

**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 headache
- Joint and muscle pain
- Present vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Disorientation
- Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool, urine or vomit

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

# JINDRAH IMAGES

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## EXPLAINER

### What does 2027 census means for identities and politics of J&K?

**□ In a first, population of Paharis and OBCs to be enumerated □ To form basis of next delimitation of Assembly and Lok Sabha seats of J&K**

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUN 16 (KNO)

The 2027 census is expected to have significant implications for both the demography and politics of Jammu & Kashmir, as it will not only conduct the first-ever headcount of Paharis and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the Union Territory, but also serve as the basis for the next delimitation of electoral boundaries.

As Union Home Ministry on

Monday issued a notification for holding the India's largest headcount exercise in 2027, the census holds significance for Jammu & Kashmir for two reasons: it will reveal the exact population of Paharis and OBCs and it will serve as the basis for next delimitation of Assembly and Lok Sabha segments.

An official, wishing not to be named, told news agency that Paharis, Paddaris, Gadda Brahman and Koli tribes added in the

Scheduled Tribe list of Jammu and Kashmir in 2024 would be enumerated for the first time in the census as separate communities.

"As of now, there is no exact population data available about the Pahari population in J&K. The census will provide data about Paharis and three other communities notified as Scheduled Tribes," he said, adding that demographic data of SCs and STs was also collected during previ-

ous such exercises.

In Jammu & Kashmir, STs are entitled to 20 percent - 10 percent to ST1 and remaining 10 percent ST2.

As per 2011 census, the total ST1 population of J&K is 12,75,106, of which 8,10,800 live in Jammu and 4,64,306 in Kashmir.

With the Union Government deciding to enumerate caste in the census, the exercise will also reveal the headcount of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) of J&K

for the first time.

As per details available with KNO, 20 castes/ communities find place in central list of OBCs for J&K and 41 in State list. In J&K, OBCs are entitled to 8 percent reservation in government jobs.

The Centre is likely to use both Central list and State (UT) list for enumeration of OBCs.

More importantly, the census would also form the basis of the next delimitation of electoral constituencies in the UT, as laid down

in the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act-2019.

The law provides that there cannot be readjustment of Assembly and Lok Sabha seats in the UT until the figures of the first census conducted after 2026 are released.

The last delimitation exercise in Jammu & Kashmir was completed on May 5, 2022.

Talking to KNO, senior journalist and political

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### High Court discharges man in POCSO case

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUN 16 (KNO)

The Srinagar wing of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court has discharged a man in a POCSO case after noting that the Investigating Agency had not collected any scientific evidence to show that the accused had committed the sexual assault upon the two girls, and there was an absence of oral testimony on the part of the victims.

According to the news agency the petition before the High Court was filed against the order of the Special Judge (POCSO Cases), Srinagar, whereby charges for offences under Section 363, 376 IPC and Section 4 of the POCSO Act had been framed against the petitioner.

The Single Bench of Justice Sanjay Dhar said, "The Investigating Agency has not collected any scientific evidence to show that the petitioner has committed the sexual assault upon the two girls and in the absence of any oral testimony on the part of the two girls to this effect, the offence of rape is also not made out against the petitioner."

Advocate Adnan Fayaz represented the Petitioner while Sr. AAG Mohsin Qadiri.

As per the chargesheet, which had emanated from an FIR registered under Section 363, 376 IPC and Section 4 of POCSO Act, it was alleged that the complainant's minor daughter had left her home along with another girl. The two girls returned to their home and they were produced by their family members before the police. The victim girls were subjected to medical examination, and it revealed "sexual activity."

The investigation further revealed that the petitioner had enticed the victim girls to board his vehicle, whereafter he kidnapped them intending to commit sexual assault upon them. The Special Court, after hearing the parties and after analyzing the material on record, framed charges for offences under Section 363, 376 of the IPC and Section 4 of the POCSO Act against the petitioner.

The Bench addressed the issue of scope of power of a Court while considering discharge of an accused, the Bench said, "From the foregoing analysis of law on the subject, it is clear that at the time of framing of charge, the Court has only to consider the material available for framing an opinion as to whether, prima facie, offence is committed which would require the accused to be put on trial. It is open

**CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4**

## Security forces given free hand to crush terrorists, their ecosystem in J&K: LG Sinha



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
UDHAMPUR, JUN 16 (KNO)

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday said that Jammu and Kashmir Police, along with the Army and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), have been given a free hand to wipe out terrorism from the Union Territory.

Speaking at the Passing-out Parade of Deputy Superintendents of Police (DySPs) and Probationary Sub-Inspectors

(PSIs) at the Sher-i-Kashmir Police Academy (SKPA), here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency said, "Our police force has been empowered to strike at the heart of terror and the eco-system that sustains it. I expect the J&K Police, Indian Army, and CAPFs to eliminate terrorism at the earliest."

He said that Operation Sindoor has drawn new red lines against terrorism. "Any act of terror on our soil will

**CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4**

### LG launches Ashish Sharma's Coffee Table Book 'Reimagining Jammu & Kashmir' in Delhi



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today launched the 'Reimagining Jammu & Kashmir', a coffee table book by Photojournalist Ashish Sharma, at New Delhi.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor commended the Photojournalist Ashish Sharma for factually presenting

**CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4**

### SIA attaches property of Pak-based terrorist in Kupwara



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUN 16 (KNO)

In a significant move to counter terrorism and dismantle its support infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir, the State Investigation Agency (SIA) of J&K Police has attached a property of Pakistan-based terrorist in Kupwara.

The property as per a statement issued to the news agency, belongs to Ab Hamid Lone, S/O Ab Aziz Lone, R/O Mawar Bala Qalamabad, Handwara, District Kupwara.

"The immovable property attached comprises land bearing Khasra No. 110-min (02 Kanal 03 Marlas) and Khasra No. 115-min (01 Kanal

16 Marlas). The attachment has been made after following due legal process and with proper authorization from the Hon'ble NIA Court, Kulgam," a police spokesman said.

The accused, Ab Hamid Lone, is an absconding terrorist wanted in FIR number 02/2023 of Police Station CIK/ SIA Kashmir, for his involvement in multiple offences under Sections 13, 17, 18, 21, 39, 40 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and Section 120-B of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). "He has been evading arrest to avoid legal proceedings following his active participation in terrorist activities."

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### IRAN ISRAEL CONFLICT 'Evacuation process for stranded students begins'

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUN 16 (KNO)

Amid escalating tensions between Iran and Israel, the Embassy of India in Tehran Monday said that it has made arrangements for evacuation of Indian students and may be permitted to leave the Universities.

According to the news agency, Embassy of India, Tehran in an official commu-

nique to different universities said, "We have made arrangements for their evacuation. They may be permitted to leave the University, as being facilitated by the Embassy of India, Tehran. The Embassy of India, Tehran takes this responsibility for this planned movement and security of the Indian students."

In the meantime, Jammu and Kashmir Students

**CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4**

### J&K heaves sigh of relief as temp settles below normal after intense heatwave

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUN 16 (KNO)

Amid the possibility of a brief spell of rain for the next four days, the maximum temperature across Jammu and Kashmir has settled below the normal point, bringing relief to the people from the scorching heatwave that continued for more than a week across the region.

According to the details obtained by the news agency,



the local Meteorological department here has issued yellow alert till June 22, predicting isolated thunderstorm, lightning, gusty and strong winds till June 20 and isolate heavy rain, thunderstorm, lightning with gusty winds on June 21 and 22.

Director MeT, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad told KNO that there is a possibility of a brief spell of rain, thundershower with gusty winds at isolated

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### COVID-19 active cases rise to 15 in J&K; total 18 since January

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUN 16 (KNO)

The number of active COVID-19 cases in Jammu and Kashmir has increased to 15, with a total of 18 cases reported this year so far, officials said.

An official informed the news agency that while 15 cases remain active, three patients have recovered, bringing the total reported cases for 2023 to 18. Over the past 24 hours, there were 17 active cases and two recoveries.

The official said the situation remains under control

and there is no immediate cause for alarm. However, citizens are urged to remain vigilant and adhere to safety precautions. "We are strictly following the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW). The UT is fully prepared to respond to any potential rise in infections," he said.

These measures, the official said, are part of a broader national strategy to stay ahead of any resurgence, especially in light of reports of increasing COVID-19 cases in some parts of Asia. Routine testing for

severe acute respiratory infections (SARI) and influenza-like illnesses (ILI) continues across healthcare facilities in both Jammu and Kashmir divisions.

To strengthen preparedness, the Ministry of Health recently conducted a high-level review involving key agencies such as the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Emergency Medical Relief

(EMR) Division, Disaster Management Cell, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), and representatives from central hospitals. The objective was to assess and enhance surveillance and response systems in anticipation of a possible uptick in cases.

Health experts have urged the public to remain cautious but not panicked, saying the current strains often

cause mild illness or no symptoms at all. They reassured that healthcare facilities have been upgraded since the first wave of COVID-19, and all necessary arrangements are in place to handle any escalation.

"Most positive cases recover on their own, and only a few may require hospital visits, which can be managed through outpatient departments," they said. "There is no need for panic."

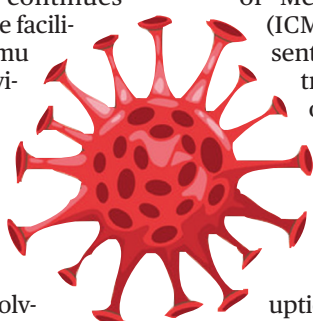
Authorities continue to monitor the situation closely, advocating for adherence to safety protocols such as

testing, masking in crowded places, and timely vaccination.

Hospitals across the Union Territory have maintained dedicated isolation wards and medical facilities as a precaution. Public awareness campaigns have been intensified to inform citizens about COVID-19 symptoms and preventive measures.

The Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) under the NCDC has ramped up monitoring efforts, with enhanced surveillance, contact tracing, and prompt

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## National Apprenticeship Promotion Mela held at ITI Shopian

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SHOPIAN, JUNE 16

National Apprenticeship Promotion Mela (NAPM) was organised today at Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Shopian, drawing enthusiastic participation from hundreds of aspiring apprentices, industry representatives, training partners and government officials.

The event marked another significant step forward in advancing the objectives of the Apprenticeship scheme, promoting on-the-job training and strengthening the ecosystem of apprenticeship in the country.

Superintendent, ITI Shopian gave a detailed presentation of the scheme, highlighting the win-win situation that the scheme



offers for both Industries and potential apprentices. He stressed on companies and industry to come forward with zeal and enthusiasm so that the scheme is implemented as envisioned by policy makers in line with broader objective of Skill India Mission

The event was attended by the companies dealing

with cold storage chain, logistics, automobile, horticulture, Information technology and banking sectors. The participating companies and industries offered apprenticeship roles and guidance on career pathways to the apprentices and also offered career counselling and mentorship to job seek-

ers and stressed on need of specific skill, practical knowledge and Industry experience in addition to theoretical knowledge.

Participation of over 15 companies and employers offered on-the-job training roles and registration of over 100 candidates for apprenticeship opportunities. On the spot counselling and skill assessment was also provided to job seekers.

On the occasion, awareness sessions were held on the benefits of apprenticeship programmes under the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS), which provides financial support to establishments for engaging apprentices and direct benefit transfer to engaged apprentices during the contract period.

## Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gramin Utkarsh Abhiyan Benefit Saturation Camp held at Panchayat Ghar Cherji in Kishtwar

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, JUNE 16

As part of the 15-day Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) Campaign under the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gramin Utkarsh Abhiyan, a mega Awareness and Benefit Saturation Camp was organized today at Panchayat Ghar Cherji, Block Nagseni, where.

The event saw overwhelming participation from the tribal populace, underlining the community's eagerness to engage in developmental processes and avail of government entitlements.

On-the-spot services were offered to ensure immediate and effective benefit delivery to eligible beneficiaries. Key services delivered included issu-



ance of Aadhaar Cards, PMJAY Golden Health Cards, Domicile Certificates, Caste Certificates and others.

Seventeen line departments set up informative stalls, highlighting more than 25 key government schemes and interventions.

Interactive sessions between district officials and community members were also held to enhance mutual understanding,

verify ground realities, and identify services delivery gaps for immediate redressal.

Members of the tribal community expressed heartfelt appreciation for the outreach and reaffirmed their commitment to active participation throughout the campaign period. In Kishtwar, the campaign is being carried out across 19 Gram Panchayats.

## FMD Vaccination campaign launched under NADP- FMD-CP by Animal Husbandry Kashmir

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

Department of Animal Husbandry Kashmir today flagged-off the 6th round of the FMD Vaccination Campaign from the Directorate of Animal Husbandry Kashmir.

The campaign was launched under the directions of the Director, Animal Husbandry department Kashmir, and was attended by the Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Srinagar, Deputy Director Poultry, DIO Sgr, BVO Sgr/Batpora, LDO Nowgam, and Extension Officer Publicity Wing, Srinagar. Furthermore, the vaccination drive

was simultaneously successfully launched in all districts of Kashmir. On this occasion, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Srinagar, DDP, and other officers highlighted the importance of timely vaccination for prevention, control and eradication of FMD under NADCP, as it aims to control the FMD by 2025 and eradicate it by 2030. FMD Vaccination is conducted free of cost under NADCP. Alongside this event, paravets were sensitized to adopt all the SOPs while carrying out vaccination on mission mode and directed that no eligible animal should be leftover without vaccination. At the end, Officers of the department made a fervent appeal to the livestock owners to cooperate with the paravet staff and get their eligible livestock vaccinated against the said disease.

## DAJGUA awareness campaign held at Chitreybanday to empower tribal communities of B'pora

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BANDIPORA, JUNE 16

Continuing the momentum under the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA), district administration Bandipora Monday organized an awareness and benefit saturation camp at Chitreybanday.

DAJGUA campaign was formally launched on June 15th at Government Higher Secondary School Aragam by the District Administration, where various stakeholders including PRIs, civil society members, and tribal youth participated in large numbers. The launch event marked the beginning of a 15-day initiative aimed at ensuring saturation of government schemes in all 31 notified



tribal villages of the district.

Various government departments actively participated in today's camp to facilitate on-the-spot services and enrollment under key welfare schemes. Departments including Health, Education, Social Welfare, Rural Development, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal and Sheep Husbandry, and others showcased schemes like PMAY, PM-KISAN, Ujjwala Yojana,

pension assistance, and scholarships.

On the occasion, eligible beneficiaries were provided with direct support, guidance, and registration opportunities as part of the ongoing saturation drive. The event witnessed encouraging participation from tribal residents of Chitreybanday and adjoining areas, who availed multiple services and interacted with officials to understand scheme benefits.

## DLSA, Budgam organizes awareness programme

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BUDGAM, JUNE 16

In run up to the 'International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking' to be observed on 26th June, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Budgam today organized an awareness programme for Legal Services Unit for Children (LSUC) at Legal Literacy Club Boys Higher Secondary School Budgam.

During the programme, awareness was created on drug laws, their social impact, and the legal actions available for those affected by drug abuse or illicit trafficking.

The programme was also aimed to raise awareness on the legal rights of individuals involved in substance abuse, focusing on rehabilitation & legal measures to prevent trafficking and combating drug abuse, including policies related to preventing, treatment



and the rights of individuals in recovery.

The event was conducted under the supervision of O.P. Bhagat, Chairman, DLSA Budgam and under the guidance of Nusrat Ali Hakak, Secretary DLSA Budgam.

During the event Nazir Ahmad Wagay, Deputy Legal Aid Defense Counsel, Budgam, emphasized the

importance of protecting and empowering vulnerable children in our society. He highlighted that children represent innocence, potential and the future, and how we treat them reflects our respect for human dignity, commitment to equality, and readiness to build a better future.

legal framework in India to protect and empower vulnerable children, including the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, Transgender Persons Protection of Rights Act, 2019, POCSO Act, 2012, and the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015.

He also highlighted available remedies for children in need, including the Child Welfare Committee, District Child Protection Unit, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), State Commission, and Childline Helpline (1098).

The program provided a platform for children to learn about their rights and the legal recourse available to them. Students, teachers, LSUC members and PLV's of DLSA Budgam actively participated in the discussions and deliberations.

## Dharti-Abha Abhiyan event held at Tribal Village Rakh Barotian, Vijaypur

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SAMBHA, JUNE 16

To deepen grassroots engagement and ensure last-mile delivery of welfare services, a special "Dharti-Abha Abhiyan" outreach event was today organized at Rakh Barotian, the only officially notified tribal village in Block Vijaypur.

Offering a multi-departmental convergence platform, the campaign brought together representatives from all the line departments, including Health, Agriculture, Education, Mission Poshan, Employment, Rural Development and Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Department, among others. Their unified presence served to sensitise the predominantly Scheduled Tribe (ST) population about the wide spectrum of government welfare schemes, rights, and entitlements.

To facilitate meaningful interaction, dedicated information and service stalls were installed by each department. These offered real-time assistance through on-the-spot beneficiary registration, scheme consultations, application processing and distribution of multilingual informational brochures.

A unique feature of the event was the griev-



ances redressal session, where villagers got the opportunity to project the feedback directly to the attending officers. Concerns related to infrastructure, healthcare access, education gaps and delayed scheme benefits were earnestly noted. The officers gave on-the-spot assurances for time-bound resolution, further underscoring the administration's resolve to foster responsive governance.

Addressing the gathering, field-level officers reiterated the importance of such platforms in bridging administrative efforts with

grassroots realities. The event facilitated two-way communication, enabling officials to not only inform but also listen, understand, and respond to the unique needs of the tribal population.

The campaign received overwhelming appreciation from the local residents, who hailed the outreach as a long-awaited and much-needed governmental presence in their lives. The villagers expressed gratitude for the proactive and empathetic approach adopted by the district administration.

## Sakeena Itoo reviews medical preparedness for SANJY-2025 at Sonamarg

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
GANDERBAL, JUNE 16

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare, and Education, Sakeena Itoo, held a comprehensive review of medical preparedness for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2025 during her visit to Sonamarg today.

Chairing a high-level meeting of the Health Department officials, the Minister was briefed by the Director Health Services Kashmir, Dr. Jahangir Bakshi, about the overall medical strategy for smooth conduct of SANJY-2025. He provided an overview of the healthcare arrangements being put in place along the Baltal route, which include deployment of medical staff, availability of life-saving medicines, ambulances, oxygen booths, and accommodation for healthcare personnel.

It was informed that 30 Medical Stations, comprising Base Hospitals, Medical Aid Camps, and Emergency Aid Centres, have been established at key locations along the Baltal axis. These facilities are fully equipped with essential medical equipment, supplies, and trained medical and



paramedical personnel to ensure efficient and timely healthcare services for the pilgrims.

Emphasizing the importance of readiness, Health Minister directed the health authorities to ensure that all medical arrangements are in place well before the commencement of the Yatra. "There shall be no compromise on the safety and healthcare of the yatris," she stated.

The Minister further stressed that the list of medical and paramedical staff, along with their contact numbers, should be shared with the District Administration besides duty rosters of doctors must be adhered to strictly to avoid any disruptions during the pilgrimage.

Sakeena Itoo called for robust coordination among all medical units deployed along the route to provide seamless and

uninterrupted healthcare services throughout the Yatra period.

The meeting, among others, was attended by MLA Kangan, Mian Mehar Ali; Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore; Director Health Services Kashmir, Director Family Welfare MCH & Immunization J&K, Director Ayush, CMO Ganderbal, and other senior officials from the Health Department and district Administration.

Later, the Minister visited the Baltal Base Camp Hospital, where she inspected the arrangements and interacted with the on-ground staff. She directed officials to ensure round-the-clock availability of doctors, paramedical staff, and other healthcare professionals and emphasized that uninterrupted medical services must be ensured for the welfare of the pilgrims.

## SDM inaugurates 5th Leg of Chowki Choura Premier League Cricket Tournament 2025



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

Sub Divisional Magistrate Chowki Choura, Ankush Hans today inaugurated the 5th leg of the much anticipated Chowki Choura Premier League (CCPL) cricket tournament 2025 at High Secondary School, Chowki Grounds. The event marks a significant moment for the local sports community, bringing together 10 enthusiastic teams to compete in league matches.

**Power shutdown**  
J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCL Jammu has informed that the power supply to Canal Head, Bhagwati Nagar, Parts of Talab Tillo and adjoining areas will remain affected on June 17, 18 and 19

The organizing Committee of the tournament comprises notable citizens of Chowki Choura, namely Ravi Sharma and Ajeet Singh.

In his inaugural address, the SDM extended best wishes to the participating teams, encouraging them to play with true sportsmanship and passion. "Such tournaments not only foster healthy competition but also strengthen community bonds and promote youth engagement in sports," he said.

Similarly, the power supply to Hanuman Chowk, Daskal, Jourian Town, Gurh Brahmana, Bamyal, Maira Mandarian, Chowki Choura, Bali Gulba and adjoining areas will remain affected from June 17, 18, 19 and 20 from 7 am to 11 am.

## National Animal Diseases Control Programme AHD Jammu launches 6th round of FMD vaccination

JJ NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

Director Animal Husbandry Department Jammu Dr. Parvinder Singh today launched the 6th round of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccination under the National Animal Diseases Control Programme. The launch was marked by flagging off the vaccination teams here from the Directorate of Animal Husbandry Complex Talab Tillo.

The programme envisages the control of FMD disease in cattle and buffaloes by 2025 and its complete eradication by year 2030.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director informed that National Animal Dis-



ease Control Programme for FMD is a central sector scheme where 100 percent funds are provided by the Central govt. to the States/UTs. The programme envisages 100% vaccination of susceptible cattle and buffalo population in order to achieve the control and subsequent eradication of this disease.

He further said that

FMD is a highly contagious viral disease found in animals such as cattle, buffaloes, sheep and goats which leads to massive reduction in milk yield, decreased growth rate, infertility and reduced working capacity in bulls. "The control of this disease can be achieved by mass vaccinations of susceptible livestock popula-

tions at regular intervals" he added.

The vaccination campaign, he said, shall last for 45 days covering over 15 lakh cattle and buffalo population of Jammu division. He instructed the field officers and other staff to go for mass de-worming drive also to improve the overall health of livestock and to get better immune response which shall lead to better efficacy of the vaccinations.

The event among others was attended by CEO, Livestock Development Board Jammu, officers from the Directorate complex, Doctors and Para-vet staff of Jammu district, Dairy farmers and their representatives.

## Rana reviews measures aimed to strengthen Tribal Research Institute in JK

JJ NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

Aimed at promoting tribal welfare and research in Jammu & Kashmir, Tribal Affairs Minister, Javed Ahmed Rana, today reviewed measures aimed to strengthen the Tribal Research Institute (TRI) in Jammu and Kashmir.

In a meeting of the officers of Tribal Affairs Department, the Minister emphasized the pivotal role of TRI in promoting the tribal welfare. He called for transforming it into a premier institute of tribal research and excellence.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Tribal Affairs Department, Harun Malik, Director Tribal Affairs, Mohd Mumtaz Ali and other senior officers of the department.

During the review, the Minister directed the officers to formulate a comprehensive coordination plan with all the stakeholders to devise the broader structure of role and activities to be taken up by the TRI. He stressed the need for infrastruc-



ture upgrades, hiring of reputed consultants and submission of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) to ensure the institute's effective functioning.

The Minister also emphasized the importance of studying and replicating best practices and models from other parts of the country to enhance TRI's capabilities. He envisioned TRI as a hub for innovative research, policy formulation and capacity building, ultimately contributing to the socio-economic development of tribal communities in J&K.

Javed Rana directed for enhancing TRI's infrastructure to facilitate cutting-edge research and training. He also asked for fostering broader coordination with all stakeholders, including tribal communities, academia and

civil society organizations. The Minister instructed for engaging experienced and reputed consultants to provide expertise in tribal research and development and prepare and submit DPRs for various projects and initiatives to be undertaken by TRI.

"Our vision for TRI should be to establish it as a premier institute of tribal research and excellence, contributing to the socio-economic development of tribal communities in J&K. TRI's work should be guided by a deep understanding of tribal issues, cultures, and aspirations," he said.

TRI should be positioned as a key driver of tribal welfare and development in J&K, leveraging research, innovation, and collaboration to improve the lives of tribal communities, he added.

## DLSA Kulgam observes 'World Elder Abuse Awareness Day'

JJ NEWS SERVICE  
KULGAM, JUNE 16

District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Kulgam, in collaboration with the District Social Welfare Office, today observed 'World Elder Abuse Awareness Day' to raise awareness about the rights and welfare of senior citizens.

The event was held under the chairmanship of Aijaz Ahmad Khan, Chairman, DLSA Kulgam. Legal Aid Defense Counsels (LADCs) attended the programme as resource persons and delivered insightful lectures on the topic.

They highlighted key provisions of various welfare schemes being provided by the central and UT governments for senior citizens. Speakers also informed participants about the availability of free legal aid and other legal services offered by DLSA and affiliated legal services institutions.

Programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from senior citizens, staff of DLSA, Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) and officials from the District Social Welfare Office.

The event was supervised by Fozia Paul, Secretary, DLSA Kulgam.

## Distt admin Kulgam hosts mega awareness event under DAJGUA

JJ NEWS SERVICE  
KULGAM, JUNE 16

As part of the fortnight-long campaign under the ambitious Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan, a mega awareness camp was today organized at the New Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat Kulgam.



The programme was presided over by Chairperson, District Development Council (DDC) Kulgam, Mohammad Afzal Parray and Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan.

The event witnessed participation from Vice Chairperson DDC Kulgam, Shazia Jan; DDC members, ADDC Kulgam, district and sectoral officers, and a large number of tribal residents.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairperson DDC described the initiative as a mission to bridge the development gap in tribal areas and ensure that tribal populations are fully benefited from various government schemes.

He emphasized the importance of preserving the rich cultural heritage

and traditions of tribal communities and called for coordinated efforts from all stakeholders to achieve tangible outcomes.

In his address, Deputy Commissioner stated that the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan is a major step towards inclusive development and tribal empowerment, with a focus on comprehensive awareness and scheme saturation. He instructed all departments to reach every doorstep, raise awareness, and ensure that all eligible beneficiaries are covered.

He highlighted that the programme is inspired by the vision of Birsu Munda, the iconic tribal freedom fighter, and aims to honor his legacy by empowering tribal communities

through targeted development initiatives.

DDC member from Manzgam, Jameela Chowdhury, also spoke on the occasion and lauded the government's dedicated efforts for the upliftment of tribal populations. She highlighted the developmental progress in Manzgam and other tribal areas, and stressed the importance of such outreach programmes in raising awareness and ensuring the grassroots reach of government initiatives.

During the programme, resource persons from various departments briefed participants about the schemes and welfare programmes available for tribal communities, ensuring they are well-informed and empowered to avail the benefits.

## Dr. Bilal Mohiud-Din Bhat assumes charge as DC Budgam

JJ NEWS SERVICE  
BUDGAM, JUNE 16

In a formal handover ceremony held today in the office chamber of the Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohiud-Din Bhat took over the charge as DC Budgam.

He joined as the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, succeeding Akshay Labroo.

Dr. Bhat took the charge in presence of several senior officers of the district administration.

Additional District Development Commissioner Budgam, Aashiq Husain; ADC Budgam, ACR Budgam, all SDMs, Chief Planning Officer Budgam, DIO Budgam, Tehsildars and other senior officers of the district were present on the occasion.

The incumbent DC was accorded a warm welcome by the officers present. He expressed gratitude to the gathering of officers and officials present on the occasion.

## SWD Reasi organises Samajik Adhikarita Shivar for free distribution of Aids & Appliances to Divyangjans

JJ NEWS SERVICE  
REASI, JUNE 16

The Social Welfare Department Reasi, in collaboration with ALIMCO, a central agency, organized a distribution camp for free distribution of Aids & Appliances to Divyangs and senior citizens at Sungri, a far flung area of Tehsil Mahore.

In the camp, the eligible beneficiaries were provided 24 Wheelchairs, 07 Hand-Propelled Tricycles, 03 Motorized Tricycles, 50 Hearing Aids, Walking sticks, and Crutches by ALIMCO.

The aim of the camp was to distribute free aids and appliances to all the targeted Divyangjans with 40% or more benchmark disability and senior citizens (60 years and above) under ADIP and RVY schemes respectively. The camp was inaugurated by Member Legislative Assembly Gulabgarh (ST) constituency Er Khurshid Ahmed as the Chief Guest.

Addressing the beneficiaries, the MLA applauded the efforts of Social Welfare Department Reasi in providing assistance



to the needy persons. He appealed the people to come forward to take benefit from such schemes.

District Social Welfare Officer Sachin Sharma said that the scheme is for specially abled persons with a benchmark disability of 40% or more. He informed that such camps shall continue till June 23, 2025 across various locations of district Reasi to provide

free aids and appliances to the needy and deserving specially abled persons and senior citizens.

He added that as many as 710 disabled and senior citizens were assessed for free distribution of aids and appliances in Assessment Camps held in April 2025. SDM Shafiqat Majeed Bhat, TSWO and other staff of the Social Welfare Department were also present.

## Absentees Face Heat: Action Taken against officials skipping Nasha Mukht Bharat campaign

JJ NEWS SERVICE  
RAJOURI, JUNE 16

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma, a series of impactful awareness activities were held across different blocks of Rajouri district under the aegis of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan.

The events witnessed overwhelming participation from the public, particularly the youth.

Resource persons from stakeholder departments led the campaign, spreading awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse and emphasizing its harmful impact on health, society and future generations.

The youth were informed about the devastating effects of the drugs and advised to remain steadfast in the resolve to stay safe and contribute positively to the nation's development.

In a show of commitment to the cause, Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma personally visited several awareness camps to take stock of the activities. During the visit, he interacted with the participants and encouraged them to act as ambassadors of change in their respective communities.

He also directed concerned officers and field functionaries to further intensify the campaign across the district.

"The youth of Rajouri district are the future of this nation. We must ensure that they are equipped with the knowl-



edge and support they need to lead a healthy and productive life. The Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan is a crucial step in creating a drug-free society, and we will continue to make all efforts to intensify this campaign," said DC Abhishek Sharma.

Taking serious note of absence and lackadaisical conduct of some officials in the execution of the campaign activities, the DC ordered immediate action against them. The DC emphasized that laxity in such a crucial mission will not be tolerated.

ment to the cause, Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma personally visited several awareness camps to take stock of the activities. During the visit, he interacted with the participants and encouraged them to act as ambassadors of change in their respective communities.

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"The youth of Rajouri district are the future of this nation. We must ensure that they are equipped with the knowl-

## Amar Singh College asks aspirants seeking admission for FYUG 2025-26 to register online

JJ NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

All aspirants (CUET and Non-CUET) seeking admission to four-year undergraduate programs (FYUGP) at Amar Singh College, Srinagar are hereby informed to register online on the JK Admission Samarth Portal: <https://jkadmission.samarth.ac.in> from June 16, 2025 (5:00 PM) to July 07, 2025 (7:00 PM).

For complete details, they can refer to the official Admission Notification No. DC-HE/2025/1152 dated 15-06-2025, available on the Directorate of Colleges J&K website: <http://directorcollegesjk.in>

Meanwhile, for assistance, candidates may also visit the College Facilitation Centre during working hours (11:00am to 3:00pm).

## SDM conducts field visit to address public grievances in Panchayat Choura area

JJ NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

Sub Divisional Magistrate Chowki Choura, Ankush Hans toured to far-flung areas of Panchayat Choura today. He was accompanied by officials from across key departments. The visit aimed to directly engage with local residents, understand their grievances and ensure swift action on critical issues.

During the tour, the SDM listened attentively to public concerns related to road connectivity, water supply, electricity, healthcare and education. He assured to address all genuine issues on a priority basis.

The officials were directed to take time-bound measures and implement a follow-up mechanism to monitor progress.

## J&K prepares for SSG-2025: Rural Sanitation Deptt. holds division level workshop at Srinagar

JJ NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

Directorate of Rural Sanitation, Jammu & Kashmir, today organised a workshop on Swachh Survekshan Grameen-2025 (SSG-2025) at the meeting hall of Directorate of Rural Development, Kashmir.

The workshop witnessed active participation from Assistant Commissioners Development (ACDs), Assistant Commissioners Panchayat (ACPs), Block Development Officers (BDOs), and other Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G) officials from across all districts of the Kashmir division.

The workshop aimed

to sensitize field functionaries on the framework, methodology, and key deliverables of the upcoming SSG 2025 survey. The survey marks a crucial step toward strengthening J&K's preparedness and accelerating efforts under the SBM-G.

Director General, Rural Sanitation, J&K, Anoo Malhotra, underscored the significance of community participation, visible cleanliness, and strong data validation for achieving result oriented rankings in the national survey.

The event featured interactive sessions and technical presentations on survey parameters, IEC (Information, Edu-

cation & Communication) strategies, and protocols for evidence uploading.

Launched by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2025, is a nationwide rural sanitation survey aimed at evaluating the impact of SBM-G, promoting hygiene, and sustaining the achievements of Open Defecation Free (ODF) status.

In Jammu & Kashmir, the survey will be conducted in a phased manner by the Academy of Management Studies (AMS), covering all districts of the Union Territory.

SSG 2025 is a comprehensive survey that evaluates ODF sustain-

ability, solid and liquid waste management, citizen feedback on cleanliness and sanitation infrastructure.

Importantly, SSG 2025 will generate a national ranking of states and districts based on these sanitation parameters, encouraging healthy competition and fostering innovation in rural sanitation practices.

Swachh Survekshan Grameen 2025 is a vital step in India's journey towards a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable rural environment, ensuring consistent monitoring, identification of gaps, and implementation of best practices across the country.

## JKMS organizes Yoga Camp



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

A three-day long Yoga Camp was successfully concluded at JK Montessorie School organised by BVP adhshankrachrya branch in collaboration with Bharatiya Yog Sansthan Jammu in the presence of State president BVP, Sunita Gupta, Sh Bharat Bushan sharma, Regional secretary, Sewa, Sh Gurmeet Singh, Smt Sunny Gupta president, adhshankrachrya branch Smt Rajni GUPTA, Smt Rani Sharma and other members of the branch.

The initiative aimed to promote holistic health, harmony, and well-being through the ancient practice of yoga.

Under the expert guidance of seasoned instructors from Bharatiya Yog Sansthan, members and teaching staff were introduced to a comprehensive range of yoga practices. The sessions encompassed various asanas (postures) along with pranayama (breathing techniques) and meditation, highlighting their physical, mental, and spiritual benefits.

The primary objective

of the camp was to fulfill the vision – “Yoga in every home, enabling every individual to lead a healthy and balanced life.” Throughout the program, participants were educated on the significance of integrating yoga into daily routines to enhance overall wellness and mental clarity.

The profound mantra “Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah” – meaning “May all be happy and healthy” – resonated throughout the camp, inspiring attendees to embrace yoga as a path toward a meaningful, balanced, and fulfilling life.

## Foundation Day of Ancient Raja Mal Dev Temple, Kali Jani, Jammu celebrated



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

The Foundation Day of the Ancient Raja Mal Dev Temple, Kali Jani, Jammu, was celebrated today with traditional fervor, deep devotion, and enthusiastic community participation.

The day began with a sacred Havan at 7:00 AM, invoking divine blessings for peace, prosperity, and the well-being of all. This was followed by a spiritually uplifting Kirtan session at 11:00 AM, during which devotees engaged in devotional singing and hymns, creating an atmo-

sphere of devotion and unity. The celebrations culminated in a Bhandara (community feast) at 12:00 noon, which was open to all attendees, symbolizing communal harmony and shared faith.

The Management Committee of the Temple expressed heartfelt gratitude to the devotees and local residents for their continued support and participation. They cordially invited all members of the community to continue engaging with the temple's spiritual activities and to seek the divine blessings of Raja Mal Dev Ji.

Prominent citizens and Committee members were present on this auspicious occasion, including Satish Tandon, Raman Tak, Sonu Kumar, Arun Jangotra, and Sachin Kumar, among others. Their presence added to the sanctity and communal spirit of the celebrations.

The Foundation Day served not only as a religious observance but also as a celebration of the region's rich cultural heritage and the enduring spiritual significance of the Ancient Raja Mal Dev Temple.

## Fifth FPV 'Achal' built by Goa Shipyard Ltd launched for ICG

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

'Achal', the fifth Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) in a series of eight being constructed by Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL) for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), was ceremoniously launched on June 16, 2025, in Goa by Smt. Kavita Harbola in the presence of Coast Guard Commander (Western Seaboard), Additional Director General Anil Kumar Harbola. Designed and constructed under stringent dual-class certification from the American Bureau of Shipping and Indian Register of Shipping, the FPV features over 60% indigenous content. The vessel measures 52 meters in length and 8 meters in breadth, with a displacement of 320 tons. Powered by a CPP-based propulsion system, the vessel can reach a top

speed of 27 knots. With its primary roles of protection, monitoring, control, and surveillance, 'Achal' is equipped to safeguard offshore assets and island territories. Its launch marks another milestone in the long-standing partnership between the Indian Coast Guard and GSL, further reinforcing the collective march towards Aatmanirbharta in defence manufacturing. Built at a total cost of Rs 473 crore, the project has also provided a significant boost to local industry by generating substantial employment and supporting MSMEs engaged in production activities at various factories and within GSL. The ceremony was attended by Chairman & Managing Director, GSL, Shri Brajesh Kumar Upadhyay, along with senior officials from the Indian Navy, ICG, shipyard and others

## FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

### What does 2027...

commentator, Zaffar Choudhary said that the next census will trigger a competitive identity struggle in Jammu & Kashmir.

“With the addition of new communities to the quota list, the issue of reservation has taken center stage in Jammu & Kashmir. The upcoming census is crucial for J&K, particularly in terms of documenting the numbers of various communities,” he said. KNO

### Security forces given...

be considered an act of war—and India will respond accordingly,” the LG warned.

He called upon the police to expedite targeted operations against Over Ground Workers (OGWs) and others providing logistical and moral support to terrorists. “Such elements must be shown their right place,” he said.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent remarks during the inauguration of the Kashmir rail link, LG Sinha said, “PM Modi rightly acknowledged that the people of Jammu and Kashmir after the barbaric Pahalgam terror attack gave a befitting reply to terrorism. It is now time to finish the remaining elements with resolve and precision.”

“Your sacred duty is to serve Maa Bharati. From today, your foremost responsibility is to uphold the rule of law and ensure the complete eradication of terrorism from Jammu and Kashmir,” the LG told the pass outs.

He highlighted that the new officers have been trained in cybercrime investigations, modern policing techniques, and Army-style tactical operations, equipping them to face the changing dimensions of internal security. “We now have B.Tech professionals joining the force, and three new criminal laws coming into force—these must be adopted and enforced effectively,” he said.

Stressing the importance of intelligence-driven policing, LG Sinha said, “A constable must have complete knowledge of his area. For J&K Police, human intelligence has become the most potent weapon. Community engagement is key, and our intelligence collection must become sharper and more localized.”

“Despite remarkable changes in technology, there is no alternative to beat policing and area policing. Therefore, we have to bring beat policing to the centre of the security apparatus. We must strike a fine balance between Techint and Humint to strengthen overall counter-terrorism efforts,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Paying tribute to the martyrs of J&K Police, LG Sinha said, “I salute the brave hearts who laid down their lives fighting terrorists. The entire nation admires and respects the J&K Police for their unmatched professionalism and courage in handling complex security challenges.”

He emphasized the need for a multi-pronged approach combining intelligence, technology, community support, and inter-agency coordination. “Our ancient values are rooted in truth, justice, and good governance. It is the duty of our police to uphold these principles while ensuring peace, development, and stability in the region,” he said.

Congratulating the pass outs, LG Sinha said, “For thousands of years, an important part of our society, a group of warriors have been making supreme sacrifices to establish the victory of dharma over adharma. Those warriors have creative power of Lord Brahma, the nurturing power of Lord Vishnu and the absolute power of Lord Shiva. The same invincible power is being imparted to new probationer DySSP and Sub-Inspectors at the Parade.”

“Entire nation looks at our police force with admiration and respect for professional competence, for successful handling of security challenges on multiple fronts and ruthlessly combating terrorism,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

“The brave personnel must protect the whole society in every possible way to ensure peace, development and stability,” he said, adding, “Our ancient values focus on truth, justice, morality, law and good governance—these values need to be protected and nurtured in the society by J&K Police.”

The Lieutenant Governor called upon J&K Police Force to utilise the modern technology like Artificial Intelligence to enhance its capability of data collec-

tion and analysis to counter security threats, prevent radicalisation and triumph over adverse situations. “Our mighty warriors of J&K Police must adopt a multi-pronged approach,” he added.

The Lieutenant Governor further asked the police personnel to focus on fostering collective vigilance in the communities.

He said this collective vigilance will not only enable the police force to ensure a coordinated response against terrorists but will also strengthen the trust with all sections of society.

He emphasised on intelligence-driven anti-terror operations.

The Lieutenant Governor also extended his felicitations to all the trainers and officials of Police Academy Udhampur and the family members of the passing out DySSP and PSIs.

Garib Dass, Director, Udhampur Police Academy briefed about the program and various activities conducted during the Training course.

The training program equipped recruits with high proficiency in New Criminal Laws, Artificial Intelligence, cybercrime, narc-terrorism, general warfare, field craft and tactics, counter-terrorism, counter-insurgency, human rights, and law & order.

The Lieutenant Governor took the ceremonial Salute and inspected the parade. He also felicitated the new recruits who excelled during their training. KNO

### LG launches Ashish...

the continuous changes taking place in Jammu and Kashmir and development in various sectors since abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019.

“Under leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi J&K has regained its identity of 'Paradise' post 2019 and Ashish Sharma's watchful photographic journey captures that transformation.

In the history of J&K, 5 August and 6 June will always be remembered. While abrogation of Article 370 on 5 August 2019 paved the way for J&K's complete integration, 6 June physically connected Kashmir to Kanyakumari and its citizens' aspirations with national mainstream.

This coffee table book is an attempt to present before the nation the transformation that has taken place in Jammu and Kashmir in the last five years,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor, in his address, highlighted the efforts made by the J&K Administration, under the guidance of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, to build a Jammu and Kashmir, which is free from all kinds of discrimination, fear and insecurity.

“My message from day one was very clear - we do not believe in buying peace but want to establish peace. I had given another vision to the security agencies - do not harass the innocent, do not spare the guilty.

The administration has been successful to a large extent in realising the vision of 4 Ps - Peace, Progress, Prosperity and People First. Our infrastructure has transformed at an unprecedented pace and economy is showing impressive growth,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor reiterated that the administration, while transforming urban landscape and developing our cities, has paid special attention to facilities, sustainability and quality living for the common citizens.

“Nightlife for any city is not just a clock but a symbol of the liveliness and the cities of Kashmir valley have regained their vibrancy now. Jammu and Kashmir's relationship with lakes and rivers has been revived after decades.

Our industry, Startups and Agriculture sectors witnessed rapid growth over 5 successive years. Youth are fulfilling their dreams through entrepreneurship and around one million availed the opportunity of self-employment within 4 years and it has been ensured that no section of society is left behind,” he further said.

The Lieutenant Governor also lauded the significant efforts behind the coffee table book, which remarkably showcases J&K's extraordinary journey and unprecedented growth across all sectors.

Books are documents of time, especially coffee table books present progress through captivating photographs. We can see J&K is on the move through Ashish's Camera, he said. The Lieutenant Governor also

cautioned the people against the fear mongers who are making misleading statements, without any substance, and threatening the peace.

“People should do their politics but not at the cost of unity and integrity of our great nation,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Ms. Meenakshi Lekhi, former Union Minister of State; Shri Ram Bahadur Rai, President IGNC; Dr Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNC; Prof. Ramesh C. Gaur, Director & Head, Kala Nidhi, IGNC and prominent citizens from all walks of life were present.

### SIA attaches property...

The property attachment was executed in the presence of an Executive Magistrate, ensuring full compliance with statutory procedures, the spokesman added.

“This action represents a significant milestone in the continuing investigation into unlawful and anti-national activities in the region. It also reflects the SIA's unwavering commitment to neutralize terrorist threats, safeguard national security, and uphold peace and rule of law in Jammu and Kashmir,” the statement reads.

The SIA, J&K, in collaboration with other security and intelligence agencies, remains steadfast in its resolve to take stringent actions against individuals and entities involved in activities that threaten the sovereignty, integrity, and unity of the nation. KNO

### 'Evacuation process...

Association (JKSA) informed that ‘at least 600 students of India, majorly from Kashmir have already been relocated to safer places’.

“At least 1300 students from Kashmir are studying in Iran. Most of them are pursuing MBBS degrees out there,” JKSA said.

National Convenor of JKSA Nasir Khuehami told KNO that “At least 600 students of India, majority of them from Kashmir, have been relocated to the city of Kom.”

He said that the arrangements for the Indian students are being done by the concerned university and Indian embassy jointly. KNO

### J&K heaves sigh...

to scattered places till June 20.

However, he added that generally cloudy weather with intermittent spells of rain and thundershower is expected at many places between June 21 and June 23.

Amidst the forecast, the farmers have been advised to continue the farm operations.

Meanwhile, the people across J&K heaved a sigh of relief from the intense heatwave as the mercury settled below normal at all the stations after more than a week.

In Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, the mercury settled at 25.2 degrees Celsius, while in Jammu, the winter capital of the region, a maximum temperature of 32.3 degrees Celsius was recorded on Monday.

Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, recorded 22.8 degrees Celsius while Pahalgam, a famous tourist destination, recorded 20.2 degrees Celsius. In Kupwara, the mercury settled at 25.0 degrees Celsius and Koker-nag and Gulmarg, a famous ski resort, recorded 21.4 degrees Celsius and 17.0 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Banihal in Jammu division recorded 21.4 degrees Celsius while Katra recorded 29.9 degrees Celsius. Batote and Bhandarwah recorded 23.1 degrees Celsius and 23.6 degrees Celsius, respectively. KNO

### COVID-19 active...

isolation remaining central to the region's containment strategy.

Officials said all current patients are stable with mild symptoms, and there is no cause for concern.

Meanwhile, the Union Health Ministry has directed all states and UTs to ensure the availability of oxygen, isolation beds, ventilators and essential medicines to handle any potential surge. KNO

### High Court discharges...

to the Court, at the stage of framing of charge, to

## Hakeem seeks lifting of Tourism Ban at Doodpathri, Yousmarg & Tosamaidan

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

President of Peoples Democratic Front (PDF) and former minister, Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen, on Monday reiterated his call to the Jammu and Kashmir administration to immediately lift the ban on tourist activities at key destinations including Doodpathri, Yousmarg, and Tosamaidan, citing the adverse impact on local livelihoods and the region's economy.

In a statement issued to the press, Hakeem Yaseen said that delegations from various parts of Budgam district, particularly from Tosamaidan, Yousmarg and Doodpathri, met him recently and expressed their deep anguish over the continued closure of these popular tourist des-

tinations. The affected residents, mostly dependent on tourism for their livelihood, are facing immense financial strain due to the restrictions.

“These regions are among the most picturesque and peaceful tourist destinations in Kashmir. The continued ban has disrupted the income of hundreds of families who rely on tourism for survival,” Hakeem said.

He emphasized that tourism is not merely a source of revenue, but a lifeline for rural households, providing employment, dignity, and opportunity. “The ban has triggered a sense of abandonment among the youth and small business owners who had invested in the seasonal tourism economy,” he added.

ascertain as to whether the allegations made in the charge sheet against the accused are supported by the material collected by the Investigating Officer during investigation of the case.”

“It is to be borne in mind that at the time of framing of charges, the court has to accept the material assembled by the Investigating Agency during investigation of the case at its face value and its probative value cannot be gone into. The court has only to derive satisfaction about the commission of offence by the accused”, it added.

The Bench took note of the fact that both the victim girls had stated that they could not get any vehicle for returning to their home, and they boarded the vehicle of the petitioner out of their own will and volition. “This Court is conscious of the fact that both the victim girls were minor at the relevant time and their consent or otherwise is immaterial”, it said.

It was noted that from the statements of the two girls, it was discernible that they had left their home completely uninfluenced by any promise and inducement emanating from the petitioner. “Thus, when the statements of both the victim girls are read in conjunction with the statements of their immediate family members, it comes to the fore that the victim girls were neither taken nor enticed by the petitioner to go with him. Therefore, offence under Section 363 of IPC is not made out against the petitioner even if whole of the material collected by the Investigating Agency is taken to be true at its face value”, the Bench said.

On the aspect of the evidence relating to rape upon the victim girls, the Bench noted that both of them had not stated anything about this aspect of the matter. “None of them had stated that they were subjected to assault by the petitioner. Merely on the basis of the opinion of the doctor that the two girls had been subjected to sexual activity a couple of days back, it cannot be inferred that the petitioner was the author of it,” the court said.

The Bench found no evidence on record to show that the petitioner had either kidnapped the two victim girls or had committed sexual assault upon them. Therefore, even if the material collected by the Investigating Agency during the investigation of the case remains un rebutted, the same is not sufficient to presume that the petitioner/accused has committed any offence nor does it raise any grave suspicion about the involvement of the petitioner in the alleged occurrence”, it said.

Allowing the petition, the Bench set aside the impugned order of the Special Judge (POCSO Cases) (Principal Sessions Judge) Srinagar, whereby charges had been framed against the petitioner/accused. “The petitioner is discharged and the challan against him shall stand dismissed”, it ordered. KNO

## Faz Lul Haseeb assumes charge as Commissioner SMC, CEO SSCL

**J1 NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

Mr. Faz Lul Haseeb today assumed charge as the Commissioner of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) and Chief Executive Officer of Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), ushering in a new chapter in the city's urban governance and infrastructure development.

He takes over from Dr. Owais Ahmad, who has been transferred as Director, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Kashmir. A brief ceremony held at the SMC headquarters witnessed a warm welcome for Mr. Faz Lul Haseeb by senior officials and staff. They pledged full support in furthering the mission of sustainable, inclusive, and responsive urban development.

In his maiden address, Haseeb reaffirmed his commitment to transparent, efficient, and citizen-first governance. "Srinagar's transformation into a smart and sustainable



city demands collective action and innovative solutions. My focus will be on strengthening service delivery, streamlining grievance redressal, and ensuring people's concerns remain central to all our initiatives," he said.

With a distinguished record of public service, Haseeb is known for his dynamic approach, prompt action, administrative acumen, and problem-

solving capabilities. His leadership is expected to energize ongoing projects under the Smart City Mission and revitalize municipal functions for enhanced citizen satisfaction.

Officials expressed optimism that under Haseeb's stewardship, Srinagar will witness accelerated progress, deeper civic engagement, and sustainable urban outcomes.

## Commissioner Secretary visits Cooperative Public Secondary School, Malangam

**J1 NEWS SERVICE**  
BANDIPORA, JUNE 16

As part of the ongoing celebration under the International Year of Cooperatives, Commissioner Secretary, Cooperative Department, Babila Rakwal, on Monday visited the Cooperative Public Secondary School Ltd, Malangam, Bandipora to review functioning of the institution and promote cooperative-based education in rural areas.

During the visit, the Commissioner Secretary interacted with the school management, faculty, students and members of the managing cooperative society. She appreciated the efforts of the institution in delivering quality education through a cooperative model. She emphasized the importance of strengthening educational cooperatives to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities in remote areas.



Babila Rakwal informed that there are currently 15 cooperative educational institutions in Jammu and Kashmir, and this school at Malangam has been recently established under the Cooperative Department.

"Our foremost focus will be on developing the infrastructure of these cooperative schools, including the provision of desks, establishment of science laboratories, libraries, smart classrooms and computer labs," she said, while reiterating the department's commitment towards empowering the rural youth through quality

education. This visit followed her earlier engagement in Gurez, where she emphasized the need to register cooperative societies in niche sectors such as food processing of Zeera, buckwheat, potato, and rural tourism.

On the occasion, the Commissioner Secretary felicitated the students from the institution who had recently excelled in academic examinations. The local community and school stakeholders expressed optimism for continued support to cooperative-led educational initiatives in the region.

## Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan Awareness Camp held at Chakwa Panchayat - Batote



**J1 NEWS SERVICE**  
RAMBAN, JUNE 16

As part of the ongoing Dharti Aaba Janbhagidari Abhiyan, a 15-day outreach campaign aimed at empowering tribal communities, the District Administration Ramban today organized an awareness camp at Panchayat Chakwa of Tehsil Batote.

The event was presided over by Chief Planning Officer, Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Rather in presence of Tehsildar Dr. Reejuta Mhajan, BDO Kavita and other concerned officials.

The camp witnessed enthusiastic participation from the local tribal population, particularly members of the Gujjar and Gaddi (ST) community.

Resource persons from the government departments engaged with the attendees, providing detailed information on a wide range of govern-

ment welfare and employment schemes available to Scheduled Tribe beneficiaries.

Besides imparting awareness about social security, livelihood, and skill development programs, the officials also addressed several grievances of the locals. A number of issues raised by the participants were resolved on the spot, while others were duly recorded for follow-up action by the respective departments.

The Chief Planning Officer emphasized the importance of ensuring last-mile delivery of government services to marginalized sections, particularly in remote tribal areas.

Local community members appreciated the efforts of the administration and expressed hope that such initiatives would continue to bring positive change in their socio-economic conditions.

## MD Jal Jeevan Mission asks CEs to expedite Har Ghar Jal certification of reported villages

**J1 NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

Mission Director, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Khurshid Ahmad Shah, today convened a review meeting regarding implementation of the Mission in J&K through virtual mode.

The meeting was attended by chief Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Kashmir, Mohammad Taj Chowdhary, Chief Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Jammu, Vikas Sharma Superintending Engineers Hydraulic Circles Jammu, Udampur-Reasi, Rajouri, Poonch, Kathua, Doda/Kistwar/Ramban, Srinagar/Ganderbal, Anantnag-Kulgam, Budgam, Baramulla-Bandipora and Kupwara-Handwara, Executive Engineers of all Civil and Mechanical divisions and the officers in Mission Directorate.

The MD enquired about the status of scheme completion under the Mission. He was informed by both the Chief Engineers that out of 3200 schemes being executed under JJM, 1486 stand completed, the details of



which can be accessed by the public on JJM portal. The rest of the schemes are in advanced stages of completion, they added.

The MD enjoined upon the Chief Engineers to expedite the progress on the scheme for completion within the set timelines so that the mission of providing "Har Ghar Jal" becomes a reality in J&K soon.

He took a detailed review of mapping of pipelines laid under PM Gati Shakti. He directed the officers to complete the targets within the set timelines and upload the scheme related information on the portal.

The MD also took a division wise review of Har Ghar Jal certification of reported villages. He directed the Executive Engineers to remove the discrepancies in schemes completed and Villages certified evident in the PowerPoint Presentation. He also directed the Superintending Engineers of respective circles to take a detailed review of their respective districts regarding Har Ghar Jal Certification.

He also discussed the expenditure reconciliation and variations in state and central share under JJM.

## DC B'la finalizes arrangements for International Yoga Day; directs officers for smooth conduct

**J1 NEWS SERVICE**  
BARAMULLA, JUNE 16

In connection with the upcoming International Yoga Day, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today chaired a meeting here to review and finalize the necessary arrangements for the main event of International Yoga Day scheduled to be held at Helipad Ground Baramulla.

During the meeting, DC directed all concerned officers to ensure adequate arrangements for the smooth conduct of the event. He emphasized wide public participation, and instructed departments to raise awareness about the importance



of Yoga in promoting physical and mental well-being.

Key arrangements discussed included sanitation, drinking water, seating, medical aid, security, transport and logistics. DC stressed inter-departmental coordination and timely execution of responsibilities.

Officers from the Youth Services & Sports, Health,

Education, Information, Police and other line departments briefed the DC on their preparedness for the day.

The main event on June 21 will witness participation from officers, students, athletes, NCC/NSS cadets, and local citizens, all coming together to perform Yoga and spread the message of healthy living.

## DC Bandipora reviews arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haram at Sumbal

**J1 NEWS SERVICE**  
BANDIPORA, JUNE 16

In view of the upcoming observance of Muharram-ul-Haram 2025, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri today convened a high-level coordination meeting at Dak Bungalow, Sumbal to finalize arrangements for the peaceful and smooth conduct of religious events across the district.

During the meeting, DC emphasized inter-departmental coordination, timely execution of facilities, and maintaining law and order during the Muharram days. He directed all concerned departments to ensure uninterrupted power and water supply, proper sanitation, healthcare services, and traffic regulation at all major congregation sites.

On the occasion, DC directed concerned officers from departments including PDD, Jal Shakti, R&B, Health, Fire & Emergency Services, Food Civil Supplies, Police and Municipal Committees to stay alert and ensure all necessary



arrangements are in place well in advance.

He underscored the importance of maintaining peace and communal harmony during the Muharram period, stressing the need for seamless coordination among the district administration, police authorities, and religious bodies to ensure the smooth and dignified conduct of all related processions and events.

On the occasion, religious leaders and community representatives raised several concerns related to healthcare, electricity, drinking water and other

essential arrangements for Muharram congregations.

While giving a patient hearing to the issues highlighted, DC assured that all genuine demands would be addressed on priority. He directed the concerned departments to take immediate action for timely resolution of the issues. Among others, the meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Zaffar Hussain Shawl; Programme Officer ICDS, Yaar Ali Khan; SDM Sumbal, Chief Planning Officer Bandipora and other concerned officers.

## Vaccination drive for FMD control programme inaugurated at Dir. of Sheep Husbandry Kashmir



**J1 NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

Directorate of Sheep Husbandry, Kashmir, today kick-started a comprehensive vaccination drive for Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) control programme at its headquarters in Lal Mandi, Srinagar.

The drive was formally inaugurated by Dr. Rafiq Ahmad Shah, Director, Sheep Husbandry Department, Kashmir.

The initiative marks a crucial step in safeguarding the health of the livestock population in the region, with a focus on improving animal productivity and minimizing economic losses to the farming community due to FMD, a highly contagious cloven-hoofed animals.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Rafiq Ahmad Shah emphasized the department's commitment to a proactive move to strengthen animal

healthcare and disease prevention among small Ruminants.

"FMD vaccination drive is a significant intervention under the National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP). Ensuring the health of our livestock directly contributes to the livelihood of thousands of sheep and goat rearers across Kashmir," he said.

Demonstrations on proper vaccine handling and administration were also conducted as part of the awareness and capacity-building component of the programme.

This initiative reflects the department's continued efforts toward strengthening animal husbandry infrastructure and promoting sustainable livestock farming in the region. Directorate has urged all livestock owners to actively cooperate with field teams and ensure timely vaccination of their animals.

## CEO lauds media's role in voter education, strengthening democratic values in society

**J1 NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu and Kashmir, Sanjeev Verma, today convened an interactive session with the representatives of print media houses at Nirvachan Bhavan, Jammu, with an aim to enhance better communication flow with the media fraternity.

The CEO underscored the importance of effective collaboration between the election machinery and the media to deliver accurate, clear and timely updates to the public from the Election Department.

Expressing gratitude for successful coverage and contribution in the previously held Parliamentary and Assembly Elections,



the CEO appreciated the consistent support from the media fraternity in disseminating timely and accurate election-related information to the public.

Sanjeev Verma also acknowledged the role of media in fostering democratic values and enhancing voter education, creating awareness about SVEEP, dispelling myths, countering misinformation and false narratives.

The media fraternity also gave valuable suggestion like creating WhatsApp group for better coordination and updated information.

The CEO stressed on seamless election-related communication and ensuring prompt coordination with media houses for press notes and releases, supplemented with relevant visuals provided by the Election office.

## EDITORIAL

## New dawn for Kashmir's tourism sector

The recent decision by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to reopen 16 key tourist destinations across Jammu and Kashmir marks a significant step towards restoring confidence and normalcy in the Union Territory's tourism sector, which has been reeling under the shadow of fear since the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam that claimed 26 lives, including 25 tourists. The move not only signals administrative readiness to ensure safety but also carries immense symbolic weight for the people of Kashmir and the broader tourism ecosystem that sustains their livelihoods. Pahalgam, often described as the crown jewel of Kashmir's tourism circuit, was among the first to welcome back tourists following the announcement. Images of smiling visitors strolling through the valleys, pony rides resuming, and restaurants echoing with laughter and life are powerful affirmations of the Valley's resilience. These are not just scenes of leisure—they are statements of collective defiance against fear and violence. The reopening comes at a crucial time. With the summer season peaking and the annual Amarnath Yatra scheduled to begin next month, the revival of tourism activity could not have been more timely. The forthcoming Yatra, known for drawing lakhs of pilgrims from across the country, is expected to provide a much-needed fillip to the local economy and deepen the faith in Kashmir's capability to host visitors securely and graciously. Importantly, the reopening is not a blanket gesture but a calibrated and phased process, underscoring that safety remains the administration's top priority. The decision to review and selectively reopen the 48 previously shut tourist spots after a detailed security assessment reflects a prudent balance between encouraging tourism and maintaining vigilance. The return of tourists is not just a morale booster—it is an economic necessity. For thousands of Kashmiris, from hotel owners and pony operators to cab drivers and handicraft sellers, tourism is not just livelihood—it is survival. After months of uncertainty and loss, the sight of bustling markets and occupied guesthouses brings with it hope and a renewed sense of purpose. Yet, the road ahead requires sustained effort. Mere reopening will not be enough. It is imperative that the administration continues to invest in securing these destinations, ensuring transparent communication with the public, and building long-term strategies for crisis preparedness. Equally vital is the role of media and civil society in reinforcing narratives of peace, resilience, and progress. The return of tourists to the Valley is not merely about economic revival—it is about reclaiming normalcy, asserting resilience, and sending a clear message: Kashmir remains open, welcoming, and unbowed. The Lieutenant Governor's decision to reopen these destinations is commendable, but the real credit also goes to the spirit of Kashmiris who, despite tragedy, continue to open their arms and hearts to the world.



NITIN GADKARI

When Narendra Modi took oath as India's Prime Minister in 2014, from that very moment, the BJP-led Central government prioritised infrastructure development above all else. In this direction, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways became the focal point of infrastructure growth. Under Modi's leadership, this Ministry has not only accelerated the country's economic development but has also given it a new dimension over these 11 years, since 2014. The construction of highways - both completed and upcoming - has played a significant role in changing the trajectory of the country's growth. Efficient highways, waterways, and railways can reduce logistics costs and boost the economy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi dreams of making India a 'Vishwaguru' (World Leader). India has emerged as the world's third-largest economy and a \$5 trillion economy. To fulfill this

dream, we need to increase exports, which will in turn boost growth in agriculture, services, and industrial sectors.

In the past 11 years, the roads built have already reduced our logistics costs from 16% to 10%, and next year, we aim to bring it down further to 9%. This will enhance our exports, make us more competitive, and help India advance more powerfully toward becoming a 'Vishwaguru'.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is building 25 new Greenfield Express Highways across the country. Over 3,000 km of highways are also being built to connect ports and promote religious tourism. The government's efforts to boost religious tourism are also taking shape. The Buddhist Circuit project, completed at a cost of Rs22,000 crore, has significantly increased the number of tourists visiting the birthplace of Lord Buddha from South Asia, Indonesia, Malaysia, China, Singapore, and Japan.

Simultaneously, the number of pilgrims visiting the Char Dham sites - Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, and Yamunotri - has tripled. A ropeway worth Rs12,000 crore is being constructed to connect Kedarnath. About 90% of the work on the road linking Kailash Mansarovar in Uttarakhand to Pithoragarh has been completed.

In India, particularly in the national capital, the dream of 'flying buses' is on the verge of becoming a reality. This includes aerial buses, flash-charging electric buses, and double-decker flying buses for hilly regions. The aerial bus service from Dhaura Kuan in Delhi to Manesar, based on a skyway system, is almost in its final stages. I am confident that this experiment will be crucial in resolving the persistent traffic congestion on this special route.

Nagpur will soon see the launch of the first flash-charging electric bus. It will have 135 seats, executive class, front TV screens, and bus hostesses like air hostesses. This bus will have a maximum speed of 120 km/h and will stop every 40 km for just 30 seconds to fully charge before resuming its journey.

Such work cannot be achieved by merely sitting in an office preparing DPRs - it requires whole-hearted effort!

A recent study by IIM-Bangalore on road construction revealed that every Rs 1 spent on National Highway (NH) construction has led to a Rs3.21 increase in India's GDP, a multiplier effect of 3.2 times. Consequently, domestic production has grown by 9% and car sales by 10.4%. The work done by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has not only boosted economic activity but also creat-

ed numerous job opportunities.

Here are some figures worth noting: In 2014, India had only 91,000 km of national highways. By 2024, this network has expanded by nearly 60% to 1.46 lakh-km. The daily pace of road construction has increased from 12 km/day to 28-30 km/day. Under the ambitious Rs5.35 lakh crore Bharatmala project, the target is to build 65,000 km of roads, including economic corridors, international border roads, and border area connectivity. This plan is a decisive step toward reducing India's logistics costs further.

The 'Gati Shakti' and multi-modal connectivity initiative integrates roads, railways, air, waterways, and ports into a single digital platform, which has helped ensure timely project completion. Our ministry has also started implementing road development projects through public-private partnership (PPP) models, which has attracted significant private investment. Under this model, road projects worth over Rs12 lakh crore have been undertaken.

This journey, which began in 2014, is not just about roads; in a way, it has become the lifeline of India's progress. The expansion of the highway network has not only made travel easier but also boosted domestic trade, industry, tourism, and safety. From day one, our govern-

ment has been working tirelessly to ensure inclusive development reaches every person in the last row of society. We are committed to accelerating this work even faster in the coming years to achieve this goal as soon as possible.

We now have a clear vision of building world-class infrastructure and making our national highways network superior to even that of the United States by 2047, so that India becomes an economic superpower.

"America does not have good roads because it is rich; America is rich because it has good roads." This quote by former U.S. President John F. Kennedy, displayed in my office at the Transport Bhavan in Delhi and earlier in Maharashtra when I was a minister, is not there by chance. This has been our guiding mantra for the past 11 years under the leadership of Modi ji.

We are determined to carry this work forward even faster in the future. In the coming years, India's road infrastructure will be better than that of the United States - this is not a dream, but a reality taking shape. By maintaining a balance of quality, speed, transparency, and environmentally-friendly policies, India's national highway network will be recognised at the global level."

(The author is the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways)

## Chenab Bridge-The Arch of Modi's New India



BY TUSHI DEB

In the kaleidoscope of national progress, there are moments when infrastructure ceases to be merely functional and acquires the character of a developmental metaphor. The Chenab Bridge—poised as the world's highest railway arch, towering above the windswept river in Jammu and Kashmir—is one such creation. It is not just a marvel of civil engineering but a monument to the Narendra Modi government's reimagining of nationalism and development.

For decades, national integration was spoken of in sentimental abstractions. From Jawaharlal Nehru's cautious constitutionalism to Indira Gandhi's populist stances,

the promise of integrating Kashmir into the Indian mainstream remained just a promise, often deferred, frequently diluted. Projects were conceived and shelved. Political will waxed and waned. The mountain passes of Kashmir were treated more like buffers than bridges.

Then came a paradigm shift—bold, decisive, and deeply ideological. The abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 was not merely a constitutional manoeuvre. It was a political signal—a declaration that the time for half-measures had passed. But an act alone cannot sustain national unity. What was needed was physical integration, one that reshaped lived experience.

In the fog-laced valleys of Jammu and Kashmir, where once the echoes of uncertainty reverberated through the Pir Panjal, now rises a steel arc—the Chenab Bridge. Soaring 359 metres above the riverbed, it is not merely an engineering marvel; it is a

resounding metaphor for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a united, connected, and assertive Bharat.

Let us be clear: the Chenab Bridge is not just another infrastructural feat. It is the crown jewel of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link Project—a dream languishing in bureaucratic inertia and strategic indecision for decades. It took Narendra Modi's decisive leadership to breathe life into this project. His tenure has seen the bridge transform from blueprint to reality, rising defiantly above the ravines that once symbolised isolation and abandonment.

But Modi's political significance does not lie in the mere laying of steel and stone. It lies in the symbolism of inclusion.

In the classical Nehruvian tradition, India's first Prime Minister often spoke of "temples of modern India." Yet, the difference is stark. Nehru's dams and steel plants, while vision-

ary, were driven more by ideological idealism than political realism. Nehru gave India the scaffolding of modernity. Indira Gandhi wove populism into it. But Narendra Modi has transformed development into a tool of national consolidation. Whether it's a toilet in a tribal village, a highway in Ladakh, or a bridge over the Chenab, each project under Modi carries a dual message: "vikas" and "rashtravaad." This is not merely governance—it is the forging of a New India where the map and the mind are both being redrawn. Modi's approach is pragmatic nationalism—minufused with strategic foresight.

Let us also not forget the security implications of the Chenab Bridge. The bridge lies in a region where the Line of Control is not too distant and where instability has been weaponised for decades. In strengthening logistical mobility, Modi has addressed an unspoken

but vital requirement—the rapid movement of defence personnel and equipment. The bridge, thus, is both a civilian and a strategic asset—a dual-purpose lifeline in a geopolitically sensitive zone.

Critics may scoff and call it optics. But if optics are accompanied by outcomes, if symbolism is backed by steel, and if politics translates into bridges that span centuries of alienation, then Modi has succeeded where many only promised.

Under Modi, 11 years of governance is not a whispered slogan confined to New Delhi. Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil has highlighted this in a recent press conference. He stated, "Before 2014, indulging in appeasement and creating rifts among people to be in power had become India's political culture. However, Modi has changed this culture in 11 years. He has established a more transparent and accountable government that people have full

faith in."

Modi's developmental policies have decisively altered polity, with nationalism becoming a primary factor. In contrast to the Nehruvian consensus, which viewed nationalism as an elite abstraction, and Indira Gandhi's politics, which used development as electoral appeasement, Modi has treated both nationalism and development as intertwined forces. His infrastructure is ideological; his development is civilizational. The Chenab Bridge is not merely a logistical link. It is a metaphor for a new India—unapologetically nationalist, logistically integrated, and emotionally inclusive. The Chenab Bridge today stands as a national statement of the transformation of dreams to deeds. Hence, as trains begin to cross this magnificent arch, they will carry more than just passengers. They will carry an idea of Bharat—connected, complete, and committed.

## Short term courses can also become a means of getting employment for girls

VIJAY GARG

In the present era, science and technology have made our lives easier and more comfortable by making many useful discoveries and inventions, but they have also forced us to pursue higher-level science and technical education to get employment. Today, many such diploma and degree courses are available in our country and state, which enable us to earn good income by getting training at low cost and in less time. Now the trend of going to schools or colleges for traditional courses or studies is decreasing. Recognizing the pulse of the needs of the time, various educational institutions and

central or state organizations have started many new courses, which can prove helpful in getting employment.

If we look around, we find that there are many technical diploma or certificate courses available with a duration of three months to one year, which can be very helpful in providing us with employment. For example, many courses like 'Computer Hardware', 'Digital Marketing', 'Web Designing', 'Graphics Designing', 'Web Developer', 'Social Media Management', 'Content Writing' and 'Copy Writing' etc. are easily available in the offline or online market, which can provide us with employment quickly. The most

important thing is that no major basic educational qualification or very high marks are required to do the above courses.

Not only this, if you are keen on enhancing your 'technology skills', there is also a lot for you in the market. For example, if you want, you can get employment by doing 'Computer Hardware and Networking', 'Mobile Repairing Course', 'Electricity Course', 'Refrigerator and Air Conditioner Repair Course' and 'Solar Panel Installation Course' and become self-reliant. Remember that no government can ever provide government jobs to all the educated or trained youth of the country or state, so by doing low-cost and short-

term courses that make you self-reliant through self-employment, we can become self-reliant and avoid the suffering of unemployment.

If your interest lies in the Personal Care and Beauty Industry, then there are many courses available for you in this field as well. You can get training in 'Beauty Therapy Course', 'Nail Art Course', 'Mehndi Course', 'Makeup Artist Course', 'Hair Styling Course', 'Spa Therapy Course', 'Health and Fitness Course' or 'Physiotherapy' and increase your income by working in the health and beauty industry. There are some other courses related to this field as well, such as 'Yoga Training', 'Fit-

ness Training Course' and 'Nutrition and Dietician Course' etc. The Punjab government has also started government recruitment of Yoga Trainers.

Cooking courses hold a unique place in themselves. Due to the large middle class population in India, fast food is growing like a big industry. Since the economic level of the middle class is good, people of this class prefer market food. This market food can be in the form of 'tiffin food', 'dhaba food', 'restaurant food' or 'hotel food' etc. 'Street food' is the most popular food industry in India. By doing a good cooking course, you can get a job as a chef in a good dhaba, restaurant

or hotel, or you can also start your own tiffin business sitting at home.

The bottom line is that all the above courses not only educate you but can also become your support for a secure future. By doing the above courses, you can get a job sitting at home without making a big investment. Remember that the present and future era is about manual skills and the best thing is that all these courses can prove to be helpful for us even when we go abroad, but the condition is that these courses are done from a recognized institution and with complete honesty and hard work.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational Columnist Malout Punjab

## Autistic patients at high risk of Parkinson's disease: Study

People with autism could be at a higher risk of developing Parkinson's disease early in life, according to a large-scale study that showed similar underlying biological mechanisms of the conditions.

Researchers from the Karolinska Institutet questioned a possible connection between the neuropsychiatric diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), which affects an individual's thought processes, behaviour, and interpersonal communication, and early-onset Parkinson's disease -- a condition that affects locomotion and movement.

The results, published in *JAMA Neurology*, show that people with an autism diagnosis were four times more likely to develop Parkinson's disease than people without such a diagnosis. The correlation between the conditions remained even when con-



trolling for socioeconomic status -- a genetic predisposition for mental illness or Parkinson's disease and other such factors, said the researchers, who suspect the role of dopamine.

"This indicates that there can be shared biological drivers behind ASD and Parkinson's disease," said Weiyao Yin, research-

er at the Department of Medical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Karolinska Institutet.

"One hypothesis is that the brain's dopamine system is affected in both cases, since the neurotransmitter dopamine plays an important part in social behavior and motion control," Yin

added.

The study is based on registry data from over two million people born in Sweden between 1974 and 1999, who were followed from the age of 20 up to the end of 2022.

It is well-known that dopamine-producing neurons are degraded in Parkinson's disease.

Previous studies have also shown that dopamine is possibly implicated in autism, but more research needs to be done to confirm this.

"We hope that our results will eventually help to bring greater clarity to the underlying causes of both ASD and Parkinson's disease," Yin said.

Calling for more studies, the researchers urged healthcare services to keep people with ASD -- a vulnerable group with high co-morbidity and high use of psychotropics -- under long-term observation.

## India remains most trusted partner globally towards sustainable future: Minister

In a world characterised by geopolitical uncertainties, India remains the most trusted partner globally and this trust is attributed to political stability, visionary leadership, cultural values and unwavering commitment to a sustainable future, Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupendra Yadav, has stressed.

Addressing the CII 'Annual Business Summit 2025' in the national capital, the minister outlined India's climate policy architecture, focusing on three key drivers.

"India is transitioning from a linear to a circular economy model, aiming to reduce waste and enhance resource efficiency. The government has introduced Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) guidelines for various sectors, including tyres, batteries, plastics, and e-waste, to promote recycling and sustainable



consumption," he told the gathering.

Between 2022 and 2024, the recycling sector attracted investments totalling Rs 10,000 crore, reflecting industry commitment to sustainable practices. The circular economy sector is projected to be worth \$2 trillion by 2050, creating approximately 10 million jobs.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has launched Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) and

nationwide campaign 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam', a community-driven initiative aimed at environmental conservation.

"The introduction of Green Credit Rules under Mission LiFE incentivises voluntary actions toward environmental conservation, fostering a culture of sustainability," said the minister.

India also recognises the challenges posed by climate change and is committed to building resilience through adap-

tation strategies. The government has released the draft framework of the climate finance taxonomy, outlining methodologies for classifying activities under adaptation and mitigation.

Moreover, the development of the first National Adaptation Plan, to be submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), focuses on enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening knowledge systems, and reducing exposure to climate risks, he mentioned. Yadav urged industry leaders to actively participate in building a self-reliant circular economy.

He invited them to join the Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Industry Coalition, launched under India's G20 Presidency, as a collaborative platform to facilitate knowledge-sharing and sustainable practices.

## Study links depression with high risk of dementia in both mid and later-life

Depression can significantly raise the risk of dementia both in middle age as well as among those aged 50 and above, according to a study.

Dementia affects over 57 million people globally. There is currently no cure, so identifying and treating the factors to reduce the risk, such as depression, is an important public health priority.

The findings showed that potential links between depression and dementia are complex and may include chronic inflammation, hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis dysregulation, vascular changes, alterations to neurotrophic factors, and neurotransmitter imbalances. Shared genetic and behavioural-related modifications may also increase the risks.

The study, published in the journal *eClinicalMedicine*, highlights the importance of recognising and



treating depression across the life course, not just for mental health, but also as part of a broader strategy to protect brain health.

"Public health efforts need to place greater emphasis on preventative brain health, including scaling up access to effective mental health care," said Jacob Brain from the Institute of Mental Health and School of Medicine at the University of Nottingham, UK.

Previous studies have shown that people with depression are more likely to develop dementia later in life. Still, there's been a lot of debate about when depression matters most, whether it's depression that starts in midlife -- in the 40s or 50s, or depressive that appears later in life -- in the 60s or beyond.

This new research brings together all the existing evidence and adds new analysis to

examine this timing in more detail.

"Our findings raise the possibility that depression late in life may not just be a risk factor, but it could also be an early warning sign of dementia beginning to develop. By clarifying this timing, our work helps guide future research, treatment, and prevention strategies," Brain said.

The study, based on a meta-analysis of more than 20 studies involving over 34 lakh participants, specifically focused on the timing of when depression was measured, whether it was measured in midlife or later life, and calculated how much it increased the risk of developing dementia.

This essentially helped the researchers to provide a more accurate and up-to-date picture of how depression at different life stages is linked to dementia risk."

## Sleeping disorders may signal risk of Parkinson's disease, dementia

Sleeping disorders may act as an early indicator of neurodegenerative diseases like Parkinson's disease and Lewy body dementia (LBD) -- a type of dementia, according to a study.

The study focussed on patients with Rapid eye movement behaviour disorder -- a sleep disorder where individuals physically act out their dreams during the rapid eye movement (REM) stage of sleep.

"Normally, when we're asleep and dreaming, our muscles are paralysed, but around age 50, some people become very agitated during sleep and start punching, kicking and screaming," said Shady Rahayel, a medical professor at Université de Montréal in Canada.

Unlike sleepwalking, which occurs during slow-wave sleep, RBD occurs during rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, he added, and it affects people of middle age.



In the study, published in the journal *eBioMedicine*, the researchers said that nearly 90 per cent of people with the disorder will go on to develop either Parkinson's disease or LBD.

"RBD is an early warning sign that certain mechanisms in the brain are no longer working as they should," said the team.

"The people with RBD who come to see us are in good health... but of those who subsequently develop

a disease, half will have Parkinson's and the other half LBD."

Rahayel explained that with LBD, the second most common form of dementia after Alzheimer's, "patients are no longer able to function in everyday life".

In addition to dementia, "they will have Parkinson's-like symptoms, vivid visual hallucinations, fluctuating attention and other symptoms."

For the study, the team used data from 1,276 MRI

scans of people at risk of, or with, Parkinson's disease or LBD, and also of healthy people.

Using machine learning and computational models, the researchers identified two trajectories of brain atrophy progression.

LBD seems to be associated with brain atrophy that begins in the cortex and then spreads to the interior of the brain, while in Parkinson's the atrophy progresses from the interior to the exterior of the brain.

The team next aims to investigate the factors that lead to this deterioration in the cortex, such as vascular lesions, the effects of drugs, and of lifestyle choices.

"Now that we have identified these new progression patterns, our goal is to be able to determine from an MRI whether a person has one of them so that we can provide the best possible care," said Rahayel.

## Urgent action needed to ban flavoured tobacco, nicotine products: WHO

Urgent action is needed to ban flavoured tobacco, nicotine products that are increasingly being disguised as safer alternatives and deliberately targeted at children and adolescents, said the World Health Organization (WHO) on Friday, ahead of World No Tobacco Day.

World No Tobacco Day is observed every year on May 31. The theme this year "Bright products. Dark intentions. Unmasking the Appeal" sheds light on the concealed risks of tobacco products that are made to look attractive through enticing flavours, eye-catching packaging, influencer endorsements on social media, and misleading health claims.

The WHO called on governments to urgently ban all flavours in tobacco and nicotine products, including cigarettes, pouches, hookahs, and e-cigarettes, to protect youth from addiction and disease.

The products also include menthol, bubble



gum, and cotton candy which mask the harshness of tobacco and nicotine products turning toxic products into youth-friendly bait.

These not only make it harder to quit tobacco but

have also been linked to serious lung diseases.

"Flavours are fuelling a new wave of addiction, and should be banned. They undermine decades of progress in tobacco control," said Dr Tedros

Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO.

Flavoured tobacco is currently banned in over 50 countries, and more than 40 countries have also banned e-cigarette sales. While five nations specifically ban disposables, 7 ban e-cigarette flavours. Yet, flavoured accessories remain largely unregulated.

Saima Wazed, Regional Director for WHO South-East Asia said an estimated 11 million adolescents aged 13-15 years are already addicted to tobacco products in the region -- nearly 30 per cent of the global total in this age group.

"We now face aggressive industry marketing of new and emerging nicotine and tobacco products (NENTPs) -- such as electronic cigarettes, heated tobacco products, and flavoured nicotine pouches. These are being disguised as safer alternatives and deliberately targeted at children and adolescents," Wazed said.

## WHO calls for maternal vaccine, monoclonal antibody to protect babies against RSV

The World Health Organization (WHO) on Friday recommended all countries to use both maternal vaccine and a monoclonal antibody to protect babies against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) -- the leading cause of acute lower respiratory infections in children globally.

While the maternal vaccine -- RSVpreF -- can be given to pregnant women in their third trimester to protect their infant, the long-acting monoclonal antibody -- nirsevimab -- can be administered to infants from birth, just before or during the RSV season, stated the recommendations, published in the *Weekly Epidemiological Record* (WER).

"Every year, RSV causes about 100,000 deaths and over 3.6 million hospitalisations in children under the age of 5 years worldwide. About half of these deaths occur in infants younger than 6 months of age," the WHO said.



"The vast majority (97 per cent) of RSV deaths in infants occur in low- and middle-income countries where there is limited access to supportive medical care, such as oxygen or hydration," it added.

Although RSV causes mild symptoms similar to the common cold, including runny nose, cough, and fever, it can lead to serious complications. This can include pneumonia and bronchiolitis -- in infants, young children, older adults, and those with compromised

immune systems or underlying health conditions.

Both RSVpreF and nirsevimab were recommended by the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunisation (SAGE) for global implementation in September 2024. In addition, the maternal vaccine received WHO prequalification in March 2025, allowing it to be purchased by UN agencies.

While the vaccine can be given during routine antenatal care, nirsevimab is given as a single injection of monoclonal

antibodies that starts protecting babies against RSV within a week of administration. It lasts for at least 5 months and can cover the entire RSV season in countries with RSV seasonality.

The global health body recommends that infants receive a single dose of nirsevimab right after birth or before being discharged from a birthing facility. If not administered at birth, the monoclonal antibody can be given during the baby's first health visit.

If a country decides to administer the product only during the RSV season rather than year-round, a single dose can also be given to older infants just before entering their first RSV season, the WHO said.

The greatest impact on severe RSV disease will be achieved by administering the monoclonal antibody to infants under 6 months of age. However, there is still a potential benefit among infants up to 12 months of age, it added.

## Pawar hails bravery of Armed Forces during Operation Sindoor

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SAMBA, JUNE 16

Senior Congress leader and former MLA Indu Pawar on Monday paid rich tributes to the Indian Armed Forces for their extraordinary courage and sacrifices during Operation Sindoor, describing their action as a symbol of India's unwavering resolve against terrorism and external threats.

Speaking at the Jai Hind Sabha organised by DCC Samba under presidency of Sanjeev Sharma alongwith other senior congress leaders including former minister Yash Pal Kundal, Working President DCC Babbal Gupta, Ex Councillor Kuber Singh, Mandip Chaudhary & several others, She lauded the role & bravery of armed forces who always achieved the target.

Pawar said the recent operation launched by

Indian forces in response to the Pahalgam terror attack had once again proved that India will never bow before the forces of terror.

Later "Jai Hind Yatra was taken out which witnessed enthusiastic participation of large number of people including congress workers holding the national flag (Tiranga) in their hands & raised spirited slogans of Jai Hind.

"Our soldiers displayed unparalleled bravery during Operation Sindoor, not only neutralising threats across the border but also sending a strong and clear message that India will not tolerate attacks on its people or its sovereignty," she said.

Pawar underscored that the bravery of the Indian forces in the face of cross-border terrorism was not just a tactical success but a moral victory for the entire nation. "Each soldier who



participated in this operation upheld the highest traditions of the Indian Army – courage, discipline, and commitment to the motherland. The entire country is proud of their valour and sacrifice," she added.

She said the Congress party has always stood in full support of the Indian Armed Forces and will continue to do so, beyond politics.

"National security and respect for our soldiers

is above all political considerations. We salute the bravery of our jawans and assure their families that the nation stands firmly behind them", She said.

She Called upon the youth to draw inspira-

tion from the armed forces, adding sacrifices made by our soldiers are a call to all Indians – especially the youth – to contribute to the nation with dedication, honesty, and a spirit of service."

She praised the spirit of the people of Samba district, who have always stood shoulder to shoulder with the Army and security forces. "This border belt has produced many heroes and continues to show immense patriotism. The enthusiasm with which the Jai Hind Sabha and Yatra were organized here reflects the people's deep connection with the ideals of the Indian Armed Forces."

Former Minister Yash Pal Kundal demanded more bunkers besides five marla plot to border line people in safer zones.

He said Pakistan cant be trusted, so our border people have to be alert.

## BJP has brought social justice to the forefront of national policy: Sat Sharma

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, 16 JUNE, 2025:

Vaibhav Ruckwal, National Secretary of All India Backward Classes Union and former spokesperson of the Indian Youth Congress from Reasi, formally joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) along with hundreds of his supporters. He was accompanied by Nitin Mukesh, State Vice-President of the All India Backward Classes Union, and social activists Sparsh Sawhney and Sunil Dogra.

J&K BJP President Sat Sharma, and General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul, accompanied by MLA Mohan Lal Bhagat, BJP All Cells Incharge Rakesh Mahajan, former JMC Deputy Mayor Baldev Singh Billawaria, Office

Secretary Tilak Raj Gupta, and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Incharge Dil Bahadur Singh Jamwal welcomed the new entrants in a joining programme held at the BJP headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. The joining was facilitated by District Reasi BJP President Rohit Dubey.

Welcoming the new entrants, Sat Sharma said that the Bharatiya Janata Party is the most trusted political party who truly serves the nation and the society.

"We welcome Vaibhav Ruckwal and his entire team into our family with open arms. His commitment to the welfare of the backward classes and his deep connect with the grassroots will immensely benefit our organization", said Sat Sharma.

## NIT Srinagar marks World Blood Donor Day with blood donation camp

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Monday marked World Blood Donor Day by organizing a successful blood donation camp at the institute's Medical Unit.

The initiative was led by the NCC Unit of NIT Srinagar under the aegis of the 9 J&K Girls Battalion, in collaboration with the National Service Scheme (NSS), Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) Club, Sports Club, Alumni Association NIT Sgr, Medical Unit, and SMHS Hospital (Government Medical College Srinagar).

Held under the national theme "Nation First, Donate Blood, Save Lives," the camp aimed to raise awareness about the importance of voluntary blood donation and instill a spirit of patriotism and humanitarian service among the youth.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, staff, and faculty. A total of 77 pints of blood were collected, with 80 voluntary donors and 18 NCC cadets actively participating.

In his message, Director



NIT Srinagar, Prof. Binod Kumar Kanojia, appreciated the efforts of the organizers and participants.

"Such initiatives reflect the true spirit of service and responsibility that we aim to nurture in our students. I commend the NCC Unit and all collaborating bodies for successfully organizing this blood donation camp, which not only contributes to public health but also strengthens the values of empathy and civic engagement within our campus community," he added.

Notably, Lt Dr. Nitika Kundan, Associate NCC Officer (ANO) and event coordinator, also donated blood herself, exemplifying leadership by action. She commended the collective spirit shown by the NIT Srinagar community. "

The enthusiastic response from our cadets and the larger campus community reflects the institute's enduring commitment to nation-building through service," she said.

The blood donation camp was supported by the presence of all key coordinators, who also donated blood in the camp. These included Prof. M. A. Shah, Dean Alumni and International Affairs, Lt. Dr. Nitika Kundan (NCC Officer), Dr. Jitendra Gurjar (NSS), Dr. Ashok Kumar (EBSB), Dr. Gowhar Nabi (Medical Officer), and Dr. Manoj Kumar (SAS). The organizing team extended heartfelt thanks to Prof. Binod Kanojia, Director, NIT Srinagar, for his encouragement and permission to hold

the event. His continued support was instrumental in the success of the initiative.

Medical Officer Dr Ulfata Gul at SMHS Hospital praised the discipline and turnout of the participants. "This contribution is not just commendable, it will directly help save lives in critical care and trauma situations," she said Dr Ulfata also expressed her heartfelt gratitude to all the volunteers who came forward to donate blood, appreciating their selfless contribution to saving lives. Prof. Atikur Rehman, Registrar, NIT Srinagar, extended his support and commended the initiative, describing it as an essential part of the institute's vision.

"Beyond academics, we believe in nurturing empathy and service among our youth. Today's successful blood donation drive is a testimony to that belief," he added.

Prof. M. A. Shah, Dean Alumni and International Affairs, stressed the significance of holding such camps in academic institutions. Such humanitarian initiatives are vital not only for saving lives but also for instilling a deep sense of

civic duty among students, he said.

He emphasized that these drives serve a dual purpose, meeting critical healthcare needs and shaping socially responsible citizens. "Institutions like NIT Srinagar must lead by example. These camps foster empathy, discipline, and collective responsibility—values that extend far beyond the classroom," Prof Shah added.

The medical team from SMHS Hospital comprised Dr. Ulfata Gul, Dr. Ifla, Blood Bank Manager Aadil Mustafa Bhat, Lab Technicians Zahoor Ahmad and Ishfaq Ahmad, and Nurse Rozy Jan, who ensured smooth and safe blood collection throughout the event.

From NIT Srinagar's Medical Unit, the team comprised Dr. Urnaib Riyaz (Dental Surgeon), Dr. Tasaduq Nazki (Physiotherapist), Mr Mohammad Abrar Khan (Senior Pharmacist), Mr. Fairuz Malla (Psychology Counselor), and others.

The institute plans to organize more such events in the future to further promote a culture of voluntary blood donation, social responsibility, and national service.

## 11 years of Modi govt a symbol of excellent governance: Balbir Ram

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

Jammu and Kashmir BJP spokesperson and former Vice Chairperson, Balbir Ram Rattan, described the 11-year tenure of the central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a 'golden era of unparalleled achievements and excellent governance'.

He said that the historic transformations that have taken place in the country since 2014 are unprecedented in post-independence India. The Modi government, through its guiding principle of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas" (Together with all, Development for all, Trust of all, Efforts by all), has prioritized the balanced development of every section, region, and state.

Balbir Ram Rattan highlighted various public welfare schemes that have



direction to the country.

Balbir Ram Rattan further stated that historic decisions such as the abrogation of Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir, the construction of the Ram Temple, and the abolition of Triple Talaq have resolved long-standing issues and helped unify the nation.

He emphasized that during these 11 years, Prime Minister Modi has not only made governance more transparent and accountable but has also earned the trust of the people. He has taken the country to new heights of development, pride, and security.

Balbir congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his cabinet, and the BJP leadership for this successful, people-centric, and nation-first governance. He also expressed confidence that India will continue progressing on this path in the years to come.

## ADGP Armed J&K takes stock of functioning of IRP-13th Bn at Baramulla

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

Shri Anand Jain, IPS, ADGP Armed J&K, accompanied by Sh. Junaid Mehmood, IPS, Dy. Inspector General IRP, Kashmir visited IRP 13th Bn. to review the functioning and operational preparedness of the unit.

Upon his arrival, Sh. Jain, was accorded a warm welcome by the Officers present on the occasion. A ceremonial guard of honour was presented to the ADGP by a contingent of IRP 13th Bn.

During the visit, the ADGP inspected various establishments/facilities within the battalion premises, including administrative block, barracks, mess, kot, and transport fleet. He expressed satisfaction over the upkeep and cleanliness of the campus and highlighted the significance of maintaining high standards of hygiene and discipline.

Darbar was also held,



during which the ADGP interacted with the unit officers/officials. The unit personnel put forth their demands which were patiently heard by the ADGP and assured timely redressal.

While addressing, Shri Jain urged the personnel to remain fully prepared for the forthcoming Shri

Amarnath Ji Yatra duties, stressing the importance of professionalism, physical endurance, and quick response capability.

The ADGP also reiterated the department's firm stand on maintaining a drug-free environment, both on and off duty, warning of strict action against any involvement in sub-

stance abuse.

Highlighting the shift towards modernization, Sh. Jain appreciated the I/C Commandant and other Officers for fully implementing the e-Office system, which has enhanced administrative efficiency and reduced paperwork.

During the visit, ADGP

Armed also reviewed the pace of construction work, presently in progress at Tulibal Sopore for establishment of Battalion Headquarters for Women 2nd Battalion, besides taking security review of the F-coy deployed at Palhalan Pattan. He also interacted with the trainees, presently undergoing refresher course at Palhalan Pattan.

Sh. Jain encouraged all ranks to embrace digital initiatives for better governance and accountability.

The visit concluded with a plantation drive within the battalion campus, reaffirming the department's commitment to a clean and green environment.

Among other who were present on the occasion includes, Sh. Maqsood-ul-Zaman, IPS, DIG NKR, Baramulla, Sh. Gurinderpal, IPS, SSP Baramulla, Sh. Munir Ahmad, SSP APCR Kashmir, Sh. Aijaz Ahmad, I/C Commandant IRP 13th Bn. and other officers.

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
DODA, JUNE 15

In a significant step towards promoting academic excellence and guiding youth towards promising career paths, Viksit Bharat Welfare Society organized the "Shiksha Ke Champions Award Ceremony & Career Counselling Mela" at the Community Hall, Doda.

The event was held in the presence of Anil Thakur (JKAS), Additional Deputy Commissioner, Doda, who served as the Chief Guest. In his address, he lauded the efforts of the organization in recognizing meritorious students and underlined the importance of education as a transformative force in nation-building.

Yasir Hussain Wani, Executive Officer, Doda, attended the event as the Guest of Honour and motivated students to pursue their goals with dedication and clarity, stressing the value of early career planning and perseverance.

The ceremony was further enriched by the



presence of distinguished educationists Retired Principal Tanveer Wani and Hafizullah Khurwani, who attended as Special Guests and delivered motivational messages focused on discipline, self-confidence, and educational commitment.

The major highlight of the event was the felicitation of Class 12th toppers from across Doda district, who were awarded trophies and certificates in recognition of their outstanding academic performance. Their parents and teachers were also acknowledged for their vital role in the students' success. The event also featured a vibrant Career Counselling Mela, where reputed institutions such as Baba Farid Group of Institutions (Bathinda), SVIET College (Chandigarh), Arni University

(Himachal Pradesh), and University Guru (MBBS Counselling Services) participated. Students were provided with free personal guidance, insights into higher education options, scholarship opportunities, and assistance in planning their academic futures.

Speaking on the occasion, the organizing team stated that the initiative aimed to bridge the gap between talent and opportunity by empowering students with both recognition and resources.

The program was efficiently managed by Atul Sudan, Runit Gupta, Kulveer Singh, Kunal Koul, along with media partners Rayees Ahmed Gattu (Fair Voice News), Yawar Khurwani (Today News Line), and Mateen Iqbal (Enquirer Today).

# NDS releases Book Titled "Dogras Killed Alexander at Salal (Reasi) Jammu"

JI NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

Nami Dogri Sanstha (NDS) released a book of Pangotra Mangal Dass Dogra titled "Dogras Killed Alexander At Salal (Reasi)", Jammu. The author hailing from Nainath, Ghagwal, has worked for about two decades on this Project. After studying all the local historians, relevant Greece history, Purans, Research papers and after visiting all the spots connected with the Campaign of Alexander in Jammu and Kashmir, interacting with people and based upon his research work, he has established that Alexander was killed in Salal.

Jatinder Udhamपुरi, Sahitya Academy Awardee and former Director AIR whereas, Col. Varinder Kumar Sahi Vr C and Director War Decorated India (DWI) J&K and Ladakh Chapter was Chief Guest on the occasion. Prof. Nirmal Kamal Former HOD Economics Department Jammu University and former Chairperson Social Welfare Board was Guest Of Honour and Nidhi Sharma Dogra President Dogra Samaj Trust Mumbai was Special Guest. Dogra Harish Kaila President NDS co-shared. Yash Pal Yash General Secretary NDS conducted the proceedings. Prof. Lalit Gupta an English Scholar carried out detailed review of the book. He said the book

once again establishes the bravery of valiant dogras who frustrated the designs of Alexander to conquer India and was made to pack up and return back from Jammu region itself. Capt Lalit Sharma IFS APCCF (Retd) Conveiner NDS in his opening address lauded the efforts of the author in writing this research based book which enhances the pride of Dogras. He observed that the author has laid various bench marks for the young historians to further work in various areas to reach to the absolute truth of history as regards campaign of Alexander in Duggar Land. Om Arsh Dalmotra President Adbi Kunj Jammu quoting Dogra History said that



Alexander could not withstand the resistance posed by Dogras. Nidhi Dogra Sharma said that Dogras have always proved their credentials and stood test of the time in all the fields. She said Dogras can achieve all goals when they stand united. Prof. Nirmal Kamal said

that Padam Shree Prof Shiv Nirmohi has wriely equated Pangotra Mangal Dass Dogra, ather, with Kalhan of Kashmir as regard revealing of true history is concerned. Prof. Anupama Sharma Patron NDS said that the author has swimmied deep in the ocean of JK history to find out the facts about

the military campaign of Alexander in Duggar land where he was forced to return back leaving his mission in between. She congratulated the author to reveal the truth. Col Vainder Kumar Sahi Vr.C said that Dogras are a brave, considerate and versatile race which has repeatedly been proved. He said that in the latest Kargil war the martyrdom of doras is proportionally seven times more. He said that Alexander himself in an letter to his mother wrote that he is fighting here in Duggar Land with the tigers. He further writes that you have given birth to one Alexander but here every soldier is an Alexander. Col.Sahi admitted that Dogras have failed

to record their history in right earnest and we have to now bank upon Heunsaung and foreign historians. He appealed for lot of reearch work to record our factual history. He futher said that it is unfortunate that even the post independence history of dogras from 1947 has not been recorded properly. He remarked that our history is important for our new generations to read. He congratulated the author for his work. Padam Shree Jatinder Udhamपुरi is his presidential address while appreciating and congratulating the author described his work as an impotant landmark in Dogra History. He said that if facts are true the book has

the relevance at international level. The Vote Of Thanks was extended by Wg Cdr Nirmal Kumar "Nimbal" Secretary NDS. To inculcate the habit of reading he suggested for presenting dogri books as gifts on various occasions. Others present on the occasion include Maj Gen S.K Sharma, O.P Sharma Eminent Journalist, Chan-der Mohan Sharma former Dy Director, MS Jamwal Ex DSP, Brij Mohan Dubey, B.S Jamwal Ex Dy Commissioner, Narinder Singh Chib Dogri Poet, Sunita Padwal Dogri Writer, Shambu Ram Pyasa Cashier NDS, Raj Rishi Sharma, Harish Kaila President NDS, Randhir Singh Raipuria, Prof SP Chopra and Anita Chopra.

## Surjit Singh Slathia & Keshav Chopra release Musical Song 'Gurha Slathia'

JI NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

Former Minister and Member of Legislative Assembly Samba Surjit Singh Slathia accompanied by prominent Social activist and Chairman of the Samvedna Society, Keshav Chopra, today releases a new musical song titled 'Gurha Slathia'. The release event took place here in Samba.



with everyone, fostering a stronger sense of belonging and community pride. My heartfelt congratulations to the entire team for this beautiful creation." Keshav Chopra while speaking said that "The launch of 'Gurha Slathia' is a heartwarming occasion. As Chairman of the Samvedna Society, our mission is to uplift and empower communities in various ways, and promoting local art and culture is a crucial part of that. This song is a testament to the creative talent that exists right here in Jammu. I commend Dev Rajput for his dedication and the entire production team for bringing this wonderful song, 'Samvedna is always there to support every artist of Jammu and Kashmir and if they need any help they can approach us anytime," Keshav added.

The song was released under the banner of the YouTube Channel "Dev Rajput Music." The lyrics, music, and vocals for 'Gurha Slathia' were all contributed by Dev Rajput. The accompanying music video was directed by Rahul Dutta and Tarun Sharma, both renowned personalities in Jammu. Raj Kumar served as the Director of Photography (D.O.P), with editing and

production handled by KD. 'Gurha Slathia' is expected to resonate with local audiences, celebrating the spirit and culture of the area. The collaboration of seasoned political and social figures in its release underscores its community significance. Speaking during the Launch Surjit Singh slathia said that "It is with immense pride and joy that we witness the release of 'Gurha Slathia' today. This song is more than just a melody; it is an ode to our beloved place, its rich culture, and the indomitable spirit of its people. As someone deeply rooted in Samba, I believe it's vital to promote our local talent and heritage. Dev Rajput has done a commendable job in capturing the essence of Gurha Slathia through his music and lyrics. I am confident that this song will resonate

## Defence Cyber Agency begins exercise to bolster cyber resilience at national level

JI NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JUNE 16

'Cyber Suraksha', a comprehensive Cyber Security Exercise organised by Defence Cyber Agency under the aegis of Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff, commenced on June 16, 2025. This multi-phased exercise, which concludes on June 27, 2025, is a proactive step

towards bolstering cyber resilience at national level, and encompasses the conduct of targeted training sessions, evaluation and an engaging capsule for leadership. Over 100 participants from national-level agencies and stakeholders from defence domains are taking part in the event. The exercise is designed to simulate real-world cyber threats, reinforce secure

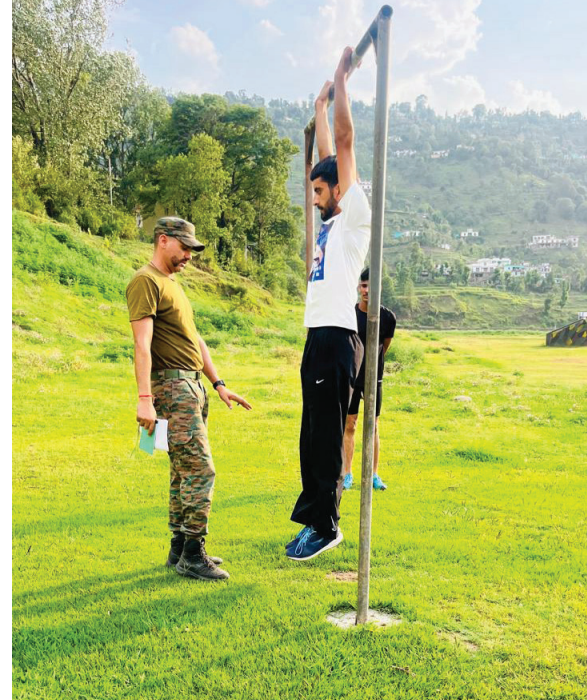
practices, and test the analytical and defensive cyber skills of participants in a high-paced, gamified environment. Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) conclave for leadership has also been dovetailed in 'Cyber Suraksha', thereby integrating the technical aspects with leadership roles. The CISOs conclave includes talks by eminent speakers and will

culminate in an immersive Table-Top Exercise. Combining structured learning with dynamic hands-on challenge environments will empower participants to act decisively in the face of cyber threats. Defence Cyber Agency plans to conduct such exercises on a regular basis to maintain a state of readiness and cultivate a security-first culture across all levels.

## Indian Army organizes Op Pehla Kadam, a Rect Training Programme for Aspiring Agniveers at Mendhar, Poonch

JI NEWS SERVICE  
POONCH, JUNE 16

In a significant initiative to empower the local youth and guide them towards a career in the Indian Armed Forces, the Ace of Spades Gunner unit organised Operation 'Pehla Kadam' a rigorous pre-recruitment training programme for aspiring Agniveers in Mendhar. This transformative programme aims to bridge the gap between aspiration and achievement by preparing young men physically and mentally for the challenges of the Indian Army's recruitment process under the Agnipath Scheme. The initiative focuses on enhancing physical fitness, fostering discipline, and instilling self-confi-



dence core values essential for military service. Under the mentorship of experienced Army instructors, participants underwent structured training sessions, including endurance runs, obstacle courses, drill practices, and motivational interactions. The programme received an overwhelming response from the local youth, reflecting their enthusiasm and patriotism. Operation 'Pehla Kadam' is part of the Indian Army's broader outreach strategy to build trust, develop capabilities, and channel the potential of border youth towards nation-building. The Indian Army remains committed to guiding and uplifting the youth of remote areas like Mendhar, ensuring they get equal opportunities to serve the nation with pride and purpose.

## 3 injured in mysterious blast in Handwara


JI NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

Three persons were injured in a mysterious blast in Jammu and Kashmir's Handwara sub-district on Monday, officials said. According to officials, the explosion occurred

while residents of Kachri Langate were demolishing an old mosque to pave the way for the construction of a new one. "While clearing the debris, a suspicious object exploded, injuring three individuals," an official said. The injured have been identified as Muda-

sir Ahmad Mir, Ghulam Ahmad Tantray, and Owais Ahmad Lone - all residents of different villages in Handwara. "All the injured were initially shifted to the Sub-District Hospital Langate. One among them was later referred to Government Medical Col-

lege (GMC) Handwara for specialized treatment," the official added. Following the incident, senior police officers rushed to the site to ascertain the nature and source of the blast. Further investigation is underway, officials said.



**UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**  
**OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD**  
**(R&B) DIVISION BAKSHI NAGAR, JAMMU**

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
e-NIT No. 18 of 2025-2026 Dated. 13-06-2025

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 each of the following works :-

S. No	Name of Work	Name of Division	Advertis ed Cost (Rs. in lacs)	Cost of document (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Time Allowed for comple te-on	Time and date of opening of tender	Class of Contractor
1	Strengthening and modernization of existing farms by way of Up gradation of Stocking Ponds 1 nos by way of raising of bed, replacement of bottom soil including wall lining and including Mechanical works at Fish Farm Nowabad Jammu.	PWD (R&B) DIVISION BAKSHI NAGAR Jammu	20.00	600	2% of Advertised Cost	60 Days	21-06-2025 (12.00Pm)	"A,B,C"

**Position of AAA: Accorded**  
**Position of TS: Sanctioned**  
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	13-06-2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 13-06-2025 to 20-06-2025 upto 1800 Hrs
3	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting	XXXXXXXX at XXXX Hrs. in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) DIVISION BAKSHI NAGAR Jammu
4	Bid submission Start Date	13-06-2025
5	Bid Submission End Date	20-06-2025 upto 1800 Hrs
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	21-06-2025 on or after 1200 Hrs in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) DIVISION BAKSHI NAGAR Jammu
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, e-NIT No. and name of work duly crediting to MH 0059 (Revenue) favoring Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) DIVISION BAKSHI NAGAR Jammu and upload the same i.e treasury challan / receipt, Earnest money/Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) DIVISION BAKSHI NAGAR Jammu. The CDR/FDR/BG shall be valid for 45 Days beyond the bid validity period. The original instruments in respect of cost of documents, EMD and relevant documents of LI be submitted to the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) DIVISION BAKSHI NAGAR Jammu at the time of allotment.
- 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 needs not to 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](http://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 BAKSHI NAGAR Jammu**. 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: - EE/R&B/ 2076-95  
Date:-13-06-2025  
DIP/J-2195/25  
Date: 16-6-25

(Er. Sandeep Gupta)  
Executive Engineer  
PWD (R&B) Division  
Bakshi Nagar Jammu

## PM Modi awarded Cyprus' highest honour, Order of Makarios III, by President Christodoulides

AGENCIES

NICOSIA/NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was today awarded Cyprus' highest honour, the Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III, by President Nikos Christodoulides at the presidential palace in Nicosia.

PM Modi said he is humbled to receive the 'Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III' of Cyprus and dedicated it to the friendship between the two nations.

The MEA spokesperson



said in a post on X:

"An award dedicated to the trusted India-Cyprus friendship & 1.4 billion people of India."

"President @Christodoulides conferred PM @narendramodi with the 'Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III' of Cyprus."

"The honour reflects the enduring India - Cyprus bilateral partnership and shared commitment to work together for the common vision for peace, progress and prosperity."

Earlier, the PM was warmly welcomed by the Cyprus President at the Presidential Palace in Nicosia and accorded a ceremonial welcome.

The two sides are set to hold official talks later today, to be followed by the signing of some agreements.

## Govt issues notification for population census in 2027

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

The government of Monday officially notified that the next Census of the population of India will be conducted in the year 2027.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) made the announcement through a Gazette notification issued under Section 3 of the Census Act, 1948 (Act 37 of 1948).

"The reference date for the said census shall be 00:00 hours of the 1st day of March, 2027, except for the Union territory of Ladakh and snow-bound non-synchronous areas of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the States of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand," the notification said.



"In respect of the Union territory of Ladakh and snow-bound non-synchronous areas of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the States of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, the reference date shall be 00:00 hours of the 1st day of October,

2026," the notification said.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday reviewed the preparation for the forthcoming Census of India here. The meeting was attended by the Union Home Secretary, Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI), and other senior officials.

## Mamata slams BJP over deportation of Bengali speakers, cites Maha incident

AGENCIES

KOLKATA, JUNE 16

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday launched a scathing attack on the BJP in the Assembly, alleging that Bengali-speaking Indians were being wrongfully branded as illegal immigrants and deported.

She cited a recent incident in Maharashtra where three migrant workers from West Bengal were sent to Bangladesh allegedly for speaking Bengali.

"If someone speaks in Bengali, they are being called Bangladeshi. They are being deported to Bangladesh. Aren't you ashamed? Even with Aadhaar cards, PAN cards, and other identity documents, the BJP government in Maharashtra did this just because they spoke Bengali. I condemn them," Mamata said during her address in the assembly.

According to the West Bengal Migrant Workers Development Board, the three workers - two from Murshidabad and one from East Burdwan - were detained in Mumbai, suspected of being Bangladeshi, and deported without notifying the state administration.

The Board learned about the incident on June 10, and with the intervention of the state government and coordination with the Border Security Force (BSF), the workers were eventually brought back to India. Chairman of the Board and Trinamool Rajya Sabha MP Samirul Islam had informed Mamata about the matter a day before her Assembly speech.

The Chief Minister also linked the incident to a broader pattern in BJP-ruled states like Maharashtra, Delhi, and Assam, where crackdowns on undocumented migrants have intensified.

## BJP accuses Congress of suppressing OBCs rights

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

Soon after the government issued a notification declaring the 16th Caste Census to begin from 2027, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday accused the opposition Congress party of always cheating and suppressing the rights of OBCs.

"The OBC community has always been betrayed by the Congress. If the Congress had genuine intent, it would have formed a new commission after scrapping the Kaka Kalelkar Commission... Instead, they dismissed the commission's report and continued to rule..."

"Later, when the Mandal Commission was constituted and the Supreme Court upheld its legality, the Congress worked to weaken the OBC Commission," Union Minister Bhubender Yadav said at a press conference here.

While slamming the Opposition party for "suppressing OBC rights and caste census reports", Minister Yadav gave credit to his party for taking various initiatives for the com-



munity including granting constitutional status to the OBC Commission and implementing welfare schemes.

He said, "It was the BJP government that granted reservation to the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS). Congress has never stood with the poor, OBCs, or SC/ST communities. Congress MP & LoP Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, calls Karnataka an ideal state - but the timing and internal contradictions of their stance show that social justice is merely a showpiece for Congress, not a genuine commitment. Misleading the OBC community has been Congress's policy; delivering justice to them has never been their intent..."

Rather, he said, Congress always worked towards weakening the OBC Commission and delaying the implementation of the Mandal Commission report.

"We thank our PM for addressing the long-standing issue of reservations in admissions to central schools... Through his economic welfare schemes, crores of people have been lifted out of poverty," said the senior BJP leader.

He also pointed out loopholes in the proposed census survey announced by the Congress-led Karnataka Government a few days ago, alleging that the Congress is using "social justice for electoral engineering rather than genuine commitment."

In response to a reporter's question about the Congress party's demand to adopt the Telangana model for the census to gather socio-economic data of all castes, Yadav took a jab at the Opposition, remarking, "If that's the case, then why are they not implementing the Telangana model in Karnataka, where they are in power?"

## Ahmedabad crash: 47 bodies handed to families, 97 DNA samples match

AGENCIES

AHMEDABAD, JUNE 16

As many as 47 bodies of the ill-fated Air India plane that crashed on June 12 have been handed over to their families, Rajneesh Patel, Additional Superintendent of Ahmedabad Civil Hospital, said on Monday.

DNA samples from 92 individuals who perished in the plane crash have matched. To date, 47 bodies have been returned to their families.

Patel spoke about the identification campaign conducted by the state government following the accident, stating that the bodies with matched DNA samples are being respectfully returned to their families.

Meanwhile, DNA matching of 92 victims has been completed.

Patel said, "Eight more bodies will be handed over to families in a few hours. Currently, 13 relatives are present at the civil hospital, who will receive the bodies of their loved ones. The hospital authorities have already contacted family members of the 87 victims of

## Congress slams census notification, demands clarity on caste enumeration

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Monday criticised the Gazette notification issued by the Government on the 16th Census, calling it a "damp squib" that offers no clarity and "remains silent on the inclusion of caste data".

On his social media handle X, Ramesh said that the notification merely reiterates what was already announced on April 30, 2025, and questioned the government's intent regarding caste enumeration.

Ramesh alleged, "It is entirely because of the persistence and insistence of the Indian National Congress that the PM surrendered to the demand for a caste census. He had called Congress leaders as urban Naxals for making this demand".

The Modi government had earlier rejected the



idea of a caste census in both Parliament and the Supreme Court, the Rajya Sabha MP alleged.

"Today's Gazette Notification is, however, SILENT on the inclusion of caste in the 16th Census. Is this yet another U-turn by the PM?" Ramesh asked, targeting the PM.

Reiterating the party's demand that the 16th Census adopt the Telangana model, Ramesh said, "The INC firmly believes that the 16th Census must adopt the Telangana model for not just caste

enumeration but also bringing out detailed data information on socio-economic parameters caste-wise".

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) officially notified that the next Census of the population of India will be conducted in the year 2027.

Home Minister Amit Shah yesterday reviewed the preparation for the forthcoming Census of India here with Union Home Secretary, Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI), and other senior officials.

## India lost 91 tigers under six months: NTCA

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

In the past five-and-a-half months, India has lost 91 royal tigers—an alarming figure - due to poaching, territorial disputes, human-wildlife conflicts, train mishaps and natural causes, according to data from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).

On an average, this equates to nearly 17 tiger deaths every month.

If this trend persists, the total number of tiger fatalities this year could surpass last year's figure of 126. In the five-year period from 2019 to 2023, a total of 628 striped predators have died across India. The data from the NTCA, which oversees Project Tiger in India, shows 96 deaths in 2019, 106 in 2020, 127 in 2021, 121 in 2022, and 178 in 2023.

This widespread loss in the first five months till to date is uneven across states, with more than half the 49 mortalities occurring in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra where train accidents and infectious disease too have been found to be the cause of the deaths.



Maharashtra alone reported the deaths of 26 tigers, followed closely by Madhya Pradesh with 24. Other affected states include Kerala (nine), Assam (eight), Uttarakhand (seven), Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh (four each), and Telangana (one).

The data also reveals that 42 tigers were found dead inside their habitat only which can be due to natural causes or territorial fights. At the same time, 35 were reported to have perished outside these protected areas, with officials attributing the deaths to man-animal conflicts and electrocu-

tion among others. A significant portion of these fatalities includes 14 cubs, 26 females, and 20 males.

However, data available from the Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI), an NGO engaged in the sector are more alarming. It indicates that tiger deaths have surged in 2025, with 120 reported fatalities so far—96 due to natural or human-induced causes and 24 linked to poaching and wildlife trafficking.

As per the NTCA data, over the last 12 years, 1,386 tigers have been lost across India, with nearly 50% of these deaths occurring within designated tiger

reserves.

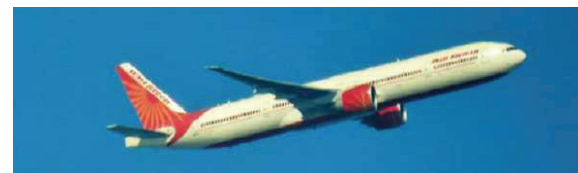
Conservationists say that despite rapidly growing urbanisation and human populations, around three-quarters of the world's tigers now live in India.

YV Jhala, a conservationist at the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) in his recent study published in Science journal, said that "from 2010 to 2022, tigers in India more than doubled from an estimated 1,706 to nearly 3,700".

However, the study also warns that there is no need to be complacent. "While India's tiger recovery is an extraordinary achievement, challenges remain. Large tracts of potential tiger habitat - spanning 157,000 sq km - are still devoid of tigers due to socio-political instability and habitat degradation," it said.

The study has recommended expanding protected areas and habitat corridors, strengthening anti-poaching measures, promoting sustainable livelihoods for communities living near tiger habitats, enhancing human-wildlife conflict mitigation strategies, including early warning systems and rapid response teams.

## Another Air India Boeing 787 faces technical issue, returns to Hong Kong



AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

In yet another incident involving an Air India Boeing 787 Dreamliner, flight AI 315 from Hong Kong to Delhi was forced to return to its origin shortly after takeoff due to a suspected technical issue.

This comes just four days after a devastating crash involving a Dreamliner en route from Ahmedabad to London.

According to sources, flight AI 315 departed from Hong Kong at 11:59 PM (local time) Sunday night—delayed by three hours and nine minutes. Soon after takeoff, the pilot suspected a technical anomaly. In response, the pilot kept the aircraft flying over the sea for some time, and when the issue could not be resolved, he decided to

return.

The aircraft returned to its original location—Hong Kong Airport—approximately one hour and 19 minutes later. It landed at 1:18 AM local time, where it will undergo a thorough technical inspection, sources said.

This incident follows closely on the heels of a tragic crash on June 12, in which an Air India Boeing 787 Dreamliner en route from Ahmedabad to London crashed shortly after takeoff. The aircraft collided with the BJ Medical College hostel in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, killing 241 of the 242 people on board. The deceased included 230 passengers and 12 crew members. The sole survivor, Vishwash Kumar Ramesh—a British national of Indian origin—is currently receiving treatment for injuries sustained in the crash.

## Nitish inaugurates elevated road project



AGENCIES

PATNA, JUNE 16

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar dedicated Bhoopati-punpun elevated road of the Mithapur-Mahuli-Punpun project constructed at an expenditure of Rs 1105 crore.

After inaugurating the road here on Monday, Kumar said that the long Sipara-Mahuli stretch will be covered within 6 minutes.

Kumar inspected the road and said that the people can reach Patna from Punpun quicker. People can also easily travel

to Gayaji, Jahanabad, Arwal, Aurangabad, Rajgir and various other districts of south Bihar. The elevated road would also solve the traffic jam problems, he said.

Addressing the people in Punpun, Kumar said his government has launched several projects for development of the area and promised to take up the measures for further development of the region.

The Chief Minister directed the authorities to quickly complete the rest of the construction work of Mithapur-Mahuli elevated road from Sipara to Mithapur flyover.

# Gill yet to finalise batting position ahead of first Test

AGENCIES  
BENGALURU, JUNE 16

Ahead of the much-anticipated Test series against England, Indian vice-captain Shubman Gill said he has not yet locked down his batting position, suggesting that the upcoming practice game will be key in assessing where he might best serve the team.

Responding to a question on whether he had earmarked a specific batting slot at the start of the series, Gill told Sky Sports, "Not really. I think we are playing a practice game, a warm-up game, so I'm going to maybe test the waters in that one and see which batting position suits."

The stylish right-hander, who was India's regular opener until a recent move to No.3, has shown adaptability in recent Test matches. His statement now throws fresh light on the Indian team's deliber-



ations over its top-order structure, especially in English conditions where batting early in the innings presents unique challenges.

The competition for the openers' role has intensified. Young talents like Yashasvi Jaiswal and Abhimanyu Easwaran are in contention, while the selectors have also kept an eye on Sai Sudarshan who has been in red-hot form. Each option brings a different strength - Jaiswal's aggressive approach, Easwaran's red-ball con-

sistency, and Sudarshan's compact technique.

India's previous tours to England have been marked by top-order collapses, particularly due to the swinging Dukes ball under overcast skies. The team management is therefore expected to weigh recent form, technique, and mental toughness while finalising the lineup. Gill's flexibility could prove pivotal, allowing the team to explore a left-right combination at the top or balance the middle order with his

strokeplay.

If Gill slots back at No.3, as he did during the home series against Australia, the door may open for Easwaran or Sudarshan, providing variety against England's right-arm pace attack. However, should conditions or strategy warrant, Gill might well walk out with Jaiswal to open the innings.

"It's going to be a very interesting series," Gill noted, summing up the anticipation around not just the team's performance, but also its evolving structure.

The final XI and batting order will likely emerge after the solitary warm-up game, where team management will closely observe how the contenders handle English conditions.

As India seeks a strong start in its bid to reclaim supremacy in Test cricket, the choice of openers could prove decisive.

# Sudharsan calls Sundar an inspiration before Eng series

AGENCIES  
LONDON, JUN 16

India batsman B Sai Sudharsan on Monday revealed that his senior teammate and fellow Chennai cricketer Washington Sundar has long been a source of inspiration for him - a sentiment the two shared during a candid conversation ahead of India's first Test against England.

The two, who go back to their days in Tamil Nadu's domestic cricket, reunited during the team's preparatory camp for the high-profile Test series against

England. Sudharsan, who was drafted into the extended squad following a string of consistent performances, recalled the emotional exchange with Sundar, who had already been part of the Indian Test setup.

"I've watched him on TV and there was a lot to take away from his skill set. He's been my inspiration from the beginning," Sudharsan said on the sidelines of a training session. "I've played a few games against him. So it's always special. I've practised with him once or twice, and the way he

went up and played for the country so quickly - it stayed with me."

With a smile, Sudharsan recalled watching Sundar shine in the IPL before donning the India cap. "That phase really motivated me. I've known him from our younger days playing together in Chennai. It made me feel I could walk a similar path. God bless him," he added.

Responding to the young left-hander's words, Washington Sundar was visibly touched. "He has told me this a few times. A lot of my friends and coaches have also men-

tioned how far he has come. His growth, especially over the last three-four years, has been remarkable," Sundar said.

"Every time I see him on TV now, I see how much he's improved. His work ethic is outstanding. I'm sure he'll continue to inspire many more youngsters, not just in Chennai but around the world," he added.

Both players, products of Tamil Nadu's robust cricketing structure, represent a growing wave of homegrown talent making their mark on the national stage.

# India go down 2-3 to Australia in FIH Hockey Pro League

AGENCIES  
ANTWERP (BELGIUM), JUNE 16

Talisman Manpreet Singh's 400th milestone international match didn't go as he would have hoped, with India going down 2-3 to Australia in the ongoing FIH Hockey Pro League 2024-25 (Men) match here.

It was goals by Tim Brand (4'), Blake Govers (5') and Cooper Burns (18') that set up the victory for Australia while Sanjay (3') and Dilpreet Singh (36') scored for India on Sunday.

After getting off to a fine start, with an opening goal coming only in the third minute through the handy work of Sanjay who picked up the rebound from a PC to put India ahead by 1-0, India lost the lead with Australia responding swiftly with an equaliser in the very next minute.

It was Tim Brand who scored in a sensational



fashion and only seconds later, they stunned India with a second goal through Blake Govers. There was little India goalie Krishan Pathak could do to stop the blazing Aussie attack.

It was perhaps one of the fastest 10 minutes in any game this far in the European leg of the tournament, with both teams living up to the billing producing a high-octane encounter. At the first quarter break, Australia was in lead by 2-1 and extended it to 3-1 when Cooper Burns struck one past Pathak in the 18th

minute. This goal put India under the pump with Australia attempting to increase their advantage with fast-paced attack. The next few minutes saw both team trade PCs but neither found success, ending the first half with Australia leading by two goals.

Following the ten-minute break, India returned with fresh vigour to reduce the deficit. Good stick work was on display when Abhishek set up Dilpreet to score a fine field goal in the 36th minute. This was an important goal to

keep India in the hunt but Australian defence was relentless, not allowing any loop-sided marking in the circle.

With just one goal difference between the two sides, it was going to be a nail-biting final quarter. There were a few moments that could have brought India back in the fold with an equaliser but they couldn't capitalize on the chances. Australia did well to restrict India in the final stretch to pick up the crucial winning points from this game.

"It is unfortunate we have lost six back-to-back matches here. It has never happened before but if you see, all these games have been very close and we have done well overall but have not been able to finish well. This is something we will deliberate on and try to bounce back in the upcoming matches," stated Manpreet Singh after the game.

# India U23 men's head coach Moosa names 23-member squad for Tajikistan tour

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 16

The India U23 men's team head coach Naushad Moosa, on Monday, announced a 23-member squad for the friendly matches against Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic.

The Blue Colts have been training at the AIFF National Centre of Excellence in Kolkata since June 1 and departed for Tajikistan on Monday afternoon.

As part of their preparations for the AFC U23 Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers in September, India will face Tajikistan on June 18 before squaring off against Kyrgyz Republic on June 21. Both matches, kicking off at 20:30 IST, will take place at the Hisor Central Stadium in Hisor, about 25 kilometres from Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe.

"These two matches against Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic will help us understand the level



of our players, and what more we need to add to it. For now, I'm happy with the way we have prepared. We won a couple of practice matches by big margins, but it wasn't much of a competition," said Moosa.

The camp began with 29 players, of whom 20 made the final list. Moosa's squad was boosted by the addition of forward Suhail Ahmad Bhat, midfielder Ayush Chhetri and defender Tekcham Abhishek Singh, who joined the U23 camp after finishing their duties with the senior national team during the June FIFA Window games

against Thailand and Hong Kong.

"After these friendlies, we will get more understanding of our players and what else we need to work on. The opponents are of a pretty good level, I believe. It's important to play against such teams when you're preparing for the U23 Asian Cup Qualifiers, where we will face Qatar and Bahrain," Moosa added.

India U23's 23-member squad for June friendlies in Tajikistan:

Goalkeepers: Mohd Arbaz, Priyansh Dubey, Sahil.

Defenders: Bikash

Yumnam, Dippendu Biswas, Muhammed Saheef AP, Nikhil Barla, Pramveer, Subham Bhatnagary, Tekcham Abhishek Singh.

Midfielders: Ayush Chhetri, Chingangbam Shivaldo Singh, Lalremtuanga Fanai, Lalrinliana Hnamte, Macarton Louis Nickson, Mohammed Aimen, Vibin Mohanan, Vinith Venkatesh.

Forwards: Joseph Sunny, Mohammed Sanan K, Parthib Sundar Gogoi, Suhail Ahmad Bhat, Thingujam Korou Singh.

Head Coach: Naushad Moosa

Assistant Coach: Remus Damiao Gomes

Goalkeeper Coach: Dipankar Choudhary

Strength and Conditioning Coach: Diwakar Manohar

India U23's Match Schedule:

June 18: Tajikistan vs India (20:30 IST)

June 21: India vs Kyrgyz Republic (20:30 IST)

# India dealt narrow 1-2 defeat by Australia in FIH Hockey Pro League (Women)

AGENCIES  
LONDON, JUNE 16

The Indian Women's Hockey Team were dealt a narrow 1-2 defeat by Australia in their FIH Hockey Pro League 2024/25 match at the Lee Valley Hockey & Tennis Centre here.

Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke (3') scored the only goal for India while Amy Lawton (37') and Lexie Pickering (60') were the goalscorers for Australia.

India took an early lead in the proceedings but Australia made a comeback with a goal in the third and final minute of the fourth quarter to seal the victory on Sunday.

India made a bright start to the game as they won three back-to-back penalty corners in the very first minute, adding pressure on the Australian backline. India carried on their momentum and scored the opening goal as early as the third minute to take charge of the match.

Navneet Kaur carried the ball forward and passed it to Sharmila Devi on the left who played it to the far post for Vaishnavi as she deflected the ball



into the net.

India continued to pile on the pressure as Navneet came close to extending the lead but narrowly missed the target. Minutes later, Australia won two back-to-back penalty corners towards the end of first quarter but India did well at the back to maintain their lead.

Australia improved their performance in the second quarter and started creating good goalscoring chances. Both sides exchanged possession and battled it out in the mid-field but they couldn't be

separated in the second quarter as India headed into the second half with a goal in hand.

Australia were more dominant in the third quarter and caused troubles for the Indian defence. Greta Hayes came teasingly close to scoring a goal as she struck a shot towards an empty net, however, the ball was stopped by her own teammate by accident.

In the 37th minute, Australia were on the attack again but this time, they managed to find the equaliser courtesy of a brilliant

goal from Amy Lawton. Amy did well to win the ball from an India defender and then unleashed a powerful shot from the edge of the circle, past the keeper into the bottom right corner.

The scores were level as both sides headed into the final quarter of the match. India received a penalty corner but the Australian keeper made a strong save to keep her side in the contest.

In the 54th minute, India won four penalty corners in a row but they couldn't manage to find the net. In their third attempt, Neha fired a shot which took a deflection and struck the post, missing the net by a few inches.

With 34 seconds left on the clock, Australia converted a penalty corner to complete their comeback in the match. Tatum Stewart played the perfect pass to Lexie Pickering on the right as she took the Indian goalkeeper off-guard and deflected the ball into the net to claim all three points.

India next play Argentina on June 17 at the same venue.

## Principal Secretary chairs review meeting of Geology & Mining department

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 16

Principal Secretary, Geology and Mining Department, Anil Kumar Singh, today chaired a meeting to review functioning of the department at Civil Secretariat, Srinagar.

The Principal Secretary directed the department to expedite the auctioning of mining resources strictly as per the existing guidelines. He emphasized the need for stringent monitoring and a complete crackdown on illegal mining and related violations.

He instructed the officials to take strict legal action against the violators and ensure full compliance with the Central and UT mining Acts and Rules during all mining opera-



tions. He further stressed that the revenue generated from the mining activities must be effectively utilized for public welfare, with a focus on road development, health and other social sector initiatives that directly benefit the public.

While reviewing the human resources, the Principal Secretary emphasized the importance of filling up of vacant positions within the department to ensure efficient function-

ing.

The meeting included detailed presentations updating the chair on the progress in exploration and extraction of major and minor minerals including limestone, granite, blue sapphire, gypsum, lithium and coal. It was reported that during 2024-25, 36 leases for limestone and 205 leases for minor minerals were granted.

The Principal Secretary also directed for robust monitoring mechanism

through multi-departmental district-level task forces, flying squads, informant teams, checkpoints and e-challenging systems to curb illegal mining. He reiterated the department's core mandate to identify and explore mineral resources, prepare mineral blocks, grant concessions, and conduct geo-scientific and hydro-geological investigations to assess the feasibility of infrastructure projects and mitigate geo-hazards like landslides and subsidence.

The Principal Secretary called for promotion of mineral-based industries to boost employment and revenue generation and ensure uninterrupted supply of essential construction materials to various government depart-

ments in alignment with the UT's developmental priorities.

During the meeting, it was informed that Rs. 16.79 crore revenue has been generated from the compounding of vehicles and machinery involved in illegal mining and transportation, with 6,219 seizures made in 2024-25. Furthermore, the department recorded a total revenue generation of Rs. 150.49 crore in Jammu and Kashmir during the same period. Additionally, gypsum mining generated revenue of Rs. 438 lakhs during 2025-26.

The meeting was attended by the Director, Geology and Mining, Director Finance, Managing Director, J&K Minerals, Joint Director, and other senior officers of the department.

## Deputy Commissioner reviews status of PMGSY projects in Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
POONCH, JUNE 16

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kunal chaired a meeting today to assess the progress of ongoing road and bridge projects being executed in different parts of the district under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).

At the outset, the Executive Engineer PMGSY presented a detailed overview of the status of the road and bridge projects, highlighting both completed and ongoing.

The Deputy Commissioner conducted a thorough evaluation of each project, particularly discussing the status of bridge constructions associated with different road projects.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the urgency of completing the



Bufliaz to Mandi Phagla BT work and instructed the ACR and SDM Surankote to facilitate the demarcation of the Mandi-Phagla road. He urged all concerned authorities to accelerate their efforts to meet the deadlines set for project completion.

The meeting was

attended by the ACR, Executive Engineer of PMGSY, along with all Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs), Assistant Engineers (AEs), and Junior Engineers (JEs) from the PMGSY Department, all committed to driving progress in rural infrastructure development.

## 2nd District Magistrate Open Chess Championship 2025 begins at Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
POONCH, JUNE 16

The District Administration Poonch, in collaboration with the Department of Youth Services and Sports, inaugurated the 2nd District Magistrate Open Chess Championship 2025 at Dina Nath Rafiq Memorial (DNRM) Girls Higher Secondary School, today.

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kunal graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the significance of sports, highlighting their role in fostering not only physical fitness but also mental strength and discipline.

He lauded Youth Services and Sports Department and the school administration for promoting such



intellectually enriching activities. He also encouraged students to actively participate in diverse sports events to ensure holistic development.

A total of 70 players, including 55 boys and 15 girls from across the

district are participating in the championship, reflecting growing interest in mind sports among the youth of the district.

The championship aims to promote strategic thinking and mental agility among the youth.

## DC Kishtwar convenes introductory meeting

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, JUNE 16

Pankaj Kumar Sharma today formally took over as the Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar. Soon after taking over the office, the Deputy Commissioner chaired an introductory meeting with the district heads of the line departments.

The meeting aimed to familiarize with the functioning of each department, review ongoing developmental works and outline a roadmap for efficient governance and services delivery in the district.

The DC emphasized the importance of inter-departmental coordination, timely implementation of government flagship schemes and following a citizen-centric approach in administration.

He also stressed the need for accountability, transparency, and inclu-



sive development, ensuring that no staff shortage hampers the progress of public welfare initiatives.

The DC also reviewed and finalized arrangements for the International Yoga Day function to be held at the historic

Chowgan Grounds.

The meeting was attended by ADC Pawan Kotwal; CEO KDA, Kaiser Bhawani; ACR, Idrees Lone; CPO, Shah Nawaz Bali; SDM Chattro, Nayeem Ur Rahman; SDM Padder, Dr. Amit Kumar and other officers.

## Pankaj Kumar Sharma takes over as Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, JUNE 16

Pankaj Kumar Sharma assumed the charge as Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar today.

Upon his arrival, he was warmly received by district and Sectoral officers and staff of the DC office. The new DC assured

full cooperation with all stakeholders to ensure smooth governance and accelerated progress in the district. He expressed happiness for getting the opportunity to serve the people of Kishtwar and emphasized on transparency, responsive governance and development-oriented administration.

## Dharti Aaba Janbhagidari Abhiyan awareness camp organised at Town Hall Doda

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
DODA, JUNE 16

To mark the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, commemorated as Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh, the District Administration Doda organised a special awareness and benefit saturation camp under Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA)-India's largest tribal empowerment campaign, here in the Town Hall. The nationwide 15-day campaign is being observed from 15th to 30th June 2025 across the country, including the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

The event was chaired by Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh and witnessed enthusiastic participation from tribal community members, students and officials of line departments.

Addressing the gathering, the DC highlighted the life and contribution of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, who played a historic role in safeguarding tribal rights and identity. He informed that 15 tribal villages have been identified across Doda district for focused welfare interven-



tions under government-sponsored schemes. He emphasised that road connectivity remains the most critical need for tribal welfare, as it ensures access to healthcare, IT services, and educational support to tribal households residing in remote areas.

The DC directed the Chief Medical Officer

(CMO) to prioritise medical outreach in these areas and stressed the need for timely disbursement of tribal scholarships and benefits.

He said the District Administration plans to establish tribal product sale centres across the district to promote and market handmade tribal goods, enhancing local

livelihood opportunities. Additionally, he directed the Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) to ensure full saturation of schemes under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in tribal belts. He also urged all officers to deliver services and information transparently and effectively during the ongoing Dharti Aaba celebrations.

Earlier, Chief Planning Officer Manesh Kumar Manhas shared key insights about ongoing government schemes and strategic planning for the empowerment of tribal communities.

Information stalls and banners were displayed by the departments, offering detailed guidance on flagship schemes related to education, healthcare, housing, livelihood and skill development. Tribal community members also highlighted key issues and suggestions during the interaction. The camp served as an effective platform to spread awareness about tribal rights and entitlements, promoting inclusive development in alignment with the vision of Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh and Dharti Aaba Janbhagidari Abhiyan.

## MLA Sajjad Shaheen inaugurates Nagar Van Doba Park at Banihal

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
RAMBAN, JUNE 16

Member Legislative Assembly Sajjad Shaheen today inaugurated the newly developed Nagar Van Doba Park in the Banihal Range of Ramban Forest Division.

District Development Council Chairperson Dr. Shamshad Shan, besides Conservator of Forests Chenab Circle, Arshdeep Singh, DFO Ankit Sinha, and other senior officers of the Forest Department and district administration were also present.

The newly created park has been developed under the CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority) scheme. The green space marks a major milestone in promotion of eco-tourism and green development in the region.

The inaugural ceremony featured a vibrant cultural programme presented by local artists and school students, adding colour and warmth to the event and reflecting the wholehearted community involvement in the project.



In his address, the MLA appreciated the Forest Department's initiative in creating a recreational and ecological asset for the people of Banihal. He hoped that the Nagar Van Doba will also boost local tourism and provide a peaceful space for community interaction.

The DDC Chairperson commended the collaborative efforts of the Forest Department and the local administration in transforming Banihal into an emerging eco-tourism hub. She urged the youth to take pride

in their environment and play a proactive role in its conservation.

The Conservator of Forests highlighted that the development of Nagar Van Doba is part of the government's larger vision to promote sustainable green spaces under the Nagar Van Scheme, especially in hilly and tribal areas.

The DFO Ramban informed that the park, spread over 200 kanal, is nestled in the serene landscape of the Pir Panjal Range, and has already attracted over 80,000 visitors, making it a trend-

ing destination on social media. He emphasized that the park features eco-friendly infrastructure and nature trails designed to connect people with the environment.

The locals expressed deep appreciation for the project, stating that it has not only enhanced the natural beauty of the area but also created a safe and accessible recreational space for families, tourists and children alike.

The Range Officer thanked all guests and participants for making the event a grand success.