

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:

- Severe and continuous abdominal pain
- Diarrhea
- Persistent vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Disorientation
- Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool, urine or stool

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

JINDRAH IMAGES

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Big on jobs, reward for allies; minor relief for taxpayers



AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Facing flak from the Opposition over unemployment, the Modi 3.0 government's first Budget on Tuesday announced a Rs 2 lakh crore package to create more jobs while making the tax regime attractive for foreign companies and providing marginal income tax relief to the salaried class.

The Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in

Parliament maintained higher Capex to support growth and loosened purse strings for projects in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar to appease crucial National Democratic Alliance (NDA) allies Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Janata Dal (United).

"I am happy to announce the Prime Minister's package of 5 schemes and initiatives to facilitate employment, skilling and other opportunities for

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Centre unveils Rs 1,18,390 crore budget for J&K

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 23

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday unveiled Rs 1,18,390 crore budget for Jammu & Kashmir for the fiscal year 2024-25.

Budget Estimates

As per budget documents accessed by news agency, total budget estimates for 2024-25 are Rs 1,18,390 crore. "The total gross receipts are estimated at Rs 1,51,526 crore, including the provision for ways and means advances and over-draft of Rs 33,136 crore. Given these receipts, total gross expenditure is estimated to be Rs 1,51,526 crore," read the documents.

Of which the revenue expenditure is estimated to be Rs 81,486 crore and capital expenditure to be Rs 36,904 crore.

As per documents, the total expected revenue receipts are

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Budget Highlights 2024-25

Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors project in Jammu and Kashmir (JKCIP) at an estimated value of USD 100 million loan from International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to be implemented.

Implementation of all 29 projects approved under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme for Rs 5013 crore over five years.

25,000 MTs of Controlled Atmosphere (CA) storage capacity to be added.

Development of Chrysanthemum theme Park at Cheshmashahi, Srinagar.

60,000 backyard poultry units in rural areas.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Soldier killed in Counter-Infiltration Ops in Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JUL 23

A soldier was killed in the line of duty as the Army thwarted an infiltration bid by terrorists along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu Poonch district early Tuesday, the latest in a string of terrorist attacks in the region.



Lance Naik Subash Kumar was injured in the intense gunfight and later succumbed, said officials, adding terrorists too suffered "loss".

"All Ranks of White Knight Corps salute the supreme sacrifice of Braveheart L/Nk Subhash Chander who laid down his life in the line of duty. White Knight Corps offers deepest condolences and stands firm with the bereaved family in this hour of grief," army in a post on X confirmed, as per news agency.

Officials said that a post-mortem has been conducted and the soldier's body handed over to the Army, a police officer said. A search operation has been launched in the area, the officials said.

Earlier Army in a post on X said, "Alert troops foiled an infiltration bid by effectively engaging infiltrating terrorists ... in the Battal sector of Krishna Ghati at 0300 hours," White Knight Corps said on X. "During the exchange of heavy fire, one braveheart was injured, who later succumbed".

There has been a spurt in terror activities in Jammu in recent months, raising fears about the revival of militancy in the region.

Yesterday, alert soldiers thwarted a major terrorist attack on a home of gallantry soldier's in Budhal-Khawas area of Rajouri, an official said. As per details, terrorists opened fire at one of tem-

porary army posts, which was operational near the house of a VDG member Parshotam Kumar, a Village Defence Guard (VDG) member in Gundha - a remote village of Rajouri district at around 0310 hrs and the fire was promptly retaliated by security personnel," official said, adding, "The attack was given appropriate retaliation by alert security personnel." Sources said that an army trooper was injured in a brief exchange of fire between terrorists and hospitalized, but there has been no official confirmation on the same.

This attack follows two high-level meetings chaired by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Army Chief

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Budget provides countless opportunities for youth and empowers neo-middle class: PM Modi

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday hailed the Union Budget 2024-25, saying this budget is going to empower every section of the society and provide countless new opportunities to the youth. "This is a budget that will take the

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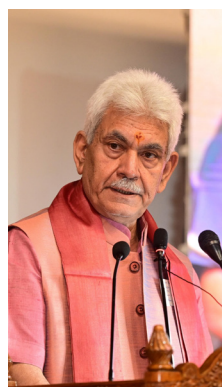
LG expresses gratitude to PM Modi & Finance Minister Sitharaman for the visionary Budget-2024

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 23

Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha has expressed gratitude to Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Hon'ble Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman for the visionary Budget for 2024-2025.

The Lt Governor said the Budget-2024 will intensify economic growth, facilitate far-reaching reforms for 'Viksit Bharat' and increase the 'Ease of Doing' Business' and the 'Ease of

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LG launches 'JK SAMADHAN' - Unified Grievance Redressal & Monitoring System



J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 23

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Tuesday launched 'JK SAMADHAN', Unified Grievance Redressal & Monitoring System, of the Department of Public Grievances, at Srinagar today.

In his address, the Lt Governor congratulated the Department of Public Grievances, Information Technology Department,

Central Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology and Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo-Informatics for the initiative.

Dedicating 'JK SAMADHAN' to the people, the Lt Governor said the unified grievance redressal & monitoring system launched today underscores the UT Adminis-

tration's commitment to good governance.

"Every voice matters for the administration. We have built a system that works for everyone without discrimination. 'JK SAMADHAN' will establish a transparent, inclusive, accountable, accessible and responsive governance for ease of living and empower the citizens," the Lt Governor said.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

In the Union budget 2024-25, J&K gets 42277.74 crore allocation to bridge resource gap

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 23

The Union Finance Ministry has proposed to allocate Rs 42277.74 crore for Jammu & Kashmir in the Union budget 2024-25, which was presented by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Parliament on Tuesday.

Of Rs 42277.74 crore proposed for J&K, Rs 40619.30 crore have been kept for bridging the resource gap of the Union Territory. As per budget documents available with the news agency, the central assistance of

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Budget of J&K police shifts to Union Govt from UT

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 23

In a significant development, the Union Government has taken over the budget of Jammu & Kashmir police from the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

As per the news agency, in her J&K's budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

J&K Govt dismisses employees for anti-national activities

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 23

The Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday dismissed four employees, belonging to various departments including two from Police Department (Constables), one from School Education Department (Junior Assistant) and one from Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (Village Level Worker) in terms of Article 311 of the Constitution of India for their deep involvement in anti-national activities.

As per an official communiqué issued to the news agency, the activities of these below mentioned employees had come to the adverse notice of law enforcement and intelligence agencies, as they found them thickly involved in activities prejudicial to the interests of the State evidencing their involvement in terror related activities.

Imtiyaz Ahmad Lone, Constable in Police Department S/o Mohammad Akram Lone R/o Gamraj, Tral, District Pulwama, was involved in the commission of offence of supplying, transporting

and facilitating delivery of Arms and Ammunitions for promotion and executing terror acts. Bazil Ahmad Mir, Junior Assistant in School Education Department S/o Manzoor Ahmad Mir R/o Khurhama Lalpora, District Kupwara, is also involved in the commission of offence of nurturing drug syndicate in and around Lolab area and has become a full fledged trafficker of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, having direct relationship with the terrorists/secessionists ecosystem.

Mushtaq Ahmad Pir,

Selection Grade Constable in J&K Police S/o Abdul Ahad Pir R/o Kalsoona, Vilgam Handwara, District Kupwara, being resident of border area in Kupwara had established contacts with narcotic drug smugglers across the border in Pakistan and was running a drug cartel in the North Kashmir belt. He had a direct association with the kingpins of narcotic terror syndicate operating across the border and has a direct relationship with terrorists/secessionists ecosystem. Mohd. Zaid Shah, Village Level

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

CS asks to establish critical care ICUs in all new medical colleges

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 23

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today in a meeting held to review functioning of Medical Colleges and status of ongoing infrastructure projects, impressed upon the concerned to establish critical care Intensive Care Units (ICUs) in all the newly established Medical Colleges of the UT.

Present in the meeting were Secretary Health & Medical Education, Secretary, PWD; Secretary, Planning; MD, NHM; Director, SKIMS; DG, Codes; MD, JKPC; Principals of Medi-



cal Colleges; Development Commissioner (Works); Director Health, Kashmir/Jammu; Chief Engineers and other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary took stock of the major services being offered in these Medical Colleges. He enquired about the novel

diagnostic tests introduced in these health institutions and the unique procedures performed by the doctors. He exhorted upon the Principals of these Colleges to strive for continuous upgradation of facilities so that there remains no need to refer patients from these facili-

ties to anywhere. Dulloo directed the concerned department to form an expert panel to find out the specific procedures that could be done in these Colleges with optimum utilization of manpower and resources available there.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

DC Kupwara chairs NCORD meeting

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, JULY 23

A meeting of District Level Committee of Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) was on Tuesday held under the chairpersonship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan at Mini-Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex, here to discuss the comprehensive strategy to counter the menace of drug abuse in frontier district Kupwara.

The DC reviewed the implementation of the measures taken and progress achieved to eliminate drug abuse and its peddling in the district.

At the outset, the DC took a detailed appraisal from members of NCORD Committee regarding the present scenario of drug related occurrences, areas of concern, age group of addicts, hot spots of drug abuse.

The DC took feedback from the members of the



Committee who presented the latest report related to action taken against drug-addiction and drug trafficking in the last one month in the district.

On the occasion, the DC stressed upon the Officers of all the line Departments to further intensify IEC activities, connecting communities including religious influencers and civil society members.

The DC meticulously reviewed the functioning of Drug De-addiction Centre Kupwara and Addiction Treatment Facility Centre (ATFC) Handwara and stressed for making them fully functional so that sufferings of the drug-affected persons is mitigated. She

emphasized on ensuring proper counseling and rehabilitation for individuals struggling with addiction.

On the occasion CMO Kupwara, Dr. Ramzan appraised the chair that 1138 cases of drug and substance abuse have been identified in the district, 639 have been treated, 334 cases fully recovered and 76 relapsed till date.

CMO said 37 awareness programmes in collaboration with the education department were organized in the district till date. It was given out that 100 percent CCTV cameras have been installed in the medical stores of the district. CMO further said that

last month 10 samples of drugs were lifted which came standard in quality. CMO further appraised that this month 10 samples of drugs have been lifted whose report is awaited.

On the occasion, Medical Superintendent District Hospital Handwara appraised that OPD at ATFC Handwara is functional and a 10-bedded full-fledged ward is being set up after the finalization of recruitment of the staff.

ASP Kupwara appraised the meeting that as many as 44 FIRs were registered, 63 new drug peddlers were arrested in 2024 and lodged in different jails besides seizure of heroin, Charas, brown sugar.

The meeting among others was attended by ADC Kupwara, Mohammd Rouf Rehman, ASP Kupwara, G.M Bhat, CMO Kupwara, Medical Superintendent DH Handwara, Tehsildars besides other concerned Officers.

J&K to organize Swachhta Pakhawada from 1 to 15 August; Secretary RDD reviews preparedness

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 23

Jammu and Kashmir will organize Swachhta Pakhawada over two weeks from 1st August to 15th August 2024 with greater public participation to emphasise on sanitation, sustainability and cleanliness. In line with directions of the Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha the Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj in coordination with various departments and Districts Administration has planned a series of programmes for cleanliness and sanitation initiatives with involvement of public.

Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary discussed the detailed roadmap in a meeting with District and Block level officers

today, which was attended by Director General Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra, Director Rural Development Kashmir, Shabir Hussain Bhat, Director Rural Development Jammu, Mumtaz Ali, Director Panchayati Raj, Sham Lal, Jt Director Planning Kamal Sharma, besides other provincial officers, ACDs and ACPs.

Dr Shahid emphasised on effective and greater public participation for promotion of scientific waste management, best sanitary practices, hygiene, cleanliness and institutional as well as societal initiatives. The two week long initiative aimed at public mobilization includes inaugural events at provincial, district and block level, cleanliness drives at public places and tourist destinations, legacy waste disposal, dedication of infrastructure to local

communities, initiation of new projects at local level besides a series of awareness programs and engagement initiatives at various levels. The Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj will also organize Swachhta Gram Sabhas in select panchayats of all the districts for creating awareness and eliciting public participation in planning, establishment, operation and maintenance of various assets under the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen. In coordination with departments of Health, School Education, Youth Services and Sports, Forest Ecology & Environment, Social Welfare and Agriculture, a number of programs have been planned at district, block and panchayat level.

The Secretary asked the officers to promote innovation at local level for sanitation and best

practices in sustainability for which assured funding will be provided by the department. It was also conveyed that participation of Non-Governmental Organizations, Educational Institutions, and local Community organization for effective and responsive planning for waste management in villages. The Amrit Sraovars developed by the department will also serve as focus areas for community action during the initiative. It was advised to engage local media establishments for public engagement and creating awareness about sanitation, sustainability and scientific waste management in the rural areas. The performance of districts will also be awarded after culmination of the two week long program which is designed to trigger a great public involvement and response.

District administration Doda virtually participates in JK Samadhan Portal launch



J1 NEWS SERVICE
DODA, JULY 23

The Jammu and Kashmir administration today launched the JK Samadhan portal, a unified grievance redressal and monitoring system aimed at addressing public grievances through a single window. The launch was conducted by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha from the Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar. This innovative portal promises an effective and efficient way to handle public grievances, ensuring timely and transparent redressal.

The event was witnessed across all districts of the UT. In Doda, the district administration, under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh, organized a mega event at the conference hall of the DC office complex to watch the live telecast of the JK Samadhan portal launch.

The conference hall was packed with attendees from various departments, including representatives from education, health, agriculture, and the Rural Development Department (RDD), as well as members of the media fraternity.

Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh, along with ADC, Sudershan Kumar, ACR, Sunil Bhutyal, ACD, Manoj Kumar, CPO, Manesh Kumar Manhas and ACP, Mushraf Ali Haf, DIO, Rohit Saini attended the virtual session.

The entire program was a significant milestone in enhancing public service delivery and ensuring that grievances are addressed promptly and effectively. The initiative is expected to bring about a transformative change in the way public grievances are managed, contributing to improved governance and citizen satisfaction in Jammu and Kashmir.

Awareness programme on Self-Employment initiatives & opportunities held at Ramban

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, JULY 23

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, an awareness program regarding various Self Employment Schemes under Mission Youth J&K and the Schemes of Industries Department, was conducted today at PWD Hut Ramban.

The program was conducted in coordination with the Rural Development Department and District Industries and Commerce Department Ramban.

The event aimed at generating mass awareness among the unemployed Youth of Block Ramban. Sub Divisional Magistrate Ramban, Ghanshyam Basotra was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

At the beginning of the programme, Amit Kumar, Assistant Labour Commissioner Ramban having additional charge of Assistant Director Employment Ramban briefed about the schemes of Mission youth like MUMKIN, Tejaswini and Spurring Entrepreneurship Initiatives. He elaborated the eligibility conditions, benefits and procedure of applying under the schemes. He further requested the youth to think differently and bring out innovative ideas and this department is ready to



provide any financial and other support in the establishment of the unit and assured that such camps shall be held on monthly basis in each Block.

Representative of JK Bank Ramban, SBI Branch Manager Ramban, were also present and elaborated the sponsoring mechanism of the government Sponsored self employment cases, under various self-employment schemes at Bank level and assured that the proper SOP shall be followed to prevent unnecessary delay at bank level.

The camp was also attended by labourers/ construction workers, to whom ALC Ramban gave detailed information about welfare schemes being provided by JKBOWWB. He briefed the new rates of the education assistance to be

provided to the wards of the registered construction workers applicable from this financial year 2024-25.

SDM highlighted the importance of Self employment Schemes, of various departments and encouraged the youth to take part in these schemes to become self-sufficient and self-reliant. He further motivated the youth to find innovative ideas and get involved in business activity in their local area.

During the camp on-the-spot registration of about 17 youth for various schemes of Mission youth was carried out by Young Professional Lovepreet Singh. Various queries related to registration and renewal of labourer cards were also resolved.

Career Counseling Officer Ramban presented a vote of thanks.

ARI&T department conducts inspection of Horticulture Directorate



J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 23

Administrative Reforms Inspections and Trainings Department, conducted a comprehensive administrative inspection of the Directorate of Horticulture Kashmir.

The inspection team was led by Dr. Kabir Dar, Secretary Technical Administrative, Reforms, Inspections and Trainings Department along with other senior officials.

Administrative inspections are crucial for assessing the operational efficiency of government departments. They help evaluate the implementation of policies and programs of the respective departments, ensuring alignment with model profarma, devised by ARI for desired outcome and public good. They also help effective resource utilization, identify areas for improvement, and promote best practices

and innovative solutions.

Horticulture, plays a pivotal role in the economy of Jammu and Kashmir. The Directorate is responsible for establishing and maintaining fruit and vegetable markets in production zones, enhancing marketing connectivity, and facilitating the direct supply of fruits to potential markets and distribution of fruits from Jammu & Kashmir to other parts of India and international markets. Notably, Jammu and Kashmir has got first prize in International Agriculture and Horticulture expo-2024.

The inspection led by Dr Kabir underscores the commitment of ARI & Training's Department, to assist and guide the government organisations to enhance their administrative and operational efficiency so that they can contribute significantly to the economy and overall development of Jammu & Kashmir.

DC Kulgam flags-off 30 farmers for exposure tour to CSR&TI Pampore



J1 NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM, JULY 23

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan today flagged-off a group of 30 Sericulture farmers from the mini-secretariat Kulgam for an exposure tour to the Central Sericultural Research & Training Institute (CSR&TI) Pampore.

This exposure visit is part of the Silksamagra initiative aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of local farmers.

The tour is designed to provide farmers with first-hand experience of advanced sericulture prac-

tices and innovations. By visiting CSR&TI Pampore, the farmers will gain valuable insights into modern techniques and strategies that can be implemented in their own sericulture activities to improve productivity and sustainability.

It was shared that such initiatives are empowering farmers with the necessary tools and knowledge to boost the sericulture sector in the region and for bridging the gap between traditional practices and modern advancements, ensuring that local farmers remain competitive and prosperous.

Div Com Jammu chairs Executive Council meeting of MMJHS

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 23

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, who is also the Chairman Executive Council of Mubarak Mandi Jammu Heritage Society (MMJHS), today chaired its Executive Council meeting.

Commissioner JMC, Executive Director MMJHS, Director Archives, Joint Director Tourism, SE PWD and concerned officers were present.

The meeting discussed different issues and agenda points pertaining to the projects under execution for renovation and preservation of Mubarak Mandi and developing it as a major tourist attraction of Jammu.

During the meeting, it was informed that many of the projects like Conservation and Adaptive reuse



of Ram Singh's Queens Palace, Conservation of Darbar Hall, Conservation of Dogra museum are 75% completed.

The Divisional Commissioner directed for speeding up the pace of remaining works being executed under JKIDFC.

The participants also deliberated on the possibility of construction of a parking facility for visitors/Tourists of Mubarak Mandi and the general public.

The Div Com directed the concerned officials for

operationalising the Café in Mubarak Mandi for attracting and facilitating the visitors.

The Div Com further directed for constituting a committee for identifying the activities and projects that can be taken up in the Mubarak Mandi complex under CSR.

Discussion was also held on appointing an expert agency for execution of works, strengthening of hill slope along the circular road adjacent to Mubarak Mandi Heritage complex.

DC B'la visits Boniyar, interacts with fire affected Shopkeepers & local residents

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, JULY 23

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today visited Boniyar, where a devastating fire incident damaged 10 shops on the night of 22nd July, and conducted thorough assessment of the damage caused by the fire.

During his visit, the DC interacted with the affected shopkeepers and local residents, expressing deep sympathy for the affected families and assured them of every possible support from the district administration.

Local residents raised a demand for the establishment of a fire and emergency station in the vicinity to help in fire fighting measures in case of any prevalent emergencies.

The DC assured the



community that a plan for setting up a fire station in the area has already been set in motion and the new fire station would be established in the near future to enhance their ability to respond promptly to such emergencies.

Minga Sherpa applauded and expressed his gratitude towards the fire fighters from fire and emergency department, policemen, local residents and all others for their efforts to bring fire under control. He further urged the public to adhere to fire safety norms and to report any emergency situations to the fire and emergency department promptly.

LMD slaps Rs 01 lakh fine on Delhi based Food Manufacturer

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 23

The Legal Metrology Department (LMD) during its routine market inspection held in Srinagar District booked a Delhi based Frozen Food Manufacturer which was found distributing pre-packaged food items in Lal Bazar, Srinagar in contravention of the Legal Metrology norms.

The inspection team of Legal Metrology Department, found the items without mandatory declarations like MRP, Unit Sale price, Net Weight etc. which is a violation under Rule 6(1)(e) & Rule 6(11) of Legal Metrology Packaged Commodities Rules, 2011. The department seized all unlawful packages which included Chicken Meat Balls and Chicken Seekh Kababs.

The Delhi based company acknowledged the lapse and a case was compounded under section 48 of Legal Metrology Act 2009 against a payment of Rs.01 lakh by Deputy Controller, Consumer Protection Kashmir after an undertaking was submitted by the manufacturer that such offence will not be repeated in future.

The swift administrative action and the manufacturer's acceptance of responsibility underscore the regulatory framework's role in consumer protection and market fairness.

Directions for such consistent market checking campaigns were issued to the field executives of the department by Controller, Legal Metrology J&K Govt., Majid Khalil Drabu to serve the consumer interest.

Awareness is being created by Legal Metrology Department about the importance of adhering to legal standards for packaged commodities.

DC Ramban reviews RDSS; calls for daily advancement report on strengthening power infrastructure



JI NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, JULY 23

Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, emphasizing the importance of Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) in strengthening the power infrastructure and providing reliable electricity supply to consumers, has urged the stakeholders to submit daily achievement report on the supply of essential equipments, including poles, transformers, conductors etc. received and installation made of the received material. He directed the

concerned officers while reviewing the RDSS to expedite the works and ensure timely completion of the projects, especially before the winter months during which the snowing and harsh weather hampers the progress. It was reported that ED Batote has 36 Feeders under RDSS DPR, out of which 19 feeders have been surveyed and work on 8 feeders is ongoing, while 909 poles have been erected on the ground. The approved cost for the Electric Division (ED) Batote under RDSS is 113.15 Crores. The DC also reviewed

the progress of various ongoing projects, and issues faced by the department while execution of the projects on ground which include frequent ROW, Forest Clearances, and insufficient funds released. The meeting was attended by ADC Ramban Varunjeet Singh Charak; Project Manager NTPC J.S. Mann; Superintendent Engineer PDD; CPO Ramban; Executive Engineers of STD, JPDCL; AEEs; Manager SJ RDSS; Team Leader PMA and other concerned officers.

Legal Awareness Programme conducted at GHS Bun Doda

JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, JULY 23

On the directions and supervision of DSWO Doda Mission Shakti SANKALP: Hub for Empowerment of Women Doda Social Welfare Department organized a Legal Awareness programme on legal rights, child protection, Dowry Prohibition Act 1961 and the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 and other important acts and women rights in collaboration with District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Doda at Girls High school Bun Doda. The main aim of the legal awareness programme was to educate students, particularly female students, about their legal rights and remedies in cases of any harassment and domestic violence. The programme was spearheaded by Advocate Prianka Manhas representative of DLSA who graced the occasion and shared her views on a wide range of topics related to children in conflict with law; juvenile justice law; legal proceedings; child rights



and responsibilities; delinquency; bullying; cyber crimes ,legal provisions regarding women's rights, and discussed the legal procedures for reporting and seeking redressal for any violations or offences under the acts.etc with emphasis on their prevention and reporting. The programme was a part of on-going 100 days special awareness cum enrolment drive for Mission Shakti. Aim of the program was to promote legal literacy and empower women to assert their legal rights. Raising awareness about the Dowry Protection Act and Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act is crucial in preventing and addressing incidents

of dowry harassment and domestic violence, which continue to affect many women in our society and thus becoming the cause of their distress. The event was attended by a huge number of students who were very keen to learn about these Acts/Laws. DHEW team threw light on juvenile justice, taking into account the present challenges that children have to face in their day to day schedules, whether in school or at home or at market places. They apprised them about the legal procedures that have to be followed in case of any abuse or misconduct with any child. The staff provided a brief yet impactful demonstration

on the concept of good touch and bad touch , encouraging students to be vigilant and conscious of inappropriate behaviour. The students were encouraged to speak up and not allow others to make them feel uncomfortable. The DHEW team advised the children that in addition to avoiding any action against the law, children should carry this message to their homes, friends and families that we need to report about any unlawful activity that might be happening around us, to stop their spread in the society. They were given a brief description about how to report incidents and seek help , ensuring that the students felt safe and informed. The interactive session concluded with a lively question and answer segment, where students posed their doubts and queries. The responses from the experts helped clarify many aspects of legal rights and protection, leaving the students more knowledgeable and confident about seeking help when needed.

DLSA Samba organises Legal Awareness Program at GHSS Ghagwal

JI NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, JULY 23

As per the Action plan for the month of July, 2024 issued by Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority and also under the guidance of Adnan Sayeed, Chairman, District Legal Services Authority and Pr. District and Sessions Judge, Samba, District Legal Services Authority, Samba today organized a legal awareness program on "Domestic Violence and Inheritance Rights" at Government Higher Secondary School Ghagwal, Samba, wherein Shivali Sharma, Newly Selected Civil Judge(Junior Division) was the resource person who shared her expertise. The core mission of the awareness programme under District Legal Services Authority, Samba was to provide legal awareness to the students with respect to the different provisions of both the Protection of women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 and Hindu Succession Amendment Act, 1955 along with its Amendments. The proceedings of the programme were conducted by Versha Anthal, Assistant Legal Aid Defense Counsel Samba. The program was attended by students, faculty members of Government Higher Secondary School Ghagwal Samba and Para Legal Volunteers of District Legal Services Authority Samba.

Inter-block district level Kabaddi tournament organised for girls under BBBP in Rajouri

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, JULY 23

The Department of Social Welfare in collaboration with the Department of Youth Services & Sports today organized an inter-block district level Kabaddi tournament for girls under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme at the Mini Sports Stadium. The tournament was declared open by the Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat in presence of ADC Rajouri, Rajeev Kumar Khajuria; PO ICDS, Fareed Kohli; CPO, Maqsood Ahmed; DSWO, Abdul Raheem; DYSSO, Sukhdev Raj; ZEOs and ZPEOs. The event brought together the talented girl players from various blocks of the district, showcasing their skills and enthusiasm for the sports. Speaking during the event, the ADC Rajouri highlighted the importance of sports in shaping the personalities and charac-



ters of youth. He emphasized that sports help to inculcate values like discipline, teamwork and fair play, which are essential for their overall development. He also underscored the significance of the BBBP scheme in promoting education and sports among girls, leading to their empowerment and a brighter future. He encouraged them to spread the message of the positive impact of sports on their lives and to promote a healthy lifestyle among their peers. The Deputy Commis-

sioner while speaking on the occasion, highlighted the objective of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme saying that the scheme aims to educate girl child and improve the efficacy of welfare services for them. Deputy Commissioner also highlighted the importance of sports activities in promoting healthy lifestyles and fighting drug abuse. He highlighted various schemes for women and encouraged them to avail the benefits, empowering them to become independent and self-reliant. He

also quoted examples of famous women personalities, urging the girls to learn from their achievements and strive for excellence. Furthermore, he emphasized the commitment of the Government to providing equal opportunities to women, ensuring their participation in all aspects of development. He motivated the girls to take up sports, not only for physical fitness but also for building confidence, discipline and teamwork skills. The girl participants also shared their experiences and threw light on the BBBP scheme, discussing its impact on their lives and the importance of education and sports in their development. The tournament was organized to promote healthy competition, teamwork, and sportsmanship among the participants, while also raising awareness about the BBBP scheme.

RTO Jammu suspends 153 DLs, issues notices to 403 traffic violators

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 23

Tightening its noose on the traffic violators of district Jammu, RTO Jammu, Pankaj Bhagotra, suspended 153 driving licenses and issued notices to around 403 violators during the last 02 days. The 153 Driving Licenses have been suspended in all aspects of recommendations of different enforcement agencies/ teams and 250 more Driving Licenses are under process for suspension and will be suspended after completion of notice period. Meanwhile, the enforcement teams of RTO Jammu laid Nakas regularly at different locations in Jammu district viz. Bhagwati Nagar, Tawi 4th Bridge, Near Railway Station Jammu and Jammu-Akhnoor Road to monitor complaints of overcharging during ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra. The main focus of the last two day's drive was overloading and overcharging by Passenger Vehicles particularly e-Autos and e-rikshaws carrying Amarnath Pilgrims and vehicles plying with expired documents. During the



last 02 day's enforcement drive nearly 265 vehicles, which includes 2-Wheelers, Taxi/ Maxi Cabs, e-Rikshaws, e-Autos and Three Wheeler (Passenger) etc. were checked for various offenses viz. Route Permit violations, RC violations, Overloading, without Seat Belt, Without Helmet, without SLD etc. out of which 90 vehicles e-challaned. A fine of Rs. 1,10,000 (Rupees one lakh ten thousand) was imposed on violators during these drives. In addition to issuing Challans, the overloaded Passenger Vehicles were offloaded on spot and

vehicles were arranged for the extra passengers for their respective destinations. The drives are being widely appreciated by the pilgrims and have shown RTO's commitment to fair practices and regulatory standards. The public/ commuters were encouraged to report any malpractice with the Motor Vehicle Department during the drives. The enforcement teams comprised of Rehana Tabassam, ARTO (HQR), Motor Vehicles Inspectors, Vikas Srivats, Jasbir Singh, Jagandeep Singh, SMVI, Amanish Sharma.

BBBP: Awareness programme on Digital Skill & Learning organised by SANKALP:HEW Kishtwar

JI NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, JULY 23

Under the direction of DSWO Kishtwar, Zubair Ahmad Lone, SANKALP:HEW team organised Digital Skill and Learning camps at Mother's Pride School and Al-hilal Educational Institute Kishtwar under the banner of BBBP. The camps aimed to foster digital skills and learning among girl students. The importance of the digital skills for the personal, educational and professional development of girls was emphasized. The students were made aware of the basic digital knowledge and skills that would help them in enhancing their learning opportunities, improved career prospects, and greater social empowerment. Besides, a session on digital safety was also conducted by the team. Digital safety refers to the practices and measures taken to protect personal information, devices, and online activities from cyber threats. This includes protecting against hackers, identity theft and phishing scams.

Sanitary napkin vending machines installed in Jammu schools by Mission Shakti

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 23

Under the supervision of District Social Welfare Officer Mamta Rajput, Mission Shakti SANKALP HEW Jammu installed sanitary napkin vending machines at Government Girls Higher Secondary School RS Pura and Government Girls High School Rangpur Maulani. An awareness seminar on menstrual hygiene and women-centric schemes was organised at GGHSS RS Pura. Dr. Eera Suri delivered a lecture on menstrual hygiene, stressing the importance of proper hygiene practices during menstruation. The session was attended by students and staff, who were also informed about various government schemes designed for women's education, health, safety and empowerment. These schemes include Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), health-related



schemes of the National Health Mission (NHM), Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Ladli Beti, scholarship schemes and various skill and business startup programs. A similar session was held at Government Girls High School Rangpur Maulani, where Dr. Suri

again emphasised menstrual hygiene. Officials from SANKALP HEW Jammu highlighted the range of government initiatives aimed at empowering women, including educational and health schemes, skill development programs and support for starting busi-

nesses. In both schools, the installation of sanitary napkin vending machines aims to improve menstrual hygiene management among students. At the end of each session, sanitary napkins and refreshments were distributed to the students.

Launch of JK Samadhan portal: District Administration Samba joins virtually

JI NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, JULY 23

The District Administration Samba, under the supervision of District Commissioner (DC) Abhishek Sharma, organized a highly successful program to mark the launch of the JK Samadhan portal. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from the general public, highlighting the community's keen interest in leveraging digital solutions for efficient governance. The program featured a live address by the Lieutenant Governor from SKICC, which was streamed to the attendees at the Conference Hall in Samba. The Lt Governor's address emphasized the significance of the JK Samadhan portal in



streamlining grievance redressal and enhancing public service delivery across the UT. The event was attended by a diverse audience, including members of the general public and various officers, who gathered to celebrate this significant step towards digital governance. The launch of the JK Samadhan portal is expected to bring about greater transparency, accountability, and efficiency in addressing the concerns of the residents of Samba and beyond. DC expressed gratitude

to the participants and highlighted the district administration's commitment to adopting innovative technologies to better serve the people.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

Sr. Divisional Material Manager, NRY, Store Branch DRM Office, Firuzpur for and on behalf of President of India, invited tenders through e-procurement system for the supply of the following items:-

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Description	Quantity	Due Date
1.	94245099C	Air compressor Diesel Driven 450 CFM Pressure 10 Kg/Cm2 as per Specification attached	1+1=02 Nos	12.08.2024

Note:- Above tenders with detailed description are uploaded on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. The firm, who desires to participate against e-tenders, is advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which they would require to have a class III digital certificate form certifying Agencies authorized under IT Act 2000 by Govt. of India. Manual offers against e-tenders will not be accepted.

Tender Notice No. 14/2024-25 Date:- 15.07.2024 2230/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Big on jobs, reward...

4.1 crore youth over a 5-year period with a central outlay of Rs 2 lakh crore," Sitharaman said while presenting the seventh successive Budget.

The Minister said that one crore youth will be skilled by top companies in five years. A 12-month internship program with a monthly allowance of Rs 5,000 was also announced.

The stock market response to the Budget was lukewarm with the BSE Sensex shedding 73 points.

Hailing the Budget, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that it ensures inclusive growth, benefiting every segment of society and paving the way for a developed India.

Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi, who has been aggressive in cornering the government over a host of issues, termed the Budget as 'Kursi Bachao' Budget - indirectly referring to the government's compulsion to keep the allies happy.

Earlier, Sitharaman announced a special financial package of Rs 15,000 crore for Andhra Pradesh and said that concerted efforts would be made to fulfill the commitments under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act. The Finance Minister said that the special financial package will be arranged in the current financial year to develop the capital of Andhra Pradesh.

In the case of Bihar, Sitharaman announced that the Centre will support development of an industrial node at Gaya on Amritsar-Kolkata Industrial Corridor. Road connectivity projects worth Rs 26,000 crore would also be taken up in the state. The road projects include Patna-Purnea Expressway, Buxar-Bhagalpur Expressway and additional two-lane bridge over the Ganga at Buxar.

Despite unveiling several populist schemes, Sitharaman stuck to fiscal prudence and pegged the fiscal deficit at 4.9% of the GDP for FY25 from the earlier estimate of 5.1% projected in the interim Budget this year. She emphasized that the fiscal consolidation path announced by her in 2021 has served the economy very well, and the government will aim to reach a deficit below 4.5% next year.

Tax buoyancy and record dividend transfer by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have contributed to the government's lower fiscal deficit target.

Ahead of three state elections, the Budget has made an all-out attempt to woo voters, especially the youth and salaried middle class. In the new tax regime, it has enhanced standard deduction to Rs 75,000 from Rs 50,000, resulting in a saving Rs 17,500. As a result, no income tax will be payable for income up to Rs 3 lakh annually.

The Budget also provided impetus to manufacturing by proposing 12 "Plug and Play" industrial parks, reducing compliance burden for MSMEs and setting up e-commerce export hubs. It also exempted nearly two dozen critical minerals from custom duties.

Looking to take forward the success in local manufacturing of electronics, the Budget 2024-25 has also proposed to cut basic custom duty (BCD) on mobile phones, mobile PCBA (printed circuit board assembly) and mobile chargers to 15% from 20%.

In order to enhance domestic value addition in gold and precious metal jewellery in the country, the Finance Minister proposed to reduce customs duties on gold and silver to 6% and that on platinum to 6.4%. The lower custom duty would mean prices of these items going down.

At the same time, Sitharaman also provided relief to cancer patients exempting three more cancer drugs from customs duties.

For boosting foreign capital inflows, the Budget also proposed to reduce the corporate tax rate on foreign companies from 40 to 35 per cent. Seeking to bolster the Indian start-up ecosystem, Sitharaman announced to abolish angel tax for all classes of investors.

Top industry body CII hailed the Union Budget saying it provides continuity to India's successful holistic economic strategy to drive growth with inclusion.

"The Union Budget 2024-25 takes forward the government's successful economic strategy of the previous two terms, led by investments and reforms and focused on inclusion and empowerment. The announcement on collaboration with States to take forward the next gen reforms with the twin objectives of employment generation and growth, is a welcome step," CII director general Chandrajit Banerjee said.

Infrastructure boost remained the cornerstone of the Budget as in the previous year with the Finance Minister provisioning Rs 11.11 lakh crore for capital expenditure (capex) during FY25. Housing for the poor under PM Awas scheme and expansion of rural road network were some of the key highlights of the Budget.

Centre unveils...

Rs 98,719 crore and capital receipts are Rs 19,671 crore.

This was the sixth consecutive budget to be presented in the Parliament for J&K after imposition of Governor's rule in June 2018 following withdrawal of BJP's support to Mehbooba Multi-led government.

After imposition of Governor's Rule, the budget for 2019-20 was approved by then J&K Governor as head of the State Administrative Council. After downgrading of J&K into a UT in August 2019, all budgets of the UT were presented in the Parliament.

On February 5 this year, J&K's interim budget for 2024-25 was also presented in the Parliament.

Budget speech

In her budget speech, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that Rs 17,000 crore special assistance has been worked out to correct complex financial issues of J&K.

"This year the Government of India decided to correct this historical aberration by providing adequate financial support to Jammu and Kashmir coupled with reforms to come out of the perpetual fiscal stress. I am happy to mention here that to correct the complex fiscal issues of Jammu and Kashmir, a special central assistance of Rs 17,000 crore has been worked out," she said.

She said the unprecedented assistance would lead to complete improvement in fiscal position enabling the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to correct the legacy of financial challenges and work towards fulfilling the developmental needs and aspirations of the people, while maintaining stable fiscal health.

"As a result of this Rs 17,000 crore central assistance, the fiscal deficit to GDP ratio will be 3.0% in 2024-25 well within the target," she said.

She announced that apart from this, a lump sum special grant of Rs 5,000 crore as additional central assistance is being provided in the current financial year.

She added that that due to historical challenges in financial management, J&K has a legacy of very high fiscal stress.

"Mr. Speaker Sir, while analysing the fiscal situation of Jammu and Kashmir, we observed that due to historical challenges in financial management, it has a legacy of very high fiscal stress. This is aggravated by the committed nature of the

major expenditures not supported by proportionate increase in its revenues. Its dependence on central grant is to the tune of around 70% of its total expenditure. The perpetual fiscal stress leads to frequent use of ways and means advances and overdraft," she said. KNO

Budget Highlights 2024-25

Establishment of Micro Food Processing Units for creating employment opportunities, especially in rural areas.

Construction of 6 Grain storage units in 6 districts which are deficit in grain storage facility under the Scheme "World's Largest Grain Storage".

12,000 additional Self Help Groups (SHGs) to be formed.

80,000 houses to be constructed under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Gramin (PMAY-G).

26,000 hectare area to be covered under Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)

New 12 off-beat tourist destinations, 6 each in Jammu and Kashmir divisions, to be developed. Keran as border tourist village, Tosamaidan and Sitharan as circuits.

Revival and restoration of 75 identified heritage sites/cultural sites. Establishment of 8 cultural centers.

46 estates to be developed to fulfill the goal of 'Made in Jammu and Kashmir'.

Under Jammu and Kashmir Rural Employment Generation Programme (J&K REGP), 1,372 units are targeted to be setup during 2024-25.

New Start-up Policy to be introduced for creating entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Two Cancer Institutes' at Jammu and Srinagar to be made fully operational during 2024-25.

Enhancing DNB Seats to 400 and creation of ABHA IDs for 1.35 crore population.

100% screening of 30+ age population for hypertension and diabetes.

AIIMS, Awantipora to be made functional by March, 2025.

New Nursing College at Handwara to be set-up.

Attainment of TB free status in all the remaining districts.

2,176 new Kindergartens to be established.

18,499 Schools to be provided sports equipments', 2,584 Schools to be provided ICT labs and Smart Classrooms, 43 Robotic Labs and 30 Virtual Reality Labs to be established.

Establishment of Science Centres in 100 Schools and vocational Education to be introduced in new 554 Schools.

20 national sports events to be organized in 2024-25.

Placement drives for 1,000 pass outs to be organized in collaboration with big business and industrial establishments.

New initiative to create ecosystem for promotion of enterprises and self-employment, generate over 5 lakh opportunities for self-employment and expand investments through credit support.

New age courses to be introduced in 10 Industrial Training Institutes.

Outreach and counselling activities to be conducted for aspiring job seekers through Model Career Centers (MCCs).

All persons with disability to be covered under Nirmaya Health Insurance Scheme.

11 Shakti Sadan and 04 Sakhi Niwas to be established.

7,708 women beneficiaries with establishment of 1,502 units to be targeted under self-employment scheme

80 schools to be transformed into smart schools in tribal areas.

An addition of 3,014 MW installed capacity in phased manner till year 2026-27 with cumulative increase of design energy of 10,714.50 Million units per annum.

Creation/Augmentation of 38,150 KVA Distribution Transformer, Replacement of 14,000 Ckm of dilapidated LT bare conductor.

Providing of reliable power supply to the far-flung and remote areas of Gurez.

5,000 Kilometres of road length to be black-topped during 2024-25

194 new projects sanctioned at an estimated cost of Rs 1023.42 crore under NABARD to be taken for execution during 2024-25.

Rs 1000 crore new road and bridge projects to be taken up under NABARD loan assistance under RIDF Tranche XXX during 2024-25.

Completion of 60 ongoing bridges is targeted during 2024-25.

4.26 lakh households to be provided Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) to achieve 100% coverage under tap water connections.

Shahpur Kandi Dam project likely to be commissioned which will benefit Jammu and Kashmir with 1,150 cusecs of irrigation water facilities to 32,186 hectare of land in Kathua and Samba.

Balance work of Tawi Barrage to be completed. 197 minor irrigation schemes to be completed during 2024-25, which envisages creation of irrigation potential of 38,723 hectare.

All projects to be completed under Smart city mission.

Western Foreshore Road along Dal Lake, Srinagar to be constructed.

Introduction of 200 e-buses under PM e-Bus Sewa scheme.

Inter Model Station (IMS) in collaboration with NHAI to be developed at Katra.

Finalization of Master Plan of all 78 Cities/Towns.

Development of Sewerage network of Houseboats in Dal-Nige-en Lake, including sewerage network of hamlets inside lake.

Implement of Van se Jal, Jal se Jeevan, an innovative water conservation techniques through water shed management approach, promote sustainable agricultural practices and revitalize traditional water bodies, including wetlands.

Conservation and rejuvenation of Wular Lake to enhance the livelihood of the local people, through ecotourism.

Completion of construction of 1,500 flats as transit accommodation for Kashmiri Migrant employees during 2024-25.

Remaining 276 posts out of 6,000 posts under PM-Package for Kashmiri Migrants to be filled in 2024-25.

e-KYC of all beneficiaries under Public Distribution System to be completed.

Roll out of Smart PDS in Jammu and Kashmir.

4,000 AC agriculture pumps to be replaced by Solar Pumps in phased manner under PM-KUSUM

Around 04 MW rooftop solar power plants to be installed on the government buildings. 22,494 Government buildings to be 100% solarised in phased manner.

5,000 improved biomass cook-stoves to be provided in the tribal areas to reduce indoor air pollution and fuel use.

Solarization of all routes and camps of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra.

Operationalization of Bio-Technology Park at Kathua.

Young Scientist Awards/Fellowships among the outstanding researchers.

IDTR at KotBhalwal, Jammu to be completed and operationalized in 2024-25.

Institute of Inspection and Certification Centre (ICC) at Samba, Jammu to be completed in 2024-25.

Implementation of Vehicle Location Tracking Platform (VLTP) for safety of women in public transport vehicles.

Automated Testing Stations (ATSS) to be established for testing fitness of motor vehicles in private sector.

v Construction of Modern Bus Terminal at TRC, Srinagar.

Budget provides...

villages, poor and farmers of the country on the path of prosperity," he said while addressing the nation after Financial Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget in Lok Sabha.

PM Modi said, "This budget is a continuation of the empowerment of the Neo Middle Class and it will give countless new opportunities to the youth."

"I congratulate all the countrymen for this important budget that will take the country to new heights of development," he added.

Congratulating the Finance Minister and her team, PM Modi said, "This visionary budget will uplift and empower every stratum of our society, paving the way for a brighter future for all."

Highlighting other steps taken in the budget, Modi said, "This budget will give a new scale to education and skill and will give new strength to the middle class."

"It has come with strong plans to empower the tribal society, Dalits and backward classes and ensuring economic participation of women," he further added.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also hailed the Budget and said, "The Budget 2024-25 not only exemplifies Bharat's newfound sense of purpose, hope and optimism under the PM Modi Ji -led NDA government but also fortifies them."

"Harnessing the power of Bharat's youth, Nari Shakti and farmers, the budget fuels the nation's pace on the path of emerging as a developed nation by ushering in a new era of employment and opportunities," he wrote on X.

LG expresses gratitude...

Living'.

"This budget with focus on employment, skilling, MSMEs and the middle class, seeks to translate the vision of empowering all sections of the population. Nine priorities for generating ample opportunities for all as envisaged in the budget will ensure faster progress and social equity," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor said the Budget-2024 meets the challenges of 21st century and provides unlimited opportunities to youth, women, farmers and entrepreneurs and lays down plans for prosperous rural India. He said the budget will speed up development of a robust agriculture infrastructure and urban development.

The Lt Governor said the focus on productivity and resilience in agriculture and measures highlighted in the budget will greatly benefit J&K. Natural farming, mission for oilseeds, vegetable production, supply chains and national cooperation will ensure inclusive growth for farmers, villages and labourers, he added.

"Jammu Kashmir has seized the opportunities of the 21st century and our youth are building a proud and prosperous Union Territory. Budget-2024 with focus on 'Employment & Skilling' and new schemes will give fresh impetus to youth empowerment and it will pave the way for higher participation of women in the workforce," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor said the Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan for saturation coverage for tribal families in tribal-majority villages and aspirational districts will be a game-changer.

"Budget-2024 ensures that the system at grassroots is strong and caring and people enjoy the fruits of social justice," he said.

In the Union budget...

Rs 40619. 30 crore also includes a sum of Rs 7900 crore, sanctioned as advance from Contingency Fund of India which

stand recouped to contingency Fund of India after demands for grants 2024 is passed by Parliament and the connected Appropriated Act is assented by the President of India.

In the Union budget, Rs 279 crore have been kept as grant for contribution towards J&K's Union Territory Disaster Response Fund. The UT Disaster Response Fund would meet the expenditure on account of mitigation of disasters caused due to natural calamities.

The Union Finance Ministry has also proposed to allocate grants towards equity contribution of 624 Megawatt Kiru power project, 800-MW Rattle power project, 540 MW- Kwar project and Jhelum-Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP).

As per budget documents, Rs 130 crore, Rs 476.44 crore, Rs 171.23 crore and Rs 500 crore grants have been respectively earmarked for equity contribution towards these projects.

Moreover, Rs 101. 77 crore have been proposed to bridge resource gap funding for infrastructure projects. KNO

Budget of J&K police...

Sitharaman announced that the Union Government has agreed to take the entire budget of the Police from the Union Territory of J&K." It is observed that around 11% of budget of Jammu and Kashmir is used for Police. Such expenses on policing being unavoidable, leaves limited space for spending on development and welfare projects. I am happy to inform this august House that the Union Government has agreed to take the entire burden of the budget of police from the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir," she said.

With this announcement, J&K Police's budget would no longer be part of J&K's budget and would be part of the Union Budget. She said that the Central Government will now provide for the salary, pension and other costs of Jammu and Kashmir Police for which an allocation of Rs 12,000 crore has been made in the annual budget.

This is for the first time after reorganization of J&K that J&K Police's budget has become part of the Union Government's budget. Under the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act-2019, police would be under direct control of the Central Government as J&K Legislative Assembly has no powers to make laws on "police" and "public order". KNO

Soldier killed in...

General Upendra Dwivedi in Jammu on Saturday, where they reviewed the security situation in response to the recent surge in terror attacks in the region. According to sources, security forces initiated a cordon and search operation (CASO) in a village in the Budhal area of Rajouri district after suspected terrorists opened fire at a security picket/post early in the morning.

This incident follows another attempted terror attack on a Territorial Army (TA) battalion post in Galuti Patrara village of Manjakote, Rajouri district, on July 7. An Army sentry deployed at the post sustained injuries during the initial exchange of gunfire, which lasted for half an hour on Sunday morning. The Terrorist attack was thwarted as fire was retaliated with equal caliber by the army. KNO

LG launches JK...

It will improve governance through advanced monitoring and analytical capability and free the system from anonymous complaints and foster greater trust between citizens and the administration, he further added.

Observing that Ease and Speed are two most important factors - ease to lodge complaints and speed to resolve grievances, the Lt Governor said the new system will provide a user-friendly interface to the citizens and is dedicated to resolve the complaints within the time frame, besides fixing the accountability of nodal officers.

Citizens can lodge grievances via call center, online mode and through 'JK SAMADHAN MOBILE APP'. JK SAMADHAN web portal (<https://samadhan.jk.gov.in>) and the mobile app launched today are multilingual and citizens can write their complaint in English, Hindi and Urdu, he observed.

The Lt Governor said the state-of-the-art grievance redressal system will ensure efficient and speedy redressal of citizen grievances. He said the monitoring of grievances on GIS using heatmap will address systemic issues in particular areas and automated flow of grievances to concerned nodal officer of the department. Chairpersons of District Development Councils and people from different walks of life were also present on the occasion. KNO

J&K Govt dismisses...

Worker in the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj S/o Hassam Ul Din Geelani R/o Basgran, Uri, District Baramulla, is a hardcore drug peddler. He had received huge consignment of heroin from drug smugglers across LoC in PoJK, playing pivotal role in the generation of funds derived from narco trade that inevitably gets channelized to sustain terrorists- secessionists ecosystem in J&K. He was at the forefront of running a drug cartel in north Kashmir belt and was in constant touch with the individuals of J&K Origin, who had exfiltrated into Pakistan in 1990, for terrorist training and are currently settled in PoJK.

Government has adopted a Zero tolerance policy towards the anti-national elements who have been taking advantage of being in the Government service. KNO

CS asks to establish critical...

While taking appraisal of the faculty status in these Colleges, the Chief Secretary stressed on filling all the available positions of Assistant Professors besides taking measures for engaging eligible persons for higher positions. He asked for repeating the advertisements till all the faculty positions are availed by these Colleges.

He maintained that the old medical colleges like SKIMS, GMC Jammu/Srinagar should play a mentoring role for the overall handholding and capacity building of staff in these Colleges to enhance their efficiency and outcomes.

The Chief Secretary impressed upon the Health department to work towards offering Drug De-addiction Indoor Patient Department (IPD) facilities in its District Hospitals where there is availability of space and professional psychiatrists. He called for better utilization of these resources for bringing respite to the victims of drug addiction.

Dulloo reviewed progress on the major infrastructure projects including the balance work on the 07 new medical colleges at Kathua, Doda, Rajouri, Anantnag, Baramulla, Udhampur and Handwara.

He also assessed progress on operationalization of new block of Bone & Joint Hospital Srinagar and Extension of Labour Room at SMGS Hospital Jammu. He asked for taking swift steps for operationalization of Phase 2nd of Government Dental College Jammu.

Dept. of Horticulture, J&K bags 1st position in International Agriculture & Horti Expo-2024, at New Delhi



JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 23

The Department of Horticulture J&K has bagged first prize at International Agriculture & Horti Expo-2024 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

The Department of Horticulture J&K had participated in the International Agriculture & Horti Expo-2024, the mega exhibition which was held at Pragati Maidan New Delhi, w.e.f. 20th to 22nd July 2024.

The 3-day exhibition aimed to focus on Agricultural and Horticultural Advancements and International Trade; Protected Cultivation (Greenhouse), Irrigation & Farming Technologies; Organic Farming and Fresh Fruits, Vegetables, Cereals etc.; Hi-tech Seeds, Fertilizers & Pesticides; Processed Foods & Post Harvest Technologies; Agri Finance, Insurance

& Research Institutes; Cold Storage & Technologies. Concurrent shows 'Farmers Workshops', World Organic Expo, Food & Technology Expo Govt. Achievements & Schemes.

The Departmental stall was installed in the said Expo, to showcase various fruit cultivars being cultivated in Jammu and Kashmir. A large number of people visited the stall during three days.

The exhibits of fresh and dry fruits displayed at the stall invited the attention of visitors as well as the management of the expo. At the valedictory session of the expo, the participation of Department of Horticulture, Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir was declared spectacular and adjudged most attractive among all the stalls of the expo and has got first prize in the International Agriculture & Horti Expo 2024.

Awareness programs on new laws, menstrual hygiene and skill development held in Ramban



JI NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, JULY 23

A significant event was organized in Ramban to empower young women through a comprehensive awareness program focusing on Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), menstrual hygiene, and skill development. Under the direction of Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary and the supervision of District Social Welfare Officer, Rahul Gupta. The event saw active participation from local students.

The program educated the girl students about the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, emphasizing their legal rights and protections. This session aimed to enhance legal literacy and empower young women to seek justice and equality. Additionally, Muzaima Banoo, Gender Specialist from the District Hub for

Empowerment of Women, moderated a crucial session on menstrual hygiene management. Students received vital information on maintaining menstrual health, breaking menstrual stigma, and effective use of sanitary products, promoting overall health and well-being.

The event also highlighted the importance of skill development, introducing various techniques and available facilities within the district to enhance employability and foster self-reliance among young women. The program concluded with a group photo, symbolizing the commitment of the district administration and the Department of Social Welfare to the empowerment of women. This initiative reflects the district's dedication to fostering an informed and capable female population.

DDC Rajouri discusses MGNREGA convergence plan for FY 2024-25

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, JULY 23

District Development Commissioner Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat today chaired a meeting to discuss the MGNREGA convergence plan for the financial year 2024-25.

During the meeting, the DDC emphasized the importance of a well-planned convergence strategy, highlighting the need for departments to work in coordination. He stressed that a coordinated approach would ensure the formulation of an effective plan that addresses the specific needs of the district.

The DDC directed the departments to focus on key areas, including creation of durable assets that benefit the rural community in consonance with priorities of the district and development goals,



optimal utilization of resources and ensuring accountability in the implementation. He also said that timely formulation and proper implementation of the convergence plan on the ground will facilitate the creation

of durable assets and provide work to the rural labour. He emphasized the importance of collaboration and coordination among the departments to achieve the desired outcomes.

The meeting was

attended by the GM DIC, Fareed Kohli; ACP, Sheraz Chowhan; CPO, Maqsood Ahmed; AD FCS&CA, Rohit Kumar; EXEN I&FC Rajouri, Asrar Khan; EXEN I& FC Nowshera, Sunil Seth and Block Development Officers.

Launch of JK Samadhan portal: District Administration Rajouri joins virtually

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, JULY 23

In a significant step towards enhancing public grievance redressal, Lieutenant Governor Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha today launched the JK Samadhan portal, an AI-based platform for citizens to register complaints and track their resolution.

The district administration Rajouri joined the launch event through live telecast from the DC office complex.

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat, was also present on the occasion. Among the others, ADC Rajouri, Rajeev Kumar Khajuria; ACR, Mohammad Jhanjhan Khan; ACP, Sheraz Chowhan; DSHO, PP Sagotra; EXEN PDD Rajouri, Mohammad Rashid and other officers also attended the event.

The JK Samadhan portal, developed in partnership with Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BIS-AG-N) aims to provide a multilingual platform for citizens to register their grievances and track their resolution in real-time. The portal is designed to enhance accessibility and responsiveness, ensuring timely redressal of public grievances.

The launch event was widely attended, and the portal is expected to revolutionize public grievance redressal in Jammu and Kashmir. With the JK Samadhan portal, citizens can now register their complaints and track their resolution. This development is a significant milestone in the efforts of the Government to enhance public services and ensure good governance in the region.

GOVT. OF INDIA UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN, DARHAL

email: -cdpofficialdarhal@gmail.com

Subject:- Tentative Merit/Select List of Sahayikas (AWHs) of Poshan Project Darhal under Phase-III- Calling of objections thereof.

NOTICE

Whereas, vide advertisement notification No.02 of 2024, Dated:-01-03-2024, 06(Six) number of posts of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) were advertised for filling up of the vacant posts in Poshan Project Darhal in pursuance of HR Policy as notified Vide Govt. order No:- 103-JK(SWD) of 2023, dated:-28-04-2023; and Whereas, 19 number of applications were received for the vacant posts of Anganwadi Helpers (Sahayikas), for various anganwadi centers in different Panchayats of Poshan Project Budhal, as on last date of receipt of application i.e.18-03-2024; and Whereas, after scrutiny of application as per eligibility conditions as contained in the aforementioned advertisement notification, in accordance with HR policy referred above, the tentative merit list alongwith select list has been framed detailed as Annexure "A" & "B"; Now, therefore, objections if any with regard to merit/ residential status/Qualification/Marks/Date of Birth etc are hereby called from general public/ applicants of the concerned ward/ Panchayat against the tentative merit list (Annexure A & B) within ten days, from the date of issuance of this notice, falling which no claim shall be entertained.

Sd/-
(Najma Naize)
Child Development Project Officer
Poshan Darhal
(Member Secretary Selection Committee)
Dated:-20/07/2024.

No:-CDPO/Darhal/2024-25/310-16

ANNEXURE "A"

TENTATIVE MERIT LIST UNDER PHASE-III OF SAHAYIKAS (ANGANWADI HELPERS) ANGANWARI CENTRE /PANCHAYAT /MC WARD WISE VIDE ADVERTISEMENT NOTIFICATION NO.02 OF 2024, DATED:-01-03-2024

S. No	Name of the Project	Name of Panchayat/ Municipality	Name of Anganwari Centre	Ward Number/ Name	S.No	Name of Candidate	Parentage / Husband Name	Date of Birth (DD-MM-YYYY)	Qualification (As per Clause III-D and Clause III-G of Govt. Order No.103.JK(SWD) of 2023, Dated:-28-04-2023)			Remarks	
									10th Marks Obtained	Max. Marks	%age		
1	Darhal	Rajdhani-B	Upper Lam W.No.5	W.No.05, Upper Lam	1	Shabnam Kouser	W/O Shabir Ahmed	14-02-2005	318	500	63.60	Yes	
					2	Syra Koser	D/O Abdul Ahad	18-09-1996	287	500	57.40	Yes	Name donot figure in Pyt. Ward Voter List & Candidatutre dropped as one Married canadidate is available in the same ward.
					3	Tahira Yasmeen	D/O Mohd Ishaq	03-03-1992	211	500	42.20	Yes	Name donot figure in Pyt. Ward Voter List & Candidatutre dropped as one Married canadidate is available in the same ward.
					4	Kulsoom Begum	D/O Abdul Ahad	04-03-1992	192	500	38.40	No	Name donot figure in Pyt. Ward Voter List & Candidatutre dropped as one Married canadidate is available in the same ward.
2	Darhal	Mangota-A	Danna -A W.No.1	W.No.1 Danna -A	1	Rubia Koser	W/O Mohd Kafil	04-03-2003	220	500	44.00	No	
					2	Zabina Akhter	W/O Mohd Maroof	01-07-1992	185	500	37.00	No	
					3	Yasmeen Akhter	D/O Nazir Hussain	11-08-1998	321	500	64.20	No	Candidatutre dropped as two Married canadidate are available in the same ward.
3	Darhal	Alal	Alal -A W.No.2	W.No.2 Alal -A	1	Rifat Naz	W/O Javid Iqbal	31-12-2005	291	500	58.20	No	
					2	Shahida Kouser	W/O Waseem Raja	15-08-1995	278	500	55.60	No	
					3	Mesba Choudhary	W/O Naveed Iqbal	01-05-2001	241	500	48.20	No	
					4	Khalida Rani	D/O Badar Maneer	02-04-1997	226	500	45.20	No	Candidatutre dropped as four Married canadidate are available in the same ward.
					5	Rubina Kouser	W/O S Mohd Sharaz	01-01-1993	Middle Pass				Candidatutre dropped as three Matriculate canadidate are available in the same ward.
4	Darhal	Rajdhani-B	Kashmiri Mohalla W.No.2	W.No.2 Kashmiri Mohalla	1	Rukhsana Firdose	W/O Yasar Nazir	04-01-2002	210	500	42.00	No	
					2	Urfee Jan	W/O Farhad Rafiq Mir	03-01-1999	Middle Pass				Candidatutre dropped as one Matriculate canadidate is available in the same ward.
					2	Salma Kouser	W/O Waheed Ahmed	01-12-2002	289	500	57.80	Yes	
					3	Salma Kouser	W/O Waheed Ahmed	02-12-2002	289	500	57.80	Yes	
5	Darhal	SaaJ	Saj -A Khoor W.No.5	Khoor W.No.5	3	Shaheen Bhatti	W/O Zaheer Ahmed	08-04-1989	198	500	39.60	Yes	
					4	Noreen Kouser	D/O Mohd Arshed	05-04-1993	179	500	35.80	Yes	Name donot figure in Pyt. Ward Voter Lis & Candidatutre dropped as three Married canadidate are available in the same ward.
6	Darhal	Lower Dodaj C	Lower Dodaj C (Sabzi -B) W. No. 4	W. No. 4	1	Iqra Razaq	W/O Naiz Ahmed	04-02-2002	187	500	37.40	No	

ANNEXURE "B"

TENTATIVE MERIT LIST UNDER PHASE-III OF SAHAYIKAS (ANGANWADI HELPERS) ANGANWARI CENTRE /PANCHAYAT /MC WARD WISE VIDE ADVERTISEMENT NOTIFICATION NO.02 OF 2024, DATED:-01-03-2024

S. No	Name of the Project	Name of Panchayat/ Municipality	Name of Anganwari Centre	Ward Number/ Name	S. No	Name of Candidate	Parentage / Husband Name	Date of Birth (DD-MM-YYYY)	Qualification (As per Clause III-D and Clause III-G of Govt. Order No.103.JK(SWD) of 2023, Dated:-28-04-2023)			12th (Yes/ No)
									10th Marks Obtained	Max. Marks	%age	
1	Darhal	Rajdhani-B	Upper Lam W.No.5	W.No.05,Upper Lam	1	Shabnam Kouser	W/O Shabir Ahmed	14-02-2005	318	500	63.60	Yes
2	Darhal	Mangota-A	Danna -A W.No.1	W.No.1 Danna -A	1	Rubia Koser	W/O Mohd Kafil	04-03-2003	220	500	44.00	No
3	Darhal	Alal	Alal -A W.No.2	W.No.2 Alal -A	1	Rifat Naz	W/O Javid Iqbal	31-12-2005	291	500	58.20	No
4	Darhal	Rajdhani-B	Kashmiri Mohalla W.No.2	W.No.2 Kashmiri Mohalla	1	Rukhsana Firdose	W/O Yasar Nazir	04-01-2002	210	500	42.00	No
5	Darhal	SaaJ	Saj -A Khoor W.No.5	Khoor W.No.5	1	Salma Kouser	W/O Waheed Ahmed	01-12-2002	289	500	57.80	Yes
6	Darhal	Lower Dodaj C	Lower Dodaj C (Sabzi -B) W. No. 4	W. No. 4	1	Iqra Razaq	W/O Naiz Ahmed	04-02-2002	187	500	37.40	No

No:-CDPO/Darhal/2024-25/310-16
Dated:-20-07-2024

DIP/J-3271/24
Date: 23-7-24

Sd/-
(Najma Naize)
CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER
POSHAN DARHAL
(Chairperson Selection Committee)

EDITORIAL

A milestone in Jammu's healthcare!

Finally, the UT administration has introduced PET scan services at Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu. It is a big moment for the people of Jammu region who have always cried for better health infrastructure and adequate presence of doctors at government-run hospitals. This significant development not only signifies progress in medical infrastructure but also promises profound benefits for patients and their families who have long struggled with limited access to advanced diagnostic technologies. PET scans, renowned for their role in detecting cancer, heart disease, and neurological conditions by providing detailed images of cellular activity, are crucial for early diagnosis and precise treatment planning. Until now, patients in Jammu Division faced the daunting challenge of traveling outside the region or relying on expensive private hospitals for this vital diagnostic tool. The inauguration of PET scan services at GMC Jammu eliminates these hurdles, bringing state-of-the-art medical care within reach of local residents. The initiation of PET scan services at GMC Jammu owes much to the dedicated efforts of a multidisciplinary team led by the Principal, whose vision and persistence have culminated in this achievement. The immediate impact of this facility was evident on its first day, with four PET scans performed, highlighting its readiness to serve the community. This success underscores the collaborative spirit among medical professionals, essential for such groundbreaking initiatives. Moreover, the integration of PET scan services with upcoming radiation therapy machines at the State Cancer Institute promises to revolutionize cancer treatment in the region. By leveraging PET imaging for radiation planning, treatments will become more precise, enhancing outcomes and reducing the physical and emotional burden on patients. Affordability remains a cornerstone of this initiative, with efforts underway to ensure that PET scans and related services at the State Cancer Institute remain accessible to all, particularly those facing financial constraints. This commitment reflects the institute's dedication to extending life-saving care equitably, aligning with broader public health objectives. The need for such advanced medical services in Jammu is underscored by the significant cancer burden documented in recent years. With thousands of cases registered, the availability of PET scan services holds promise for early detection and improved treatment outcomes, crucial in tackling prevalent cancers such as lung and breast cancer. GMC Jammu, as a pivotal healthcare institution for the entire region, plays a vital role in providing comprehensive medical care, especially during the winter months when it serves as a refuge for patients from Kashmir. The introduction of PET scan services is set to alleviate the suffering of countless families while enhancing healthcare quality across the board. Looking ahead, sustained investment in healthcare infrastructure, continuous training for medical personnel, and robust public awareness campaigns will be essential to building on this milestone. The success of PET scan services at GMC Jammu should serve as a blueprint for further advancements in healthcare delivery throughout the region. The introduction of PET scan services at GMC Jammu represents not just a medical milestone but a beacon of hope for the community.

Digital Prescriptions Can Prevent Medication Misuse

DR FAZAL UL HAQ WANI AND ER RIZWAN UZ ZAMAN WANI

Drug abuse and usage are major global issues that result in worse health outcomes, higher healthcare expenses, and an increase in illnesses resistant to drugs. Digitalization ensures appropriate medicine distribution monitoring and management, providing creative solutions to this problem. Implementing a digital prescription system with individual ID numbers for patients is one such approach that can greatly lower overuse and self-medication.

Digital Prescription with Unique ID Numbers

The fundamental component of this digital strategy is the allocation of a unique identification number to every patient, which is connected to their prescription medications. The system operates as follows

Doctor's Order: Medication prescriptions written by doctors are digitally stored and associated with each patient's individual ID. Authorized pharmacists can access a secure digital database including this prescription information.

Pharmacy Verification: Patients show their special ID when they visit a pharmacy to pick up their prescription medication. To confirm the prescription information, including the precise drugs and dosages recommended by the physician, the pharmacist consults the electronic prescription database.

Controlled Dispensation: The drug is given out by the pharmacist in accordance with the prescription written by the physician. The moment the medication is given, the transaction is entered into the computerized system, instantly updating the patient's medication history.

Preventing Multiple Dispensations: The system will indicate that a medication has previously been distributed if the patient tries to get the same prescription from a different pharmacy. This effectively stops overuse and misuse of medication by preventing the patient from taking more than is prescribed.

Advantages of Digital Prescription Systems for Improved Monitoring: Digital prescriptions let medical professionals keep a close eye on how their patients are taking their medications. This facilitates the early detection of overuse or self-medication behaviours and enables appropriate responses.

Digital methods lower the chance of errors resulting from illegible handwriting or inaccurate dose instructions by doing away with handwritten prescriptions.

Enhanced Patient Safety: The system guarantees that patients receive the appropriate drug and

dosage in real-time, hence improving patient safety in general.

Planning and policy-making for public health can benefit from the analysis of aggregated data from digital prescriptions to learn more about drug trends.

Prescriptions no longer need to be carried by patients, and pharmacies can quickly check and dispense drugs, improving process efficiency.

Challenges and Considerations

Although the advantages are obvious, there are a few issues to take into account:

Privacy and Security: It is crucial to protect patient data privacy and security. Sophisticated encryption and access controls are required to safeguard private data.

Infrastructure: To put such a system into place, a large sum of money must be spent on digital infrastructure, and pharmacists and healthcare professionals must

receive training.

Regulation and Compliance: To control the use of digital prescriptions and guarantee compliance throughout the healthcare industry, legal and regulatory frameworks must be put in place.

Conclusion

Digitalization has a lot of potential to reduce pharmaceutical usage and self-medication. We may establish a more regulated and effective pharmaceutical dispensing procedure by utilizing digital prescription systems that are associated with distinct patient identification numbers. This helps achieve the more general objective of improving public health outcomes in addition to enhancing patient safety. Although the path to complete healthcare digitization is difficult, it is an effort worth taking because of the possible rewards.

Feedback at wanifazal@gmail.com

"BJP's challenges and resolutions"

Simmering voices for separate Jammu state amidst proxy war with Pakistan

BY DR VARINDER SHARMA

Despite the historic abrogation of Article 370, which aimed to fully integrate Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of India, demands for a separate Jammu state are once again surfacing from various quarters. The objective of nullifying Article 370 was to dismantle the monopoly of a select few families over power and to devolve authority to the grassroots level, enabling people to have a say in decision-making institutions and elect their representatives beyond dynastic lines. However, the emergence of voices advocating for a separate Jammu state is a cause for concern for both the BJP leadership and citizens.

Recently, the ministry of home affairs issued a notification amending the transaction of business rules of the Jammu and Kashmir reorganisation act. This amendment, aimed at giving more powers to the Lieutenant Governor, has sparked renewed calls for a separate Jammu state. The notification under Section 55 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act 2019, inserting new sections to empower the Lieutenant Governor, was not well received by many and they started echoing voices of separate state for Jammu.

Social Media Reactions

Manu Khajuria, a London-based social activist with roots in Jammu,

Patna, and Kashmir, expressed her views on X (formerly Twitter). She tweeted, "If this is not the time for Jammu leaders to ask for a separate state, I don't know when is," garnering 153 likes, 32 reposts, and several comments. Rahul Dubey responded, "I don't think about separate states, but at least they talk about equality for both regions and stop appeasement politics." Manu Khajuria countered, "We are two separate regions with different aspirations and behavior. Doesn't Jammu deserve to have full statehood?"

Another user, Varinder Sharma, supported the idea, while Rahul Dubey suggested a solution, "Once a soldier gave a great suggestion to finish this conflict: break Kashmir into parts and join one part with Jammu and another with Ladakh." To this another social media user, argued, "Making Kashmir a separate territory with over 95% Muslims would be a strategic blunder by the Indian state. Jammu serves as a leverage with a Hindu majority population over Muslim-dominated Kashmir Valley. Jammu should negotiate for more power and resources from the government."

Manu Khajuria had an answer and I quote, "Jammu has made supreme sacrifices for the nation only to be treated as a sacrificial goat. It's been destroyed while being served as

a false leverage. Have Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Telangana become other countries?" Other Twitter users, like Hemant Sharma, voiced concerns, "Jammu is taken for granted, even by BJP. Forget about them granting a separate state for Jammu. Only one honest administrator J&K ever got was Shri Jagmohan. Rest all CMs and governors, bureaucracy are compromised. BJP of Jammu Kashmir is now diluted with induction of NC and INC leaders."

Gaurav Sharma replied to Manu Khajuria, stating, "You are the flag bearer of Jammu's rights and also in the good books of Jammu leaders. Then you should request them to raise voices in favor of Jammu."

Some users reminded Manu Khajuria of the Jammu State Morcha, a political group created in 1999-2000, advocating for a separate Jammu state. While the debate was extensive, these voices for a separate state are damaging the secular fabric for which BJP stands. Nowhere in the BJP manifesto is such a demand present. However, the BJP is working hard to restore peace in Kashmir, ensuring the return of displaced Kashmiri Pandits to their homeland.

India's Proxy War with Pakistan and Internal Challenges

India is currently engaged in a proxy war with Pakistan, a situation

that demands vigilance and strategic responses. Stray incidents of violence, particularly in Jammu division, have been reported recently, causing concern for the administration and security agencies. The morale of Indian forces remains high, with assurances that the sacrifices of soldiers will not go in vain. The government is determined to avenge these attacks and eliminate terrorists in their strongholds. Many might be thinking negative but the fact remains that our vigilant forces are eliminating these terrorists simultaneously.

A proactive approach will finish them all in few months and Jammu and Kashmir will completely be free from these terrorists who are fast losing ground. There seems to be an escalation in attacks but this again can't be construed as a failure in any way as repulsive attacks are eliminating terrorists in a big way. We are capable and will be eliminating militancy completely.

It is because of consistent efforts of BJP government at the Centre that several temples located in Kashmir are being revived and regular pooja besides other rituals are being held there. These efforts stand appreciated by even the local population of the same villages. Though some stray incidents of violence particularly in Jammu division, have been reported during the recent past, which are

a cause of worry for the administration as well as the securities agencies yet the morale of our forces is high. These sacrifices of our soldiers won't go waste and we will definitely be avenging these attacks.

BJP's Developmental Efforts

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to ensuring Jammu and Kashmir's development, connecting the region through railroads and airways with the rest of the world. The establishment of AIIMS, IIT, and IIM in Jammu exemplifies the government's efforts to bring development at par with other states. Massive tunneling and road work are underway to connect border areas with the rest of the country. This unprecedented infrastructure development aims to provide better road connectivity and institutions previously denied by previous regimes, such as the National Conference, People's Democratic Party or that of Congress.

The BJP's vision includes restoring peace, facilitating the return of Kashmiri Pandits, and creating a conducive atmosphere for young people to pursue politics, start businesses, or excel in their chosen fields. However, the resurgence of demands for a separate Jammu state requires introspection by the BJP leadership to ensure that their efforts over the past decade are not undermined. People

must be informed about policies and programs aimed at empowering the masses in Jammu and Kashmir.

Resolve

The recent tweets by Manu Khajuria also highlight the sacrifices and struggles faced by the people of Jammu. She tweeted, "On one hand, the Supreme Sacrifice of our soldiers on the land weighs us down heavily. And on the other, normal life is just a façade. The Naya and normal was not the agenda for Jammu. The attitude has always been Jammu can wait or chin up and bear more." Despite limited response, her sentiments resonate with many who feel neglected.

The BJP must address these concerns and continue working towards the holistic development of Jammu and Kashmir. The party's leadership should introspect and ensure that the aspirations of the people are met, and their sacrifices are honored. The government's focus on infrastructure and development, coupled with strategic responses to internal and external threats, will pave the way for a prosperous and united Jammu and Kashmir and end bring at rest such demands of separate Jammu state which are nowhere on the agenda of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP).

(The writer is Co-convenor Professional Cell J&K BJP)

Tackling new wave of terror in Jammu

UMANG KOHLI

There has been a spate of terror attacks in the Jammu Region in the last few months. These terror attacks clearly show that the enemy has changed its tactics to strike into regions that had otherwise become peaceful. After the revocation of Article 370, China and Pakistan felt rattled about the new dynamics. China then tried to capture territory in Leh and Galwan took place. We all know Galwan was a well-planned operation by the PLA. This led to the movement of Indian Army Troops from the hinterland particularly from the Jammu region.

The void of boots on the ground in near peace regions of Jammu has led to a vacuum as far as the intelligence network is concerned. Normalcy has to be maintained for some time, also with fewer boots in the Jammu Region the human

intelligence that gets developed over some time gets depleted.

Most of the army posts in Jammu and Kashmir have an administrative setup based on locals. These locals provide fresh food, logistic support and other admirative material. Even in winter cut-off posts locals provide wood, and admirative backup in both Jammu and Kashmir. Now when troops are depleted all of a sudden, the intelligence gathering in the area dries up. It also leads to a shortage of earning opportunities for the locals making them more vulnerable to the lure of money to facilitate enemy design. This vacuum of this intelligence is being exploited by the enemy and make no mistake China is fully involved in helping Pakistan in this. The attacks are well-planned and deliberate. Pakistan has started refuelling its Over Ground Workers in the Jammu region specifically.

There have been a lot of FIRs registered by the army against these OGWs over the years but little or no action has been taken on them. It's about time we took action against these FIRs. Special courts must be set up to fast-track cases filed by the army against underground workers. Many of the men move to Himachal in search of work from Doda during summers. Some of them also make hideouts for terrorists during winter for them to come there and stay during summer. Once the men move out, there are a lot of women in the Doda area who help terrorists.

These women give food and information to the terrorists. The terrorists generally hide in Guwardi (resting place Gujjars make) and hideouts made during winters in higher reaches of Doda and these women provide them food there. They also provide them with information about force movement and then

help them go to the other side of the ridge.

Many women work for money yet others get physically involved with these terrorists. The army is not allowed to interrogate these women or to search them. Even after the AFSPA the rules to interact with women are very strict. If the soldiers try to check the movement details of these women, false FIRs are sometimes lodged against them.

It would be prudent to provide Special Women Officers in army posts who could search these women and also interrogate them. Also, a lot of dog squads could come in handy to chase away these women after smelling them.

Till 2003 special women police officers used to stay at far-off army posts in Doda, however as comparative normalcy returned the practice was let go. Special women units in city centres like Doda, Jammu, Udhampur etc could also help.

Doda has also had a history of women moving as guides of terrorists. They provide them with local SIM cards which terrorists keep disposing of. The movement of forces from one place to another is also communicated by these OGWs. However, rape of these women by terrorists is not uncommon. One odd local terrorist generally accompanies these Pakistani terrorists to act as a physical guide.

Security forces in Jammu and Kashmir work together and police and army share information and intelligence, however when two different organisations share intelligence chances of overlap and double cross increase.

It will be prudent to share intelligence but not mix standard operating procedures which may be different for the two organisations.

Lungars of jawans of both forces must remain different at all times. Also, each

piece of information and intelligence shared must be carefully corroborated by other sources independent of each other. It is also advised not to rush into situations based on half-corked information.

The encounters in Jammu region is an effort by the enemy to showcase that there is no region in Jammu and Kashmir that is peaceful. They want to also show that the revocation of Article 370 has made no difference to their effort to bleed India.

The entire effort of the enemy is hinged on Foreign Terrorists who are helped by local Over Ground Workers. Hoping fast action is taken against OGWs while the army eliminates these terrorists sent by Pakistan on the instructions of China. (The author has firsthand experience of encounters in Doda Forests for three long years; views are personal)

Discrepancies between brain regions could help predict risk of psychosis, study finds

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Discrepancies between brain regions linked to a common gene deletion - affecting one in every 2,000 - could help assess one's risk for developing psychosis, according to a new study.

For 20 years, a team of researchers at the University of Geneva, Switzerland, followed 300 patients, aged 5-34 years, affected by a specific gene deletion - the 22q11.2DS microdeletion. A common genetic deletion, this results in the absence of a small DNA sequence on chromosome 22. The gene deletion is known to lead to heart defects and immune malfunction in their carriers.

About a third of such individuals can also develop psychotic disorders as a teen or an adult. In such a disorder, there is loss



of contact with reality as one develops symptoms affecting the mind, and disrupting their thoughts and perceptions. Almost 40 per cent of the study cohort developed schizophrenia, the researchers said.

In the study, published in the journal Biological Psychiatry: Cognitive Neuroscience and Neuroimaging recently, the researchers looked at how the interactions or

'coupling' between brain regions developed from childhood to adulthood. These interactions form the basis of our cognitive (thinking) processes, they explained.

The authors wanted to find out if a less efficient coupling in the people having the gene deletion meant an increased risk of developing psychosis.

Using magnetic resonance imaging, the team observed for 12 years'

brain development in the individuals in their study cohort.

They found a 'persistent' discrepancy in the interactions between three brain regions - the frontal cortex, responsible for coordinated movement and language; the cingulate cortex, which helps process pain and emotions; and the temporal cortex, which processes auditory and visual information, along with memory.

The discrepancy is especially marked in teenagers, the researchers said.

"We found that patients with the (gene deletion) had a persistent developmental discrepancy since childhood, with regions of hyper- and hypo-coupling throughout the brain," said first author Silas Forrer, a PhD student in the Department of Psychiatry, University of Geneva.

While hyper-coupling refers to a more-than-optimal coherent interaction between brain regions during development, hypo-coupling refers to a less-than-optimal coherence.

The strong link found between the gene deletion and discrepancies developed during brain's development is a "significant step towards identifying predictive markers for the disease (psychosis)," the researchers said.

"The next step will be to determine how these couplings can constitute an individual 'fingerprint' of the brain, making it possible to clearly know whether that individual is more at risk than another of developing psychosis, or conversely, is protected from it," explained lead author Stephan Eliez, a professor in the Department of Psychiatry, University of Geneva.

Budget 2024: Government to exempt 3 more cancer drugs from customs duty

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

In a big relief to cancer patients, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the Union Budget 2024, exempted customs duty on three cancer drugs.

The three drugs are Trastuzumab deruxtecan, Osimertinib and Durvalumab. The reduction in customs duty may help reduce the financial burden on those battling the deadly disease.

In her seventh budget speech, the Union Minister also called for exemptions in custom duties on X-ray tubes and flat panel detectors.

"I also propose changes in the BCD (Basic Customs Duty), X-ray tubes, and flat panel detectors for use in medical X-ray machines under the phased manu-



facturing programme to synchronise them with domestic capacity addition," said FM Sitharaman. According to the recent 4th edition of Apollo Hospitals' Health of Nation Report, cancer cases are skyrocketing across the country.

The report dubbed India the "cancer capital of the world".

In 2019, India registered about 12 lakh new cancer cases and 9.3 lakh deaths in 2019, becoming the second highest contributor to the disease burden in Asia, as per a Lancet study.

The number increased to 13.9 lakh in 2020, which then rose to 14.2 lakh and 14.6 lakh in 2021 and 2022, respectively.

Girls more affected by juvenile idiopathic arthritis than boys: Experts

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Girls are more affected by juvenile idiopathic arthritis than boys, said experts on Monday highlighting the need for recognising the symptoms early.

Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA) is a chronic condition affecting children under 16, characterised by persistent joint inflammation, pain, swelling, and stiffness. The exact causes of JIA are unknown, but it is believed to result from a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

Dr Debashish Chanda - Orthopaedics & Joint Replacement Specialist, CK Birla Hospital, Gurugram, said that there was no fixed cause on what triggers JIA, but it would not be completely irresponsible to rule out genetic and environmental causes, but it is a disease that occurs more in girls



as compared to boys.

"Children with a family history of arthritis or autoimmune diseases are at higher risk, with girls being more frequently affected than boys. Certain bacterial or viral infections might also trigger JIA in genetically predisposed children," he told IANS.

While symptoms of JIA vary, it includes joint discomfort or swelling, persistent pain, fever, rash, fatigue, loss of appetite, and morning stiffness.

Unlike adult arthritis, which is often due to joint

cartilage degeneration, JIA is primarily an autoimmune condition with systemic symptoms like fever and rash.

Dr Sanjeev Kapoor, Sr. Consultant Rheumatology at the Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, said, "JIA is the most common paediatric rheumatological disorder, affecting an estimated 350,000 to 1.3 million children in India. There are five types of JIA: systemic arthritis, which affects boys and girls equally; oligoarthritis and polyarthritis, more

common in girls; enthesitis-related arthritis, mainly in boys older than 8 years and psoriatic arthritis," he told IANS.

JIA can also impact a child's growth and development if not properly managed.

"Recognising these symptoms early is crucial," Dr Kapoor noted. "Treatment aims to relieve pain, reduce inflammation, and improve the quality of life. Medications such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs), and biological agents are commonly prescribed to manage symptoms and prevent joint damage.

The expert also stressed physical therapy and regular exercise to maintain joint function and muscle strength. In severe cases, surgical intervention may be necessary to correct joint deformities or replace damaged joints.

Viiva brings groundbreaking Terahertz technology to India

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, JULY 22

In a move shrouded in excitement, a leading figure in India's wellness industry has launched a cutting-edge facility here on Monday. The exclusive event, attended by a select few, marked the debut of a revolutionary technology set to transform the health sector.

Located near the HSR BDA office, this new hub is a hidden gem. Behind its modest exterior, a game-changing innovation is brewing: Terahertz frequency.

This elusive technology, wrapped in enigma, promises to push the boundaries of health and wellness to new heights.

The select mediapersons witnessed the unveiling of the Viiva Discovery Station, a beacon of this technological marvel. Alongside this, Viiva India proudly announced the opening of a new Viiva Experience Centre (EC).

The Viiva Experience Centre is designed to provide customers with a comprehensive range of services all under one roof. This landmark launch introduces the innovative Terahertz frequency technol-



ogy, which promises extraordinary health benefits and aims to revolutionise the global health and wellness sector.

Viiva's flagship products, such as the V-Power and Smart Electromagnetic Invigorator, are designed to enhance health and wellness. These groundbreaking products will be available for an exclusive experience at the newly inaugurated Viiva Discovery Station.

The event saw the presence of prominent figures from Viiva India, including Co-founder Bryann Pillay,

Vice Chairman William Lung, President of Indian Operations Cindie, and Head of Sales and Marketing Steve Martin.

Addressing the media, Viiva India Founder Chudgar stated, "This momentous occasion allows us to witness firsthand the revolutionary technology that Viiva is bringing to India.

Experience the transformative power of Terahertz frequency and discover how Viiva's innovative products can change health and wellness in India."

UN says nearly 40 million people had HIV in 2023, lack of treatment means someone died every minute

AGENCIES
UNITED NATIONS, JULY 23

Nearly 40 million people were living with the HIV virus that causes AIDS last year, over 9 million weren't getting any treatment, and the result was that every minute someone died of AIDS-related causes, the UN said in a new report launched on Monday.

While advances are being made to end the global AIDS pandemic, the report said progress has slowed, funding is

shrinking, and new infections are rising in three regions: the Middle East and North Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America.

In 2023, around 6,30,000 people died from AIDS-related illnesses, a significant decline from the 2.1 million deaths in 2004. But the latest figure is more than double the target for 2025 of fewer than 2,50,000 deaths, according to the report by UNAIDS, the UN agency leading the global effort to end the pandemic.

Gender inequality is exacerbating the risks for girls and women, the report said, citing the extraordinarily high incidence of HIV among adolescents and young women in parts of Africa.

The proportion of new infections globally among marginalised communities that face stigma and discrimination - sex workers, men who have sex with men, and people who inject drugs also increased to 55 per cent in 2023 from 45 per cent in 2010, it said.



UNAIDS Executive Director Winnie Byanyima said, "World leaders pledged to end the AIDS pandemic as

a public health threat by 2030. They can uphold their promise, but only if they ensure that the HIV

response has the resources it needs, and that the human rights of everyone are protected."

As part of that pledge, leaders vowed to reduce annual new HIV infections to below 3,70,000 by 2025, but the report said in 2023, new infections were more than three times higher at 1.3 million.

Last year, among the 39.9 million people globally living with HIV, 86 per cent knew they were infected, 77 per cent were accessing treatment, and for 72 per cent the virus

was suppressed, the report said.

César Núñez, director of the UNAIDS New York office, told a news conference there has been progress in HIV treatments - injections that can stay in the body for six months, but the two doses cost USD 40,000 yearly, out of reach for all but the richest people with the virus.

He said UNAIDS has been asking the manufacturer to make it available at lower cost to low and middle-income countries.

Núñez said there have

also been seven cases where people with HIV who were treated for leukemia emerged with no sign of the HIV virus in their system.

He said injections and the seven cases will be discussed at the 25th International AIDS Conference which began Monday in Munich.

At present, he said, daily treatment with pills costs about USD 75 per person per year. It has allowed many countries to increase the number of people with HIV to receive treatment.

Boys are at greater risk of developing Type 1 diabetes than girls: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Young boys are more at risk of developing Type 1 diabetes (T1D) than girls, finds a study.

It showed that the risk decreases markedly in girls after age 10 years, while the risk in boys stays the same. Furthermore, the risk of T1D is significantly higher for boys with a single autoantibody - proteins produced by the body's immune system that attack other proteins.

This suggests that the male gender could be



linked with autoantibody development, indicating the importance of incorporating sex in the assessment of risk, said the team from the University of Exeter in the UK.

Importantly, the study showed that, unlike most

autoimmune diseases, male sex is a risk factor for type 1 diabetes (T1D).

This raises the hypothesis that either immune, metabolic, or other differences between sexes may impact risk or progression through stages of T1D.

In this study, the team studied 235,765 relatives of people with T1D. They used computer and statistical modelling to calculate the risk of T1D, stated as an estimated five-year risk for females and males respectively, after adjusting for confounders. Males were found to have higher autoantibodies (females: 5.0 per cent males: 5.4 per cent). Males were also more likely to be screened positive for multiple autoantibodies and their chances were also higher in absolute five-year risk of progression to T1D.

New tool shows promise in reducing depression risk in elderly

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

US researchers have developed a novel tool that can help reduce the onset of depression in individuals over 60.

Researchers from Mass General Brigham, in collaboration with Yale University, have shown that a higher Brain Care Score (BCS) is associated with a lower risk of late-life depression.

The findings, published in Frontiers in Psychiatry, highlight the potential of the BCS in helping patients make lifestyle changes to improve brain health.

"The Brain Care Score is a simple tool designed to help anyone in the world answer the question, 'What can I do to take better care of my brain?'" said Jonathan Rosand, co-founder of the McCance Center for Brain

Health at Massachusetts General Hospital.

The study indicates that raising the BCS can lower the risk of depression, dementia, and stroke.

It also highlights a bright opportunity to prevent these conditions.

The BCS focuses on modifiable risk factors: Physical (blood pressure, haemoglobin A1c, cholesterol, BMI), lifestyle (nutrition, alcohol intake, smoking, physical activ-

ity, sleep), and social/emotional (stress, relationships, life purpose).

The study, based on data from over 350,000 participants, found that a five-point increase in BCS was associated with a 33 per cent lower risk of late-life depression, although researchers found a significant link between baseline BCS and depression risk in under-50s, contrary to expectations.

Experts hail Rs 1.48 lakh cr Budget allocation for education, employment & skilling

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Experts hailed the Rs 1.48 lakh crore allocation for education, employment, and skilling in the Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Parliament on Tuesday.

The Finance Minister said that the government will provide financial support of up to Rs 10 lakh for higher education in domestic institutions.

The government will also launch a scheme to provide internship opportunities to one crore youth in 500 top companies with Rs 5,000 per month as internship allowance and one-time assistance of Rs 6,000. About 20 lakh



youth will be skilled over five years.

FM Sitharaman announced a Rs 20 lakh-crore PM package of five schemes to facilitate employment and skilling. "The 2024 budget

sounds positive and forward-looking, with a focus on job creation, education, skill development, and building a more inclusive workforce," said Neeti Sharma, CEO, TeamLease Digital.

"The provision of Rs 1.48 lakh crore made to support education, employment, and skilling demonstrates a robust commitment to workforce development.

Schemes enabling industries to create new jobs, financial support for higher education loans, ITI upgrades, and internship schemes will all enable a higher-skilled and employable workforce," she added.

Sharma said the proposed initiatives will bolster industries such as manufacturing, health-care, and MSMEs.

Welcoming the Budget as a "positive development," Anuraag Saxena, CEO, E-Gaming Federation said that jobs are the "pri-

mary driver of economic growth, and putting new initiatives and allocations into practice would not only improve the employment situation."

He added that the budget will "also have a significant impact on developing a trained labour force for all industries, including online skill gaming."

"The urgency around skilling requirements has been rightly reflected through announcements related to skilling loans, interest subvention on higher education loans, and incentives to corporates for providing internship opportunities," said Ranen Banerjee - Partner and Leader of Economic Advisory, PwC India.

Union Budget: Assam CM thanks Centre for special assistance to tackle floods

AGENCIES
GUWAHATI, JULY 23

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday thanked Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for proposing special assistance to the state to meet the challenges posed by recurring floods.

Reacting to the Union Budget, the Chief Minister in his statement on social media said: "We are extremely grateful for the special assistance Assam will receive under this Budget to help meet the challenges posed by floods."

FM Sitharaman while presenting the Budget in the Lok Sabha proposed aid to the flood-affected states like Bihar, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Uttara-

rakhand and Sikkim with flood management and development support, including financial backing for flood control projects.

The Chief Minister said that enhanced allocation under the PM Awas Yojana and Schemes such as PM Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan will also have a net positive impact in Assam.

The infrastructure push via Rs 1.5 lakh crore to states focus on improving agricultural productivity, green energy initiatives and generous allocation for rural development would also have a multiplier effect on Assam's growth, CM Sarma pointed out.

Noting that the Union Budget stands out for its unprecedented push towards employment generation and powering small businesses, the Assam

CM said that schemes such as PM's Package for employment and skilling, one crore paid internship opportunities and employment-linked incentives will be game changers.

Complimenting the Union Finance Minister and her team for presenting a 'Budget that lays down a solid roadmap to maintain India's growth momentum', the Chief Minister said that the Budget seeks to propel the economy of the country to the third position in the world, as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The excellent reforms announced for land registration will complement our ongoing efforts like Mission Basundhara 3.0", the Chief Minister stated.

Shinde hails tax structure changes saying Maha will remain leader in collection

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, JULY 23

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reaffirmed the trust of crores of countrymen by giving relief through major changes in the tax structure.

"The new tax structure is a relief to the common man and employees and I welcome it. Due to this new tax structure, the number of taxpayers will also increase. Maharashtra will remain a leader in tax collection which is necessary for development," he remarked.

Shinde said that while emphasising on the poor, women, youth and farmers, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has made a provision of Rs 1.52 lakh crore for agriculture and allied sectors.



The digital public infrastructure, which aims to increase productivity in the agriculture sector, will further strengthen the farm sector and ultimately make growers financially sound.

He added that the FM's proposal to encourage one crore farmers to take up natural farming is the need of the hour.

According to him, the state government has also taken steps to promote natural farming in Maharashtra.

He said that the provision of Rs 2.66 lakh crore for the development of rural India will transform villages.

"It is always said that our country belongs to the youth. Its reflection has been seen in today's budget and a large number of provisions have been made for the youth.

The budget has also decided to create 50 lakh additional employment opportunities which will benefit the youth of Maharashtra also," said CM

Shinde.

On the allocation of Rs 11.11 lakh crore on infrastructure development, CM Shinde hoped that Maharashtra would get support for its ongoing infrastructure development projects and also those in the pipeline.

"Maharashtra is the leader in infrastructure development in the country. The FM's proposal for the allocation of Rs 26,000 crore for road development and the development of 12 industrial parks will also be crucial for the state," he noted.

CM Shinde said the FM's proposal to launch the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana Phase 4 to build good quality roads for 25,000 villages across the country will be important for the development of roads in rural areas of Maharashtra.

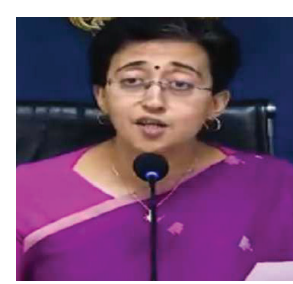
AAP slams central Budget, claims Delhi hasn't received a single rupee

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Atishi on Tuesday described the budget as dashing the hopes and aspirations of Delhi's residents, stating that the city has not received a single rupee from the Central Government in the 2024-25 budget under the Share in Central Taxes.

Addressing the media, Atishi said, "The people of Delhi had demanded from the Central Government that they should get 5% of the money they pay as tax, but the Central Government has not fulfilled the demand of the people of Delhi."

Atishi highlighted that the central government provides financial assistance to local bodies across the country, similarly, the people of Delhi were also



demanding to give 5% of their tax to MCD, but the central government has not given even a single rupee.

"In the 2024-25 budget, Rs 1.24 lakh crore has been allocated to various states, and Rs 82,207 crore has been given to different local bodies across India. However, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) did not receive any funds," Atishi claimed.

"Last year, Delhi gave Rs 2 lakh 7 thousand crores to the Central Government in the form of Income Tax

and Rs 25 thousand crores in the form of CGST," she pointed out.

"That means the people of Delhi paid taxes worth Rs. 2 lakh 32 thousand crores to the central government. But despite this, nothing has been given to Delhi in this budget," she alleged.

"In the last 11 years, the BJP central government has done nothing for Delhi. The people of Delhi pay a tax of 40 thousand crores to the Delhi government every year. With this tax of 40 thousand crores, the Kejriwal government provides many facilities to the people of Delhi including excellent government schools, mohalla clinics, 24-hour free electricity and free bus travel for women," she criticised.

"The people of Delhi pay Rs 2 lakh 32 thousand crores every year as tax to

the BJP-ruled central government, but the central government does not give anything to the people of Delhi. The BJP government at the center has not done a single work for Delhi in the last 11 years," she said.

"Just like the British government used to loot the money of the people of India, similarly the BJP central government is looting the money of the people of Delhi," Atishi criticised.

The central government has reduced the budget of the health sector. Last year, 1.98% was allocated for health. This time, it has been reduced to 1.85%. The total budget of Ayushman Bharat is only Rs 7 thousand crores, whereas the health budget of a small state like Delhi is Rs 9 thousand crores, she alleged.

IIT Delhi to SC: Only one correct answer in ambiguous physics question in NEET-UG-2024 Exam

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JUL 23

The three-member expert committee, set up by the IIT-Delhi, told the Supreme Court on Tuesday that option 4 is the correct answer for the ambiguous question, which is said to have two correct answers.

The director of IIT-Delhi told the bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud hearing a batch of petitions related to the controversial medical entrance exam, NEET-UG 2024, that 'option 4 is the correct answer for the physics paper. Option 4 is statement 1 is correct but statement 2 is incorrect'.

Explaining why statement 2 is incorrect, he said because 'radioactive elements' atoms are unstable. The CJI said the committee has opined clearly that there was only 1 option which is option 4. So NTA was correct in its answer key which was option 4,' said CJI, on the basis of the IIT Delhi report.

The Supreme yesterday (July 22) directed the IIT-Delhi

to constitute a three-member expert committee to resolve a contentious question in the NEET-UG 2024 paper which was said to have two correct answers to the NCERT physics question. This question alone led to 44 students getting the top rank. On the court's directions the director, IIT, constituted a three-member committee from the dept. of Physics which after examining the question concluded that option 4 is the correct answer which is that statement 1 is correct but statement 2 incorrect.

The Supreme Court yesterday tasked IIT-Delhi with resolving a contentious question in the NEET-UG 2024 Physics exam. The court directed IIT-Delhi's director to appoint three top professors to solve the issue within 24 hours, a decision that could impact the scores of over four lakh candidates, including 44 students who achieved perfect scores.

An officer from the CBI also appeared before the court and explained the investigation

being carried out by them. The CBI officer stated that some gadgets of the involved gang were burnt, and a few others were recovered yesterday, which will now be investigated. Senior advocate Hooda told the court that the paper leak took place through WhatsApp so it was impossible that it was confined only to Patna in Bihar. "The paper solvers were taken from Rajasthan. The Dissemination of the solved paper was through WhatsApp. It is not possible that the leak is confined to Patna," he said.

Hooda further said that if the apex court is "not considering re-NEET, at least qualified people should be asked to re-take the exam, which will be about 13 lakh people." The bench comprising Chief Justice of India, DY Chandrachud, Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is hearing nearly 40 pleas related to the alleged irregularities on the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test, Undergraduate (NEET UG) 2024.

Some petitioners have demanded a re-test as there was a paper leak in the examination. The Court had also directed the National Testing Agency (NTA) to publish the results of all NEET-UG candidates on July 20 on their website by masking the identity of the students.

The CJI inquired about one of the contentious centers at Hazaribagh.

To this Solicitor General Tushar Mehta replied, "Hazaribagh Center has a 4.61% success rate this year. About Belgavi Center, the SG said that one student shifted to Belgavi because they said there was some huge potential for mass copying. Mehta debunked the claim that cluster toppers increased success rates and said this year it is only 5.3%.

The SG explained that more students qualifying for the exam doesn't mean more admissions. He also pointed out that the examples of Sikar and Kota having higher quali-

fication rates cannot be used to make decision for aspirants across the country as these places are preparation hubs.

"The word which is being used by the newspapers 'Factory' is possibly taken from the web series 'Kota factory, Mehta said. When a child from Kota sits for the actual examination, actually it is their 200th examination," he added. SG submitted the city wise qualification ratio. Increased cut off may mean hardworking students, he said.

"The cutoff this year was 164 (for unreserved category). Last year the cut was 137, which indicates that this year number of students increased and secondly students were way more hardworking and thirdly the syllabus was sliced out, Mehta said. SG also explained the concept of percentile "The narrative going on is that for centres like Rajkot more than 30 candidates were qualified. General impression was that if you're qualified you're getting admission in the course of

your choice."

"There has always been and also for this year, a system of coming to a percentile. Percentile is the figure, after we get the result, it (result) is fed into the computer system and we request we want 50% percentile. So it gave us the figure of 164."

Students unnecessarily tensed over wrong narrative, SG emphasized "We must satisfy your conscience from stats and figures and not through some social media or telegram video.

Top 100 students are spread over 95 centre, 56 cities and 18 states and UTs," said the SG. Advocate Hooda argued over lack of CCTV cameras at exam centres "NTA says they were live monitoring the exam, but in Sawai Madhopur their systems were not working. So their argument that they have CCTV monitoring is destroyed," Hooda said. To this, SG replied that the counsel has raised suspicion for 2-5 centres only. "Your

lordships are examining an issue where approximately 24 lakhs students are involved. Total centres 4750- this would be relevant figure in examining a pan-India cross country impact," SG said.

Senior advocate Narendra Hooda explained that in a few centres, namely Sawai Madhavpur, Rajasthan and Ghaziabad the question paper was given in different medium of language.

"In Sawai Madhavpur they detected on social media at 2:30 pm. It is their affidavit on record. At 2 pm the exam started, questions were given, and students raised grievance that this is not my medium. NTA got to know at 4:30 pm the same day, Hooda said.

CJI Chandrachud said that those candidates who have some individual grievances can move to the High Courts. Here we will address the issue whether the paper leak had a widespread impact then only a re-test can be ordered, the CJI said.

Odisha Assembly adjourned twice over opposition ruckus

AGENCIES
BHUBANESWAR, JULY 23

Pandemonium continued to prevail on the second day of the budget session in the Odisha Assembly.

Speaker Surama Paddy first adjourned the House till 11.30 and later till 4 pm on Tuesday following the ruckus by members of the opposition Biju Janata Dal over the alleged assault on an Assistant Section Officer (ASO) by the son of governor Raghubar Das.

"An ASO was assaulted by the Governor's son on July 7 but he hasn't been provided justice so far. Both the Governor and Chief Minister held discussions with the victim but what transpired between them didn't come to out.

The ASO didn't get justice and was even transferred. They came to power raising the Odia Asmita issue but are failing to give security to Odia people," alleged senior BJD leader Pramila Mallik.

She also criticised Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan's statement in which he advised the opposition to wait till the submission of an inquiry report by the Puri collector who is investigating the matter.

Meanwhile, Congress leader Tara Prasad Bahinipati targeted BJD and BJP saying that both parties in collaboration adjourned the house so that important issues like unemployment couldn't be discussed in the Assembly.

Budget an economic document for self-reliant and developed India: Yogi

AGENCIES
LUCKNOW, JULY 23

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday said that the general budget presented by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will prove to be all-encompassing, inclusive, and development-oriented, meeting the hopes, aspirations, and resolutions of Amrit Kal for 140 crore Indians.

Talking to media after the presentation of the Union Budget 2024-25, the CM said, "The Gen-

eral Budget 2024-25 provides the economic blueprint for fostering an 'Atma Nirbhar' (self-reliant) and 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India). It embodies the sacred spirit of Antyodaya and seeks to tap the country's infinite development potential with a fresh vision of innovation. The budget's provisions for every section of society are poised to realise the concept of Ram Rajya."

He expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the budget and congratulated Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and her team. He said

that the budget includes a provision of Rs 1.52 lakh crore for the prosperity of farmers and the agriculture sector, and over Rs 3 lakh crore for women's empowerment. Yogi said, "The greatest beneficiaries will be the people of Uttar Pradesh, the country's largest state. This is especially significant as UP has been actively implementing the 'Mission Shakti' programme since 2020. With the highest number of farmers residing in UP, this budget will play a crucial role in their prosperity."

He said that the budget will act as an economic blueprint to posi-

tion India as the world's growth engine and to achieve the vision of a developed India, with the goal of transforming the nation into a five trillion-dollar economy.

The CM said, "The middle class has received the biggest tax exemption today, addressing a long-standing demand. There will be no tax on income of up to three lakhs, and other tax slabs also offer substantial relief. The provisions for various sectors, including rural poor, farmers, youth, industry, and the MSME sector, will generate numerous jobs."

Border issues with India to be resolved through diplomatic mechanisms: PM Oli

AGENCIES
KATHMANDU, JULY 23

Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has said that there is an understanding with India to resolve border issues, including territories such as Limpiyadhura, Lipulekh, and Kalapani, through diplomatic mechanisms.

Responding to a question by a lawmaker in the House of Representatives on Monday, PM Oli mentioned that the construction and restoration of border posts along the Nepal-India border are underway.

"The Federal Parliament, the Government of Nepal, and all Nepalis have been clear and firm regarding the international border of Nepal. Through the second amendment to

the Constitution of Nepal on June 17, 2020, new maps have been included in Schedule-3 of the Constitution, and there is an unprecedented national consensus on border issues.

According to the Sugauli Treaty of 1816, the Government of Nepal is firm and clear that all the territories east of the Kali (Mahakali) river, including Limpiyadhura, Kalapani, and Lipulekh, belong to Nepal," said PM Oli, myrepublica reported.

He stated that during meetings between the prime ministers of Nepal and India on the occasion of high-level visits, there was an agreement to resolve the border issues through established diplomatic mechanisms.

"In the seventh meet-



ing of the Nepal-India Joint Commission held at the foreign minister level on January 4, 2024, the border issue was also discussed, and there was a commitment to complete the work on the remaining sections of the Nepal-India border as soon as possible," he said.

"Construction, restoration, and repair of border pillars, along with technical work such as prepara-

tion of no-man's land and cross-holding, are being carried out continuously. Efforts are being made to resume meetings in bilateral harmony."

He added that the Government of Nepal is committed to resolving the border problems through negotiations and diplomacy with the Government of India based on the Sugauli Treaty, various maps, historical facts, and evidence.

PM Oli also said that an Armed Police Force (APF) unit has been deployed in Chhangru of Darchula district, and six border outposts - five along the borders with India and one along the borders with China - have been added in Darchula district in recent times.

A month ago, then Nepal Prime Minister

Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' had stressed that his government is determined that all territories east of Kali (Mahakali) river including Limpiyadhura, Kalapani and Lipulekh belong to Nepal.

The Kalapani dispute is a border dispute between India and Nepal over a 373 square kilometer area in the Pithoragarh (Uttarakhand). The dispute stems from different interpretations of the origin of the Kali River, forming a border between the two countries.

The Kalapani region is situated at the tri-junction of India, Nepal, and China.

In May this year the Prachanda government in Nepal decided to depict the contested India-Nepal-China tri-junction on its currency notes.

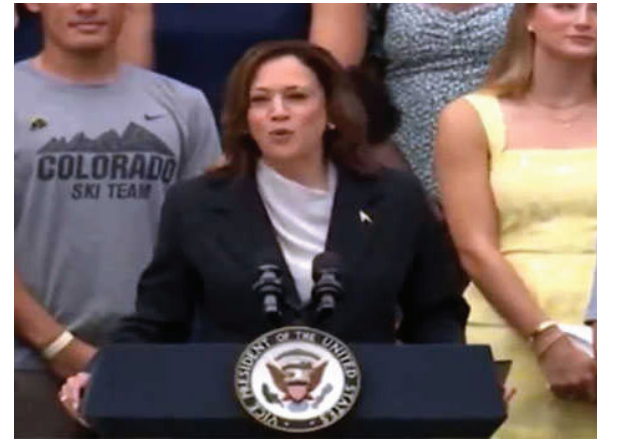
Harris says she has enough support for Democratic nomination to run for U.S. Prez

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON, JULY 23

U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris said late Monday that she has secured enough support of Democratic delegates to become the party's nominee for the upcoming presidential election.

"Tonight, I am proud to have secured the broad support needed to become our party's nominee," she wrote in a statement sent by her campaign. "I look forward to formally accepting the nomination soon."

Under mounting pressure from within the Democratic Party, U.S. President Joe Biden announced on Sunday that he was



dropping out of the 2024 presidential race. He also offered his full support for nominating Harris as the Democratic presidential candidate.

Harris has won endorsement from a number of prominent Democratic

figures including former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who has urged the party to unify and charge forward to "resoundingly defeat" former President Donald Trump, the Republican presidential nominee.

UK, Italy, Japan present concept of next-generation combat aircraft

AGENCIES
ROME, JULY 23

The United Kingdom, Italy and Japan jointly presented a concept model of a next-generation fighter jet, which is planned to be put into service in 2035, Italian aerospace and defense company Leonardo said.

"The three nations of the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) - UK, Italy, and Japan - have unveiled a new concept model of their next generation combat aircraft at Farnborough International Airshow," the company said in a statement on Monday. The statement added the new model differs from previous concepts in its increased wing span to improve the aerodynamics of the aircraft.

"The combat aircraft,



set to be in service in 2035, will be one of the world's most advanced, interoperable, adaptable and connected fighter jets in service, boasting an intelligent weapons system, a software-driven interactive cockpit, integrated sensors and a powerful next generation radar capable of providing 10,000 times more data than current systems, giving it a battle-winning advantage," the statement

read. In December 2022, the leaders of Japan, Italy and the UK agreed on a joint development of a new generation fighter jet. It will replace the F-2 jets in Japan, and the Eurofighter Typhoon jets in Italy and the UK. In December 2023, the three states inked an international agreement within the GCAP program to develop a stealth fighter with supersonic capability.

Death toll in Israeli attacks on Khan Younis rises to 70

AGENCIES
GAZA, JULY 23

At least 70 Palestinians were killed and more than 200 others injured during Israeli attacks in the southern Gaza Strip city of Khan Younis, the Gaza-based health authorities said.

Nasser Medical Complex in the city has called on locals to "urgently donate blood, for the benefit of the wounded and sick inside the complex, given the severe and major shortage of blood units," the health authorities added.

Israeli warplanes launched an intensive bombardment on the eastern neighborhoods of Khan Younis after immediate evacuation orders were issued. The eastern areas began to witness mass displacement towards the city's west, especially Al-Mawasi, the Palestinian



official news agency Wafa reported.

The Hamas-run Gaza government media office said in a statement on Monday that it has received 1,217 appeals from besieged families asking for help to be rescued.

It holds Israel and the American administration "fully responsible" for the continuation of these killings and for the use of internationally prohibited

weapons, the statement added.

"Families in Khan Younis have yet again received evacuation orders from Israeli authorities. Thousands of people on the move again, fleeing strikes and military operations," The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) said on social media platform X on Monday.

"The situation is impos-

sible. The cycle of fear and displacement has gone on too long. Everyone is exhausted," the UN refugee agency added.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said in a statement on Monday that it called on Gazan civilians to temporarily evacuate from specific areas of Khan Younis earlier in the day, which was due to intelligence indicating that "terrorists" were operating and firing rockets in these areas, as well as efforts by Hamas to reassemble its forces there.

Since the morning, the Israeli Air Force and IDF artillery forces have struck more than 30 "terror infrastructure sites" in Khan Younis, including in the area from which a projectile was launched toward Nirim in southern Israel earlier on Monday, the statement added.

Khan Younis has seen

several massive Israeli attacks in July. On July 13, at least 90 Palestinians, half of them children and women, were killed after an Israeli airstrike hit tents for displaced people in Khan Younis.

Israeli media said the target of the Israeli attack was Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif, but Hamas has rejected the claim. So far, no confirmation has been reported.

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

The Palestinian death toll from ongoing Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip has risen to 39,006, the Gaza-based health authorities said on Monday.

Netanyahu meets families of Israeli-American hostages in Washington

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

In what was his first meeting in the framework of the diplomatic visit to Washington, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with the families of the Israeli-American hostages held in the custody of Hamas, earlier on Tuesday, India time.

"I am doing everything in my power to combine the necessary humanitarian objective and the imperative to return the hostages, and at the same time, preserve the existence of the State of Israel," Netanyahu said after the meeting.

"I am not prepared in any way to give in on the victory over Hamas. If we give up on this, we will be



in danger in the face of Iran's entire axis of evil," he added. Several representatives of the families of the hostages who accompanied the Israeli PM on flight to Washington and soldiers who fought on October 7, and who have fought in Gaza, also participated in the meeting which was also attended

by Netanyahu's wife Sara. Representatives of bereaved families who have lost their sons in the fighting in Gaza and the Western Negev were also present at the meeting.

"We are determined to return them all. The conditions for returning them are becoming ripe, for the simple reason that we are

putting very strong pressure on Hamas. We see a certain change, and I think that this change will increase," said Netanyahu.

The Israeli PM said that his visit to the US was an important one, one which will give "the opportunity to bring before the representatives of the American people, and the American people themselves the importance of their support".

Israel's top officials, including the Director of the National Security Council, the Director General of the Prime Minister's Office, the Cabinet Secretary, the Prime Minister's Military Secretary and the Coordinator for the Hostages and the Missing, also participated in the meeting.

Fast-growing wildfire destroys homes in California

AGENCIES
LOS ANGELES, JULY 23

A fast-growing wildfire in Southern California, western US state of California, has destroyed three homes and damaged four others in Riverside County, authorities said.

The wildfire, dubbed the Hawarden Fire, was first reported at 1:05 p.m. on Sunday local time in the Hawarden area, Xinhua news agency reported.

As of Monday morning, the blaze had burned a total of 527 acres (2.13 square km), according to the City of Riverside Fire Department.

There are 1,500 residences in the surrounding area and the Riverside



Police Department is helping evacuations, Riverside Fire Department Deputy Chief Steve McKinster said at a news conference on Monday.

One firefighter suffered a minor injury. Twenty-one engines and two hand crews are fighting the fire, he added.

There has been no forward progress of the fire,

and it is fully contained within the established perimeter. Additional hot spots are being closely monitored throughout the day, said the department in a Facebook post, adding that the City of Riverside Arson Task Force is investigating various reports of fireworks to determine the cause and origin of the fire.

Iran stays committed to existing deals with Syria: Diplomat

AGENCIES
DAMASCUS, JULY 23

Visiting Iranian Foreign Minister's senior advisor for special political affairs, Ali Asghar Khaji, stressed his country's commitment to existing agreements with Syria. In a statement issued following his meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad in Damascus, Khaji said his visit to Syria on Monday was part of a broader tour to discuss and evaluate regional issues, particularly those related to bilateral relations and their future trajectory. He said Mekdad focused on a joint assessment of bilateral and regional matters and setting objectives to further enhance relations, Xinhua news agency reported.

Guterres has 'serious concern' over Bangladesh deploying UN-marked vehicles during riots: Spokesperson

AGENCIES
United Nations, July 23

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has expressed "serious concern" over reports that authorities had deployed vehicles with UN markings during the Bangladesh riots, his Spokesperson said.

UN staff there had "seen disturbing reports of UN-marked vehicles that may have been used during the developments we've seen in Bangladesh over the

last few days," Guterres's Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said on Monday.

UN troops and police-contributing countries should use the UN insignia on equipment "only when they are performing mandated tasks as part of a UN peacekeeping or UN political mission," he added.

"Our serious concern in this regard has been conveyed to the relevant authorities in Bangladesh by our colleagues," he said.

Bangladesh with 5,859 troops on UN peacekeep-

ing operations has access to vehicles and equipment with UN markings meant for use in other countries where its personnel are deployed on the world organisation's missions.

Bangladesh is the third-largest contributor of personnel to current UN peacekeeping operations.

Dujarric said that Guterres is "deeply concerned" about the reports that more than 100 people have been killed in the violence in Bangladesh and over 1,000 injured.



He said that the Secretary-General has seen the

reports about the Supreme Court ruling in Bangladesh

scaling back the job quotas and the students' groups' decision to suspend their agitation for 48 hours.

"He very much hopes that both these decisions will help create a conducive environment for dialogue. He urges all sides to avoid violence and negotiate in good faith," Dujarric added.

Student groups were protesting the 30 per cent government job reservations for the family members of the Bangladesh freedom fighters who

fought against Pakistani troops and their supporters who carried out the genocide.

Three million Bangladeshis were killed during the 1971 War of Independence, according to Bangladesh authorities.

The Supreme Court on Sunday ordered the reservation for freedom fighters' relatives cut to five per cent.

Asked about reports of Bangladeshi protesters in the United Arab Emirates receiving long prison

sentences, Dujarric said, "We've seen the disturbing reports of very harsh sentences being meted out."

"As we do everywhere else, we feel that it is very important for people to have the right to express themselves freely and peacefully without fear of arrest or worse," he added.

The Federal Court of Appeal in Abu Dhabi sentenced three Bangladeshi protesters to life terms, one to an 11-year sentence and 53 to a 10-year jail term, according to reports.

Budget 2024: Government cuts customs duty on gold, silver to 6 per cent; mobile phones 15 per cent

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

The government on Tuesday slashed customs duties on a range of products, including gold, silver, critical minerals, mobile phones and other electronic items, to cut input costs, increase value addition, promote export competitiveness and boost domestic manufacturing.

The duties were also reduced on Shea Nuts; marine sector goods like prawn and shrimp feed, and fish feed; inputs for the manufacture of these feeds like lipid oil; cancer drugs; other precious metals like silver and platinum; textile, steel, copper, capital goods, shipping, medical equipment and leather sector items.

The basic customs duty on coins of precious metals, gold/silver findings, and gold and silver bars was reduced to 6 per cent from 15 per cent. It was cut to 5.35 per cent from 14.35 per cent for gold and silver dore.

On platinum, palladium, osmium, ruthenium, and Iridium, the levy was

cut to 6.4 per cent from 15.4 per cent.

The gems and jewellery exporters have been demanding for the last several years to cut duties on precious metals to boost exports and manufacturing.

"My proposals for customs duties intend to support domestic manufacturing, deepen local value addition, promote export competitiveness, and simplify taxation while keeping the interest of the general public and consumers surmount," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said.

"To enhance domestic value addition in gold and precious metal jewellery in the country, I propose to reduce customs duties on gold and silver to 6 per cent and that on platinum to 6.4 per cent," she added.

The minister also proposed to undertake a comprehensive review of the rate structure over the next six months to rationalise and simplify it for ease of trade, removal of duty inversion and reduction in disputes.



On mobile phones and parts, she said that with a three-fold increase in domestic production and an almost 100-fold jump in exports of mobile phones over the last six years, the Indian mobile phone industry has matured.

"In the interest of consumers, I now propose to reduce the BCD (basic customs duty) on mobile phones, mobile PCBA and mobile chargers to 15 per cent," she said, adding that customs duties are fully exempted on 25 critical minerals.

This will provide a major fillip to the processing and refining of such minerals and help secure their availability for these strategic and important sectors, the minister said.

Critical minerals, such as cobalt, copper, lithium, nickel and rare earth, play a crucial role in the production of clean energy technologies from wind turbines to electric cars. They are particularly in demand for the production of batteries for electric cars.

On the solar sector, the minister said that the energy transition is critical in the fight against climate change.

"To support the energy transition, I propose to expand the list of exempted capital goods for use in the manufacture of solar cells and panels in the country. Further, in view of sufficient domestic manufacturing capacity of solar glass and tinned

copper interconnect, I propose not to extend the exemption of customs duties provided to them," the minister noted.

To promote seafood exports, which have touched Rs 60,000 crore, a duty cut was proposed on certain broodstock, polychaete worms, shrimp and fish feed to 5 per cent.

"I also propose to exempt customs duty on various inputs for manufacture of shrimp and fish feed," she said.

Similarly, to enhance the competitiveness of exports in the leather and textile sectors, the minister proposed to reduce BCD on real down-filling material from duck or goose.

On the electronics segment, Sitharaman said that to increase value addition in the domestic electronics industry, the duty was removed on oxygen-free copper for resistor manufacturing.

"I also propose to exempt certain parts for manufacture of connectors," the finance minister said, adding that to incentivise domestic manufac-

turing, the duty is hiked from 10 to 15 per cent on PCBA (printed circuit board assembly) of specified telecom equipment.

Commenting on these decisions, Saurabh Agarwal, EY Partner, said the changes aim to boost domestic manufacturing in these sectors.

Tanushree Roy, Director, Nangia Andersen India, said the move would lead to lowering administrative burdens and increase predictability for businesses, boosting competitiveness and attracting foreign investment.

"Addressing duty inversion would support local industries by making raw materials more affordable, stimulating manufacturing," Roy said.

Gulzar Didwania, Partner, Deloitte India, added that the overall objective of the customs-related proposals is to review and rationalise customs duty over the next six months to encourage domestic value-addition, enhance export competitiveness, remove inverted duty structure, and reduce disputes with the authorities.

India open up nuclear power sector for Bharat Small Reactors, Bharat Modular Reactors



AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

In a move to bring in the private sector in the nuclear power sector, the Indian government will partner with private players in setting up small reactors, for research and development of small modular reactors, and newer nuclear energy technologies.

Presenting her seventh Union budget on Tuesday in the Parliament, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said: "Nuclear energy is expected to form a very significant part of the energy mix for Viksit Bharat."

"Towards that pursuit, our government will partner with the private sector for setting up Bharat Small Reactors, research & development of Bharat Small Modular Reactors, and research & development of newer technologies for nuclear energy. The

R&D funding announced in the interim budget will be made available for this sector," she said.

The US and Russia have shown interest in developing small modular reactors in India. Small modular reactors are the ones which are factory-made compact with less than 300 MW capacity.

India and the US are working together to develop next-generation small modular reactor technologies for domestic and export markets.

According to a joint statement issued by the White House, President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during the latter's visit to the US last year, noted "the ongoing discussion on developing next-generation small modular reactor technologies in a collaborative mode for the domestic market as well as for export".

Centre cuts customs duty on mobile phones, components to 15 pc; industry upbeat

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

The government on Tuesday announced to reduce the basic customs duty (BCD) on mobile phones, printed circuit board assembly (PCBA) and mobile chargers to 15 per cent from the current 20 per cent.

With a three-fold increase in domestic production and an almost 100-fold jump in exports of mobile phones over the last six years, the Indian mobile phone industry has matured.

"In the interest of consumers, I now propose to reduce the BCD on mobile phones, mobile PCBA and mobile chargers to 15 per



cent," said Nirmala Sitharaman while presenting the Union Budget 2024-2025.

India's electronics sector has experienced rapid growth, reaching \$155 billion in FY23.

Production nearly doubled from \$48 billion in FY17 to \$101 billion in

FY23, driven primarily by mobile phones, which now constitute 43 per cent of total electronics production.

Pankaj Mohindroo, Chairman, India Cellular Electronics Association (ICEA), congratulated the government for the land-

mark budget.

"We are impressed with its intent and direction focusing on enhancing manufacturing and export competitiveness. The Finance Minister has also acknowledged the tremendous growth of mobile phone manufacturing and exports," Mohindroo told IANS.

The industry had recommended reducing BCD on mobile phones, its PCBA and charger/adaptor to 15 per cent, which has been accepted.

"The announcements will go a long way to enhance manufacturing, exports and our competitiveness.

Our proposal for tariff slab rationalisation, as has

also been acknowledged and FM has announced that it will be taken up in the next six months, will further embolden the industry and its competitiveness," Mohindroo explained.

India has significantly reduced its reliance on smartphone imports, now manufacturing 99 per cent domestically.

According to Siddhesh Mehta, research analyst, Samco Securities, this change will reduce costs and support the Indian manufacturers.

"Dixon Technologies will benefit the most from this move, allowing the company to strengthen its market position and grow further," said Mehta.

Budget gives big boost to agriculture sector

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an outlay of Rs 1.52 lakh crore in Budget 2024-25 to boost production and resilience in the agriculture and allied sectors.

The measures unveiled to enhance productivity and resilience in the agriculture sector include use of digital public infrastructure, 'atmanirbharta' for oil seeds, large-scale clusters for vegetable production, and financial support for the network of Nucleus Breeding Centres for shrimp broodstock.

Terming 'Annadata' (farmer) as one of four major castes which need to be focused upon, the minister said that the government has announced higher Minimum Support

Prices a month ago for all major crops, delivering on the promise of at least a 50 per cent margin over costs.

Buoyed by the success of the pilot project, the government, in partnership with the states, will facilitate the implementation of the digital public infrastructure (DPI) in agriculture for coverage of farmers and their lands in 3 years.

The Finance Minister said that during this year, a digital crop survey for Kharif using DPI will be taken up in 400 districts. The details of 6 crore farmers and their lands will be brought into the farmer and land registries. The issuance of Jan Samarth-based Kisan Credit Cards will be enabled in 5 states.

Sitharaman said that a strategy is being

put in place to achieve 'atmanirbharta' for oil seeds such as mustard, groundnut, sesame, soybean, and sunflower. The government will strengthen their production, storage and marketing.

She also said that large-scale clusters for vegetable production will be developed closer to major consumption centres. The government will promote Farmer-Producer Organisations, cooperatives and start-ups for vegetable supply chains including for collection, storage, and marketing of the products.

The financing for shrimp farming, processing and export will be facilitated through NABARD.

Finance Minister announces credit guarantee scheme, other measures for MSMEs

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday announced a credit guarantee scheme for facilitating term loans for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to purchase machinery and equipment without collateral or third-party guarantee.

In her speech in the Lok Sabha, she said the Budget provides special attention to MSMEs and manufacturing, particularly labour-intensive units.

"We have formulated a package, covering financing, regulatory changes and technology support for MSMEs to help them grow and also compete globally, as mentioned in the interim budget," she said.

The credit guarantee scheme for MSMEs in manufacturing will operate on the pooling of credit risks of such entities.

"A separately constituted self-financing guarantee fund will provide, to each applicant, guarantee cover up to Rs 100 crore, while the loan amount may be larger," the minister announced in the



Budget.

The borrower will have to provide an upfront guarantee fee and an annual guarantee fee on the reduced loan balance.

She also announced a new mechanism for facilitating the continuation of bank credit to MSMEs during their stress period.

Sitharaman said that while being in the 'special mention account' (SMA) stage for reasons beyond their control, MSMEs need credit to continue their business and avoid getting into the NPA stage.

"Credit availability will be supported through a guarantee from a government-promoted fund," she added.

In another move to

help MSMEs, the minister announced a new assessment model for credit to the sector.

She said public sector banks will build their in-house capability to assess MSMEs for credit, instead of relying on external assessment.

"They will also take a lead in developing or getting developed a new credit assessment model, based on the scoring of digital footprints of MSMEs in the economy," she added.

The new assessment model, she said, is expected to be a significant improvement over the traditional assessment of credit eligibility based only on asset or turnover

criteria. It will also cover MSMEs without a formal accounting system.

Mohammad Athar (Saif), partner and leader capital projects and infrastructure development, PwC India, said the credit guarantee scheme and e-commerce export hubs for MSMEs will enable demand creation and boost India's aspiration of achieving USD 1 trillion in exports by 2030, driven by MSMEs.

Sitharaman also announced that to enable MSMEs and traditional artisans to sell their products in international markets, e-commerce export hubs will be set up in public-private-partnership (PPP) mode.

These hubs, under a seamless regulatory and logistic framework, will facilitate trade and export-related services under one roof.

Vivek Jalan, Partner, Tax Connect, a multidisciplinary firm, said, as requested by the trade and industry bodies and laid down by the Economic Survey, for MSME businesses, the compliance burden is also sought to be relaxed.

Budget 2024: Centre proposes to abolish angel tax on startups for all classes of investors

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Giving a big relief to startups, the government on Tuesday announced removal of angel tax for all classes of investors to further promote the growth of budding entrepreneurs of the country.

Angel tax refers to the income tax that the government imposes on funding raised by unlisted companies, or startups, if their valuation exceeds the company's fair market value.

"To bolster the Indian startup eco-system, boost the entrepreneurial spirit and support innovation, I propose to abolish the so-called angel tax for all classes of investors," she said.

Ahead of the Union Budget, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has recommended removal of this levy on startups.

In September last year, the Income Tax Department notified new angel tax rules that comprise a mechanism to evaluate the shares issued by unlisted startups to investors.



While previously the angel tax -- a tax levied on capital received on the sale of shares of a startup above the fair market value -- applied only to local investors, the Budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year (April 2023 to March 2024) widened its ambit to include foreign investments.

Over 1.17 lakh startups are registered with the government.

They are eligible for availing of incentives under the government's Startup India initiative.

Commenting on the announcement, Deloitte India Partner Sumit Singhanian said it is a positive move as it would help reset not only the tax cost matrix for investors in startup, but for foreign strategic invest-

tors as well.

"It also puts out a progressive view of tax policy making by the government. Since this levy has stung for more than a decade since it was introduced in 2012, withdrawal of angel tax entirely means a timely course correction as the government rolls out red carpet for long term strategic investment as well more risk-capital to promote innovation and R&D," he said.

Lokesh Shah, Partner, IndusLaw, termed it as a major announcement. "This is a huge relief for Indian companies, specifically startups. A delight for investors and private equities/venture funds supporting Indian companies," Shah said.

Union Budget aims at empowering every citizen: Yediyurappa

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, JULY 23

Former Karnataka Chief Minister and BJP Central Parliamentary Committee member B.S. Yediyurappa said the Union Budget was aimed at empowering every citizen of the country.

Taking to X, Yediyurappa stated, "A comprehensive and development-oriented budget has been presented by Finance Minister, aimed at empowering every citizen and building a prosperous and powerful nation."

"Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the first budget of the 3rd term of the NDA government has been presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman," he said.

"This budget lays a strong foundation for building a developed India, accelerates the pace of overall and inclusive development of the country, and provides a roadmap for the nation's progress over the next 5 years," he stated.

Harmanpreet, Shafali move up in ICC Women's T20I Rankings

AGENCIES
DUBAI, JULY 23

India batters Harmanpreet Kaur and Shafali Verma have moved up in the ICC Women's T20I Player Rankings after their recent performances in the ongoing Women's Asia Cup in Sri Lanka.

Indian captain Harmanpreet and opener Shafali are in joint-11th position in the latest T20I rankings.

Harmanpreet's scores of five not out against Pakistan and 66 against the

United Arab Emirates have helped her gain one spot while Shafali's scores of 40 and 37 have lifted her four positions.

Sri Lanka off-spinner Inoshi Priyadarshani has advanced three places to a career-best fourth position after taking two wickets against Bangladesh and one against Malaysia.

India's wicketkeeper Richa Ghosh has moved up four places to 24th, Bangladesh's Murshida Khatun has climbed six



places to 47th, Sri Lanka's Vishmi Gunaratne has

advanced seven places to 51st, and Thailand's Nattaya Boochatham has jumped 10 places to 76th in the batting rankings.

Among the bowlers, Bangladesh's Nahida Akter has risen nine places to 21st while Marufa Akter is up one place to 26th. Sri Lanka's Udeshika Prabodhani has progressed four places to 30th, and India's Shreyanka Patil has surged 19 places to 41st.

England captain Heather Knight, who scored a match-winning 46 not

out off 31 balls in the final match of their home series against New Zealand, helping England win the series 5-0, has re-entered the top 20, gaining two spots. Her teammate, new-ball bowler Lauren Bell, has moved into the top 10 following a three-wicket haul.

New Zealand's Amelia Kerr has advanced two places to 13th in the batting rankings, while her sister Jess Kerr has moved up five places to joint-42nd in the bowling rankings.

PSG exploring possibility to sign Jadon Sancho from Man Utd: Report

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Kylian Mbappe's departure has put a lot of pressure on Paris Saint Germain as they have let go of their club captain and generational player on a free transfer to one of their biggest European rivals.

The last time PSG lost their marquee player was back in 2016 when Zlatan Ibrahimovic left the club to join Manchester United. They followed his departure with the signing of Neymar jr for a world record fee of 222 million Euros and Mbappe for 180 million euros in the 2018

season. In the past few weeks many big names in the likes of Victor Osimhen, Vinicius Jr and Bruno Fernandes have been linked to the Parisian club.

According to a report by Sky Sports, PSG have added Jadon Sancho to their list after he starred for Dortmund during their dream Champions League run which ended in heartbreak against Real Madrid in the finals.

Sancho heavily impressed in the Champions League completing more dribbles than anyone in the competition and was on top of his

game against PSG in the semifinals where the Dortmund defeated the former over two legs.

The 'beef' between Erik Ten Hag and Jadon Sancho which saw the English international move to Dortmund on a season long loan seems to be finally over with the head coach admitting that it was time to draw the line and 'move on.' "We spoke well. Everyone can make a mistake. If the player reflects on this well, you draw a line and move on. This club needs good players, and one thing is certain: Jadon Sancho is a very good player."

Hockey India name core probables ahead of Asian Champions Trophy

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Hockey India on Tuesday named a core probable group for the senior men's national coaching camp in SAI, Bengaluru ahead of the forthcoming Asian Champions Trophy, to be held in Hulunbuir City, China in September.

The core group includes players who didn't make the final cut for Paris 2024. It also includes players from the development group and the junior men's team. Players from the Olympic squad will join the ongoing National Camp on August 24 after a brief break. The camp will end on September 4.

Players called up for the national camp include goalkeepers Suraj Karkera and Mohit HS, defenders Varun Kumar, Amir Ali, Amandeep Lakra, Rohit, Sukhvinder and Yogember Rawat.

Midfielders called up



include Rabichandra Singh Moirangthem, Mohd Raheel Mousen, Vishnukant Singh, Rajinder Singh, Ankit Pal, Poovanna CB and Rosan Kujur.

Among the forwards called up are Maninder Singh, Karthi S, Arajjeet Singh Hundal, Bobby Singh Dhami, Uttam Singh and Gurjot Singh.

"While the senior squad prepares to begin our campaign in Paris 2024, we already have a strong set of players in the fringes waiting to get an opportunity to play for India again. With the Asian Champions Trophy scheduled only weeks after the completion of the Olymp-

pic Games, the preparations for this continental championship has already begun with the national coaching camp called up in SAI, Bengaluru.

"These players will continue to train together for the Asian Champions Trophy where India will go in as defending Champions. The Olympic Squad will join them on August 24," expressed chief coach Craig Fulton.

Core probable group: Goalkeepers: Suraj Karkera, Mohit HS

Defenders: Varun Kumar, Amir Ali, Amandeep Lakra, Rohit, Sukhvinder, Yogember Rawat

Midfielders: Rabichandra Singh Moirangthem, Mohd Raheel Mousen, Vishnukant Singh, Rajinder Singh, Ankit Pal, Poovanna CB, Rosan Kujur

Forwards: Maninder Singh, Karthi S, Arajjeet Singh Hundal, Bobby Singh Dhami, Uttam Singh, Gurjot Singh.

Hockey: 'This opportunity motivates me to work even harder', says defender Sanjay on Olympic debut

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 23

Indian men's hockey team defender Sanjay, who is a formidable drag-flicker from Dabra village near Hisar, Haryana, is set to make his debut at the Olympics in Paris, starting from July 26.

Emerging as one of the most promising players in Indian hockey, Sanjay's journey from a small village to the grand stage of the Olympics is a testament to his hard work and dedication.

"I am honoured to be a part of the Indian team for the Paris Olympics. Like any other player, it was my dream to play in the Olympics, so I am happy that my hard work paid off and I made it to the squad for the Paris Olympics. This opportunity motivates me to work even harder and contribute to our team's success. I look forward to



making my country proud at the biggest sporting stage," Sanjay was quoted by Hockey India.

"My family was overjoyed when I shared the news of my selection for the Paris Olympics.

Their blessings and encouragement have been a tremendous source of motivation for me to give my best in the event and make them proud," he added.

Sanjay first caught the

nation's attention during the 2021 Junior World Cup, where he emerged as the highest scorer for India with eight goals, including two hat-tricks.

His outstanding performance not only made him the third-highest scorer in the tournament but also showcased his potential as a future star in Indian hockey.

He made his senior team debut in June 2022 and quickly made an impact

by helping India win the inaugural FIH Hockey5s. His skills as a drag-flicker have been instrumental in securing crucial victories.

Sanjay has also participated in major tournaments such as the 19th Asian Games 2022 in Hangzhou, China and the Asian Champions Trophy Chennai 2023, where the team clinched gold medals. His performance in the FIH Junior World Cup Bhubaneswar 2021 earned India a 4th position, and he also secured a silver medal in the 3rd Youth Olympic Games in 2018.

Also, in recognition of his talents, Sanjay was awarded the Hockey India Jugraj Singh Award for Upcoming Player of the Year (Men) Under-21 in 2021.

Now Sanjay's complete focus is on the Paris Olympics and he aims to take it one game at a time and

not get ahead of himself. "I will focus on the Olympics by taking it one game at a time and giving my hundred percent in each match. My goal is to stay fully present and committed, ensuring that I contribute to my team's success with every opportunity on the field. This is the moment I've worked so hard for, and I intend to make the most of it," he stated.

Further revealing his ultimate dream as a player, he said, "Ever since I picked up a hockey stick, I have dreamed of winning Gold medals at the Olympics and the World Cup. Representing my country on these prestigious platforms and bringing home the Gold has always been my ultimate goal. I am deeply committed to making my nation proud through my dedication and hard work on the field."

MLC: San Francisco Unicorns beat Washington Freedom by 6-wicket

AGENCIES
DALLAS, JULY 23

Led by Sanjay Krishnamurthi's unbeaten 79 off 42 balls and Josh Inglis' rapid 45 off 17, the San Francisco Unicorns handed the Washington Freedom their first loss of the season in the penultimate league stage match of the Major League Cricket (MLC) 2024 at Grand Prairie Stadium on Monday.

Despite Steve Smith and Travis Head each scoring half-centuries to guide Washington Freedom to 174/3 in 15.3 overs, the Unicorns managed their run-chase flawlessly in a rain-affected game, securing a six-wicket victory (DLS Method).

Both teams ended the league stage with 11 points from seven matches, with Washington Freedom finishing on top due to a superior Net Run Rate, while the San Francisco

Unicorns placed second.

With the game reduced to 14 overs due to rain, San Francisco Unicorns were given a DLS-adjusted target of 177 runs to win. Finn Allen was sent packing on the very first ball of the innings by Akeal Hosein.

Despite the early setback, Jake Fraser-McGurk and Sanjay Krishnamurthi took an aggressive approach, smashing 42 runs in the Powerplay of 4 overs. However, Fraser-McGurk was caught behind by Andries Gous off Andrew Tye in the next over, having scored 18 off 9 balls.

Krishnamurthi, who was dropped by Mukhtar Ahmed at 13 in the second over, reached his fifty off 28 balls in the eighth over. Meanwhile, Josh Inglis delivered a blistering innings of 45 runs off 17 balls, featuring six sixes and just one four. He



smashed three consecutive sixes off Jack Edwards in the ninth over, reducing the target to 67 runs needed from 30 balls.

Tye, who was hit for two sixes by Inglis in the second and third balls of his second over, had the last laugh as he dismissed Inglis on the fourth ball and went on to strike again, removing Sherfane Rutherford on the last ball

of the 10th over.

Krishnamurthi then took charge of the run chase, teaming up with Hassan Khan to score 33 runs in the next two overs, reducing the target to 22 runs needed from 12 balls. Riding on stunning momentum, both batters chased down the target with ease with two balls to spare.

Earlier in the contest, Steve Smith and Travis Head gave Washington Freedom a flying start, amassing 70 runs in the Powerplay. The pair brought up the team's 100-run mark in the 9.3 over. However, Smith was dismissed by Corey Anderson on the next ball, scoring a remarkable 56 off 31 balls.

Head continued his red-hot form as he reached his fourth successive fifty in 34 balls, but was also dismissed by Anderson in the 12th over after scoring 56 off 36 balls, leaving Wash-

ington at 122/2.

Rachin Ravindra then played a quick cameo, scoring 16 off 6 balls before getting run out in the 14th over. Gous (29* off 20) continued to find timely boundaries until rain halted play after 15.3 overs, with Washington at 174/3. The match was then shifted to a 14-over chase for San Francisco.

Having finished in the top two, both Washington Freedom and San Francisco square off against each other in the Qualifier on July 25 at 0730 PM Local Time at Grand Prairie Stadium in Dallas.

Brief Scores: Washington Freedom 174/3 in 15.3 overs (Steve Smith 56, Travis Head 56, Corey Anderson 2-20) lost to San Francisco Unicorns 177/4 in 13.4 overs (Sanjay Krishnamurthi 79 not out, Josh Inglis 45, Andrew Tye 3-41) by 6 wickets (DLS method).

Guardiola confirms De Bruyne 'is not leaving' amidst Al-Ittihad speculations

AGENCIES
CHAPEL HILL, (USA), JULY 23

After days of speculation and false reports that claimed Kevin De Bruyne may be on his way out of Manchester City and close to joining Saudi Pro League side Al-Ittihad, head coach Pep Guardiola has confirmed that their star midfielder is not going to be leaving this transfer window.

"Kevin isn't leaving. If someone leaves, we're going to talk about that. Of course, until the last day, we have chances (to make transfers), I don't rule it out the option to have new players but I think there is an 85,90 per cent chance we will have the same squad," said Guardiola told reporters.

De Bruyne has often been hailed as one of

the best midfielders in Premier League history. The Belgian joined the Citizens in 2015 and went on to completely dominate the English League.

Over the course of the past nine seasons, he has scored 68 goals and provided 114 assists making him the second highest assist provider in Premier League history only behind Ryan Giggs (162).

"I feel comfortable, because the quality of human beings we have in the squad is difficult to be replaced, and the quality is there. But we'll see, I don't know in the last moment if someone comes for some players and they leave, we're going to decide," added Guardiola.

Manchester City are currently on their USA pre season tour and will play

against Scottish side Celtic on Wednesday. They will then turn their attention to AC Milan, Barcelona and Chelsea who they face in the build up to the new season.

Guardiola also admitted he is a huge admirer of talented midfielder James McAtee, who rejoined the team after a successful loan spell at Sheffield United.

"I am curious to see Macca (James McAtee) especially after coming back from Sheffield United. We have a high opinion of him. I would love to have him next season with us - he can play in the small spaces in the pockets. I think he grew up in terms of physicality and has played for a team fighting relegation and when you do this you get something special."

IOC chief Bach highlights values of sports in divided world

AGENCIES
PARIS, JULY 23

At a time when the world order is deeply troubling, the Olympic values of solidarity, equality and human dignity for all have never been more important.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach made these remarks when addressing the opening ceremony of the IOC 142nd session on Monday night.

"We are witnessing a new world order in the making," said Bach.

He noted that historic disruptions, featured with trends such as decoupling of economies, beggar-thy-neighbor and narrow self-interests trumping the rule of law, are upending the system of international relations that has been in place since World War II and multilateralism is on the backfoot.

"In this new world order, 'cooperation' and

'compromise' are sadly considered disparaging terms.

"These trends are deeply disturbing to us because they are going straight against our mission to unite. Grounded in and united by our Olympic values - we must be ready to face this sea-change,"

he added. Despite the tough challenges, the IOC chief has maintained a positive mindset.

"We are prepared

because we are not only multilateral - we are global. The Olympic Movement is

a global movement. In the Olympic Movement, we are all equal.

"We have 206 National (or regional) Olympic Committees that all enjoy equal rights under the Olympic Charter. What is more, we are living in solidarity with each other. Solidarity - this core value defines our Olympic community," he said.

FIFPRO, European Leagues to file joint complaint against FIFA over 'unsustainable' match calendar

AGENCIES
BRUSSELS, JULY 23

FIFPRO Europe and European Leagues have released a joint statement stating their intentions to file a complaint with the European Commission against FIFA over the match calendar.

"The international match calendar is now beyond saturation and has become unsustainable for national leagues and a risk for the health of players. FIFA's decisions over the last years have repeatedly

favoured its own competitions and commercial interests, neglected its responsibilities as a governing body, and harmed the economic interests of national leagues and the welfare of players," read the joint statement posted on X.

Due to the ever-changing dynamic world of football, the new UEFA Champions League format and the new FIFA Club World Cup will heavily affect all players involved. Besides the domestic duties, the number of matches in

the new UCL format will increase from 125 to 189. Each team will play a minimum of eight games instead of six and a maximum of 17.

"Legal action is now the only responsible step for European leagues and player unions to protect football, its ecosystem and its workforce from FIFA's unilateral decisions. The complaint will explain that FIFA's conduct infringes EU competition law and notably constitutes an abuse of dominance," the statement further added.

To add to that the usual list of participants at the FIFA Club World Cup has also increased adding to the team's already congested fixture list. Adding international duties to the current calendar puts the players at serious risk with the number of ACL injuries already having seen an increase in both the men's and women's game during the 2023-24 season.

"FIFA holds a dual role as both the global regulator of football and a competition organiser."

DC B'pora visits Quilmuqam; inaugurates Home-stays to promote eco-tourism at Dumgali destination, Aaloosa

JNEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, JULY 23

In an effort to promote eco-tourism and to assess public demands for the promotion of tourist destination Dumgali, a day-long public interaction cum tourism promotion programme was today organised by District Administration at Quilmuqam Bandipora.

The programme was attended by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Shakeel-ul Rehman; DDC Vice Chairperson, Kounsar Shafeeq; DDC Aaloosa, Mewa Jan; ACR Bandipora, Ex. Engineers of R&B and PHE, Tehsildar Aaloosa, BDO Aaloosa, Assistant Director Tourism and Tourism scholar Shabnum Bashir Gojjar besides other sectoral officers and locals and youth of the area.

The participants were welcomed by singing songs by students and



locals donning remarkable traditional attires depicting the local culture of the area.

On the occasion, the DC inaugurated Home-Stay registered with the Tourism Department at Quilmuqam. It was given out that with this inauguration, 48 home stays have been made functional at the various tourist destinations in Sumbal and Bandipora to promote local livelihood means and eco & sustainable tourism.

Speaking on the occasion, Shakeel-ul Rehman said that the main objec-

tive of these home-stays is to promote local livelihood means, preserve tourist destinations and to facilitate tourists visiting the areas without resorting to construction of concrete

permanent structures having harmful impact on the environment.

He further added that these home-stays will generate employment opportunities and shall also facilitate tourists visiting the interconnected tourist destinations like Dumgali, Bude Dumgali, Danna, Lashkoot, Narmarg and Chaandajji.

During the public interaction programme, representatives of the local areas demanded road connectivity from Quilmuqam to Dumgali and Hapatnar, Lift irrigation scheme for

Reshkul to be fed from Bonnar Nallah to cater the irrigation problems, dedicated playground for the youth of Quilmuqam, shifting of Tehsil Office Aaloosa on the main road and augmentation of mobile & internet connectivity in the area.

The DC gave a patient hearing to all the public issues and issued on the spot directions to the officers for the settlement of the genuine concerns in a time-bound manner. Rs. 06 lakh were approved on the spot for the installation of pumps for feeding Reshkul. He directed ExEn PHE to make these 02 pumps functional as early as possible.

DC also directed ACD and BDO Aaloosa to identify suitable land in the area for the development of a playground. He also directed ExEn R&B Bandipora to chalk out the ways and ensure inclusion of

the Quilmuqam -Dumgali and Hapatnar road in the next year NABARD plan. With regard to the shifting of Tehsil Office to a suitable location on the main road, DC directed ACR Bandipora and Tehsildar Aaloosa to submit a detailed report within weeks' time.

On the occasion, DC urged the locals to ensure their cooperation and commitment for the promotion of the tourist spots like Dumgali & Dalwa in the area. He sought public support and participation in the successful implementation of the ongoing project like the Macadamization of roads, projects under JIM, electricity, and infrastructural development.

Earlier in the morning, a trekking expedition of 20 students was flagged-off by ADDC Bandipora, M Ashraf Bhat for the exploration of Dumgali and Dalwa tourist destinations.

District Admin Ramban virtually participates in launch of JK Samadhan Portal

JNEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, JULY 23

The District Administration of Ramban, led by Deputy Commissioner Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, virtually participated in the launch of the JK Samadhan Portal initiative today.

This significant good governance project was inaugurated by Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha.

The event was attended by Chairperson of the District Development Council, Dr. Shamshad Shan, along with DDC members and prominent citizens, who joined to witness the unveiling of this transformative platform.

During the event, participants were sensitized about the importance and functionality of the JK Samadhan portal, which aims to enhance

the efficiency and effectiveness of grievance redressal mechanisms. A comprehensive user manual for the app was provided, ensuring that users can easily navigate and utilize its features.

The JK Samadhan platform represents a substantial advancement over the previous systems, JKIGRAMS and CPGRAMS. It is equipped with a multilingual AI-based interface designed to automatically forward grievances to the relevant departments. Key features include real-time updates on the status of grievances, prompt acknowledgements to users, and a multilingual voice response system.

The platform also offers advanced capabilities such as grievance prioritization, various types of dashboards for monitoring, and comprehensive reporting tools to

ensure transparency and accountability.

Later, the Chairperson extended her gratuities to the Government for launching the JK Samadhan initiative, a crucial step towards improving governance and ensuring that citizens' concerns are addressed efficiently. The platform's advanced technology and user-centric design will significantly reduce the time taken to resolve grievances and improve overall satisfaction among the residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

The virtual launch event was attended by a wide range of senior officers including Additional Deputy Commissioner, Varunjeet Singh Charak, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, S. Harpal Singh, CPO, Sakeeb Ahmed, GM DIC, Ravindra Anand, ACD Shrinath Suman, ACP, Ashfaq Kanji, CMO, and other senior officers.

Justice Tashi Rabstan lays foundation stone for multipurpose utility in DCC, Leh

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 23

Acting Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Tashi Rabstan, today laid foundation stone for multipurpose hall in the District Court Complex, Melongthang, Leh, through virtual mode, from Jammu wing of the High Court.

The multipurpose hall would come up at Melongthang, Leh at an estimated cost of Rs. 19.78 crore, which will comprise of Ground Floor Auditorium Hall with capacity of 260 persons, Separate Lounge and Dining Hall, and a Gymnasium. Whereas, the first floor of the building will comprise of a Conference Room, Mediation Hall, Physiotherapy Room and Media Room. The project is being executed by PWD Leh, and has to be completed within 18 working months. In the



course of his virtual address on the occasion, while Justice Tashi elaborated upon the usage and benefits of the upcoming Multipurpose Hall, impressed upon the Executing Agency for timely completion of the same. Worthwhile to mention here that it is with the vigorous intervention of Justice Tashi Rabstan, who also heads the Infrastructure Committee of the High Court for UT of Ladakh, and with the upbeat co-opera-

tion of the Administration of the UT Ladakh, that a state of art judicial infrastructure is rapidly being developed in UT of Ladakh, for the judiciary, in a record time.

Those who were present on the occasion virtually from Jammu wing of the High Court included Shahzad Azeem Registrar General, High Court, M K Sharma Principal Secretary to Chief Justice, Sandeep Kour Registrar

Judicial Jammu, Amit Gupta Member Secretary J&K Legal Service Authority, Anoop Kumar Sharma Registrar Computers (IT), High Court, Prem Sagar Secretary High Court Legal Services Committee, Rajni Sharma Joint Registrar (Judicial) Jammu and Deldan Angmo Munsiff attached to the office of Registrar Computers (IT).

Whereas, at Leh the event was graced by the presence of Splazes Angmo, Principal District and Sessions Judge Leh, Shashi Kant Bhagat Administrative Secretary Law and Justice UT of Ladakh, Judicial officers from the District Headquarter Leh, Shafi Lassu President Bar Association Leh along with other Members, Mutalib Chief Engineer UT Ladakh, Gyatso SE Leh, Executive Engineers of PWD Construction Division and Mechanical Division Leh etc.

DC Kathua reviews arrangements for Independence Day 2024 celebrations

JNEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, JULY 23

Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Dr. Rakesh Minhas convened a meeting with district officers to discuss arrangements for the upcoming Independence Day 2024 celebrations in the district.

The mega event will take place at the Sports Stadium in Kathua, where the VIP will hoist the National Flag and inspect the parade.

The parade will feature march-past contingents from the Police, Army, Para Military forces, Forest Department, NCC and platoons from local schools and colleges, as well as bands from PTS and the Army.

Dr. Minhas instructed the concerned officers to ensure the renovation of the venue and arrange necessary

logistics to guarantee a smooth and successful event at the district headquarters.

The meeting involved detailed discussions on the sequence of events. It was decided that the day will commence with the playing of Shehnai Vadan by teams from the Information Department at the offices of the Deputy Commissioner and SSP Kathua.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need for comprehensive arrangements covering security, sanitation, seating, barricading, drinking water supply, uninterrupted electricity, prize distribution, invitation cards, transportation, and the illumination of significant buildings for the occasion.

Regarding cultural programs, Dr. Minhas tasked the Chief Edu-

cation Officer Kathua to select the best performances by school and college students to showcase India's rich cultural diversity.

The DC also stressed the importance of cleanliness, the illumination of government offices, plantation drives, and flag hoisting in all government establishments to celebrate the day with appropriate honor and enthusiasm.

Dr. Minhas urged all officers to complete preparations well in advance to ensure that the national event is celebrated with traditional fervor and dignity.

Among those present at the meeting were SSP Kathua Anayat Ali Chaudhary, ADDC Surinder Mohan, ADC Ranjit Singh and various district officers from different departments.

Power shutdown

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 23

Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCL, Jammu has informed that the power supply to Gandhi Nagar, Green Belt, Bahu Plaza and adjoining areas will remain affected on July 24 from 6 am to 7 am. Similarly, the power supply to Gandhi Nagar, Nanak Nagar and adjoining areas will remain affected on July 24 from 9 am to 10 am. Likewise, the power supply to Residency Road, Raghunath Bazar, Gummat, Jewel and adjoining areas will remain affected on July 24 from 10 am to 11 am. Similarly, the power supply to Bathindi, Sunjwan and adjoining areas will remain affected on July 24 from 11 am to 12 noon.

Principal Secretary APD reviews functioning of F&V Terminal Markets

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 23

Principal Secretary, Agriculture Production Department (APD), Shailendra Kumar today held a detailed meeting with Presidents of terminal Fruit and Vegetable Market Associations of J&K to review their functioning and assess overall development scenario.

Secretary in Agriculture Production Department, Secretary Technical Agriculture Production Department, Managing Director JKHPMC, Directors of Horticulture Kashmir/Jammu, FA/CAO Horticulture, Joint Director Planning, Horticulture, Deputy Director (P&M) Jammu/Kashmir, AMOS and Technical officer Horticulture participated in the meeting.

The meeting was also attended by Presidents/representatives from Fruit & Vegetable Markets of Parimpora, Narwal, Jablipora Anantnag, Aglar Shopian and Sopore.

During the meeting, the Principal Secretary emphasized on the need of cleanliness of the Mandis and directed that all Fruit



& Vegetable Markets to focus on this aspect on priority. He also asked the F&V market officials to prepare the budget for development in each Mandi every year by September/October and its approval by January enabling works to start early.

Regarding spurious Fertilizers and pesticides, the Principal Secretary informed that effective mechanism has been put in place and the Law Enforcing agencies have curbed it and if anyone is found indulging in malpractices, huge fine will be levied on them. He asked the association representatives to get involved with Law Enforcing Agencies for enforcing the vigilance of spurious fertilizers.

The Principal Secretary emphasized that government schemes like HADP are tailored for overall benefit of farmers and their

business development and a new scheme JKIP has also been launched. He also complimented the department for raising the e-NAM trade manifold. He advised the growers to participate in e-NAM for gaining remunerative prices of their produce.

While welcoming the participants, Director Horticulture (P&M, Vikas Sharma, dwelled upon the services and other facilities that the department is providing to growers for their smooth business operations.

The Association members highlighted the issues of their respective F&V Markets and requested for their early resolution. Various issues of the Mandis were discussed threadbare including early completion of Baghi Sundri road and development of truck terminal, extension of lease in Narwal Mandi,

building permission of CA store in Parimpora by SDA and its supplementary MOU/lease, allotment of shop sites in Aglar and Jablipora.

The Principal Secretary patiently listened to the participants and had a thorough discussion about all the issues.

He stressed that all the allotments for shop sites shall be carried out through e-auction for transparency and accountability. He invited the association members for their views which shall be taken into consideration while finalizing e-auction parameters.

In the meeting Principal Secretary accepted the demand from Mandi Associations for establishment of Quality Control Laboratories each costing about one crore for six fruit and Vegetable markets in J&K which is expected to enhance quality control mechanism of the fruit being exported. It was also informed that from this year the Crop Insurance Scheme for horticulture crops has been approved.

Div Com, ADGP Jammu review preparations for Independence Day celebrations 2024 in Jammu Division

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 23

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, and Additional Director General of Police Jammu, Anand Jain, today reviewed the preparations for Independence Day Celebrations made by the respective District Administrations of Jammu Division.

Commissioner JMC, MD JPDCL, Deputy Commissioners and SSP of respective districts, HoDs, representatives from line departments, executive agencies, BSF, CRPF, NCC and concerned were present.

During the meeting, the Div Com took appraisal of preparations made for Divisional level function to be organized at MA Stadium in Jammu and the arrangements put in place by District Administrations for Independence Day celebrations across the Jammu Division.

Deputy Commissioner Jammu apprised the Div Com about the detailed arrangements planned for the event in Jammu. He



informed about the different committees constituted that have been assigned different responsibilities and activities for smooth and successful conduct of the Independence Day celebrations.

The Div Com directed for timely start of the rehearsal of the contingents and cultural items to be part of the Divisional level event. He also instructed the concerned departments for white wash, decoration and relevant repair works at the venue.

The Div Com further took stock of the department-wise arrangements to be put in place by them for the Independence

Day celebrations 2024. He impressed on the concerned officers for ensuring best arrangements for the participants and the general public.

Threadbare discussion was held on the barricading, seating arrangements, Parking facilities, traffic regulation, illumination of offices, PAS, provision of Power, water, security arrangements at function venues, sanitation, medicare facilities, contingents, cultural activities.

The Div Com asked for setting up a joint control room with representatives of line departments and appointing Nodal officers for smooth execution of the responsibilities.

The Traffic Department was directed for providing wide publicity of the designated parking spots for the general public and RTC was asked to provide busses for ferrying the participants and public to the venue.

The Div Com directed the Deputy Commissioners to put in place all necessary arrangements well in time. He further asked them to ensure smooth celebrations at Sub division, Block and Panchayat level as well.

Deputy Commissioners were asked to ensure the hoisting of the national flag on every Government building and schools in all the districts. He further directed for visiting the families of freedom fighters, Martyrs on the national festival.

Directions were also issued for organizing Swacchta Pakhwara from 1-14 August, 2024.

The ADGP directed the SSPs to make fool-proof security arrangements to ensure hassle-free celebrations at all the venues by formulating deployment plans well in advance.