

**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:

- Headache
- Joint and muscle pain
- Diarrhoea
- Profound vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Disorientation
- Severe ten pin or more bleed or vomit, urine or stool
- Redness

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

# JINDRAH IMAGES

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## J&K's former deputy CM Kavinder Gupta appointed as new LG of Ladakh

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, JUL 14 (KNO)

In a significant move, the President of India on Monday appointed Kavinder Gupta, former deputy chief minister of J&K, as new Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Union Territory.

Gupta, a former deputy CM of J&K, was deputy CM in Mehooba Mufti-led government, which collapsed in June 2018 following withdrawal of support to it by BJP, citing deteriorating security situation in the erstwhile state.

Gupta has become the first politician to hold the position of LG Ladakh. Until now, Ladakh UT has been administered by non-political appointees—Radha Krishna Mathur (a retired IAS officer) and Brigadier (Dr.) B. D. Mishra (an Army veteran).



According to an official communique, a copy of which is in possession of news agency, the President of India has appointed Kavinder Gupta as Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh.

The President also accepted the resignation of Brig. (Dr.) B. D. Mishra (Retd.) as Lieutenant Governor of Union

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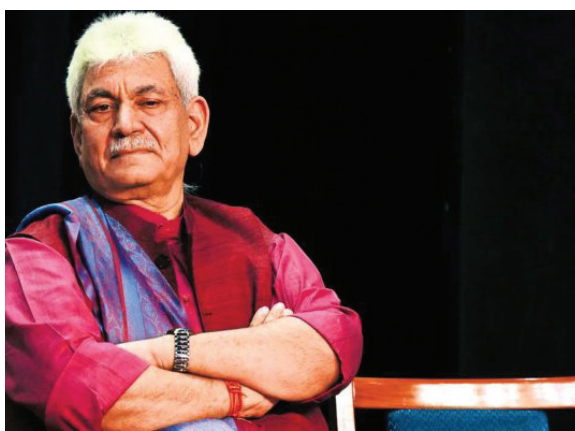
## I take full responsibility: LG Manoj Sinha calls Pahalgam attack a security failure

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 14

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has acknowledged that the deadly attack in Pahalgam earlier this year was a grave security lapse, taking personal responsibility for the incident that killed several innocent civilians.

In an interview to The Times of India, Sinha described the attack as a Pakistan-sponsored act of terror intended to sow communal discord and derail the region's economic progress.

"I take full responsibility for the incident, which was undoubtedly a security failure," Sinha said.



He added that while the attack was a deliberate attempt to target India's unity, it should not be seen as evidence that terrorism is resurgent across the Union Territory.

"The intention of the neighbour (Pakistan) was to create a communal divide and trigger a backlash against people of J&K living in other parts of the country, adding to the feeling of alienation," he said.

Pakistan's calculated strike on Kashmir's economy

According to Sinha, the timing and location of the assault were aimed at undermining Kashmir's booming tourism sector and overall economic revival.

"In the past five years, the J&K economy's size has doubled. Tourists have been flocking in high numbers. This was a hit by Pakistan at the economic well-being of Kashmir," he said, while also stressing that the widespread condemnation by ordinary Kashmiris was a "befitting reply to Pakistan and terror outfits."

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## Amarnath Yatra: 2.20 lakh devotees perform darshan in 12 days

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 14 (KNO)

The annual Amarnath Yatra has entered its twelfth day and continues to proceed smoothly, witnessing a steady rise in the number of pilgrims each day.

As of Monday, over 2.20 lakh devotees have offered prayers at the holy cave shrine since the pilgrimage began on July 3.

Officials told the news agency that a total of 20,448 pilgrims performed 'darshan' at the 3,800-meter-high holy cave shrine on Monday including 14,145 men, 5,214 women, 242 children, 84 sadhus, six sadhvis and 757 security force personnel paid their respects at the holy cave shrine.

Over the last twelve days, a total of 2,20,511

pilgrims have undertaken the ongoing pilgrimage, officials said.

They said the annual pilgrimage has been progressing smoothly amid tight security arrangements and favourable weather conditions.

On Sunday, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha announced that the ongoing Amarnath Yatra has surpassed the 2-lakh mark, with devotees continuing to throng the holy cave shrine.

In a post on X, LG Sinha expressed his joy, stating, "With Baba Amarnath Ji's blessings, the holy pilgrimage has crossed the 2 lakh mark today. This is a sacred journey of a lifetime, and I welcome all the devotees to discover and experience the divinity. Har Har Mahadev!"

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## UP man, walking for 111 days with 15 kg load, reaches Pahalgam for Amarnath Yatra

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
PAHALGAM, JUL 14 (KNO)

Harnam Prasad, a resident of Jasnagar in Uttar Pradesh, who has been undertaking the Amarnath Yatra on foot, reached Pahalgam on Monday after walking for 111 days.

Carrying a Kaware (sacred water pot) weighing 17 kilogrammes on his shoulders, Prasad began his journey from Rameshwaram Jyotirling, covering thousands of kilometres.

Speaking to the news agency, Prasad said, "I started my journey on March 27 and today, after 111 days on foot, I have reached Pahalgam. I am extremely happy. There were many hurdles along the way, but I overcame them all with faith"

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## Adventure tourism vital for boosting repeat visits to Kashmir: CM



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 14 (KNO)

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Monday said that in order to promote repeat tourism in Kashmir, it is essential to offer something new and refreshing each time—like adventure tourism.

He was speaking at the launch of the book "Valleys of Jammu and Kashmir - A Tribute to the Soul

of Jammu and Kashmir" authored by Mehmood A. Shah, Managing Director, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited, at a local hotel here.

"If we aspire to promote repeat tourism, we must recognize that tourists won't return solely for our Mughal gardens or the Tulip bloom, nor just for the gondola rides. They return when

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## CM Omar meets various delegations at Raabita Office



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 14 (KNO)

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Monday met several delegations at the Public Outreach Office, Raabita here, and held wide-ranging discussions on development, overall functioning of Institutions and public welfare issues.

Dr. Mohd. Jaffar Akhoun, Chief Executive Councillor from Kargil, led a deputation to apprise the Chief Min-

ister of several challenges being faced by students and patients from Ladakh, particularly from Kargil, in different educational and healthcare institutions across Jammu and Kashmir. The deputation also raised various civic issues affecting the residents of Ladakh living in the J&K, seeking timely redressal and support.

Prof. Jawaid Iqbal, Vice Chancellor of Baba Ghulam Shah

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## CS pushes for 100% digital health records under ABDM

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 14 (KNO)

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Monday chaired a meeting to review implementation of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) in Jammu and Kashmir with a focus on ensuring seamless integration of healthcare data and digital services across the UT.

The meeting was attended by Secretary, Health & Medical Education; Managing Director, ABDM; Principals of Government Medical Colleges; Director Coordination (Medical Colleges) and other senior officers of the Department.

Taking stock of the ongoing initiatives under ABDM, the Chief Secretary underscored the urgency of linking patient health records with ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Health



Account) IDs, emphasizing that no stone should be left unturned to complete this vital digital transition without any further delay. He called for interlinking of Sehat, ABDM and HMIS portals, to create a unified digital ecosystem that empowers the patients, healthcare professionals and institutions to access and share data effortlessly through a single platform.

Dulloo stressed that

continuous updating of patient health records must be ensured so that individuals need not carry paper records when visiting any hospital or doctor. He called for universal implementation of the Scan and Share facility across all health institutions. He directed the department to rationalize manpower, especially for data entry tasks critical to success of the HMIS module.

In a significant push towards improving accountability and data integrity, the Chief Secretary instructed the department to expedite the Health Professional Registry (HPR) and take strict measures against professionals delaying compliance. He also advised for seeking technical support from BISAG-N to professionally and swiftly

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## BJP MLAs protest in Jammu



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUL 14 (KNO)

The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) on Monday staged a protest outside the Civil Secretariat and Assembly here, demanding the revocation of a government order mandating Urdu as a compulsory language for the Naib Tehsildar recruitment examination in Jammu and Kashmir.

Led by Leader of Opposition in J&K Assembly and J&K BJP General Secretary, Sunil Sharma, BJP MLAs arrived at the Civil Secretariat in the morning and staged a dharna, calling the order discriminatory and detrimental to the interests of Jammu's youth.

Carrying placards highlighting injustice against Jammu's youth, Dogras and other official

**CONTINUED ON ►► PAGE 4**

## CAT stays mandatory Urdu clause for Naib Tehsildar posts

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JULY 14 (KNO)

The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) on Monday stayed the enforcement of a key provision in the Jammu & Kashmir Revenue (Subordinate) Service Recruitment Rules, which required candidates to possess graduation with knowledge of Urdu as the exclusive language qualification for the post of Naib Tehsildar.

The tribunal's interim order came in response to a petition challenging the language requirement.

In its order, as per news agency, the

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## GOC 16 Corps conducts security review along LoC

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUL 14 (KNO)

Lieutenant General P K Mishra, General Officer Commanding (GOC) of White Knight Corps, commonly known as 16 Corps, accompanied by senior officers, reviewed operational preparedness in the forward areas along the Line of Control (LoC) in the bordering districts of Jammu, Rajouri, and Poonch.

Accompanied by the GOCs of the Ace of Spades Division (25th Infantry Division) and Crossed Swords Division (10th Infantry Division), the General Officer conducted a comprehensive visit to multiple forward brigades to assess the prevailing security situation along the LoC.

Official sources informed the news agency, that the visit focused on

evaluating operational readiness and reinforcing force effectiveness to ensure complete dominance of the operational space.

During the visit, Lt Gen Mishra was briefed on current operational modalities, threat response mechanisms, and the state of readiness to counter emerging challenges.

The GOC interacted with troops of all ranks, commending their professionalism and dedication. He motivated them to maintain the highest standards of operational readiness, vigilance, and morale to effectively address dynamic security scenarios. This visit underscores the Indian Army's commitment to maintaining robust security and operational supremacy in the region, ensuring peace and stability along the LoC. KNO

## Facing jungle-hardened militants, J&K DGP stresses need for tactical upskilling

**AGENCIES**  
SRINAGAR, JULY 14

J&K Police chief Nalin Prabhat today underscored the importance of heightened preparedness in counter-insurgency operations and called for continuous upskilling in modern jungle warfare tactics.

He emphasized that in forested terrains, long-duration operations require exceptional endurance, situational awareness, and an adaptive tactical mind-set to achieve the target of terrorist free J&K.

Director General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir, Nalin Prabhat made the remarks while interacting with officers and jawans at Rajwar in the



Zachaldara area of Handwara sub-district. Notably, this visit marks the first-ever by a serving Police Chief to this remote and strategically significant region of North Kashmir.

Over the last few years, security forces have been up against battle hardened mostly Pakistanis nationals who are trained in jungle warfare and have

carried out several deadly attacks on forces and civilians in Jammu and Kashmir.

During the visit, the DGP held one-on-one interactions with Special Operations Group (SOG) -- the elite counter-insurgency force of J&K Police -- personnel to gain firsthand insight into their experiences of operating in deep forested and hilly terrain.

Addressing the officers and jawans, the DGP highlighted the importance of constantly upgrading skills in modern jungle warfare.

He emphasized that in forested terrains, long-duration operations require exceptional endurance, situational awareness, and an

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## DC Samba reviews beneficiary verification under PMAY-U 2.0



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SAMBA, JULY 14

Deputy Commissioner Samba Rajesh Sharma today reviewed the beneficiary verification under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0 here at a meeting of the District Level Committee (DLC).

The Committee reviewed applications received from Municipal Council Samba and the Municipal Committees of Vijaypur, Bari Brahmana, and Ramgarh.

After thorough scrutiny and joint spot verification by the Revenue and Urban Local Body (ULB) staff, eligible cases under the Beneficiary-Led Construction (BLC) component were recommended for further processing through the Unified Web Portal.

DC Samba directed the concerned officers to facilitate the applicants of pending cases for their expeditious disposal. He emphasized the importance of transparency and proper identification of

genuine beneficiaries to ensure that timely assistance reaches deserving households under the scheme.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Champa Devi Thakur; Assistant Commissioner Revenue; Senior Manager, Housing Board; District Social Welfare Officer; Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Council Samba and other concerned officers and officials.

## Inter-School Zonal Level Competitions commence across Kishtwar under the aegis of DYSSO

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, JULY 14

The Department of Youth Services & Sports Kishtwar today commenced the Inter-School Zonal Level Competitions for U/19 Boys and Girls across multiple zones of the district.

The grand initiative is being held under the overall guidance of the District Youth Services & Sports Officer Jaffer Haider Sheikh, who continues to promote youth engagement and holistic development through sports.

The competitions are being organized across different zones, each supervised by the respective Zonal Physical Education Officers (ZPEOs) and supported by a team of committed sports staff.

Zone Drabshalla hosted events in Kabaddi, Volleyball, Kho-Kho and Tug



of War for both U/19 Boys and Girls. The activities were conducted in a spirited atmosphere under the supervision of the local ZPEO, witnessing enthusiastic participation from various schools.

Zone Kishtwar organized Chess and Badminton competitions for U/19 Boys and Girls efficiently by a dedi-

cated team of DYSS led by the ZPEO. The event witnessed disciplined contests and strong strategic performances.

The Zone Nagseni hosted contests in Chess, Table Tennis, and Badminton under the guidance of the local ZPEO, ensuring fair play and active involvement of students across institu-

tions.

This sports initiative aims to foster physical fitness, mental agility, teamwork and healthy competition among students, while identifying and nurturing talent at the grassroots level. The Department remains committed to providing youth with platforms that not only promote sportsmanship but also contribute to their overall character development.

The zonal events will pave the way for upcoming inter-zonal and district-level competitions, giving deserving young athletes the opportunity to represent Kishtwar at higher levels.

## MLA Budhal meets LG, seeks welfare measures for Gujjar-Bakerwal Community

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JULY 14

Shri Javed Iqbal Choudhary, Member of Legislative Assembly from Budhal called on Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha, today.

He apprised the Lieutenant Governor of various welfare issues of Gujjar and Bakerwal community including establishment of Eklayva Model Residential School at Khawas, Kendriya Vidyalaya at Kotaranka, and similar educational institutions in other areas with tribal population in the UT.

He also requested for special central assistance for the development of Budhal constituency.

## Power Shutdown

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JULY 14

According to the Chief Engineer, Distribution, KPDCL, in order to carry out the installation and commissioning of newly created feeder F#7 (Dedicated feeder) for Unani Hospital Shalteng, shutdown of 33KV HMT line shall be observed due to which 33/11KV Receiving Stations at Zainakote, ICC, Industrial, HMT, Shalteng, Mujgund, Bakshipora and adjoining areas will be affected from 12:00 Noon to 01:00 PM on 17 July, 2025.

To facilitate preventive maintenance, line stabilization and Branch cutting of trees along corridor of line, shutdown of 33KV Bemina I & II line shall be observed due to which 33/11KV Receiving Stations at Bemina I and Bemina II shall remain off while power supply to HIG/ MIG Colony, Nund Resh Colony, Hamza Colony, Gousia Colon, Sir Syed Abad, Qammerwari, Chatbal, SK Colony, Taushedabad, Bemina, Court Complex, Mandi and adjoining areas will be affected from 06:00 AM to 01:00 PM on 19 July, 2025.

Also in this connection, shutdown of 33KV Bemina Karan Nagar line shall be observed due to which 33/11KV Receiving Stations at Karan Nagar & Shalstore shall remain off while power supply to Chatabal, Balgarden, Zaladgar, Police lines, Civil Secretariat, SMHS, Gole Market, Guru Bazar, Tankipora, Shaheed Gunj and adjoining areas will be affected from 06:00 AM to 01:00 PM on 19 July, 2025.

Further, the shutdown of 33KV Bemina Barbar-shah line, 33 KV Bemina Fatehkadal line, 33 KV Bemina KP Bagh line, 33 KV Bemina Exhibition line and 33 kv Bemina JVC/ PC Depot line shall be observed due to which 33/11KV Receiving Stations at Fatehkadal, Khayam, Barbar-shah, Basant Bagh, Rakhi Arth, Court Complex, GIS Batamalo, JVC, PC Depot, Children Hospital and JVC Hospital shall remain off while power supply to Fatehkadal, Khayam, Barbar-shah, Basant Bagh, Rakhi Arth, Hamdania Colony, Sabadan, Court Complex, Batmalo, Bus Adda, Moominabad, Gund Reshi Colony B, Bemina, JVC Hospital, Children Hospital, State Motor Garage, Haj House, Forensic Lab, Qammerwari, Baran Pathri and adjoining areas will be affected from 06:00 AM to 01:00 PM on 19 July, 2025.

## DDC Chairman Doda reviews finalization of Annual Action Plan 2025-26

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
DODA, JULY 14

A meeting of the District Development Council (DDC) was held today in the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex, under the chairmanship of DDC Chairman Dhanan Singh Kotwal, with the active participation of Deputy Commissioner, Harvinder Singh.

The meeting was convened to discuss and finalize the Annual Action Plan for the financial year 2025-26 with the focus on identification of developmental priorities, ensuring inclusive planning and addressing pressing local issues.

The meeting was also graced by the presence of MLA Doda East, Mehraj Malik, who actively participated in the discussions and shared valuable suggestions for the comprehensive development of the district.

A detailed PowerPoint presentation was delivered by Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Manesh Kumar Manhas, showcasing the ongoing works and proposed plans under various schemes, including DDC grants, Aspirational grants, ABDP and BDC grants. The presentation highlighted the proposed projects for the upcoming financial year, covering all 17 blocks



and 237 panchayats of the district.

The meeting was attended by DDC councilors, besides key officers and officials, including District Programme Officer ICDS Akhtar Qazi, ACD Din Mohammad Afaqi, ACP Mushraf Haff, Superintendent Engineers of PWD (R&B), Hydraulic, JPDC and PMGSY, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer and heads of Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Husbandry departments.

Representatives from Forest, PHE, REW, Social Welfare, Regional Transport, Youth Services and Sports, JAKEDA, Block Development Officers, Municipal Committees and BDC chairpersons were also present.

During the deliberations, departmental heads and BDOs presented proposed plans, while councilors and MLA Mehraj Malik raised demands and suggestions seeking improvement of road connectivity, especially in remote and hilly

areas; strengthening of water supply schemes and accelerating works under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

Measures were also sought for environmental protection, including large-scale tree plantation drives, upgradation of healthcare and power infrastructure; Promotion of livelihood opportunities and support to weaker sections of society; creation of adequate sports and youth engagement facilities and strengthening of Anganwadi centres through better monitoring and infrastructure.

Addressing the participants, DDC Chairman Dhanan Singh Kotwal directed the stakeholders to accelerate the works under JJM and to ensure that finalized plans are inclusive, realistic, and aligned with the needs of the people. He underscored the importance of consulting all stakeholders, maintaining transparency and accountability and ensuring timely and quality execution of projects. He

also emphasized proactive field visits, stronger inter-departmental coordination and equitable development across all panchayats.

Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh stressed on plans that reflect the aspirations of the people and close monitoring during the implementation. He also highlighted the importance of maintaining financial discipline and prioritizing projects with maximum public benefit.

In his concluding address, DDC Chairman Dhanan Singh Kotwal appreciated the contributions of officers, councilors and MLA Mehraj Malik, acknowledging their dedicated approach to public service. He assured that genuine demands raised during the meeting would be incorporated in the final plan. He called for stronger ground-level execution to translate the plan into tangible and impactful outcomes.

## Mega awareness programme held at Arin to empower artisans, weavers

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BANDIPORA, JULY 14

Handicrafts & Handloom department Bandipora on Monday organized a mega awareness programme and seminar at the BDO office Arin, aimed at educating and empowering local artisans and weavers through government-backed initiatives and support schemes.

The event was attended by DDC Member Arin, Ghulam Mohiuddin; Assistant Director Handicrafts & Handloom Bandipora, Sameer Ahmad Jan, besides a large number of local artisans and weavers ensured their participation in the event.

On the occasion, DDC Arin lauded the efforts of the department for orga-



nizing such outreach programmes, terming them 'crucial for enhancing the livelihoods of artisans and weavers at the grassroots level.'

During the programme, departmental officials provided detailed presentations and interactive sessions on various schemes and services being offered by the government. These included skill development training, credit support under Mudra and PMEGP, incentives for participation

in exhibitions and fairs, and avenues for marketing through e-commerce platforms.

Special focus was laid on Geographical Indication (GI) tagging, product packaging, and branding to help artisans improve the quality and market appeal of their products. Participants were encouraged to register under the departmental schemes to avail the benefits of institutional support and capacity building.

## DC Reasi inaugurates Shrawan Mahotsav at Shiv Khori Shrine



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
REASI, JULY 14

Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik, who also serves as the Vice Chairperson of the Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board (SSKSB) on Monday inaugurated the Shrawan Mahotsav at the revered Shiv Khori Shrine. The festival began amid spiritual fervor and religious spirit coinciding with the first Monday of the ongoing Shrawan month (July 11 to August 6).

The event was organized in collaboration with the Department of Tourism and the Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board, adding grandeur and coordinated planning to the religious event.

The Mahotsav commenced with a grand Kavayatra, which started from the Darshani Deodi at Ransoo Base Camp and culminated at the holy cave shrine of Lord Shiva. The Deputy Commissioner along with Devotees, carrying ornately decorated

Kavayatra on their shoulders, chanted religious hymns.

The Rudhrabishek was also performed inside the Holy Cave of Shivkhori which was followed by Hawan at Hawan Kund Bhawan near the Shrine. The Deputy Commissioner attended both the rituals.

The Shrawan Mahotsav will feature cultural and religious programmes like the Kavayatra to be held every Monday of the month. The Shiv Puran Katha will be held from 27th July to 4th August and a Bhajan Sandhya will be organized on 4th August, attracting large numbers of devotees and creating a spiritually uplifting atmosphere.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner extended greetings to the devotees and emphasized the importance of the Shrawan month in Hindu tradition. She lauded the efforts of the Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board, the Department of

Tourism and the district administration for making elaborate arrangements to ensure the smooth conduct of the Mahotsav and the safety and convenience of pilgrims.

The DC further highlighted the role of the Mahotsav in promoting religious tourism and enriching the cultural heritage of the district. She emphasized that the district administration has made elaborate arrangements for clean drinking water and power supply, medical aid and fire safety to ensure the smooth conduct of the religious festival.

A large number of devotees from different parts of Jammu and Kashmir and neighboring states participated in the event. ADC Rakesh Kumar, Tehsildar Pouni Sahil Randhawa, Manager (SSKSB) Tersam Lal Sharma, Executive Engineer PHE, AD Tourism and other officials were also present.

## DC Anantnag convenes preparatory meeting for Independence Day celebrations-2025

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
ANANTNAG, JULY 14

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. S. F. Hamid, convened the preparatory meeting to review the arrangements for the celebration of upcoming Independence Day-2025 with the concerned officers today, here.

Emphasising the historical importance of Independence Day, DC described it as a momentous occasion that should be celebrated with zeal and patriotic fervour. He underscored the need for seamless coordination among the concerned departments and exhorted them to make collective efforts for the successful conduct of the National event in its true spirit.

During the meeting, key aspects and arrangements including the schedule



and timing of the event, preparation and consolidation of venue, stage/dice preparation and management, security arrangements, sanitation and cleanliness, seating arrangements, medical facilities, uninterrupted power and water supply, venue illumination and decoration, deployment of fire tenders, transportation, printing and distribution of invitation cards, installation of the public address system, prize distribution, etc were reviewed threadbare.

Dr. Hamid issued direc-

tions to all concerned officers to discharge their assigned tasks diligently and put in place the necessary arrangements well in time so that a smooth and memorable celebration befitting the national event is held.

It was informed that the main function will be held at the Shaheed Himayun Muzamil, Government Degree College (Boys), Khanabal, where the National Flag will be hoisted by the chief guest, followed by a parade featuring contingents of the J&K Police, other security

forces, School Education and NCC.

In addition, colourful cultural programmes reflecting themes of patriotism, nationalism, and local folk traditions will be presented. Besides, it was decided that Jhankis from various departments showcasing their achievements and disseminating public awareness about the respective schemes will take part in the main event.

Independence Day celebrations will also be held at the Sub-divisional, Tehsil and Block levels across the district.

The meeting was attended by ADC, Principal GMC and SHM, GDC (B) Anantnag, DPO ICDS, GM, DIC, ACR, ACD, CPO, CMO, CEO, officers from engineering departments and other concerned officers of the district.

# Rajouri gears up for grand Independence Day celebrations

DC, SSP discuss arrangements for National Event

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
RAJOURI, JULY 14

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma alongside Senior Superintendent of Police Gaurav Sikarwar today reviewed the arrangements for the celebration of Independence Day 2025 at a meeting held here in the Dak Bungalow.

The Deputy Commissioner laid emphasis on making elaborate and coordinated preparations for the smooth conduct of the national function. He directed for proper stage arrangements, systematic seating for invitees and the public, appropriate length and content of cultural programs, and timely installation of a reliable Public Address (PA) system.

The DC emphasized that contingents from across the district will participate in the ceremonial March Past to reflect inclusiveness and discipline.



The DC also directed the concerned departments to ensure illumination of prominent government buildings, bridges, and key installations in the district as a mark of celebration. He further suggested that stalls and displays highlighting the achievements and developmental milestones of the district be set up at the venue to showcase progress under various government schemes.

DC directed ADCs and SDMs to monitor and ensure celebration in all Government institutions within their jurisdictions.

SSP Gaurav Sikarwar elaborated the security arrangements. He empha-

sized the need for meticulous planning to ensure foolproof security and smooth movement of participants and visitors. He stressed on enhancing surveillance and increasing deployment at vulnerable points to ensure peaceful conduct of the celebrations. He also underscored the need for coordination among the security agencies to maintain law and order.

The Deputy Commissioner urged all departments to work in a coordinated manner and finalize all arrangements well before time to ensure a grand and smooth celebration of Independence Day

2025. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Chander Prakash; ADC Kalakote Tanvir Ahmed; ADC Sunderbani Ramkesh Sharma; SDM Thanamandi Abid Hussain; Commandant JKAP Nasir Khan; ACD Auqil Naveed; SE PWD Tilak Raj; Executive Engineer PWD Aftab Ahmed; CMO Dr. Manohar Lal; DySP Traffic, ARTO, Tehsildar, representatives from defence forces, representative of BRO, Ex En PMGSY, Executive Officers of Municipal Committees and other sectoral and district offices.

# Two-day International Workshop on 'OMICS for Crop Improvement' begins at SKUAST-Kashmir

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JULY 14

Division of Plant Biotechnology, Faculty of Horticulture, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), inaugurated a two-day International Workshop on 'OMICS for Crop Improvement' today at the university's Shalimar campus.

The event is being held on 14th and 15th July, 2025, with participation from scientists, researchers, and students from different institutes.

Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice Chancellor of SKUAST-K, delivered the 'Words of Wisdom' as the chief guest of the event. He appreciated the department's efforts in organizing this international workshop and highlighted the transformative role of integrative OMICS in revolutionizing plant breeding, stress tolerance, and genetic resource utilization to mitigate aberrant climatic changes for sustainable agriculture in J&K.

The session was also graced by Prof. Haroon Rashid Naik, Director of Research; Prof. Mohammad Altaf Bhat, Director of Education; Prof. Azmat Alam Khan, Registrar, SKUAST-K; Prof. Neelofar Bandy, Dean, Faculty of



Prof. Nazir A. Ganai also mentioned about 'Evergreen revolution' initiatives taken by SKUAST-Kashmir under HADP project for safeguarding fragile climatic conditions of Kashmir.

Earlier, the program commenced with a welcome address by Prof. Amjad M. Husaini, Head, Division of Plant Biotechnology, who welcomed the dignitaries, invited speakers and all participants.

The session was also graced by Prof. Haroon Rashid Naik, Director of Research; Prof. Mohammad Altaf Bhat, Director of Education; Prof. Azmat Alam Khan, Registrar, SKUAST-K; Prof. Neelofar Bandy, Dean, Faculty of

Horticulture. A formal Vote of Thanks was presented by Dr. Sajad Majeed Zargar, Workshop Coordinator, Division of Plant Biotechnology, who expressed gratitude to the university leadership, expert speakers, participants, and the organizing team for their support and contribution in making the event successful.

It was followed by an expert talk on Genome Harvest by Prof. Rupesh Deshmukh, Head, Department of Biotechnology, Central University of Haryana.

Over the course of the two days, participants will receive exposure to both hands-on training and expert lectures on cutting-edge topics Genome Harvest, Multivariate Pro-

teome Analysis, Genome Editing for Crop Improvement, QTL Mapping, Genome Informatics and Experimental Design etc.

The workshop is expected to foster interdisciplinary collaborations and enhance technical skills relevant to modern plant science and agricultural biotechnology focusing on the role of OMICS technologies in sustainable agriculture and precision crop breeding.

Researchers, academicians, and students from various institutions are participating in the program. This program is sponsored by Neuberg Diagnostics, Ahmadabad.

# Organic Cluster Rahthal- Kishtwar achieves bumper production

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, JULY 14

In a remarkable success story from the hilly terrains of Kishtwar district, the Organic Cluster Rahthal comprising 50 Farmers has achieved bumper production of Organic Hill Garlic.

The Organic Cluster harvested 15 quintals of Organic Hill Garlic from just 1 hectare of land this agricultural season.

This exceptional yield has resulted in an impressive income of Rs 2 lakh, marking a significant milestone for the promotion of high-value crops in the region.

Showcasing their production, a group of farmers from the Cluster led by its President Gulab Nabi Wani today gifted packs of Organic Hill Garlic to Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma and ADC Pawan Kotwal in presence of CAO Kushal Chandel and staff of Agriculture Department.

The farmers adopted improved agronomic practices, timely interventions and organic methods suited to the unique agro-climatic conditions



of the area, which collectively contributed to this outstanding performance.

The Deputy Commissioner and Department of Agriculture applauded the efforts of the farmer and encouraged others to take inspiration and adopt innovative and sustainable farming techniques.

Special appreciation was extended to CAO Kushal Chandel and field-level extension officers Rabia Kouser for their constant support and training efforts under the district's Agriculture development initiatives.

Hill Garlic, known for its medicinal properties, longer shelf life, and strong market demand has emerged as a lucra-

tive crop for small and marginal farmers in high-altitude regions.

This success story is a testament to the potential of hill agriculture and how scientific guidance and proper management can significantly enhance productivity and profitability.

The achievement reaffirms the government's vision of doubling farmers' income and promoting climate-resilient crops in mountainous areas.

"The department will continue to facilitate capacity-building programs, input support and market linkage for the widespread adoption of Hill Garlic cultivation in the Chenab Valley", said the CAO.

# Secy RDD reviews progress on Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin; asks to accelerate sanitation projects

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JULY 14

Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, chaired a review meeting on Monday to evaluate the progress on the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) 2025-26, assess the status of locational plans, verify water assets and review progress on the GOBARdhan plans.

The meeting was attended by Director General Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra; Director Rural Development Kashmir, Shabir Hussain Bhat; Director Rural Development Jammu, Shahnaz Akhter; Superintending Engineer REW Jammu, Rajesh Kumar Agastam; Superintending Engineer REW Kashmir, Shafat Hussain besides Deputy Directors Rural Sanitation, Assistant Commissioners Panchayat (ACPs) and Executive Engineers of REW from all districts.

During the review, the Secretary emphasized the need for timely tender-

ing, land identification and rapid execution of all planned works under the AIP 2025-26. He urged the district teams to eliminate procedural delays and ensure real-time progress reporting.

A detailed district-wise discussion was held on pending locational plans for various sanitation-related assets, including Compost Pits, Soak Pits, Community Sanitary Complexes (CSCs), Segregation Sheds, Plastic Waste Management Units (PWMUs), GOBARdhan units, Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs), Waste Stabilization Ponds (WSPs) and Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS).

The Secretary emphasized that Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin is not just about building sanitation infrastructure, it is about bringing systemic change, ensuring sustainability and achieving measurable outcomes. He asked the ACPs to take ownership at the ground level. From DEWATS and FSTPs to compost pits and segrega-

tion sheds, the success of these interventions lies in timely land identification, proactive coordination and a mission-mode approach, he added.

Aijaz Asad directed the districts to submit all pending locational plans to the Directorate of Rural Sanitation within five days.

The Secretary underscored the importance of 100% digital asset verification through the mWater platform. He directed all the districts to ensure that every completed asset is geo-tagged and digitally verified in accordance with SBM-G protocols to maintain full transparency and accountability.

A detailed status of the GOBARdhan was also



reviewed, with a focus on organic waste management and bio-energy production. Districts were instructed to expedite physical work progress, highlight challenges if any, and regularly update progress with the Directorate.

The Secretary stressed upon the ACPs to conduct physical site visits for all major infrastructure components, including WSPs, DEWATS and water bodies, ensuring quality control and verification. In districts where land issues were cited. He emphasized that land identification issues must be resolved at the district level in consultation with the respective Deputy Commissioners (DCs).

In many districts, Assistant Commissioners Panchayat (ACPs) were directed to personally visit the asset sites, conduct thorough inspections and ensure that all constructed assets, especially those related to water bodies, Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS) and Waste Stabilization Ponds (WSPs),

are verified for functionality, compliance and quality. These visits are crucial for on-ground validation and must be followed by updated status reporting.

Given the critical role of DEWATS and WSPs in environmental protection, the Secretary directed for conducting the a virtual workshop on these technologies for all the field officers.

The Secretary stressed the urgent need for all the districts to update their Self-Assessment data on the Swachh Survekshan Grameen (SSG) 2025 portal (<https://ssg2025.in/State/Index>).

He reminded the officials that Self-Assessment contributes 140 out of 1000 marks as per SSG guidelines and directly impacts the district rankings.

Earlier, the Director General, Rural Sanitation, presented a detailed presentation highlighting the current status, achievements, challenges and actionable points under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G) across all districts of Jammu & Kashmir.

# Horticulture Department launches fruit plantation drive in Akhnoor Zone

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 14

The Horticulture Department today kick-started monsoon Plantation Drive in Zone Akhnoor. The drive took off with the ceremonial planting of a fruit sapling by Chief Horticulture Officer Jammu Rakesh Kotwal at Village Gandharwan of block Akhnoor. The initiative marks a significant step toward sustainable horticultural development and aims to boost fruit cultivation in the region's rainfed and sub-tropical areas.

District level subject Matter Specialist Rakesh Bhagat, Horticulture Development Officer (HDO) Akhnoor Virender Kumar and HDO Khour Amit Saraf were also present. The event drew enthusiastic participation from



local farmers and community members, reflecting a growing awareness and interest in horticulture-based livelihood opportunities.

After the plantation drive, Kotwal addressed the farmers, sensitizing them about various Central and UT Government Sponsored Schemes being implemented by the Horticulture Department. He

highlighted flagship initiatives such as the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH). These schemes, he explained, are specifically designed to provide financial assistance, technical know-how and market linkage support to orchardists and aspiring horticulturists.

Emphasizing the importance of adopting scientific and modern horticultural practices, Kotwal encouraged farmers in the rainfed and sub-tropical belts of Akhnoor to switch to improved cultivation techniques for fruit crops like guava, mango, citrus, and aonla—crops well-suited to local agro-climatic conditions. He called upon the farming community to actively participate in these developmental schemes to enhance productivity and profitability.

DLSMS Jammu, HDO Akhnoor and HDO Khour, also engaged with the farmers during the event, addressing their queries and providing guidance on best practices in orchard management, pest control strategies and soil health improvement measures.

# Inter-zonal Football & Volleyball fest commences at Baramulla

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BARAMULLA, JULY 14

Youth Services and Sports, Baramulla, kick-started the inter-zonal district level Football Tournament for Under-14 & Under-17 Boys and Volleyball Tournament for Under-17 Boys at the scenic Showkat Ali Stadium, Khawaja Bagh Baramulla with vibrant enthusiasm and competitive spirit.

The mega sports event was officially declared open by Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Altaf Hussain Musavi, who graced the occasion as the chief guest, and was joined by the Principal of Government Degree College (Boys), Baramulla.

In his motivational address, Principal lauded the department's efforts in



nurturing grassroots talent and also conducted a live demonstration of breathing exercises, offering participants a unique blend of sports and wellness motivation.

A total of 45 teams representing 18 zones from across the district are competing in this celebration of youth

talent, unity, and sportsmanship. The young athletes will have the opportunity to showcase their skills, promote healthy competition, and represent their zones with pride.

The event is being held under the active supervision of District Youth Services & Sports Officer (DYSSO)

Baramulla, whose team has ensured seamless coordination, fair play, and an energetic sports atmosphere.

This inter-zonal competition marks yet another milestone in the department's ongoing mission to provide a robust platform for budding sports stars of the district.

## J&K Gymnasts to shine on International stage: Flag off ceremony held

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 14

In a grand ceremony, two talented gymnasts from J&K, Ms. Vaibhavi Sharma and Ms. Muskan Rana, were flagged off to participate in the prestigious International FIG Rhythmic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup. The event is scheduled to take place in Romania and Italy on July 20, 2025. Ms. Anissa Nabi, Chief Sports Officer Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council flagged off two gymnasts from Jammu and Kashmir to participate in International FIG Rhythmic Gymnastic World Challenge Cup to be held in Romania and Italy. The flag off ceremony was attended by Sat Pal, Divisional Sports Officer J&K Sports Council and Kiran Wattal, President Gymnastics Association of J&K, Anil Khajuria (Sr. Vice President), Rakesh



Malhotra (Treasurer), S. Tajinder Singh (Associated Secretary), Sunil Sharma (Chairman, Discipline Committee), Rajan Sharma (Chairman, Activity Committee), Satyam Gupta (President, Jammu Distt.), Adv. Anesh Chatterji (Secretary, Jammu Distt.), Swarn Singh (President, Udhampur Distt.), Raj Kumar Bucha (Secretary, Udhampur Distt.), Adv. Y.C. Katoch (President, Kathua Distt.), Anil Khajuria (General Secretary) along with other dignitaries who extended best wishes and support to the players and termed it as

moment of immense pride for Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, Wattal said that Ms. Vaibhavi Sharma will represent J&K in the World Challenge Cup in Romania, while Ms. Muskan Rana will compete in the World Cup in Milan, Italy. Both athletes have previously participated in international sports events, bringing glory to the Union Territory of J&K. Wattal acknowledged the support of Ms. Nusrat Gul, Secretary, J&K Sports Council; Sarmad Hafiz, Commissioner Secretary, Sports; Satish Sharma, Minister of Sports, J&K; and especially

Manoj Sinha, LG, J&K, in providing facilities for the upliftment of gymnastics in the region. The participation of these gymnasts in the international event is a moment of immense pride for Jammu and Kashmir. The athletes are expected to showcase their skills and bring laurels to the region, added Wattal. Ms. Nusrat Gul, Secretary, J&K Sports Council, and Er Kiran Wattal, President, Gymnastics Association of J&K, extended their best wishes to the gymnasts for a stellar performance.

Wattal expressed confidence that Ms. Vaibhavi

Sharma and Ms. Muskan Rana will excel in the International FIG Rhythmic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup. He stated that both gymnasts have the potential to shine on the international stage and bring pride to Jammu and Kashmir and the nation. Wattal's confidence stems from the gymnasts' previous performances and the training they have received. He believes that with their talent, dedication, and hard work, they will be able to showcase their skills and make a mark in the international gymnastics arena. The Gymnastics Association of J&K and the J&K Sports Council have been working tirelessly to provide the necessary support and facilities to the gymnasts, and Wattal is optimistic that these efforts will pay off in the form of outstanding performances from Ms. Sharma and Ms. Rana.

## Indian Army organizes Medical Camp in Sanai, Surankote, Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
POONCH: 14 JUL 2025

In a continued effort to foster goodwill and extend humanitarian assistance, the Indian Army organized a comprehensive Medical Outreach Camp for the residents of Sanai, a remote and underserved area in Surankote. This initiative was conducted under Operation Sadbhavana, reflecting the Army's unwavering commitment to nation-building and civil-military cooperation. The camp saw enthusiastic participation from over 600 civilians, including elderly citizens, women and children. A dedicated team comprising Army medical officers, the Medical Officer of SDH Surankote, the BMO Surankote, paramedics and support staff provided free medical consultations, diagnostic ser-



VICES and essential medicines to the attendees. Specialized care was made available in areas such as general medicine, pediatrics, orthopedics and gynecology, addressing the vital healthcare needs of the community. The outreach served as a critical support mechanism for residents in a region where access to regular medical infrastructure is limited by both terrain and climatic challenges. This proactive healthcare initiative not only showcased the Indian Army's people-centric approach but also strengthened the bond of trust and cooperation with the local population. The

camp served as a lifeline for many, reaffirming the Army's role as a pillar of support in remote and difficult-to-reach areas. Local residents expressed heartfelt gratitude for the Army's continuous efforts towards their well-being. Such initiatives play a pivotal role in enhancing peace, development, and mutual respect, reinforcing the Army's enduring presence as a force for good. The Indian Army remains resolute in its mission to support the people of Sanai, Surankote and will continue to conduct such outreach programs to uplift and empower remote communities.

## FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

### J&K's former deputy...

Territory of Ladakh. Gupta, a BJP leader, was elected mayor of the city of Jammu for a record three consecutive terms, from 2005 to 2010. In the 2014 Assembly election, Gupta contested and was elected a Member of Legislative Assembly from the Gandhinagar constituency. He defeated Raman Bhalla of Congress. On March 19, 2015, Gupta was elected speaker of the assembly. On April 30, 2018, he was appointed as the deputy chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir State. KNO

### I take full responsibility...

Asked whether the participation of local accomplices in the attack posed a fresh challenge for security forces, Sinha maintained that local recruitment of militants had fallen to record lows.

"There has been just one incident of local recruitment this year compared to 6-7 last year. There was a time when this figure used to be 150-200. But it is also a fact that Pakistan has facilitated the infiltration of a large number of terrorists in both Jammu region and Kashmir region," he noted.

The Pahalgam attack dealt a temporary blow to tourism, with arrivals plunging in the immediate aftermath. "Tourist arrivals had almost stopped after the incident. We believed that the Amarnath Yatra would be the turning point," Sinha said.

The LG confirmed that tourist destinations closed after the attack have gradually reopened. "Many have already opened. Others will be opened too in a phased manner, after finalising a robust security plan for each," he said.

Operation Sindoor: A Deterrent for Pakistan Reflecting on the broader security environment during the TOI interview, Sinha said the success of Operation Sindoor had drawn clear red lines for Pakistan.

"India has made it clear that any terror attack will be considered an act of war. The manner in which our forces carried out precise hits against terror facilities in Pakistan conveyed a stern message. But a country that has made terrorism its declared state policy is not to be trusted," he cautioned during the conversation.

Despite the challenges, Sinha expressed confidence that the Union Home Ministry, Defence Ministry and intelligence agencies are fully prepared to counter any future threats. Jammu and Kashmir job listings

### Amarnath Yatra: 2.20 lakh...

Meanwhile, the 13th batch of 6,143 pilgrims undertaking the annual Amarnath Yatra left from the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in Jammu on Monday morning amid tight security arrangements.

Officials said that the pilgrims were divided into two escorted convoys heading towards the twin base camps of Baltal and Pahalgam. The first convoy comprising 100 vehicles left for the Baltal base camp in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district, carrying 2,215 pilgrims. The second convoy of 135 vehicles departed for the Nunwan base camp in South Kashmir's Pahalgam, with 3,928 pilgrims on board.

The Baltal-bound pilgrims included 1,646 men, 507 women, 5 children, 44 sadhus and 13 sadhvis.

"The Pahalgam-bound group consisted of 3,045 men, 741 women, 12 children, 123 sadhus and 7 sadhvis. In terms of transportation, 235 vehicles were used for Monday's convoy, including 100 for Baltal and 135 for Pahalgam," official said.

The annual yatra started on July 3 and will culminate on August 9, the officials added. KNO

### UP man, walking for 111...

in Baba Bholenath." Harnam said he aims to inspire others with the message of faith and perseverance. "Leave everything to Baba Bholenath. With hope and confidence, victory will definitely follow," he said.

The devotee appreciated the arrangements made along the Yatra route. "We receive full support from the army and authorities. Food and shelter are easily available, and the overall management is commendable."

Prasad added, "I will pray for the happiness of our country and a united India (Akhand Bharat). I urge people not to fear - come and have Baba Barfani's dar-

shan, there is no problem here." KNO

### Adventure tourism...

offered something new—something refreshing each time. Adventure tourism provides exactly that. No two experiences are ever the same. The trail looks different in the morning than it does at sunset. Each trek offers a unique story," the Chief Minister said.

Calling for preservation and promotion of the region's historic trekking routes, he said these trails, connecting Jammu with Kashmir and Kashmir with Ladakh—are not just physical pathways, but cultural corridors of heritage and sustainable tourism.

"It is imperative that we market our trekking routes not just as a tourism product, but as part of our ecological and cultural legacy. We must not confine ourselves to markets where advisories act as obstacles. There are many countries with no such restrictions, whose tourists would be eager to explore our terrain," he said, calling for joint efforts with Ladakh to keep traditional routes alive and accessible.

Referring to the current situation, Omar Abdullah said it was unfortunate that the book is being released at a time when many of the trekking routes described in it remain inaccessible due to recent developments.

"Reading this book evokes both admiration and sadness. Admiration for the unmatched natural wealth we possess, and sadness because we are not able to experience or share it at present. It is my heartfelt hope, and indeed my effort, that these routes will soon be reopened for our youth, trekkers and visitors," he said.

Reflecting on his personal regret at not having trekked these trails, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah praised the author's dedication and passion. "Mr. Shah is truly fortunate to have explored these routes over the last 20-25 years. His experiences, beautifully documented in this volume, reflect deep commitment and love for the land."

The Chief Minister emphasized the need for digitizing the book to ensure wider accessibility. "If we want this work to benefit those who are truly interested in trekking, we must digitize it—perhaps through an app. Let the coordinates, photographs, anecdotes, and waypoints become a digital guide for adventure lovers," he suggested.

He added that while the book will adorn coffee tables, its real value lies in becoming a functional resource that inspires exploration and fosters sustainable tourism.

On the occasion, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, and the author Mehmood A. Shah also spoke. The event was moderated by noted endocrinologist Dr. Shariq Masoodi and was attended by prominent figures from the travel, trade, tourism and media. KNO

### CM Omar meets...

Badshah University (BGSBU), Rajouri, briefed the Chief Minister about the functioning of the university. The VC discussed several ongoing academic and administrative initiatives at the university and sought the Chief Minister's support for strengthening higher education in the region.

Sandeep Sharma, Zonal Head of ICICI Bank, also called on the Chief Minister and discussed matters related to the bank's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. He informed the Chief Minister about the rescue vehicle provided for Dachigam and initiatives aimed at employment generation and community welfare.

Brigadier Deepak Sajjan Har from NCC, Srinagar, met the Chief Minister to present a memento in connection with the NCC Everest Expedition-2025, highlighting the achievements and commitment of the NCC cadets to contribute to national pride and adventure sports activities.

Later, Sameer Baktoo, Chairman of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), J&K Chapter, met the Chief Minister along with a visiting team from SKAL INTERNATIONAL. The team, currently on a visit from Mumbai, discussed the upcoming SKAL India Convention and proposed to make the event Kashmir-centric in the post-Yatra season, with an aim to promote the region's tourism potential globally.

The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to all deputations and assured appropriate action and continued government support as may be necessary. KNO

### CS pushes for 100%...

conclude digitization targets under the ABDM framework.

During the meeting, Secretary H&ME, Dr. Shah, briefed about the steps already taken to accelerate digital transformation. He highlighted the Department's success in initiating the HPR, digitizing patient health records, integrating radio diagnostic reports with ABHA IDs and rolling out the Scan and Share facility in numerous health institutions.

He reaffirmed the Department's commitment towards ensuring full saturation of these initiatives within a defined timeline. He delineated the strategies that are going to accomplish the mission satisfactorily across all the healthcare facilities in J&K.

Adding to the deliberations, MD ABDM, Anant Dwivedi, outlined the mission's three core pillars including ABHA ID, Health Professional Registry (HPR) and the Health Facility Registry (HFR). He informed that J&K has made notable strides in all these domains.

As per the latest figures, it was informed that 94.49 lakh ABHA IDs have been created, covering 69.7% of the target population. It was further revealed that 100% registration of all 3,607 public health facilities (HFR) has been completed besides 87% registration of public doctors (6,713 out of 7,730) and 100% registration of public nurses (5,149) has been achieved.

Moreover, 20.58 lakh digital health records have been linked with ABHA IDs, with 1.44 lakh new records added since May. Additionally, 104 out of 105 health facilities are now actively using the HMIS (JK-e Sahaj) portal. Notably, 71.16 lakh Scan and Share tokens have been generated so far, as was informed in this meeting.

These milestones reflect the UT's firm commitment towards harnessing technology for better healthcare delivery.

The Chief Secretary lauded the department for the progress and stressed on sustaining momentum to ensure full digital inclusion of all citizens in the futuristic health ecosystem in the days to come. KNO

### BJP MLAs protest...

languages of the union territory, the BJP leaders raised slogans against the government and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, accusing the part of trying to create unrest in the region.

According to the news agency, the party has been opposing the move across Jammu for over three weeks, holding protests and rallies at the district level.

The BJP MLAs condemned the move as discriminatory and unjust, calling it a deliberate attempt by the Omar Abdullah-led National Conference government to ignore the aspirations of the youth of Jammu and other non-Urdu-speaking regions.

Speaking to the media, Sharma said that this policy amounts to grave injustice against deserving candidates who are otherwise qualified but are being excluded based on language preference.

"This is not just about language. This is about rights, opportunities, and equal treatment. Urdu is one of the official languages of Jammu & Kashmir, but it is not the only one. Why should proficiency in Urdu be made mandatory when there are several other official languages recognized by the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir?" asked Sharma.

The BJP MLAs asserted that they had already exhausted all peaceful and democratic means to oppose the decision. "We submitted memorandums, led delegations, and even met with the Lieutenant Governor. Though the LG acknowledged our concern, he stated that the recruitment matter falls under the purview of the state government," said BJP MLAs.

MLAs highlighted that the Chief Minister had previously assured BJP representatives that the issue would be looked into, but no action followed. "This betrayal of public trust has left us with no option but to protest," they said.

MLAs also criticized the Chief Minister for allegedly playing the victim card while failing to perform his basic duties.

"Instead of solving the problems of the people, he is more concerned about enjoying the privileges of office. The youth of Jammu and Kashmir deserve a fair and transparent recruitment process, not political manipulation," they said.

The BJP MLAs warned that if the government continues to turn a deaf ear to the people's demands, the

## Tony, Gurdwara Rani Talab Management initiate plantation drive



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 14

Senior Congress leader and DDC Suchetgarh, Sardar Taranjit Singh Tony today joined hands with the management of Gurdwara Rani Talab, Digiana, to launch a plantation drive within the Gurdwara premises. The initiative was undertaken in collaboration with NGO Oxygen Footprints, which has been actively promoting environmental consciousness since its inception post-COVID.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from members of civil society and Gurdwara management. Among those

present were Harbaksh Singh Kala, President of the Gurdwara, and Babbu Singh. The plantation drive is aimed at promoting green cover and raising awareness about environmental degradation.

Harneak Singh, a retired Air Force officer and President of NGO Oxygen Footprints, highlighted that the organization came into existence in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, recognizing the importance of clean air and green surroundings. "Since then, we have planted nearly 15,000 saplings across various regions, and our mission continues with renewed vigor," he said.

protest will escalate.

"Today's protest is a symbolic message. We are prepared to take the agitation to the next level if the NC government does not immediately revoke the Urdu language requirement in the Naib Tehsildar recruitment," Sharma added. KNO

### CAT stays mandatory...

CAT directed the Jammu & Kashmir Service Selection Board to accept applications from candidates who possess graduation with knowledge of any of the five official languages listed under the 2020 Act—Hindi, Kashmiri, English, Dogri, and Urdu.

The Tribunal has also issued a notice to the respondents, directing them to file their reply within four weeks in response to the plea challenging the mandatory Urdu qualification for NT posts—(KNO)

### Facing jungle-hardened...

adaptive tactical mind-set to achieve the target of terrorist free J&K.

The DGP urged the personnel to deepen their understanding of the local terrain and topography, stating that knowledge of the environment was a key force multiplier in jungle warfare and essential to denying terrorists any opportunity to establish a foothold in such areas.

A police spokesman said the DGP visit to the remote area was aimed at boosting the morale and motivation of the police personnel deployed on ground in one of the most challenging terrains of the Union Territory.

The DGP's presence served as a significant morale booster for the SOG personnel operating in these tough conditions, police said

## DC pitches for intensive efforts to make Reasi District TB-Free



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
REASI, JULY 14

Deputy Commissioner Reasi, Nidhi Malik, today chaired a high-level meeting to review the implementation and progress of the Intensified TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan under the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP).

The meeting focused on intensifying screening, providing better treatment, and enhancing inter-sectoral coordination to ensure the successful execution of the TB elimination drive.

District Tuberculosis Officer Dr. Anil Saloach gave a detailed overview of the current status of TB in the district.

The DC issued a string of directives stressing on extensive screening to identify potential patients. She instructed healthcare

officials to achieve the set screening targets at the earliest.

She emphasized the need to prioritize high-risk groups, particularly individuals in close contact with TB patients – including family members, friends, and colleagues – to ensure timely treatment and prevention of further transmission.

In a significant move under the Nikshay Mitra initiative, DC Malik directed all doctors and healthcare officials to adopt at least one TB patient, providing them with nutritional basket kits and necessary amenities to support their recovery and overall well-being.

To enhance outreach and public engagement, the Deputy Commissioner instructed the Health Department to organize TB screening and aware-

ness camps in collaboration with the Rural Development Department to ensure comprehensive community participation.

DC Malik also highlighted the urgent need for strengthening ongoing efforts, directing the Health Department to ensure the availability of diagnostic facilities in all health institutions across the district.

Reaffirming the administration's commitment to a TB Mukht Bharat, she encouraged collective action, robust monitoring and streamlined treatment delivery mechanism. She reiterated that Reasi is firmly aligned with the national mission to become TB-free by 2025.

The meeting was attended by CMO Dr. Ashraf Kohli, Deputy CMO, Medical Superintendent, BMOs and other concerned officers.

## DC inspects civic amenities, road condition in Kishtwar Township

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
KISHTWAR, JULY 14

Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma on Monday conducted a comprehensive inspection of developmental works from Kuleed Chowk to Saffron Development Park Berwar here in the Kishtwar Township.

The inspection focused on progress of work on critical civic infrastructure and roads, including pothole repair and drain maintenance.

The DC issued clear directions to the GREF team to expedite pothole-filling operations and ensure timely desilting of drainage channels to prevent water logging and ensure smooth commuter movement, especially in light of upcoming Yatras, including Shree Machail Mata Ji Yatra 2025.

He also reviewed ongoing measures to curb



encroachments along the route, emphasizing the importance of maintaining unhindered access to public infrastructure.

The DC directed the Tehsildar to serve notices and seal vehicle washing points creating nuisance by throwing water on the road. He asked stakeholder departments to safeguard public assets and uphold the convenience and safety of the general public.

The DC was accompanied by ACR Idress Lone and officers/officials from PWD, Jal Shakti, Revenue, Municipality, RDD and GREF Team, besides other concerned staff.

The inspection aimed to ensure proper maintenance of civic infrastructure and roads to provide a safe and convenient experience to the public, particularly during the upcoming yatras.

## DC inaugurates HP Fuel Station in Doda Township

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
DODA, JULY 14

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Harvinder Singh today inaugurated the newly established S.S HP Fuel Station here within the municipal limits of Doda town.

The fuel station, set up by a private company under the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) banner, aims to cater to the growing fuel demands of the region. A large number of citizens and local stakeholders were present at the inaugural ceremony.

The fuel station is expected to greatly benefit the residents of Doda by improving access to quality fuel services and easing vehicular movement within the town and surrounding areas. It will also contribute to local economic growth by creating employment opportunities and enhancing public convenience.

The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the initiative taken by the private enterprise and emphasized the role of such public-private collaborations in enhancing civic amenities and strengthening infrastructure in the district.

## KVK Shopian organizes CBP for tribal, rural youth at GDC Shopian



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SHOPIAN, JULY 14

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Shopian today conducted a Capacity Building Programme (CBP) for 30 tribal students at Government Degree College (GDC) Shopian.

The event was held under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) initiative of ICAR, aiming to empower young minds from marginalized sections through knowledge and skill development.

Prof. Rihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension, SKUAST-K, was the chief guest of the event, who delivered an inspiring keynote address. She highlighted the importance of education for tribal youth, urging participants to develop themselves through SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) in order to better understand their potential and areas of growth.

Earlier, the programme formally began with an opening talk by Dr. Zaffar

Afroz Badri, Head of KVK Shopian, who introduced the objectives and structure of the capacity-building session.

The event was attended by several dignitaries including Dr. Amal Saxena, who stressed the importance of improving communication skills to unlock opportunities in both professional and personal development.

Dr. Liqyat Ahmad Choudhary spoke on the vast scope of agriculture as a sustainable career path for rural youth.

Dr. Irfan Basti spoke on awareness talk focusing on rural empowerment and access to Government schemes.

Dr. Shaiq Ahmad Ganai, who also led a parallel Front Line Demonstration (FLD) session, enriched students' practical benefits of proper hygiene and sanitation.

As part of the programme, soap, detergent, and towels were distributed among the participants to promote hygiene awareness.

## Arrangements for Independence Day celebration discussed at Bhandarwah

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
BHADARWAH, JULY 14

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bhandarwah Sunil Kumar Buthyal today convened a meeting of officers and stakeholders here at Dak Bungalow to discuss the arrangements for the celebration of Independence Day-2025.

The meeting discussed the essential arrangements including security, first aid, sanitation, and deployment of Fire

& Emergency Services, seating, power supply, drinking water availability and issuance of invitation cards. Directions were issued to the concerned departments to ensure foolproof arrangements well in advance.

The meeting decided that all government buildings and institutions in the area will be illuminated to mark the occasion in a grand manner.

The Full Dress Rehearsal of the Independence

Day programme will be held on August 13, 2025. The departments were instructed to ensure their participation and preparedness.

The meeting was attended by CEO BDA Joginder Singh Jasrotia, BMO Dr. Versha Sharma, the heads of Boys and Girls Higher Secondary Schools, AE PHE, representatives from CRPF and Police Department and officers from several other departments.

## Dharti Aaba Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan Mega Awareness cum Public Outreach Camp held at Pachound-Udhampur

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
UDHAMPUR, JULY 14

As part of the ongoing Dharti Aaba Abhiyan-Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan, District Administration Udhampur organized a mega Awareness cum Public Outreach camp at village Pachound in Block Dudu-Basantgarh today.

The camp was held under the supervision of Sub-Divisional Magistrate Dr Manmeet Kumar.

During the program, scores of public grievances were redressed on-the-spot through prompt intervention by officials from the line departments.

Multiple government



departments had set up informative stalls to disseminate knowledge about flagship schemes such as PM Awas Yojana, Ujjwala Yojana, MGNREGA, Social Welfare schemes and more. Eligible beneficiaries were also facilitated

for on-the-spot enrollment for these schemes, ensuring that no deserving citizen is left behind.

The outreach camp witnessed enthusiastic participation from locals belonging to the tribal community.

## 73 college students complete internship at JKEDI

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JULY 14

A batch of 73 college students including 43 from Government SPMR College of Commerce Jammu and 30 from Government College for Women Gandhi Nagar successfully completed their summer internship at the Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI).

The students underwent a 10-day (60-hour) internship, which commenced on June 2, 2025 at Bari Brahmana campus of the institute. As per National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 guidelines, the intern-



ship program was aimed at developing the entrepreneurial and research acumen among students.

The internship included hands-on activities and interactive sessions providing students a real-world experience of business and startups. Key highlights of the program included business simulation exercises, startup ecosystem orientation, business idea generation workshops, research assignments, SWOT analy-

sis sessions and market surveys. These activities helped the students to develop critical thinking, problem-solving abilities and practical insights into how businesses are planned, launched and sustained.

The program aimed to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world application, fostering a spirit of innovation and self-reliance among the youth of Jammu and Kash-

## DC Srinagar, Commissioner SMC review progress of PMAY-Urban 2.0

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JULY 14

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo and Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb Monday held a joint meeting of Revenue and SMC Officers here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office to review the progress achieved in implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY-U 2.0) in the district.

The meeting was among others attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Rifat



Aftab Qureshi; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Khurshid; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar, all Tehsildars, SMC Ward Officers, and Officers from J&K Housing Board.

At the outset, Deputy Commissioner & Commissioner SMC emphasized the need for maintaining

transparency and accuracy in beneficiary selection under the scheme to ensure benefit reaches the deserving population. They instructed the Revenue and SMC

Officers to ensure that no eligible beneficiary is left out and no ineligible case is included in the final beneficiary list.

The Revenue and SMC Officers were instructed to expedite the verification process at their respective levels swiftly in line with scheme guidelines to meet the scheme objectives of providing 'Housing for All'

## Input Distribution, Clinical & Awareness camp held for Sheep Breeders at Faqir Gujri Dara



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JULY 14

The Division of Animal Genetics and Breeding at the Faculty of Veterinary Sciences and Animal Husbandry, SKUAST-K Shuhama, in collaboration with the department of Sheep Husbandry Srinagar, organized a clinical cum awareness camp at Faqir Gujri, Dara.

The event was conducted under ICAR's Network Project on Animal Genetic Resources.

A team of scientists from the Division of AGB, led by Prof. Syed Shanaz, Head of the Division, along with Dr Ashraf Baba, DSHO Srinagar, Veterinary Assistant Surgeons, visited

the area and imparted awareness and training to sheep breeders on various aspects of scientific and sustainable livestock rearing practices vis-a-vis the importance of conserving native germplasm.

Free quality medicine and university developed feed was provided to the stakeholders including women beneficiaries.

The camp was organized with the objective of awareness about animal health, promoting sustainable livestock management and livelihood generation.

The stakeholders were made aware of various schemes offered by the department under HADP, INLM, ICDS etc.

## Food Safety Department Anantnag cracks-down on Unsafe Snack and Confectionery Manufacturers



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
ANANTNAG, JULY 14

In a decisive move to safeguard public health particularly the well-being of young children, Food Safety department Anantnag conducted extensive raids on various snack, sweet, and confectionery manufacturing units across the district.

The enforcement action followed credible inputs regarding the use of unpermitted additives and improper storage conditions in the production of food items primarily consumed by children.

During the raids, approximately 200 kilograms of snacks, sweets, and other confectionery products valued at an estimated Rs.1.65 lakh were seized. Additionally, around 50 kilograms of deteriorated and perishable food items were found unfit for consumption and were destroyed on the spot by the Food

Business Operators (FBOs) under supervision.

Further, two FBOs were booked for operating in gross violation of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, including the absence of basic infrastructure and non-compliance with hygiene and manufacturing standards as outlined in Schedule IV of the FSSA.

Samples of the suspected food items have been collected and sent to a NABL-accredited laboratory for detailed testing and analysis.

Food Safety department has reiterated its zero-tolerance policy toward unsafe and unethical food manufacturing practices. Officials have once again urged all food business operators to ensure the use of only permitted and high-quality ingredients and to strictly adhere to food safety norms and regulations.

## Supervisors, Booth Level Officers imparted orientation training at Udhampur



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
UDHAMPUR, JULY 14

A day long training program for supervisors and Booth Level officers was today organized by the District Administration Udhampur here in the Conference Hall of DC Office Complex.

The training session held under the supervision of District Election Officer Saloni Rai, aimed to equip the participants with in-depth knowledge of constitutional provisions related to elections and familiarize them with their pivotal roles and responsibilities

in the electoral process.

The session emphasized the role of BLOs as the grassroots facilitators of the Election Commission of India and stressed the need for accuracy, transparency and accountability in maintaining electoral rolls.

The Participants were also sensitized about the procedures for submission of claims and objections regarding the draft roll and the process of appealing before the competent authority in case of disputes related to inclusion or deletion of names in the Draft Electoral Roll.

## EDITORIAL

## A heritage in peril

The majestic Mubarak Mandi Palace, once the regal seat of the Dogra rulers, stands today not in grandeur but in grave uncertainty. Its fate—along with the collective heritage of Jammu—is caught in a dangerous limbo, the result of bureaucratic stagnation, technical complexity, and a disheartening lack of professional interest. At the heart of the issue lies the unaddressed vulnerability of the slope on Circular Road, just below the historic complex. This slope, prone to erosion especially during monsoon, poses an existential threat to the entire structure. Yet, repeated efforts to engage a consultancy firm for stabilization have yielded nothing. Despite multiple tenders and even an initial agreement from IIT Roorkee—later retracted without clear reason—the Mubarak Mandi Jammu Heritage Society (MMJHS) finds itself in a deadlock. It is not due to a lack of intent or funding; rather, the problem lies in the sheer absence of technically competent and willing agencies to take up this critical assignment. With the July 8 deadline for the most recent tender having passed with inadequate response, one can't help but wonder: how long must a heritage structure wait for rescue? The 450-meter stretch of the slope isn't just a civil engineering challenge—it's a test of our priorities. Do we, as a society, have the will to save our monuments? Or will we let nature and neglect reduce them to a cautionary tale? The crisis is compounded by the lack of skilled conservation expertise in Jammu & Kashmir and even in the adjoining states. Most capable restoration artisans and firms are based in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, and they often shy away from fragmented or partially executed projects. This makes it all the more imperative for the administration to consider institutional partnerships—perhaps with national-level conservation bodies like INTACH, the Archaeological Survey of India, or even through international cooperation with UNESCO—to create a sustainable framework for heritage protection in the region. Meanwhile, emergency stabilization measures have been drawn up and submitted for administrative approval. These are critical, short-term fixes, intended to prevent further collapse within the palace complex. But make no mistake: they are mere band-aids on a festering wound. Without long-term slope stabilization and a clear roadmap for restoration, the complex is living on borrowed time. Even the conservation work on Raja Amar Singh Palace—a key component of the Mubarak Mandi complex—has faced delays, with the original contractor nearing termination. And once again, the same fear looms: even if the contract is formally canceled, will anyone step forward to take up the remaining work? Heritage is not just about stones and structure; it is memory made tangible. Mubarak Mandi is not merely a royal residence—it is a chronicle of Dogra rule, a cultural landmark, and a potential driver of heritage tourism in Jammu. If allowed to deteriorate further, it would be a betrayal—not only of history but of future generations. The government must now adopt a war-footing approach. If conventional tendering methods continue to fail, special project execution mechanisms must be explored. Handholding smaller firms, incentivizing expert agencies, or even seeking defense infrastructure bodies for technical support may be unconventional—but these are extraordinary times. Mubarak Mandi can still be saved. But time is running out, and complacency is no longer an option.

## Why education must lead to employment for women in India

TRIPTISOMANI

Despite notable progress in female literacy and higher education, women's participation in the Indian workforce remains alarmingly low. According to the Women Empowerment Principles (WEP), female literacy in India has crossed 77 per cent, and women now account for 48 per cent of higher education enrollment. Yet, the Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) stood at just 41.7 per cent in 2023-24—significantly below the global average. This stark disparity reveals a troubling disconnect between educational attainment and actual employment outcomes.

The real issue lies in what happens after women complete their education. While colleges and universities proudly highlight rising female enrollment, few track or support how many of these women transition into formal jobs, entrepreneurship, or leadership roles. This oversight undermines the productive potential of nearly half the country's population.

According to WEP data,

only 20 per cent of academically strong female graduates enter the formal workforce or launch businesses. Clearly, qualifications alone are not enough—there is a pressing need for a more supportive ecosystem to help women take the next step in their professional journey.

One practical and impactful solution is to include a “conversion rate”—the percentage of students, particularly women, who transition from education to employment or entrepreneurship—as a critical parameter in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).

By integrating this into institutional rankings, colleges and universities would be incentivised to move beyond academics and focus on real-world outcomes. It's not enough to admit and educate women; institutions must also enable their success in the workforce.

To bridge this transition gap, educational institutions must proactively offer structured career counseling, entrepreneurship training, and mentorship programs.



Leadership development courses designed specifically for women can help build confidence, develop community-building skills, and nurture ambition—equipping them to take on impactful roles and inspire others.

Although the FLFPR has shown a slight uptick in recent years, much of this growth comes from self-employment or unpaid family work, especially in rural India. These forms of employment are often unsustainable and do not guarantee financial independence.

In urban settings, while women hold 31 per cent of entry-level jobs, their representation drops dramatically to just 13 per cent in leadership roles. This gender imbalance not only reflects deep-rooted structural issues but also poses a significant roadblock to India's aspiration of becoming a developed nation, or Viksit Bharat.

Research shows that closing the gender gap in employment could add up to \$770 billion to India's GDP, significantly accelerating the country's progress toward becoming a \$5

trillion economy.

Ensuring equal workforce participation for women is not just a matter of fairness—it is a strategic economic imperative. It's time for accountability. Educational institutions must take responsibility not just for degrees awarded, but for the real-life outcomes of their graduates.

By incorporating conversion rates into NIRF rankings, we can begin to reshape the higher education landscape into one that actively empowers women to succeed in the workforce. This is not just a policy recommendation—it is a call to action.

If institutions and authorities align their goals with this vision, “women empowerment” will move from being a slogan to a measurable reality. India's economic engine can no longer afford to run on half its potential. The journey to inclusive growth starts where careers begin: in our colleges and universities.

**Conclusion**

India stands at a critical juncture where empowering women in the workforce is not just a moral imperative but a strategic

economic necessity.

Despite high literacy rates and increasing female enrollment in higher education, the low Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) exposes a serious gap between education and employability. Introducing “conversion rate” as a metric in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) can hold institutions accountable for ensuring women transition from classrooms to careers.

By offering career counseling, entrepreneurship support, and leadership training, colleges can become true catalysts of change.

Sustainable economic growth, especially the vision of a \$5 trillion economy and a Viksit Bharat, depends on fully utilizing the potential of India's women. Bridging this gap could add up to \$770 billion to India's GDP. The time to act is now—when we empower women to lead, we empower India to grow stronger, faster, and more equitably.

**(The writer is Founder of Womennovator. Views expressed are personal)**

## The past is the foundation for present

SANJAY CHANDRA

I was born a little more than a decade after Independence. We became a self-governed country with a bend towards the socialist model. Though there were people who thought that the country was better managed by the British, generally, there was euphoria in the air. Youngsters looked forward to the Government creating enough employment. The Government did not disappoint. There was substantial investment across diverse sectors. I was born, then studied, secured a good Government job, and spent my entire professional journey almost under the same political ideology. I was already out of the professional rat race by the time the political dispensation changed. I was in a position to look at the developments more dispassionately.

However, I was also influenced by the glasses that I had worn for a better part of my

life. I was upset by statements I considered to be backwards-looking. A few talked about our glory during the Vedic times. I have considered myself forward-looking and have often scoffed at people who speak of our past glory without considering the progress we have made due to science and technology. I would conveniently forget my prejudices. I was no better. The recent war changed my perspective. I was proud of the decisive action taken by us. I reflected upon the factors that made us achieve success. I am happy I thought rationally. It helped me overcome earlier biases. We had Gurukuls in times past. These residential schools existed since Vedic times till the mid-nineteenth century. The Britishers are blamed for the decline or even destruction of the Gurukuls. The earlier education was holistic, with an emphasis on all-round development. The medium of instruction was Sanskrit. A few stories from our epics indicate that

these institutions mostly catered to the elite males of society—the royals, the priests, and the warriors. The other classes of society, as well as women, did not have the benefit of this schooling. We probably had around a million of these schools by the 19th century. Certain classes and even women were still excluded.

The medium of teaching in the British system was English. They likely had an ulterior motive—to educate and create an exclusive local community to further their colonial rule. Less than a century later, the same set of people, through the same education system, would rise and gain Independence. Entire generations, irrespective of class or caste or gender or religion, would be educated in the coming decades after Independence. They would learn science and technology to establish manufacturing facilities to produce steel, cement, fertilisers, medicines, seeds, dairy, and much more. Within half a century of

Independence, our youngsters would excel in the revolutionary software technology that would drive the engines of the economy globally. The same education system would be exploited to create a cashless economy. It would help innumerable youngsters gain sustainable employment locally through opportunities created indigenously—Vocal for Local or Make in India are examples. An education system, imposed upon the population by the British for their benefit, has been turned around to create a more developed country. The second example is that of the ordnance factories. This was another institution created by the British with the twin objectives of exploiting the available resources to subjugate the local population and to help them in their war games.

Post-Independence, Governments invested not only in maintaining these plants but also in absorbing the latest technology from the more developed

countries and improving upon it. These are only two of the examples that helped us come out as winners in the war. Railways, infrastructure, roads, use of technology in agriculture, better and affordable medicines, and a lot more are all examples of our building a strong edifice on the foundations laid in the past, which started with education. I realise that what I call an edifice today is also a foundation for something bigger to come up in future. We should understand that the past is not redundant, and the present is not evil. We are good today because we built upon yesterday. We will be better tomorrow because of the present. We should learn from experience, discard that which is no longer relevant, retain the good to adapt and build a new present, laying the foundation for a better future.

**(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing. Views are personal)**

## How India is Powering Growth with Equity and Sustainability

PULKIT SINGH BISHT

At a time when the world is stumbling under the weight of political unrest, economic slowdown, and ecological anxiety, India is quietly scripting a different story, one of resilience, responsibility, and remarkable reinvention.

While many developed nations debate climate change in conference halls and flip-flop on fossil fuel subsidies, India is taking a radical step; it's delivering. Despite being classed as a “developing” nation, India is not waiting for permission to lead the green revolution. It is rolling up its sleeves and building a new paradigm, one where growth and sustainability walk hand in hand.

Consider the stark contrast: while wealthy economies account for over 70 per cent of global emissions, India, with 17 per cent of the world population and home to 1.4 billion people, contributes a mere 4 per cent to the global

carbon footprint. Its per capita carbon footprint stands at just 1.9 tonnes per year, significantly lower than the global average of 4.7 tonnes, and a mere fraction of what many industrialised nations emit.

India today has over 226 GW of renewable capacity, already achieving its Paris Agreement target of 40 per cent non-fossil power, seven years ahead of schedule. Solar panels line the vast stretches of Rajasthan, wind turbines whirl along Tamil Nadu's coastline, and remote villages that once waited years for electricity now run on sunlight.

This isn't just energy but equity.

In 2023, as the G20 host, India didn't just play diplomat; it reshaped climate diplomacy. The launch of the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA), with members including India, Brazil, Italy, Argentina, Singapore, UAE, Bangladesh, Mauritius, and the US, was not a side note; it was the

headline. With 24 countries and 12 international bodies, GBA aims to turn farm waste, dung, and municipal garbage into the clean fuel of tomorrow.

India is already leading by example. 12 per cent ethanol is now blended in petrol nationwide, with the 20 per cent target advanced to 2025, five years ahead of schedule. Twelve bio-refineries are converting waste into energy, cutting emissions and boosting farmer incomes. GBA marks India's second major green alliance after the International Solar Alliance (ISA) in 2015, reaffirming its role as a global architect of clean energy cooperation.

The world took further notice of India's strategic diplomacy in June 2025, when Prime Minister Modi undertook a five-nation visit, not to the usual capitals, but to Ghana, Trinidad & Tobago, Argentina, Brazil, and Namibia. It wasn't about red carpets. It was about rare earths, green hydrogen, ethanol



technology, and LNG.

In Ghana, Argentina and Namibia, India secured critical minerals like lithium and cobalt for EVs and battery storage. In Brazil, goals in renewables, pharma and digital infrastructure deepened. Trinidad and Tobago, rice in hydrocarbons, provided a vital option for India to diversify its energy imports.

This wasn't climate diplomacy as charity. This was strategic climate diplomacy, green, grounded, and future-ready.

India's sustainability story isn't just about infrastructure or diplomacy; it's about real impact on the ground. Between 2018

and 2025, the country's SDG Index score jumped from 57 to 99, driven by gains in clean energy, sanitation, education, and financial inclusion.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the Northeast, which was once peripheral but is now pivotal. In Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura, every district ranks as a “Front Runner” on the SDG Index. In Hnahthial, Mizoram, local governance has transformed central schemes into tangible outcomes, including clean water, gender parity, and education levels on par with those of India's major cities.

While many developed

nations wrestle with inflation, political instability, and rising inequality, India stands like a banyan tree, rooted, resilient, and growing. In 2024, India surpassed Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy, crossing \$4 trillion. But it's not just growth, it's growth with equity.

According to the World Bank, India now ranks 4th globally in income equality, with a Gini index of 25.5, ahead of all G7 and G20 nations, including the US (41.8), China (35.7), and the UK (32.4). Extreme poverty has nearly vanished.

The population living on less than \$2.15 a day dropped from 16.2 per cent in 2011-12 to just 2.3 per cent in 2022-23, lifting 171 million out of poverty. Today, only 1 per cent of households fall below the global poverty line.

This transformation is powered by India's digital backbone, 550 million Jan Dhan accounts, 140 crore Aadhaar IDs, and over 13

billion monthly UPI transactions.

It's a model of inclusive growth, not trickle-down. No surprise, then, that investors are paying attention. FDI rose 14 per cent to \$81 billion in FY25, backed by 6.5 per cent GDP growth, 2.8 per cent inflation, and \$703 billion in forex reserves. In a volatile world, India offers what others can't: scale with stability.

India has quietly become what few expected: a climate leader without a colonial past, a tech innovator beyond Silicon Valley, and a democracy delivering at scale. By 2030, half its power will come from non-fossil sources.

By 2047, it aims to be a fully developed nation, not by imitation, but by crafting a model that fuses equity, ecology, and innovation.

While others light up summits with promises, India is lighting villages with proof.

From leading global ini-

tiatives like the Global Biofuel Alliance to securing energy and mineral access through smart diplomacy, and maintaining macro-economic stability amid global turbulence, India has demonstrated a rare, holistic national strength.

Its success in delivering inclusive development across even its remotest regions positions it as a credible leader of the Global South and a stabilising force in a multipolar world.

This is no accident. India's journey is a deliberate blend of ancient ethos and modern execution. It's not just about chasing net-zero by 2070; it's about making every family part of the mission. If 1.4 billion people can be powered sustainably while lifting millions from poverty, India might just be the world's next development model.

**(The writer is Delhi-based political analyst and commentator on sociopolitical issues. Views are personal)**

## Women's health more hit than men's during Covid pandemic: Study

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Women's mental and physical health took a severe toll than men during the deadly Covid-19 pandemic, finds a study.

The study, published in the journal *Social Science and Medicine*, showed that psychological distress increased for both women and men during the pandemic, with women experiencing a greater rise.

The link between health behaviours and mental health weakened for women during the pandemic, with a healthy lifestyle no longer showing a significant connection to mental health.

In contrast, these relationships remained consistent for men. Before the pandemic, health behaviours offered greater protective benefits for women's mental health, but during the pandemic, this protective effect became stronger for men,



revealed researchers from the University of Aberdeen in Scotland.

"We found that women reported poorer overall changes in health behaviours than men during the pandemic. Specifically, women reported fewer days of fruit consumption and smaller reductions in alcohol intake. We also found that psychological distress increased for

both women and men during the pandemic, with women experiencing a greater rise," said Professor Paul McNamee, who led the research at the University of Aberdeen.

To understand whether the pandemic had differing effects on the health behaviours of women and men, the team analysed national data from January 2015 to March 2023 to

compare results pre- and post-pandemic.

They found that women were more negatively affected by the pandemic than their male counterparts.

"The adverse changes in women's health behaviours compared to men persist through to May 2023, suggesting longer-term effects were likely worsened by financial pressures during this period. It's important we keep tracking these trends," said Dr. Karen Arulsamy from Duke-NUS Medical School in Singapore, who was also part of the study.

The research called for targeted interventions as during times of heightened stress, women from lower socio-economic backgrounds with caregiving responsibilities have limited ability to maintain levels of social engagement and face more challenges in engaging in healthier behaviours.

## AI decodes gut bacteria to provide clues about health

AGENCIES  
TOKYO

For the first time, researchers from the University of Tokyo have used a special kind of artificial intelligence (AI) called a Bayesian neural network to probe a dataset on gut bacteria in order to find relationships that current analytical tools could not reliably identify.

Gut bacteria are known to be a key factor in many health-related concerns. The human body comprises about 30 trillion to 40 trillion cells, but your intestines contain about 100 trillion gut bacteria.

"The problem is that we're only beginning to understand which bacteria produce which human metabolites and how these relationships change in different diseases," said Project Researcher Tung Dang from the Tsunoda lab in the Department of Biological Sciences in a paper published in *Briefings in Bioinformatics*.

By accurately mapping these bacteria-chemical



relationships, we could potentially develop personalised treatments, Dang mentioned. "Imagine being able to grow a specific bacterium to produce beneficial human metabolites or designing targeted therapies that modify these metabolites to treat diseases."

The system, VBayesMM, automatically distinguishes the key players that

significantly influence metabolites from the vast background of less relevant microbes, while also acknowledging uncertainty about the predicted relationships, rather than providing overconfident but potentially wrong answers.

"When tested on real data from sleep disorder, obesity and cancer studies, our approach consistently

outperformed existing methods and identified specific bacterial families that align with known biological processes, giving confidence that it discovers real biological relationships rather than meaningless statistical patterns," Dang explained.

As VBayesMM can handle and communicate issues of uncertainty, it gives researchers more confidence than a tool which does not. Even though the system is optimised to cope with heavy analytical workloads, mining such huge datasets still comes with high computational cost; however, as time goes on, this will become less and less of a barrier to those wishing to use it.

"We plan to work with more comprehensive chemical datasets that capture the complete range of bacterial products, though this creates new challenges in determining whether chemicals come from bacteria, the human body or external sources like diet," said Dang.

## Covid hospitalisation, family history, lifestyle behaviours behind unexplained sudden death: ICMR study

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Hospitalisations due to severe Covid-19 infection, a family history of sudden deaths, as well as lifestyle behaviours are some of the reasons behind the unexplained sudden death, according to a study led by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

The peer-reviewed study published in the *Indian Journal of Medical Research* explored factors associated with unexplained sudden deaths among adults aged 18-45 years in India.

It showed that Covid vaccination was not responsible for sudden and unexplained deaths seen among young and healthy individuals.

The study was conducted in 2023, following anecdotal reports of sudden, unexplained deaths in India's apparently healthy young adults, which were linked to Covid-19 infection or vaccination.



did not increase the risk of unexplained sudden death among young adults in India. Past Covid-19 hospitalisation, family history of sudden death, and certain lifestyle behaviours increased the likelihood of unexplained sudden death," the researchers said.

Using a multicentric matched case-control model, the researchers included 729 cases and

2,916 controls from 47 tertiary care hospitals across India. Family vacation packages

The cases were apparently healthy individuals aged 18-45 years without any known co-morbidity, who suddenly (were seen apparently healthy 24 hours before death) died of unexplained causes between October 2021 and March 2023.

Four controls were included per case matched for age, gender, and neighbourhood.

The team interviewed/perused records to collect data on Covid vaccination or infection and post-Covid conditions, family history of sudden death, smoking, recreational drug use, alcohol frequency and binge drinking, and vigorous-intensity physical activity two days before death/interviews.

"The results showed that receiving at least one dose of Covid-19 vaccine lowered the odds of unexplained sudden death.

On the other hand, "past Covid-19 hospitalisation, family history of sudden death, binge drinking 48 hours before death, use of recreational drug or substance and performing vigorous-intensity physical activity 48 hours before death were positively associated", the team added.

## Brighter night-time light exposure may not be good for your heart

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Are you in the habit of sleeping with lights on during the night? Beware, a study led by an international team of researchers found that brighter night-time light exposure may increase the risks of five major cardiovascular diseases.

Light at night causes circadian disruption, which is a known risk factor for adverse cardiovascular outcomes. However, it is not well understood whether personal light exposure patterns predict an individual's risk of cardiovascular diseases.

In a study of 88,905 people, yet to be peer-reviewed, researchers from the Flinders Health and Medical Research Institute, along with colleagues in the UK and the US, showed that avoiding exposure to night light may lower the risk of cardiovascular diseases.



The study posted on the pre-print site medRxiv, that night light exposure to women more, with stronger associations for heart failure and coronary artery disease. Younger participants were also found at an increased risk for heart failure and atrial fibrillation.

"Night light exposure was a significant risk factor for developing cardiovascular diseases. In addition, to current preventative measures, avoiding light at night may be a useful strategy for reducing risks of cardiovascular diseases," the researchers said.

In the study, the team used approximately 13 million

hours of personal light exposure data, tracked by wrist-worn light sensors (one week each).

The findings showed that people sleeping with the brightest nights had significantly higher risks of developing coronary artery disease, myocardial infarction (heart attack), heart failure, atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat), and stroke, compared to people sleeping in the dark.

The relationships were robust after adjusting for established risk factors for cardiovascular health, including physical activity, smoking, alcohol, diet, sleep duration, socioeconomic status, and polygenic risk.

The researchers explained that unnatural light may cause circadian disruption which "may trigger metabolic and vascular perturbations elevating cardiovascular risk".

## Sudden Deaths in Young Indians Linked to Lifestyle, Covid Hospitalisation: ICMR Study

A landmark study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has found that Covid-19 vaccination is not linked to unexplained sudden deaths in healthy young adults. Instead, factors such as severe Covid-19 hospitalisation, family history of sudden deaths, binge drinking, recreational drug use, and vigorous physical activity shortly before death were found to be associated with increased risk.

**Key Findings from the Study**

Published in the *Indian Journal of Medical Research*, the peer-reviewed study investigated the causes behind sudden and unexplained deaths among Indian adults aged 18 to 45 years. It was initiated in response to anecdotal reports linking such deaths to either Covid-19 infection or vaccination.

**However, the study clearly concludes:**

"Covid-19 vaccination



did not increase the risk of unexplained sudden death among young adults in India," the ICMR researchers stated.

**Study Scope and Methodology**

The study was conducted between October 2021 and March 2023. Researchers used a multicentric matched case-control model, covering 47 tertiary care hospitals across India. A total of 729 sudden death cases and 2,916 matched controls (matched by age, gender, and neighbourhood) were analysed.

The deceased individuals were reportedly healthy 24 hours prior to death, with no known co-

morbidities. Researchers collected data through interviews and medical records, focusing on:

Covid-19 vaccination and infection history

Post-Covid complications

Family history of sudden death

Lifestyle habits (smoking, alcohol, drug use)

Physical activity levels in the 48 hours before death

**Vaccination Lowers Sudden Death Risk**

Contrary to rumours, the study found that vaccination may actually lower the risk of sudden unexplained death.

"Receiving at least one dose of a Covid-19 vaccine

reduced the odds of unexplained sudden death. Two doses further lowered the odds," the study revealed.

**Risk Factors Identified**

The study identified several significant risk factors linked to sudden deaths:

Past hospitalisation due to Covid-19

Family history of sudden death

Binge drinking within 48 hours before death

Use of recreational drugs

Vigorous-intensity physical activity two days before death

**Conclusion**

This ICMR-led research offers crucial evidence for public health discourse, debunking myths around Covid-19 vaccination and redirecting attention to post-Covid complications and high-risk lifestyle behaviours. It emphasizes the need for awareness around health risks, especially for young adults engaging in strenuous activity or substance use.

## BMI may influence breast cancer risk in women with heart disease: WHO study

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Excess weight may increase the risk of developing breast cancer among postmenopausal women with cardiovascular disease, according to a study by the World Health Organization (WHO), published on Monday.

Higher body mass index (BMI) is a known risk factor for breast cancer in postmenopausal women. The study, published in the peer-reviewed journal of the American Cancer Society *CANCER*, unravels how the risk differs among women with and without cardiovascular disease or type 2 diabetes.

It showed that each 5 kg/m<sup>2</sup> increase in BMI was associated with a 31 per cent higher risk of breast cancer in women who developed cardiovascular disease during follow-up and a 13 per cent higher risk in women without cardiovascular disease.

The development of



type 2 diabetes did not seem to affect breast cancer risk: women with or without type 2 diabetes had a similarly elevated breast cancer risk related to higher BMI.

"The findings of this study could be used to inform risk-stratified breast cancer screening programmes," said a team led by Heinz Freisling, from the WHO's specialised cancer research team, the International Agency for Research on Cancer

(IARC).

The team analysed data from the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC) and UK Biobank on 168,547 postmenopausal women who did not have, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease when they agreed to participate.

After a median follow-up of 10.7 years in EPIC and 10.9 years in UK Biobank, 6,793 postmenopausal women developed breast cancer.

Further, the study noted that the combination of overweight (BMI ≥ 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) and cardiovascular disease was estimated to lead to 153 more cases of breast cancer per 100,000 people per year than expected.

"This study should also inspire future research to include women with a history of cardiovascular diseases in weight loss trials for breast cancer prevention," Freisling said.

The link between excess weight and increased cancer risk is well established.

Being overweight or obese increases your risk for 12 cancers, including uterine, kidney, liver, and colorectal cancer.

A recent study, published in the journal *Nature Communications*, showed that that overweight and obese women are more likely to be diagnosed with larger tumours and more advanced-stage breast cancer.

## J&K Congress OBC Department takes historic step to ensure women's representation in politics

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 14

Under the visionary leadership of Shri Rahul Gandhi and the committed efforts of Madan Lal Chalotra, Chairman of the OBC Department, J&K Pradesh Congress Committee, a historic step has been taken to ensure the rightful representation of women from the Other Backward Classes (OBC) in the political landscape of Jammu & Kashmir. On 13th July 2025, the Women Wing of the OBC Department for District Jammu Urban was officially constituted, and a large number of dynamic OBC women were nominated to serve at various levels of responsibility. At the forefront of this initiative is Harwant Kour (Babli Ji), who has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Women Wing. Her leadership symbolizes the rising voice of OBC women determined to fight for their rights and bring about meaningful change at the grassroots level. This landmark decision of inclusive repre-



sentation sends a strong message against the ongoing crisis of Chitta (synthetic drugs), which is severely affecting the youth of Jammu. These newly appointed women leaders, under the leadership of Harwant Kour (Babli Ji), have vowed to fight the drug menace and safeguard future generations from falling into addiction. They represent a force of change and are committed to taking this battle to every street, school, and household. Their activism is not just about social service—it's a resistance against the administrative silence and failure under the BJP regime, which has ignored the rise of drug abuse, unemployment, and social alienation in the region.

The representation of 27 dedicated women in this wing is a direct response to the BJP's myth-making that backward communities, especially OBC women, lack leadership and political relevance. With this appointment, the Congress Party is not just empowering women—it is rewriting narratives. These women will now have a seat at the table, ensuring that OBC concerns are addressed in policymaking, welfare schemes, and governance. This is political empowerment in its true sense—grassroots, inclusive, and determined. Chairman Madan Lal Chalotra, known for his relentless advocacy for backward classes, has once again shown the

courage to lead from the front. By organizing and mobilizing women leadership under the mission of Rahul Gandhi, he is ensuring that Congress remains the party of social justice. His commitment to ground-level leadership, community involvement, and strategic political empowerment is reflected in the strength and diversity of this new wing. He has raised a collective voice that demands visibility, action, and accountability—whether it be in education, healthcare, employment, or law enforcement. This powerful step will pave the way for broader representation of OBC women in every sector—be it political forums, administrative bodies, or civic institutions. The Women Wing under Harwant Kour (Babli Ji)'s leadership is poised to challenge the inertia, inspire action, and most importantly, protect the rights and dignity of the OBC community. This is not just an organizational change—it's a movement of justice, voice, and empowerment.

## Several prominent people of Pyt Suba Chak & Salehar join BJP in presence of MLA Bishnah

JNEWS SERVICE  
BISHNAH JULY 14

In a significant political development, a large contingent of 30 individuals from Panchayat Chak Suba and Salehar, previously affiliated with various political parties, today formally joined the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) at a ceremony held in Bishnah. The event took place in the distinguished presence of Dr. Rajeev Bhagat, the incumbent MLA from Bishnah, marking a considerable boost for the BJP's grassroots presence in the region.

The joining ceremony saw prominent figures from the local political landscape pledging their allegiance to the BJP. Among those who switched their affiliations were Harbans Lal, Subash Chander, Kasturi Lal, Bachan Lal, Parveen Kumar, Vijay Kumar, Sahar Singh, Bachan Lal, Rajinder Lal, Pawan Kumar, Sohan Lal, Romesh Chander, Sat Pal, Pritam Lal, Subash



Chander, Rakesh Kumar, Sohan Lal, Ram Lal, Pratap Singh, Lal Husain, Showkat Ali, Mohd Shafi, Shah Mohammad, Hazur Hussain, Lal Din, Mushtaq Ali, Mohammad Sahil, Joginder Singh, and Farman Ali. The diverse group, representing a broad spectrum of the local population, underscores the growing appeal of the BJP's agenda in the area. Addressing the new entrants, MLA Dr. Rajeev Bhagat extended a warm welcome, emphasizing that their decision to join the BJP reflects the public's trust in the party's vision of development,

good governance, and inclusive growth. He highlighted the BJP's commitment to uplift all sections of society and reiterated the party's resolve to address the concerns and aspirations of the people of Bishnah and the wider region. "Today's significant induction of new members from Panchayat Chak Suba and Salehar is a testament to the BJP's burgeoning strength and its growing acceptance among the common people," Dr. Bhagat stated. "These individuals, with their deep roots in the community, will undoubtedly play a crucial role in strengthening our party at the grass-

roots level and in furthering our mission of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas' (Together, for everyone's growth, with everyone's trust)."

The new members, in their statements, expressed their confidence in the leadership of the BJP and its commitment to national progress.

They articulated their desire to contribute to the party's efforts in bringing about positive change and development in their respective areas. This wave of defections from other parties is seen by political observers as a strategic gain for the BJP, potentially strengthening its position ahead of upcoming local body elections and further consolidating its political footprint in the Jammu region. The party leadership expressed optimism that this trend would continue, with more individuals choosing to align with the BJP's developmental narrative.

## Over 7.2 Lakh youth trained through HDFC Bank Parivartan's Skill Development, Livelihood Enhancement Programmes

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, 14 JULY 2025.

On the occasion of World Youth Skills Day, HDFC Bank today highlighted a significant milestone, of having skilled over 7.2 lakh youth across India since the inception of the Bank's CSR programme, Parivartan. The Bank currently has over 70 active projects in the area of Skill Development across different states, covering multiple sectors including IT/ITES, retail, healthcare, manufacturing and agriculture.

Skill Development and Livelihood Enhancement is a key focus area of the Bank's Parivartan programme, its umbrella brand for all CSR initiatives. Its initiatives focus on two

key areas including skill development for employment generation and livelihood enhancement with an emphasis on entrepreneurship, particularly in rural communities.

The employment-generation programmes offer National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF)-aligned certificate courses lasting three to six months, covering sectors such as Finance and Business Services, Retail and Sales, Hospitality and Tourism, Healthcare, IT and IT Enabled Services, Construction and Manufacturing, Beauty and Wellness, Apparel and Textiles, and Education and Training. These programmes have achieved placement rates ranging from

60 to 70 per cent.

A recent addition to the Bank's skilling centres is the Parivartan Skills Academy in Jaipur, which provides locally relevant training pathways leading to sustainable employment and entrepreneurship. This academy is part of a wider network across India, through which HDFC Bank aims to skill a total of 2 lakh youth in the coming years.

Concurrently, over six lakh individuals, including farmers, self-help groups, and community-based enterprises have benefited through Parivartan's livelihood enhancement and entrepreneurship initiatives that foster sustainable economic participation. The skills developed through

these initiatives include goat-rearing, bee-keeping, handloom weaving, mushroom cultivation, vermi-composting and organic farming.

HDFC Bank Parivartan's skilling initiatives span across urban and rural areas in several states, including Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal.

The Bank's efforts in skill development support inclusive growth and economic empowerment for young people from diverse backgrounds. The Bank's inclusive approach is

reflected in its training of over 4,300 differently-abled persons.

In addition to skill training, HDFC Bank Parivartan organises youth entrepreneurship pitch events to encourage innovation and enterprise among young people.

These efforts align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including decent work and economic growth, quality education, gender equality, and climate action.

World Youth Skills Day, established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2014, recognises the importance of equipping young people with skills for employment and entrepreneurship to advance sustainable development.

## Vice-Chancellor, CU Jammu honored on auspicious occasion of Vyas Poojan

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 14

The Department of Hindi & Other Indian Languages, Central University of Jammu, in collaboration with the Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal, Jammu-Kashmir & Ladakh Province, organized a special event to mark the occasion of Vyas Poojan. On this auspicious day, the Honorable Vice-Chancellor of the University and President of the Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal, Jammu-Kashmir & Ladakh Province, Prof. Sanjeev Jain, was honored for his exemplary contributions.

In his blessings, Prof. Jain shared valuable insights from his teaching career and guided attendees on the duties and conduct of teachers and students. Emphasizing the importance of Guru-



Shishya Parampara (teacher-disciple tradition), he stated, "In the present era, discussions on Indian knowledge traditions in the field of education are essential. Unless a student develops reverence for the Guru, holistic development remains unattainable."

The event witnessed the gracious presence of Prof. Bharat Bhushan, Provincial Co-Secretary

of Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal and Head of the Department; Dr. Vandana Sharma, Chief of Publication Activities; Dr. Shashikant Mishra, Dr. Ratnesh Kumar Yadav, and research scholars from the department.

The program highlighted the significance of Guru-disciple values in modern education, aligning with India's rich cultural ethos.

## Dr. Jitendra Singh hails IIT Jammu's Growth, calls for Synergy between Institutions and Industry

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 14

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today delivered a compelling address at the NITI Aayog "Regional Consultative Committee" meeting on "Ease of Doing Research and Development", at IIT Jammu on Monday.

The event witnessed the participation of faculty, NITI Aayog representatives, eminent scientists, academicians, and institutional leaders.

Reflecting on the genesis of IIT Jammu, Dr. Jitendra Singh recalled a conversation from over a decade ago with the late Arun Jaitley, then Finance Minister, which ultimately led to the sanctioning of the IIT for Jammu in the Union Budget. He noted that setting up the institution from scratch was a Herculean task, but expressed

pride that it is now thriving under dynamic leadership and advancing in academic excellence.

The Minister emphasized that making research and development more accessible and effective is not the job of a single ministry or institution. "This is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders—including academia, policymakers, industry, and society at large," he stated, adding that institutional reforms must be matched by cultural and systemic shifts.

Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted the Modi Government's unwavering commitment to advancing science and research, noting that a series of transformative reforms have helped unshackle India's innovation potential. Over 1600 obsolete rules have been scrapped to streamline governance and reduce bureaucratic hurdles. The General Financial Rules (GFRs) have been relaxed, enabling faster procurement and greater flexibility for researchers.



In a historic move, Dr. Jitendra Singh noted, the government has also opened up the nuclear sector to private participation—an unprecedented step reflecting deep trust in India's domestic scientific capabilities. Furthermore, the creation of the 1 lakh crore National Research Foundation (NRF-Anusandhan) marks a significant push to encourage private sector investment in R&D, thereby strengthening the country's overall research ecosystem.

The Minister noted that this transformative initiative is further bolstered by recent reforms that empower Vice Chancellors to approve global tenders up to 200 crore,

significantly simplifying and expediting the procurement of advanced research equipment and infrastructure. Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized that such bold measures will accelerate scientific progress and help position India as a global leader in research and innovation.

Dr. Jitendra Singh proudly noted that 56% of India's patent filings now come from Indian residents, showcasing the country's growing self-reliance and innovation capacity.

The Minister further emphasized India's rapidly rising global stature in science, innovation, and entrepreneurship. He pointed out that India's rank in the Global Inno-

vation Index has significantly improved—from 81 to 39—demonstrating the country's focused efforts in research, innovation, and technology. India now ranks fourth globally in scientific publication output, highlighting the increasing academic and research contributions from Indian institutions.

Additionally, he noted the country's remarkable startup boom, with the number of startups growing from just 350 to nearly 1.75 lakh in the last decade, reflecting a robust and dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem.

"Our space missions like Chandrayaan and Gaganyaan have made India a global science and technology leader," he added, citing the success of experiments aboard these missions, including Shubhashu, which are setting world benchmarks in life sciences and biotechnology.

Citing the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as a landmark reform, Dr.

Singh said it has freed students from becoming "prisoners of their parents' choices." The policy now offers flexibility and interdisciplinary pathways, laying the foundation for more meaningful and purposeful careers.

Highlighting Jammu's emerging educational ecosystem, Dr. Singh noted the rare proximity of IIT, IIM, AIIMS, IIIM, and Mass Communication institutions in the region. He called for early industry linkage from the outset of academic projects for sustainable StartUps to foster relevance and innovation.

"Early industry involvement is the secret behind our vaccine success story," he said, referring to partnerships with Bharat Biotech and the Serum Institute in India's rapid development of COVID-19 and HPV vaccines.

The event was also attended by Manoj Singh Gaur, Director, IIT Jammu, and Prof. V. K. Saraswat, Member, NITI Aayog.

## Indian Army organizes T20 Cricket Tournament at Keri Village, Rajouri



JNEWS SERVICE  
RAJOURI: 14 JUL 2025

As part of its ongoing outreach efforts under Operation Sadbhavana, the Indian Army successfully organized a T20 Cricket Tournament at Government High School, Keri. The event was designed to promote sportsmanship, strengthen community ties and engage the local youth in positive and constructive activities. A total of 16 cricket teams from Keri and nearby villages participated in the tournament. The matches which were held over several days, attracted

an enthusiastic crowd and showcased a spirit of healthy competition and camaraderie among the players. The final match held today, was attended by officers of the Indian Army who interacted with the players and local residents. They commended the players for their zeal, discipline and team spirit, encouraging them to continue participating in such positive initiatives. This event further reinforced the bond between the Indian Army and the local community, sending a strong message of unity, development and peace in the region.

## Khatana slams Congress & NC for misleading Kashmiri Youth, urges development, peace at Uri Rally

**JNEWS SERVICE**  
URI, JULY 14, 2025:

In a powerful address at a massive public rally held at the revered Baba Fareed Shrine in Garkote, Uri, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana launched a scathing critique of the Congress and National Conference (NC) for, what he termed, "derailing the youth of Kashmir from the mainstream and leading them towards destruction."

Addressing hundreds of enthusiastic attendees, many of whom had travelled from nearby villages on foot, MP Khatana said, "While our Prime Minister envisions a future of prosperity, schools, playfields, tourism, and economic empowerment, these parties filled graveyards and raised the numbers of orphans and widows during their regimes."



Speaking from the foothills of the historic Baba Fareed Shrine under the shade of majestic chinar trees, MP Khatana laid out a comprehensive vision for Uri's. He proposed the enhancement of facilities at the Baba Fareed site, including improved road connectivity, signage, rest areas, and pilgrim lodging – positioning Uri as a key religious and eco-tourism hub. Urging youth to engage in entrepreneurship, he pledged support

for handicrafts, adventure tourism, and hospitality initiatives – with special focus on empowering the tribal communities. He highlighted Central Government programs like PM Awas Yojana, Ayushman Bharat, Ujjwala Yojana, and Kisan Credit Card (KCC), calling on locals to actively benefit from these schemes. He particularly encouraged women to join skill development and livelihood missions.

Public Connect & Unity: The MP praised the community's unity and cultural strength, saying,

"This rally is not just a gathering, it's a message of hope, strength, and a shared vision for Uri's

The event witnessed strong participation from local leaders, elders, youth, and women – with community voices expressing optimism and support for this new chapter in Uri's ,

In the mean time uri division officers meeting also taken, and directed them to work with enthusiasm and reach the last deserving person ,

Other prominent accompanied Mohd Anwar khan ,Ghulam Hussain Dar,Mushtaq mir nowshari, Harjeet Singh,Umar khan,Ashish mungrial, and Rafiq Balote x vdc,Rafiq chechi were the main organiser of the program

## Suri applauds appointment of Kavinder Gupta as LG Ladakh

**JNEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JULY 14

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) executive member congratulated senior party leader Kavinder Gupta on his appointment as the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, as announced by the Hon'ble President of India, Droupadi Murmu. This historic appointment, he said marks Gupta as the first Jammu-born leader to hold this prestigious position in the Union Territory



(UT), signifying a strong political signal from the Centre.

Raman Suri, Executive Member of the BJP, expressed his heartfelt appreciation for this decision, stating, "Kavinder Gupta's appointment as

Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh is a testament to his unwavering commitment to public service and his exemplary leadership. His vast experience and dedication to the people of Jammu and Kashmir make him the ideal choice to lead Ladakh towards greater progress and prosperity."

Kavinder Gupta's illustrious career is a reflection of his strong leadership qualities, including his ability to foster unity,

drive equitable development, and uphold the values of inclusive governance. A seasoned politician, Kavinder Gupta has served with distinction in several key roles as Mayor of Jammu from 2005 to 2010 and elected for a record three consecutive terms to the post. He as Mayor had transformed Jammu's civic administration, earning widespread acclaim for his focus on infrastructure development and public welfare.

## Unprecedented assault on democracy in J&K : Rattan Lal

**JNEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JULY 14

Advocate Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC), has strongly condemned the highly condemnable and unjusti-

fied act by security officials who physically prevented and allegedly manhandled the sitting Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Omar Abdullah, as he attempted to offer prayers at the Mazar-e-Shuhada graveyard in Srinagar on Monday.

In a press release issued here today, the senior NC leader said it is both shocking and disgraceful that the elected Chief Minister of the Union Territory was compelled to scale the boundary wall of the graveyard to pay homage to the martyrs of 1931 after

being stopped by security forces for two consecutive days. "This reflects the intolerable level of authoritarianism where an elected head of the government is denied his fundamental right to pray and participate in a solemn act of remembrance," he said.

**Government of Jammu & Kashmir**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**  
**PWD (R&B) DIVISION RAMBAN**

**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**

**E-NIT No: 38 of 2025-26 Dated: 12-07-2025 (E-tendering).**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir UT, the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Ramban invites tenders by e-tendering mode on **%age rates** from approved and eligible Contractors/Firms registered with J&K UT. CPWD, MES & Railways for the following work:-

S.No	Name of Work	Name of Division	Estimated cost of Work (in Lacs)	Cost of Tender Doc. (in Rs)	Earnest Money (In Lacs)	Time allowed for completion	Time & Date of Opening of tender (Technical Bid)	Class of Contractor
1	Upgradation of AEO Office Ramban under Capex Budget 2025-26.	PWD (R&B) Division Ramban	3.28	600	2% of Adv. Cost	01 Month	26-07-2025 on or after 10.00 AM.	D Class

Position of AAA = **Accorded**  
Position of funds = **Partially available**  
Technical Sanction = **Sanctioned**

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	<b>12-07-2025</b>
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From <b>13-07-2025</b> ,10.00 A.M to <b>25-07-2025</b> , 4.00 P.M
3.	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting	
4.	Bid submission <b>Start Date</b>	<b>13-07-2025</b> ,10.00 A.M
5.	Bid Submission <b>End Date</b>	<b>25-07-2025</b> , 4.00 P.M
6.	Submission of hard copy of tender documents	Only successful bidder who is declared as L1 should submit the hard copy after opening of financial bids
7.	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online) - [The date should be one day after deadline for receiving of hard copies]	26-07-2025 at 10.00 A.M. in the Office of the Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Ramban
8.	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed

1.The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per below schedule:  
Note: \*Cost of Bidding Document to be fixed by the tender inviting authority.

No:EE/R&B/RBN/  
Dated: 12-07-2025

**Executive Engineer**  
**PWD (R&B) Division Ramban**

DIP/J-3437/25  
Date: 14-7-25

**Government of Jammu & Kashmir**  
**Department of Animal Husbandry, Jammu**  
E-mail: [director-ahdj@jk.gov.in](mailto:director-ahdj@jk.gov.in) Ph.0191-2505552,2505247,2502252(Fax)Gole Pully, TalabTilloo, Jammu -180002

Sub:- Waiting list for the post of **Veterinary Pharmacist (Divisional/District Cadre)** advertised vide Notification No:- 04 of 2021 dated:- 17.07.2021 – verification of Character & Antecedents thereof.

Ref:- Administrative Department's letter No:- ASHF/AHONGAZ/38/2024 (7623966) dated:- 08.07.2025.

**NOTICE**

The candidates figuring in the Annexure-A to this Notice who have been selected as **Veterinary Pharmacist (Divisional/District Cadre)** in Animal Husbandry Department, Jammu by Jammu & Kashmir Service Selection Board vide No:-JKSSB-SD0SECY(JMU)/18/2024-03 (E-7499468) dated:- 11.06.2025 are hereby informed to submit their following particulars on official e-mail Id [director-ahdj@jk.gov.in](mailto:director-ahdj@jk.gov.in) within 15 days from the date of issuance of this office Notice, for the purpose of filling up of e-verification rolls to obtain their Character & Antecedents from the Criminal Investigation Department:-

Name of the Candidate	Parentage	Permanent Address	Working Mobile No.	Working E-Mail Id

Encls:- Annexure-A

Sd/-  
(Dr.Parvinder Singh)  
Director,  
Animal Husbandry Deptt.,  
Jammu.  
Dated:- 12.07.2025.

No:- DAHJ/Adm-125/2024-05/2705-07

**ANNEXURE-A**

S. No.	Name of the applicant	Father's Name	Selection Category	Address	Division/District
1	Sahil Kumar	Kala Ram	OM	68 Wand Waziran Pouni Chak, Jammu.	Division Cadre Jammu
2	Ajay Sharma	Dharam Pal Sharma	OM	12 Raipur Jaggir PO Bhadrone Marh, Jammu	Division Cadre Jammu
3	Mahesh Kumar	Krishan Lal	SC	29 W.No. 06 Karal Dansal, Jammu	Division Cadre Jammu
4	Sadia Choudhary	Niaz Ali	ST	Bari Brahamana, Samba	Division Cadre Jammu
5	Gurvinder Singh	Jagar Ram	ALC/IB	365 5 Badyal Brahman Dehrian Ranbir Singh Pura, Jammu	Division Cadre Jammu
6	Sofia Bano	Razi Ahmed	OM	Village Chak Drab Khan Near Govt.Middle School, Chak Drab Khan, Kathua	District Cadre Samba
7	Ankush Raina	Romesh Parkash	EWS	80 6 Badyal Brahamna Ranbir Singh Pura, Jammu	District Cadre Kathua
8	Varun Sharma	Tara Chand	OM	Nil 2 Madha Chenani Udhampur	District Cadre Udhampur
9	Skinder Paul	Satpaul Sharma	EWS	Kalaspur, Kathua	District Cadre Udhampur
10	Pranav Jamwal	Pardeep Singh	OM	5 Tikri, Udhampur	District Cadre Doda
11	Amit Gupta	Krishan Chander Gupta	OM	Village Juthana Beradhani, Kathua	District Cadre Ramban
12	Neha Choudhary	Ashok Kumar	ALC/IB	Ward No.04 V/PO Chowki, Tehsil Nowshera, District Rajouri	District Cadre Rajouri
13	Mohsin Ali Bukhari	Ghulam Ali Shah Bukhari	OM	10 Prori Gujran Koteranka, Rajouri	District Cadre Poonch
14	Shahnawaz Akram	Mohammad Akram Sheikh	OM	110 Kandoora Beerwah, Budgam	District Cadre Poonch
15	Raza Ahmed	Late Mohd. Razaq	ALC/IB	92 9 Ari Mendhar, Poonch	District Cadre Poonch

Sd/-  
(Dr.Parvinder Singh)  
Director,  
Animal Husbandry Deptt.,  
Jammu.

**DIP/J-3422/25**  
**Date: 14-7-25**

## PM Modi's efforts herald new revolution via biofuels: Hardeep Puri

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 14

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Monday lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's effort in bringing a new revolution in India through biofuels, which has resulted in Namibia's entry into the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA).

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister said that biofuel is an energy that is obtained from household and farm waste, grains or spoiled grains, and this environmentally-friendly, clean fuel is also a powerful medium to accelerate



the country's development.

"Namibia joins GBA. India's initiative towards clean energy and the expansion of the Global Biofuel Alliance family

the Prime Minister's efforts toward biofuels are bringing substantial change to the nation and improving the lives of citizens.

"PM Modi's efforts have brought a 'new revolution of change through biofuel' in India. This green fuel, which is powering India's development journey, is changing and improving the lives of people from villages to cities," the minister posted.

The biofuel is not only helping farmers to generate income, but the development around it is creating new employment opportunities, especially in rural areas.

is another proof of PM Narendra Modi's farsightedness on the mantra of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," the minister said in a post on X. Puri emphasised that

## SC rejects plea challenging ban on SIMI

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 14

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea challenging a decision of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Tribunal, which had upheld the extension of ban on the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI).

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta questioned the maintainability of the special leave petition (SLP) filed by Humam Ahmad Siddiqui, a former member of the banned "unlawful association".

"Why are you (Siddiqui) here? Let the organisation come!" remarked the Justice Nath-led Bench, questioning the locus standi of



the petitioner.

Ultimately, it dismissed the special leave petition (SLP) filed against the decision of the judicial tribunal confirming the ban on SIMI under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

In a notification issued on January 29, 2024, the Union Home Ministry had extended the ban on SIMI for five more years, referring to its involvement in "fomenting terrorism, disturbing peace and communal harmony, which are prejudicial to

the sovereignty, security and integrity of India".

"The ban on SIMI has been imposed under Section 3(1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) 1967 for a further period of five years," the Union Ministry of Home Affairs had said.

Subsequently, a tribunal was constituted to decide whether there were sufficient reasons to declare SIMI an unlawful organisation or not.

Citing ISIS links among a host of reasons for the decision, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Tribunal, presided over by Delhi High Court Judge Justice Purushandrade Kumar Kaurav, passed an order confirming the ban on SIMI.

## 'Nothing much the govt can do': Centre tells SC on Nimisha Priya's execution in Yemen

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 14

The Centre on Monday told the Supreme Court that "there is nothing much the government can do" to save Kerala nurse Nimisha Priya from execution in Yemen.

Appearing before a Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta, Attorney General of India R. Venkataramani, the highest law officer of the Centre, submitted, "There is nothing much the government can do! Looking at the sensitivity of Yemen, the country is not diplomatically recognised. There is a point till



which the Government of India can go, and we have reached that."

The Attorney General (AG) said that the Union government did not want to complicate the situa-

tion by going public and was taking "utmost possible efforts" to rescue the Indian national from the gallows.

He added that a request was also forwarded to Yemeni prosecution authorities to suspend the execution of the sentence, but it yielded no positive results.

"We got an informal communication that execution would be put in abeyance, but we do not know if it will work out," AG Venkataramani said.

The Justice Nath-led Bench was dealing with a plea filed by 'Save Nimisha Priya Action Council' seeking directions to the

Union Ministry of External Affairs to use diplomatic channels to stall Nimisha Priya's execution.

The plea, referring to Sharia law, stated that the death penalty could be negotiated with the payment of 'diya (blood money)' to the victim's family.

Indian national Nimisha Priya, who has been sentenced to death for the murder of a Yemeni national, Talal Abdo Mehd, has been in prison for the last three years. According to media reports, she is tentatively set to be executed on Wednesday, following the approval of the Yemeni President Rashad al-Alimi.

## Build 'Viksit Gaon' to achieve Viksit Bharat goal by 2047: Minister

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 14

Union Minister of State for Rural Development and Communications, Dr Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar, on Monday called for a renewed push to transform villages into 'Viksit Gaon' (developed villages), as a necessary step towards achieving the goal of a 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India) by 2047.

Speaking at the first meeting of the performance review committee of the Ministry of Rural Development here, Dr Sekhar said that a future where every rural family lives in a pucca house with



basic amenities, every village is connected by quality roads, every youth has employment opportunities, and every woman is empowered and financially independent, is not

a dream but an achievable reality.

He said that to realise this vision, the Ministry must move forward with fresh energy, innovative thinking, and deep com-

mitment.

"We are not just implementing schemes, we are writing the next chapter of India's growth story," Dr Sekhar said, crediting the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Cabinet Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan for the remarkable progress made in rural development.

Highlighting the success of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Dr Sekhar said it has become a powerful tool against rural unemployment and distress migration, especially during the agricultural lean seasons.

## Centre clarifies: Siddaramaiah was invited, asked to preside over Sigandur event

AGENCIES  
BENGALURU, JULY 14

Responding to objections raised by Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over his request to reschedule the inauguration of the Sigandur cable bridge project, allegedly being neglected by the Union Government, the Centre has clarified that the Chief Minister was invited to the event on June 11 and was also requested to preside over the programme.

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, taking to social media platform X, on Monday,



stated, "A major step towards boosting regional connectivity, the inauguration and foundation stone laying ceremony for multiple key infra-

structure projects is being held on Monday in Shivamogga, Karnataka."

"An official invitation was duly extended to the Chief Minister of Karnat-

taka, Siddaramaiah Ji, on 11th July 2025, inviting him to preside over the programme. In light of any possible scheduling challenges, a subsequent letter was sent on 12th July, requesting his virtual presence," Union Minister Gadkari stated.

"The Central Government continues to uphold established protocols and has consistently appreciated the contributions and cooperation of the Government of Karnataka and the Chief Minister. It remains committed to cooperative federalism and close coordination with all states," the Union Minister emphasised.

## Following Vadodara bridge tragedy, Jamnagar launches bridge and road safety survey

AGENCIES  
JAMNAGAR, JULY 14

Vadodara bridge collapse has prompted a state-wide directive to inspect infrastructure in Gujarat, as a result of which, the Jamnagar Municipal Corporation has sprung into action. The inspection began at the Gulab Nagar Overbridge on Monday, where officials gathered detailed data on the bridge's current condition.

The team then moved to inspect two more bridges near Dhumnav on the Jamnagar-Rajkot Road. On-site, Municipal Commissioner D.N. Modi provided specific instructions



and recommendations to the engineers and department heads involved.

The team did a comprehensive survey of bridges and roads across

the city. D.N. Modi personally inspected several overbridges along major arterial routes, including Rajkot Road and Kalavad Road, to assess their struc-

tural integrity.

The survey continued along the Kalavad Highway, extending from Mahaprabhuji's Bethak and covering multiple structures en route.

Joining the inspection were DMC Devendrasinh Jhala, City Engineer Bhavesh Jani, Controlling Officer Mukesh Varnava, and teams from the Town Planning (TPO), Estate, and Solid Waste Management branches.

In addition to bridge assessments, the team is directed to identify and repair potholes and damaged stretches across the city's main roads, especially those affected by recent rains.

## Digvijaya Singh to visit Harda, alleges police dragged girl students from hostels

AGENCIES  
HARDA (MADHYA PRADESH), JULY 14

A police lathi charge to disperse an unruly mob of Karni Sena members during a protest in Madhya Pradesh's Harda district has triggered a political storm, with the ruling BJP and opposition Congress trading sharp accusations.

The controversy is likely to intensify further as veteran Congress leader Digvijaya Singh is scheduled to visit Harda district to meet police and administrative officials.

Singh, who hails from the Kshatriya community, will be accompanied by his son and Raghogarh



MLA Jaivardhan Singh. The duo is also expected to meet members of the Karni Sena during their

visit.

The protest took place on Saturday, when members of the Karni Sena staged a demonstration demanding the release of their Harda district president, who had been arrested earlier in connection with a local dispute. To control the situation, police reportedly fired tear gas shells, used water cannons, and resorted to a lathicharge to disperse the crowd.

According to sources, the situation escalated after Karni Sena volunteers allegedly attempted to stop the police from taking the accused, Mohit Verma, to court. Verma had been arrested follow-

ing a complaint by Karni Sena functionary Ashish Singh Rajput, who alleged he was defrauded of Rs 18 lakh by Verma and two others. The confrontation led to a scuffle, prompting the administration to take such measures.

More than 60 people, including Karni Sena national president Jeevan Singh Sherpur, were detained. In response, the district administration imposed prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) on Sunday.

Speaking to reporters, Digvijaya Singh condemned the police action, alleging the use of excessive force.

## SC agrees to hear plea of 'Udaipur Files' producer against stay on release

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 14

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to urgently hear a plea filed by the producer of the film 'Udaipur Files' challenging the Delhi High Court's order, which had temporarily halted the release of the movie based on the Kanhaiya Lal murder case.

A Bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joyimalya Bagchi agreed to list the matter in a day or two after senior advocate Gaurav Bhatia mentioned it for urgent hearing.

The film, slated to be released worldwide on July 11, revolves around the brutal murder of Kan-



haiya Lal, a tailor in Rajasthan's Udaipur, in June 2022 by Mohammad Riyaz Attari and Ghaus Mohammad by slitting his throat.

A day before its release, the Delhi High Court stayed the release of the film 'Udaipur Files' till the Centre decides the revi-

sion plea of the petitioners challenging the grant of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) certification.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.K. Upadhyaya and Justice Anish Dayal was dealing with a batch of pleas, including a plea

filed by Maulana Arshad Madani, the President of the Islamic cleric's body Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind, seeking a direction to quash the CBFC certification granted to the film.

As per the petition filed by Maulana Arshad Madani, the CBFC certification was granted in violation of Section 5B of the Cinematograph Act, 1952 and the Guidelines for Certification of Films for Public Exhibition, since the release of the film 'Udaipur Files' has the potential to inflame communal tensions and disrupt public order, severely undermining the fabric of religious harmony in the country.

## Siraj fined for aggressive reaction to Duckett's wicket

AGENCIES  
LONDON, JULY 14

India pacer Mohammed Siraj has been fined 15 per cent of his match fee after a breach in the ICC Code of Conduct during India's Test match against England at Lord's.

The incident happened on the fourth day when Siraj produced a fiery opening spell to claim the scalps of Ben Duckett and Ollie Pope. After dismissing Duckett, the pacer celebrated close to the batter in his follow-through and made contact as the



opener began his walk back to the Lord's long room.

Siraj was guilty of breaching Article 2.5 of

disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from a batter upon his/her dismissal during an International Match".

In addition to the fine, one demerit point has been added to Siraj's disciplinary record, for whom it was the second offence in a 24-month period, taking his tally to two demerit points.

When a player reaches four or more demerit points within a 24-month period, they are converted into suspension points and a player is banned.

the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to "using language, actions or gestures which

## Aditi finishes T-28 as Australian Grace Kim wins Evian Championship

AGENCIES  
AIX-LES-BAINS (FRANCE), JULY 14

Aditi Ashok had a weak final round as she shot 73 in the final round at the Evian Championship, she shot 2-over 73 and ended with a total of 5-under 279, finishing T-28th.

It was Aditi's second-best finish at the Evian and came one year after T-17 in 2024. Aditi opened with a string of nine pars and then bogeyed four in a row, which derailed her hopes of a Top-10 after being T-12 overnight. She managed a minor recovery with birdies on the 17th and the 18th, but it was



too little too late.

Australia's Grace Kim claimed her maiden major title at the Evian Championship, after defeating world number two Jeeno Thitikul, in a dramatic playoff at Evian Resort

Golf Club.

This week Aditi was the only Indian in the field as Diksha Dagar narrowly missed out on making the field but will, however, play at the AIG Women's Open later this month.

Both players began the day tied for third and posted impressive final rounds of 67 (-4). Thitikul held the lead for much of the day with two birdies on the front nine, but Kim's eagle finish forced a playoff.

On the first playoff hole at 18, the Aussie found the water which seemed to spell the end for her but responded with a miraculous chip-in for birdie, arguably the best shot of her career. The drama continued as the duo returned to the 18th for a second playoff hole, where Kim then finished with her second eagle putt on 18 to take the win.

## Markram bags ICC Player of the Month award for June after WTC Final heroics

AGENCIES  
DUBAI, JULY 14

South Africa batter Aiden Markram has been named the ICC Men's Player of the Month for June 2025, thanks to his crucial all-round display in the ICC World Test Championship Final against Australia at Lord's.

The 30-year-old played a defining role in ending South Africa's 27-year wait for a senior ICC title, scoring 136 runs and taking two key wickets in the final.

Rising to the occasion, the South African opener produced a standout performance - one of the most memorable in the tourna-



ment's history - to lead his team to their first-ever World Test Championship crown.

"It is a privilege to receive this award. To contribute to a ICC World Test Championship win for our team and South Africa is something that means a lot to me," Markram said upon winning the award.

"Winning the final at Lord's is a historic moment for South African cricket, and it is something we will all remember forever. This victory was only possible due to the combined efforts of the entire team, with crucial contributions from KG (Kagiso Rabada) and Tembs (Temba Bavuma)."

## Hayley Matthews wins ICC Women's Player of the Month award for June

AGENCIES  
DUBAI, JULY 14

West Indies all-rounder Hayley Matthews has out-classed Tazmin Brits and teammate Afy Fletcher to win the ICC Women's Player of the Month for June.

Matthews bagged her fourth monthly accolade, having also claimed the honour in November 2021, October 2023 and April 2024. With her fourth win, Matthews is tied with Australia's Ash Gardner for the most ICC Women's Player of the Month honours.

The West Indies skipper was recognised after another strong showing,



mostly in the shortest format, claiming another Player of the Series trophy in a 2-1 T20I victory at home over South Africa.

Upon the news, Matthews was quick to look at

the bigger while appreciating another accolade. "It's an honour to receive the Player of the Month award again. I've been pleased with my form recently, but more importantly, it's

been great to contribute to the team's success - especially in a hard-fought T20I series against South Africa," she said.

"Recognition like this is appreciated, but my focus remains on what's ahead. There's a lot more I want to achieve, both personally and with this team. We're heading in the right direction, and I'm excited about where we can go from here," Matthews added.

Matthews made 147 runs at a strike rate of 120.49 and an average of 73.50 in the series, chiming in with two wickets bowling her vital off-spin to the West Indies cause.

## Double delight for Rohaan Madesh, Shiv Neel at National Karting Championship

AGENCIES  
COIMBATORE, JULY 14

Bengaluru's Rohaan Madesh (Peregrine Racing) came up with a brilliant drive to top the Senior Max category in the first round of the MECO-FMSCI National Karting Championship Rotax Max Classes at the CoASTT circuit here.

Also topping their respective classes were a trio of MSPORT team drivers, Chennai's Eshanth Vengatesan in the Junior Max, Rivaan Dev Preetam, also from Chennai, in the Mini Max and Shiv Neel from Coimbatore who notched a double by winning the Pre-Finals and



Finals races in the Micro Max.

Rohaan Madesh's skills were put to acid test in the Finals as he stoutly defended his P1 spot despite close attention from Mumbai's Aahil Mecklai (Rayo Racing) who had to settle for second place ahead of Bengalure-

an Rishon Rajeev (Birel Art India). Having also won the Pre-Finals earlier, Rohaan, thus, completed a fine double. Incidentally, the Senior Max attracted Asia's biggest grid of 34 drivers.

Meanwhile, Eshanth Vengatesan benefitted after front-runners Pune's

Arafath Sheikh (Crest Motorsports) and Rayo Racing's Kiaan Shah from Mumbai, who had earlier won the Pre-Finals, collided midway through the 14-lap Junior Max Finals.

Vengatesan capitalised on the incident to move from P3 to P1 and went on to clinch victory ahead of Sheikh while Bengaluru's Rishik Rohit Reddy (MSPORT) delivered a stunning third place after starting the race from 16th on the grid, but subsequently received a five-second "bumper" penalty which pushed him to fourth while elevating Bengaluru's Thimmaiah Yohan (Peregrine Racing) to third.

## Cricket icons set to return to spotlight in World Championship of Legends

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 14

Cricket's greatest icons Yuvraj Singh, AB de Villiers, Chris Gayle and Brett Lee are set to return to the spotlight in the World Championship of Legends - a premier T20 tournament uniting global legends for an unmissable showdown from July 18 to August 2, across four iconic venues in the United Kingdom.

Sanctioned by the England & Wales Cricket Board, the WCL is more than just a tournament - it's a tribute to the game's golden era.



This season features an all-star line-up: Yuvraj Singh, Harbhajan Singh, Shikhar Dhawan, Suresh Raina, Brett Lee, Chris Lynn, Shaun Marsh, Eoin

Morgan, Moeen Ali, Sir Alastair Cook, AB de Villiers, Hashim Amla, Chris Morris, Wayne Parnell, Chris Gayle, DJ Bravo, Kieron Pollard and more.

Harshit Tomar, founder & CEO of the World Championship of Legends, shared, "WCL is where nostalgia meets world-class competition. It's an honour to bring these legends back to the field and reignite the passion of fans across generations. This season will be unforgettable."

The World Championship of Legends features iconic teams representing the most storied cricketing nations: Australia Champions, England Champions, India Champions, South Africa Champions, West Indies Champions and Pakistan Champions.

## MI New York triumph in final-over thriller to claim MLC title

AGENCIES  
DALLAS, JULY 14

After losing six of their first seven matches this season, MI New York produced one of the most remarkable turnarounds in franchise T20 history, capturing the 2025 Major League Cricket (MLC) title with a tense five-run win over defending champions Washington Freedom here at Grand Prairie Stadium.

Needing 12 runs from the final over in their chase of 181, Washington Freedom had two seasoned finishers - Glenn Maxwell and Glenn Phillips - at the crease, keeping their



hopes alive. The pressure was on 22-year-old Rushil Ugarkar, tasked with bowling the last six balls. Maxwell took a single off the first delivery and Phillips followed suit with another. Maxwell then swung hard at the third but missed completely. With 10 required off the final

three balls, Maxwell went for a big heave over mid-wicket but only managed to sky it to long-on, where Michael Bracewell held on to a vital catch.

Debutant Obus Pienaar swung and missed at the fifth, leaving the equation at 10 needed off the last ball - a bridge too far.

The final dot sealed an incredible comeback and a championship triumph for MI New York.

Freedom's run chase got off to a disastrous start, with Trent Boult removing Mitchell Owen and Andries Gous in the first over to leave them reeling at 0 for 2. Rachin Ravindra and Jack Edwards then put together a steady 84-run stand. Ravindra led the scoring with a superb 70 off 41 balls, including eight fours and two sixes while Edwards added 33 from 22 deliveries. The partnership ended in the ninth over when Edwards was caught at long-on off Nosthush Kenjige.

## Boland makes history in Jamaica, records best bowling average since 1915

AGENCIES  
JAMAICA, JULY 14

Australian fast bowler Scott Boland scripted history to become the Test bowler with the best bowling average of cricketers since 1915, who have bowled a minimum of 2000 balls in the longest format.

Boland achieved this feat in the third Test against the West Indies at Sabina Park, where he recorded the figures of 3-34. His Test bowling average now stands at 17.33, the best of any bowler in the last 110 years of Test cricket (minimum 2000 balls bowled).

Only England's Syd Barnes stands above Boland for bowlers since 1900, with



the other six bowlers above Boland all hailing from the 1800s, and in the infancy of Test cricket., ICC reports.

After making just 225 in the first innings, Australia roared back through their four-pronged pace attack, bundling out the hosts for

just 143 to take away a first innings lead.

Boland spoiled the work of West Indies top-scorer John Campbell (36) who shouldered arms to a delivery that nipped back into his pads, and it was the fast-bowler's angle and seam

into the right-hander that also led to Shai Hope's dismissal on 23. He returned to clean up the tail by hitting the stumps of Shamar Joseph, ensuring the tourists took away an 82-run lead.

The West Indies hit back late in the Jamaican evening, however, leaving Australia reeling at 99/6 in its second innings with the lead of 181 when stumps were called on day two.

But Australia's first-innings lead still gives them a cushion. With Cameron Green unbeaten on 42, and Aussie captain Pat Cummins (5\*) at the crease, the Aussies will look to stretch their lead beyond 220 and even to 250 on Day 3.

# Kishtwar admin rolls out action plan for effective implementation of NTCP

J NEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, JULY 14

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pankaj Kumar Sharma today presided over a Workshop cum District Level Coordination Committee (DLCC) Review Meeting to assess the implementation of National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) in the district.

At the outset, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rajinder Kumar highlighted the anti-tobacco measures launched in the district. He also discussed key components of the NTCP, including the prohibition of smoking in public places, the ban on the sale of tobacco products within a 100-yard radius of educational institutions and the restriction on both direct

and indirect advertising of tobacco products.

The meeting deliberated on the need for concerted efforts, incorporating a comprehensive set of activities such as conducting Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaigns in schools and communities, declaring educational institutions as Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions (ToFEI), designating at least 40 villages as Tobacco-Free Villages by the next quarterly review and conducting aggressive enforcement drives to ensure compliance with tobacco control regulations.

The DC called for adopting all laid down procedures and guidelines in implementing the NTCP in the district. He directed



the Chief Education Officer to ensure that all educational institutions register on the ToFEI application and update the required 10-point Tobacco-Free attributes.

He also called for random inspection by the police, civil administration, and officers designated under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003.

The Block Development Officers were asked to educate all stakeholders and strengthen community-based efforts in combating

tobacco use. It was also decided to designate a Nodal Officer in all offices and institutions to ensure the smooth implementation of anti-tobacco measures.

A power presentation was given by Divisional Coordinator NTCP Shiveta Raina, underlining the enforcement benchmarks of the COTPA 2003, including 85% above score in declaration of Tobacco free Educational Institutions via ToFEI application.

The session also included detailed discussions on

the provisions of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003, particularly sections 4, 5, 6 and 7, which focus on restrictions on smoking in public places, the sale and advertisement of tobacco products, and enforcement measures. The police and other designated authorities were directed to conduct enforcement drives at regular intervals to strengthen anti-tobacco measures across the district.

The meeting also emphasized the importance of engaging ambassadors and role models to inspire youth to refrain from tobacco use and raise awareness about its harmful effects.

The DC directed Shri Machail Mata Yatra as a No Tobacco Zone and order in

this regard shall be notified shortly. He further directed concerned officers to ensure extensive challenging to curb tobacco use during the yatra.

He also directed all district and sectoral officers to declare their institutions as No Tobacco Zones and display necessary signage.

The meeting concluded with a resolve to enhancing coordination among the health, education, police and civil administration to ensure the effective implementation of the National Tobacco Control Program in Kishtwar.

The meeting was attended by ACD/CEO KDA Kaiser Bhawani, SDM Chattro Nayem UR Rehman Mughal, CMO Dr. Rajinder Kumar, CEO Kishtwar, ARTO, DIO, BMOs, BDOs besides others.

## DEO Shopian conducts training program on Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls-2025



J NEWS SERVICE  
SHOPIAN, JULY 14

Two training programs for BLO Supervisors and BLOs of 36-Zainapora and 37-Shopian Assembly Constituencies were held today as part of the Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls, 2025 by District Election Office (DEO), Shopian.

The training was con-

ducted simultaneously in two batches at DIET Shopian and Mini Secretariat Shopian during morning and afternoon sessions.

Key topics included house-to-house verification, handling of claims/objections, and use of IT tools as per ECI guidelines. The program aimed to ensure accuracy and transparency in the electoral rolls.

# DDC Budgam takes review of major infrastructure projects including NABARD

J NEWS SERVICE  
BUDGAM, JULY 14

District Development Commissioner (DDC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat today chaired a comprehensive meeting in the New Conference Hall, DC Office Complex Budgam to review the progress of key infrastructure projects being executed across the district, including those funded under NABARD and other major schemes.

The meeting was convened to assess implementation across sectors viz. Roads and Buildings (R&B), Jal Shakti, Housing, Health, Education, and Public Health Engineering. A detailed abstract of schemes revealed the performance status, including the number of approved works, funds released,

expenditure incurred, and completion rates.

The chair was apprised that under JJM, 59 schemes with an approved cost of Rs.37219.97 lakh, of which Rs.24143.39 lakh has been released and fully utilized, with 24 schemes completed and 35 under progress. Under NRDWP, 3 schemes have been completed with 100% expenditure, UT-funded schemes show a utilization rate of 100% as well, with a majority under execution.

Other departments presented similar updates, highlighting the scale and financial status of ongoing infrastructure development in Budgam.

DDC emphasised the need for timely execution, strict monitoring, and monthly progress reviews to address bottlenecks and



ensure delivery of quality infrastructure to the public.

He urged the concerned departments to avoid delays in execution and submission of Utilization Certificates (UCs), while also laying stress on physical verification of completed

works.

DDC directed concerned officials to expedite the forest and revenue clearance procedures, besides other disputes to facilitate smoother development processes for the benefit of the community.

He emphasized the necessity of inter-departmental coordination to address the developmental bottlenecks of any while executing the projects.

Dr Bilal stressed the importance of completing projects that are nearing their cutoff timelines and urged executing agencies to prioritize physical and financial progress.

The meeting also involved extensive discussions on issues related to fund flow.

Concerns regarding the slow progress of works

were thoroughly examined to identify actionable solutions.

DDC also emphasized the timely completion of key tourist destinations in the district, aiming to boost the local tourism economy.

He reiterated that district administration's commitment towards transforming Budgam through mission-mode infrastructure development, ensuring transparency, efficiency, and public accountability.

The meeting was attended by SE R&B Circle Budgam, SE Hydraulic Circle Budgam, SE PHC Srinagar, Chief Medical Officer, Deputy General Manager, Housing Board Srinagar, representatives of Education department, and other concerned Officers.

## Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Utkarsh Abhiyan Awareness cum benefit saturation camp held at Village Omhara

J NEWS SERVICE  
UDHAMPUR, JULY 14

As part of the ongoing Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Utkarsh Abhiyan, an awareness cum benefit saturation camp was today organized at village Omhara, Panchayat Sundla, Block Khoon.

The camp was held under the overall supervision of Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Saloni Rai and was graced by Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Dr. Ashwani Hansa, who is also the Nodal Officer for the campaign.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Hansa sensitized the local tribal people about several flagship welfare schemes launched by the Government for their socio-economic upliftment. He emphasized the



District Administration commitment to ensuring 100% saturation of schemes and delivery of different services to eligible beneficiaries.

Officials from the line departments participated in the camp and provided on-the-spot services and information at their respective stalls established at the venue.

Domicile and ST category certificates were issued on the spot to the eligible tribal beneficiaries, thereby facilitating their access to a wide range of welfare initiatives.

Later, a special grievances redressal camp was also organized, where numerous public issues were resolved on the spot by the concerned officials.

## Brigadier Usman's Birth Anniversary: Rajouri gears up to pay glowing tributes to valiant Soldier

J NEWS SERVICE  
RAJOURI, JULY 14

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma today chaired a comprehensive meeting at Nowshera to review the preparations and activity plan for the celebration of the birth anniversary of Brigadier Mohammad Usman, besides the launch of Vibrant Village Program (Phase-II) at the border village Sarya.

The Deputy Commissioner laid emphasis on honouring the legacy of Brigadier Usman, a revered war hero who laid down his life defending the nation. He directed that senior officers shall felicitate Bal Sainiks as a mark of tribute to Brigadier Usman and to instill patriotic fervour among youth.

The DC instructed officers to put up departmental stalls showcasing the government schemes and services. Directions were issued for organising vibrant cultural programs to celebrate local heritage, identify hidden talents and foster a spirit of nationalism.

Highlighting the devel-



opmental and economic potential of the region, the Deputy Commissioner asked officials to focus on promotion of agriculture and allied sector activities, religious tourism—particularly at Mangla Mata Temple—and tapping of tourism potential in the border belt.

Promotion of Swachhta (cleanliness) activities, local cuisine and rural sports was also underscored as key components of the celebration, aimed at holistic community engagement and development.

To educate and inspire the young generation, the DC directed the District Information Officer to host an essay writing competition on the life and sacrifice of Brigadier Usman across schools in the area.

The Deputy Commissioner also stressed active

involvement of ex-servicemen, defence forces and educational institutions in the event to pay befitting tribute to the valiant soldier and foster a strong civil-military connection.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner visited the memorial of Brigadier Mohammad Usman to pay homage to the brave heart, who made the supreme sacrifice for the nation during the Indo-Pak war of 1947-48. He reiterated the district administration's commitment to preserving the legacy of national heroes and inspiring future generations.

ADC Nowshera, Pritam Lal Thapa; Tehsildar, BDO and other sectoral and district officers were present during the meeting and assured full cooperation for the successful conduct of the event.

## Union Joint Secretary reviews Baramulla district's progress under NITI Aayog's ADP

J NEWS SERVICE  
BARAMULLA, JULY 14

Union Joint Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Central Prabhari Officer for NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts Programme, Ajeet Kumar Sahu, today chaired a meeting to review district's progress under various indicators of NITI Aayog's Aspirational District Programme (ADP).

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, Joint Director Planning, Principal GMC, ACD, CMO and officers from various line departments.

The Union Joint Secretary was informed that the district has made remarkable progress in its Delta Ranking, issued by NITI Aayog and has improved significantly, moving from the 108th position to 35th out of 112 districts, achieving a composite score of 61.3.

Apprising the JS of key health indicators, the DC stated that the district has achieved 100% saturation in major areas, including nutrition support for pregnant women, full child



immunization, institutional deliveries and major reduction in infant and maternal mortality rates, reduction in TB cases and effective implementation of Poshan Abhiyan in combating malnutrition.

Further, the Central Prabhari Officer was informed that the education sector has seen marked improvement with increased student enrolment, 18 Model Academic Schools and Lab Schools in each of the educational zone, increase in Atal Tinkering Labs from 2 to 42, consistent pedagogical teacher trainings and sanitary facilities like incinerators and vending machines.

Meanwhile, the Union Joint Secretary took a comprehensive review of the district under Agriculture and Financial Inclusion, Skill Development and Infrastructure.

The Union Joint Secretary also conducted a comprehensive review of the progress on projects undertaken under the ADP, along with key centrally and state-sponsored schemes such as PMSBY, PMJBY, PM-JDY, PM-APY, PM-MUDRA and HADP.

Speaking during the meeting, Ajeet Kumar Sahu directed the Health Department officials to carry out comprehensive research to identify the root causes of TB in the district and take targeted measures to eliminate them.

Addressing the issue of low uptake of KCC loans by the farmers, the Central Prabhari Officer directed the concerned department to constitute a team to thoroughly examine the reasons behind the poor response and suggest measures to improve participation in the scheme.

Meanwhile, the Union Joint Secretary instructed the concerned department to carry out thorough soil testing across agricultural lands in the district. He asked to ensure that farmers are clearly informed about the findings, particularly any nutrient deficiencies and provide them with tailored recommendations on the types of fertilizers and soil health measures needed to enhance the productivity and sustainability.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner, Minga Sherpa presented a comprehensive overview of the district's performance under 5 key indicators of the ADP, including Health and Nutrition, Education, Agriculture and Water Resources, Financial Inclusion and Skill Development besides Infrastructure.

## Nasha Mukt J&K Abhiyan: Distt Admin Pulwama organises Panchayat-level awareness camps

J NEWS SERVICE  
PULWAMA, JULY 14

As part of the ongoing efforts to curb substance abuse under the Nasha Mukt J&K Abhiyan, district administration Pulwama today conducted a series of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) awareness camps across various panchayats in all blocks of the district.

The programmes were aimed at promoting awareness among the general public, especially youth, regarding the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of a drug-free and healthy society.

During the sessions, resource persons sensitised the participants about the physical, psychological, and social consequences of drug addiction. Topics such as early detection, role of families in rehabilitation, and community vigilance were also discussed in detail.