster the local economy and empower farmers. They noted that the ceasefire agreement and proactive measures by the district administration have created a conducive environment for agriculture. Farmers now feel secure enough to return to their fields. With encouragement and support from the district administration and security forces, farmers are regaining confidence. The construction of a

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Kathua attack: LG pays homage to bravehearts of Army

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 09

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Tuesday paid homage to the bravehearts of Indian Army martyred in a dastardly terror attack in Kathua. The Lt Governor has posted on X: "I salute the bravery of our army personnel, who lost their lives in a dastardly terror attack in Kathua. Deepest condolences to bereaved families of martyrs. Coordinated counter-terror operations are

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20,000 pilgrims perform Amarnath Yatra daily as numbers increase

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JUL 09

The 52-day Amarnath Yatra has seen a daily increase in the number of pilgrims, with more than 20,000 performing the pilgrimage since it began on June 29 from the twin tracks of Baltal-Sonamarg and Nunwan-Pahalgam. Officials told the news agency that 230,759 pilgrims have so far performed the Amarnath Yatra, with 23,743 yatrins having performed darshan at the holy cave situated at an altitude of 3,888 meters in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

They said the 12th batch of 5,433 pilgrims, drawn from different parts of the country, left for the twin base camps of Nunwan-Pahalgam in Anantnag district and Baltal-Sonamarg in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district in a cavalcade of 213 light and heavy vehicles under tight security measures from Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas early Tuesday morning. The batch included 4,203 men, 1,117 women, 18 children, 83 sadhus, and 12 sadhvis (female sadhus). Among them, 1,971 preferred the shorter Baltal track, while 3,462 opted for the longer and

traditional Nunwan-Pahalgam track. Officials said the pilgrims who reached the twin base camps of Baltal and Nunwan on Monday left for the holy cave early Tuesday morning, while the yatrins who departed from Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas this morning reached their respective base camps by the evening and will leave for the holy cave early Wednesday morning. Extensive security arrangements have been made this year along the nearly 300 km Jammu-Srinagar highway, at

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J&K records slight rise in day temp, Sgr simmers at 34.2 degree Celsius

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 09

While there was a slight respite from the heat wave in Jammu and Kashmir, the parts of the Valley recorded a bit rise in the mercury on Tuesday with Srinagar, the summer capital of the Union Territory recording a maximum temperature of 34.2 degree Celsius. As per the details available with the news agency, besides Srinagar, all the other stations too have recorded a slight rise in the maximum temperature today. Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, has recorded a

maximum temperature of 32.0 degree Celsius while Pahalgam, a famous tourist destination has recorded a maximum temperature of 28.1 degree Celsius. In Kupwara, the mercury settled at 34.2 degree Celsius while Kokernag recorded 31.0 degree Celsius. Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, recorded a maximum temperature of 24.0 degree Celsius. In the Jammu division, the mercury continued to settle around the normal temperatures with Jammu, the winter capital of the Union Territory, recording a maximum temperature of 35.5 degree Celsius.

Banihal recorded 33.0 degree Celsius while Batote, Katra and Bhaderwah recorded a maximum temperature of 28.3 degree Celsius, 32.2 degree Celsius and 35.2 degree Celsius respectively. Moreover, Director Meteorological department, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said, there is a possibility of brief spell of rain and thundershower at scattered places of Jammu division and isolated places of Kashmir division till tomorrow. He added that from July 11 to July 12, a

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Two US nationals perform Amarnath Yatra, say 'dream come true'

JI NEWS SERVICE
PAHALGAM, JUL 09

Among the thousands of pilgrims heading to Kashmir for the Amarnath Yatra, two United States nationals were spotted on Tuesday undertaking the holy pilgrimage. Speaking with the news agency, Heather Hathway and her son Hudson Hathway said that visiting the Amarnath cave had been a "dream come true" for them. They said they have waited for this opportunity for many years. "We are so grateful to

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28 Panchayats of Bandipora Declared TB Free

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, JULY 9

The District Tuberculosis Control Society Bandipora today organized a felicitation ceremony at the Mini Secretariat Bandipora to honor the Mid-Level Health Providers (MLHPs) and Panchayat Secretaries of 28 panchayats that have successfully achieved TB-free status.

The event was organized to recognize the remarkable efforts of local health workers and panchayat secretaries in eradicating tuberculosis from their concerned panchayats.

Speaking on the occasion, Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Bandipora, Mohammad Ashraf Bhatt, highlighted the importance of continuing and intensifying awareness campaigns.

He stressed that sustained efforts and community involvement are



crucial in ensuring that tuberculosis is eradicated from every nook and corner of the district.

Bhatt said, declaration of these 28 panchayats as TB free serves as an inspiration for other areas in the district to intensify their efforts in the fight against tuberculosis.

"We must continue to work together to ensure

that no one in district Bandipora suffers from this preventable and curable disease", he added.

On the occasion, CMO Bandipora Dr. Rafi Ahmad, District Tuberculosis Officer Dr. Hafeezullah, MS DH Bandipora and BMO Bandipora highlighted the collective effort and dedication required to achieve the TB-free status across

the district while as Senior Physician Consultant Dr. Parvaiz Sajjad Shah highlighted the importance of awareness measures, the spread of infection, and control strategies in the fight against TB.

Among others the event was attended by Doctors, MLHPs, Panchayat Secretaries and other concerned.

District Road Safety Committee meeting held

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, JULY 9

Following the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, ADC Kupwara, Mohammad Rouf Rahman today chaired the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) meeting here to deliberate on enforcement of road safety measures and ensuring smooth traffic flow in the district.

The meeting discussed better management of traffic, including identification of black spots, blind spots, improvement of lighting on vital roads, clearance of ROWs, provision of Trauma centre on national highway and other measures pertaining to road safety.

The ADC also took a detailed review about the tasks assigned to different departments during the previous Road Safety Committee meeting.

He directed all the members to make coordinated efforts to ensure safety on



roads and prompt emergency care.

The ADC stressed upon all the stakeholder departments to be proactive, work in complete synergy and take all required measures to decongest the main towns of the district for smooth flow of traffic.

He stressed on repairing black spots, initiating remedial measures at blind spots, installation of signage and painting of roads at appropriate spots.

The petrol pump deal-

ers were directed not fill oil to the bikers who are not wearing helmet and minor children.

To ensure safety of school children, the private schools were directed to ensure presence of conductor in all their school buses so that the safety of students is ensured while boarding and disembarking the buses.

The CMO was asked to put up proposal for establishment of Trauma Centres at PHC Chowgol and

CHC Kupwara.

Ex. Engineers of R&B Kupwara and Handwara were directed for macadamization/patching of all important roads of the district so that the people commute smoothly, besides, they were directed to ensure erection of proper road signages at important places.

The ADC also instructed the concerned to increase deployment of police personnel at Kupwara and Handwara towns to address the issue of traffic congestion.

EO Municipal Council Kupwara was directed to identify two more parking slots at Kupwara town and remove all road side and footpath encroachments on Kupwara Bye-Pass road and hospital road.

The meeting was attended by SE R&B, ASP Kupwara, OC BEACON, CMO, CEO, ARTO, Executive Engineers of R&B and other committee members.

GDC Ramban, JKEDI organise awareness programme on 'JK Government's Start-up Schemes 2024'

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, JULY 9

IIC of Government Degree College, Ramban, in collaboration with Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), organized an Entrepreneurship awareness Programme to educate students about the JK Government's Start-up Schemes 2024.

The Programme aimed to create awareness among students about the various opportunities and benefits provided by the government to support entrepreneurship and innovation.

District Nodal Officer, JKEDI Ramban Mohammad Numan and Assistant Faculty Sajad A Lone, were the resource persons who enlightened the students about various start-



up schemes launched by the government, incubation centers, and different types of funding available to them for starting their businesses.

The programme was organized under the overall supervision of Principal of the College, Prof. Archana Kaul, who appreciated the initiative and committed to organizing such events in the future.

Along with students, the programme was attended by faculty members of the college, including Prof. Satish Kumar, Prof. Raj Kumar Gupta, Prof. Sanjay Kumar Cartel, Dr. Romesh Chander, Prof. Rabinder Kumar, Prof. Ram Parkash, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Mir and Dr. Anuj Gupta.

The whole event was coordinated by Prof. Arjun Gupta.

Commissioner SMC Reviews NCAP Implementation

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 9

The Commissioner, SMC, Dr. Owais Ahmed today conducted comprehensive review meeting to evaluate the progress of National Clean Air Program (NCAP) projects.

The meeting was attended by the Joint Commissioners SMC, Superintending Engineer Drainage, Divisional Forest Officer of SMC, Executive Engineers from R&B, City Roads Division and senior officials of SMC and other line departments. Dr owais conducted a detailed examination of all ongoing NCAP projects for the FY 2023-2024 and also instructed officials to develop an action plan for FY 2024-2025. Emphasizing the importance of the clean air initiative, Dr. Owais issued clear directions to all concerned officials, calling for intensified efforts to accelerate the implementation of the Program.

DC Bandipora reviews progress of Semi Ring Road Phase II & allied issues

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, JULY 9

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman, on Tuesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress and discuss various issues of the Semi Ring Road Phase II project.

The meeting focused on evaluating the current status, addressing challenges, land acquisition, coordination among various departments and ensuring the timely completion of the project.

The concerned officers provided updates on their respective responsibilities regarding Semi Ring Road Phase II.

Sub Divisional Magistrate Sumbal Aamir Choudhary highlighted the challenges and solutions being implemented. He also pointed out



areas/issues requiring necessary interventions.

A total of 63 representations received over a period of time were discussed in the meeting and consequently, necessary directions were passed on to the concerned

departments/stakeholders for resolution as per norms.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of the Semi Ring Road Phase II in enhancing connectivity

and boosting economic activities in the region.

He urged all stakeholders to work collaboratively to overcome any obstacles and expedite the construction process.

He directed all concerned stakeholders to redress bottlenecks promptly so that the project meets its objectives and deadlines. He also assured full support from the District Administration in this regard.

The meeting was attended by ACR Shabir Ahmad Wani, SDM Sumbal Aamir Choudhary, Project Director NHAI, PIU Srinagar, Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Sumbal, Tehsildar Sumbal and other concerned.

Major reform in H&ME Dept, 20 days casual leave, Female SRs/PGs allowed 6 months Maternity Leave

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 9

In a progressive move aimed at enhancing the well being as well as work-life balance of Senior Residents (SRs)/Tutors and Postgraduate (PG) students, the Health and Medical Education (H&ME) department has ordered one-day weekly-off and 20 days of Casual leaves, including five academic leaves per year for all Senior Residents/Tutors and Postgraduate Students executing their assignments in Government Medical Colleges of J&K.

This significant step has been taken in compliance to National Medical Commission (NMC) and National Board of Education (NBE) norms.

As per the order, for Senior Residents/Tutors, there shall be weekly one-day off (subject to exigencies of work). "In addition, a Senior Resident/Tutor shall be eligible for Twenty (20) days' Casual Leave. Five (05) days' Academic Leave per year shall be admissible subject to the relevance of the programme to the course" the order reads. It adds that Female Senior Residents/Tutors shall be allowed Maternity Leave,



MTP/Abortion Leave as per existing Government rules and regulations besides male Senior Residents/Tutors shall be allowed Paternity Leave as per existing Government rules and regulations. It further adds that the tenure/course will be extended by the same number of days for which Maternity/Paternity Leave has been availed.

Similarly, the order reads that for Post-graduate students in Medical Education, there shall be weekly one-day off (subject to exigencies of work), adding that PG Students shall be eligible for twenty (20) days Casual Leaves and Five (05) days' Academic Leaves per year subject to the relevance of the programme to the course. It adds that Female Post-graduate students shall be allowed Maternity Leave, MTP/Abortion Leave as per existing Government rules and regulations while as Male Post-graduate students shall be allowed Paternity Leave as per existing Government

rules and regulations. It however reads that this shall be subject to the minimum attendance requirement during the course as per NMC norms. It adds that the period of training shall be extended by same number of days for which Maternity/Paternity Leave and total excess Casual Leave, over and above minimum attendance requirement, are availed during the training/course.

Likewise the order reads that DNB PG student shall be eligible to avail a maximum of twenty (20) days' Casual Leave in a year excluding regular duty off Gazetted holidays as per Hospital/Institute calendar/policy. It reads that Female DNB PG students shall be allowed Maternity Leave, MTP/Abortion Leave as per the Government rules and regulations, which are applicable to DNB Training Institute while as a Male DNB PG students shall be allowed Paternity Leave as per the Government rules and regulations, applicable to DNB Training Institute.

"Further, any changes in the guidelines/norms of NMC and NBE for leaves to Senior Residents/Tutors & PG Students of Government Medical Colleges and DNB PG Students shall apply ipso-facto", the order also reads.

Speaking on the development, Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah said that Maternity Leaves and Casual Leaves for SR's and PG's is aimed at a women friendly work ecosystem in the health and medical Education department. He added that after consultations with stakeholders in the Medical Education, and realizing the genuineness of their demands, we have decided to permit these leaves, in consonance with the norms of the regulatory bodies. Highlighting on the broader intent behind this significant step, Dr. Abid said that being one of the toughest courses in the world with vast syllabus coupled with relentless schedules imposed on PG Students, these leaves

entitlements were long due. "MD/MS courses being very demanding, the new leave rules will make the situation better and reduce the toll on physical and mental health of PG Students who along with Senior Residents are critical for quality patient-care in our Medical Colleges", he said. As part of major reformative agenda of the Health & Medical Education Department other measures are also on the anvil. Pertinently, the Health & Medical Education in a slew of measures in the recent past has introduced several policy initiatives. These initiatives include restructuring of faculty structure on old GMCs and amendment in Medical Education Recruitment Rules as per NMC norms, uniform policy guidelines for selection of Senior Residents/Tutors.

A spokesperson of H&ME Department revealed that the Department while recognizing the criticality of SRs and PGs for quality patient-care in GMCs, is in the process of setting up a robust grievances redressal mechanism and stringent anti-ragging measures to ensure congenial environment to enable them perform their assignments more efficiently.

Kupwara Clinches Victory in Inter District Subroto Cup 2024



J1 NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, JULY 9

The Inter District Subroto Football Cup 2024 for Under-15 boys concluded today at Showkat Ali Stadium, Khawaja Bagh, Baramulla.

The event was organized by the Youth Services and Sports Department J&K, under the supervision of Rashid Kohli Joint Director YSS Kashmir Province and was hosted by the Department of Youth Services and Sports, District Baramulla.

During the day, first semi-final saw Kupwara emerging victorious over Pulwama, while Kulgam triumphed over Anantnag

in the second semi-final. The final match was a thrilling contest between Kupwara and Kulgam, with Kupwara securing a decisive 3-0 victory.

Akthar Hussain from District Kupwara was the standout player, scoring all three goals.

The final ceremony was graced by Nazir Ahmad Bhat, DYSSO Baramulla, along with other dignitaries from the YSS Department.

Speaking on the occasion, Bhat extended his gratitude to all the participating teams for their outstanding performances and commended the field staff for making the tournament a grand success.

The winners and runners-up teams were awarded trophies and certificates for their achievements.

Notice

I, Rohit Kumar S/o Baldev Raj R/o 76, Jyotipuram, Salal, Udhampur am applying for correction of my name which has been wrongly written as Lalit Kumar instead of Rohit Kumar in birth Certificate of my son. Objection, if any, may be conveyed to SMGS Hospital, Jammu within 7 days.

CS calls for holistic development of new tourist destinations

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 9

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo today chaired a meeting to assess the proposal of Tourism department to be taken up with Union Ministry of Tourism for funding by World Bank.

The meeting was attended by the ACS, Forests; Commissioner Secretary, Tourism; Secretary, Revenue; Director Tourism, Jammu/Kashmir; DG Budget besides other concerned officers.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary had an overview of proposal framed by the department to be taken up with Union Ministry of Tourism and World Bank for their funding over a period of next 4-5 years.

Dulloo impressed upon



the officers to choose destinations from both the Divisions that are currently less treaded and have potential to be developed on their unique strengths.

He advised that these destinations along with other nearby lesser known destinations should be developed as a circuit. He called for inclusion of activities related to adventure, nature, leisure, pilgrimage or eco-tourism in this plan.

He also enjoined upon

the concerned to focus on promotion of destinations that would address the problems of overcrowding in the existing, popular destinations. He also asked for focusing on high-end and niche tourism.

Commissioner Secretary, Tourism, Yasha Mudgal, during the meeting threw light on the main features of this proposal. She highlighted that it is going to lay focus on the already developed infrastructure available in the

vicinity besides the status of bed capacity, surface and air connectivity, communication network, medical, sanitation and other common amenities along with that of the creation of master plan in such areas.

It was also revealed that this envisaged plan is going to look into the identification of zones that could be developed for hospitality, fun, pleasure, adventure or eco-tourism activities.

Besides the gap analysis and acknowledging of strengths of each site, the proposal is also covering the scope of introduction of activities like Paragliding, Zipline, Camping, Skiing, Trekking, Mountaineering, Rafting, Canoeing for their development and promotion as alternate destinations accessible to tourists round the year.

DC Rajouri reviews arrangements for Shri Baba Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, JULY 9

The Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat today held a meeting to review the arrangements for Shri Baba Budha Amarnath ji Yatra.

During the meeting, the DDC emphasized on the role and responsibilities of various officers in ensuring smooth and successful pilgrimage. He gave instructions to them regarding the arrangements that need to be made regarding smooth conduct of Budha Amarnath ji Yatra.

The DC stressed the need for proper security arrangements, adequate medical facilities, traffic management and other essential services to be provided to the pilgrims.

The officers were also directed to put all necessary arrangements in place well in advance. The DDC directed them to



work diligently and leave no stone unturned in their efforts to make the yatra successful and memorable experience for everyone who embarks on this spiritual journey.

Shri Baba Budha Amarnath ji Yatra is a highly revered pilgrimage that draws devotees from all over the country. With

the efforts of the officers and the support of the local community, the Shri Baba Budha Amarnath ji Yatra is expected to be a fulfilling and memorable experience for all those who undertake it.

The meeting was attended by the SSP, Randeep Kumar; ADC Rajouri, Rajiv Kumar Khajuria; ADC Sun-

derbani Rajeev Magotra; ACR, Mohd Jhangir Khan; OC 58 RCC, Ankit Uniyal; Dr Pankaj from CISF; DPO, Mohd Nawaz Choudhary; AD FCS&CA, Rohit Kumar; EXEN PWD(R&B) Rajouri, Sardar Khan; EXEN PWD(R&B) Nowshera, VK Raina; EXEN Jal Shakti Rajouri Ashwini Sharma; EXEN Jal Shakti Nowshera, Bipin Kumar and other concerned officers.

Among others, Anshuman Chopra, Kewal Sharma, (Distt President VHP), Gourav Mahajan (District Gen Secretary), Karan Singh (Prant Seh Mantri); Kapil Sharma (Vibagh Mantri); Sahil Pandit (Bajrangdal President); Deepak Sapotra (District Cashier); Sangeet (Zila Seva Pramukh); Sanjay Sharma (Seh Pramukh); Atul Sharma (Math Mandir Sampark Pramukh) and other stakeholders also remained present in the meeting.

DIO Doda convenes meeting with media fraternity

JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, JULY 9

An important meeting of the print media fraternity was held at the District Information Centre in Doda. The meeting was chaired by District Information Officer (DIO), Rajinder Kumar Digra, who provided an overview of various parameters suitable for media operations across the district.

A comprehensive discussion on multiple aspects of print media execution was conducted, highlighting the need for coordination and dedication among media personnel. The DIO emphasized the importance of fostering newspaper reading habits among children, noting that the rise of digital media has led to a decline in traditional newspaper readership. He



urged the media fraternity to ensure that newspapers are readily available at district headquarters to maintain their presence and relevance.

During the meeting, media personnel raised various issues, grievances and demands, which the DIO assured to address promptly. Additionally, the DIO recommended regular meetings of the media fraternity at the District Information Centre to ensure proper function-

ing and execution of print media.

Furthermore, discussions included potential strategies for enhancing the quality of print media, such as improving content standards, increasing community engagement, and leveraging digital platforms to complement traditional media. The DIO also stressed the importance of ethical journalism and the role of the media in promoting informed and educated societies.

In a first, USG Guided Amniocentesis done in Lalla Ded hospital

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 9

For the first time Amniotic Fluid Testing (AFT) was conducted in the Genetic Clinic of Fetal Medicine of Lalla Ded hospital, the hospital Administration informed through a communique issued today.

"The establishment of the genetic clinic has been the brain child of Prof Rizwana Habib HOD Obstetrics and Gynecology GMC and associated hospitals, Prof. Dr Majid Jehangir HOD, Deptt of Radio-Diagnosis and Imaging and Dr Muzaffer Ahmad Jan MS LD Hospital whose diligent and tenacious efforts culminated in the functioning of genetic clinic at LD Hospital.", the communication stated.

It further stated that the clinic will be a boon for patients of the valley as they had to travel outside of valley for antenatal procedures like amniocentesis.

The efforts of Prof. Dr Ambreen Qureshi and team are praise worthy for pre and post procedural care and workup, acknowledged the hospital Administration.

The procedure was undertaken by Dr Hakeem Aijaz Associate professor department of Radiodiagnosis and the samples were acquired from a 27y/o female for genetic testing in view of positive NIPT and quadruple test.

Chief Justice inaugurates Legal Aid Clinic at MIET School of Law, Jammu

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 9

Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh and Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority, Justice N. Kotiswar Singh today inaugurated Legal Aid Clinic at the MIET School of Law here.

The Chief Justice was accompanied by Justice Tashi Rabstan and Justice Atul Shreedharan, Judges of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, and Executive Chairmen, J&K Legal Services Authority and Ladakh Legal Services Authority respectively.

On their arrival, the Chief Justice and other dignitaries were received by Principal District & Sessions Judge, Jammu, Sanjay Parihar; Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority, Amit Gupta; Prof. Ankur Gupta, Director MIET, Ruchika Gupta, Joint Director, Prof. Sunita Koul, Dean, MIET School of Law and Prof. Sahil Sawhney, GM Strategic Initiatives.

The inauguration of Legal Aid Clinic was followed by an impactful awareness program for law students on the topic "Access to Justice through Legal Services and the Role of Law Students" organized by the J&K Legal Services Authority, in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority, Jammu and MIET, School of Law, Jammu. According to Chief Justice, legal aid clinic is a significant ini-



tiative at the MIET School of Law which aims to enhance access to justice for the underprivileged and provide practical legal experience to law students besides enhancing their legal acumen while serving the needs of underprivileged sections of the society.

In his inaugural address, the Chief Justice highlighted the critical role of legal aid in ensuring justice for marginalized communities. He emphasized the importance of legal services authorities in bridging the gap between the law and the people.

The Chief Justice emphasized the need for every student of law to remember the preamble of our Constitution, which defines our core values as a nation. He lauded the MIET School of Law for provisioning high quality infrastructure for the Legal Aid Clinic and promised full support of the J&K

Legal Services Authority in ensuring that the Legal Aid Clinic meets its stated objectives to reach out and help those entitled to free legal aid.

He also highlighted the challenges confronting the legal system in our country and outlined the initiatives that the students at MIET School of Law can undertake to play a constructive role in transforming the legal system while alleviating the sufferings of the poor.

Justice Tashi Rabstan, in his special address, underscored the need to raise awareness about legal rights and the availability of legal services. He also spoke about the unique challenges faced by law students in today's dynamic legal environment and encouraged them to contribute actively to the legal aid movement.

In his welcome address, Prof. Ankur Gupta, Director, MIET, School of Law,

Jammu, extended a warm welcome to the Chief Guest and the Guests of Honour. He expressed his gratitude for selecting MIET, School of Law, for establishing a legal aid clinic and emphasized the significance of conducting such awareness programs, which play a crucial role in raising awareness and steering students towards positive societal change.

Asmi Abrol, a law student, delivered a valuable presentation depicting the importance of legal services and the proactive role, law students can play in ensuring access to justice for all. The programme was attended by M. K. Sharma, Principal Secretary to the Chief Justice, Rajinder Sapru, Registrar Rules, Sandeep Kour, Registrar Judicial, Jammu, Prem Sagar, Secretary, High Court Legal Services Committee, Rajni Sharma, Joint Registrar Judicial, Jammu, Anil Sharma Chief LADC along with his team, Advocates, staff and PLVs of J&K Legal Services Authority.

The event also witnessed enthusiastic participation from around 240 law students, faculty members, and administrative staff of MIET, School of Law, Jammu. The vote of thanks was proposed by Smriti Sharma, Secretary, DLSA Jammu, who expressed her gratitude to the management of MIET, School of Law, Jammu, for their support in organizing this awareness program.

DC Srinagar chairs meeting of DCDC

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 9

A meeting of the District Cooperative Development Committee (DCDC) was held today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat here at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

At the outset, the Deputy Registrar Cooperative Srinagar, Abida Nabi through a PowerPoint presentation gave a detailed overview of District profile along with agenda points and action taken on them which were circulated by the Ministry of Cooperation.

The DC issued instructions to improve registration numbers in Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). He also directed other allied Departments to work in convergence mode with the Cooperative Department.

Dr Bilal further asked for recommendations and feedback from other allied Departments to further strengthen the Cooperative sector. He assured cooperation and every possible support to the Department for its better functioning.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Deputy Registrar Cooperative, Assistant Director Fisheries, District Agriculture Officer, Lead Bank Manager and others concerned.

Dir Agriculture visits SM Farm Padgampora



JI NEWS SERVICE
ANANTNAG, JULY 9

Director Agriculture Kashmir Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal today visited Seed Multiplication Farm Padgampora Anantnag and took stock of the Progress on the implementation of different programs in the Farm.

He visited different sections of the Farm and reviewed the various interventions adopted there.

Speaking on the occasion Dir Agriculture said that the departmental farms are the assets with the department and have an inevitable role to play amid the changing global agriculture scenario.

Our immediate goal is to achieve the self reliance in seed requirement of different Agricultural crops in the region and the departmental seed Multiplication Farms are the main resources to reach this ambitious goal

he added. Director asked the concerned officers/ the technical experts to work on a mission mode so that all the set targets for the current year could be reached successfully.

Earlier, he visited different areas of Anantnag and pulwama districts and took stock of the agriculture scenario and inspected different field crops.

He held meetings with the farmers at many places and received feedback regarding the different centrally sponsored schemes CSS, flagship programmes run by the department. He asked farmers to avail benefits under different projects of holistic agriculture development program HADP.

He assured them of every possible technical support during the cultivation of different agricultural crops.

ADDCC Reviews Progress under Convergence Plan in Block Zaingeer

JI NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, JULY 9

The Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDCC) Baramulla, Syed Qamar Sajad, conducted a comprehensive review of the works under the convergence plan of Block Zaingeer today.

The review session aimed to evaluate the progress and ensure the effective implementation of various development projects in the region.

The meeting, held at the District Headquarters, was attended by key officials and stakeholders, including representatives from different govern-

ment departments and local bodies.

During the session, detailed presentations were made, highlighting the current status of ongoing projects, challenges faced, and future action plans.

In his address, ADDCC Syed Qamar Sajad emphasized the importance of inter-departmental coordination and community involvement in achieving the desired outcomes.

He stressed the need for timely completion of works to ensure that the benefits reach the grassroots level, contributing

to the overall development of Block Zaingeer.

The convergence plan

includes a range of initiatives aimed at improving infrastructure, healthcare,

education, and livelihood opportunities for the residents of Block Zaingeer.

EXTENSION OF SUMMER SPECIAL TRAINS

For the convenience of Rail Passengers, Railways have decided to extend the Periodicity of run the following Summer Special Trains as per details given below:-

Train No. & Name	Notified up to	Frequency	Days of Run	Period of Extension
09321 Dr.Ambedkar Nagar - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Superfast Special	10.07.2024	Tri-Weekly	Mon, Wed, Sat	Up to 31.07.2024
09322 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Dr.Ambedkar Nagar Superfast Special	11.07.2024	Tri-Weekly	Tue, Thu, Sun	Up to 01.08.2024

For detailed information regarding stoppages and timings of above trains, please call RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit enquiry website: www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in

RailMadad Helpline No. 139

Visit RailMadad website: www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in

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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

SANJY-2024: Lt Governor...

water supply, sanitation, health, traffic and security management, and other facilities to the pilgrims.

He directed all concerned departments and service providers to take every possible measure for the safe and smooth conduct of the Yatra.

Syed Fakhruddin Hamid, Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag briefed the Lt Governor on the facilities available to the Yatris arriving at the Base Camps.

The Lt Governor was accompanied by Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, CEO, Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board; Vidhi Kumar Birdi, IGP Kashmir; Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir and other senior officers of District Administration, SASB, Police and Army.

India, Russia for resolution...

continue working together to promote bilateral settlement system using national currencies. The Sides agreed to continue consultations for interoperability of their financial messaging systems.

The Leaders appreciated the initial meeting in March 2024 to commence full negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement on goods between India and the Eurasian Economic Union. The Leaders also directed their relevant officials to explore the possibility of commencing negotiations for signing a bilateral free-trade agreement in services and investments.

The Sides agreed to continue discussion on the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement.

The Sides expressed readiness to actively work to expand logistics links with an emphasis on increasing the capacity of infrastructure, including for implementation of the Chennai-Vladivostok Eastern Maritime Corridor and the International North-South Transport Corridor, as well as using the potential of the Northern Sea Route.

The Sides appreciated the ongoing cooperation in the coal sector and agreed to explore the possibility for further increasing supply of coking coal to India, and the opportunities of exporting anthracite coal from Russia to India.

The Sides expressed their readiness to intensify trade and investment cooperation in the Far East and the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation.

The Sides welcomed the progress achieved in the construction of the remaining nuclear power plant units at Kudankulam and agreed on adhering to the schedule, including to the timelines for delivery of supplies.

Both Sides noted the importance of further discussion on the second site in India in accordance with earlier signed agreements. The Sides agreed to continue technical discussions on the VVER 1200 of the Russian design, localization of equipment and joint manufacturing of NPP components as well as on cooperation in third countries. The Sides confirmed their intention to broaden cooperation in Nuclear Power including fuel cycle, life cycle support for operating KKNPPs and non-power applications.

The Sides welcomed the enhanced partnership between the Indian Space Research Organization and the Russian State Space Corporation "Roscosmos" in the use of outer space for peaceful purposes, including in the human spaceflight programs, satellite navigation and planetary exploration.

Military and Military Technical Cooperation

Responding to India's quest for self-sufficiency, the partnership is reorienting presently to joint research and development, co-development and joint production of advanced defence technology and systems. The Sides confirmed commitment to maintain the momentum of joint military cooperation activities and expand military delegation exchanges.

Both Sides agreed to encourage joint manufacturing in India of spare parts, components, aggregates and other products for maintenance of Russian origin arms and defence equipment under Make-in-India program through transfer of technology and setting up of joint ventures for meeting the needs of the Indian Armed Forces as well as subsequent export to mutually friendly third countries by the Sides' approval.

The Sides agreed to continue their consultations on mutual recognition of education and academic degrees.

Both Sides called for comprehensive reform of the UNSC to reflect contemporary global realities and to make it more representative, effective and efficient in dealing with issues of international peace and security. Russia reiterated its steadfast support for India's permanent membership of a reformed and expanded UN Security Council.

The Leaders unequivocally condemned terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations including the cross-border movement of terrorists, and terrorism financing networks and safe havens.

The Sides called for an uncompromising fight against international terrorism and extremism in all their forms and manifestations, noting the importance of increasing cooperation in this area, without hidden agendas and double standards on the solid basis of international law and the UN Charter.

The Leaders reiterated that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group and that all those involved in terrorist activities and their supporters must be held accountable and brought to justice in accordance with international law.

Russia expressed its strong support for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

The Sides noted with appreciation the close coordination between India and Russia on Afghanistan including through the dialogue mechanism between the Security Councils of both countries. Both Sides discussed the situation in Afghanistan, including the security situation and its implications in the region, the current political situation, issues related to terrorism, radicalization and drug trafficking.

They noted with appreciation relevant proposals of mediation and good offices aimed at peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict in accordance with international law and on the basis of the UN Charter in its entirety and totality.

The Sides expressed deep concern on the situation in the Middle East, with a particular focus on Gaza.

The Sides agreed to strengthen joint efforts to build an architecture of equal and indivisible regional security and to intensify consultations on complementarities between integration and development initiatives in Greater Eurasian space and in the regions of Indian and Pacific oceans.

The Sides noted with satisfaction the resilience of India-Russia Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership and the convergent and complementary approaches of their foreign policy priorities, and reaffirmed their commitment for its further strengthening.

They stressed that India and Russia as major powers will continue to strive for global peace and stability in multipolar world.

Kathua Attack: Massive...

in Kathua. A massive search operation is underway to nab the terrorists behind the ambush in which five people were

also injured.

Meanwhile, President Droupadi Murmu termed the terrorist attack on an Army convoy in Jammu and Kashmir a "cowardly act" and said it deserved condemnation and firm counter-measures.

In a post on X, Murmu said, "My sympathies are with the families of the bravehearts who laid down their lives in this ongoing war against terror in its all forms. I pray for the speedy recovery of those injured."

"The attack on a convoy of Army personnel in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir by terrorists is a cowardly act that deserves condemnation and firm counter-measures.

My sympathies are with the families of the bravehearts who laid down their lives in this ongoing war against terror in its all forms. I pray for the speedy recovery of those injured," the President said.

Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Pushkar Singh Dhama asserted that sacrifice of Bravehearts will not go in vain.

"Five brave soldiers of Uttarakhand attained martyrdom during the cowardly terrorist attack in Kathua, Jammu and Kashmir. This is a moment of great pain for all of us," Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama said in a statement.

"Our bravehearts made the supreme sacrifice for their motherland in keeping with the rich military tradition of Uttarakhand," he said, adding their "sacrifice will not go in vain.

Terrorists, who are the enemies of humanity and guilty of this cowardly attack, will not be spared at any cost, he said, adding the people who sheltered them will also have to face the consequences. He said the entire state stands with their families in this hour of grief. The chief minister also paid his tribute to those killed through separate posts on X.

NIA teams...

two directions, sources said.

The officer said that search for the terrorists, which was suspended late Monday because of heavy rain, resumed on Tuesday with joint search parties of the Army, police and CRPF launched from various directions, including Kathua, Udhampur and Doda.

"Ground search teams of JKP special operation group, CRPF's Ghatok Group and Army's elite Para Commandos are being supported by helicopter and UAV surveillance. Sniffer dogs and metal detectors are also being employed in the operation with a focus on some dense forest areas in the belt," the officer said.

Tributes

Though the army in Jammu and Kashmir's not issued any statement on the incident, army Western Command in the evening shared photographs and details of slain soldiers, as the area of operation came under YoI, Himachal Pradesh based 9 Corps.

"Nashak Navtara Corps Commander & all ranks paid homage to #bravehearts Nb Sub Anand Singh, Hav Kamal Singh, Nk Vinod Singh, Rfn Anuj Negi & Rfn Adarsh Negi for sacrificing their lives in service of the nation. We stand in solidarity with the bereaved family members," army's Western Command posted on X.

It added that Indian Army and Western Command salute the bravery and supreme sacrifice of five soldiers in Kathua Sector, Jammu on 08 July 24 while fighting the scourge of terrorism. Army Commander & all ranks stand in solidarity with bereaved families. Joint operation in progress.

Earlier, on July 8, five Army personnel, including a junior commissioned officer, were killed, and five others injured on the rugged Machedi-Kindli-Malhar mountainous road near Badnota village, about 150 kilometers from Kathua district headquarters. This incident marks the fifth terror attack in the region within a month.

Five jawans from Uttarakhand identified as Naib Subedar Anand Singh Rawat, resident of Rudraprayag district, Havidar Kamal Singh, resident of Pauri district, Naik Vinod Singh, resident of Tehri Garhwal district, Rifleman Anuj Negi, resident of Pauri district, Adarsh Negi, resident of Tehri Garhwal district made the supreme sacrifice in the terrorist attack.

LG Manoj Sinha

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has said that perpetrators of Kathua terror attack will be punished soon. He also expressed deepest condolences to bereaved families of martyrs. In his message the Lieutenant Governor said: "I salute the bravery of our army personnel, who lost their lives in a dastardly terror attack in Kathua. Deepest condolences to bereaved families of martyrs. Coordinated counter-terror operations are underway and the perpetrators of this attack will be punished soon." Notably five soldiers, including a Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO), were killed and five others were injured when a group of terrorists ambushed two army vehicles on patrolling duty near Badnota village in Kathua district on Monday afternoon.

NIA

Meanwhile, National Investigation Agency (NIA) also arrived at the incident site where an Army convoy was ambushed yesterday. Meanwhile, security has been tightened along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway following the attack. NIA will assist the Jammu and Kashmir police in its probe of a terrorist attack. However, the agency has not yet registered an official case to investigate the terrorist attack.

Security Intensified

Day after the Kathua attack, security forces recovered 2 Mortar Shells near Ban Toll Plaza in Jammu along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway. The mortar shells were noticed abandoned in a ditch by police and security forces during joint patrolling this morning. They said the experts of the bomb disposal squad were immediately rushed to the scene and both the explosive devices were safely defused around noon. Following the incident Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and Jammu and Kashmir police personnel have been deployed along the National Highway (NH44) in Udhampur.

Jammu Attacks

The Jammu region has been shaken by a series of recent ambushes and terror attacks, particularly in the border districts of Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, and Reasi.

On October 11, 2021 gun battles between terrorists and Army raged for over 10 days in Chamrer and Bhatta Durrian forests falling between Surankote and Mendhar in Poonch district signaling revival of terrorism. 43 bravehearts have sacrificed their lives in different terror attacks and encounters in the Jammu region.

While five Army soldiers lost their lives on October 11, 2021 in Chamrer forests, four others attained martyrdom at Bhatta Durrian forests on October 16, 2021. Two of them were JCOs. The terrorists remained untraced. Two more Army jawans sacrificed their lives in Nowshera sector of Rajouri on October

30, 2021. Five Army soldiers were killed while two fideayens were eliminated in a terror attack at Pargal in Darhal area of Rajouri on August 11, 2022. Five Army soldiers were martyred at Bhatta Durrian in Mendhar area of Poonch on April 20, 2023 while exactly a fortnight later five para commandos lost their lives and a Major was injured in an IED blast triggered by the terrorists at Kandi in Rajouri district. On November 22, 2023, five Army personnel, two of them Captains, attained martyrdom while eliminating two foreign terrorists at Bajimal in Dharamshal area of Kalakote in Rajouri while five more bravehearts were killed and two others were injured at Dera Ki Gali in Surankote area of Poonch on December 21, 2023.

A VDG jawan was killed at Basantgarh in Udhampur district on April 28, 2024, an IAF soldier lost his life on May 4, 2024 at Surankote in Poonch while a CRPF jawan sacrificed his life at Hiranagar in Kathua on June 11, 2024.

Four Army jawans were martyred at Machedi in Billawar area of Kathua district today.

The fresh spurt begins since June 9, when terrorists attacked a bus carrying pilgrims from the Shiv Khorji temple in Reasi district, claiming the lives of nine persons and injuring 41 others.

Earlier in May, terrorists ambushed an Indian Air Force (IAF) convoy in Poonch district, killing a soldier and injuring several others. Kashmir Tigers, a shadow outfit of the banned Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Protest & statements

Jammu region today rocked with anti-Pakistan protests in several areas from Kathu to Poonch as agitated people took to the streets to condemn the terror attack. The Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association (JKHCBAA) a massive protest at the District Court Complex, condemning the recent spurt in terrorist attacks in UT of J&K in general and Jammu Division in particular. The protest was lodged by a large number of Bar members who stood united in expressing their solidarity with the families of the brave heart soldiers who attained martyrdom laying down their lives in service of nation.

Bajrang Dal, Locals in Jammu have taken to the streets in Jammu to protest. The demonstrators raised serious concerns over the recent terror attacks in Jammu region and urged the government to take strict action against those responsible for the attacks.

Rashtriya Bajrang Dal, Dogra Front & Shiv Sena, BJYM Poonch unit people of R S Pura, District Congress Committee Kathua along with dozen organizations condemned the terrorist attack and asked the Government to take stern action against the preparators of the attack.

Gulam Ali Khatana

Rajya Sabha MP Gulam Ali Khatana during a press briefing strongly denounced Pakistan for propelling Kathua terror attack. Terming the attack as barbaric and inhuman Gulam Ali Khatana hurled brickbat and said India will throw a tight slap to Pakistan for sponsoring terror. Pertinent to mention, five soldiers made the supreme sacrifice in the Kathua encounter.

Farooq Abdhulla

National Conference Chief Farooq Abdullah said that only way forward now is that the pressure of the world on that country must increase. This is not the path to peace. This is the path to destruction...

"Terrorism will not help anyone. If our neighbour thinks that infiltrating terrorists into our territory will bring change, they are wrong. They will fail... I am afraid that our anger will increase so much after this that we might resort to aggression and retaliation. They have already destroyed their country, and now a war will only further destroy it. They need to stop terrorism. They are being condemned all over the world for their actions... What are they gaining from this? The families of these soldiers would be mourning and demanding retaliation. If they want to move on this path then they must be ready for the consequences also... Terrorism and dialogue cannot go hand in hand. If they want good ties, they will have to walk on that path, and terrorism does not lie on that path..."

Ravinder Raina

Condemning the Kathua terror attack, J&K BJP President Ravinder Raina said "Cowardly Pakistani terrorists have carried out a cowardly attack in Jammu and Kashmir. They targeted a vehicle of the Army at night in Kathua's Machedi area. Our brave soldiers have made the supreme sacrifice for the motherland. These terrorists will not be spared"

Bharat Sinh Solanki

Congress s has expressed shock over the loss of lives & strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Kathua district of Jammu region in which four army jawans attained martyrdom and several others injured, while terming the security situation worrisome..

JKPCC has saluted the bravehearts and expressed sympathies with their family members and colleagues.

AICC Incharge Jk Affairs Bharat Sinh Solanki has strongly condemned the cowardly attack and expressed sympathies with the families of martyrs. He prayed for peace to the departed souls.

Expressing grave concern over rise in terror attacks in Jammu province, Senior AICC leader termed the situation highly worrisome.

JKPCC President Vikar Rasool Wani and all Senior JKPCC leaders have strongly condemned the attack and expressed serious concerns over the deteriorating security situation in Jammu region too and asked the government to launch a full-scale war against terrorism to save the lives of the army, security forces, police and common people. They said such incidents are intolerable and terrorism has to be eliminated.

They conveyed heartfelt sympathies to the families of martyrs and prayed for early recovery of injured.

20,000 pilgrims...

the twin yatra routes, the two base camps, and the cave shrine to ensure a smooth and incident-free yatra.

Over 124 langars (community kitchens) have been set up along both routes, at the transit camps, and at the cave shrine. Over 7,000 sevadars (volunteers) are serving the yatris during this year's Yatra. Helicopter services are also available for the yatris on both routes.

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

Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha visited the Nunwan and Chandanwari base camps set up for the Amarnath Yatra and reviewed arrangements for the ongoing pilgrimage to the 3,880-meter-high cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas.

"Visited Nunwan & Chandanwari base camps at Pahalgam

today. Interacted with the pilgrims, service providers, doctors, sanitation workers, and administrative and security officials and took stock of the yatra arrangements. #ShriAmarnathJi-Yatra2024," the Office of LG J&K posted on social media site X.

Kathua attack: LG pays...

underway and the perpetrators of this attack will be punished soon".

Chief Secretary takes...

assistance to the concerned executing agencies by resolving court cases, land disputes, handing over of land and other issues faced by them in smooth execution of these projects.

Moreover, the Chief Secretary took project wise appraisal of progress made so far. He enquired about the possible date of completion of work on each phase of these projects.

Regarding the different phases of Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway, it was appraised that the project has been distributed in several phases and work on each phase is going on simultaneously. It was given out that some phases of this project including Balsua-Hiranagar, Hiranagar-Vijaypur, Vijaypur-Kunjwani and Kunjwani-Sidhra would be completed before September, 2025.

As far as the work on Ring Road Jammu is concerned, it was revealed that the work has largely been completed with just a few minor works and a tunnel to be finished now. It was given out that the same would be completed by June, 2025.

Giving details about the incomplete phases of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44), it was divulged that the work on all the tunnels is going on and would be completed by June, 2026. It was further informed that the Banihal Bypass would be accomplished in the month of September this year and other viaducts by June, 2025.

Another project discussed during this meeting was the Srinagar Ring Road. The meeting was appraised that the work on the project is going on with 42.8% progress made on ground. It was added that the project is slated to be commissioned by June, 2025.

The later phases of this highway including phase-II (Magam-Pandach) and phase-III (Lasjan-Pandach via Dalgate) also came under discussion during this meeting.

The progress on the upgradation of Narbal-Baramulla-Urlihighway was given by the NHIDCL during the meeting. It was revealed that the work on Sangrama Flyover is 96% complete and would be thrown open by October this year. It was added that the work on Baramulla Bypass (14.2 Kms) and Pattan Bypass (10.9 Kms) would be taken in hand shortly.

In addition the status of Khanabal-Pahalgalam Road (NH-501), Rafiabad-Trehgam Road, Magam-Surankot Road were reviewed. The progress on Bemina, Sanatnagar and Nowgam flyovers was also taken, besides other works like rehabilitation of Jawahar Tunnel and old Chanapora Bridge was also discussed during the meeting.

The meeting also held a detailed discussion over the pace and progress made on Jammu-Akhnoor elevated corridor. It took note of the development of Tawi 4th Bridge-Satwari-Airport-Miran Sahib-RS Pura-Suchetgarh Road besides the Katra-Basholi-Bani-Baderwah-Doda Road for more reliable and alternate connectivity between these areas.

Other significant roads which came-up for discussion include Chenani-Sudhmahadev Road, Baderwah-Chamba Road, Goha-Khellani, Khellani-Khanabal Road and Rajouri-Poonch Highways to augment Road network in the Pirpanjal region.

The meeting also discussed the pace of work on major tunnels, viaducts, flyovers, Bypasses to major towns across Jammu and Kashmir.

It also took note of work on the Z-Morh tunnel that would ensure reliable connectivity to the tourist destination of Sonamarg. It was given out that work would be completed shortly in the month of August this year and that on Zojila tunnel by September, 2026.

J&K records slight rise...

spell of light to moderate rain and thundershower is expected at scattered to fairly widespread places while a brief spell of rain and thundershower is expected at isolated to scattered places on July 13 and July 14.

Farming Resumes After...

dam on the zero line has further enhanced their sense of security. The district administration's directive has led to an organized effort to contact farmers and promote urad cultivation. Seeds have been provided, and sowing has commenced on the reclaimed 500 kanals of land.

Two US nationals perform...

be here. I have dreamed of coming to Amarnath for many years. This has only been possible with the Government of India's amazing organisation and the Shrine Board. We are overwhelmed with joy. Everyone has been so amazing, sweet, and kind," Heather said.

The Amarnath Yatra attracts thousands of Hindu devotees annually. The 52-day long pilgrimage, which began on June 29, will conclude on August 19, 2024. Devotees visit the Amarnath cave, located at an elevation of 3,888 meters in Jammu and Kashmir's Lidder Valley.

Encounter breaks out...

encounter. "The operation is going on," he said, adding that further details will be shared accordingly.

3 killed as many...

from Kashmir towards Dachan when it rolled down into a gorge.

Medical Superintendent, District Hospital Kishtwar, Dr Yudhvir Singh told KNO that one injured person has been brought to the hospital, while two are on their way.

Meanwhile, Union Minister, Dr Jitendra Singh in a post on X stated that he is in constant touch with the Deputy Commissioner and expressed condolences with the bereaved families.

"J&K | I am in constant touch with DC #Kishtwar, Dr Devansh Yadav following tragic road accident in which a private Alto vehicle rolled down a deep gorge at Dachan area leading to loss of 4 lives and injuries to 2. The injured are being shifted to District hospital. My sincere condolences to the bereaved families. All possible help being provided," Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh wrote.

Director Panchayati Raj inspects Kanihama PLC, reviews its functioning

JI NEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, JULY 9

Director, Panchayati Raj, J&K, Sham Lal today conducted an inspection of the Kanihama Panchayat Learning Centre (PLC) in Budgam district to review its functioning as well as assess various facilities available there.

During the inspection, the Director called upon the officials to equip the centre with all necessary facilities to transform it into a comprehensive one-stop center for the local community.

During his visit, Sham Lal underscored the importance of making Common Service Centre (CSC) functional where residents can apply for various schemes and services online.



He also highlighted the need for effective communication and awareness among the public about the services offered at the PLC.

The Director said that the idea is to create a hub where people can come for various services and information. He urged officials to strategically place

information boards and notices in areas with high footfall to ensure maximum visibility and accessibility for the community. Sham Lal also addressed the need for increased participation in local governance, particularly during Gram Sabhas.

The Director also suggested using the Panchayat

as a medium to connect people with various government schemes and services.

He said that Panchayat should serve as a bridge between the government and the people, ensuring that all necessary information and services are readily available to the community.

The Director underscored the need for consistent awareness campaigns to inform people about the dates and times of meetings, programs, and events.

He also mentioned the role of the Panchayat Secretary, stressing the significance of their duties in maintaining the functioning of the Panchayat and ensuring the implementation of resolutions and schemes.

JKTPO to host E-commerce Onboarding Drive in Kishtwar, district admin finalises preparation



JI NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, JULY 9

The Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) in collaboration with various e-commerce platforms, is organizing an E-commerce onboarding drive in District Kishtwar on July 11, 2024.

This initiative is specifically targeted towards the One District One Product (ODOP) and District Export Hubs (DEH) programs.

General Manager DIC/ACD Kishtwar, Phulail Singh, convened a preparatory meeting today under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav here at DC Office Complex Kishtwar.

The meeting was attended by Chief Agriculture Officer Kishtwar, Assistant Labour Commissioner Kishtwar, Dis-

trict Manager Industries, Chief Horticulture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, District Program Manager NRLM, Saffron Development Officer, Assistant Handicrafts and Handloom Officer, and Assistant Director Employment & Career Counseling.

The chair informed in the meeting that the primary objective of this special drive is to enhance the digital presence and market reach of local artisans, manufacturing units, weavers, farmers, entrepreneurs, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and small businesses by facilitating their onboarding onto leading e-commerce platforms.

All concerned officers were instructed to provide details of eligible individuals and organizations registered or operating within their respective departments.

The ODOP and DEH initiatives have demonstrated significant potential in promoting unique and high-quality products from each district, thus boosting local economies and providing artisans, farmers, entrepreneurs, and producers with greater market opportunities.

The drive will include comprehensive training sessions on e-commerce operations, digital marketing, and logistics management.

Participants will receive assistance in registering and setting up online stores on prominent e-commerce platforms, support in listing products with effective descriptions, images, and pricing, and guidance on strategies to boost online sales through digital marketing, social media, and promotional campaigns.

The success of this

onboarding drive hinges on the active participation of various stakeholders, including sellers, farmers, artisans, SHG members, entrepreneurs, self-employed youth, and lady entrepreneurs within the district.

Effective dissemination of information through district and sectoral officers is vital to ensuring broad participation from the targeted audience.

All concerned officers were urged to facilitate the mobilization of sellers, farmers, artisans, SHG members, entrepreneurs, self-employed youth, lady entrepreneurs, and small business owners within their sectors to maximize the benefits of this district-level initiative. Encouraging widespread participation among relevant stakeholders will be crucial to the success of the onboarding drive.

Team of ARI & Trainings Deptt conducts Administrative inspection of Director Colleges J&K, other Higher Educational Institutions

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 9

Administrative Reforms, Inspections, and Trainings (ARI) department conducted administrative inspection of Director Colleges J&K and several key higher education institutions like SP College and Amar Singh College as part of the ongoing efforts of government to ensure excellence, adherence to educational standards and government policies.

The inspection team led by Secretary Technical, ARI department, Dr Abdul Kabir Dar interacted extensively with the faculty, students and administrative staff, including Dean of Academic Affairs, Cluster University of Srinagar, Director Colleges, and Principal SP College.

The interactions were aimed at understanding the current educational environment, addressing any immediate concerns, identifying opportunities for further improvement and bringing reforms in the system.

During the visit, the Secretary, emphasized the critical role of higher education in the socio-economic development of Jammu and Kashmir. He reiterated the commitment of ARI and trainings department to support the higher education by carrying out reforms and enhance the quality of education provided in colleges and universities across Jammu and Kashmir. One of the highlights of the inspection was the discussion on the importance of model pro-forma devised by ARI and train-

ings department.

The Secretary highlighted about various aspects of model pro-forma, key areas of operation that provides a structured framework for government departments to conduct official dealings with transparency and accountability.

The implementation of this pro-forma is expected to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative processes, ensuring that all official transactions are carried out with the highest standards of integrity.

Director Colleges J&K shared insights on initiatives being undertaken to improve academic standards and infrastructure within the institutions. She also spoke about the introduction of the Jammu and Kashmir Higher Edu-

cation Admission Portal - 2023, which streamlines the admission process for all undergraduate programs in J&K State Universities.

Principals of Colleges, along with other faculty members, expressed their appreciation for the visit and the proactive approach of the department in addressing Administrative and other educational challenges. They also discussed ongoing projects and future plans to enhance the academic and infrastructural landscape of their respective colleges.

The inspection team expressed satisfaction with the progress made by institutions and reaffirmed the government's support in bringing reforms for educational excellence in the region.

ACR B'la flags off marathon under Sampoonnata Abhiyan at Eco Park B'la



JI NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, JULY 9

As part of the Sampoonnata Abhiyan launched by NITI Ayog recently, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Baramulla, Arshad Ahmad Khan, today flagged off a mara-

thon at Eco Park Baramulla. The marathon witnessed participation of a large number of students and other stakeholders, who enthusiastically carried banners and placards. Their presence and support significantly contributed to raise awareness for

the cause, thereby helping achieve the targets and success of the campaign. Pertinently, the Sampoonnata Abhiyan, initiated by NITI Aayog, is a targeted three-month campaign aimed at achieving complete saturation in six critical indicators essential for the socio-economic advancement of Aspirational districts. Speaking during the flagging off ceremony, the ACR emphasized the significance of saturation of the key indicators under the Sampoonnata Abhiyan for the comprehensive development of the district. He further encouraged all the stakeholders involved to collaborate closely, to contribute towards achieving the overarching goals and success of the Sampoonnata campaign.

Mission Shakti SANKALP HEW Jammu organises awareness camp in village Ambaran Akhnoor

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 9

Mission Shakti SANKALP-Hub for Empowerment of Women Jammu, Social Welfare Department organized an awareness camp in Village Ambaran, Akhnoor in association with JKNRLM in block training centre.

A large number of women from Ambaran and adjoining areas attended the camp.

The officials of Mission Shakti SANKALP HEW Jammu elaborated government schemes/ services and programmes



such as BBBP, Health Related Schemes of Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Ladli Beti, scholarship schemes, education oriented schemes, skill oriented programmes, business start up schemes, pensions for Old Age, Widow, Physically Challenged Person, SMAS for marriage, schemes for

women in distress, Nasha Mukta awareness session, Helpline Nos. They further stressed how these schemes are designed for women's education, health, safety and empowerment. At the end of the session, the grievances were also noted for early redressal.

OFFICE OF THE ZONAL EDUCATION OFFICER, TIKRI

No:-ZEO/T/307-14

Date:-04-07-2024

NOTIFICATION

Sub-Engagement / Hiring of Helper / AAYA'S Under ECCE for the session 2024-25.

In reference to Director of SAMAGRA SHIKSHA Jammu and Kashmir Order No. 07 of Chirag 2023, Dated: 09-01-2023 & Chief Education Officer, Udhampur's Order No. CEOU/AAYA/SS/15637-747, Dated:- 12-06-2023. The Zonal Education officer, Tikri is going to engage Helper/ AAYA at Village level of honorarium @ 5000/- Per month. In order to engage Helper/ AAYA application are invited from Female Candidates of the following Schools. Last date of receipt of application is 15-07-2024

S.No	Name of the School	Pre-Primary Enrollment	No of Post of Engage/ Helper/AAYA	Name of the Revenue village	Remarks
1.	Ms Tikri	5	1	Mand West	
2.	MS Jalmar	7	1	Jalmar	
3.	MS Seen Thakran	5	1	Seen Thakran	
4.	MS Dhanoo	5	1	Dhanoo	
5.	PS Lehri	6	1	East Mand	
6.	PS Kalsar	7	1	Fast Mand	
7.	PS Upper Mohalla Upper Hartaryan	8	1	Hartaryan	

The Terms and Conditions are as under:-

- Only Female Candidate can apply.
- The Candidate must have domicile of the same Village.
- Candidate belongs to BPI. Category.
- Candidate must be physically/ mentally fit for the Job.
- Minimum Qualification required 8th Pass **(8th Pass Marks Card-Mandatory)**.
- The age of the Candidate shall be between 18-45 years as on 1st Jan 2024.
- Preference shall be given to candidates from BPI. Category in below mentioned order priority:-
a. Widow b. Divorced c. Orphan d. Any Candidate among the Poorest of the poor in the village/Elder in Age.
- Honorarium 5000/Per month which may vary as per the approval in The subsequent year in P'AB of Samagra Shiksha.
- Last date of receipt of application is **15-07-2024**
- No. application shall be entertained after the last date.
- In case of total non-availability of candidates as mentioned above from the concerned Panchayat may be considered. 12. In case of tie up of the selection of candidates for selection of helper, the preference shall be given to the elder candidate.
- The name of Selected AAYA/ Helper shall be displayed on the notice Board of the School/Panchayat Ghar seven days before the commencement of the new academic session.
- If anybody feels aggrieved with selection of the helper/AAYA, an appeal shall be preferred to the Chief Education Officer, Udhampur within period of 15 days from Selection. Second appeal if any be filed before Director School Education Jammu.
- In case of any misconduct, misbehavior and poor performance while discharging duty be the helper/ AAYA as notice/ reported, the concerned Zonal Education Officer, Tikri having the right to Terminate the service of Helper/ AAYA in consultation with Panchayat Halqa. Replacement shall be made within 07 days.
- All Head of Institution's check, Scrutinize and verify the application form thoroughly in all respect before signing.
a. Only Female Candidate can apply.
b. The Candidate must have domicile of the same Village.
c. Candidate belongs to BPI. Category.
d. Candidate must be physically/ mentally fit for the Job.
e. Minimum Qualification required 8th Pass **(8th Pass Marks Card- Mandatory)**.
f. The age of the Candidate shall be between 18-45 years as on 1st Jan 2024.

Note:- Application form will be submitted in this office before 15th of July 2024. No form will be accepted after last date.

DIP/J-2592/24
Date: 9-7-24

Sd/-
MADAN LAL DOGRA
Zonal Education Officer
Tikri, Udhampur

EDITORIAL

Bridging the divide in Ladakh?

The aftermath of the Parliamentary elections in Ladakh has unveiled a rift that threatens the unity and collective aspirations of its people. The Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), once aligned in pursuit of regional empowerment, now find themselves at odds, echoing sentiments of betrayal and discord. The recent electoral dynamics saw the KDA throwing its weight behind Haji Haneefa Jan, a move that LAB leaders perceive as a breach of trust. The subsequent victory of Haji Haneefa Jan has been followed by provocative statements and calls for merging Ladakh back into the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. These developments have exacerbated tensions, with Leh leaders criticizing their Kargil counterparts for what they see as a capitulation to forces opposed to Ladakh's autonomous status. The cleavage deepened further when a senior KDA leader met with Mirwaiz Omar Farooq of the Hurriyat Conference, a move that has widened the rift between Leh and Kargil. This meeting has been viewed as undermining the unity of purpose that Ladakh's leadership once displayed in advocating for its interests at the national level. While over a month has passed since the conclusion of the elections, the LAB has maintained a cautious silence, refraining from endorsing the KDA's call to resume dialogue with the Union Government. This reticence underscores the gravity of the divisions that have emerged within Ladakh's political landscape. On the other hand, the KDA, led by Co-Chairmen Qamar Ali Akhone and Haji Asgar Ali Karbalaie, has reiterated its commitment to constructive engagement with the government. They have proposed a comprehensive four-point agenda, including the pressing demand for full-fledged statehood for Ladakh. This agenda, they argue, addresses longstanding grievances and underscores the region's quest for greater autonomy and development. The KDA's call to reconvene the High Powered Committee (HPC) and resume dialogue with local leaders is not just a plea for recognition but a plea for justice. It highlights the urgent need for the Union Government to revisit its approach towards Ladakh, ensuring that the aspirations of its diverse communities are heard and addressed. It is crucial in this delicate moment that all stakeholders in Ladakh demonstrate statesmanship and prioritize unity over discord. The region's journey towards greater autonomy and representation requires a collective effort, where differences are bridged through dialogue and mutual understanding. The role of political leadership in Ladakh, whether in Leh or Kargil, must transcend partisan interests to embrace a shared vision for the region's future. It is imperative for both LAB and KDA leaders to engage in constructive dialogue, setting aside differences in pursuit of a common agenda that benefits all residents of Ladakh. As the nation watches, hoping for a resolution that respects Ladakh's unique cultural and geopolitical context, it is incumbent upon all parties involved to rise above political brinkmanship. The aspirations of Ladakh's people for self-determination and effective governance deserve nothing less than earnest, inclusive dialogue and action. The path forward for Ladakh lies in unity, dialogue, and a commitment to addressing grievances through democratic means. Only through such concerted efforts can Ladakh realize its full potential as a beacon of harmony and progress in the Union of India.

The cost of freebies and the legal quagmire

UTTAM GUPTA

In the Maharashtra Budget for 2024-25 presented by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, the BJP-led MahaYuti has announced financial assistance of Rs 1,500 per month for eligible women between 21 to 60 years of age, a stipend up to Rs.10,000 per month for youth in industrial and non-industrial sectors, electricity bill waiver for farmers etc. Unambiguously, these are freebies - an acronym for something given by the State free of charge - aimed at garnering votes during the State assembly elections later this year.

In a July 2013 order in *S Subramaniam Balaji vs Government of Tamil Nadu & Ors*, the Supreme Court (SC) had said that the distribution of freebies of any kind influences all people; that "It shakes the root of free and fair elections to a large degree". Yet, it had held that promises in the election manifesto cannot be construed as "corrupt practice" under the Representation of People Act (RPA), or any other prevailing law and, hence, distribution of freebies can't be stopped when the ruling party uses public funds for this purpose through the passage of Appropriation Acts in the state assembly. In the same order, it directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) "to frame guidelines that could govern the contents of the election manifesto of all the recognized political parties as when it had acted while framing guidelines for general conduct of the candidates, meetings, processions, polling day, etc". Further "this can also be included in the model code of conduct - under a separate head for guidelines for election manifesto - for guidance of political

parties and candidates". The ECI never came out with any such guidelines. Emboldened by ECI inaction, the political parties who in the past, were placing freebies in a corner of their manifestos, have started catapulting them to the centre stage.

Now, freebies hold the key to winning elections. In February 2020, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led by Arvind Kejriwal mesmerized Delhi, voters, by promising free or heavily subsidized electricity and free water, free bus rides for women, free Wi-Fi, and so on. In 2022 in Punjab, AAP promised free electricity to each household for consumption up to 300 units per month, waiver of all outstanding power bills, Rs 1000 per month to every woman aged 18 or above etc. The party won the state with a thumping majority. In Uttar Pradesh also in 2022, BJP promised 20 million smartphones for poor students, two free LPG cylinders every year, Rs 100,000/- for the marriage of girls from poor families, and so on. Meanwhile, the matter came up before the SC through a public interest litigation (PIL).

On January 25, 2022, it observed "This is no doubt a serious issue. Budget for freebies is going above the regular budget". It also reiterated that "this disturbs the level playing field". On August 3, 2022, it gave a sense that it is for Parliament, besides the ECI, to take the initiative to enact a law on curbing freebies. It also sought suggestions on the composition of a committee that could go into the issue "dispassionately" and make recommendations.

But, the above decisions



haven't been acted upon. Although, on its part, the ECI had sent out questionnaires asking parties to give 'specifics' of what they intend to promise voters, financial impact and how this will be funded, there hasn't been any follow-up. Meanwhile, the freebies continue to proliferate. In Karnataka elections in May 2023, the grand old party (GOP) promised five guarantees viz. Gruha Jyoti, Gruha Lakshmi, Sakhi programme, Yuva Nidhi, and Anna Bhagya. The trend continued during elections in Madhya Pradesh (MP), Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Telangana held in November/December 2023. While, in Rajasthan, Congress promised Rs 10,000 every year to the female head of the family under the Gruha Lakshmi Yojana, in MP, BJP increased the grant to Rs 1,250 per month under Ladli Behna Yojana; the amount to be hiked to Rs 3,000 per month. Additionally, in MP, under Ladli Lakshmi Yojana, the BJP promised girls Rs 200,000/- till they get married. In Chhattisgarh, it promised Rs 12,000 per year to married women under the 'Mahtari Vandan Scheme'.

In Telangana, the GOP beat all promising 10 grams of gold besides Rs 100,000/- cash to

women getting married. In the run-up to the general elections, even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced on December 23, 2023 supply of free foodgrain under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) to over 800 million persons, Congress gave ten guarantees in its manifesto "Nyay Patra" released in April, 2024.

Meanwhile, in Delhi, Kejriwal promised Rs 1000 per month to all women above the age of 18 years under the Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana (MMSY). For State elections later this year, parties are readying to give another round of big doles. As mentioned earlier, the BJP-led MahaYuti has already announced a bountiful package for Maharashtra. For others viz. Haryana, and Jharkhand, parties will follow suit. The SC assertion on January 25, 2022 "Budget for freebies is going above the regular budget" is confirmed by facts on ground zero. Whereas, in Delhi, these cost the exchequer around Rs 12,500 crore annually, in Punjab the impact is close to Rs 20,000 crore.

In Karnataka, at over Rs 60,000 crore, the cost of five guarantees exceeds the existing fiscal deficit. Redeeming the guarantees promised in GOP's "Nyay Patra" could cost the Central Government a mammoth around Rs 46,00,000 crore.

In Maharashtra, Rs 1,500 per month to eligible women alone would cost Rs 46,000 crore a year. When the top court says freebies are bad, why doesn't it ban them? A big deterrent is none other than the SC order of

July 2013 which says "... it can't be construed as corrupt practice..."

Within the meaning of section 123(1)(A) of the RPA, 1951, the expression 'bribery' has been defined to mean any gift, offer or promise by a candidate or his agent or by any other person with the consent of a candidate or his election agent of any gratification with the object of inducing an elector as a reward to his candidature. The irony is, that when a candidate uses his own pocket money to bribe the voter, it is treated as corrupt practice, but when the party on whose symbol he is seeking election bribes voters using 'public money', the top court doesn't treat it that way.

The Union Government's standards of financial propriety lay down inter alia that "no authority shall exercise its powers of sanctioning expenditure to pass an order which will be directly or indirectly, to its advantage; and the expenditure from public moneys should not be incurred for the benefit of a particular person or a section of the people unless a claim for the amount could be enforced in a court of law or the expenditure is in pursuance of a recognized policy or custom".

The reckless spending of the taxpayer's money on freebies is neither a recognized policy/custom nor it is sanctioned in a court of law. It is a blatant financial irregularity that amounts to bribing voters using public money solely to gain electoral advantage. The SC should change its stance to recognize this and force the Parliament to enact a law if it feels existing laws don't provide for it.

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

Agniveer: Empowering India's Armed Forces for a Stronger Future

BHARATH NANDA

The Agniveer Scheme has recently been in the news, often for the wrong reasons, as debates and controversies swirl around its implementation and impact. Critics have raised concerns about various aspects of the scheme, questioning its effectiveness and long-term benefits. However, it is crucial to understand and appreciate the numerous advantages this initiative brings to the Indian Armed Forces. This article aims to delve into how the Agniveer Scheme will significantly benefit our defense forces and contribute to the nation's security and progress.

In a strategic move to bolster the capabilities and modernization of the Indian Armed Forces,

the Government of India introduced the Agniveer Scheme. This initiative is poised to revolutionize the recruitment and training processes, ensuring that our defense forces remain agile, well-equipped, and ready to meet contemporary challenges.

The Agniveer Scheme aims to streamline the recruitment of young and dynamic individuals into the armed forces. By focusing on merit-based selection and rigorous training programs, the scheme ensures that only the most capable and motivated individuals join the ranks. One of the standout features of the Agniveer Scheme is its emphasis on modern training methodologies. Recruits will undergo comprehensive training that integrates advanced

technology, modern warfare tactics, and specialized skills. This will prepare them to handle a wide range of scenarios, from conventional warfare to counter-terrorism operations. Additionally, the scheme provides a clear career progression path for recruits, with opportunities for continuous learning and skill enhancement. This not only boosts the morale of the personnel but also ensures that the armed forces benefit from a pool of highly skilled and experienced soldiers.

By attracting younger recruits and equipping them with state-of-the-art training, the Agniveer Scheme significantly enhances the operational readiness of the armed forces. This is crucial in today's fast-paced and ever-evolving secu-

re environment, where quick response times and adaptability are key. The inclusion of advanced technology in training programs means that recruits are well-versed in the latest defense technologies and systems. This technological edge is vital for maintaining superiority in various operational theaters, whether on land, sea, or air.

With a focus on merit and continuous development, the Agniveer Scheme fosters a sense of pride and dedication among the personnel. The clear pathways for career advancement also contribute to higher morale and stronger unit cohesion, which are essential for effective teamwork and mission success. The streamlined recruitment and training processes under the Agniveer

Scheme reduce the time and resources needed to bring new recruits up to operational standards. This increased efficiency allows the armed forces to maintain a robust and ready force at all times.

The Agniveer Scheme is not just a boon for the armed forces but also a strategic asset for national security. By ensuring a steady influx of well-trained and motivated personnel, the scheme enhances the overall security apparatus of the nation. This is particularly important in light of the evolving geopolitical landscape and the diverse security challenges that India faces. Furthermore, the Agniveer Scheme aligns with the government's broader vision of a self-reliant and resilient India. By fostering a culture of excellence and

continuous improvement within the armed forces, the scheme contributes to the nation's long-term security and stability.

The Agniveer Scheme represents a significant step forward in the modernization and enhancement of the Indian Armed Forces. By prioritizing advanced training, technological integration, and career development, the scheme ensures that our defense forces remain at the forefront of national security. As India continues to navigate complex security challenges, the Agniveer Scheme stands out as a visionary initiative that will safeguard our nation's sovereignty and integrity for years to come. **Jai Hind!**

The author is a Geopolitical Analyst and IT Entrepreneur based out of Jammu.

Cultivating Gratitude

RAVI VALLURI

Almighty divinity, through the prowess of nature, and the resplendent and ever-mutating cosmos is eternally showering bounties on humans. However, the human mind is not wakeful or grateful to accept this materiality. A question of attitude is primarily and predominately our attitude which reinforces gratitude within our personalities. The word gratitude strikes its roots in the word the Latin word *gratis*, meaning to be thankful. It is always sagacious to recite a short prayer before a meal. Language is no trammel. Annadata Sukhi Bhava. By remembrance of these lines (Sanskrit), we express our gratefulness and indebtedness to the agrarian community and the cook for producing and preparing the meal respectively. Body: a divine instrument Nature

has gifted us with something incomparable and priceless, the human body. We have been provided with a supercomputer of a brain.

Prowess of the breath-Next humans are blissfully unmindful of the power of our breath. It can be likened to a cell phone which nature has provided to connect us with divinity. Breath is perhaps the most potent form of effervescence and pizzazz of our personalities. Humans are insensible to the fact that ninety per cent of toxins get expatriated from our bodies through the potency of breath. If we delve deep into the ancient practices like pranayama or the unique rhythmic technique of Sudarshan Kriya (imparted in various bouquets of courses of the Art of Living) the primacy of breath is understood by us. An inestimable nun-Aeons ago lived an exalted and celebrated Zen nun.



There were far and few like her. It was believed that few women could attain the venerable state like this pious lady.

Once she had undertaken an arduous pilgrimage and arrived at a village as the sun sank in the horizon.

In all humility, she

begged for lodgings for the night. However, the villagers slammed their doors and were unwilling to accommodate her in the village. They were opposed to the tenets of the Zen school of thought. They thought it to be exceedingly revolutionary. Thus, the clichéd and conform-

ist individuals were unwilling to accept the nun into their fold even for a night. The traditionalists banished her from the village and she was compelled to wage the battle against inclement weather out in the cold. At the stroke of midnight, she woke up abruptly, unearthed the cherry tree which fed her ravenous body with sweet fruits, talking to the full moon which lightened up the sky.

Immediately she was engulfed with waves of emotions and suffused with love and affection for all those who had exiled and expatriated her from the village. She experienced the quintessential silence of an awakened one. She was extremely grateful to the villagers who had not accommodated her, to the cherry tree that fed her, the meditative silence that encompassed her body, all of which had wily nicely contrib-

uted to her awakening, an almost celestial spectacle. "Thus, a stock individual, a savant, a sage or a nun becomes a Buddha the moment he/she accepts all that life brings with its variegated, paradoxical situations.

The one who accepts these situations with gratitude and gratefulness, without admonishing anyone or carping verily becomes an awakened one." - The Buddha. "Good men and bad men differ radically. Bad men never appreciate kindness shown them, but wise men appreciate and are grateful. Wise men try to express their appreciation and gratitude by some return of kindness, not only to their benefactor, but to everyone else," said Gautama Buddha.

(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)

What's 'cancer cachexia' syndrome, a disease behind most patients' death?

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 8

When tumours in cancer patients elevate levels of an immune system molecule called Interleukin-6 (IL-6), it can cause severe brain dysfunction, which leads to a lethal wasting disease called 'cachexia' in about 50 to 80 per cent of cancer patients, a new study said on Monday.

As per US-based Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory's (CSHL) Professor Bo Li, "It's a very severe syndrome".

"Most people with cancer die of 'cachexia' instead of cancer. And once the patient enters this stage, there's no way to go back because essentially there's no treat-



ment," he said in a study published in the journal Nature Communications.

Li and other researchers in the team found that blocking 'IL-6' from binding to neurons in a part of the brain called the area

postrema (AP) prevents cachexia in mice.

As a result, the mice live longer with healthier brain function.

"Future drugs targeting these neurons could help make cancer cachexia a

treatable disease," the researchers suggested. In healthy patients, 'IL-6' plays a vital role in natural immune response. The molecules circulate throughout the body. When they encounter a possible threat, they alert the brain to coordinate a response.

According to the researchers, cancer disrupts this process as too much IL-6 gets produced, and it begins binding to AP neurons in the brain.

"That leads to several consequences. One is animals and humans alike will stop eating. Another is to engage this response that leads to the wasting syndrome," Li said.

The team took a two-pronged approach to

keeping elevated IL-6 out of the brain in mice. Their first strategy neutralised IL-6 with custom antibodies.

The second used CRISPR to reduce the levels of IL-6 receptors in AP neurons. Both tactics produced the same results -- the mice started eating again, stopped losing weight, and lived longer, the study noted.

"The brain is so powerful in regulating the peripheral system. Simply changing a small number of neurons in the brain has a profound effect on whole-body physiology. I knew there was an interaction between tumours and brain function, but not to this extent," said Li.

New tool to predict nerve damage from breast cancer treatment

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

Swedish researchers have developed a novel tool that can predict the risk level of nerve damage in each individual from breast cancer treatment.

While once deadly cancer is becoming treatable, many women treated for breast cancer using taxanes -- a chemotherapy drug used to prevent breast cancer recurrence -- often experience side effects in the nervous system.

The new tool, by researchers at Linköping University in Sweden, could help doctors adapt treatment to avoid persistent side effects in those at the greatest risk.

Kristina Engvall from the varsity noted that

nerve damage is a very common side effect after treatment with taxanes for breast cancer. They often persist for several years.

"For those affected, it is extremely stressful, and it has a major impact on quality of life," she added. For the study, published in the journal *npg Precision Oncology*, the team surveyed side effects in 337 patients treated for breast cancer with either docetaxel or paclitaxel -- the two most common taxane drugs.

Between two and six years, more than one in four patients reported cramps in the feet as the most common side effect of nerve damage, or peripheral neuropathy. Difficulty opening a jar, numbness in feet,

tingling in feet, and difficulty climbing stairs were the other side effects.

To develop the prediction model, the researchers sequenced the patients' genes and then built models that link genetic characteristics to various side effects of the taxane treatment.

The researchers succeeded in modelling the risk of persistent numbness and tingling in feet using machine learning.

The two models separated the patients into two sets: one with a high risk of persistent side effects, and one that corresponded to the frequency of peripheral neuropathy in the normal population.

Kristina noted that the new tool can help personalise treatment.

Researchers identify potential treatment for a rare genetic disorder

AGENCIES
SAN FRANCISCO, JULY 9

A team of researchers from the US-based University of North Carolina has identified a potential treatment for a rare genetic disorder -- 'Angelman syndrome', a new study said on Monday.

Angelman syndrome is caused by mutations in the maternally inherited UBE3A gene and is characterised by poor muscle control, limited speech, epilepsy, and intellectual disabilities, explained researchers in the study published in the journal Nature Communications.

Ben Philpot, PhD, the Kenan Distinguished Professor at the UNC School of Medicine, and his lab have

identified a small molecule that could be safe, non-invasively delivered, and capable of 'turning on' the dormant paternally-inherited UBE3A gene copy brain-wide, which would lead to proper protein and cell function, amounting to a kind of gene therapy for individuals with Angelman syndrome. "This compound we identified has shown to have excellent uptake in the developing brains of animal models," said Philpot, who is a leading expert on Angelman syndrome. As per researchers, UBE3A helps regulate the levels of important proteins; missing a working copy leads to severe disruptions in brain development.

Dengue can seriously affect your brain, nervous system: Doctors

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

Although dengue is known to cause mild flu-like symptoms, the mosquito-borne viral illness has profound neurological implications that are often overlooked, said experts on Tuesday.

Amid the monsoon in India, dengue cases have spiralled in various parts of the country, including Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Delhi and Maharashtra.

According to the latest data from the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), there have been 246 dengue cases in the national capital till June 30 this year. During the same period in 2023, Delhi saw

only 122 cases, 143 cases in 2022, 36 cases in 2021, and 20 cases in 2020.

"While primarily known for causing flu-like symptoms, dengue has profound neurological implications that are often overlooked," Dr Praveen Gupta, Principal Director & Chief of Neurology at Fortis Hospital Gurugram, told IANS.

"Neurological manifestations of dengue, though less common, include encephalitis, meningitis, and myelitis. These conditions arise from the virus crossing the blood-brain barrier, leading to inflammation and infection of the brain and spinal cord," he explained.

Patients with severe dengue may experience



headaches, altered mental status, seizures, and even coma. The virus's neurotropic nature means it can directly infect neural cells, causing damage and inflammation. Furthermore, the immune response triggered by the infection can exacerbate these neurological issues, making management complex.

Dengue is a vector-

borne disease transmitted by the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito. It is endemic to more than 100 countries and affects about 400 million people globally every year.

Dengue fever escalates significantly during the monsoon season due to increased mosquito breeding. During monsoon, stagnant water and higher humidity create ideal con-

ditions for the Aedes mosquito to thrive, leading to a spike in dengue cases.

"Dengue can affect many parts of the human body, including the nervous system. When it affects the nervous system, the presentation will be like a brain fever. Patients could have altered consciousness levels and difficulty in talking, stroke, seizures or fits and could have bleeding in the brain also due to low platelet counts," Dr Srikantha Swamy, Lead Senior Consultant, Neurology, Aster RV Hospital Bengaluru, told IANS.

"As known, when platelets are low, it leads to bleeding in different parts of the body and could happen in the brain too. When platelets are low

and a patient is diagnosed as dengue positive, then it affects the nervous system, and the progress is usually bad," the doctor added.

The experts noted that the increased neurological complications of dengue during monsoon emphasise the need for early recognition and intervention. Healthcare systems must be vigilant in monitoring for signs of neurological involvement in dengue patients, particularly during peak transmission periods.

Preventative measures, such as mosquito control and public awareness campaigns, are crucial to mitigating the impact of dengue on neurological health during the monsoon season.

India emerging as a prominent manufacturing hub for assistive devices: Centre

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

India is emerging as a prominent manufacturing hub for developing assistive devices, said Rajesh Aggarwal, Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), under the Ministry of Social Justice, and Empowerment on Tuesday.

Speaking at the ASSOCHAM's 6th Conference on Empowering Persons with Disabilities, he talked about three issues affecting such people -- accessible infrastructure, employment opportunities, and education for people with disabilities.

"Do not help Persons with Disabilities (PwD) with charity purposes but include them with desig-



nated job profiles and not quotas," Rajesh said.

Citing examples of "devices such as braille displays, speech-to-text software, and adapted learning tools to facilitate learning," he called on to enhance their education.

"Provide necessary workplace accommodations such as ergonomic chairs, specialised keyboards, and software solu-

tions to support productivity," he added.

He noted that the conference aligns with the vision of 'Viksit Bharat', aspiring to "position India as a global assistive technology hub".

"Driven by competitive manufacturing costs, supporting government policies like Make in India, India can position itself as a key player in the global market," the DEPwD Sec-

retary said.

At the event, Anil Rajput, Chairperson of the ASSOCHAM National CSR Council, "appealed to the automobile manufacturers in India to bring in the latest technologies in vehicles for disabled people that are being used in different parts of the world to make a transformational impact in the lives of persons with disabilities in India".

"Mobility is a critical factor in the lives of PwDs," he added.

He also shared data from the World Health Organization (WHO) which showed that 16 per cent of the world's population, which is over a billion people, have some form of disability, and 80 per cent of these live in developing countries.

Study shows how to protect diabetics from heart & kidney disease

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

Using a combination of sodium-glucose co-transporter 2 inhibitors (SGLT2is) and glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1RAs) is likely to offer additional protection against heart and kidney disease in patients with diabetes, according to a study.

SGLT2is, also called gli-flozins, are a class of drugs that lower blood glucose by increasing its excretion in the urine, while GLP-1RAs, such as Ozempic, work by enhancing insulin release and sensitivity.

Impaired glucose control in patients with diabetes is known to cause damage to blood vessels in the heart and kidneys.



According to lead author Brendon Neuen, Clinical Associate Professor from The George Institute for Global Health, "the rapidly expanding indications for the use of GLP-1 receptor agonists, makes it important to look at their effects with SGLT2 inhibitors".

The new findings, published in *The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology*, are based on a meta-analysis of 12 large-scale, placebo-controlled trials of SGLT2is involving 73,238 patients with diabetes, 3,065 of whom were already receiving GLP-1RAs.

The results showed that SGLT2is reduced the risk of heart attack, stroke, or cardiovascular death by 11 per cent, independent of GLP-1RAs.

It also decreased hospitalisation for heart failure or cardiovascular death by 23 per cent versus placebo, even when added to GLP-1RAs.

Further, the drug SGLT2is also reduced the risk of chronic kidney disease progression by 33 per cent when added to GLP-1RAs and slowed the annual loss of kidney function by almost 60 per cent when added to GLP-1RAs.

Importantly, no new safety concerns were identified when SGLT2is and GLP-1RAs were used in combination, the team said.

Women more likely to suffer anxiety, depression post-cardiac arrest: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

Women who survive cardiac arrest are more likely to experience greater rates of anxiety and depression than men, according to a study on Tuesday.

The research group from Amsterdam University Medical Centre in the Netherlands analysed the five-year socioeconomic data of 1,250 individuals, with an average age of 53, who had survived an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in the country.

They looked at many factors to determine the five-year consequences of a cardiac arrest.

The results, published in the journal *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality & Outcomes*, showed a 50 per cent rise in antidepressant prescription in the first year among women that was not mir-



rored in men.

"This rise then tapered off to around a 20 per cent increase in prescriptions after five years," said Robin Smits, a researcher at Amsterdam Public Health.

While more research is needed "we can already say that it shows that particularly women are not adequately supported after a cardiac arrest," Smits added.

Besides anxiety and depres-

sion, the research also saw the employment trends that also affect the general population as they age through their 50s.

There was also a change in 'primary earner status' -- meaning that the member of a household who had the highest earnings frequently changed after a cardiac arrest, suggesting it was difficult for individuals to return to the labour market, Smits said.

A previous study on the survival rates of cardiac arrest showed that women lived longer than men after a cardiac arrest.

Combining the findings, "we see that the consequences of cardiac arrest differ depending on your sex. While women may be more likely to survive and live longer, they are also more likely to be affected by mental health issues after a cardiac arrest," Smits said.

Bird flu strain in US cows shows minimal air spread in ferret study

AGENCIES
LONDON, JULY 8

The bird flu strain found in cows in the United States is not easily transmitted through the air among ferrets, a new study shows, although the scientist who led the work said it had shown some ability to spread this way.

Ferrets are considered to be the best small mammal for studying influenza virus infection and transmission, and are often used to inform assessments of the public health risks of emerging viruses.

In the experiment led by researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, ferrets infected with a sample of the H5N1 bird flu strain were placed near healthy animals, but not close enough for physical contact.

None of the four healthy ferrets exposed in this way became ill and no virus was recovered from them during the study.

However, one of the ferrets produced antibodies to the virus, the researchers later found, suggesting it had been infected.

"It is good news that the virus does not have extensive transmissibility between ferrets through the air, but it is concerning that it has the ability to transmit (at all in this way)," said study author and flu virologist Yoshihiro Kawaoka.

A virus that can spread easily through the air between humans would pose a greater pandemic threat than H5N1 currently does. That risk is assessed by public health agencies worldwide as low, as there is no evidence of any human-to-human transmission.

Advances in Gen AI good, but raising problem of deepfakes: President Murmu

AGENCIES

BHUBANESWAR, JULY 9

Technological advancements like generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) are providing capabilities to human society, but creating ethical and social issues like deepfakes for humanity, President Droupadi Murmu said on Tuesday.

In her address at the 13th Graduation Ceremony of the National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER), she noted that along with rapid changes taking place in the fields of science and technology, there is always



the danger of its curse.

"New technological developments are providing capabilities to human society, but at the same

time, they are also creating new challenges for humanity," the President said, citing the examples of CRISPR-Cas9, a gene

editing tool; and generative AI, where images or videos of fake events are digitally manipulated.

"CRISPR-Cas9 has made gene editing very easy. This technology is a huge step towards solving many incurable diseases. However, problems related to ethical and social issues are also arising due to the use of this technology. Similarly, due to the advances in the field of Generative Artificial Intelligence, the problem of deepfake and many regulatory challenges are coming to the fore," she said.

Further, the President said that experiments

and research in the field of fundamental science often take a lot of time to get the results. She stated that similarly in life, "breakthroughs" are "achieved but after facing disappointment for many years".

In such situations, where "patience is tested", one should never be discouraged, she advised.

The President also called on the students to use their education and knowledge "for the betterment and upliftment of humanity" and to "discharge their social duties with full accountability".

People in K'taka burnt my photo, means we are on right track on Mhadei River: Goa CM

AGENCIES

PANAJI, JULY 9

Goa Chief Minister, Pramod Sawant, on Tuesday said some people in Karnataka's Belagavi burning his photo over the Mhadei River issue, suggests that his government is on the 'right track'.

While members of the water management authority Mhadei PRAWAH inspected the river's stretch in Karnataka on Saturday, a few individuals allegedly stopped Goa's state-run Kadamba Transport Corporation Limited (KTCL) bus in Belagavi in protest against the Goa government's move to seek the inspection.

Reacting to this inci-

dent, CM Sawant on Tuesday said, "Mhadei PRAWAH is an independent authority. I don't know why Karnataka is pained by their inspection. It is important to allow them to make fair inspections. Their report will be authentic."

Sawant added, "The incident of some people in Karnataka burning my photograph suggests that we are on the right track in fighting the case."

The Goa CM said that the team inspected the Mhadei stretch at the right 'point' and witnessed how water is diverted.

"We are on the right track. Let the PRAWAH submit the report. I am confident and have trust

that their decision will help Goa," CM Sawant added.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah recently met Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking clearance of the Kalasa Banduri Drinking Water Project.

Reacting to it, CM Sawant had said that the Centre will take Goa into confidence before taking any decision.

"I have informed the Prime Minister about this issue. Hence, let anybody demand whatever they want, Goa will be taken into confidence before any decision is made. There will be no injustice to us. Our entire team is working to protect Mhadei," CM Sawant said.

Jagannath Temple's treasury 'Ratna Bhandar' likely to open on July 14

AGENCIES

BHUBANESWAR, JULY 9

The high-level committee, set up to supervise the opening of Ratna Bhandar of the Jagannath temple in Puri, on Tuesday decided to request the state government to reopen the inner chamber of the treasury on July 14.

Speaking to media persons, Justice Biswanath Rath, chairman of the high-level community, said, "We (panel members) have unanimously decided that the state government will be requested for the reopening of the inner chamber of Ratna Bhandar on the 14th of this month. Decisions have also been made regarding the opening of the treasure trove at any cost."

Rath also said that a detailed discussion was held on the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) needed for making



an inventory of the ornaments stored there and repairing the Ratna Bhandar.

"The Odisha government and the Managing Committee will now have some time to decide. We hope that the government will provide the necessary permission to us," said Justice Rath.

He said that making the inventory of ornaments in Ratna Bhandar will be a long process.

Rath noted that the

temple management has informed the committee that a designated place (room) inside the temple premises has been finalised where the ornaments will be shifted.

"We will look into the nature of the ornaments, the character of the ornaments (whether 22 or 24 carat), nature of the gems, most of them are hundreds of years old too. The government must select a team of competent and experienced groups of

jewellers and metrologists. As there are several aspects, the state government needs to make necessary provisions so that we can make the inventory. Several teams need to be formed and confidential and experienced people need to be selected," said Rath.

He assured that the committee has sent some proposals to the Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee so that devotees do not face inconvenience in the darshan of the triad during the making of the inventory.

The temple's managing committee has also been instructed to provide the keys of Ratan Bhandar to the high-level panel on July 14.

The temple management was earlier asked to submit the keys on Tuesday but it failed owing to the Rath Yatra preparations.

Rajasthan Deputy CM Diya Kumari to present 'all-inclusive' budget on Wednesday

AGENCIES

JAIPUR, JULY 9

Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Diya Kumari will present the first full-fledged budget of the Bhajan Lal Sharma government in the state Assembly on Wednesday at 11 a.m.

Deputy CM Kumari earlier presented a Vote on Account in the Assembly on February 8. Under Article 116 of the Constitution, a Vote on Account is presented to meet essential government expenditure for a limited period until the Budget is approved. It is granted for a few months for an amount equivalent to one-sixth of the total estimation.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Jogaram Patel on Tuesday said that it will be an "all-inclusive" budget.

"We are going to bring a long-term planning about how Rajasthan can become prosperous and developed. We do not believe in just making announcements. An effort is being made to bring a budget touching all the regions and sections of the society," he said.

Meanwhile, the Congress has called a meeting of its MLAs to discuss the party's strategy during



the Assembly session. At the meeting, the party legislators will also discuss the formation of a "shadow cabinet".

Rajasthan's Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Tika Ram Jolly said that the Congress will form a "shadow cabinet", assigning young MLAs to oversee various government departments. In a statement, he said that the move aims to ensure that the government's functioning is monitored closely and any discrepancies

are promptly addressed.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Patel told reporters that if the opposition party is forming a shadow cabinet only to disrupt the proceedings of the House and stall the bills related to development works, then "we will give a strong reply to it".

Responding to a query about his recent meeting with former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Patel said that Gehlot is from Jodhpur and has been his university friend.

Shivakumar-led delegation urges Siddaramaiah to rename Ramanagara Dist as Bengaluru South

AGENCIES

BENGALURU, JULY 9

A delegation of legislators, led by Deputy Chief Minister and Karnataka Congress President, DK Shivakumar, met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at the Vidhana Soudha on Tuesday and sought the creation of a new Bengaluru South district from five taluks surrounding Bengaluru.

The delegation also urged the government to rename Ramanagara District as Bengaluru South district, with Ramanagara city as its headquarters.

This move is likely to trigger a debate as the decision to create Ramanagara District was initially made by Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, HD Kumaraswamy.

After the submission, Deputy Chief Minister Shivakumar stated, "Our objective is to extend the benefits of the reputa-



tion of the global city of Bengaluru to the people of Ramanagara, Magadi, Kanakapura, Channapatna, and Harohalli taluks, which are located close to Bengaluru city.

"Hence, we request the rechristening of Ramanagara District as Bengaluru South district and making Ramanagara city the head-

quarters of the new district," he said.

Shivakumar explained that earlier, Doddaballapura, Nelamangala, Devanahalli, Hosakote, Channapatna, Ramanagara, Anekal, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru East, Hosakote, Ramanagara, Magadi, Kanakapura, and Channapatna taluks were part of Bengaluru District.

In 1986, Bengaluru Rural District was carved out, including Doddaballapura, Nelamangala, Devanahalli, Hosakote, Channapatna, Ramanagara, Magadi, and Kanakapura taluks.

In 2007, making Doddaballapura the headquarters, Hosakote, Nelamangala, Devanahalli, and Doddab-

ballapura taluks were included to form Bengaluru Rural District.

Similarly, in 2007, Ramanagara District was announced, including Kanakapura, Channapatna, and Ramanagara taluks.

"We all belong to the Bengaluru Urban district," Shivakumar noted (he hails from Kanakapura). "For administrative purposes, Bengaluru Rural, Bengaluru Urban, and Ramanagara districts were carved out. Ramanagara will remain the district headquarters. Today, the whole world is looking at Bengaluru, and we want to benefit from it," Shivakumar maintained.

"On one side, after Bengaluru, the state borders Andhra Pradesh. On the other side is Tamil Nadu. Hence, we are trying to save our identity and direct growth towards this region," he stated.

Bengal bypolls: 34 candidates contest four Assembly seats

AGENCIES

KOLKATA, JULY 9

The fate of 34 candidates will be sealed on Wednesday in the bypolls to four Assembly constituencies in West Bengal.

The four Assembly constituencies are Bagda in North 24 Parganas district, Ranaghat-Dakshin in Nadia, Raiganj in North Dinajpur and Maniktala in Kolkata.

Maniktala is going for bypolls because of the demise of the erstwhile Trinamool Congress legislator, Sadhan Pande.

The bypolls in Raiganj, Bagda and Ranaghat-Dakshin have been necessitated by the resignation of the erstwhile BJP legislators from there namely Krishna Kalyani, Biswajit Das and Mukut Mani Adhikari, who contested unsuccessfully as Trinamool Congress candidates from three Parlia-

mentary constituencies in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls.

While Kalyani and Adhikari had been nominated as candidates by Trinamool Congress in the bypolls from the respective Assembly constituencies of Raiganj and Ranaghat-Dakshin, Das had not been that fortunate. At Maniktala, the ruling party has fielded Sadhan Pande's widow Supti Pande.

It will be a three-cornered contest in Raiganj, Ranaghat-Dakshin and Maniktala among the Trinamool Congress, BJP and Congress-Left Front alliance. However, in Bagda there will be a four-cornered fight as both Congress and All India Forward Bloc have fielded candidates besides Trinamool Congress and BJP.

As per the past poll statistics in the 2021

West Bengal Assembly elections as well as the Assembly-wise results in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls, the BJP is comfortably ahead in Raiganj, Ranaghat-Dakshin and Bagda. In the case of Maniktala Trinamool Congress is marginally ahead.

Bypolls will be conducted on Wednesday under tight security cover, with the Election Commission of India (ECI) having decided to deploy as many as 55 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) personnel.

The maximum deployment will be at Bagda at 16 companies followed by Ranaghat-Dakshin at 15. The Commission has decided to deploy 12 companies of CAPF each for Raiganj and Maniktala. There will be 100 per cent webcasting for the bypolls.

Hathras stampede: Yogi govt suspends six officials on SIT recommendations

AGENCIES

LUCKNOW, JULY 9

The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has ordered the suspension of six officials, including the Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Circle Officer (CO) and Tehsildar, in the Hathras stampede incident in which 121 persons were killed.

The action comes on

the recommendations of the SIT report submitted earlier to the state government.

The government has suspended the SDM of Sikandrarao, Circle Officer of Sikandrarao, Station Officer of Sikandrarao, Tehsildar of Sikandrarao, Chowki Incharge of Kachora and Chowki Incharge of Pora.

The SIT comprising

ADG Zone Agra and the Divisional Commissioner of Aligarh, established immediately after the accident during the Satsang on July 2 in Sikandrarao, inspected the incident site on July 2, 3 and 5.

During the investigation, statements were collected from a total of 125 individuals, including administrative and

police officials, the general public, and eyewitnesses. Additionally, copies of news articles related to the incident, on-site videography, photographs, and video clippings were reviewed.

In the preliminary investigation, the SIT held the event organisers primarily responsible for the accident based on eyewitness accounts and other

evidence.

Based on the investigation and actions taken so far, the investigation committee has not ruled out the possibility of a major conspiracy behind the accident and has emphasised the need for a thorough investigation.

The investigation committee has also found the programme organiser

and tehsil-level police and administration guilty. The local SDM, CO, Tehsildar, Inspector and Chowki Incharge have been held responsible for negligence in performing their duties.

The SDM of Sikandrarao granted permission for the event without inspecting the venue and did not inform senior officials.

The said officials did not

take the programme seriously, and senior officials were also not informed. The SIT has recommended action against these officials.

The organisers obtained permission for the event by concealing facts. The conditions applicable for the permission were not followed.

They did not make adequate and smooth arrange-

ments despite inviting an unexpected crowd, nor did they comply with the conditions set by the local administration for the programme.

People associated with the organising committee have been found guilty of spreading chaos. Individuals added by the committee without proper police verification contributed to the disorder.

Six dead as heatstroke cases surge in Japan

AGENCIES
TOKYO, JULY 9

Six people have died from heatstroke over the weekend in Tokyo, the local medical authority reported on Tuesday, as the country has been facing an unprecedented heatwave amid summer humidity.

According to the Tokyo Medical Examiner's Office, three deaths were reported on Saturday and another three on Monday.

Tokyo saw its highest temperatures of the year over the weekend, reports Xinhua news agency.

Temperatures in the Japanese capital soared to 34.2 degrees Celsius and hit a scorching 36 degrees Celsius on the two days, respectively, the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) reported.

The recent heatwave has led to a significant increase in heatstroke cases across Japan. Some 9,105 people were transported to emergency rooms nationwide due to heatstroke last week, according to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency under the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

It marks a substantial rise of about 6,800 cases compared to the previous week, which saw 2,276 cases, the data showed.

The number of heatstroke patients this year nearly doubled that of the same period last year, which recorded 4,026 cases. Among the recent cases, 19 people have died, and 210 are in serious condition.

The authorities advised the public to take preventive measures for heatstroke and recommended staying hydrated and using air conditioning appropriately to cope with the extreme heat.

Death toll rise to 20 in Indonesian gold mine landslide

AGENCIES
JAKARTA, JULY 9

The death toll from landslides that struck a gold mine in the Indonesian regency of Bone Bolango in the Gorontalo province climbed to 20 as of Tuesday, according to the local search and rescue agency.

Nine bodies were reportedly evacuated on Tuesday morning and would go through further identification, reports Xinhua news agency.

The natural disaster struck the East Sawawa district in Bone Bolango regency amid heavy downpours at midnight on Saturday, with 46 people surviving the incident, the agency reported.

Additionally, another 51 people still reported missing.

Search and rescue operations are underway.

Man arrested after domestic violence-related stabbing in Sydney

AGENCIES
SYDNEY, JULY 9

Australian Police have confirmed that a man has been arrested after a woman was fatally stabbed in west Sydney, the police said.

At about 1:40 p.m. local time, emergency services were called to a home at Great Western Highway in Kingswood, following reports of a stabbing.

A 21-year-old woman was found sustaining two stab wounds to her chest, Xinhua news agency reported.

Paramedics treated the injured woman, but she was later declared deceased at the scene.

Authorities are working to formally confirm the identity of the victim.

After the stabbing occurred, officers from the New South Wales Police Force were informed that a 22-year-old man was spotted fleeing the incident site.

They established a crime scene and began inquiries into the circumstances surrounding the stabbing.

At around 7:10 p.m. local time, officers arrested the runaway man on Derby Street in Penrith.

"He has been taken to Penrith police station and is assisting with inquiries," the police said in their latest update.

Before the man was taken into custody, Detective Superintendent Trent King from Nepean Police Area Command told local media that he was wanted in connection with the woman's death.

The man, believed to have been in a domestic relationship with the victim, is allegedly "the perpetrator of this incident and had caused those injuries," said King.

With more than 10,000 people residing in the suburb, Kingswood is located 50 km west of Sydney's central business district.

46 missing following landslides, flash floods in Indonesia

AGENCIES
JAKARTA, JULY 9

A senior rescuer has said that 46 people went missing following landslides and flash floods at a gold mine in Indonesia's Gorontalo province.

Heriyanto, head of the provincial search and rescue office, reported on Monday an increase in the number of residents declaring their family members missing following the natural disaster in Bone Bolango regency, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Residents continue to report their missing family members. So far, 46 people have been declared missing," Heriyanto told Xinhua news agency.

He said that the victims included miners and villagers who provided supplies to the miners, all of whom resided in camps within the mining zones.

"The incident occurred when they were sleeping or taking a rest at the camps," he added.

Covid or conflict, India-Russia friendship remain unscathed: PM Modi tells Putin

AGENCIES
MOSCOW, JULY 9

Emphasising that the last five years have been quite challenging for the world and the entire humankind considering the Covid pandemic and the uncertain geopolitical situation due to various conflicts thereafter, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday hailed India-Russia ties, which he asserted, have remained unaffected even during such turmoil.

"Food to fuel and fertiliser, the world underwent a huge crisis. However, thanks to the India-Russia friendship, I did not let the farmers of my country face any kind of uncertainty. We remain committed to the interest of farmers and hope to increase partner-



ship with Russia to help them further," said PM Modi while making his opening remarks during the bilateral meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Prime Minister Modi highlighted that he has remained in touch with the Russian President for

nearly 25 years now and met him on 17 occasions in the last 10 years.

"The fact that this is my sixth visit to Russia shows how the partnership between the two countries has deepened over the years," he said.

Raising the issue of terrorism, PM Modi men-

tioned the recent terrorist attacks in Dagestan and Moscow's Crocus City Hall.

"India has been facing the issue of terrorism for the last 40-50 years. We know how horrible it can really be. So, when the terror attacks took place in Moscow and in Dagestan, I could well imagine

the pain it would have caused. India strongly condemns all kinds of terrorism," Prime Minister Modi mentioned on the second and final day of his trip to Moscow.

The Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia has advanced enormously during PM Modi's term over the past 10 years, including in the areas of energy, security, trade, investment, health, education, culture, tourism and people-to-people exchanges. A lot has changed in the region since then, especially after the start of the Russia-Ukraine war in 2022. However, the India-Russia Special and Privileged Partnership has remained resilient in the wake of multiple geo-

political challenges that the world has been facing.

New Delhi has maintained a steady relationship with Moscow even as PM Modi repeatedly asserted that no solution can ever arrive at the cost of human lives and that escalation of hostilities and violence is in no one's interest. "Be it war, conflicts or terror attacks, anyone who believes in humanity is moved and pained when lives are lost. More so when innocent children are murdered, to see them dying is heart-wrenching and unimaginable. I held a detailed discussion on this with you over this," said the Prime Minister without specifically mentioning Monday's bombing of a children's hospital in Ukraine's capital.

At Kremlin, PM Modi tells Putin that peace is necessary for future generations

AGENCIES
MOSCOW, JULY 9

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday that India, having always stood on the side of peace, is ready to assist Russia in any possible way to establish peace in the region.

"Yesterday, at your residence, we had a wonderful opportunity to spend four or five hours.

We discussed all the issues in a homely atmosphere, and I am very glad that on the topic of Ukraine, we exchanged opinions in an open manner, respected each other's opinions, and talked calmly," said PM Modi while making his opening remarks during the bilateral with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Grand Kremlin Palace.

While highlighting India-Russia friendship, his personal camaraderie with the Russian leader, his several visits to Russia

and 22 summits between the two countries over the past 25 years, he said that the whole world is currently watching with great interest his ongoing visit to Moscow.

"As your friend, I always tell you that peace is necessary for the bright future of our future generations. That is why we believe that war is not a solution. There can be no solution through war. Bombs, missiles and rifles cannot ensure peace, that is why we emphasise dialogue, and dialogue is necessary," PM Modi remarked.

He added that, during his informal talks with Putin at the latter's residence in Novo-Ogaryovo on Monday, some "very interesting ideas and completely new views" have emerged.

"I am very glad that yesterday we had such an informal conversation, and you expressed your opinion very openly, without any colouring... Let's

take war, any conflict or terrorist acts: any person who believes in humanity feels pain when people die, and especially when innocent children die. When we feel such pain, the heart simply explodes, and I had the opportunity to talk about these issues with you yesterday," Prime Minister Modi mentioned.

PM Modi reiterated New Delhi's stance that no solution can ever be arrived at the cost of human lives and that escalation of hostilities and violence is in no one's interest.

"Yesterday we also agreed to establish peace as soon as possible and we are ready to assist in any way in this regard. I have heard your position, your positive views and thoughts. And I can assure you that India has always been on the side of peace. When I listened to you, I felt optimistic and hopes for the future arose. So I want to thank you for that," he said.

'National Security': Pakistan's ISI gets nod to trace and intercept calls, messages

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD, JULY 9

Pakistan's spy agency ISI has been formally granted permission by the government to intercept and trace calls and messages in the "interest of national security", media reports said on Tuesday.

The Shehbaz Sharif cabinet has approved the relevant circular allowing a designated ISI officer to carry out the tracing of calls under the Telecommunication (Re-organisation) Act's Section 54, which allows the federal government to authorise any person or persons to intercept calls and messages or to trace calls through any telecommunication system in the interest of national security, Geo News reported.

However, the officer nominated by the agency must be at least of grade 18, or deputy director level in the case of the ISI. "The federal govern-

ment in the interest of national security and in the apprehension of any offence is pleased to authorise the officers (...) to be nominated from time to time by ISI to intercept calls and messages or to trace calls through any communication system," as per the notification issued by the Ministry of Information.

The move came months after the Islamabad High Court was informed in December during the hearing of a case related to audio leaks that the government had not permitted any intelligence agency to tap audio conversations. The latest step is seen as part of the Shehbaz Sharif government's steps towards stricter social media regulations, based on "national security concerns" and the continued ban on social media platform X.

In May, the government approved a draft to amend the Prevention

of Electronic Crimes Act, (PECA), 2016, seeking a Digital Rights Protection Authority, and is also installing a national firewall on different internet service providers (ISPs) to rein in social media with filters capable of blocking unwanted content from reaching a wider audience, as per media reports.

The latest firewall's prime focus is said to identify the locations from where the material deemed suspect is originating and the subsequent blockade or diminished coverage of those accounts.

There will be a keyword filtering system to detect content on social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and X that the government considers undesirable or prejudicial to national security etc.

Preparations are also in progress to prevent the "misuse" of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs).

Russia to release Indians fighting in Ukraine war after PM Modi raises matter with Putin: Sources

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI/MOSCOW, JULY 9

Russia has decided to release and facilitate the return of all Indians fighting for the Russian army in Ukraine, a breakthrough achieved after Prime Minister Narendra Modi raised the issue with President Vladimir Putin during his Moscow visit, said sources on Tuesday.

The development came after Prime Minister Modi, who is in Moscow for a two-day visit, raised the matter at a private dinner hosted by Putin on Monday evening, sources added.

Nearly two dozen Indians are believed to have been forced into fighting the war against Ukraine after being tricked by agents into going to the country on the pretext of getting high-paying jobs.

In March, the Indian government said they had "strongly" taken up the matter with Russian authorities for their early discharge.

"Strong action has been initiated against agents and unscrupulous elements who recruited them on false pretexts and promises," they said.

According to reports, four Indians have been killed in the war, while 10 have returned to the country. About 35-40 Indians are still believed to be stuck in Russia.

The plight of Indians fighting for Russia in the Ukraine war is a key concern for New Delhi.

In recent months, reports have surfaced about Indians who have fallen prey to job fraud and were tricked and forced by scammers to fight for the Russian army, which



allows recruits from other countries. One such group had even posted a video on social media narrating their ordeal, asking the government to intervene.

India's Foreign Ministry has earlier said that it is pressing hard to bring back the recruits tricked by agents.

India's Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar has said the issue is a "very deep concern" for India, and has been engaging with Russia for the past few months to make headway.

Two Indians, Ashvinbhai Manguniya and Mohammad Asfan (both from Gujarat), were reported killed in the Ukraine war earlier this year. Two others were reported killed in June.

India has maintained that the recruitment of Indian nationals into the Russian army in a conflict situation is not in consonance with the India-Russia diplomatic partnership, and has asked for the early release and return of all such Indian

nationals.

India has also demanded a halt to such recruitments in the future. In such a backdrop, the breakthrough during PM Modi's visit would be a major relief for the families of the recruits still stuck in Russia.

Prime Minister Modi arrived in Moscow on Monday evening, which marks his first visit to the country since it launched a war against Ukraine.

Russia's First Deputy PM Denis Manturov received PM Modi at the airport.

The Prime Minister will hold bilateral talks with Putin on Tuesday and also attend the 22nd India-Russia summit in Moscow.

Prime Minister Modi has been treading a fine line between maintaining a longstanding relationship with Moscow and courting closer Western security ties.

The visit is also PM Modi's first since he returned to power for a third term.

UN says 90 pc of Gazans displaced at least once as more evacuations ordered

AGENCIES
UNITED NATIONS, JULY 9

UN humanitarian workers have said 90 per cent of Gazans were displaced, some multiple times, as more evacuations were ordered and poor or no security hampers aid and fuel deliveries.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said on Monday that the Israeli military instructed on Sunday and Monday tens of thousands of people living in 19 blocs of apartments in Gaza City to evacuate immediately.

On Sunday, some residents were ordered to evacuate to western Gaza City, while the order on Monday included areas that people had fled to a day earlier and instructed them to evacuate to shelters in Deir al Balah, Xinhua news agency reported.

"The two directly affected areas encompass 13 health facilities that were recently functional, including two hospitals, two primary healthcare centres and nine medical points," OCHA said, adding that 13 out of 36 hospitals in the Gaza Strip are only partially functional.

The office said that with nine out of every 10 people estimated to be displaced in Gaza, new waves of displacement are mainly affecting people who have already been displaced multiple times, only to find themselves forced to flee again under shelling. They were forced to reset their lives repeatedly without any of their belongings or any prospect of finding safety or reliable access to essential services.

"People, especially children, spend long hours queuing to collect water each day," OCHA said.

"Access to emergency health care is also a challenge, particularly given limited communications coverage to contact emergency services, high transportation costs to reach hospitals (\$26 roundtrip) and the long walking distance of at least 3 km to reach the nearest medical point."

In northern Gaza, the aid partners especially highlighted the lack of safe shelters for up to 80,000 IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) who were forced to hastily flee from Shuja'iyyeh and other parts of eastern Gaza City following evacuation orders in late June.

Stock markets hit fresh all-time high, auto stocks gain after UP gov't's road tax waiver

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, JULY 9

The Indian benchmark indices hit a fresh all-time high on Tuesday led by auto, pharma and FMCG stocks, with Maruti Suzuki India becoming the top gainer after the Uttar Pradesh government's announcement of registration tax waiver on strong hybrid cars.



Company and Sun Pharma on Sensex, while Bajaj Finance, Reliance Industries, Tech Mahindra, HCL Technologies and JSW Steel.

At the closing bell, Sensex reached 80,351, up 391 points, while Nifty closed at 24,433, up 112 points. Nifty Bank gained 143 points to close at 52,568.

The BSE midcap and smallcap indices also ended on a positive note. According to market analysts, both domestic and global factors continue to drive the market momentum.

"Currently, consumption sectors like FMCG

and auto are leading the gains, buoyed by progress in the monsoon and kharif sowing. Investors are eagerly awaiting the first-quarter earnings results, which will guide market direction," they noted.

The rupee ended flat at 83.49 per dollar on Tuesday against Monday's close of 83.50.

Jateen Trivedi of LKP Securities said that the overall focus now shifts to the upcoming budget in India.

"The rupee will take cues from the budget and how the economic outlook will be shaped according to the spending figures presented," he said.

65 pc transactions now digital in small-town India, Gen X leads the charge

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

About 65 per cent of transactions by consumers in small-town India are now digital, while in larger cities this ratio was around 75 per cent, a new report showed on Tuesday.

According to the report by Kearney India and Amazon Pay India, the digital payment revolution is being spearheaded by India's millennials (aged 25-43 years) and Gen X (aged 44-59 years). Boomers (60 years and above) have higher card and wallet usage than the younger cohorts.

"From the widespread

adoption of digital payments in both online and offline transactions to the rise of emerging payment methods like BNPL (buy now, pay later), this report provides a detailed look at how India is transforming its payment landscape," said Shashwat Sharma, Partner, Financial Services Lead, Kearney India.

The report is based on a survey spanning 120 cities, over 6,000 consumers and 1,000 merchants.

According to the report, UPI, digital wallets, and cards gain widespread traction as cash transactions dwindle, with digital modes

making up 69 per cent of merchant transactions.

"India's digital payment revolution is firing on all cylinders, propelled by consumers and merchants alike. With digital transactions penetrating even street vendors and smaller towns, we are at an inflection point," said Vikas Bansal, CEO, Amazon Pay India.

Moreover, the report mentioned that emerging modes like BNPL gained visibility as convenience, and rewards propelled India's digital payment transformation, with 87 per cent awareness of the credit-based offering among respondents.

Impressionism meets realme 13 Pro Series 5G, redefines smartphone aesthetics using Monet-inspired design

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

In the digital age, our smartphones have become more than just communication devices -- they're our personal assistants, entertainment hubs, and windows to the world. As these pocket-sized marvels continue to evolve, a curious phenomenon has emerged: the fusion of cutting-edge technology with the timeless allure of fashion and personal expression.

Gone are the days when a phone's worth was measured solely by its processing power or camera

quality. Today's consumers are increasingly drawn to devices that not only perform exceptionally but also serve as extensions of their personal style. This shift has ushered in a new era of smartphone design, where aesthetics and user experience are given equal weight to technical specifications.

realme recognises that smartphone design is as crucial as functionality. To enhance their design expertise, they established the realme Design Studio, focusing on innovative materials, unique forms, and emerging technologies. This com-

mitment to design excellence shines in their flagship Number series, which offers advanced features at affordable prices.

With each new model, realme boldly explores diverse design concepts, pushing boundaries to deliver a fresh, immersive visual experience.

The latest embodiment of this philosophy is seen in the upcoming realme 13 Pro Series 5G - Ultra Clear Camera with AI. These models represent a groundbreaking collaboration between realme and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), a global leader in art curation and



exhibition.

The MFA's collection, spanning six continents and eight millennia of creative achievement, from ancient Egypt to contemporary interactive art, provides a rich tapestry of inspiration.

French painter Claude Monet's dedication to capturing the ephemeral nature of light and shadow is legendary -- he created 25 paintings of "Grainstacks" and an astounding 250 paintings of "Water Lilies" throughout his life-

time. His goal was to capture the same scenes at different times of the day and across various seasons, preserving fleeting moments in timeless art.

Inspired by Monet's artistic vision, realme selected two of the most classic masterpieces from these series.

The design team has ingeniously incorporated the fleeting light and shadow captured by Monet into the smartphone's design, effectively transforming each device into a handheld work of art.

This approach not only pays homage to Monet's

impressionist techniques but also brings a piece of timeless artistry into the everyday lives of users.

Both the realme 13 Pro 5G and realme 13 Pro+ 5G feature a Monet-inspired aesthetic, available in Monet Gold and Monet Purple for the glass back panel, and Emerald Green for the vegan leather option.

These colour choices evoke the golden haystacks under sunlight and the purple water lilies in Monet's paintings, creating a sense of vitality and connection to nature.

By reimagining Impressionism through the lens

of modern technology, realme has created smartphones that transcend mere functionality.

The realme 13 Pro 5G and realme 13 Pro+ 5G are not just communication tools, but portable works of art that users can form a personal connection with.

This approach sets realme apart in an increasingly homogeneous market, redefining expectations for accessible smartphones and proving that cutting-edge aesthetics can be accessible to all users. realme 13 Pro Series 5G will be available in the market soon.

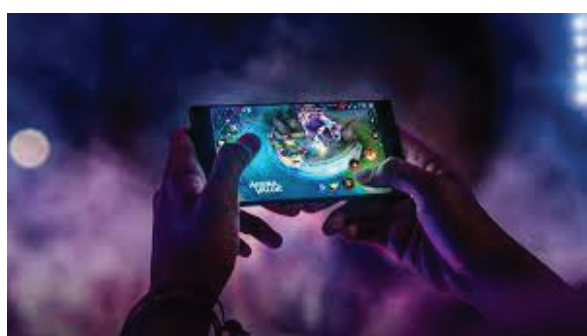
'Player safety, responsible practices must as India's gaming industry sees growth'

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

As India's gaming industry experiences exponential growth, it has now become imperative to prioritise player safety and responsible gaming practices, a new report said on Tuesday.

The report released by Grant Thornton Bharat and the E-Gaming Federation (EGF) advocated for a comprehensive Code of Conduct (CoC) in the gaming industry, setting clear standards for ethical behaviour to ensure accountability and transparency.

According to industry estimates, the number of online gamers in the country has reached a whop-



ping 442 million, surpassing China, which makes it essential to prioritise adherence to a strong CoC and adopt self-regulation to ensure the sustainable growth of this industry, the report mentioned.

"The report highlights the importance of responsible play and consumer protection in this rapidly-changing landscape. It

advocates for fair play, transparency, and the safeguarding of mental well-being," said Shalabh Saxena, Partner at Grant Thornton Bharat.

"By voluntarily undergoing rigorous audits and embracing self-regulation, stakeholders demonstrate their commitment to integrity and trust within the gaming community,"

he added.

As per the report, the CoC addresses key risks such as cyber threats, regulatory uncertainties, and financial risks, offering best practices to mitigate these challenges and ensure the industry's sustainability and growth.

"By emphasising robust player protection mechanisms, the report highlighted proactive measures and educational initiatives, calling for collaboration among industry players, regulators, and policymakers to create a safer, more responsible gaming environment.

"We believe our self-regulatory standard in the form of a CoC will help navigate the complexities of the online gaming

industry and strike a balance between innovation, consumer protection, and the nation's interests," said Anuraag Saxena, CEO of EGF. Moreover, the report called for the modernisation of laws to address sectoral threats such as microtransactions and loot boxes.

The way forward involves embracing modern regulatory frameworks, enhancing player protection measures, and promoting ethical standards, the report said.

By adopting these solutions, India can ensure the long-term growth and integrity of its gaming industry, positioning itself as a global leader in ethical gaming practices, it added.

Wealth management platform Dezerv raises \$32 mn led by Premji Invest

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

Wealth management platform Dezerv on Tuesday announced that it has raised \$32 million in a funding round led by Premji Invest.

This round also saw participation from existing investors Matrix Partners India (aka Z47), Accel and Elevation Capital.

"India's wealth creators are set to add nearly \$1.2 trillion over the next five years, with their wealth growing at a 14 per cent CAGR," Sandeep Jethwani, Co-Founder, Dezerv, said in a statement.

"Building trust and

delivering top-tier service requires significant capital for client asset security, regulatory compliance, and good governance. We are grateful for the substantial support from Premji Invest and our existing partners," he added.

The company said that it plans to invest fresh capital into crafting new investment strategies, boosting its technology platform to deliver superior client experience, and hiring investment specialists for its next growth phase.

Saravanan Nattanmai, Partner, Premji Invest said that Dezerv's vision to "revolutionise wealth

management for India's emerging wealth creators aligns perfectly with our investment ethos."

"They have built a strong product roadmap across various investment solutions, positioning themselves as the most preferred, tech-led, open-architecture wealth management platform," he added. In addition, Vikram Vaidyanathan, MD, Matrix Partners India said that Dezerv's digital-first proposition, coupled with a portfolio approach that is the right mix of risk-reward-tax, has catapulted them to be a market leader in a short span of time.

India to see 13-14 pc growth in warehousing logistics supply in FY25: Report

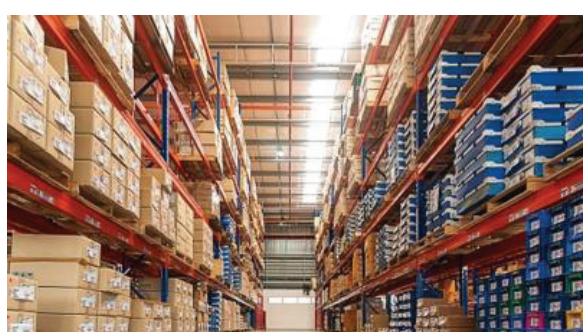
AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

As the government focusses on making India a global manufacturing hub, industrial and warehouse logistics supply is projected to grow by 13-14 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in FY25 to nearly 424 million square feet (sq ft), a report showed on Tuesday.

The growth in warehousing space in India's eight major cities is buoyed by strong demand from the e-commerce, manufacturing and logistics sectors. Grade A warehouses will take up a bigger share of the market, according to the ICRA report.

Moreover, the absorption is estimated to increase to 47 million sq ft in FY25 (90 per cent of incremental supply addition) from 37 million sq ft in FY24, supported by strong consumption-led demand, the report noted.

"Over the last five years, the Grade A warehouse stock in the eight primary markets has grown at



a healthy CAGR of 21 per cent to 183 million sq ft in FY24 and is estimated to increase further by 19-20 per cent YoY in FY25.

"Over 50-55 per cent of the current Grade A stock in India is backed by global operators/investors such as CPPIB, GLP, Blackstone, ESR, Allianz, GIC, and the CDC Group, etc," said Tushar Bharambe, AVP and sector head - Corporate Ratings, ICRA.

The long-term growth prospects for the Grade A warehouses are supported by the growing preference of the tenants for modern, efficient, and ESG-compliant warehouses, he added.

The vacancy in the eight

primary markets stood at 10 per cent in FY24 and is likely to remain at a similar level in FY25.

The sector continues to witness a sustained demand from the third-party logistics (3PL) and manufacturing sectors, which together accounted for 65 per cent of the total leased area (as of March 2024) while the share of e-commerce stood at 15 per cent.

Among the eight primary markets, around 42 per cent of the warehousing stock was contributed by Mumbai and Delhi-NCR, while the overall occupancy remained healthy at around 90 per cent.

EV adoption could save \$10 bn, create millions of jobs by 2030: Amitabh Kant

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

Highlighting the need to create a new overarching strategy for road transport that can boost transition to Electric Vehicles (EV), G20 Sherpa and former NITI Aayog CEO, Amitabh Kant on Tuesday said that EV adoption could save \$10 billion and create millions of jobs by 2030.

"There is a need to develop a new overarching strategy for road transport that can accelerate the EV transition by 2030," Kant wrote in a post on X.

He also mentioned that this transition should focus on fully electrifying India's 50 most polluted cities by 2030.

"This could save \$10 billion by 2030 and generate millions of jobs, positioning India as a global EV manufacturing leader," the G20 Sherpa mentioned.

Kant also shared an article written by him along with the post, in which he

mentioned that the first step should be to electrify two-wheelers, three-wheelers, light commercial vehicles, and buses, as they are key contributors to tailpipe emissions.

"These cities alone account for over 40 per cent of the nation's vehicle registrations. If these cities achieve 100 per cent electrification in new vehicle sales by 2030, India will be well on its way to sharply reducing its oil needs," he said.

As per the World Air Quality Report 2023, India ranked among the top three countries with the highest PM2.5 levels and is home to 42 cities among the top 50 with the worst air quality.

As mentioned by Kant, transportation emissions play a significant role, accounting for 14 per cent of energy-related CO2 emissions in India and heavily contributing to PM2.5, PM10, and NOx emissions.

Xiaomi aims to source 55 pc phone components in India, showcases 1st luxury EV

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, JULY 9

Smartphone company Xiaomi on Tuesday said it aims to source at least 55 per cent of its components locally in India, which aligns with the government's 'Make in India' initiative -- as the company completed 10 years in the country.

According to Muralikrishnan B, president at Xiaomi India, around 35 per cent of the non-semiconductor bill of materials (BoM) for smartphones is currently being locally sourced.

He said that over the next two years, the company aims to source 55 per cent of the non-semiconductor BoM or components locally.

Number of new jobs more than doubles to 46.6 million in 2023-24: RBI data

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

As many as 46.6 million new jobs were created in the Indian economy during 2023-24, according to the latest data released by the Reserve Bank of India. The total number of people employed in the country rose from 596.7 million in 2022-23 to 643.3 million in the financial year ended on March 31, 2024. While an average of 20 million jobs was created between 2017-18 and 2021-22, the number more than doubled during 2023-24, the data shows.

The RBI's KLEMS database covers five key inputs of production -- Capital (K), Labour (L), Energy (E), Materials (M), and Services (S). The database is created for 27 industries aggregated to form six sectors that cover the entire economy.

The RBI has also for the first time made a provisional estimate of

productivity for the total economy in FY24 based on the available information.

This reflects the quality of labour in the economy based on the education level of the workers. The data shows an increase in employment across education levels and age groups. The unemployment ratio has gone down to 1.4 per cent in FY24 from 2.2 per cent in FY18.

The services sector, excluding construction, is now absorbing most of the workforce that is moving out of agriculture. This is in sharp contrast to the 2000-2011 period when the construction sector was providing the bulk of jobs to the workforce.

The data also shows that high-skilled activities, such as financial and business services, education and health care, are seeing an increase in the share of educated workers.

3rd T20I: Series tied 1-1, India look to gain upper hand against Zimbabwe

AGENCIES
HARARE (ZIMBABWE), JULY 9

Having recovered from an embarrassing defeat to hosts Zimbabwe in the first T20I of the series with a remarkable 100-run victory in the second match, Shubman Gill's Indian team will hope to take an upper hand by winning the third game of the five-match series at the Harare Sports Club here on Wednesday.

In a remarkable turnaround, India rode on an outstanding maiden international century from young gun Abhishek Sharma in the second T20I. After this victory, the Indian cricket team is eager to maintain their



winning momentum as they gear up for the crucial third T20I.

In the opening game of this series, India suffered a setback where they were

restricted to a modest 102 runs while chasing a 116-run target. Despite the brave effort from captain Shubman Gill to steer the innings, the team fell

short, handing Zimbabwe an unexpected advantage early in the five-match series.

The Men in Blue bounced back emphatically in the second T20I to level the series at 1-1. Debutant Abhishek Sharma's outstanding century in just 47 deliveries set the tone, complemented by Ruturaj Gaikwad's 77 and Rinku Singh's 48-run knocks, helped the team notch a total of 234 runs, which Zimbabwe failed to overcome.

The hosts, led by skipper Sikandar Raza, showcased a bowling masterclass in the series opener, with Raza's three-wicket haul playing a crucial role in restricting India to a low

score.

However, their triumph was short-lived as the visitors' resurgence in the second encounter saw them dominate the game, posting a formidable total that Zimbabwe could not chase down.

As both teams brace themselves for the pivotal third T20I, the stakes are high as victory will give the team the edge going into the last two matches of the five-match series.

Fans can watch the match on Wednesday from 4:00 PM IST onwards LIVE on Sony Sports Ten 5 SD & HD, Sony Sports Ten 3 SD & HD (Hindi) & Sony Sports Ten 4 SD & HD (Tamil & Telugu). Livestream on Sony LIV in India.

Paris Olympics: Antim Panghal wants to live up to country's expectations

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

Antim Panghal will bring her prodigious wrestling talent to Paris 2024 as the 19-year-old is expected to be a medal contender in the 53 kg weight category in the upcoming Olympic Games. Panghal's journey began at the young age of 10 years, inspired by her elder sister, a kabaddi player, who encouraged her to pursue wrestling.

In an exclusive feature on JioCinema's 'The Dreamers,' she opened up on her wrestling journey which saw her become the first Indian woman to win gold at the World Junior Championships.

Reflecting on her early days, she said, "Before stepping onto the mat, I feel jitters, but once I am

on the mat, the fear and nerves take a back seat. The spirit is all about fighting and winning."

The two-time Junior World Champion's journey met a turning point at the 2022 Commonwealth Games trials, where a lost bout sparked her to put in extra effort and enter the best stretch of her young career. "The loss at the trial for the 2022 Commonwealth Games to Vinesh Phogat was tough, it motivated me to work harder."

"I went on to win a gold at the Junior World Championships, becoming the first Indian woman to do so, and later won a silver medal at the 2023 Asian Championships. My life changed after the 2022 Commonwealth Games," she shared.

Panghal also discussed the importance of resilience and learning from setbacks. "If I lose a match, I don't dwell on it. I motivate myself to do better and move on. I believe that the Almighty has a better plan for me, and there are lessons to be learned from my losses. The final seconds of the semifinal bout at the World Championships taught me the importance of focus and attentiveness."

Looking ahead to Paris 2024, Panghal aspires to follow in the footsteps of Sakshi Malik, India's only female Olympic wrestling medallist. "The country has placed its faith in me, and I want to live up to their expectations. Once I set my mind on something, I ensure it gets done," she said.

Winning AIFF Futsal Club Championship is a 'memory I will always cherish,' says coach Rizwan

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

Corbett FC took the futsal court in Gujarat by storm. Debutants only by name, but not by their game, the club scored a staggering 48 goals in seven games en route to lifting the trophy after Sunday's final. The numbers speak for their dominance.

But they were given a real test by Golazo FC, and it took an extra-time winner from who else but PC Lalruatsanga in the 49th minute to seal the title. Twice Corbett had taken the lead in regular time, but Golazo crawled back each time. However, when teenage sensation Lalruatsanga, hiding in plain sight at the back post, slid in to convert Pratik Swami's inch-perfect cross, there was no time for another comeback.

Corbett FC ran out deserved winners, becoming the first Uttarakhand



side to win an AIFF tournament. Lalruatsanga's 17 goals, more than a third of the total scored by Corbett, earned him the Golden Boot.

"The key to our championship success was the quality of our players, our positive attitude, and thorough preparation. It's a remarkable achievement for us at Corbett FC. It reflects on our dedication, teamwork, and determination," added Rizwan.

Corbett literally faced every sort of challenge in their path to becoming

champions. If the final was a test of their perseverance, the semi-final against Ambelem produced some heart-in-the-mouth moments when their 6-2 lead with just 10 minutes to go was slashed to 6-5 and they had to scrape through to the finish line.

The wild celebrations at the whistle, perhaps more impassioned than the ones after the final, conveyed it all.

And until the semifinals, they spewed pure dominance on the futsal

court. An 11-1 demolition of former champions Delhi FC, a 9-0 thrashing of Nyenshen FC, eight past Classic Football Academy, six past Millat FC, and five past Sports Odisha. There was no stopping Rizwan's army.

"Our two-week camp helped fine-tune our strategy. We planned each match based on the opponents' strengths and weaknesses.

We learned from our mistakes and improved continuously. In the end, celebrating with my teammates is a memory I'll forever cherish," said Rizwan.

In all the event was spread across 15 days during which 43 matches were played which saw 386 goals scored. Going by this record, the AIFF Futsal Club Championship 2023-24 was an out-and-out success. A celebration of the sport of futsal, which is gradually finding its feet in the country.

Football: India lose 1-2 in close battle with Myanmar in international friendly

AGENCIES
YANGON (MYANMAR), JULY 9

The Indian senior women's team suffered a 1-2 defeat to hosts Myanmar in the first of their two friendly matches at the Thuwunna Stadium here on Tuesday. In the first meeting between Myanmar and India after more than five years, the hosts scored both goals from set pieces. Tetsuro Uki's side took the early lead courtesy of a header from Odisha FC's Win Theingi Tun in the 14th minute.

Although her club teammate Pyari Xaxa equalised for India with an opportunistic tap-in in the 58th minute, San Thaw Thaw converted May Thet Mon Myint's free-kick in the 74th minute to win the game for Myanmar. Right-back Aruna Bag was handed her first start for India.

The Indian custodian came out of her goal but



India came out rejuvenated in their goal hunt in the second period. Head coach Langam Chaoba Devi brought on Karishma Shirvoikar in place of Sandhya Ranganathan. And the Kickstart forward's fast pace paved the path for the equaliser in the 58th minute.

Receiving the ball from Naorem Priyangka Devi on the left, Karishma burst forward and fired at the goal with her left foot. Myo Mya Mya Nyein attempted to catch it but ended up spilling it onto the path of Pyari, who dispatched it first time into the roof of the net to make it 1-1.

Myanmar got their second goal from another dead-ball situation in the 74th minute. A low free-kick from May Thet Mon Myint caught the Indian defence napping as San Thaw Thaw was able to slip away and meticulously jink it over an onrushing Panthoi.

failed to get a touch on the Myanmar defender's curling corner as Win Theingi Tun arrived unmarked and headed it into the empty net to put the hosts ahead.

India were in pursuit of an equaliser immediately and almost got one from their first corner in the 18th minute. Anju Tamang's out-swinging delivery was headed wide of the near post by Soumya Guguloth. A few minutes later, Soumya tried to feed Anju with a

low cross, but goalkeeper Myo Mya Mya Nyein gathered the ball before the latter could arrive.

Striker Pyari Xaxa tried her luck from a distance on two occasions, first seeing it go harmlessly wide before hitting it directly at Myo Mya Mya Nyein. On the Indian end, Myanmar continued to make Panthoi work. In the 42nd minute, she prevented the hosts from doubling their lead by making a solid one-on-one save to deny San Thaw Thaw.

Rohit, Virat, Bumrah likely to be rested for Sri Lanka tour: Report

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

After the T20 World Cup title win, the three senior players including Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Jasprit Bumrah will likely be rested for the upcoming Sri Lanka tour later this month, says a report.

India are scheduled to play three T20Is and three ODIs, starting on July 27. As per the Indian Express report, the BCCI wants to rest the three senior players for the tour before returning for Bangladesh tour, where India will play two Tests and three T20Is



starting on September 19.

Rohit, Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja have announced their retirements from

T20Is after the T20 World Cup triumph last month. However, they will continue to play for India in

other formats. BCCI will likely announce India squad for the Sri Lanka tour next week.

"Senior players can take some rest and get ready for the full cricket season ahead. Rohit, Virat and Bumrah have been offered rest and will join the team for the Test matches against Bangladesh in September," a BCCI source told the newspaper.

Meanwhile, the 2024 T20 World Cup was Rahul Dravid's last assignment as head coach. He guided India to three consecutive ICC finals including two in 2023 - the World Test

Championship and the ODI World Cup - before ending the title drought in the Caribbean.

The Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) has interviewed Gautam Gambir and WV Raman for the role of head coach and the former is a front-runner to succeed Dravid.

The BCCI will shortly open applications for the team's support staff after the tenures of batting coach Vikram Rathour, bowling coach Paras Mhambrey, and fielding coach T Dilip ended following the T20 World Cup.

Wimbledon 2024: Ostapenko makes it to third QF; Rybakina and Svitolina also advance

AGENCIES
LONDON, JULY 9

The No.13 seed and former French Open winner Jelena Ostapenko raced past Yulia Putintseva to reach her third quarterfinal at Wimbledon, the first since 2018, and was joined in the last-eight stage by No.4 seed Elena Rybakina and No.21 seed Elina Svitolina, who set up a mouth-watering meeting at the grass-court major on Monday.

Ostapenko raced past Putintseva 6-2, 6-3 in 68 minutes while Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon champion, moved into the quarterfinals after an ailing No.17 seed Anna Kalinskaya retired from their Centre Court match due to a right wrist injury. Rybakina led 6-3, 3-0 when Kalinskaya stopped play after 53 minutes. Svitolina, a Wimbledon semifinalist last year, joined Rybakina in the last eight with a 6-2, 6-1 victory over

42nd-ranked Wang Xinyu in just 55 minutes. Ostapenko was in the spotlight as she defeated giant-killer Putintseva.

In four matches so far this fortnight, the Latvian has dropped just 15 games -- the lowest number of any player to get to the last eight since Victoria Azarenka's 14 in 2012 -- and spent 4 hours and 5 minutes on the court. Her tally of 29 winners against Putintseva took her tournament total to 88 in 63 games played.

Warner keeps door open to play for Australia in Champions Trophy 'if selected'

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 9

David Warner said chapter of his playing career is closed but has left the door open to appear in next year's Champions Trophy to play in one last international tournament.

Warner concluded his Test cricket career in January, simultaneously declaring that his final appearance in the 50-over format was during last year's ODI World Cup. His international tenure came to an end last month following Australia's exit from the T20 World Cup.

In a social media post,

the Australian opener expressed gratitude towards fans, his national teammates, and staff.

Additionally, he indicated his willingness to play for national side at the Champions Trophy, which will be staged in Pakistan next February and March.

"Chapter closed!! It's been an unbelievable experience to play at the highest level for such a long period. Australia was my team. The majority of my career was at the international level. It's been an honour to be able to do this. 100+ games in all formats is my highlight. I want to say thanks

to everyone out there who has made this possible.

"My wife and my girls, who sacrificed so much, thank you for all your support. No person will ever know what we've been through. For all the cricket fans out there, I truly hope I have entertained you and changed cricket, especially tests, in a way where we scored a bit faster than others.

"We cannot do what we love without the fans, so thanks. I will continue to play franchise cricket for a while, and I am also open to playing for Aus in the Champions trophy if selected.

"To the players and staff, thanks for putting up with me. No more what's app junk, your ears are now going to be free of my voice. This team has had unbelievable success the last few years and long may this continue. Pat Cummins, Andrew Mac and staff have got this," read Warner's post on Instagram.

Australia's limited-overs teams will commence the era following Warner's retirement in September, beginning with a series of three T20Is each against Scotland and England, followed by a five-match ODI series against England.

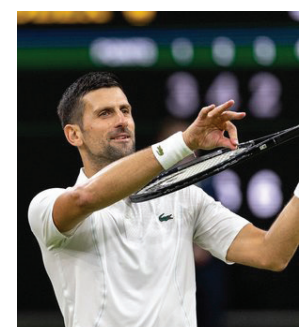
Djokovic glides past Rune to enter 15th Wimbledon quarterfinal

AGENCIES
LONDON, JULY 9

Novak Djokovic brushed past Holger Rune of Denmark to reach his 15th Wimbledon quarterfinal with a 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 in the latest chapter of the pair's rivalry.

Djokovic has been pushed to the limit by Rune in the past, with the Dane winning two of their previous five ATP head-to-head meetings, including the Paris Masters final in 2022.

"I'm very pleased. I don't think Holger played close to his best. Tough start for



him. That got to him mentally. Waiting all day to come out on court is never easy, getting more and more tense and stressed," said Djokovic.

By advancing to the last eight at Wimbledon for

the 15th time, Djokovic claimed sole ownership of second place in the all-time list for most quarterfinal appearances at the grass-court major, moving past Jimmy Connors (14). Only record eight-time champion Roger Federer has advanced to the quarter-finals more (18), according to ATP stats.

Moreover, this is 60th quarterfinal for Djokovic in a Grand Slam tennis.

The 24-time Grand Slam champion is aiming to equal Federer's trophy haul of eight at The Championships this fortnight and he will next face Alex

de Minaur after the ninth-seeded Australian eliminated Frenchman Arthur Fils in four sets.

"Alex (de Minaur) is one of the quickest, if not the quickest, player on Tour. But I'm enjoying my running still at 37. Looking forward to the match," the Serb added.

The 37-year-old Serbian arrived at Wimbledon having undergone knee surgery in early June. He has moved comfortably throughout his first four matches, where he has defeated Jacob Fearnley and Alexei Popyrin in four sets.

DC Pulwama Chairs Comprehensive Review Meeting on CSS for FPOs

J NEWS SERVICE
PULWAMA, JULY 9

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom chaired a comprehensive review meeting to discuss the progress and implementation of the Central Sector Scheme for Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) under the aegis of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

The meeting brought together key stakeholders including representatives from NABARD, agricultural experts, district officials, and members of various FPOs operating within the district. The primary objective was to evaluate the current status of the scheme, address challenges faced by FPOs, and devise strategies to enhance their operational efficiency and impact.



The administration is committed to aiding Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) in obtaining essential licenses for seeds, pesticides, fertilizers, e-NAM, GST, FSSAI, and more. FPOs will be integrated onto the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) and other e-retailing platforms to enhance the sale of their produce.

Developmental departments are tasked with sensitizing FPO Board Members about various government schemes and pro-

grammes through regular awareness campaigns.

During the meeting, Dr. Qayoom emphasized the critical role of FPOs in empowering farmers, improving agricultural productivity, and enhancing rural incomes.

He highlighted the importance of collaboration among different departments and agencies to ensure the successful implementation of the scheme.

Dr. Qayoom also reiterated the commitment of the district administration

to support FPOs through various initiatives and schemes.

Discussions during the meeting included, review of the current progress of FPOs under the scheme, Identification of bottlenecks and challenges faced by FPOs, Strategies for capacity building and skill development of FPO members, Financial and technical support mechanisms available through NABARD, Future action plans to strengthen the FPO ecosystem in Pulwama. Dr. Qayoom concluded the meeting by urging all stakeholders to work in a coordinated manner to achieve the objectives of the Central Sector Scheme for FPOs. He assured continuous monitoring and regular follow-up meetings to ensure the scheme's success and the welfare of the farming community in Pulwama.

Inter College Road Race-2024 Organised by Cluster University Srinagar

J NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 9

Cluster University of Srinagar today Morning organized a spirited Road Race from Nishat to Duck Park along the foreshore Road.

The Race was flagged off by the Vice-Chancellor, Cluster University Srinagar, amidst fervent cheers and enthusiasm from participants and spectators alike.

The Road Race witnessed an impressive turnout of students, faculty, and staff members both from CUS and its affiliated/constituent colleges.

Among the registered aspirants more than 150 students (Boys & Girls) participated actively and displayed their strength and endurance throughout the race and marked their presence in the celebration of athleticism, camaraderie and healthy



competition.

Hazim Nabi from Amar Singh College won the Inter College Road Race (Men) 2024 while as Bilal Altaf from S.P. College and Bilal Ahmad from Amar Singh College clinched the second and third positions respectively.

In Women's category Sana from AAAM College Bemina clinched first position while as Benazir from Govt. College for Women M.A. Road and Aafreen from Amar Singh College got second and third positions respectively.

An extraordinary felicitation ceremony was observed after the completion of the race in Duck Park Srinagar, the proceedings of which were

carried out by the Physical Director S.P. College Mr. Qayoom Gul.

In his message V.C highlighted the importance of sports in one's life and the initiatives taken by the university for the accomplishment of students' endeavours in games and Sports.

He emphasized the significance of sports and physical activities in fostering holistic development among students. He applauded the efforts of the Sports Secretary of CUS and the role of Physical Director of the constituent/affiliated Colleges for organizing such an exhilarating event and encouraged everyone to actively engage in sports for a balanced lifestyle.

Speaking on the occasion Registrar Prof. Dr. Villayat Hussain Rizvi appreciated the functioning of the Sports wing and the efforts of all stakeholders and admired the able guidance of the Head of the Institution.

All the participants were awarded with the certificates of Merit/Participation. Top Ten Athletes were specially felicitated with medals and the first three toppers with the trophies and a cash prize of Rs/3000=, Rs/2000= and Rs/1000= respectively.

The award ceremony ended with the vote of thanks extended by the Sports Secretary Prof. Muneer Ahmad Mir to all the stakeholders especially the Medical Team deputed by CMO Srinagar and the extraordinary Traffic and security arrangements by Sr. Superintendent of Police Srinagar.

Mandeep Kaur holds Public Darbar at Banihal

J NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, JULY 9

Commissioner Secretary Housing & Urban Development department, Mandeep Kaur today held a Public Darbar at Government Higher Secondary School (Boys), Banihal here.

The Public Darbar was organized to listen the grievances of people and address their concerns.

The Commissioner Secretary heard various issues faced by the public of the district like construction and upgradation of roads; insufficient staff in Schools and Hospitals; demand of Pahari Status to Ramban district; Parking spaces in Ramban and Banihal; delimitation of Municipal areas; foot bridge in the habitations on Highway-44; street lights, washrooms, drinking water in Banihal Town; sanitation in Banihal Town and Market; tourism festival in Neel and other tour-

ists spots; Banihal Tourism Development Authority; conducting census for updation of Ration Cards and other important documents; Blood Bank for SDH Banihal; Accident Hospital on the NH-44; and other public concerns.

The Commissioner Secretary assured the people that all these grievances have been recorded and will be taken care of with utmost seriousness and diligence. Interacting with the locals, the Commissioner Secretary said, "Transparency and accountability are our top priorities, and anyone can visit the DC Office Ramban to check the progress on their grievances. We are committed to resolving every issue with promptness and efficiency".

She added that LG administration is keen to address public concerns at their doorsteps, ensuring that governance is accessible, transparent and accountable to the people.



The Commissioner Secretary said that we are committed to taking governance to the grassroots level, making sure that no one is left behind, and everyone has access to quality services and grievance redressal mechanisms.

During the Public

Darbar, the Commissioner Secretary also inspected stalls showcasing the public services and schemes offered by the government departments besides products made by local artisans and entrepreneurs. She also handed over the keys of commercial vehicles to the eligible

unemployed beneficiaries of Ramban under MUMKIN scheme of Mission Youth.

On the occasion, District Development Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, while interacting with the public said that the district administration Ramban has resolved over 4200 grievances of the public in the last eight months. "This feat demonstrates our commitment to citizen-centric governance and our resolve to address the concerns of our people with utmost priority", he said.

The public darbar was also attended by DDC Chairperson Dr Shamshad Shan; DDC Councillors, ADDC Ramban, Director Urban Local bodies Jammu, DPO ICDS, SDM Banihal, ACD Ramban, ACP Ramban and officer district and sectoral officers.

SWD Ramban organizes awareness program on Menstrual Hygiene and Women, Child Provisions of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita



J NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, JULY 9

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary and the supervision of District Social Welfare Officer Ramban, Rahul Gupta, the Department of Social Welfare orchestrated a comprehensive awareness program at Panchayat Chandkote.

The initiative centered on menstrual hygiene and elucidated the women and child-oriented provisions of the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita. The objective of organising the program was to educate women and children on the critical importance of men-

strual hygiene and the legal protections afforded to them under the proposed Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita respectively.

The event garnered an enthusiastic response from the local community, underscoring a burgeoning awareness and willingness to engage in discussions on these pivotal issues.

Paramedical Sakhhi, OSC Ramban Arti, imparted crucial information on maintaining menstrual hygiene, dispelling myths surrounding menstruation, and advocating for healthy practices.

Further, the program featured detailed deliberations on the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita's provisions

that protect the rights and welfare of women and children, highlighting the legislation's relevance in the current socio-legal landscape.

DSWO emphasized the department's unwavering commitment to enhancing the well-being of women and children across the district. He underscored the significance of such awareness programs in empowering the community with essential knowledge and resources.

The program culminated in an interactive session, allowing participants to pose questions and share experiences, thereby fostering a comprehensive understanding of the topics discussed.

Sheetal Nanda visits Kulgam, conducts Public Darbar

J NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM, JULY 9

Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare department, Sheetal Nanda today visited Kulgam and conducted Public Darbar at Mini-Secretariat here during which she listened and addressed various issues and grievances of locals.

The Public Darbar witnessed active participation of locals and public delegations from Devsar, Frisal, Qaimoo, Yaripora, D.H. Pora, Pombay, Kulgam, Manzgam, and many other areas. The participating delegations apprised the Commissioner Secretary about their issues and demands as well as developmental requirements of their areas.

Addressing the gathering, the Commissioner Secretary emphasized on government's commitment to holistic development and timely redressal of issues and grievances of people.

She assured the participants that all their genuine demands and issues will be redressed on priority.

During the darbar, the delegations put forth various demands like devel-



opment of Children Park at Kulgam, road widening from clock tower to District Hospital, development of parking spaces in main town, construction of new building for tehsil office Qaimoo, augmentation of staff at Hospitals and various other demands were raised by the people from various areas.

A delegation of Specially abled persons demanded replacement scheme of motorized tricycles, quota in PMAY scheme, special recruitment drives for specially abled and other demands for welfare and betterment of specially abled persons.

All the issues and demands of people were

listened patiently by the Commissioner Secretary for early redressal.

Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan, while addressing the gathering said that demands were duly noted and would be addressed with the concerned authorities for appropriate action.

The public darbar was also attended by ADC Viqar Ahmed Giri; JDP, Zahid Sajjad; ACD, Syed Naseer; ACR, Mushtaq Ahmad Lone; ACP, Nazia Hassan; SDM Noorabad, Bashir Ul Hassan; DSWO, CEO, CMO, Executive Engineers, Tehsildars and other officers from district administration.

CEO, SSCL Reviews Progress of ongoing Smart City Works



J NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 9

Today, the CEO Srinagar Smart City Ltd, Dr Owais Ahmad accompanied by the Addl CEO, officers from SMC, Srinagar Smart City, and other line departments, visited Khayam Chowk and Nowpora to assess the development progress.

Expressing his satisfaction with the pace and quality of the ongoing works, CEO Dr. Owais emphasized the need to accelerate progress to ensure the completion of the project.

Recognizing the project's significance for the residents of Srinagar, CEO urged all involved agencies to intensify their efforts and strictly adhere to the project guidelines.

During the inspection, CEO engaged with project officials, engineers, and workers to gain first-hand insights into the challenges and advancements in the smart city project. CEO commended their dedication and hard work towards realizing the vision of transforming Srinagar into a modern, sustainable, and citizen-friendly city.

The Smart City Mission in Srinagar is dedicated to leveraging technology and innovation to enhance the quality of life for its residents. It focuses on establishing a resilient and efficient urban infrastructure, improving public services, promoting sustainable development, and fostering economic growth.

Major reform in the interest of patient care on anvil in GMCs

J NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 9

Secretary, Health & Medical Education (H&ME) Department, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Tuesday reviewed the creation of Department of Emergency Medicine in all the Government Medical Colleges of J&K in a meeting of senior officers of the Department that he chaired here at the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar.

The meeting was attended, among others, by Principals of all the Government Medical Colleges, Director, Finance, H&ME, Joint Director, Planning, H&ME, Additional Secretary and Deputy Secretary, Medical Education.

The Secretary, H&ME sought inputs from Principals and senior faculty

members of GMCs for fast-tracking the establishment of 30-bedded Emergency Medicine Department in all GMCs.

Dr. Abid Rasheed while highlighting the vision of providing holistic and quality emergency medical care to all those who seek it, expressed urgency for expeditious processing of all formalities for creation of faculty posts as per JK Finance Department's instructions. He called for optimal utilization of available infrastructure, manpower and necessary procurement of equipments to make the Department functional within the shortest possible time.

The meeting was informed that with medical emergencies becoming a serious burden for

the health system and NCDs like stroke, acute coronary syndrome, respiratory, diabetic complications and alcohol liver diseases conditions requiring immediate care, the Emergency Medicine Department shall be able to improve trauma care and emergency in GMCs more efficiently. The National Medical Commission norms also mandate establishment of the Department of Emergency Medicine for all Medical Colleges with effect from academic year 2022-2023 onwards. All Medical Colleges with recognized MBBS Qualification are required to have a Department of Emergency Medicine at the level of recognition and at any stage of renewal including against increase in intake.