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DENGUE WARNING SIGNS

Many people with dengue can be cared for at home with adequate rest and hydration. But, if you experience any warning signs, go immediately to the nearest medical center.

Watch out for dengue warning signs!

A drop in body temperature accompanied by any of the following symptoms:

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

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

JINDRAH IMAGES

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Monsoon Session begins with tributes, turmoil over Pahalgam attack

JI NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUL 21 (KNO)

The Monsoon Session of Parliament began on Monday with Members of the Lok Sabha observing a two-minute silence to pay tribute to those who lost their lives in two recent tragedies – the Pahalgam terror attack and the Air India AI-171 crash.

The Pahalgam attack on April 22 in Jammu and



Kashmir claimed 26 lives, while the June 12 crash of the Air India flight resulted in 260 fatalities. Lawmakers stood in silence to honour the victims before taking up the session's agenda.

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the media, describing the Monsoon Session as a "celebration of victory," citing the

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Landslide hits Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine track in Reasi

One pilgrim killed, several injured

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JUL 21 (KNO)

A 70-year-old pilgrim was killed while nine others were injured when a massive landslide struck the old track to the Vaishno Devi shrine in Reasi district on Monday, officials said.

Officials informed the news agency that the incident, triggered by

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Operation Sindoor displayed India's might after Pahalgam attack: PM Modi

JI NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUL 21 (KNO)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the world witnessed India's military strength during Operation Sindoor following the April 22 attack in Pahalgam that left 26 people dead, most of them tourists.

Speaking to media ahead of the Parliament Monsoon Session, PM Modi, per news agency said the Indian Army achieved its target under Operation Sindoor, in which the houses of those behind terrorism were demolished within 22 minutes. He added that this operation has drawn



global attention to India's military capability and the strength of its domestic defence sector.

"When the Parliament speaks in one voice during this session, it will support military morale, encourage citizens, and contribute to progress in defence research,

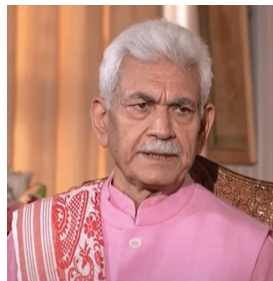
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People and history will judge what changed in 5-years: LG Sinha

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 21 (KNO)

Asserting that people and history will judge what has changed in five years compared to what used to happen earlier, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said that J&K has broken away from its troubled past and is embracing a brighter, secure, and development-driven future.

In an interview to a national news channel, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, according to the news agency reflected on the transformational journey of Jammu and



Kashmir over the past five years since he took office on August 7, 2020. "Peace, prosperity, and a people-centric approach formed the bedrock of my administration," he said.

"Stone pelting and hartals are now history. Schools, colleges, and businesses function with-

out disruption, and night-life has made a comeback," LG Sinha stated, underlining the normalization of daily life in the Union Territory. "J&K's economy has doubled in the past five years," he added, signaling significant economic revival.

Acknowledging that development is an ongoing process, the LG said, "People and history will judge what has changed in five years compared to what used to happen earlier."

On support for victims of terrorism, LG Sinha recounted emotional encounters with terror-

affected families, including one where a man with three children was killed and only one of his sons was given a job. "These meetings moved me deeply, and we took decisions to ensure comprehensive rehabilitation of terror-hit families," he said. He admitted that outreach to these families came late, but stressed that steps have now been taken to reopen old massacre cases, register FIRs, and return any properties that may have been seized by terrorists.

Responding to controversy over Chief

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

J&K receives fresh rainfall, Katra records 184.2mm precipitation in 24 hours

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 21 (KNO)

Jammu and Kashmir has received fresh rainfall on Monday with the weatherman here predicting more rains till July 23 across the region.

A three-day wet spell was predicted from July 21 to 23 as the Meteorological department (MeT) here had issued yellow and orange alerts for the region.

According to the news agency, the temperature settled above normal today with Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recording a maximum temperature of 34.9 degrees.

As per the data, the mercury in Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, recorded a maximum temperature of 29.0 degrees while Pahalgam recorded 28.0 degrees.

In Kupwara, the mercury settled at 35.3 degrees followed by 30.8 degrees in Kokernag while Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, recorded a maximum temperature of 23.5 degrees.

Jammu division, however, recorded the below normal temperature today with several areas recording the heavy rainfall.

As per the data, Katra has recorded the highest precipitation

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Student killed, 5 injured as landslide hits school in Poonch

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JUL 21 (KNO)

A five-year-old student was killed and five others were injured after a landslide hit a government school here in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, officials said.

As per officials, the landslide was triggered at the building of Government Primary School (GPS) Kalssa, situated in Ward No. 4, Village Bhainch, Tehsil Haveli, District Poonch by overnight heavy rains, during which a large boulder fell in a classroom of the



primary school in the Bhainch-Kalsian area, killing a 5-year-old Ehsan Ali and injuring students and a teacher.

The injured students have been identified as Mohammad Safer, age

7, son of Mohammad Shareef, resident of Kalsan Bhainch, Bilal Farooq, age 8, son of Farooq Ahmed, resident of Bhainch, Aftab Ahmed, age 6, son of Idriss Ahmed,

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7.66 cr tourists visited J&K from 2020-24: Centre tells LS

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 21 (KNO)

The Centre on Monday informed the Lok Sabha that a total of 7.65 crore domestic visitors and 1.47 lakh foreigners have visited Jammu and Kashmir in the five years till 2024.

According to details obtained by the news agency, a total of 76,685,482 tourists have visited Jammu and Kashmir from 2020 to 2024. The data reveals that 147,741 among them are foreign tourists and 76,537,741 domestic visitors. Replying to a question, the Minister for

Tourism, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, said that in 2020, a total of 25,19,524 domestic visitors and 5,317 foreign tourists visited J&K, while in 2021, a total of 1,13,14,920 domestic and 1,650 foreign tourists visited the region.

According to the data, an annual growth of 349.09 per cent was recorded in domestic tourist arrivals in 2021 "1,84,99,332 domestic visitors and 19,985 foreigners visited J&K in 2022, while in 2023, the total footfall of domestic visitors was recorded at 2,06,79,336 and foreign arrivals

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Indian Embassy in Niger working to secure release of Ramban man abducted during terror attack

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JUL 21 (KNO)

The Indian Embassy in Niamey, Niger, has been actively working with local authorities to secure the safe release of Ranjit Singh, a resident of Chakka Kundi village in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district, who was abducted during a terror attack in Niger's Dosso region on July 15.

The attack, which also claimed the lives of two Indian nationals, occurred when unidentified armed

assailants ambushed a Nigerien army unit guarding an electrical line construction project, approximately 100 kilometres from Niamey.

According to details obtained by the news agency, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh provided an update about the situation on social media site X, saying, "Following continuous follow-up by my office, the Ministry of External Affairs has informed that the Indian Embassy in Niamey is actively pursuing the

release of Ranjit Singh, a resident of Ramban district, who was abducted in Niger. The embassy is in constant communication with local authorities to ensure his safe return."

Earlier, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed deep concern over the abduction, urging swift intervention by the Ministry of External Affairs.

In a post on X, the Chief Minister's office stated, "Chief Minister has expressed

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Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar resigns, citing health reasons

JI NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUL 21 (KNO)

Vice-President of India, Jagdeep Dhankar tendered his resignation on Monday, citing personal health reasons.

In a resignation letter addressed to the President of India, Dhankar expressed gratitude for the "soothing wonderful working relationship" he shared with the President.

He also expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Council of Ministers. "The Prime Minister's cooperation and support have been invaluable," Dhankar wrote.

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Amarnath Yatra 17,000 perform darshan today

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 21 (KNO)

The annual Amarnath Yatra continued on Monday with over 17,000 pilgrims paying obeisance at the holy cave shrine nestled in the Himalayas of South Kashmir.

With this, the cumulative figure of devotees, who have undertaken the pilgrimage since its commencement on July 3, has crossed 3.21 lakh, officials said.

Officials told the news agency that a total of 17,016 pilgrims performed darshan at the sacred cave on Monday.

Among them were

12,757 men, 3,270 women, 150 children, 158 sadhus, 9 sadhvis, 3 transgender persons and 669 security personnel.

While the footfall at the shrine remained good, the number of pilgrims departing from Jammu—the starting point for most yatris—has shown a consistent downward trend over the past few days.

From 7,908 pilgrims on July 18, the number dropped to 6,365 on July 19, 4,388 on July 20, and 3,791 on July 21 – the lowest daily departure figure recorded so far during this year's yatra.

Despite the decline, officials said that the pil-

grimage is progressing smoothly and peacefully, with robust security and logistical arrangements in place across all transit and base locations.

On Monday morning, a fresh batch of 3,791 pilgrims left from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu under tight security cover for the twin base camps of Baltal and Pahalgam, which serve as the two main routes to the cave shrine.

The group comprised 3,067 men, 522 women, 9 children, 192 sadhus and sadhvis, and 1 transgender pilgrim. The convoy was split into two:

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ABP vital for ensuring e-Governance at grassroots level: Chief Secretary

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 21

A crucial meeting regarding implementation of the Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) in J&K was today co-chaired by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo and Secretary, Telecom, GoI, Neeraj Mittal.

The meeting underscored the commitment towards bridging the digital divide in rural India, where broadband penetration currently stands at a mere 2%, compared to 33% in urban areas.

The meeting was also attended by the Principal



Secretary, PDD; Commissioner Secretary, Forests; Secretary, IT; Secretary, Cooperatives; CGM, BSNL; Deputy Commissioners and SIO, NIC besides other concerned officers.

Terming the programme as significant for

strengthening the digital governance at the grassroots, the Chief Secretary said ABP will play a transformative role in extending high-speed internet connectivity to blocks, tehsils and remote panchayats across the Union

Territory. He assured full support from the UT administration to ensure time-bound implementation of the project.

Dulloo emphasized that the project would significantly enhance

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District Development Council Udhampur finalizes District Capex Budget – 2025-026

JINNEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, JULY 21

District Development Council Udhampur met today in the Office Chamber of the Chairman Lal Chand to discuss and finalize the Plan proposals under the District Capex Budget - Area Development Plan under DDC, BDC and PRI grants for the financial year 2025-26.

The meeting was attended by Vice Chairperson DDC Juhi Manhas Pathania; Chief Executive Officer DDC Rajinder Singh; DDC members, Assistant Commissioner Development, Block Development Officers and concerned District/Sectoral Officers.



The meeting discussed plan proposals across key sectors, including rural connectivity, rural infrastructure development, PHE, Irrigation and Water Conservation, Agriculture development, Youth Services and Sports, health and education. Special focus was laid on identifying area-specific development potential and avenues for employment generation.

The DDC members raised several developmental needs in their respective constituencies and put forth valuable suggestions to enhance the efficiency and performance of different departments.

ent departments.

It was informed that the annual plan was formulated through comprehensive Gram Sabha consultations, in coordination with former PRI members and other stakeholders, ensuring inclusive planning and transparency.

Following extensive deliberations, all members of the District Development Council unanimously finalized the Annual District Plan for the year 2025-26.

The Council also commended and appreciated the District Administration for successfully achieving the physical and financial targets set for the financial year 2023-24.

GDC Vijaypur organizes Plantation Drive

JINNEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, JULY 21

Nasha Mukh Abhiyan Committee of Government Degree College, Vijaypur in conjunction with NSS Unit (KHIDMAT) organized a plantation drive on the campus.

The plantation drive was specifically organized under the "Anti-Drug/Nasha Mukh" campaign, which encourages planting trees as a means to divert students from drugs to health and environment.

The event aimed to promote a drug-free lifestyle which involved students, faculty members, and non-



teaching staff and encouraged them in planting trees for a sustainable environment. The initiative was aimed to raise awareness about the dangers of drug abuse and encourage a healthy, drug-free environment.

The drive was organized under the guidance of the Principal of the college, Dr. Ashu Vashisht.

The participation of various stakeholders, including the NSS unit, college non-teaching members, empha-

sized the collective responsibility in creating a greener and healthier future.

The event was organized with full support of senior faculty members of the college including Prof. Anita Jamwal (HOD Political Science), Prof. Mamta Gupta (HOD Commerce), Prof. Ritu Bhagat (HOD Education) and Dr. Arti Sharma (HOD EVS). The event was coordinated/organised by Dr. Anoop Kumar Bhagat (HOD Sociology and Nodal Officer, Nasha Mukh Abhiyan Committee), Dr. Manoj Heer (HOD Dogri) and Dr. Naseem Chowdhary (HOD English and NSS PO).

Commissioner Secretary SWD reviews departmental schemes in Kashmir Division

JINNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 21

Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare, Sarmad Hafeez, today chaired a detailed review meeting at the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar, to assess the performance and progress of departmental schemes and projects in the Kashmir Division.

The meeting commenced with a comprehensive presentation by Director Social Welfare Kashmir, Mohammad Akbar Wani, highlighting implementation status of flagship schemes, infrastructural projects and related reforms.

The Commissioner Secretary issued clear directives for timely and transparent implementation of pension coverage and the Marriage Assistance Scheme, ensuring that all eligible beneficiaries receive the benefit without delay. He instructed the officers to maintain high standards of service delivery and empathy towards



the public.

A major thrust was laid on enhancing the impact of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, with actionable initiatives focusing on drug demand reduction and social sensitization.

The Commissioner Secretary emphasized the role of the department in contributing meaningfully to this national mission.

The status of infrastructure development under the UT Capex Budget was reviewed, with instructions for timely utilization of funds and completion of

ongoing projects.

During the meeting, the projects under SIPDA (Scheme for Implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act), Old Age Homes at Akura (Anantnag) and Ganderbal and Abhinanda Home were evaluated for operational and infrastructural improvements. Besides, reports on NGO-run Senior Citizen Homes, Minority and Centrally Sponsored Scholarships and Pension Disbursement (NSAP) were also discussed. The officers were directed to expedite

the reporting process and resolve any pending cases. Emphasis was laid on the linking of mobile numbers to beneficiary accounts and ensuring last-mile connectivity through Bank Sakhis.

The meeting also took stock of progress on the PM-JVKV (education sector), PMAY-G (VDP preparation in SC village, Anantnag) and the New Beginning (Beggary Home) project in Srinagar.

Additionally, attention was given to the Jansugam Portal, court case updates and the procedure for weeding out ineligible cases, ensuring robust transparency mechanisms.

The meeting was attended by Secretary in Social Welfare Department, Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Director Finance, Executive Director J&K Rehabilitation Council, Joint Director Planning, NIC officials, J&K Bank representatives and District Social Welfare Officers of all districts in the Kashmir Division.

Public Accounts Committee holds meeting in Srinagar



JINNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 21

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly convened a meeting today at the Assembly Complex in Srinagar to review and discuss the audit paras related to the Mining and Industries & Commerce (I&C) Departments.

The meeting was chaired by PAC Chairman Sham Lal Sharma and attended by members Mubarak Gul, Javid Hassan Baig, Devinder Kumar Manyal, Sajad Shaheen and Muzaffar Iqbal Khan.

During the session, the Committee undertook a detailed examination of audit paras 2.14 (2011-12), 3.14 (2000-01), 4.10 (2003-

04), and 3.13 (2015-16) pertaining to the Mining and I&C Departments.

The Committee deliberated on the key issues including land acquisition for the Industrial Export Promotion Park at SIDCO Ompora, procurement of Broadband Seismograph and establishment of a Seismograph Observatory, construction of Zone Office Complex for Handloom at Rajouri and drawal and utilization of public funds.

The Chairman directed the concerned departments to submit a comprehensive report on the Industrial Export Promotion Park project and fix accountability where necessary.

Emphasizing the need to curb illegal mining across Jammu and Kash-

mir, the Chairman called for sustainable mining practices and leveraging the modern technologies to monitor and prevent illegal activities. He stressed the importance of working with a sense of duty and accountability. He directed that Action Taken Reports (ATRs) be submitted in a time-bound manner on all discussed matters.

The meeting was attended by Principal Accountant General J&K, K. P. Yadav; Principal Secretary, Mining, Anil Kumar Singh; Commissioner Secretary I&C Department, Vikramjit Singh; Secretary I&C, Khalid Jahangir; Secretary Legislative Assembly, Manoj Kumar Pandita; Director General Accounts and Treasuries, F. A. Lone;

Director, Handicrafts and Handloom; Director, Geology and Mining; MD SIDCO; Director Finance and other senior officials.

Chairman Sham Lal Sharma emphasized the PAC's crucial role in ensuring transparency, fiscal discipline and accountability in governance. He reiterated the Committee's mandate to scrutinize public expenditure, examine CAG audit reports, identify lapses and recommend necessary reforms.

He commended the dedication of Committee members and officials, urging them to maintain high standards of oversight and continue contributing meaningfully towards good governance and public accountability.

37th NCORD meeting held at Budgam

JINNEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, JULY 21

The 37th district-level NCORD (Narco Coordination) meeting was held today in the district

under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to review the ongoing efforts against drug abuse and to formulate the future strategy for a drug-free Budgam.

The meeting reviewed the action taken by various departments on previous NCORD decisions and chalked out a roadmap to intensify efforts against narcotic cultivation, trafficking, and consumption.

At the outset, DC took a comprehensive review from all departments regarding steps taken to combat the illicit trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. He emphasized that drug abuse is not only an individual problem but a serious societal issue affecting families and communities at large.

On the occasion, DC directed Assistant Drug Controller to get CBS and CCTV cameras installed in all drug stores and ensure 100% saturation. Stronger coordination between Revenue and Police departments at the sub-division level was instructed for better deterrence, espe-

cially for destruction of poppy and cannabis cultivation. Regular lodging of FIRs was also directed whenever poppy or cannabis cultivation is destroyed in the district.

Besides, he instructed that proactive awareness campaigns must be launched across schools, colleges, markets, and busy public places, promoting healthy activities and hobbies to discourage drug abuse.

DC directed all SDMs to convene meetings with religious scholars and other stakeholders at tehsil and sub-division levels, encouraging them to speak against drug abuse during Friday sermons. SDMs were further directed to constitute a committee for declaring Nasha-Mukt panchayats at sub-divisional level.

Rural development department was tasked to organize Gram Sabhas dedicated to raising awareness on drug abuse at the village level. CMO Budgam was instructed to ensure round-the-clock availabil-

ity of medical facilities at the ATF Centre in District Hospital Budgam.

DC directed District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) to conduct mega awareness drives at designated hotspots across the district and to upload photographs and reports of IEC activities on the designated portal.

During the meeting, ASP Budgam briefed the chair about current enforcement actions, stating that 35 NDPS cases and 11 PIT-NDPS detentions have been made so far.

DC said the district administration is committed towards a zero-tolerance policy and called for collective resolve to make Budgam a healthier and drug-free district.

The meeting was attended by ADC Budgam, ASP Budgam, CMO, CEO, SDM Khansahib, SDM Chadoora, Assistant Drug Control Officer, Principals of all Government Degree Colleges, Executive Officers of all Municipal Committees, and other concerned stakeholders.

Nash Mukh Abhiyan

Budgam schools host IEC campaigns to raise awareness against drug abuse

JINNEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, JULY 21

As part of the ongoing Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, impactful Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaigns were today conducted at GMS Check Kawoosa, Government High School NS Pora and Government High School Narkara in district Budgam.

The events aimed to sensitise students and local communities about the harmful effects of drug abuse and to promote a healthy, addiction-free lifestyle among youth.

Students, teachers, civil society members, and officials from line departments including Health, Education, Social Welfare, and the Municipal Committees enthusiastically participated in the event.

The key components of these campaigns included



awareness sessions on the psychological, social and health-related consequences of substance abuse and anti-drug pledge ceremonies led by school faculty and administration, where students and participants reaffirmed their commitment to a drug-free society.

Besides these, rallies and street awareness marches involving students and youth volunteers to spread the message in surrounding areas, door-to-door outreach by health workers and volunteers in nearby localities to

ensure grassroots awareness and engagement, interactive activities like group discussions, quizzes, and the distribution of IEC material to make the sessions informative and participatory were also held.

Speakers at the events highlighted the growing challenge of drug abuse, particularly among the younger population, and underlined the importance of early intervention, awareness, and collective action. The availability of rehabilitation, de-addiction, and coun-

selling services was also shared with the attendees.

The initiative sought not only to inform but also to inspire students to take up the mantle of peer educators and advocates for a drug-free society within their schools and communities.

District Budgam remains committed to continuing such awareness programmes to ensure sustained efforts toward achieving the vision of a Nasha Mukh Budgam, Nasha Mukh J&K, and Nasha Mukh Bharat.

Sakeena Itoo expresses grief over student's tragic death in Poonch landslide

JINNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 21

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, has expressed profound

grief and sorrow over the tragic death of a student in a landslide that struck the Government Primary School in Bainch-Kalsain area of Poonch district.

In her condolence

message, the Education Minister extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and termed the incident as deeply distressing and heart-breaking. "It is truly painful to learn

that a young life, full of promise, has been cut short due to this natural calamity. My thoughts and prayers are with the family during this unimaginably difficult time," the Minister said.

PM Surya Ghar Bijli Yojana: DDC Reasi stresses accelerated action

JJ NEWS SERVICE
REASI, JULY 21

To assess the implementation of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, District Development Commissioner (DDC) Nidhi Malik today chaired a high-level review meeting with senior officers of the Power Development Department (PDD) and other stakeholders, today.

During the meeting, the DDC reviewed division-wise registrations, applications, and installations under the scheme. It was informed that a total of 1,057 registrations have been completed, with 207 beneficiaries having deposited the upfront cost. "So far, 168 rooftop solar systems have been installed,



while 39 more are at various stages of completion" the meeting was told.

While acknowledging the progress, the DDC expressed concern over the shortfall in achieving the district's overall targets. In view of the underperformance, the DDC ordered to withhold the salaries of four Junior Engineers (JEs). DDC Malik further stated that if performance levels are not improved immediately, strict action will be taken.

The DDC directed the

Executive Engineer PDD to ensure consistent follow-up on targets and to hold underperforming staff accountable. She emphasized the need for a coordinated and fast-track approach to bridge existing gaps and achieving the set goals within stipulated timelines.

The DDC also stressed the importance of intensified public awareness and outreach activities to educate citizens about the benefits of rooftop solar energy. She called for door-

to-door campaigns, community engagement, and the use of all available platforms to encourage greater public participation in this flagship scheme, which promotes clean and sustainable energy solutions.

Challenges affecting implementation were also discussed, including the ongoing strike by daily wagers and issues related to banking processes. DDC Malik instructed the concerned departments to proactively engage with bank cluster heads to expedite loan processing and address procedural delays.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Reasi Sukhdev Singh Samyal, CPO Narinder Kumar, Executive Engineer PDD, AEEs and other senior officials.

DC reviews measures for smooth traffic flow in Kulgam town

JJ NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM, JULY 21

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan on Monday chaired a meeting of officers from Motor Vehicle, Revenue and Municipality to discuss and finalise the measures and steps for smooth traffic flow in Kulgam town.

The meeting held threadbare discussion on various issues including management of the traffic system in the town and making it more convenient for commuters.

Requisite measures were discussed thread-



bare to overcome traffic jams and ensure better regulation of traffic. Creation of parking zones near Ghanta Ghar and Shopain Adda besides

making Laroo bus stand fully functional also came under discussion.

DC instructed ARTO, Traffic Police department and other concerned to work in close coordination and act tough against traffic rules violators, who cause a lot of inconvenience to common people in the town.

Directions were passed to utilize the space near Polytechnic College for Sumo ada while DH Pora Ada be used for car parking. DC directed the traffic authorities to designate proper pick and drop points for passengers in public buses in the town.

He directed the officers to conduct a massive enforcement drive against wrong parking and roadside encroachments in town.

DC also asked to relocate street vendors from heavy traffic junction points which hinder smooth traffic ply. He stressed concerned officers to take all required measures to decongest roads in town to ensure smooth flow of traffic.

The meeting was attended by ACR Reyaz Ahmad Shah, ARTO, Tehsildar Kulgam, DSP-traffic, EO Kulgam, and other traffic police officers.

DC Poonch inspects school site after tragic boulder incident; meets grieving family of deceased child

JJ NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, JULY 21

Deputy Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal visited the residence of the child who lost his life in the tragic incident due to boulder fall at Government Primary School Kalsan (Bainch) today.

Expressing profound grief over the sad demise of 5-year-old Ehsan Ali, the Deputy Commissioner offered heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and assured them



of every possible support from the district administration in this time of sorrow.

As part of immediate relief measures, the Deputy Commissioner handed over a cheque

of Rs 1 lakh to the family from the District Red Cross Fund.

Subsequently, the Deputy Commissioner visited the school premises, where he inspected the site of the incident and evaluated the damage caused by boulders dislodged due to recent heavy rainfall. He instructed the concerned departments to submit a comprehensive report and implement necessary safety measures to prevent such incidents in the future.

3 day training for Internal Assessors-cum-Service Providers under NQAS begins at IMPA Srinagar

JJ NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 21

A three-day training programme for Internal Assessors-cum-Service Providers (IA cum SPT) under the National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) commenced today at the Institute of Management & Public Administration (IMPA), Srinagar.

The training will continue until July 23, 2025, and is being conducted by the National Health Mission (NHM), J&K, in partnership with the National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

The inaugural session was inaugurated by Baseer ul Haq Chaudhary, Mission Director, NHM J&K, in presence of Dr. Bakshi Jehangir, Director Health Services Kashmir.

Dr. Vineeta Dhankhar,



Division All the participants will undergo a post-training evaluation and the successful candidates will be awarded the Certificate of Internal Assessor.

Certified assessors will drive quality monitoring and service enhancement across their respective districts. Their work will advance the Government of India's aim to strengthen the public health system and achieve quality certification for public health facilities.

This training underscores the steadfast commitment of the National Health Mission and the Health and Medical Education Department, Government of J&K, towards institutionalizing quality assurance and ensuring continuous improvements in healthcare delivery throughout the Union Territory.

Consultant, Quality Promotion and Standards (QPS) Division, NHSRC, MoH&FW is the chief resource person for the training.

The inaugural session was also attended by senior officials from the Directorate of Health Services and the National Health Mission, J&K.

On the occasion, Mission Director, NHM, J&K commended the dedication of the district and block teams towards achieving high-quality standards in public health facilities. He underscored the critical importance of

maintaining and enhancing the quality of healthcare services being offered to the people.

This capacity-building programme has been designed to equip healthcare professionals with the necessary skills to conduct internal assessments and improve service delivery standards across J&K's health institutions.

Participants included Chief Medical Officers (CMOs), Block Medical Officers (BMOs), Medical Officers (MOs) and Programme Management Staff from every district and block in the Kashmir

Jammu DC calls for unified drive to intensify TB detection and treatment

JJ NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 21

Deputy Commissioner Jammu Sachin Kumar Vaishya chaired a review meeting today to assess the implementation of the TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan in the district.

He directed officers to intensify screening and treatment of tuberculosis, with a focus on vulnerable groups such as senior citizens, alcohol and tobacco users, HIV-positive individuals, diabetics and socially disadvantaged population.

The meeting was attended by Chief Medical Officer



Dr Harbaksh Singh, District Tuberculosis Officer Dr Anu. SDMs, Chief Planning Officer Ajay Pal Singh, Chief Education Officer besides others concerned were also present.

The DC instructed to intensify screening to identify suspected cases and promptly put them on treatment. He underlined the importance of coor-

dination, especially with Education, Social Welfare and Rural Development departments for effective awareness and detection efforts.

The Chief Education Officer was directed to organise TB awareness campaigns in schools, noting that students can help disseminate key health messages.

Block Medical Officers

were asked to organise targeted screening camps in coordination with Sub-Divisional Magistrates to ensure early identification of symptoms such as persistent cough, fever, night sweats and weight loss. The DC also stressed follow-up to ensure that diagnosed individuals complete treatment.

The DC called for effective use of Ni-Kshay Mitra and community health workers for treatment support and patient counselling. "Early detection and adherence to treatment are the two pillars of TB control," he said.

Mission YUVA gains momentum in Baramulla with 232 cases approval

JJ NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, JULY 21

In a significant development under the Mission YUVA initiative, the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) Baramulla under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today approved 232 cases aimed at youth empowerment and self-employment.

During the meeting, DC while reviewing the progress of the scheme, appreciated the efforts of the SBDU team and instructed them to maintain the momentum of case verification at SBDU level. He



emphasized that all necessary support shall be extended to ensure timely processing and handholding of applicants.

Officers were further asked to fast-track the application processing and Detailed Project Report (DPR) preparation to facilitate timely assistance to beneficiaries.

Highlighting the need for institutional strengthening, the chair also issued directions for the immediate engagement of SBDU and BHD members in line with the comprehensive guidelines issued by the Director Employment-cum-Mission Director, Mission YUVA.

The meeting was attend-

ed by Assistant Director Employment Baramulla, District Social Welfare Officer, Lead District Manager, Cluster Head J&K Bank, Deputy General Manager NABARD, Nodal Officer JKEDI, Functional Manager DIC and other officers from the Employment department.

Literacy camps on PFMS and Financial Management held at Kupwara

JJ NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, JULY 21

In a significant step toward promoting transparency and accountability in government financial operations, Finance department Kupwara has initiated a Literacy camp on Public Financial Management System (PFMS) and related financial practices across the district at Auditorium Hall Employment office Kupwara.

The initiative is designed to enhance understanding of key financial mechanisms among Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) and dealing Assistants from different departments. It also aimed to build capacity



in areas such as digital payments, real-time fund tracking, expenditure management, and procedural compliance under PFMS, DLI, SLI and other schemes.

Addressing one of the sessions, Chief Accounts Officer Kupwara, (DFO) Kupwara, underscored the importance of financial literacy in strengthening governance and ensuring efficient utilization of public

funds. He emphasized the critical role of PFMS in streamlining workflows, improving financial reporting, and supporting the effective implementation of development schemes.

During the sessions, a resource person from the Finance department, delivered comprehensive presentations on various PFMS modules, including timely fund utilization,

reconciliation procedures, and adherence to financial guidelines. The workshops also featured interactive Q&A segments to resolve practical challenges faced by participants in day-to-day operations.

This concerted effort by the Finance department Kupwara reflects its commitment to promoting fiscal discipline, empowering officials with critical financial knowledge, and ensuring robust implementation of welfare and development initiatives.

The programme was attended by CAO (DFO) Kupwara, AO DFO Kupwara, officials from DFO, DTO, Dealing Assistants from various departments.

DC Poonch releases relief under JKRAVF

JJ NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, JULY 21

In a compassionate initiative aimed at providing financial relief to the families affected by the road accidents, Deputy Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal today handed over compensation cheques to the legal heirs of deceased road accident victims under the Jammu & Kashmir Road Accident Victim Fund (JKRAVF).



Cheques amounting to Rs 1 lakh each were given

to the families of deceased victims- Parveen Begum,

W/o Mohammad Ayob resident of Arai, Mandi; Bilal Ahmed, S/o Jamal Din, resident of Chamber Kinari Mandi; Mohd Zahir, S/o Mohd Javid, resident of Bhandi Chechian Tehsil Haveli; Shakeel Bi, W/o Mohammad Mushtaq, resident of Ghani, Tehsil Mankote; Mohammad Hanief, S/o Mohd Sher, resident of Ghani, Tehsil Mankote; Noor Hussain, S/o Abdullah, resident of Kasbalari, Tehsil Mankote.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

Monsoon Session...

success of Operation Sindoor.

He said the mission carried out by Indian defence forces, achieved its goals within 22 minutes, targeting and destroying structures linked to terror masterminds. He added that this operation has drawn global attention to India's military capability and the strength of its domestic defence sector.

"When the Parliament speaks in one voice during this session, it will support military morale, encourage citizens, and contribute to progress in defence research, innovation, and manufacturing," he added.

He also said that security forces are making steady progress in eliminating Maoists and Naxalites and that several previously affected districts are now free from such activities, and the Constitution is prevailing over violence.

He urged MPs across parties to ensure smooth functioning of the house and that interests may vary, but national interest must remain the shared priority.

Meanwhile, both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha witnessed continuous sloganeering by Opposition MPs demanding a discussion on the recent Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor.

Reacting to the protests, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee has been scheduled to decide the agenda for discussion.

"The government is ready for a discussion, but Opposition MPs are protesting in the Well of the House. It is not appropriate to begin the session like this," Rijiju said.

Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, questioned the government over its response to the Pahalgam terror attack and asked for clarity on the current status of the militants involved.

Kharge said the Opposition had extended full support to the Centre following the incident but emphasized the need for accountability, especially in light of the acknowledged intelligence failure. "Even the Army chief and the government have admitted lapses. The country deserves to know what went wrong," he told the House.

He also took sharp exception to recent comments by former US President Donald Trump, who reportedly spoke of mediating a ceasefire between India and Pakistan after Operation Sindoor. "It's unacceptable for any outsider to make such claims. This is an insult to our sovereignty," Kharge said.

Speaking in the Rajya Sabha, BJP leader and Union Minister JP Nadda said the government was fully prepared to hold a detailed discussion on Operation Sindoor.

"We are willing and ready to talk about it. There should be no perception that we are avoiding a debate," Nadda said, adding that the scale and execution of the operation under Prime Minister Modi's leadership was unprecedented. "This kind of mission has never been carried out before. We will share every detail," he told the House.

This year's Monsoon Session will run until August 21, with a scheduled recess from August 12 to 18. The session includes 21 sittings over 32 days. KNO

Landslide hits Mata...

heavy rainfall in Katra town, occurred around 8:30 am near 'Gulshan Ka Langar', close to Banganga, the starting point of the pilgrimage route frequented by pony riders and devotees.

The landslide caused significant damage, with a booking office and an overhead iron structure collapsing under the weight of falling debris.

According to the meteorological department, Katra town recorded 184.2 mm of rainfall in the 24 hours ending at 8:30 AM on Monday, contributing to the disaster.

The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDB) has suspended the yatra on the old track until further notice, advising pilgrims to use the safer Tarakote Marg route, which was restored by 2:00 PM after a temporary suspension.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who also serves as the Chairman of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, expressed profound grief over the tragedy.

In an official statement, he said, "I am deeply saddened by the tragic landslide incident at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine in which a devotee unfortunately lost his life. He directed Shrine Board to provide best possible medical care and support to the injured pilgrims.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed deep sorrow over the incident, extending condolences to the family of the deceased and wishing a speedy recovery to the injured.

Officiating Chief Executive Officer of the SMVDB, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, who also serves as the District Magistrate of Jammu, rushed to the site to oversee rescue operations.

Speaking to media, Vaishya said, "The landslide resulted in critical injuries to three persons and minor injuries to seven others. All the injured were promptly taken to hospitals for treatment."

He confirmed that a full-fledged rescue and debris clearance operation is underway, with earth-movers deployed to expedite efforts.

The critically injured pilgrims, identified as Uppan Srivastava (70) of Chennai, his wife K Radha (66), and Rajinder Bhalla (70) of Haryana - were admitted to Narayan hospital, where Srivastava breathed his last.

Leela Raikwar (56) from Uttar Pradesh is receiving treatment at the Community Health Centre (CHC) in Katra.

Three others, Suresh Kumar (66) from Maharashtra and locals Nikhil Thakur (26) and Vicky Sharma, were discharged after receiving first aid.

Tragically, one of the critically injured pilgrims succumbed to their injuries.

Moreover, Indian Army's White Knight Corps swiftly mobilised to assist in relief and rescue operations.

In a statement posted on X, the White Knight Corps said, "In response to a landslide in the general area of Katra, troops of White Knight Corps were swiftly mobilised to assist in relief and rescue operations in collaboration with civil authorities. Immediate support was provided to affected locals, showcasing Indian

Army's unwavering commitment to the people. Rescue and support operations currently in progress. We serve, We Protect!"

BJP MLA from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi constituency, Baldev Raj Sharma said, "This isn't an accident. Like many states are currently facing a flood situation, this is also a part of that... If this shed had not been there, the accident could have been bigger... Currently, only 1-2 injured people are in serious condition. The shrine board opened the other path for the journey."

Katra Block Medical Officer (BMO) Rashpal Bangotra provided an update on the medical response, stating, "Around 8:20 AM, we received information about the landslide, and within 15 minutes, six injured devotees reached us. Four with orthopaedic injuries were shifted to Narayana Hospital for advanced treatment." KNO

Operation Sindoor...

innovation, and manufacturing," he added.

He also said that security forces are making steady progress in eliminating Maoists and Naxalites and that several previously affected districts are now free from such activities, and the Constitution is prevailing over violence.

He urged MPs across parties to ensure smooth functioning of the house and that interests may vary, but national interest must remain the shared priority. KNO

People and history...

Minister Omar Abdullah not being invited to security review meetings, LG Sinha said, "The State Reorganization Act, passed by Parliament, clearly defines the jurisdiction of all authorities. I work within my boundaries and enjoy a cordial relationship with the CM. Whenever we have differences, we resolve them through dialogue."

On the biggest challenge faced during his tenure, LG Sinha said, "The full integration of J&K with the Indian state and the establishment of Indian sovereignty and authority were essential. Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, we have successfully achieved both goals."

Turning to tourism and the ongoing Amarnath Yatra, LG Sinha said that after April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, tourists had stopped visiting Kashmir. "However, the situation has improved. Over two lakh pilgrims have already participated this year in a 38-day Yatra. Hotels in Pahalgam and Sonamarg are full, and Srinagar's hotel occupancy is at 40%," he said, praising the hospitality of local residents for welcoming yatis warmly.

He also justified the suspension of helicopter services to the holy cave shrine this year, citing national security and past aviation accidents as reasons. "Decisions were made keeping safety and emerging drone threats in mind," he added.

Regarding Pakistan's propaganda and use of drones, LG Sinha said, "Operation Sindoor showed India's strength. Pakistan's fake narratives were exposed. Our indigenous weapons have become a strong asset."

When asked about his future plans, the LG reiterated his commitment to honesty and dedication. He credited Prime Minister Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for their guidance and encouragement, calling their decisions "historic" for J&K.

"The people of J&K firmly believe their future is secure with India. The only concern remains cross-border infiltration, but rest assured, we are vigilant," LG Sinha said.

He also hailed the role of women in J&K's progress, emphasizing their growing leadership across sectors and reaffirming the vision of "women-led development" in the region. KNO

J&K receives fresh...

in the last 24 hours. 184.2mm rainfall was recorded at Katra station today while Jammu recorded 31.6 mm since this morning.

Several areas across Kashmir also received fresh rainfall this evening with the Director of MeT, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad predicting intermittent spells of light to moderate rain and thundershower till July 23 at many places with intense showers at few places and heavy rain at isolated places of J&K.

From July 24 to 27, he said that there is a possibility of brief showers at scattered places.

Moreover, the MeT has issued an advisory, stating that there is a possibility of intense showers with gusty winds at few places with heavy rain at isolated to scattered places of J&K during 21-23rd July.

"Flash floods at few vulnerable places with landslides, mudslides & shooting stones," it reads, adding that rise in water level in rivers, streams, local Nallas & water logging in few Low lying areas is also expected. KNO

Student killed, 5 injured...

resident of Bhainch, Tobia Kouser, age 7, daughter of Basharat Hussain, resident of Bhainch.

They are undergoing treatment at Raja Sukhdev Singh District Hospital in Poonch along with the teacher, who had suffered minor injuries.

Following the incident, Lieutenant Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed grief over the loss of life.

"The news of the death of a 5-year-old child due to the rockslide that crashed into Primary School, Kalsian, Poonch, is heart-rending. May God give strength to the bereaved parents to bear this shock. I pray for the speedy recovery of the injured children," LG Sinha wrote on X.

CM Abdullah also extended his condolences to the bereaved family on a social media post. He also directed the administration to ensure proper treatment of the injured and to conduct a thorough inquiry into the incident.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal visited the district hospital and met the injured and their families. He also disbursed financial assistance of Rs 1 lakh to the family of Ehsan and Rs 50,000 each to the families of the injured children under the Red Cross Fund. He also assured all possible assistance to the families from the district administration.

In response to the landslide and ongoing heavy rain-

Rudra Abhishek performed at Adinarishwar Dham in Plakh, Basohli

JJ NEWS SERVICE

PLAKH (BASOHLI), JULY 21

Amid the sacred vibrations of Vedic mantras, a grand Rudra Abhishek Puja was performed at Adinarishwar Dham Basuki Nag Mandir, located in the serene village of Maali in Plakh, falling under Basohli Sub-Division of Kathua district.

The divine ritual was conducted by the much-revered Swami Advaitanand Ji Maharaj, who arrived all the way from Srinagar, Garhwal, to bless the devotees during the auspicious month of Sawan. He was accompanied by Sant Shri Chander Giri Ji Maharaj from New Delhi, adding further spiritual significance to the occasion.

The event witnessed



the presence of Col (Retd.) Mahan Singh, DDC Chairman Kathua, along with a large number of devotees from Plakh, Basohli, Karanwada and surrounding areas.

The Rudra Abhishek holds special significance during the Sawan month, a time when Shiva devotees across the country undertake pilgrimages such as Amarnath Yatra, Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, and Kanwar Yatra to seek the blessings of Lord Shiva.

Addressing a spiritually charged gathering after the ritual, Swami Advaitanand Ji Maharaj stressed upon the need for Hari Bhajan to purify the soul and mind. He said that in today's stressful life, devotion and remembrance of the Almighty is the path to peace and inner strength.

The revered saint also called upon the youth to embrace Indian cultural values (sanskar) and contribute towards making this world a more harmo-

nious and beautiful place for humanity.

Speaking on the occasion, Col Mahan Singh said that such spiritual events play a vital role in preserving our rich cultural and religious heritage. He emphasized that "the devotion and faith displayed by the people of this region reflect our deep-rooted values and collective belief in the power of spirituality." He further expressed gratitude to the revered saints for visiting the area and blessing the devotees with their presence and wisdom.

The spiritual atmosphere, combined with the presence of saints and participation of locals, made the event a truly divine experience for all attendees.

fall, which recorded 184.2 mm in the region over the past 24 hours, authorities have ordered the closure of all schools in Poonch district on July 22, 2025, as a precautionary measure.

The district administration, in coordination with the Education Department, has also initiated a structural safety audit of school buildings in vulnerable areas to mitigate risks during the monsoon season. KNO

7.66 cr tourists visited...

at 55,337," it added.

In 2024, a total of 2,35,24,629 domestic visitors and 65,452 foreigners visited Jammu and Kashmir.

The reply, a copy of which lies with KNO, reads that the Ministry of Tourism, under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, sanctioned a total of six (6) projects in the year 2016-17 for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, with a total sanctioned cost of Rs 519.58 crore.

All these projects have since been physically completed, it reads. The projects include Development of Jammu-Srinagar-Pahalgam-Bhagwati Nagar-Anantnag-Salamabad Uri-Kargil-Leh, Development of Tourist Facilities at Jammu-Rajouri-Shopian-Pulwama, Development of Tourist Facilities - Construction of Assets in lieu of those Destroyed in Floods in 2014 under PM Development Package, Development of Tourist Facilities at Mantalai and Sudhmahadev, Development of Tourist Facilities at Anantnag-Pulwama-Kishtwar-Pahalgam-Zanskar Padum-Daksum-Ranjit Sagar Dam and Development of Tourist Facilities at Gulmarg-Baramulla-Kupwara-Kargil-Leh.

However, Shekhawat said the Ministry has not undertaken any formal study to date to assess the extent of direct and indirect employment generated in the region under the scheme during the last five years. KNO

Indian Embassy in Niger...

concern over the abduction of Ranjeet Singh, a resident of Ramban, in Niger. He urges the Hon'ble EAM @DrSJaishankar and @MEAIndia to urgently intervene to secure Ranjit's safe and swift return."

The Indian Embassy in Niger confirmed the incident in a statement posted on X on July 18, 2025, saying, "In a heinous terror attack on 15 July in Niger's Dosso region, two Indian nationals tragically lost their lives, and one was abducted. Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. The Mission in Niamey is in touch with local authorities to repatriate mortal remains and ensure the safe release of the abducted Indian. All Indians in Niger are advised to remain vigilant."

Ranjeet Singh, a senior safety officer with Transrail Lighting Limited, a power transmission and distribution company, was working at the construction site when the attack occurred. His family lost contact with him on July 15, and his wife, Sheela Devi, was informed of his abduction by his colleagues on July 16.

In a heartfelt appeal, Sheela Devi said, "My entire life is at stake. I have three young children and elderly parents to care for. I appeal to the Government of India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar to bring my husband back home safely."

She met with Ramban Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan, who assured her that the matter had been escalated to the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Embassy in Niger.

Ranjeet's father, Mohan Lal, also urged immediate action: "We want to tell Modiji to act on it. The Government of India should work to bring him back. We have been suffering for the last 5-6 days. He has little children. We are very worried about him—where is he abducted, has he eaten anything or not?"

The family has expressed frustration over the lack of response from Transrail Lighting Limited, with Sheela Devi alleging that the company has provided no clear information about her husband's situation. A cousin, Santosh Singh, said the family was informed that Ranjit is being held in a forested area, but no direct communication has been established with Niger authorities. KNO

Vice President Jagdeep...

As per the news agency, Dhankar also acknowledged the warmth and trust bestowed upon him by Members of Parliament, stating that those relationships would be "ever cherished and embedded in my memory." He further reflected on India's economic transformation and rising global stature, calling his service during this phase a "true honor."

"As I leave this esteemed office, I am filled with pride in Bharat's global rise and phenomenal achievements

and hold unwavering confidence in her brilliant future," he concluded. KNO

17,000 perform...

the Baltal-bound convoy carried 1,208 pilgrims in 52 vehicles, while the Pahalgam-bound convoy transported 2,583 pilgrims in 96 vehicles, officials said.

"Even though there is a slight decline in pilgrim turnout from Jammu, the overall yatra is proceeding without disruptions. All necessary facilities including shelter, food, medical assistance, and route security are fully operational," an official said.

This year's Amarnath Yatra, scheduled to conclude on August 9, is being conducted amid unprecedented security measures, including drone surveillance, RFID tracking for pilgrims and a multi-layered deployment of forces. KNO

ABP vital for ensuring...

the connectivity for government institutions including schools, hospitals and agriculture offices, enabling better delivery of public services and access to real-time information. This programme holds the potential to revolutionize the agriculture by delivering weather forecasts, crop advisories and other farmer-centric services directly to rural areas, he added.

Secretary Telecom, Dr Neeraj Mittal, underlined the importance of optimal utilization, regular maintenance and enhancement of the BharatNet infrastructure to maximize its impact. He suggested that the UT may consider learning from best practices of states where ABP implementation has been highly successful.

He also outlined the inter-departmental coordination required to facilitate the rollout, directing departments like IT, PDD and RDD to ensure necessary support—ranging from logistical arrangements and power supply to space for equipment.

Regarding the Programme, the meeting was apprised that the Amended BharatNet is a flagship project designed to provide fast, reliable and affordable digital connectivity across the nation.

Key features of the program included Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs), connectivity to non-GP villages on a demand basis ensuring network. The programme also envisages uptime greater than 98% and 10-year Operation and Maintenance (O&M) commitment targeting 1.5 crore broadband connections nationwide.

The Cabinet has approved the Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) with a total estimated cost of Rs 1,39,579 crore through out the nation.

For J&K (including Ladakh), the ABP project cost is Rs 2,631 crore (including Capex & Opex). The scope of work in the region included bringing 413 connected GPs onto the ring topology and connecting an additional 3,887 new GPs in the ring.

Additionally, all non-Gram Panchayat (GP) villages will be connected on demand, with a target of 200,000 Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) connections. The FTTH rollout will be aligned with GP commissioning milestones, with a phased adoption plan: moderate uptake in Year 1 due to infrastructure readiness, accelerating in Year 2 as over 50% of GPs become operational and reaching peak adoption in Years 3-4.

As far as implementation and timelines are concerned, M/s STL is the Project Implementing Agency (PIA) as the EPC contractor, while BSNL serves as the Project Management Agency (PMA). Key timelines for the project in J&K involves Handover Takeover (HOTO) of existing networks by PIAs within 6 months from the agreement signing date.

Survey of GPs for network creation on ring topology is envisaged within a period of 12 months from the agreement signing date. It also sets 36 months for commissioning of GPs in ring topology. Implementation of ABP in J&K includes establishment of a state-of-the-art Network Operation Centre (NOC) at Jammu by September 2025.

The ABP network will connect the public institutions, private enterprises, local entrepreneurs and households. It will enable the digital governance through digitization of government processes and MIS systems. Besides, it will facilitate access to digital services like e-education, e-health and e-agriculture and boost the digital economy by providing platforms for businesses and digital transactions.

The meeting was informed that a centralized BharatNet Issue Management Platform has been established to track, coordinate and resolve implementation issues, ensuring structured communication and timely responses among all stakeholders.

CS holds maiden review of implementation of JKCIIP across J&K

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 21

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting regarding implementation of the Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project in J&K (JKCIIP).

The meeting, organised by the Agriculture Production Department, was attended by Principal Secretary, APD; VC, SKUAST, Jammu; MD, J&K Bank; MD, HADP; Deputy Commissioners; HoDs of Agriculture Departments; representatives from SKUAST, Kashmir and other concerned officers.

The meeting focused on the project's progress, annual work plan, financial mechanisms and future strategies to enhance the competitiveness and climate resilience of farmers across the UT.

During the review meeting, the Chief Secretary appreciated the project design and called for its effective implementation

while meeting all the targets set for the ensuing financial year. He called upon the Bank authorities to integrate the bank processes with that of the JKCIIP portal. He also asked them to create a loan product for making this programme a success.

The Chief Secretary stressed on giving swift approvals to the applications submitted by the applicants. He also impressed upon them to devise training modules for the trainers and beneficiaries to enhance their capacity to make their ventures a grand success.

During the review meeting, the Chief Secretary appreciated the design and structure of the project and emphasized the need for its effective and timely implementation, ensuring all targets set for the ensuing financial year are met. He urged the bank authorities to fully integrate their operational processes with the JKCIIP portal to streamline service delivery and enhance coordination.



The Chief Secretary also called for creation of a tailored loan product to support implementation of the programme and ensure its long-term success.

Highlighting the need for efficiency and responsiveness, he directed all the concerned departments and institutions to ensure swift approvals of applications submitted by the beneficiaries.

Furthermore, the Chief Secretary impressed upon the importance of capacity-building initiatives, advising formulation of training modules for both the trainers and beneficiaries to empower them with the skills necessary to make their ventures successful.

While giving overview of this prestigious project, Principal Secretary, APD, Shailendra Kumar, revealed that the project encompasses a total investment of approximately US\$ 217 million (Rs 1800 Cr). He informed that it has been designed to improve the competitiveness and climate resilience of farmers through enhanced production, value addition and marketing of high-value niche commodities in J&K.

Regarding the funding pattern, the Principal Secretary mentioned that the same constitutes substantial contributions from IFAD (46%), the UT (12%), beneficiary contributions (21%), private sector involvement (10%) and bank credit (10%), along with convergence support (2%).

MD, HADP, Sandeep Kumar, in his presentation, revealed that the JKCIIP is structured around three main verticals including Climate-smart and Market-led Production (52% of total cost).

Elucidating further, he divulged that another vertical of the programme

called Agri-business Ecosystem Development constitutes 33% of total cost. It aims at enterprise promotion, market promotion and incubation/startup support. The fourth vertical of Project Management encompasses 5% of total cost ensuring efficient oversight, monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management.

About the objectives of this project, it was given out that it targets to reach out to 3 lakh households (15 lakh individuals) across 90 blocks in both Jammu (45 blocks) and Kashmir (45 blocks) divisions.

Special emphasis is being placed on vulnerable groups, including 141,000 women (47%), 90,000 youth (30%) and 30,000 individuals from other vulnerable communities (10%).

With respect to Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWPB) for 2025-26, it was informed that the same stands at Rs 150.06 crore. Key allocations included Rs 110.33 crore for climate-

smart and market-led production, Rs 14.21 crore for agri-business ecosystem development and Rs 15.90 crore for supporting the pastoralists and other vulnerable communities.

Out of 172 approved activities for AWPB 2025-26, a procurement plan for 151 activities totaling Rs 138 crore has received IFAD's approval. This included consulting services, grants and goods. For 2025-26, Rs 75 crore has been released on Beams, with an additional Rs 12.50 crore advance drawal sanctioned by the Finance Department on July 15, 2025.

As of July 19, 2025, about 1240 farmers have been registered and 478 applications have been received, with key activities focusing on sheep/goat units, vegetable cultivation, water management, protected cultivation and apple crop management. Besides, a farmer-friendly loan product has been developed in collaboration with UTLBC, featuring a 10% marginal money with no process-

ing charges, a moratorium period of up to 2 years and a repayment period of up to 8 years.

It was informed that various feasibility studies and business plans are underway for key sectors like Tulip, Saffron, Apple and Wool Value Chains. Besides, extensive HRD initiatives are being implemented, with interviews scheduled for various officer positions across departments to strengthen the human resources for effective implementation of this project.

The Chief Secretary emphasized the importance of timely execution and effective implementation of all planned activities to ensure successful achievement of JKCIIP's objectives and upliftment of the agricultural and allied sectors in Jammu & Kashmir.

Pertinently, the rural credit workshops will commence in August to raise awareness among the farmers and stakeholders.

DC Rajouri reviews implementation of flagship government schemes

JNEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, JULY 21

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma today chaired a review meeting to assess the implementation status of the flagship schemes in the district.

The review meeting covered a wide range of Centrally Sponsored Schemes and other Government initiatives, including Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, AMRUT 2.0, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, PMAY-Urban 2.0, Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban and Grameen), National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM), PM Vishwakarma Yojana, Bharat Net, Lakhpati Didi, POSHAN 2.0, PM Adarsh Gram Yojana, SWAMITVA, PM SHRI Schools, and Computerisation of Prima-



ry Agriculture Credit Societies (PACS), in addition to the Jammu-Akhnoor-Poonch National Highway Project.

While reviewing the PM SHRI (Schools for Rising India) initiative, the Chief Education Officer presented a school-wise status report. The Deputy Commissioner expressed concern over the low expenditure levels in some institutions and directed the concerned officers to take immediate corrective measures to ensure timely and optimal utilization of allocated funds. He also reviewed the physical progress of ongoing

infrastructure and development works under the scheme.

Highlighting the district's strides in digital governance, the DC was informed that 100 per cent computerisation of PACS has been achieved in Rajouri. Under the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA ID) initiative, the district has attained 67 per cent coverage, with the DC instructing concerned departments to intensify efforts to achieve complete saturation within stipulated timelines.

The Deputy Commissioner further reviewed the implementation of social security schemes such as the PM Jan Dhan Yojana, PM Jeevan Bima Yojana, and PM Suraksha Bima Yojana, stressing the importance of timely saturation of beneficiaries. He directed the officers to adopt targeted outreach campaigns

to ensure that no eligible individual is left out.

Taking stock of PMAY-Urban and Swachh Bharat Mission Urban, the DC instructed officers to address bottlenecks affecting timely execution and maintain strict adherence to deadlines. He laid emphasis on inter-departmental coordination and robust field-level monitoring to ensure seamless and effective implementation of all schemes.

The meeting witnessed the participation of key district officers including Chief Planning Officer Maqsood Ahmed, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Sheraz Chowhan, Assistant Commissioner Defence Israr Ahmed, Chief Education Officer, District Social Welfare Officer Abdul Raheem, Tehsildar Rajouri Varinder Sharma, Tehsildar Thana- mand, Executive Officers of Municipalities, and other concerned officials.

Soulful Bhajan Sandhya by Rakesh Kalotra, Harsh elevates Sawan Celebrations

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 21

As part of the ongoing Sawan Mahotsav 2025, the historic Panjvaktra Mahadev Mandir once again became a vibrant centre of devotion and classical music, hosting its second Bhajan Sandhya of the holy month, drawing a large number of devotees and music lovers.

The evening witnessed a spiritually immersive atmosphere as Dr. Rakesh Kalotra, HoD GCW Parade College, 'A' Grade artist of Akashvani (All India Radio), and Shri Harsh Sharma, an acclaimed classical vocalist from Uttar Pradesh—both disciples of the Gwalior Gharana—captivated the audience with their deeply moving and melodious bhajans. Dr. Kalotra has trained under Prof. Ojesh Partap Singh and Pandit T.K. Jalali.

Gauri Shankar on (Harmonium) Parshotam Kumar (Pakhawaj), Rakesh Anand (Flute), and Dr. Vinay (Tabla) accompanied the artists, enhancing



the Bhajan Sandhya with their melodious support in the serene and spiritually charged atmosphere of the historic Panjvaktra Mahadev Mandir.

Earlier in the evening, the programme commenced with a soulful Ganesh Vandana by the newly inducted students of Panjvaktra Mahadev Ved Pathshala, followed by powerful chanting of Shiv Tandav Stotram by senior Vedarthis.

Suresh Kumar Sharma, Receiver, Panjvaktra Mahadev Mandir, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the participating artists, dignitaries and devotees for their overwhelming response.


He said, "Panjvaktra Mahadev Mandir continues to radiate the spirit of our rich spiritual traditions. These Bhajan Sandhyas are a beautiful way to celebrate our cultural roots and encourage the younger generation to stay connected with devotion and divinity.

He further shared that in the coming weeks, more nationally acclaimed artists will grace the Mahotsav with their presence, presenting spiritually enriching musical offerings. He warmly invited devotees to continue being part of these uplifting musical evenings held every Monday.

Panjvaktra Mahadev

Mandir has long served as a spiritual and cultural hub, offering a platform to artists to express their devotion through music and art. However, with the recent addition of a dedicated stage within the temple premises, this role has been further strengthened.

The Mandir is now actively enhancing its efforts to promote regular cultural activities in the heart of the city, allowing both seasoned and budding artists to perform. This initiative not only nurtures artistic expression but also deepens public engagement with our rich cultural and spiritual traditions.



UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION UDHAMPUR

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No. 47 of 2025-26 Dated 19.07.2025

For and on behalf of the **Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir** e-tenders are invited on **percentage basis** from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Union Territory of J&K, CPWD, Railways, MES and other State/ Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No.	Name of Work	Advertised Cost (Rs. in lacs)	Cost of document (in Rs)	Earnest Money	Time Allowed for completion	Class of Contractor	Head of Account
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1.	Repairing of damaged wall at GCW Udhampur (4202-Hr. EDU).	4.79	600/-	@2% of advertised cost	02 Months	"D-Class"	"MH-4202 Hr. Education"
2.	Repairing of roof of library by way of leakage at GCW Udhampur (4202-Hr. EDU).	3.89	600/-	@2% of advertised cost	02 Months	"D-Class"	"MH-4202 Hr. Education"
3.	Construction of boundary wall of land allotted for construction of District Fund Office Udhampur (MH 2341- NFB Finance).	15.14	600/-	@2% of advertised cost	03 Months	"B/C-Class"	"MH 2341- NFB Finance"
4.	Construction of Niabat Office Jaganoo Udhampur (Capex Budget 2024-25 Revenue).	19.67	600/-	@2% of advertised cost	09 Months	"B/C-Class"	"Capex Budget 2024-25 Revenue"

Position of AAA:- Accorded
Position of T.S:- Accorded
Position of Funds:- Partially available

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 <http://jktenders.gov.in> as per below schedule:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	19-07-2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 19-07-2025 to 04-08-2025, 1800 Hrs
3	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting.	25-07-2025 at 1200 Hrs. in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division, Udhampur.
4	Bid submission Start Date	21-07-2025 from 900 Hrs
5	Bid Submission End Date	04-08-2025 up to 1800 Hrs
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	05-08-2025 on or after 1200 Hrs in the Office of Executive Engineer, PWD (R&B) Division, Udhampur.
7	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of **e-challan through Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date, name of work duly crediting to 0059 (Revenue) favoring Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division, Udhampur uploading a copy of treasury challan and EMD/Bid Security in the shape of CDR/FDR (The date of Treasury Challan/ Bid Security/Affidavits between date of start of bid submission and bid submission end date) duly pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division, Udhampur** as mentioned in the bid documents. The earnest money of the unsuccessful bidder shall be released only after submission of Treasury Challan.
- The electronic bidding system would not allow any late submission of bids after due date and time as per server time. Bidders may modify their bids by uploading their request for modification before the deadline for submission of bids. For this, the bidder need not make any additional payment towards the cost of tender document. For bid modification and consequential re-submission, the bidder is not required to withdraw his bid submitted earlier. The last modified bid submitted by the bidder within the bid submission time shall be considered as the bid. For this purpose, modification/withdrawal by other means will not be accepted. In online system of bid submission, the modification and consequential- submission of bids is allowed any number of times. The bidders may withdraw his bid by uploading their request before the deadline for submission of bids; however, if the bid is withdrawn, the re-submission of the bid is not allowed. No bid shall be modified or withdrawn after the deadline of submission of bids.
- The date and time of opening of Financial-Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The **Financial-bids of Responsive bidders** shall be opened online in the **Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division, Udhampur**. The date for same shall be intimated separately.
- The bids for the work shall remain **valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids**.

No:- 4950-55
Dated:- 19-07-2025

Executive Engineer
PWD (R&B) Division
Udhampur

DIP/J-3701/25
Date: 21-7-25

EDITORIAL

Victory of faith over fear

In the shadow of terror and tragedy, faith has once again triumphed. The recent attack near Pahalgam could have cast a pall over the annual Amarnath Yatra, but instead, it has only reinforced the indomitable spirit of the devotees. With over 3 lakh pilgrims having already performed darshan at the holy cave in just 18 days, the yatra this year has become a resounding symbol of devotion overpowering dread. The footfall of pilgrims, comprising men, women, children, sadhus, and even security personnel, reflects a spiritual resilience that refuses to bow before fear. Far from being deterred by threats, the flow of devotees to the holy cave continues unabated, even growing stronger with each passing day. This is not just a testament to religious fervor but a powerful rebuke to those who seek to derail peace through violence. The government and security agencies deserve appreciation for ensuring the safety of yatriis under exceptionally challenging circumstances. The seamless coordination between the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB), J&K administration, and central security forces has created an atmosphere of reassurance. Additionally, the role of local Kashmiris—volunteers, langar sewaks, and civil society members—in supporting the yatra has sent a message that terrorism cannot divide the fabric of our collective humanity. What makes this year's pilgrimage particularly significant is the high morale among the devotees. From the base camps of Baltal and Nunwan-Pahalgam to the arduous final stretch toward the holy cave, the journey of the yatriis is filled with chants, devotion, and solidarity. The increasing numbers, even in the aftermath of a terror strike, underscore how deep-rooted the Amarnath Yatra is in the soul of India. The pilgrimage is not merely a religious ritual; it is a living manifestation of the country's unity in diversity. Devotees from all regions, speaking different languages and following diverse customs, congregate here under a shared canopy of spiritual purpose. Terrorism may aim to instill fear, but every step that each yatri takes towards the cave is a defiant assertion that the Indian spirit is unshakeable. As the 38-day yatra moves closer to its culmination on August 9, coinciding with Shraavan Purnima and Raksha Bandhan, the sacred journey continues to inspire. The arrival of the holy mace, 'Chhari Mubarak,' led by Mahant Deependra Giri Ji, will be the spiritual pinnacle of the pilgrimage—marking not just a religious ritual but a celebration of collective perseverance. In the end, the resounding success of this year's Amarnath Yatra is a loud, unified message: terror may wound, but it cannot weaken. Faith endures. Devotion prevails. And the yatra marches on—not just to the holy cave, but to the very heart of what India stands for—unity, courage, and unwavering belief.

India's new dawn begins in the North-East

GURLEEN NAGPAL

When something begins to shine, it's only natural that some would rather dim the lights, lest the sheen blind them completely and nudge them back into the comfort of their armchair slumber. Case in point: the much-talked-about Northeast, which is now at the centre of India's growth story, drawing unprecedented global investments and seeing a transformation not just in statistics, but in the spirit of its people. A turnaround turning decades of neglect into a decade of transformation. And the brighter it shines on the centre stage, the more some try to push it back to the periphery, not with facts, but with fog. "Overlooking" becomes convenient when too much must be acknowledged, that was long kept out of the picture. After all, oblivion is easier than acceptance.

Today, the Northeast is not just being seen, it is being celebrated, empowered, and transformed like never before. In Prime

Minister Narendra Modi's words, "EAST is not just a direction, EAST stands for Empower, Act, Strengthen, and Transform."

The Northeast is no longer a distant corner, it is our "Ashtalakshmi", as the name says it all – the embodiment of prosperity, potential, and promise. While these words are music to the ears of 5 crore Indians in the region, they are deafening to those who preferred a marginalised and victimised Northeast.

The transformation of the past 11 years isn't just about infrastructure and towers; it's about the depth and dignity with which the region has been engaged. This isn't inclusion by compulsion, it is integration by conviction. The results speak for themselves: 4.3 lakh crore in investment interest is catapulting the Northeast from a forgotten frontier to a front-runner in India's development journey. It is unarguably setting the stage for the Northeast region to become India's next economic powerhouse. The sense of alienation & discrimination once felt by the region

and its people is now being acknowledged and addressed through presence, participation and policy. PM Modi has visited the region nearly 70 times. For perspective, all previous PMs since Independence together made just 21 visits. This isn't symbolic, it is systematic. More than 700 ministerial visits happened to ensure every policy, every vision turns to an action.

With deepening ties to ASEAN, the Northeast is no longer a remote outpost, it is the gateway with Act East becoming more of a purpose than just a policy. Delhi no longer wants proximity in words, but in action – economically, emotionally & culturally. Northeast is being embraced wholeheartedly by the entire nation – a bitter pill to swallow for those thriving on propaganda. Naysayers will, of course, continue to block and blur, not just Parliament sessions but narratives of progress. But governance isn't built on the approval of 'those'. The Northeast's momentum is real, and only growing stronger.

From Arunachal's Sela Tunnel to Assam's Bhupen Hazarika Bridge, transformation is visible and visceral. In 11 years, 16,000 km of roads have been built. Operational airports have gone from 9 to 17. New railway lines now reach what were once isolated pockets. The Brahmaputra and Barak waterways are alive again. Hundreds of mobile towers have brought the silent hills into the digital age with 13,000 km of optical fibre, expanding 4G and 5G coverage.

Connectivity is expanding and so is discomfort among those peddling obsolete narratives. Guwahati, Imphal, and Agartala are being developed as logistics hubs. Land Customs Stations in Meghalaya and Mizoram are boosting international trade. As India strengthens ties with the Indo-Pacific, the Northeast is launch-ready. The gateway to Southeast Asia lies in the development visible on ground. It is easy to quote anecdotes of discrimination. It is harder – but more honest – to recognise the systematic support being provided to empower Northeast youth.

More than 60,000 youth have been skilled under the North East Skill Development Scheme. 21,000 crore in education investments, 850 new schools, 9 medical colleges, AIIMS Guwahati, two IITs, and over 200 skill institutes have unlocked ignored potential.

From coding apps in Kohima to launching startups in Aizawl, the youth is leading. Dozens of Khelo India Centres, and India's first Sports University, and you have a Northeast wired, not just digitally, but for success. Cultural festivals and tourism boosting initiatives aiming to mainstream the region's vibrant traditions, crafts and cuisine have been encouraged. Where earlier there was disillusion and unrest, today there is participation and entrepreneurship. Violence in the region has dropped by over 70 per cent in the last 8 years. The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) has been withdrawn from over 75 per cent of areas in the region, including entire districts in Assam, Nagaland, and Manipur. From Assam's golden

Muga silk to Arunachal's organic kiwis; from Meghalaya's world-class Lakadong turmeric to Tripura's GI-tagged Queen Pineapple, the Northeast isn't just contributing to India's economy, but curating a global identity. Cherry on the cake? Mizoram – India's first fully literate state. Manipur – home to Loktak, an ecotourism jewel. As PM Modi said during his visit to Shillong, "For me, the Northeast is not distant. It is at the heart of India's growth story. The sun rises here and with it rises India's future." Let us not flatten the Northeast's rich and complex story into a binary of neglect and stereotype. Let us instead recognise it as the living example of how vision, investment, and respect can empower a region to rise.

(The writer is alumna of IIMC, Delhi and contributes as a consultant to the Government of India. She holds a Master's in Literature from Delhi University and in Politics and International Relations from the University of London)

Relationships and infrastructure programmes

SANJAY CHANDRA

I am an empanelled arbitrator for infrastructure projects. I am also a member of dispute resolution boards in a few such contracts. This is the result of a change in my professional trajectory towards infrastructure almost 27 years ago. My experience as a project person, and now as a conciliator, has made me realise that securing a contract is relatively easier than execution due to ambiguity, inadequate study and interpretation of the contract by both the involved parties, namely the client and the contractor.

A third entity by the name of consultant is sometimes introduced in big-size projects with the purpose of ensuring a smooth and timely completion without any con-

flicts. They too add to the confusion. This is despite a reasonably good document, detailed discussions and clarifications before bidding, and the best intentions and efforts of all the parties to successfully complete and close the contract.

I realise that marital relationship is no different. It is a contract without a written document. I understand that many young couples have now started getting into written pre-nuptial agreements. The entire process, whether in projects or in relationships, is similar. In most of the middle-class families, both sets of parents start framing details of requirements and the terms of offer. It is both interesting and simultaneously disappointing to note that the two persons who are going to spend rest of their lives together,

even after the parents are gone, do not bother to involve themselves in the exercise, despite being in a better position to do so with education and availability of information on the internet. They need to be more involved. Things are looking up as many youngsters are willing to take charge of their future life. There is a period of courtship, and sometimes even a live-in, to ascertain the suitability of entering into the agreement, or even update or amend the terms of engagement.

The responses from the prospective applicants are evaluated. There is a shortlist. The final selection is made after discussions and based on mutually agreed commercial terms. I consciously use the word 'commercial'. It is a sad reality. A date is finalised for the formal signing of

the agreement.

Both the parties indulge in a lot of self-congratulatory and joint celebrations through age-old ceremonies before the wedding date. We now encounter two important consultants, one from each side, the priests, who shall administer the terms of the understanding between the bride and the groom through a series of elaborate rituals. It is a different matter that much of these instructions are in a language which now very few understand, least of all the two involved parties, who are lost to the world in the euphoria of the moment. With the wisdom of age, and availability of material on the internet, I can now say that the vows taken at marriage would probably result in happier and long-lasting relationships if the promises are made after a good understanding much

before the W-Day. Many do lead a contented life till the end, riding the crests and troughs. However, it is well-nigh impossible to be perfect where human emotions are involved despite best intentions. Couples, at least till my generation, were brought up with the belief that the terms of this bond were divine and life-long, and we mortals did not have the authority to change them. The youngsters do not think so. They would rightly and justifiably terminate a relationship if it does not give them satisfaction and happiness.

This does not sit well with the parents and well-meaning relatives. They judge the young through the lens of their values. They would still advise the couple to give it a little more time. This attempt at finding a solution through the efforts of the concilia-

tors, or the dispute members or the arbitrators, may or may not work. The two parties, after having exhausted all other measures for an amicable solution, may engage lawyers to meet in the court of law.

This is also the life cycle of infrastructure and other projects. They also go through the same pangs. Contract execution or administration or management is a microcosm of life. Relationships are fragile and ought to be nurtured with clarity and clear understanding of the terms. However, there should be no hesitation to terminate the agreement, without acrimony, if the situation so warrants. Life must keep moving.

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing)

Arrest warrants against Taliban leaders

SIDDHARTHA MISRA

In a recent measure aimed at achieving the ends of international criminal justice, the International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants against two senior leaders of the Taliban – Haibatullah Akhundzada, Supreme Leader of the Taliban, and Abdul Hakim Haqqani, Chief Justice of the Taliban – for crimes against humanity, including gender-based persecution. This move is being seen not just as a significant step towards accountability for the regime's brutal actions since its return to power in August 2021, but also as a powerful affirmation of gender justice on the global stage against the crime of gender persecution.

The issuance of warrants has drawn the attention of the world community towards crimes against girls and women ever since the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan in August 2021 that have continued up till the beginning of 2025. The ICC's public statement stated that "there are reasonable grounds to

believe that Mr Haibatullah Akhundzada and Mr Abdul Hakim Haqqani have committed the crime against humanity of persecution, under Article 7(1) (h) of the Rome Statute, on gender grounds, against girls, women and other persons non-conforming with the Taliban's policy on gender, gender identity or expression; and on political grounds against persons perceived as allies of girls and women". As per Article 7(1) of the Rome Statute, "crime against humanity" means any of the acts listed in the same article – such as murder, torture, and persecution – when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack. Clause (h) of Article 7(1) includes, in crimes against humanity, persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender, or other grounds that are universally recognised as impermissible under international law.

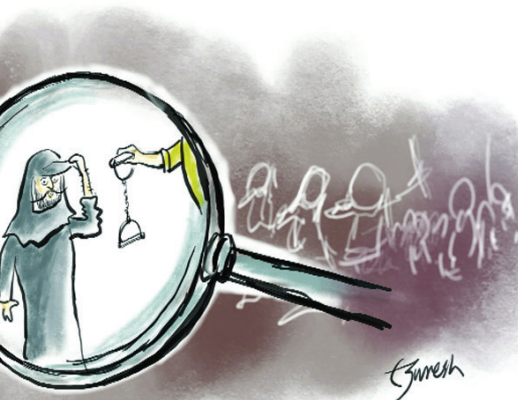
Further, persecution is defined in Article 7(2)(g) as "the intentional and severe

deprivation of fundamental rights contrary to international law by reason of the identity of the group or collectivity", when such persecution has been committed in connection with another act as mentioned under different clauses of Article 7(1). Regarding the criminal liability for such acts, the Rome Statute provides that a person shall be criminally responsible and liable for punishment for a crime within the jurisdiction of the Court if that person: (a) Commits such a crime, whether as an individual, jointly with another, or through another person, regardless of whether that other person is criminally responsible; (b) Orders, solicits, or induces the commission of such a crime which in fact occurs or is attempted; (c) For the purpose of facilitating the commission of such a crime, aids, abets or otherwise assists in its commission or its attempted commission, including providing the means for its commission; (d) In any other way contributes to the commission or attempted commission of such a crime by a group of persons acting with a

common purpose.

The statement issued by the ICC stated that "the Taliban severely deprived, through decrees and edicts, girls and women of the rights to education, privacy and family life and the freedoms of movement, expression, thought, conscience and religion", and targeted others because of their expressions of sexuality and/or gender identity. The statement also refers to the persecution, on political grounds, of "allies of girls or women".

The ICC's action is perhaps the first such development in which provisions against gender-based persecution under the Rome



Statute have been invoked in the case of systemic oppression of women and girls in a non-conflict situation. The charges against the Afghan leaders are serious in nature and include imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture, and persecution – committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack on the female population of Afghanistan. It is alleged that since coming to power, the Taliban has denied even basic human rights to Afghan women and girls.

The Taliban has imposed restrictions on girls from acquiring education at secondary and higher levels, prohib-

ited them from taking jobs, banned their entry into public spaces such as parks and gyms, and created conditions virtually amounting to gender apartheid – all as part of a state policy to vanish women from public life. The ICC's arrest warrants are a clear acknowledgement that violence against women in Afghanistan is criminal in nature rather than being just cultural or political.

Gender justice requires that crimes that victimise individuals based on their gender identity be recognised, prosecuted, and punished. It is evident that Afghan women have been facing structural violence

for long, which, ironically, received almost apathy and ignorance from the international community. However, the recent issuance of arrest warrants indicates that the international legal order treats gender-based persecution as a core concern and not merely a secondary issue, and reaffirms the right to dignity, equality, and justice of Afghan girls and women. Though the ICC's warrants carry substantial legal importance and send a strong message across, they also face certain practical challenges. As Afghanistan is not a State Party to the Rome Statute (though the charge covers crimes committed during the period when Afghanistan was a member), the enforcement of the arrest warrants will be dependent on international pressure, diplomatic isolation, and Afghanistan's internal political equations. Although the purpose of warrants will be truly served when the accused either surrender or are arrested, the decision sends a strong message to other regimes and non-state actors that systemic, state-sponsored gender-

based oppression will not be tolerated. It sets a precedent that could be used in other contexts – including violent suppression of women protestors in civilian situations or gender-based crimes in conflict zones. It also highlights the growing recognition of gender-based crimes in international criminal jurisprudence.

From the acknowledgement of rape as a weapon of war to the prosecution of forced marriage and sexual slavery in armed conflict, gender is no longer an overlooked dimension in assessing atrocities. The ICC's arrest warrants against Taliban leaders are a milestone in the global pursuit of gender justice. They represent a refusal to normalise the erasure and subjugation of women and girls and a bold assertion that gender-based crimes are crimes against humanity. While justice may be delayed, it is no longer denied and the voices of Afghan women are finally echoing in the halls of international law.

(The author is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi)

Hollywood portrayals of heart attacks misleading: Researchers

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

Do not follow Hollywood movies on how people get heart attacks, researchers have warned, saying that the portrayals of someone clutching their chest and collapsing dramatically are misleading and shouldn't be expected.

Ann Eckhardt, a nursing professor and researcher at The University of Texas at Arlington in the US said that "The Hollywood Heart Attack", unfortunately, is not real life.

"It's not always intense. Sometimes it's just discomfort that doesn't feel quite right, so people tend to wait to see a doctor. The longer you wait, the more likely you are to have negative consequences after your heart attack," Eckhardt said in an article published in the journal Heart & Lung.

Eckhardt and her colleagues are working to set the record straight by



first understanding how the public perceives chest pain.

The team explored the common misconceptions about heart attack symptoms.

Many patients don't experience the dramatic,

big-screen version of a heart attack. Instead, symptoms can be complex and even mild. Another widespread myth, the researchers note, is that heart attacks look drastically different in men versus women.

"We used to say men have typical symptoms and women have atypical symptoms," Eckhardt said. "We're trying very hard to move away from that language now. The most common symptom for men and women is chest-related. We created confusion by saying women are somehow completely different."

Changing public perception isn't easy, but it's a mission that drives Eckhardt and her colleagues. Three years ago, she helped develop the "Chest Pain Conception Questionnaire" to help determine how everyday people view heart attacks.

The study revealed that nearly 75 per cent of respondents had consumed heart attack information through sources like TV or movies, highlighting the need for clearer, more accurate educational materials on chest pain and related symptoms.

Intermittent energy restriction can better aid in diabetes control among obese: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

Dietary approaches like intermittent energy restriction, time-restricted eating, and continuous energy restriction can all improve blood sugar levels and body weight in people with obesity and type 2 diabetes, according to a study.

Although researchers identified improved HbA1c levels, and adverse events were similar across the three groups, the IER group showed greater advantages in reducing fasting blood glucose, improving insulin sensitivity, lowering triglycerides, and strengthening adherence to the dietary interventions.

IER typically involves periods of reduced calorie intake. It differs from intermittent fasting (IF) as it involves periods of complete or near-complete food abstinence.

The research directly



compared 5:2 intermittent energy restriction with 10-hour time-restricted eating in patients with obesity and type 2 diabetes.

"The findings provide scientific evidence for clinicians to choose appropriate dietary strategies when treating such patients," said Haohao Zhang, Ph.D., chief physician at The First Affiliated Hospital of Zhengzhou University in Zhengzhou, China.

The study involved 90 patients who were randomly assigned in a 1:1:1 ratio to the IER, TRE, or CER group, with consis-

tent weekly caloric intake across all groups. A team of nutritionists supervised the 16-week intervention. Of those enrolled, 63 completed the study. There were 18 females and 45 males, with an average age of 36.8 years, a mean diabetes duration of 1.5 years, a baseline BMI of 31.7 kg/m², and an HbA1c of 7.42 per cent.

At the end of the study, there were no significant differences in HbA1c reduction and weight loss between the IER, TRE, and CER groups. However, the absolute decrease in HbA1c and body weight was greatest in the IER

group. Compared to TRE and CER, IER significantly reduced fasting blood glucose and triglycerides and increased the Matsuda index, a measure of whole-body insulin sensitivity. Uric acid and liver enzyme levels exhibited no statistically significant changes from baseline in any study group.

Two patients in the IER group and the TRE group, and three patients in the CER group, experienced mild hypoglycemia.

The IER group had the highest adherence rate (85 per cent), followed by the CER group at 84 per cent and the TRE group at 78 per cent. Both the IER and CER groups showed statistically significant differences compared with the TRE group.

Zhang said these findings highlight the feasibility and effectiveness of dietary interventions for people who have obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Warning boards for samosas & jalebis: A big step to curb obesity in India, say experts

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

The Health Ministry's directive to put up an oil and sugar board warning the amount of sugar, fat, and oil in samosas and jalebis in all government canteens and restaurants is a big step to curb the growing levels of obesity and boost the Fit India initiative, said health experts on Monday.

The health ministry has directed all central institutions to install "oil and sugar boards" similar to tobacco warnings on cigarette packets. The informative posters and digital boards highlight the harmful impacts of the amount of sugar and oil present in popular food items, including samosas, kachori, pizza, pakoras, banana chips, burgers, soft drinks, and chocolate pastries.

It also displays the effects of these foods on the human body as well as



shares the recommended amounts of fat and sugar for individual intake.

"The colourful posters will tell how much sugar and oil is hidden in the breakfast we eat every day," cardiologist Dr. Amar Amle from Nagpur, told IANS.

"Obesity has become a silent epidemic, and the number is estimated to increase to 44.9 crores by 2050, hence this step of the government is highly commendable, and will help curb obesity. The

warning boards are similar to those on cigarettes and tobacco," Amle said.

"The idea behind this is that people should be aware of their health, people should know while eating samosa and jalebi how much sugar, oil and fat is there in the food they are eating," Amle told IANS, adding that the initiative in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Fit India, will help build a healthier nation. Best restaurants near meBuy vitamins and supplements

Milind Deora, MP, in a post on social media platform X noted that the Parliamentary Subordinate Legislation Committee is currently reviewing food regulator FSSAI's plans to tackle India's growing obesity crisis.

"We have unanimously advocated uniform regulations across all food categories, including alcohol, so Indian food isn't unfairly targeted while MNCs continue to market Western junk unchecked".

In May, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) issued a directive to schools to install "sugar boards" in schools. Health experts noted that the public health measure also aligns with global nutrition goals, and will help India fight the menace of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, stroke, and certain cancers.

WHO recommends twice-a-year lenacapavir jab to boost global HIV prevention

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

The World Health Organization (WHO) on Monday recommended countries to use the twice-a-year lenacapavir injection as an additional pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) option for global HIV prevention.

The landmark policy action, aiming to reshape the global HIV response, was issued at the 13th International AIDS Society Conference (IAS 2025) on HIV Science, in Kigali, Rwanda.

Lenacapavir -- the first twice-yearly injectable PrEP product -- offers a highly effective, long-acting alternative to daily oral pills and other shorter-acting options.

With just two doses per year, lenacapavir is a transformative step forward in protecting people at risk of HIV -- particularly those who face challenges with daily adher-



ence, stigma, or access to health care. Lenacapavir was approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) a month ago. Buy vitamins and supplements

"While an HIV vaccine remains elusive, lenacapavir is the next best thing: a long-acting antiretroviral shown in trials to prevent almost all HIV infections among those at risk," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

The WHO recommendation comes amid funding cuts to HIV treatment and prevention that threaten to unravel

decades of progress made to fight the deadly condition.

The US, the largest contributor to global HIV funding, halted all assistance on January 20, following the swearing-in of the new US President Donald Trump.

A recent UNAIDS report cautioned that a permanent discontinuation of support from the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) could lead to more than four million additional AIDS-related deaths and six million additional new HIV infections by 2029.

"The launch of WHO's

new guidelines, alongside the FDA's recent approval, marks a critical step forward in expanding access to this powerful tool," Ghebreyesus said.

Marketed under the brand name Yeztugo, the world's first twice-yearly HIV prevention shot that can potentially, transform pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) options. The drug may be particularly crucial for those who struggle with daily medication adherence due to stigma, access issues, or lifestyle factors.

However, the high cost -- at \$28,218 per person per year -- is likely to act as a deterrent to global HIV prevention goals.

The WHO chief noted that the global health body "is committed to working with countries and partners to ensure this innovation reaches communities as quickly and safely as possible". Buy vitamins and supplements

Over 14 mn children worldwide did not receive a single vaccine in 2024: UN

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

More than 14 million children worldwide did not receive a single dose of any vaccine in 2024, according to new national immunisation coverage data released on Tuesday by the UN agencies World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF.

The report showed that nearly 20 million infants missed at least one dose of diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTP)-containing vaccine last year, threatening to unwind decades of progress.

More than 30 million children also remained under-protected against measles, leading to more large or disruptive outbreaks.

In 2024, the number of countries experiencing large or disruptive measles outbreaks rose sharply to 60, nearly doubling from 33 in 2022.

The report blamed limited access to immunisation



services, disrupted supply, conflict, and instability, or misinformation about vaccines for children remaining un or under-vaccinated.

"Vaccines save lives, allowing individuals, families, communities, economies and nations to flourish," said WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

He noted that the missed doses were due to the "drastic cuts in aid, coupled with misinformation about the safety of vaccines".

The report also noted that global childhood vaccination coverage held steady with around 171,000 more children receiving at least one vaccine compared to 2023, and one million more completed the full three-dose DTP series.

In 2024, 89 per cent of infants globally -- about 115 million -- received at least one dose of the DTP-containing vaccine, and 85 per cent -- roughly 109 million -- completed all three doses. Coverage against mea-

sles also improved, with 84 per cent of children receiving the first dose and 76 per cent receiving the second dose, which shows a slight increase from the previous year.

An estimated 2 million more children were reached in 2024, but the overall coverage rate is far below the 95 per cent needed in every community to prevent outbreaks.

"The good news is that we have managed to reach more children with life-saving vaccines. But millions of children remain without protection against preventable diseases, and that should worry us all," said UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell.

Russell called on governments for increased determination "to overcome barriers like shrinking health budgets, fragile health systems along with misinformation and access constraints because of conflicts. No child should die from a disease we know how to prevent."

Warning labels on food not selective towards Indian snacks, says govt

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

The central government on Tuesday denied media reports which claimed that the Ministry of Health has issued health warnings on Indian snacks such as samosas, jalebi, and laddoo to fight obesity crises in the country.

It noted that the warning labels on food issued by the Ministry of Health are "not selective towards Indian snacks".

"Some media reports claim that the @MoHFW_INDIA has issued a health warning on food products such as samosas, jalebi, and laddoo. This claim is fake. The advisory of the Union Health Ministry does not carry any warning labels on food products sold by vendors, and has not been selective towards Indian snacks," the Ministry of Health said.

Media reports claimed that the Union Health Ministry has urged all minis-



tries, departments, and autonomous bodies to display warnings on Indian snacks like samosa, vada pav, kachori, and jalebi.

Calling these reports "misleading, incorrect, and baseless" the Ministry noted that its advisory was on general health awareness and "it does not target India's rich street food culture".

Reacting to the reports, Milind Deora, MP, in a post

on social media platform X noted that the Parliamentary Subordinate Legislation Committee is currently reviewing food regulator FSSAI's plans to tackle India's growing obesity crisis.

"We have unanimously advocated uniform regulations across all food categories, including alcohol, so Indian food isn't unfairly targeted while MNCs continue to market

Western junk unchecked". The Union Health Ministry said its advisory was an initiative towards making healthier choices at workplaces. It is part of the Ministry's flagship initiatives under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD).

It advises about the Display of Boards in various workplaces such as lobbies, canteens, cafeterias, meeting rooms, etc., to raise awareness of the harmful consumption of hidden fats and excess sugar in various food items.

"These Boards are meant to serve as daily reminders on fighting obesity, the burden of which is sharply rising in the country," the Ministry said.

Excessive consumption of oil and sugar is known as a key contributor to the rising rate of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and other lifestyle-related diseases.

Financial Commissioner (ACS) higher education Shantmanu inaugurates IGNOU learner support centre at GGM Science College, Jammu

JINews SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 21

In a significant step towards enhancing access to quality higher education, Shri Shantmanu, Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary), Higher Education Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, inaugurated the IGNOU Learner Support Centre (LSC-12133) at Government Gandhi Memorial (GGM) Science College, Jammu. The inauguration ceremony was graced by Prof. (Dr.) Romesh Gupta, Principal of GGM Science College; Dr. Sandeep Gupta, Regional Director, IGNOU Regional Centre Jammu; Assistant Regional Directors, Dr. Asha Upadhyay, Dr. Vikram Singh and Dr. Zeba, Deputy Registrar, S. Tejinder Pal Singh, Assistant Registrar, Sh. Dara Singh, and Dr. P. S. Thakur, Coordinator of the newly established Learner Support Centre.

Earlier, with the approval of Vice Chancellor, IGNOU, Prof. Uma Kanjilal, based on the recommendations of Sub-Committee of Student Support Centre (SSC) in its 9th Meeting held on May 7, 2025, the Learner Support Centre (LSC) in the GGM Science College, Jammu was notified for BSCM (Bachelor of Science) and MSCZOO (Master of Science in Zoology) programmes. This is the first ever Learner Sup-



port Centre of IGNOU in the entire Jammu division to have been notified exclusively for Science based programmes.

While speaking at the event, Shantmanu underscored the importance of accessible and flexible education in today's rapidly evolving academic landscape. He added that the Department of Higher Education is making continuous efforts to strength-

en the teaching-learning ecosystem across all institutions in the UT. Establishing this support centre is yet another step in our learner-centric approach to empower students from all walks of life. He assured all cooperation and support from the Higher Education Department to IGNOU by way of expansion of the Learner Support Network in the region.

Prof. (Dr.) Romesh

Gupta, Principal of GGM Science College, lauded the initiative and stated, that, this IGNOU centre will open new avenues of learning for both our students and the wider community. It will significantly enhance academic engagement by offering services such as counselling, tutorials, and examination support.

Dr. Sandeep Gupta, Regional Director, IGNOU RC Jammu, elaborated on the broader impact of IGNOU in strengthening higher education in the region. This collaboration with GGM Science College reinforces our mission to bring quality distance education closer to learners, making it more accessible and inclusive, he further remarked. The newly established Learner Support Centre aims to serve as a vital academic and administrative hub for IGNOU learners across the Jammu region, furthering the goals of inclusive and lifelong education.

Fulfilled Statehood is birthright of J&K People: Tony

JINews SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 21

Senior Congress leader and DDC Member Suchetgarh, Taranjit Singh Tony, today strongly asserted that the people of Jammu and Kashmir were born in a state, not a Union Territory, and therefore, restoration of full statehood is their constitutional right and not a matter of charity.

In a statement issued here today, Tony said, "The people of Jammu and Kashmir have been robbed of their identity and rights after the downgrading of the erstwhile state into a Union Territory. The BJP has not only remained a silent spectator to this injustice but has also backstabbed the educated youth of Jammu by allowing non-locals to occupy key positions in educational institutions."

Tony pointed out that all universities in Jammu and Kashmir are currently headed by Vice Chancellors from outside the region, which he termed as an "insult to the qualified and competent local academicians." He



accused the BJP of facilitating the extension of tenures to blue-eyed individuals, ignoring deserving candidates from J&K.

"The criminal silence of the BJP proves its complicity. It is shameful that top teaching posts at Jammu University are being filled by outsiders while superior local candidates are being overlooked. This is not just injustice; it is betrayal," he added.

He further alleged that the Union Territory has become a dumping ground for individuals connected to the BJP from other states, depriving the local youth of jobs and fair opportunities.

Referring to the recent incident where the convoy of elected Chief Minister Omar Abdullah was stopped by police on July

13 and 14, Tony said, "This is a new low in democracy. Even yesterday, elected leaders in Rajouri were mistreated. This police high-handedness must stop."

Tony criticized the present administration, including the coalition government led by Omar Abdullah, saying it is powerless in delivering promises like regularization of daily wagers and lifting of recruitment bans, as real control lies in Delhi.

He also referred to the Supreme Court's directions that statehood must be restored to Jammu and Kashmir, saying, "Nowhere else in India has a full-fledged state been turned into a UT. This unprecedented step is being used by the BJP for its personal political motives."

The senior Congress leader also thanked AICC leader Rahul Gandhi and the Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge for leading from the front and writing to the Prime Minister, urging the government to bring a comprehensive Bill for the restoration of full-fledged

statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

He said every citizen of J&K indebted to Rahul Gandhi and the Congress Party for the long-pending and much-delayed demand since 2019. He reminded the BJP of the repeated promises made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah regarding the restoration of statehood on several occasions. He added that people have now started doubting their leaders, especially as most BJP leaders continue to say that statehood will be restored at an "appropriate time," a phrase that now seems vague and misleading.

Reiterating Congress Party's stand, Tony said the movement for restoration of statehood is gaining momentum with each passing day and Congress, under the leadership of its J&K President Tariq Hameed Karra, is leading it from the front. "Statehood is not just a demand; it's our birthright. And we will not rest until justice is delivered to the people of Jammu and Kashmir," he concluded.

GDC Marheen organizes Workshop on "E-Tendering: Understanding the Process"

JINews SERVICE
KATHUA, JULY 20:

The Department of Computer Applications under the aegis of IQAC, Government Degree College Marheen, organized a one-day workshop on the theme "E-Tendering: Understanding the process" at the college campus.

The programme was conducted under the patronage of the Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Anupama Gupta.

The primary objective of the workshop was to familiarize faculty members with the end-to-end e-Tendering process, online bid submission, and best practices for navigating the e-procurement portal. The technical session was led by Mr. Deepak Bajaj, Senior Soft-



ware Developer from NIC, who covered key aspects such as an overview of e-procurement platforms, registration and login procedures, tender search and document download, online bid submission, bid security, common errors, and troubleshooting.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Bajaj said, "E-tendering promotes fairness, competition, and efficiency. This workshop is a step toward ensuring that all

stakeholders are equipped to participate in this digital transformation."

Faculty members from nine colleges of Kathua district actively participated in the workshop, including GDC Kathua, GCW Kathua, GDC Hiranagar, GDC Ghagwal, GDC Ramkot, GDC Billawar, GDC Basohli, GDC Mahanpur, and GDC Marheen.

Following the technical session, participants engaged in hands-on dem-

onstrations and interactive Q&A sessions, making the workshop practical and highly engaging. The programme concluded with a feedback session and distribution of participation certificates. Attendees appreciated the workshop's informative content and expressed that it would significantly enhance their ability to handle digital procurement processes effectively.

The workshop was conducted under the supervision of Prof. Anoop Sharma (Convener IQAC and Head, Department of Computer Application). Other faculty members who contributed to the successful organization of the event included Prof. Sandeep Choudhary, Dr. Arun Dev Singh, Dr. Munisha, and Dr. Shalun

JINews SERVICE
JAMMU, JUL 21

In a moment of recognition for unwavering dedication and public service, Padma Shri Dr. S.P. Verma, President of Gandhi Global Family (GGF) J&K, on Monday felicitated Rajiv Mahajan, UT President of Shri Ram Sena (J&K) and Editor-in-Chief of Top News of J&K, for his over 15 years of distinguished service in social activism and journalism.

Dr. Verma praised Mahajan's relentless commitment to societal upliftment, emphasizing his dual contributions in



championing public causes through Shri Ram Sena and upholding the voice of the people through his editorial leadership in Top News of J&K, the only English evening newspaper of the region.

"Rajiv Mahajan has

consistently raised pressing grassroots issues and promoted national harmony through both activism and media. His work reflects true patriotism and civic responsibility," said Dr. Verma while presenting the felicitation.

Mahajan's tenure in social service has been marked by bold advocacy, public engagement, and a tireless focus on the welfare of marginalized sections. Under his editorial guidance, Top News of J&K has emerged as a credible platform, known for its

integrity and people-centric journalism.

The felicitation highlighted Mahajan's role in bridging the gap between citizens and administration, and in nurturing a civil society rooted in democratic values. His balanced leadership in activism and journalism serves as an inspiring example for the younger generation.

In his brief address, Mahajan expressed gratitude to Dr. Verma and reaffirmed his commitment to serving the people of Jammu & Kashmir with honesty, courage, and compassion.

India leads World in Digital Payments – A Triumph of PM Modi's Visionary Leadership : Gaurav

JINews SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 21

Gaurav Gupta, BJP Spokesperson, said, "India's phenomenal rise as the global leader in fast digital payments is a direct result of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visionary leadership and the success of the Digital India mission. The IMF's recognition of UPI is a proud moment for every Indian."

The recent IMF report titled "Growing Retail Digital Payments: The Value of Interoperability" applauds India's revolutionary Unified Payments Interface (UPI), launched in 2016 by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). UPI has transformed how India transacts – enabling



secure, instant, and low-cost digital payments across all sections of society.

Today, UPI accounts for 85% of all digital payments in India, linking 491 million users, 65 million merchants, and 675 banks. In June 2024, it processed over 18.39 billion transac-

tions worth Rs 24.03 lakh crore, registering a 32% year-on-year growth.

Gupta added, "UPI has become a symbol of financial inclusion and digital empowerment – benefiting everyone from local vendors to global travellers. Its expansion to

seven countries, including France and UAE, is a testament to India's rising digital stature on the global stage."

He further stated, "This is not just a fintech milestone – it's a reflection of India's trust in innovation, governance, and inclusive growth. Under PM Modi's leadership, India has shown the world how technology can transform lives."

As UPI continues to strengthen India's digital backbone, this achievement showcases the success of the Reform-Perform-Transform model, making India not just a participant, but a global leader in the digital economy.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MECHANICAL IRRIGATION DIVISION, AKHNOOR/NOWSHERA
Tele/Fax : 01924-253998/E-Mail – ijcjmidadkhnoor@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
e-NIT No.: - MID/AN/23 Dated: -19/07/2025

For and on behalf of The Hon'ble Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir (UT), Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division Akhnoor/Nowshera invites e-tenders from Approved contractors/ Registered firms / Workshop owners having experience in Electromechanical Works for following jobs: -

S. No.	Name of the work	Quantity	Earnest Money (Rs. in Laacs)	Cost of tender document	Period of Completion	Class of contractor
01.	Design, fabrication, manufacturing, assembling, supply, installation, testing and commissioning V.T pump assembly of 20 cusec x 40 head Francis vane type mixed flow make ASTMA 276 type 431 of new bowl assembly for existing installed 20 cusec x 40 head VT Pump (2 stage) at LIS Rajal coupled with 3 phase 6.6 KV, 50 Hz, 986 rpm, slip ring, vertical solid shaft, 400 HP HT Induction motor along with allied works at LIS Rajal	01 Job	02% of the quoted value	Rs. 2000	90 Days	Registered /Reputed firms /Workshop owners having experience in Electromechanical Works

- The bidding documents can be seen and downloaded from the website <http://www.jktenders.gov.in> from 19/07/2025 (05:00PM) to 31/07/2025 (02:00 PM). Bidding document contains instruction for bidders, bill of quantities, general terms and condition and other details.
 - The Bids shall be uploaded in electronic format on the website <http://www.jktenders.gov.in> from 23/07/2025 (10:00AM) to 31/07/2025 (02:00 PM).
 - The complete bidding process will be through electronic mode.
 - A pre-bid meeting will be held on 22/07/2025 (11:30 AM) in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division Akhnoor / Nowshera to address any queries from the firms.
 - Cover-I of the bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on 01/08/2025(1:00PM) in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division Akhnoor / Nowshera in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
 - Furnishing of hard copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the bidders who is declared as L1 after opening of Financial Bids
 - The cost of the tenders should be collected by introducing e-challan by simply uploading a copy of necessary treasury challan/Receipt.
- Similarly, insisting on actual call deposit receipt, a copy of same duly pledged to the concerned department should be uploaded by the tenderers. However, before allotting the work or issuing the supply order the original CDR should be obtained and kept on record.
- Other details can be seen in the bidding document.
- The guidelines regarding submission of bid in electronic mode can be downloaded from website <http://www.jktenders.gov.in>
- The bidders shall go through the tender specific instructions sheet also.
- The bidders for any clarification can contact the department through e-mail ijcjmidadkhnoor@gmail.com.

No: - MID/AN/466-70
Dated: - 19-07-2025

-Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Mechanical Irrigation Division
Akhnoor/Nowshera

DIP/J-3698/25
Date: 21-7-25

AM MG Successfully conducts 'Hector Love Drive' Rally in Celebration of 6 Glorious Years of MG Hector

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 20

AM MG Motors proudly organized the Hector Love Drive on 20th July 2025, commemorating six years of the iconic MG Hector, India's first internet SUV. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from MG Hector owners and fans, making it a memorable celebration of trust, community and driving passion.

The rally flagged off at 10:30 AM from AM MG Motors, Narwal Bypass



Road, Jammu and concluded at the prestigious Jammu Club. The spirited convoy of up to 50 proud MG customers marked the strength of the MG family and its unwavering support over the years.

The event was held under the visionary leadership of the AM Group, including Chairman Mr. Jatinder Gupta, Managing Director Mr. Sanjay Mahajan, Directors Mr. Ankur Mahajan, Mr. Akshay Maha-

jan, Mr. Aryan Mahajan, Ms. Sahira Mahajan, Mrs. Vandana Mahajan and Mrs. Sharmila Mahajan.

Post-rally celebrations featured lunch and refreshments, where customers and guests engaged in heartfelt conversations, shared their driving experiences, and expressed their admiration for the MG brand. The occasion highlighted not only MG Hector's remarkable journey but also AM MG's dedication to community building and customer satisfaction in the Jammu region.

ABRSM slams delay in teachers' transfers, alleges political interference

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 21

The Akhil Bharatiya Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh (ABRSM), Jammu and Kashmir UT, has strongly criticized the Education Department for the unwarranted and deliberate delay in the annual transfer drive of Teachers and Masters in the Jammu division.

In a formal communication addressed to the Hon'ble Education Minister Ms. Sakeena Itoo and the Commissioner Secretary, ABRSM UT General Secretary Mr. Gulshan Raina expressed deep concern over the repeated halting of the transfer process. According to Mr. Raina, despite the department initiating the

transfer exercise twice this year, the process was inexplicably abandoned mid-way each time, raising serious doubts about the transparency and intent of the administration.

Mr. Raina alleged that political pressure and influence from well-connected employees have derailed the entire process, thereby denying fair opportunities to hundreds of deserving teachers. "The Directorate of School Education Jammu (DSEJ) had already approved transfer lists for all ten districts, but the exercise was suddenly put on hold, clearly indicating external interference," he said.

Calling this a violation of the fundamental

rights of employees, Mr. Raina pointed out that many teachers have been posted in remote and difficult areas for over a decade, while those with powerful connections continue to remain at prime urban postings. "Every teacher deserves an equal opportunity to serve at a convenient location. However, the system seems to favour only a select few," he added.

Mr. Raina further lamented that while there is consistent rhetoric about improving the quality of education, the ground reality reveals a different story. "When it comes to ensuring justice for educators, the system crumbles under pressure," he remarked.

Highlighting recent malpractices, Mr. Raina alleged that some Chief Education Officers have misused the rationalization process to selectively benefit their favoured individuals. "There appears to be a well-entrenched nexus working to sabotage the transfer policy, and this demands a high-level inquiry," he asserted.

The ABRSM has urged the Hon'ble Education Minister to personally intervene and ensure that the transfer process is completed in Jammu Division, just as it was in the Kashmir Division. Failure to act immediately, Mr. Raina warned, may compel the teaching fraternity to resort to agitation and protest.

Yudhvir visits landslide-affected area in Peer-Kho

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 21

Senior BJP leader and MLA Jammu East, Shri Yudhvir Sethi, today raised serious concern over the significant losses suffered by shopkeepers due to a sudden landslide in Ward No 3, Peer Kho area of Jammu. The landslide, triggered by continuous rainfall in the region, caused debris and mud entered into the shops, damaging goods, infrastructure, and disrupting business activity.

Upon receiving information about the incident, Yudhvir Sethi immediately reached the site to personally assess the damage and extend moral support to



the affected shopkeepers. He interacted with the victims, listened to their grievances, and assured them of all possible help from the administration and his office.

Taking prompt action, Sethi contacted the concerned Tehsildar and the Executive Engineer of the Public Works Department (PWD) to seek an immediate response to the

situation. He urged the concerned authorities to carry out a detailed survey of the affected shops and provide relief without any delay.

Sethi said that such natural calamities not only cause financial loss to small traders but also severely impact their livelihoods. He emphasized that it is the responsibility of the administration to respond quickly and compensate those affected. "I will personally follow up with the higher authorities to ensure that adequate compensation is provided to the affected shopkeepers and that preventive measures are taken to avoid such incidents in future," he said.

Indian Army organizes Motivational Lecture on World Youth Skills Day at Hayatpura, Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE
POONCH: 21 JUL 2025

The Indian Army organized an inspiring and motivational lecture on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day at Government Senior High School, Hayatpura. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from 70 students and parents, 6 teachers and 10 Army personnel. The session aimed to enlighten the students about the importance of acquiring practical skills, adaptability and discipline to succeed in today's dynamic world. Army speakers highlighted the significance of vocational education, life skills,



communication, leadership and digital literacy as essential tools for empowerment and self-reliance. The lecture included interactive discussions and real-life examples drawn from the Indian Army's own experiences,

which served to motivate the students towards goal-setting, perseverance and continuous self-improvement. This initiative is part of the unit's ongoing efforts to promote community outreach and youth empowerment, particu-

larly in rural and border areas. The overwhelmingly positive response from students and staff reflected the meaningful impact of such engagements in broadening perspectives and instilling confidence among the youth.

Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah convey condolences

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 21

National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah former Chief Minister, Jenab Omar Abdullah Honble Chief Minister and Vice President JKNC and Jenab Surinder Choudhary Deputy Chief Minister, Haji Ali Mohd Sagar Advocate General Secretary, Dr. Sheikh Mustafa Kamaal, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra Additional General Secretaries expressed grief over the passing away of Smt. Shub Gupta Wife of Advocate Rattan Lal Gupta Provincial President Jammu JKNC and former MLC and conveyed condolences to the bereaved family.

In their messages, Dr Farooq Abdullah, Jenab Omar Abdullah, Jenab Surinder Choudhary, Haji Ali Mohd Sagar Advocate, Dr. Sheikh Mustafa Kamaal, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, Javed Ahmad Rana Honble Minister, Javed Ahmad Dhar Honble Minister, Madam Sakina Itoo Honble Minister, Satish Sharma Honble Minister prayed to the departed soul rest in peace and expressed solidarity with

other members of the family.

Jenab Omar Abdullah Honble Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary Honble Deputy Chief Minister, Madam Sakina Masood (Itoo), Javed Ahmad Dar, Javed Ahmad Rana and Satish Sharma Honble Cabinet Ministers participated in the cremation.

In the condolence message, Sardar Shami Oberia Treasurer, Showket Ahmad Mir Provincial President Kashmir, Sheikh Bashir Ahmad Provincial Secretary Jammu, Ajaz Jan Honble MLA Poonch, Sajjad Shaheen Honble MLA Banihal, Arjun Singh Raju Honble MLA Ramban, Mr Javid Choudhary Honble MLA Budhal, Er, Khurshied Ahmad Honble MLA Gulabgarh, Pyare Lal Sharma Honble MLA Inderwal, Dr. Rameshwar Honble MLA Bani, Muzaffar Khan Honble MLA Thanamandi, Ch. Akram Honble MLA Surankote, Sardar Harbans Singh former minister, Khalid Najeev Suharwardhy former minister, Ch. Liaqet Ali Central Secretary, Babu Rampal former

minister and Central Zone President, Abdul Gani Malik former minister and Zonal President Udhampur Reasi, Sajjad Ahmad Kichloo former minister and Zonal President Chenab Valley, Qazi Jalal Ud Din former MLA, Dr. Chaman Lal Bhagat former MLA, Bimla Luthra former MLA, Dr. Kamal Arora former MLA, Sagar Chand former MLA, R.S Sharma former MLA, Th. Suram Singh former MLA, Dhian Chand former MLA, Mohd Aslam Khan former MLA, Bushan Lal Bhat former MLC, Rahim Daad former MLC, Master Noor Hussain former MLC, Ikhlq Khan former MLC, Mohd Iqbal Bhat former MLC, Pardeep Bali, Ayub Malik, Arif Mir Shafiqat Mir, Ch. Wali Daad Th. Rameshwar Singh DDC Dangri Provincial Secretaries Jammu, Ghar Singh, Dr. Gafoor, Surjeet Singh Manhas, Ankush Abrol, S. Tejinder Singh Aman Provincial President YNC Jammu, Satwant Kour Dogra P.P Women Wing Jammu, Vijay Luthra Joint Secretaries Jammu Province, Jugal Mahajan Treasurer, Shamim Begum DDC Damsal, Joginder

Singh Kaku DDC Nagrota, Suriya Begum DDC Bari Brahmana, Dr. Shamshad Shan DDC Chairperson Ramban, Ch. Naseem Liaqet DDC Chairman Rajouri, Pooja Thakur DDC Chairperson Kishtwar, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Abdul Gani Teli Chairman OBC Cell, Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Th. Yashu Vardan, Zeeshan Rana, Sandeep Singh Wazir Additional spokespersons Jammu, Laxmi Datta Senior leader, Chander Mohan Sharma, Naresh Singh Manhas, Naresh Bittu, Sudagar Gupta, Ajeet Kumar Sharma, Sham Nariyan Mehta, Tirth Ram, Raj Kumar Sharma, Sunil Verma, Ramparshotam, Zaffarullah Rather, Abdul Qayoom Bhagwa, Tanveer Ahmad Kichloo, Abid Magrey, Shafyat Ahmad Khan, Ashok Kumar Sharma, Bagh Hussain Rathore District Presidents, Rajni Devi Working President Women Wing Jammu Province, All Block Presidents, Party functionaries Jammu Province have also expressed grief and prayed for peace to the departed soul.

IDA Jammu seeks ESIC approval for Medical College and Dental College Jammu

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 21

The Indian Dental Association (IDA), Jammu has requested Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt. of India, to approve an Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) Medical and a Dental College for Jammu. Dr. Nipun Gupta, President, and Dr. Vibha Raina,

Secretary, IDA Jammu, informed that it is surprising to know that while the ESIC has approved the establishment of 30 new medical colleges in the country but no ESIC medical or dental college was sanctioned for Jammu.

On October 08, 2024, during the 194 meeting of the ESIC, 10 medical colleges were approved and on April 22, 2025, the ESIC has decided to open 20 more medical colleges

to support the creation of new 75000 medical seats in next 5 years as announced by the Prime Minister, Sh. Narendra Modi, during the Independence Day (2024) speech.

Prime Minister, Sh. Narendra Modi, on June 6, 2025, said that Jammu & Kashmir is the "crown jewel" of India and emphasised the government's unwavering focus on economic growth, infrastructure, and security. There is an industrial boom in J&K UT after the Modi Government abrogated the Article 370 on August 5, 2019. The number of industries, businesses, hotels and industrial workers has increased many folds in J&K. Lt. Governor of J&K, Sh. Manoj Sinha, revealed that industrial investment proposals amounting to nearly Rs 60,000 crore are pending in the Union Territory.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR Office of the Executive Engineer JAL SHAKTI (PHE) City Division No.II Jammu

FRESH NOTICE INVITING E- TENDER 3rd Time

E-NIT No PHEC/II/ 18 OF 2025-26

The Executive Engineer JAL SHAKTI (PHE) City Division No.II Jammu for and on behalf of The Hon'ble Lt. Governor of Union territory of Jammu & Kashmir invites Fresh Tenders by e-tendering from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K State Government, (U.T now) for the below mentioned works:

S. No	Name of work.	Estdt. Cost	Cost of documents	Earnest Money	Time of completion	Class of contractor
1	PROVIDING AND INSTALLATION OF D4 NOS FLEXS COMPLETE JOB, AT KUNJWANI CHOWK(SIZE 15X,10) RAILWAY ROAD (21X11) , VIKRAM CHOWK (SIZE 15X 10) AND FOURTH BRIDGE BHAGAWATI NAGAR (15X10) , UNDER JJM	Rs 0.30 lacs	Rs. 500/-	Rs. 600/-	1 Month	Dee

Position of Funds: Available

Sl. No.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice.	AA = Accorded
1.	19.07.2025	
2.	19.07.2025 05.00 PM	
3.	19.07.2025 05.30 PM	
4.	19.07.2025 06.00 PM	
5.	25.07.2025 04.00 PM	
6.	26.07.2025 03.00 PM	

- The Tender can be downloaded from J&K Govt. website.
- Cost of bidding document in shape of e-challan/single window challan of JMC pledged to Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE City Division No II Jammu /tender fee receipt through online payment through the JMC link <http://www.jmcjammu.org/online-payment.html>
- Scanned copy of the EMD will also be required to be uploaded along with. The original instruments in respect of cost of documents, Performance security @ 3% and relevant documents of Lowest Bidder (L-1) will be required to be submitted to the Executive Engineer JAL SHAKTI (PHE) City Division NO II Jammu within 07(Seven) days of opening of financial bids on-line. In case the original documents are not submitted by the Lowest Bidder (L-1) within 07 (Seven) days after opening of financial bid, the tender of lowest bidder will be rejected and the lowest bidder (L-1) will not be allowed to participate in any further /future tendering process in the Divisional office for a period of two years. The work can be offered to L-2 after necessary approvals etc. from competent authority

-Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
JAL SHAKTI (PHE) City Division No.II
Jammu

NO PHEC/II/1511-26

Dated 19/07/2025

DIP/J-3717/25

Date: 21-7-25

PM opens monsoon session with call for unity, hails Op Sindoor, space feat

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

Ahead of the commencement of the monsoon session of Parliament, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today highlighted a broad spectrum of national developments ranging from Operation Sindoor, agriculture and space exploration to defence capability and digital transformation.

Modi also called on all members of Parliament to speak about the country's pride in one voice during the session. "While there may be differences on party lines, there must be



Modi praised the success of Operation Sindoor, in which the Indian Army neutralised high-value targets at enemy bases within 22 minutes. He said this operation reflected the readiness and strength of India's armed forces and underscored the increasing global interest in Indian-made defence systems.

"World leaders have expressed their admiration for India's indigenously developed military hardware," he noted, adding that defence manufacturing would further empower youth through employment and innovation.

unity of intent in matters of national interest," he stated and expressed hope that the session would be marked by high-quality debates and cooperation on legislation aimed at

boosting development, empowering citizens, and advancing India's progress.

Describing the monsoon session as a "celebration of India's victories,"

"Don't politicise court proceedings," SC tells petitioner in contempt case against Mamata Banerjee

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

The Supreme Court today cautioned against politicising judicial proceedings while hearing a plea seeking initiation of criminal contempt against West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for her remarks on the Court's ruling in the teachers' recruitment scam case.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) BR Gavai, Justice K Vinod Chandran, and Justice NV Anjaria was hearing the



petition filed by Aatmdeep, a public charitable trust, which sought criminal contempt proceedings

against Banerjee.

Senior Advocate Maninder Singh, appearing for the petitioner, requested the Bench to defer the matter as a sanction request for initiating contempt had been filed before the Attorney General.

Responding to the submission, CJI Gavai remarked, "Are you so sure that you will get the consent? Don't try to politicise before the Court; your political battle, you should fight somewhere else."

The Bench then agreed to list the matter after four weeks.

The plea arises from Banerjee's alleged objectionable comments following the Supreme Court's April verdict, delivered by a Bench of then Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar, which upheld the Calcutta High Court's decision invalidating nearly 25,000 teaching and non-teaching appointments made by the West Bengal School Service Commission (SSC) in 2016.

HC acquits all 12 in 2006 Mumbai train blasts case, slams 'failed' prosecution

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, JULY 21

In a judicial verdict that has sent shockwaves through the legal community, the Bombay High Court on Monday acquitted all 12 suspects previously convicted in the 2006 Mumbai train blasts case, declaring that the prosecution had "utterly failed" to establish their guilt beyond reasonable doubt.

The judgment, delivered 19 years after the terror attack that claimed over 180 lives and left hundreds injured, was pronounced by a special bench comprising justices Anil Kilor



The horrific incident occurred on July 11, 2006, when seven coordinated bomb explosions ripped through Mumbai's suburban railway network during evening rush hour, targeting first-class compartments of Western Railway trains.

The blasts occurred over an 11-minute span (6:24 pm to 6:35 pm) at locations including Khar Road-Santacruz, Bandra-Khar Road, Jogeshwari-Mahim Junction, Mira Road-Bhayander, Matunga-Mahim Junction, and Borivali. Pressure cooker bombs designed to maximize casualties killed 189 people and injured over 700.

and Shyam Chandak. The bench categorically stated that the evidence presented was insufficient to sustain convictions, observing it was "hard to believe that the accused committed the

crime." The court quashed both the death sentences awarded to five individuals and life imprisonment terms given to the remaining seven.

Anwar Raajhaa joins DMK, warns BJP will 'destroy' AIADMK like other regional parties

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, JULY 21

Soon after joining the ruling DMK in the presence of Chief Minister MK Stalin today, former minister Anwar Raajhaa said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would destroy the AIADMK just as it has done with several other regional parties across the country.

The AIADMK suffered a major setback ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections, as Raajhaa was one of its most prominent Muslim faces and a vocal critic of the party's alliance with the BJP.

Speaking to the media after his formal induction



into the DMK, Raajhaa said, "The AIADMK has derailed from its ideological path and is now held hostage by the BJP. Whenever the BJP aligns, its intention is to devour and destroy—as it did with the Shiv Sena and the Nation-

alist Congress Party. The BJP's agenda is to wipe out the AIADMK and confront the DMK."

Raajhaa, who had been associated with the AIADMK for over five decades, said the BJP's treatment of the alliance was a key reason for his departure.

"In his three interviews, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had not even once mentioned that Edappadi K Palaniswami (EPS) is Chief Ministerial candidate. He has been reiterating that the NDA will secure the mandate and the BJP would be part of the government. Even EPS could not declare that

he is the CM face in the event of AIADMK winning the election. But, like (US President) Trump claiming that he brought about the truce (in the Indo-Pak conflict), the fate of EPS is similar to that and hence he is parroting for the last 10 days that he is the CM nominee," Raajhaa said, slamming the BJP and EPS.

Praising the leadership of the Chief Minister and DMK president, like all newcomers into the party, he said, "Stalin happens to be the only leader who can protect the Dravidian ideology and its cardinal principles like state autonomy and linguistic right of our language."

MP secures over Rs 11,000 cr investment proposals from CM's Dubai-Spain visit

AGENCIES
BHOPAL, JULY 21

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has stated that his just-concluded visit to Dubai and Spain will open new avenues of development in the state. Investors from both countries have shown great enthusiasm for investing in the state. As a result of this visit, Madhya Pradesh has received investment proposals worth over Rs 11,000 crore.

The CM said during his previous visits to countries such as Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom, significant investment pro-



posals were also received for the state. Continuous domestic and international investments are helping realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a developed India.

Upon his return from

the foreign tour, the Chief Minister addressed the media here and shared the outcomes of the visit. He said investment proposals worth Rs 11,119 cr were secured during the Dubai and Spain tours, which are expected to generate employment for more than 14,000 people.

Yadav emphasised that transforming the lives of the poorest is essential, and PM Modi was making tireless efforts towards this goal. "The state government is committed to inclusive development — empowering the poor, youth, women and farmers — while preserving heritage and accelerating

progress. He urged all citizens to remain committed to advancing Madhya Pradesh," he said.

The Chief Minister noted the Prime Minister's seven visits to Dubai during his 11-year tenure to foster bilateral trade and industrial partnerships. Yadav, calling Dubai a "mini-world," said he is following in the Prime Minister's footsteps to promote the Vyapar Aur Udyog Varsh 2025 and attract investments from across the globe. He added that the Dubai and Spain tour played a vital role in this effort and was designed to support Modi's vision of a developed India.

Chhattisgarh: Naxals slay 2 persons

AGENCIES
BHAJAPUR (CHHATTISGARH), JULY 21

Maoists fatally stabbed two persons in this district's Tarrem Police Station limits, police said today.

The deceased in late last night's incidents were identified as Bada Tarrem's Manglu Kursam (50) and Kawasi Joga (55) from Chhutwai village.

Unidentified rebels barged into their homes, brought them out and killed them. Police have rushed to the scenes of crime.

Over the past 25 days, 10 people have been slain on suspicion of being informers. Kurs-



am's son Nandu sur-

suspected that the insur-

Nandu but he was not found.

Trump shares AI-generated video showing Obama getting arrested

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON, JULY 21

Stepping up his offensive against Barack Obama, Donald Trump today posted an AI-generated video on Truth Social depicting former President Obama being arrested by FBI agents inside the Oval Office.

The video shows that Obama in handcuffs being taken by FBI agents from Oval Office as Trump watches, smiling.

The 45-second clip begins with a doctored voiceover of Obama saying, "Especially the President is above the law," followed by a montage of various US politi-



cal figures—Democrats and Republicans—declaring, "No one is above the law." The video then transitions to a fictional scene showing Obama being handcuffed by FBI agents in the same office he once

occupied. It ends with an AI-generated image of the former President standing in a jail cell, dressed in an orange prison jumpsuit, as the Village People's "YMCA" plays in the background.

No disclaimer was attached to the video clarifying it is fake or fictional, drawing sharp criticism from opponents who called the act "deeply irresponsible".

The video was posted after Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Tulsi Gabbard said she had "overwhelming" evidence that senior Obama administration officials fabricated the Trump-Russia collusion narrative following

the 2016 election. Gabbard has publicly called for a criminal trial against members of the former administration, alleging they weaponised intelligence agencies to subvert Trump's presidency.

"Americans will finally learn the truth about how, in 2016, intelligence was politicised and weaponised by the most powerful people in the Obama administration to lay the groundwork for what was essentially a years-long coup against President Donald Trump," Gabbard wrote on X (formerly Twitter), adding that this effort undermined American democracy.

Microsoft warns businesses and agencies of possible 'active attacks'

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

In an alert issued on Sunday, Microsoft, a technology conglomerate headquartered in Redmond, Washington, issued a warning of "active attacks" that aimed to target the servers leveraged by both government bodies and global agencies. This attack will expectedly target the software sources used by agencies and the government for sharing documents internally.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) warned about this attack, with no other official information disclosed. This federal



agency also said that it is collaborating with both private and federal-sector partners to combat this attack.

The FBI is the intelligence and security service of the United States. It acts

as a federal law agency body and reports to both the attorney general and the director of national intelligence.

Reportedly, the attacks will be limited to the on-premises SharePoint

servers, which are used internally by most organizations. Microsoft confirmed that SharePoint online and cloud-based versions of Microsoft will not be affected by these attacks.

Nitish Reddy ruled out of England tour, Arshdeep out of fourth Test

AGENCIES
MANCHESTER, JULY 21

India all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy has been ruled out of the remaining two England Tests owing to a left knee injury, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) confirmed on Monday.

Nitish will fly back home, and the team wishes him a speedy recovery, it added.

Reddy, who missed the first Test but played in the second and third, had a quiet outing in Birmingham; he made key contributions at Lord's, both with bat and ball. His absence could open the



door for Shardul Thakur, who played the first Test, to return.

Adding to India's woes, left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh has been ruled out of the fourth Test against England at Manchester. "He sustained an impact injury to his left thumb

while bowling in the nets at a training session in Beckenham. The BCCI medical team is monitoring his progress," BCCI said in a release.

To fill-up for Arshdeep's absence, the men's selection committee has added Haryana

pacer Anshul Kamboj to the squad. Kamboj has joined the team in Manchester.

India's preparations for the fourth Test of the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy at Old Trafford, starting July 23, have suffered another setback with fast bowler Akash Deep nursing an injury. This adds to existing concerns over Jasprit Bumrah's workload, with the pace spearhead expected to play only one of the last two Tests. Having featured in the first and third matches, Bumrah is likely to return for the Manchester Test after an eight-day break.

India A men's hockey team ends Europe tour campaign with 2-8 loss against Netherlands

AGENCIES
EINDHOVEN (NETHERLANDS), JULY 21

India A men's hockey team ended their Europe Tour campaign with a 2-8 loss against the Netherlands with young Indian midfielder Rajinder Singh and forward Selvam Karthi scoring the two goals for India A in the final match. India A had lost their previous match against the Netherlands on July 18 with a 0-3 scoreline.

India A had kicked off their Euro tour on July 8 and played a total of eight matches against five



European teams during this tour. The team travelled across three cities to compete against some of the top hockey teams in the world, including the World No. 1 Netherlands and World No. 3 Belgium. Talking about the over-

all experience, India A coach Shivendra Singh said, "While we might have had more losses than wins during this European Tour, it was never about the results and more about learning and experience we gained from this tour

as a team."

He went on to add, "We had a mix of senior and junior players as part India A, and they gained very valuable experience during the past two weeks. As we head back to India, I am confident that all these players will use this valuable experience and incorporate it to better their game for all their future matches."

India A played against, Ireland, France, England, Belgium and the Netherlands during this exposure tour and won a total of three of their eight matches.

>>> Badminton Asia Junior Mixed Team C'ships

India go down fighting to Japan in QF

AGENCIES
SOLO (INDONESIA), JULY 21

India's junior badminton team put up a strong fight before going down 110-104 to former champions Japan in the quarterfinals of the Badminton Asia Junior Mixed Team Championships.

In a closely contested tie under the relay scoring system, India came out strong after a narrow 11-9 loss in the opening match. The boys' doubles duo of Bhargav Ram Arigela and Viswa Tej Gobburu got India on the board, followed by a composed win from the girls' pair of Vennala Kalagotla and Reshika Uthayasooriyana to put



India ahead 33-26.

Reshika then combined with Bhavya Chhabra to maintain the lead at 44-35, and Rounak Chouhan extended the cushion

with another solid performance.

India led for a major part of the tie, but Japan, the 2023 champions, pulled ahead in the final stretch, winning the last

five matches in a row. Several of those games went down to the wire, reflecting the grit of the Indian squad.

Despite the narrow exit, India had a strong tournament. They topped Group D with wins over Hong Kong China, the United Arab Emirates, and Sri Lanka, showing depth and balance across singles and doubles.

The Bhargav-Viswa Tej and Reshika-Vennala pairings were consistently impressive, while C Lalramsanga also stood out in his doubles outings, paired up with Bhavya for men's doubles and Taarini Suri for the mixed doubles.

Surrey to honour Graham Thorpe on Day 2 of Oval Test

AGENCIES
LONDON, JULY 21

Surrey County Cricket Club (SCCC) will honour former England batter Graham Thorpe during the fifth and final Test of the ongoing Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy at The Oval.

"The life of England and Surrey cricketer Graham Thorpe will be remembered and celebrated on Friday, August 1, during the second day of the final men's Test Match in the series between England v India," Surrey County Cricket Club (SCCC) said in a statement.

'A Day for Thorpe' will



be held at the Oval Cricket Ground, London, in support of mental health charity Mind, on what would have been Graham's 56th

birthday. Graham took his own life on August 4 last year, aged 55, after struggling with anxiety and depression for several

years.

Graham played first-class cricket for Surrey County Cricket Club and represented England in 100 Test matches. After retiring from playing, he took on various coaching roles within the sport for both Surrey and England.

'A Day for Thorpe' will raise money for mental health charity Mind through the sale of a limited-edition headband which resembles what Graham wore when he was batting for England. The headbands have been co-designed with Graham's wife Amanda and daughters Kitty and Emma," the statement said.

Anush Agarwalla triumphs at Jubiläumsturnier Hofgeismar Open with Floriana

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

Indian dressage star Anush Agarwalla added another feather to his cap by securing first place at the Jubiläumsturnier Hofgeismar Open with an impressive 69.84 per cent. Riding the elegant 7-year-old mare Floriana, this marks the pair's first-ever win at S level.

This victory is particularly significant, as it is only the second time Anush and Floriana have competed at the S level.

Taking to social media, Anush shared his excitement: "Winner Winner Chicken Dinner 2nd S ever and directly first win for



Floriana and myself with 69.8%! Only 7 years old and what a potential for the future!"

Speaking after the event, Anush added, "I'm incredibly proud of Floriana; this was only her

second S competition and she handled it with maturity beyond her years. Winning here is a special moment for both of us. I want to sincerely thank Anna Scholermann for her constant guidance, train-

ing, and belief in us. This is just the beginning for Floriana, and I'm excited about what the future holds."

Last month, Agrawalla announced the retirement of his iconic horse, Sir Carmello, marking the close of a historic era for Indian equestrian sport. The duo etched their names in history at the Paris Olympics, where they became the first Indian rider-horse pair to compete in dressage on the Olympic stage.

This win is another milestone in Anush's inspiring journey, which has already seen him break barriers as one of the first Indian equestrians to compete at the Olympic Games.

India to host Chess World Cup 2025 from October 30 to November 27

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

India will host the Chess World Cup, scheduled for October 30 to November 27, the world body for the sport announced on Monday.

It added that the announcement of the host city will be released in due course.

The top three finishers of the 2025 World Cup will earn direct qualification for the 2026 Candidates Tournament, which determines the challenger for the World Chess Championship.

"The prestigious FIDE World Cup is coming to India this year! Sched-



uled for October 30 to November 27, 2025, the tournament will feature the world's best players battling for the coveted title and qualification spots in the 2026 FIDE Candidates Tournament. Further details, including the announcement of the

host city, will be released in due course," FIDE said in a statement.

India have also recently hosted major events, including the FIDE Chess Olympiad 2022, Tata Steel Chess India, the FIDE World Junior U20 Championships 2024 and the

5th leg of the FIDE Women's Grand Prix (April 2025).

The FIDE World Cup 2025 will feature 206 players competing in a knockout format - a dynamic and unpredictable system where the losing player in each round is eliminated - for the coveted title and qualification spots in the 2026 FIDE Candidates Tournament.

The event has used several formats over the years, but since 2021, it has followed a single-elimination format. Each round spans three days: two classical games on the first two days, followed by tie-breaks on the third day, if necessary.

Freestyle Chess Grand Slam: Aronian wins title; Erigaisi finishes fifth, Pragg seventh

AGENCIES
LAS VEGAS, JULY 21

Levon Aronian captured his first Freestyle Chess Grand Slam crown at Wynn Las Vegas, defeating Hans Niemann 1.5-0.5 in the final.

World no.1 Carlsen finished third after beating Hikaru Nakamura 1.5-.5. and took home USD 160,000. Indian Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi defeated Fabiano Caruana 2-0 to take fifth place, while Praggnanandhaa Rameshbabu overcame Wesley So 1.5-0.5 to finish seventh.

The 42-year-old Aronian, who earlier in the week knocked out both Magnus



Carlsen and Hikaru Nakamura, sealed the title and the USD 200,000 first prize by converting a dominant second game after an opening draw.

"It's one of the biggest victories in my life, defi-

nately the biggest when you count the prize fund. I am extremely happy and grateful for the opportunity," said Aronian, as was quoted by Freestyle Chess.

Niemann, however, came close to his biggest

career win but had to settle for the runner-up spot and USD 140,000.

World no.1 Carlsen beat Hikaru Nakamura 1.5-.5. to take third place and USD 160,000. After a balanced draw in the first game, Carlsen pressed in the second, converting his advantage to clinch third place. The result keeps Carlsen atop the overall Grand Slam Tour standings despite missing out on the title fight in Las Vegas, Freestyle Chess reports.

Caruana seemed the have more energy that the day before, and it showed on the board. He took down the strong Indian Arjun twice, and took fifth place in the tournament.

'India have a good chance of winning Manchester Test if...': Monty Panesar

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 21

Former England spinner Monty Panesar believes India have a good chance of winning the fourth Test of the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy if they can focus on the basics and use the strength of the pitch at Old Trafford to their advantage.

India head into the fourth Test on the back of an agonising 22-run defeat at Lord's which saw them fall down to 1-2 in the tour of England.

In an exclusive conversation with IANS, Panesar spoke on how the pitch will play out over the course of five days and how there will be something on offer for



everyone.

"I think India's got a very good chance of doing well in the next Test match. The pitch will have everything to offer but it's about application and if they can do

that, they will have a good chance of winning," Panesar told IANS.

In the nine Test matches that India have played at Old Trafford, England have won on four occasions, with five

matches ending in a draw. Their last trip to the venue came under Mahendra Singh Dhoni in 2014, when they were playing at the venue for the first time in 24 years and ended in a defeat by an innings and 54 runs.

"It's going to be a good batting and bowling wicket, with the spinners getting something later on. There will be everything on offer for everyone. If you bowl badly, you'll be punished. While batting there will be pace and bounce, it will be the fastest pitch of the series so far. The bowlers will have to work hard to take wickets, and the batters will not be able to play loose shots and get away with it," he added.

Renovated Restaurant dedicated to members at Jammu Tawi Golf Course

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 21

The newly renovated restaurant at Jammu Tawi Golf Course (JTGC) was officially thrown open for members, marking a fresh chapter in the club's commitment to providing an enhanced leisure and dining experience.

The upgraded facility boasts a contemporary design, expanded indoor and outdoor seating, and a curated menu offering a blend of local flavors and popular cuisines. The restaurant now serves as a vibrant social hub where members can unwind before or after their game in a relaxed and scenic setting.

The inauguration was attended by senior club



officials, members, and guests who praised the new look and elevated service standards. The renovation is part of broader efforts to modernize facilities at JTGC and further enrich the overall member experience.

Speaking at the opening, the management emphasized that the upgraded restaurant reflects the club's dedication to hospitality and continuous improvement. "We are delighted to offer our members a refreshed space that

combines comfort, quality, and aesthetics. The new restaurant is not just a place to eat—it's a space to connect and create memories."

The restaurant is now fully operational and open to all club members and their guests.

DDC Budgam flags-off Millet Awareness Road Show under HADP 2025-26

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, JULY 21

Under sustainable agriculture and nutritional security, District Development Commissioner (DDC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, today flagged-off a Millet Awareness Road Show, here under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) 2025-26, and as part of the Nutri-Cereals Initiative.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from progressive farmers, field extension personnel, and officials from all four subdivisions of the district viz. Budgam, Beerwah, Chadoora, and Khansahib. While flagging-off the road show, DDC appreciated the proactive efforts of the Agriculture department in advancing the Millet Mission.

He highlighted the multiple advantages of millet cultivation including climate resilience, low input



requirements, and high nutritional value, asserting that millets play a crucial role in ensuring food security while promoting environmental sustainability.

DDC said, "This road show is not just a ceremonial event, it is a key component of Budgam's broader campaign to reposition millets as a cornerstone of health-oriented and sustainable agriculture."

He further said, Millets are not just crops, they are climate-smart, economically viable, and nutritionally rich super foods.

Their promotion aligns with our commitment to sustainable development, rural empowerment, and better public health, said

DDC. He further added that the district administration is committed to mainstreaming traditional and underutilized crops like millets to diversify the cropping pattern and reduce dependence on water-intensive cereals.

Dr Bilal emphasised that initiatives like these are critical to changing the mindset of farmers and consumers alike. He encouraged the farming community to embrace millets not just as an alternative, but as a smart and future-ready choice for agriculture in the region.

DDC also assured full support from the district administration for creating market linkages, value

addition, and training support under HADP.

Besides, Chief Agriculture Officer, all district and sub-divisional Agriculture officers, along with their respective field staff, actively participated in the awareness programme, showcasing a unified departmental commitment to the millet movement.

Later, experts from the Agriculture department and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Budgam conducted an awareness session at Sheikh-ul-Alam Hall, Budgam.

The session sensitized farmers on the nutritional benefits, agronomic practices, and market potential of millets, with an aim to encourage their mainstream adoption.

The event marked a step towards the successful implementation of HADP's Nutri-Cereals Initiative in Budgam, fostering a millet-inclusive agricultural future for the district.

Inter-Zonal District Level Tournament: Day 10 witnesses enthralling U/19 Girls' events at Doda

J1 NEWS SERVICE
DODA, JULY 21

The 10th day of the ongoing Inter-Zonal District Level Tournament, organized by the Department of Youth Services & Sports (DYSS), Doda unfolded with high-octane sporting action as under-19 girls competed in Kho-Kho and Volleyball.

In the Volleyball final, Zone Bhaderwah delivered an impressive performance, defeating Zone Bhallessa in straight sets with a scoreline of 2-0. Meanwhile, in the Kho-Kho arena, Bhaderwah once again emerged victorious, outplaying Zone Bhagwah with a margin of 5 points, showcasing their strength and coordination on the field.

The day's events were



graced by District Youth Services & Sports Officer (DYSSO) Jaffar Haider Sheikh who interacted with the young athletes and encouraged them to continue striving for excellence. He emphasized the values of sportsmanship, discipline, integrity and

community spirit, urging participants to embody these principles both on and off the field.

To recognize the outstanding performances, medals, trophies and certificates were awarded to the winners and runners-ups, acknowledging their

dedication, hard work and sporting excellence.

The Inter-Zonal District Level Tournament continues to serve as a vital platform for nurturing young talent and promoting a culture of fitness, teamwork and healthy competition across the district.

Zone level Yoga training session held at Sports Stadium Shirmal

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, JULY 21

A zone level Yoga training session was today organized by the Youth Services and Sports, Shopian, in collaboration with the AYUSH department, Shopian, at the Sports Stadium, Shirmal.

The session was led by a Yoga Instructor, who performed and instructed various yoga asanas and pranayama techniques, engaging partici-



pants in practical exercises to promote physical and mental health.

The joint efforts of both departments contribut-

ed to the success of the event, attended by more than 50 participants.

This initiative reflects the shared commitment

of the Youth Services Sports and AYUSH departments toward fostering a healthier, yoga-inspired community in Shopian.

U14 & U17 Inter-zonal district level competitions conclude at Indoor Stadium Khawaja Bagh

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, JULY 21

Youth Services and Sports, district Baramulla, successfully concluded the Inter-zonal district level Kabaddi competition for Under 14 and Under 17 boys at the Indoor Stadium Khawaja Bagh, Baramulla.

The event witnessed thrilling contests and high sportsmanship among young athletes from various zones.

In the Under 14 category, the final clash was held



between zone Sopore and zone Dangerpora, where zone Sopore emerged victorious with an impressive performance.

In the Under 17 category,

the tables turned as zone Dangerpora took on zone Sopore and claimed the title with remarkable grit and determination.

District Youth Services

and Sports Officer (DYSSO) Baramulla, lauded the spirit of the players and the efforts of the officials for conducting the competition smoothly.

He felicitated the winners and runners-up of both categories with appreciation certificates and trophies, encouraging the youth to remain dedicated and disciplined in sports.

The Kabaddi action continues tomorrow with the Under 19 boys' competition, scheduled to be held at the same venue.

Drug-free J&K imperative for well-being of future generations: Sakeena Ito

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 21

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education Sakeena Ito today emphasized that a constant and collective effort from community stakeholders, religious leaders, government officials, law enforcement agencies and citizens is crucial to combat the growing menace of drug abuse in the society.

The Minister made these remarks while addressing a day long seminar on Drug-Free Kashmir (A practical step towards Drug-Free society) at Government College of Education (GCOE), MA Road here today.

In her keynote address, Sakeena emphasized the urgent need for a unified front against substance abuse, stressing that every individual in society has a crucial role to play in eliminating this threat.

Highlighting the disturbing rise of drug addiction among youth, the Minister said that the gov-



ernment cannot fight this societal hazard alone. She pushed for coordinated efforts from religious leaders, families, civil society groups and other agencies to combat this social evil.

"A drug-free Jammu and Kashmir is not only the need of hour, it is a necessity for the survival and well-being of our future generations", maintained Sakeena.

The Minister further said that the government is keenly working towards combating this menace from society. She added that drug de-addiction centres have been established

in district headquarters to provide required support to individuals affected by drug addiction.

While commending the organisers and college for organising the seminar in this burning societal issue, the Minister asserted that this seminar should chalk out some actionable strategies needed for making Kashmir free of drug abuse, a challenge that continues to threaten our social and cultural fabric.

During the event, cultural performances were showcased to depict the impact of drug abuse on families as well as overall

society.

The event saw huge participation of educators, youth leaders, students, healthcare professionals, law enforcement officials as well as representatives from civil society.

Among others, Joint Director Information Kashmir, Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari; Nodal Principal Kashmir Division Colleges, Prof. Seema Naz; Principal Government Women's College Srinagar, Principal GCOE Srinagar and other senior officers of district administration were present on the occasion.

Reasi admin finalises arrangements for Shri Budha Amarnathji Yatra-2025

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The District Administration Reasi has finalized the arrangements for the upcoming Shri Budha Amarnathji Yatra 2025. A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Sukhdev Singh Samyal to review preparations and ensure the smooth and secure conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

During the meeting, the ADC held detailed discussions with officials from line departments on key aspects such as drinking water, uninterrupted power supply, medical facilities, and sanitation.

It was informed that the first batch of pilgrims



is scheduled to arrive at Bhambla on July 30, where they will halt at Shiv Shakti Ashram. In this context, the ADC directed the Public Health Engineering (PHE) and Power Development Department (PDD) to ensure adequate water and electricity supply at both the Shiv Shakti Ashram and the langar site.

The Block Medical Officer (BMO) was instructed to deploy sufficient medical staff, along with essential medicines and ambulances, at the Ashram to

address the health needs of the pilgrims. The ADC also directed the concerned authorities to install mobile toilets at identified locations, based on the requirements.

Furthermore, he asked the Tehsildar Pouni and BDO Pouni to conduct a joint inspection of the designated sites to ensure that all facilities are in place. The Public Works Department (PWD) was instructed to keep standby machinery ready to handle any exigencies, particularly in the

event of natural disasters or road blockages.

The ADC emphasized the need for coordinated efforts among all departments to provide a safe, hygienic, and comfortable experience to the devotees undertaking the sacred Yatra.

ACR Nitin Verma, ACD Vijay Kumar, CMO, Dy. SP HQ, EO MC Reasi, Tehsildar Pouni, and representatives from Shri Budha Amarnathji Yatra Committee were also present at the meeting.