

North in News

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LG Manoj Sinha Joins 'Drug-Free J&K' Campaign and Padyatra in Poonch

JAMMU, JUN 7: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha today joined the 'Drug-Free J&K' Campaign and Padyatra in Poonch. Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said that Padyatra has covered all 20 districts of Union Territory and the objective is clear to free the soil of Jammu Kashmir from scourge of drugs and to eliminate narcoterrorism. "The fight for a drug-free Jammu Kashmir intensifies today from Poonch. For next 43 days, every citizen, Panchayat, and ward must unite to target drug smugglers, drug peddlers, drive awareness, and accelerate rehabilitation. Collective responsibility will build a healthier future. During the past 57 days, I have visited every dis-



trict of Jammu Kashmir and promised the people that the perpetrators harming our society will not go unpunished. Today I assure all the citizens that we will light the lamp of a brighter future," the Lieutenant Governor said. He stated that in the next 43 days we must launch a massive movement in Poonch and across UT that will be dedicated to making every Panchayat, every lane, and every

household in the district drug-free. "The people of Poonch know that being a border district, narcoterrorists attempt to exploit the geography. Cross-border drug smuggling is destroying young lives and, at the same time, financing terrorism. We must confront this through a whole-of-society approach," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor said that confronting the drug menace requires a shift from indifference to action. He said "not my problem" mindset only emboldens drug smugglers and drug peddlers, who rely on public silence to expand their networks. "True change happens when communities stand united. A drug-free

(Contd on Pg 2)

HP Governor calls 'Rashmirathi' a Timeless Message of Social Harmony and Nationalism



SHIMLA, JUNE 7: The Governor of Himachal Pradesh, Kavinder Gupta said that "Rashmirathi Parv" is not merely a remembrance of a great poet but a call to imbibe the values of social harmony, equality and patriotism in our lives. He said that

the true tribute to Rashtrakavi Ramdhari Singh 'Dinkar' would be to uphold these ideals and contribute towards building a stronger and more inclusive nation. The Governor was addressing the inaugural session of the two-day 'Rashmirathi

Parv' organized at the historic Gaiety Theatre, Shimla, today to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee Year of Rashmirathi, the immortal epic poem of Rashtrakavi Ramdhari Singh 'Dinkar'. Speaking on the occasion, Gupta said

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Sunil Sharma meets Home Minister Amit Shah; discusses Security, Development and Political Situation in J&K



NEW DELHI, JUN 7: Two shooters allegedly involved in the killing of a shopkeeper in Punjab's Ferozepur district have been arrested from Jammu and Kashmir, a police officer said on Sunday. The accused were arrested by the Punjab Police's Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF) in a joint operation with the Jammu and Kashmir Police, the officer said. "In a breakthrough, the Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF) Punjab, in a well-coordinated operation with Ferozepur Police and Jammu & Kashmir Police, apprehended two shooters from Rajasthan involved in the murder of

Amit Shah in New Delhi and held an extensive discussion on various issues concerning the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. During the meet-

ing, detailed deliberations were held on the prevailing security scenario, law and order situation, developmental initiatives, and the overall political landscape. Sunil Sharma apprised the Union Home Minister of various issues and concerns emerging from the ground and highlighted the aspirations of the people regarding peace, progress, and effective governance. "The meeting also reviewed the ongoing efforts of the Government of India to strengthen security.

(Contd on Pg 2)

Old Town Leh to get Facelift under Rs 7.62 Crore LG-approved Project

LEH, JUN 7: Ladakh Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has approved a Rs 7.62 crore project for the comprehensive upgradation and beautification of Old Town Leh, aimed at preserving its heritage character while improving infrastructure and visitor experience, officials said on Sunday. The project includes the construction of multipurpose trench and common utility duct for underground placement of overhead electric cables, sewerage lines, water supply networks, and communication cables besides the development of public amenities and beautification works around



the historic Leh Palace, a Lok Bhavan spokesperson said. The works also includes development of heritage-compatible pedestrian footpaths, facade improvement, parking facility, installation of

ornamental lighting and benches in sync with the local architecture, flower pots, heritage-style signage, wayfinding infrastructure and other public amenities, aimed at enhancing the overall visitor experience in the Old Town, he said. The project follows directions issued by Saxena on March 15, just two days after assuming office as the Lieutenant Governor, for a comprehensive makeover of Old Town Leh. The works are expected to be completed by September this year, at an estimated cost of Rs 7.62. During his visit to the area on March 15, Saxena

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BRIEF NEWS

2 Shooters involved in Ferozepur Shopkeeper's Killing arrested from J&K

CHANDIGARH, JUN 7: Two shooters allegedly involved in the killing of a shopkeeper in Punjab's Ferozepur district have been arrested from Jammu and Kashmir, a police officer said on Sunday. The accused were arrested by the Punjab Police's Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF) in a joint operation with the Jammu and Kashmir Police, the officer said. "In a breakthrough, the Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF) Punjab, in a well-coordinated operation with Ferozepur Police and Jammu & Kashmir Police, apprehended two shooters from Rajasthan involved in the murder of

Police's swift action saves Passenger's Life after he Slips From Train

JAMMU, June 7: The Jammu and Kashmir Police, in a swift action, have saved the life of a passenger who slipped from a moving train near the Udhampur district. Commandant 24 JKAP IR, Senior Superintendent of Police, Sandeep Mehta in a statement today said that prompt police action saved precious life of man after a fall from running train. "The prompt and timely action of the Police Personnel of 24 JKAP IR Bn deployed on guard duties at the railway track saved a life of a man who accidentally fell down in a tunnel from a moving train near Rammagar in Udhampur

(Contd on Pg 2)

Young Lawyers Encouraging Source For Judiciary's Technological Transformation: CJI Surya Kant



NEW DELHI, JUN 7: Young lawyers, judicial officers and legal professionals are an encouraging source for the judiciary's technological transformation, Chief Justice of India Surya Kant has said. Speaking at the Oxford Union on the theme "Constitutional Promise to Digital Reality:

Safeguarding Justice in the Age of AI and Technological Advancement," the CJI also emphasised that technology can never replace human judgment. "The youth in law, I am using the word, is so adaptive in India, whether the district court judicial officer, whether the government lawyer, and even those who are assisting the corporate entities as legal advisors. "All these young brains are so adaptive, so quick in adopting it, that they have been a really

(Contd on Pg 2)

12 Years Of Modi Govt created an aspirational India: Dr Jitendra

NEW DELHI, JUN 7: Twelve years of the Narendra Modi government have transformed India into an aspirational nation driven by opportunity, innovation and self-belief. Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh said on Sunday while talking to media, asserting that governance reforms, technological democratisation and citizen-centric policies have fundamentally changed the way Indians perceive their prospects. The Minister also outlined the next phase of growth, stating that India's space economy, currently close to \$9 billion, is expected to expand to about \$45 billion over the next seven to eight



years as the country advances towards the goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047. Reflecting on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 4,399 days in office as a continuously serving elected Prime Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted a range of measurable outcomes over the past decade. He said India's space startup ecosystem had grown from a single-digit number of startups a few years ago to around 400 today, with one startup recently attaining unicorn status. India's space economy is now valued at nearly \$9 billion and is projected to reach \$45 billion by

(Contd on Pg 2)

Three injured in LPG Cylinder blast in Rajouri Hamlet



RAJOURI/JAMMU, JUN 7: Three men sustained critical burn injuries after an LPG cylinder caught fire and exploded in a village in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district on Saturday, officials said. The incident occurred in Kha village of Rajouri

when an LPG cylinder caught fire and exploded, causing severe burn injuries to three persons present nearby, they said. The injured were immediately shifted to the Government Medical College (GMC) Associated

(Contd on Pg 2)

Parliamentary Panel Looking Into NEET, OSM Issues Seeks Answers From NTA, CBSE



NEW DELHI, JUN 7: A Parliamentary panel has asked the National Testing Agency (NTA) to define what constitutes a "paper leak" in its definition and whether any paper leaks have occurred in exams it conducted since 2018, sources said. The panel's questionnaire follows NTA officials' appearance before it last week, where they contended that there was no paper leak from their system, claiming that some questions from a guess paper were in circulation, sources said. The Parliamentary Committee for Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, headed by Congress member Divyvjaya Singh, is investigating the NEET paper leak issue and the CBSE on-screen marking system (OSM) row, having summoned top

(Contd on Pg 2)

Lavender Festival 2026 concludes with vision to make Baderwah a Global Lavender Hub

BHADEKRAH, JUN 7: The two-day Lavender Festival 2026 concluded in Baderwah on Sunday with stakeholders from the government, scientific community, industry and farming sector reaffirming their commitment to transform the region into a globally recognised centre for lavender cultivation, processing and aroma-based entrepreneurship. Organised by the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM) under the CSIR Aroma Mission, the festival brought together farmers, startup founders, scientists, industry leaders, students and policymakers under the theme "Lavender Goes Global." The event highlighted the remarkable



journey of Baderwah from a traditional agricultural region to what is increasingly being recognised as India's Lavender Capital. The second day of the festival featured technical sessions, industry interactions, buyer-seller meetings and presentations by successful entrepreneurs and farmers. Representatives from leading aroma and fragrance companies shared market insights and explored opportunities for strengthening linkages between growers and industry players. Founders and innovators also showcased value-added products and dis-

vision outlined by Hon'ble Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh during the inauguration of the festival. He said the Hon'ble Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh's call to take "Lavender Goes Global" beyond a slogan and transform it into a practical roadmap for farmers, entrepreneurs and industry stakeholders would guide future efforts of CSIR-IIIM and its partners. Dr. Ahmed noted that the festival had successfully connected farmers, startups, scientists and industry leaders on a common platform and generated meaningful discussions on cultivation, processing, value addition and market expansion. He said the objective of linking

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FROM PAGE ONE

LG Manoj...

society is built by those who choose to speak up and act, recognizing that this is a shared battle affecting us all. A prosperous society requires both economic progress and vigilant citizens. To change mindsets and dismantle supply chains, our past 57-day campaign has cracked down hard on the drug network in J&K. Over 1,130 smugglers arrested under 1,038 FIRs, 63 detained under PIT-NDPS, and more than 100 properties attached. To completely immobilize these criminals, we have also cancelled 700 driving licenses and moved to revoke 130 passports," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor called for the 'Drug-Free J&K' campaign to reach every household and become a permanent part of public consciousness. True prevention, he emphasized, lies in giving youth a purpose through education, skills, sports, and transforming them into the ultimate weapon against drug addiction.

"The strategy relies on two powerful pillars. First, mobilize Youth Clubs to act as the frontline defence against local drug networks, and putting women in leadership positions so mothers and sisters can drive the campaign to make every village drug-free," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor announced that law enforcement agencies have been given a free hand to completely eradicate the narco-terror ecosystem. Under a newly issued SOP, individuals involved in drug smuggling will face immediate, severe consequences and their passports, driving licenses, arms licenses, and Aadhar are being cancelled, while their movable and immovable assets are being attached under the NDPS Act.

"A drug-free Jammu & Kashmir is the birth of this mass movement. J&K Police, law enforcement and narcotics agencies to ensure no drug smuggler or drug peddler operates within their jurisdiction. The road ahead is long, but we will not stop until every narco-terror network is dismantled. Our determination is unwavering, our unity invincible, and our mission is to win," the Lieutenant Governor said.

HP Governor...

that the festival also serves as a tribute to the great personalities who shaped the national consciousness of India. Referring to Swami Vivekananda, Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Ramdhar Singh 'Dinkar', he said that although they illuminated society through different paths, they all shared a common vision of placing the nation, society and humanity above all else. "Swami Vivekananda inspired the youth to rise and awaken, Lokmanya Tilak transformed Swaraj into the birthright of every Indian, Atal Bihari Vajpayee demonstrated that politics is rooted in dialogue and sensitivity, while Dinkar immortalized these values through the power of poetry," the Governor observed. Referring to the central character of Rashmirathi, Gupta said that Karma's life is not merely an ancient tale but a mirror reflecting the struggles and aspirations of every individual. He urged young people to draw inspiration from Karma's perseverance, courage and determination. "The true Rashmirathi was not the one who possessed everything, but the one who overcame the darkness of adversity through his own inner light. You are the chameleons of your own destiny. Pursue knowledge, work hard, innovate and achieve success, but never forget your roots, your language, your culture and your national values," he said. The Governor expressed confidence that the younger generation would imbibe the timeless values reflected in Dinkar's work and emerge as torchbearers of India's bright future. On the occasion, the Governor also released a commemorative publication titled "Rashmirathi Se Samvad" and watched the theatrical presentation based on the celebrated literary masterpiece Rashmirathi. Former Union Minister of State Ashwini Kumar Choubey, who attended the event as the Guest of Honour, congratulated the organisers for holding the two-day festival dedicated to promoting an egalitarian, harmonious, inclusive and culturally vibrant society. He also spoke about the life and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda and attended a theatrical performance based on his life. Earlier, Chairman of Rashtrikavi Ramdhar Singh 'Dinkar' Samit Nivas, Neseer Kumar welcomed the Governor and highlighted the objectives of the event. Renowned litterateur and theatre personality from Mumbai, Mubeeb Khan also shared his views on the literary legacy of Dinkar. Member of the Nivas, Sandeep Shari briefed the audience about the significance of Rashmirathi Parv, while the programme coordinator, Narendra Sharma, proposed a vote of thanks.

Sunil Sharma...

promote inclusive development, and deepen democratic institutions at the grassroots level. Both leaders emphasized the need to further consolidate the gains achieved in recent years and ensure that the benefits of development reach every section of society. Union Home Minister Amit Shah gave a patient hearing to the issues raised by Sunil Sharma and assured him that the Government of India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, remains fully committed to ensuring lasting peace, strengthening security, accelerating development, and safeguarding the interests of the people of Jammu & Kashmir. He reiterated that all necessary support would continue to be extended for the overall progress and prosperity of the Union Territory. Sunil Sharma reiterated the Bharatiya Janata Party's unwavering commitment to safeguarding the interests of the people of Jammu & Kashmir and working tirelessly for lasting peace, prosperity, and progress in the Union Territory. He said that under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the guidance of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed a new era of development, transparency, and empowerment.

The meeting reflects the continued focus of the BJP leadership on ensuring peace, security, and holistic development in Jammu & Kashmir while addressing the concerns and expectations of its citizens.

Old Town...

directed departments concerned to prepare a comprehensive plan to address issues relating to sanitation, infrastruc-

ture improvement, utility management and overall urban development in the historic area, which is a major heritage and tourism zone of Leh city.

He had taken a strict note of the broken pavements, dug-up streets, haphazard construction including drainage in the middle of the streets and overhanging electric wires, that ruined the aesthetics of the area, besides causing considerable woes to visitors and locals alike.

The spokesperson said the initiative is in line with the Lieutenant Governor's vision of transforming Leh into a clean, organised, pedestrian-friendly and world-class tourist destination, while preserving its unique heritage and architectural character.

The project aims at providing a sustainable and long-term solution for coordinated utility management, minimizing repeated excavation works and promoting environmentally sensitive urban infrastructure in the heritage area.

"Old Town Leh is the cultural and historical heart of Ladakh and one of the most iconic heritage precincts in the Himalayas. Our endeavour is to preserve its unique character while providing modern, efficient and sustainable urban infrastructure.

"This project will not only improve public utility services and pedestrian facilities but also enhance the overall experience of residents and visitors. It is a major step towards creating a clean, organised, heritage-sensitive and tourist-friendly urban environment that reflects the rich legacy of Ladakh while meeting the aspirations of a modern society," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Old Town Leh, one of Ladakh's most prominent heritage and tourism destinations, has been facing challenges arising from unplanned utility services, exposed overhead cables, repeated road cutting, inadequate pedestrian facilities and deterioration of its traditional aesthetic character. The project seeks to provide a sustainable and long-term solution to these issues through integrated urban infrastructure development, the spokesperson said.

The integrated utility corridor will facilitate coordinated management of public utilities, minimise repeated excavation of roads, improve maintenance efficiency and significantly enhance the visual appeal of the heritage precinct in Leh, he added.

Young...

encouraging source for the Indian judiciary to bring all these reformative changes," the CJI said. He said an artificial intelligence system can process immense volumes of legal text with astonishing speed.

"It can map procedural trends and eliminate administrative checkpoints with clinical precision, yet it remains entirely blind to the qualities that animate the soul of the law — empathy, ethical discernment and deep contextual understanding," the CJI said. Advocate Tavni Dubey delivered the welcome remarks.

12 Years...

the end of the next seven to eight years. The Minister said the country's startup ecosystem had expanded from about 350-400 startups in 2014 to more than 2.3 lakh at present, generating nearly 24-25 lakh jobs. Nearly half of these startups are located in Tier-II and Tier-III cities, while 35-39 per cent are women-led. He also noted that a recent space launch witnessed the participation of around 1,500 media personnel and nearly 10,000 spectators, reflecting growing public engagement with science and technology. Dr. Jitendra Singh said some of the government's earliest reforms symbolised a shift towards a citizen-centric governance model. He cited the decision to end the requirement of gazetted-officer attestation of documents and permit self-attestation as a landmark step that signalled trust in citizens, particularly the youth. The Minister also referred to the abolition of interviews in several categories of government recruitment, saying the move reduced opportunities for nepotism, discretion and malpractice while strengthening merit-based selection. The reforms helped create confidence that success could be achieved through ability and hard work rather than influence or recommendation, the Minister added.

Arguing that the most profound change of the past 12 years has been psychological, in addition to procedural, Dr. Jitendra Singh said India had witnessed the rise of a new aspirational culture. "The change of mindset that has happened in the last 12 years under Prime Minister Modi is one of the biggest hallmarks," he said. "The kind of aspirational surge that has happened — 'I can also do it' — was not there earlier." The Minister said this shift was visible in the growing number of civil services toppers emerging from small towns and non-metropolitan backgrounds, reflecting the democratisation of opportunity through technology, transparency and fair competition. The Minister also linked India's scientific achievements to this broader transformation. Referring to the Chandrayaan missions, he said the government had fostered a culture in which citizens increasingly identify with national scientific achievements and view innovation as a shared national endeavour. He recalled that Prime Minister Modi encouraged scientists after setbacks and celebrated their successes, helping normalise the idea that failure is a part of innovation and progress. Dr. Jitendra Singh said India's successful landing near the Moon's south pole had strengthened public interest in science, while earlier discoveries by Indian lunar missions had helped identify evidence of water molecules on the Moon. Highlighting institutional changes, Dr. Jitendra Singh said the Modi government had opened strategic sectors such as space and parts of the nuclear ecosystem to private participation, ending decades of restricted access. He said these sectors had traditionally operated behind closed doors but were now integrated with industry, entrepreneurs and startups. According to the Minister, this policy shift had expanded career opportunities, accelerated innovation and aligned India's scientific ecosystem with global best practices. He also noted that initiatives such as Viksit Bharat reflected a broader emphasis on benchmarking India's progress against international standards rather than domestic comparisons alone.

The Minister further argued that welfare delivery had also moved towards universal and transparent implementation. Referring to housing and other welfare programmes, he said benefits were being delivered without discrimination based on caste or religion and other factors, creating greater trust in public institutions and governance systems.

Looking ahead, Dr. Jitendra Singh said India's develop-

ment journey would require deeper public-private collaboration, stronger participation of women and youth, continued expansion of emerging sectors such as space, nuclear energy and quantum technologies, and adherence to global standards of performance and innovation. The Minister maintained that the government's long-term objective was not merely economic growth but the creation of an empowered and aspirational society capable of contributing to the vision of a developed India by 2047. The remarks place the government's 12-year record within a broader narrative of governance reform, institutional transformation and an effort to shift India from a culture of entitlement and dependence towards one driven by aspiration, merit and innovation.

Three...

Hospital, Rajouri, for treatment. However, due to the critical nature of their injuries, all three were later referred to GMC Jammu for specialised medical care, they said. The injured have been identified as Vikram Singh (32), Nakesh Singh (38), and Shanker Singh (40), all locals. Police have taken cognisance of the incident, while further details are awaited.

Parliamentary...

government officials including those from the NTA and CBSE. The committee has sought written answers from the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the NTA on the issues of OSM system and the NEET exam, respectively. The panel asked the NTA whether it conducted any inquiry into the allegations of irregularities in the NEET-UG 2024 paper (outside of the CBI investigations). The panel also asked the NTA about its staff strength for the last three years and fresh recruitments during that period by June 10. Both agencies are yet to respond, the sources add. The parliamentary panel also asked the CBSE about reported "changes" between the various Requests for Proposals (RFPs) issued for the OSM system and whether any background checks on COEMT were conducted before awarding it the contract, the sources added. The panel also sought to know from the CBSE whether it was aware that COEMPT EduTech and/or its directors were previously associated with Globarena Technologies, whose evaluation software was faulted in the inquiry into the 2019 Telangana Intermediate results and how this was factored into the award decision, the sources claimed. Seeking detailed answers from the CBSE, the parliamentary committee asked why the proviso disqualifying bidders with a past record of poor performance was removed in the third RFP for the OSM contract, the sources claimed. It also asked why the proviso prohibiting bidders who were previously blacklisted in the third RFP and why the minimum company turnover for the bidder was specifically set at Rs 50 crore, they said. The committee sought to know why the RFP provisions "changed" from favouring contractors with their own data centres to those using MNC-managed data centres, the sources said. While the provision for a robotic scanner "dropped and replaced with a generic provision ('sufficient scanners')", and why the stipulation for contractors to scan answer papers without cutting the spine of the paper was removed, the panel has asked. It also sought to know why the minimum scanning resolution desired by CBSE in its RFP was reduced from 30 DPI to 20 DPI according to sources. The panel also asked why the criteria requiring experience handling large projects (involving at least 5 lakh students per project) was "dropped" in favour of a criterion allowing cumulative answer-book volume across multiple projects, the sources said.

The sources said the panel had earlier asked the CBSE to share documents about February 2025, May 2025 and August 2025 RFPs issued for the OSM system, which the CBSE has not complied with. The panel also asked the CBSE to share the action taken on the report of the observers of the OSM dry run and whether the Board shared and/or discussed the observers' report with the Ministry of Education.

Lavender...

cultivation with entrepreneurship, innovation and market access had been effectively achieved through the various sessions and interactions held over the two days, the festival's theme, he said the vision of taking Bhaderwah's lavender sector to the global stage would require sustained efforts from all stakeholders. While the region has already earned a national recognition for lavender cultivation, he said the next challenge is to establish Bhaderwah as an internationally recognised centre for aroma-based industries. He called for detailed documentation of the discussions and action points emerging from the festival so that they could be incorporated into future strategies under the next phase of the Mission. He also outlined future priorities, including improved processing facilities, enhanced distillation systems, value addition, branding and tourism integration to maximise economic returns for farmers.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Bhaderwah, Sunil Kumar Bhutyal, who graced the occasion as the guest, lauded the partnership between the district administration and CSRI in the form of the Aroma Mission, which has facilitated Bhaderwah's emergence as a nationally recognised centre

for lavender cultivation and aroma entrepreneurship. He said the collaboration had played a vital role in transforming Bhaderwah into a nationally recognised centre for lavender cultivation and aroma entrepreneurship.

Bhutyal attributed the success of the Aroma Mission to the combined efforts of scientists, farmers, entrepreneurs and policymakers. He acknowledged the support and vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh in promoting lavender cultivation as a viable source of income for rural communities and in bringing national attention to Bhaderwah's lavender movement.

He emphasised the need to further expand cultivation, strengthen market linkages and increase value-addition activities so that local growers could secure better returns. Highlighting Bhaderwah's tourism potential, he said the region offers much more than lavender fields, including scenic landscapes, adventure tourism, horticulture, religious tourism, rich cultural traditions and unique local cuisine. Inviting visitors to return, he urged them to become ambassadors of Bhaderwah and share their experiences with others.

Earlier in welcome address, Principal Scientist and Nodal Officer of the CSIR Aroma Mission, Dr. Suphla Gupta, said the success of the mission is the result of year-round teamwork and continuous engagement with farmers, entrepreneurs, startups and other stakeholders. She noted that the mission extends beyond cultivation and includes processing, value addition, product development, marketing and addressing challenges faced by growers and startups at every stage of the value chain.

Dr. Gupta encouraged entrepreneurs and exhibitors to learn from their interactions with visitors, industry representatives and fellow stakeholders. She said such exchanges provide valuable insights that can help improve products, business models and marketing strategies. Appreciating the enthusiasm displayed by participants and visitors, she described Bhaderwah as a place that combines natural beauty with immense entrepreneurial potential and urged stakeholders to continue spreading the fragrance of success through innovation, cooperation and sustained efforts.

A special felicitation ceremony was also held during the valedictory session, where progressive farmers, entrepreneurs, startup founders, industry stakeholders, exhibitors, scientists and officials associated with the successful organisation of the festival were honoured for their contributions to the growth of the lavender sector and the success of the Aroma Mission.

The recognitions highlighted the collective efforts of all stakeholders in advancing Bhaderwah's Purple Revolution and strengthening the region's emerging aroma economy.

The festival also served as a platform for successful farmers to share their experiences of adopting lavender cultivation and benefiting from the Aroma Mission.

Several participants highlighted how lavender has emerged as a profitable alternative to traditional crops, creating new opportunities for income generation and rural entrepreneurship.

Other senior scientists present included Er. Abdul Rahim, Scientist-G and Head, RMBD&IST Division and IIM Branch Srinagar; Dr. Asha Chaubey, Scientist-G and Head, Fermentation and Microbial Biotechnology Division; Dr. Dhiraj Vyas, Scientist-F and Head, Plant Sciences and Agrotechnology Division; Dr. Sumit G. Gandhi, Scientist-F and Head, Infectious Diseases Division; and Dr. Amit Nargotra, Scientist-F, Natural Products and Medicinal Chemistry Division. Scientists, researchers, startup founders and representatives from the aroma industry also participated in the event.

2 Shooters...

Gurcharan Singh Gaba of Makhlu, Ferozepur, from Jammu & Kashmir, and recovered one Beretta .30 bore pistol along with 10 live cartridges of .30 bore from their possession," Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said in a post on X. Preliminary investigation revealed that the accused had a criminal background involving extortion, robbery, dacoity, theft and violations of the Arms Act. They were also carrying a reward of Rs 10,000 announced by the Rajasthan Police, the DGP said, adding that further investigation is underway.

Shooper Gurcharan Singh Gaba was shot dead by two unidentified assailants in Makhlu town of Ferozepur district on June 1. According to the police, the attackers arrived at the market on a motorcycle and opened fire at Gurcharan. He later succumbed to his injuries.

Police's...

district," he said. He added that a passenger namely Anurag Choudhary of Delhi, who was travelling in Swaraj Express from Katra towards Jammu, when reached Kathdel fell from the train in Tunnel 19-U. "The Sentry on duty, Constable Shabir Ahmad, who was standing guard, immediately responded to the situation and shifted the injured passenger, who was bleeding to guard post wherein he was provided immediate first aid," said the SSP. The matter was immediately brought to the notice Police Post GRP Ramnagar and the injured passenger was later shifted to the Government Medical College (Udhampur) for further treatment. "The condition of the injured is stable and he is responding well to the treatment. Timely intervention, swift action and close coordination saved a precious life," SSP Mehta added.

NOTICE

I, Mohd Ashraf do hereby declare that my daughter's name is wrongly written in her school record as Aiza Fem instead of Aiza Manhas according to her previous documents. I have got her birth certificate and aadhar card updated. Now, I am applying for the correction of the same in her school record. Objection if any may be conveyed to the concerned authority within seven days from the publication of this notice.



'Jammu Yuva' unites over 300 youth at Tawi Riverfront in drive for drug-free future

Anti-Malaria Spraying Drive conducted in Thathri Town

JAMMU, JUNE 07: FICCI FLO Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh, in collaboration with the district administration Jammu and Jammu Smart City Limited, organised "Jammu Yuva - By the Youth, For the Youth, Against Drugs" at the Tawi Riverfront, Jammu. The event drew the participation of over 300 youth, students, educators, community leaders, FLO members and citizens, who came together in support of a drug-free future.

The initiative was conceptualised in support of the Lieutenant Governor's 100-Day Nasha Mukta Abhiyan and aimed to inspire young people to become advocates of a drug-free society through awareness, engagement and collective action.

The Deputy Commissioner Jammu Dr Rakesh Minhas attended as chief guest. Additional Deputy Commissioner Anusya Janwal was also present on the



occasion. Addressing the gathering, Dr Minhas commended FICCI FLO JKL, the district Administration Jammu and Jammu Smart City Limited for creating a platform that empowers youth and strengthens community participation in the fight against drug abuse. "The youth are the driving force of our nation and initiatives like Jammu Yuva play a vital role in channelising their energy towards positive and productive pursuits. The fight against drug abuse cannot be won by the administration alone. It requires the collective efforts of families, educational institutions, civil society and most importantly our young people. I commend FICCI FLO JKL for creating a platform that inspires awareness, responsibility and hope for a drug-free future," said Dr Minhas.

A highlight of the evening was the official launch of the Jammu Yuva Anthem by Dr Minhas. The anthem, created to mobilise young people towards a drug-free future,

captured the spirit and collective resolve of Jammu's youth and reinforced the message of hope, responsibility and positive change. The Chairperson of FICCI FLO Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh, Varsha Bansal, said, "Through this initiative, we seek to engage, inspire and empower young people to make positive choices and become agents of change in society."

The programme featured inspiring performances, awareness messages and community engagement activities, underscoring the importance of collective responsibility in addressing substance abuse.

Also present were past Chairpersons of FICCI FLO JKL, Varuna Anand, Ruchika Gupta and Arti Choudhary.

The programme was organised under the leadership of Ms Bansal, along with Executive Committee Members Sona Mehta, Tanisha Patil and Shipra Agarwal.

THATHRI, JUNE 07: Acting on the directions of the Deputy Commissioner Krishan Lal and under the guidance of the Chief Medical Officer Dr Vinod Sharma, the Malaria Wing from the Office of CMO, in collaboration with the local Block Medical Office, conducted an extensive anti-malaria spraying drive across Thathri Town, today.

The initiative was undertaken as a preventive public health measure following the flash floods that affected the area approximately a week ago. The drive aimed to minimize the risk of vector-borne diseases by eliminating mosquito breeding and improving environmental sanitation.

Spraying operations were carried out in market areas, government offices, public places and residential localities to safeguard the health of the community and prevent the spread of malaria and other mosquito-borne diseases.

The Health Department reiterated its commitment to protecting public health through timely preventive measures and appealed to the general public to maintain cleanliness in their surroundings, avoid water stagnation and cooperate with the health teams during such drives.

The department also assured that surveillance and preventive activities will continue in the affected areas to ensure the well-being of the residents and to mitigate any potential public health risks in the aftermath of the floods.



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Legal Awareness Programme on RTI Act held at District Jail Bhandarwah

BHANDARWAH, JUNE 07: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Bhandarwah organized an awareness programme on the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005 here at District Jail.

The programme was conducted by LADC Advocate Tahir Hussain Dar, under the direction of the Chairman and Secretary, DLSA, in presence of Superintendent, District Jail Hamidullah Naik.

The event witnessed active participation from jail inmates, police personnel and Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) Renu Devi and Mohammad Afzal. The participants were sensitized to the objectives,



significance and key provisions of the RTI Act, 2005. Detailed information was provided regarding the statutory right of citizens to seek information from public authorities, the procedure for filing RTI applications and the prescribed

timelines for furnishing information under the Act. Advocate Tahir Hussain Dar emphasized that the RTI Act serves as an important instrument for ensuring transparency, accountability and good governance.

addressing basic civic issues affecting the daily lives of the people remains one of her foremost priorities. She emphasized that once the drain work is completed, work on the road will also be commenced. "The residents of Dhok Waziran have been facing immense difficulties due to inadequate road. This drain project is being undertaken to provide a permanent and scientific solution to the problem while also resolving

the dispute which hindered the construction of road since 2015 thereby improving living conditions, and ensuring that the people receive the quality infrastructure they rightfully deserve. Recognizing the gravity of the situation and responding to the genuine concerns of the residents, MLA Devyani Rana personally intervened and directed the concerned departments to prepare a detailed proposal for a sustainable

Sham-e-Ghazal organised by JKAACL in memory of Gurudev O.P. Sharma Sarthi

JAMMU, JUNE 07 Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, in collaboration with Adbi Kunj, J&K, Jammu, today organised a grand "Sham-e-Ghazal" at K.L. Saigal Hall, Jammu, as a musical tribute to Gurudev O.P. Sharma Sarthi, the eminent litterateur, poet, lyricist, broadcaster and multidimensional personality of Jammu and Kashmir.

Padma Shri Dr. Jitendra Udhampuri graced the occasion as the chief guest. The guests of honour included Sardar Prihpal Singh Pritam, Arvinder Singh Aman and Suresh Sharma, Retired Judge while noted writer and journalist Suhail Qazmi presided over the function.

The dignitaries paid rich tributes to O.P. Sharma Sarthi and highlighted his immense contribution to the lit-



erary, cultural and musical landscape of Jammu and Kashmir. They described him as a visionary poet and a guiding force whose writings continue to inspire generations of writers, artists and music lovers. The speakers recalled his remarkable role in promoting Urdu, Hindi and Dogri literature and acknowledged his invaluable contribution towards enriching the cultural ethos of the region. Gurudev O.P. Sharma Sarthi was widely respected for his versatile

personality and outstanding contributions as a poet, lyricist, author and cultural activist. Through his literary creations and musical compositions, he touched countless hearts and left an enduring legacy in the fields of literature, art and culture. His works reflected human values, social consciousness and deep sensitivity towards life and society. The highlight of the evening was the soulful presentation by renowned singer Dharmesh Nargotra, who mesmerised the audience with a series of ghazals penned by O.P. Sharma Sarthi. His captivating performance brought alive the poetic richness and emotional depth of Sarthi's writings, earning appreciation from the distinguished gathering and audience alike. The programme witnessed the participation of prominent writers, poets, artists, academicians and admirers of O.P. Sharma Sarthi, who joined together to celebrate the life, works and legacy of the legendary literary figure.

Devyani Rana announces 25 Lakhs for major Drainage Project in Dhok Waziran to resolve dispute hindering construction of road

Dhok Waziran, June 7: In a significant step towards strengthening civic infrastructure and addressing a long-pending public grievance, MLA Nargotra, Ms. Devyani Rana, during her visit to Dhok Waziran Panchayat, announced the construction of a comprehensive Storm Water Drainage and Sewerage Management Project for Indira Colony worth 25 Lakhs. The project is aimed at providing a permanent solution to the persistent drainage and wastewater problems that have affected residents for several years and to further resolve the long standing dispute which hindered the construction of a main road in the area. The proposed project will directly benefit the inhabitants of Ward No. 2, Indira Colony, particularly residents living in Lanes 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, who have long demanded the construction of drain to be resolved first before the construction of road. While addressing the gathering Devyani Rana said that



the dispute which hindered the construction of road since 2015 thereby improving living conditions, and ensuring that the people receive the quality infrastructure they rightfully deserve. Recognizing the gravity of the situation and responding to the genuine concerns of the residents, MLA Devyani Rana personally intervened and directed the concerned departments to prepare a detailed proposal for a sustainable

and long-term solution. Following technical surveys and field assessments, a dedicated drainage and sewerage project was formulated, and the MLA ensured that the necessary resources were mobilized for its implementation.

This project has been designed to benefit approximately 107 households and includes the construction of a 97-metre RCC precast covered drain of 10,000-15,000 litre capacity sump well, installation of two 5 HP sewage submersible pumps (one operational and one standby), and laying of approximately 295.65 metres of HDPE pipeline network for efficient wastewater disposal. The project is expected to ensure scientific drainage management, eliminate water stagnation, improve sanitation standards, and cater to future population growth in the area. Once completed, it will clear the way for the construction of road in the area which is a major demand of locals.

Sat Sharma reviews Cooperative Cell programmes, calls cooperatives vital for public empowerment

Jammu, 07 June: J&K BJP President and Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) Sat Sharma (CA) reviewed the activities and organizational programmes of the BJP Cooperative Cell during a meeting held at the party headquarters.

The meeting was attended by BJP Cells Incharge Ved Sharma, Cooperative Cell Convener Anikush Mahajan, Co-Convenors K.L. Sharma, Ashok Sambyal, Kamnesh Gupta, and other office bearers of the Cell from across Jammu and Kashmir.

Sat Sharma, while addressing the meeting, emphasized the crucial role played by cooperative institutions in strengthening society and promoting economic self-reliance. He said that cooperative soci-



eties serve as an effective medium for generating employment opportunities, particularly for the needy and economically weaker sections. He added that the cooperative sector acts as an important bridge between the government and the people, ensuring that welfare schemes and developmental initiatives reach every section of society efficiently. Sat Sharma stressed that the BJP Cooperative Cell must work proactively to spread awareness about various government schemes and motivate people to take advantage of opportunities available through the cooperative movement. He said that the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is to empower every citizen through inclusive growth and community participation, and cooperatives have a significant role in achieving that objective.

BSP Intensifies Organizational Strengthening Drive in Nagrota Assembly Constituency

Jammu, June 7: In accordance with the directions of Bahujan Samaj Party National President, Ms. Mayawati Ji, to further strengthen the party organization at the sector and booth levels, a comprehensive review meeting of Nagrota Assembly Constituency was held under the leadership of Shri Darshan Rana, President, BSP Jammu & Kashmir UT.

Addressing the meeting, Shri Darshan Rana emphasized that a strong and disciplined cadre is the backbone of the Bahujan Samaj Party. He called upon party



workers to intensify grass-roots outreach, strengthen booth committees, and ensure that the ideology and policies of BSP reach every household. He stressed that the party is committed to safeguarding the interests of the poor, marginalized, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, minorities, and all weaker sections of society. The meeting reviewed the organizational structure, membership drive, and preparations for upcoming political activities in the Nagrota Assembly segment.

DDC Reasi assesses ongoing infrastructure works at Shiv Khori Shrine

REASI, JUNE 07: District Development Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of development works undertaken at the Shiv Khori Shrine, including the helipad at Shiv Khori Bhawan and associated pilgrim-centric infrastructure projects.

The meeting focused on strengthening fire safety systems and enhancing emergency response preparedness at the helipad located near the holy cave shrine. Detailed deliberations were held to ensure safe and efficient helicopter operations, along with robust contingency arrangements for emergency situations. The Assistant Director Fire & Emergency Services briefed the chair regarding the essential fire-fighting infrastructure require-



ments at the site. It was informed that the construction of a water storage tank has been proposed to ensure adequate water availability for fire safety operations. Other critical fire protection measures and equipment requirements were also discussed.

The DDC directed the Executive Engineer PWD to prepare an estimate for levelling the area adjacent to the helipad and for the construction of a pilot room. Instructions were also issued regarding fencing of the helipad, construction of accommodation for security per-

sonnel, installation of an X-ray baggage scanner, CCTV surveillance system and necessary facilities to strengthen operational safety and security. The meeting further reviewed ongoing PWD works at the shrine and along the pilgrimage track. Discussions were held on the construction of cloak room, repair and blacktopping of the bus stand and establishment of waiting and dining hall at the shrine premises. The DDC also directed the preparation of an estimate for the construction of an overhead shed from Ram Mandir to the upper track leading to the shrine to provide shelter and convenience to pilgrims. He emphasized that all drinking water points along the pilgrimage route must be properly maintained and kept functional.

BJP will not tolerate discrimination against Jammu region: Sat Sharma

Jammu, 07 June 2026: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Jammu & Kashmir President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma (CA), along with BJP General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul, chaired an important meeting of BJP MLAs at the party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, to review the prevailing political situation, developmental concerns, and public issues across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by BJP National Secretary and MLA Dr. Narinder Singh, Deputy Leader of Opposition Pawan Gupta, other BJP MLAs, and party General Secretaries Sanjita Dogra, Baldev Singh Billawaria, and Gopal Mahajan.

During the meeting, BJP legislators discussed various issues affecting the



people at the grassroots level and expressed concern over the continued neglect of public grievances by the National Conference government. The MLAs also highlighted constituency-specific problems and developmental requirements, emphasizing the urgent need for timely intervention by the administration.

Sat Sharma, while addressing the meeting, said that

BJP remains fully committed to safeguarding the interests of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and ensuring balanced development across all regions. He stated that the people of Jammu are increasingly feeling ignored under the present dispensation, while several critical issues concerning infrastructure, civic amenities, roads, power supply, water availability, healthcare, and

employment continue to remain unresolved. Sat Sharma asserted that the BJP will strongly oppose any attempt to discriminate against the Jammu region in matters of development, resource allocation, or governance. He said that the aspirations and rights of the people of Jammu cannot be compromised under any circumstances.

He emphasized that BJP legislators will continue to act as the strong voice of the people both inside and outside the Assembly and will vigorously raise every issue concerning public welfare.

Ashok Koul deliberated on the series of organizational programmes from June 5 to June 21 under the nationwide campaign commemorating 12 Years of Vishwaas, Vikas and Jan

Kalyan under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He shared that the programmes include special outreach initiatives, plantation drives, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan activities, Pragati Path Yatra, Viksit Bharat Sampark Sammelan, Jan Kalyan Shivirs, International Yoga Day, exhibitions showcasing the achievements of the Modi Government, workshops on natural farming, and several other public engagement activities. He asked the BJP legislators to actively spearhead these programmes in their respective constituencies, transforming them into mass outreach campaigns.

Dr. Narinder Singh stated that the BJP has always stood for equitable development and transparent governance.

BKS Holds Dogri Folk Music Workshop in School Under Repertory Grant

T. R. Sharma Highlights Four-Decade Contribution of Bhartiya Kala Sangam to Dogri Culture

Jammu-07-06-26: Bhartiya Kala Sangam (BKS), Jammu, today organized a Dogri Folk Music Workshop and cultural programme with the support of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, under its Repertory Grant scheme. The event was held at Government High School, Raipur Sattari, Jammu, where a large number of students participated and witnessed the programme.

Addressing the gathering, T. R. Sharma, Chairman of Bhartiya Kala Sangam, informed the audience that BKS has been actively functioning since 1980 with the sole objective of promoting and preserving the Dogri language and culture of the Dogra region of Jammu and Kashmir. He stated that over the past



four decades, the organization has presented numerous cultural programmes based on Dogri folk music and dances, literary activities, and felicitation ceremonies honouring eminent personalities from various fields. Appreciating the financial support extended by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, New Delhi, he said that such assistance has enabled Bhartiya Kala Sangam to organize a variety of programmes aimed at promot-

ing the Dogri language and cultural heritage. The Headmaster of the school, Madam Choudhry, expressed gratitude to Bhartiya Kala Sangam for conducting the workshop and imparting basic knowledge of music and singing to the students. She also appreciated the organization's efforts in presenting an enchanting cultural programme featuring eminent artists associated with All India Radio and Doordarshan.

Shri Chound Mata Yatra 2026 Concludes Successfully with Massive Devotee Participation

Doda, June 7: The annual Shri Chound Mata Yatra 2026 was completed successfully with great religious fervor and devotion. The sacred pilgrimage commenced from Korora and concluded at the holy shrine of Shri Chound Mata Temple, Patsyalla Top. The yatra witnessed an overwhelming response from devotees, with approximately 2,000 pilgrims participating this year.

Devotees from different parts of Doda and adjoining areas joined the pilgrimage to seek the blessings of Maa Chound Mata. Throughout the journey, devotees chanted religious hymns and bhajans, creat-



ing a spiritually uplifting atmosphere. The Yatra Committee expressed gratitude to all devotees, volunteers, local residents, administration officials, police personnel, and social organizations who contributed to the smooth and successful

conduct of the pilgrimage. The successful completion of the yatra once again reflects the deep faith and devotion of the people towards Maa Chound Mata and highlights the growing significance of this annual religious event in the region.

Khet Bachao Abhiyan and Awareness Camp on Medicinal & Aromatic Plants Held at Dansal

Dansal, June 7: Sub Division Agriculture Office Dansal organized Khet Bachao Abhiyan 2026 along with an Awareness Camp on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants under HADP-P5: Promotion of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants.

More than 140 farmers participated in the programmes and were sensitized about soil conservation practices, sustainable farming techniques, and the importance of protecting agricultural land. Farmers were also educated on the cultivation and economic benefits of medicinal and aromatic plants, particularly Harad, and



were encouraged to register under the project to avail various benefits. The technical sessions focused on scientific methods of soil conservation, improved cultivation practices, crop diversification, and the growing market potential of medicinal and

aromatic crops. The participating farmers actively interacted with the experts and sought guidance on adopting innovative and sustainable agricultural practices.

The programmes were presided over by Mr. Vinod Khajuria, DAO Extension

Jammu. The events were attended by Dr. Puneet Choudhary, Chief Scientist, KVK; Dr. Muneswar, Scientist, KVK; Dr. Poonam Abrol, Scientist, KVK; Mr. Ashwani Gupta, SDAO Dansal; Mr. Pankaj Bhawani, SMS SDL; Mr.

Pranav Chadha, SMS SDL; and Mr. Parveen Singh, JAEO HQ.

Speaking on the occasion, the officers emphasized the need for conserving agricultural land, adopting climate-resilient farming practices, and promoting medicinal and aromatic crops as a viable source of additional income for farmers.

The programmes concluded with a vote of thanks, and the participants appreciated the efforts of the Agriculture Department in organizing awareness and capacity-building initiatives for the farming community.

Drug-Free Society and Clean Environment Are Collective Responsibilities: Sat Sharma

Anti-drug rally by Shri Ram Mandir committee, plantation, cleanliness drives held

Jammu, 07 June 2026: Shri Ram Mandir Committee Gurba Bakshi Nagar, Jammu, organized an Anti-Drug Awareness Programme and Rally under the theme "Say No to Drugs", witnessing the participation of local residents, school children, social activists and prominent citizens in a united effort against the growing menace of drug abuse.

J&K BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma, participating in the programme, inspired participants to actively contribute towards building a drug-free society. The event commenced with a cleanliness drive within the temple premises, formally inaugurated by Sat Sharma along with Vikrant Gupta, President, Shri Ram Mandir Committee, Gurba Bakshi

Nagar, in the presence of committee members and distinguished guests.

Emphasizing the importance of environmental conservation alongside social responsibility, Sat Sharma also planted a sapling under the Government of India's flagship initiative "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam". School children, local youth and members of the temple committee enthusiastically joined the plantation drive, reinforcing the message of sustainable development and environmental protection.

Addressing the gathering, Sat Sharma expressed concern over the growing challenge of drug addiction and stressed the need for collective efforts by families, educational institutions, social organiza-

tions and government agencies to safeguard the younger generation. He administered the "Say No to Drugs" Oath to all participants and urged them to become ambassadors of awareness in their respective communities.

A massive Anti-Drug Awareness Rally was subsequently flagged off by Sat Sharma from Shri Ram Mandir Gurba Bakshi Nagar. The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation from hundreds of school children, local youth, residents and dignitaries from across Jammu city. Marching through Bakshi Nagar and adjoining areas, participants raised slogans such as "Say No to Drugs" and "Drug-Free Society. Healthy Society", spreading awareness about the harmful effects of sub-

stance abuse and the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Following the successful culmination of the rally at the temple premises, Prasad was distributed among all participants.

On the occasion, Vikrant Gupta thanked Sat Sharma for his inspiring leadership, valuable guidance and wholehearted support to the campaign. He also expressed gratitude to all volunteers, school children, residents and committee members whose active participation made the programme a grand success.

Sat Sharma also participated in a plantation drive organized by the BJP Jammu & Kashmir Mahila Morcha and the Cooperative Cell, and planted a sapling.

Congress District Jammu Rural Holds Protest Program Against Price Rise Under Leadership of Neeraj Kundan

Jammu, June 07: Congress District Jammu Rural organized a strong protest program against the rising prices of essential commodities, particularly the recent hike in LPG cylinder prices. The event was held under the guidance of District President Neeraj Kundan. The program was orga-



nized by All Youth Congress (AYC) President Bishnah Khushwant Singh. It was attended by prominent Congress leaders including Constituency Incharge Dwarika Choudhary, Amrit Bali and Block President Bishnah Vijay Tagotra, along with a large number of party workers and sup-

porters. Addressing the gathering, Neeraj Kundan sharply criticized the policies of the Union Government. He stated that the BJP-led government has completely failed to address the concerns of common people and is indifferent to their hardships. "The BJP government does not think about the common man. While inflation is skyrocketing and essential commodities are becoming unaffordable, the government continues to burden the poor with repeated price hikes," Kundan said. To express their strong resentment against the recent LPG price increase, Congress workers paid floral tributes to an LPG cylinder.

UNNAT NGO Organizes HPV Vaccination Awareness Programme at GHSS Muthi

HPV Vaccination Essential for Cervical Cancer Prevention, Says Neena Abrol

Jammu, June 7: With the objective of creating awareness about cervical cancer prevention and promoting the importance of Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination among adolescent girls, UNNAT NGO organized an extensive awareness programme on "HPV Vaccination as an Important Intervention for Cervical Cancer Control Worldwide" at Government Higher Secondary School Muthi today. On this occasion, Principal of the School, Harpreet Kour was the Chief Guest in the program. The programme was presided over by Neena Abrol, General Secretary of UNNAT NGO, who emphasized the critical role of preventive healthcare in safeguarding the future of young girls. Addressing the

gathering of students, teachers, parents, and community members, she highlighted that cervical cancer remains one of the most common cancers affecting women globally, despite being largely preventable through timely vaccination and regular health screening.

Speaking on the occasion, Neena Abrol said that awareness about HPV vaccination is essential, particularly among adolescent girls and their families, as it can significantly reduce the risk of cervical cancer later in life. She stressed that misconceptions and lack of information often prevent families from availing themselves of preventive healthcare services. Therefore, community-based awareness programmes play a vital role in educating people



about the benefits and safety of vaccination.

The programme featured an informative session on the Human Papillomavirus (HPV), its modes of transmission, associated health risks, and its strong link with cervical cancer.

Resource persons explained that HPV infection is one of the leading causes of cervical cancer and that vaccination at the recommended age offers effective protection against the most common cancer-causing strains of the virus.

Students were educated about the importance of receiving the HPV vaccine before exposure to the virus and were encouraged to discuss vaccination with their parents and healthcare providers. The speakers also underscored the importance of maintaining personal hygiene, adopting healthy lifestyle practices, and undergoing regular health check-ups as part of comprehensive cancer prevention measures.

Teachers and parents attending the programme appreciated the initiative and expressed the need for more such awareness campaigns in educational institutions to empower young girls with accurate health information. Interactive question-and-answer sessions were conducted, during which students

actively participated and sought clarification on various aspects of HPV vaccination, cervical cancer prevention, and adolescent health.

Speaking on the occasion, the Principal of Government Higher Secondary School, Muthi, Harpreet Kour appreciated the efforts of UNNAT NGO for organizing such an informative and timely awareness programme. The Principal stated that educating adolescent girls about preventive healthcare is essential for building a healthy and informed society. Kour emphasized that awareness regarding HPV vaccination and cervical cancer prevention should reach every household, as early intervention can save countless lives. The Principal also encouraged stu-

dents to share the knowledge gained during the programme with their families and peers, thereby becoming ambassadors of health awareness in their communities. She further assured full support for future initiatives aimed at promoting health education and the overall well-being of students.

The programme concluded with a pledge by students and participants to spread awareness about cervical cancer prevention and the importance of HPV vaccination within their families and communities. A vote of thanks was presented to the school administration, faculty members, students, and all participants for their enthusiastic support and cooperation in making the awareness programme a success.



Diet tips that help you stay healthy as you lose weight

Eating right -that should be your mantra if you want to lose weight and maintain it. Sometimes we just stop eating some foods thinking they are harmful for us. But the truth is that we should eat everything in moderation, and not avoid certain foods unless, of course, the doctor tells us to.

Always have proper sit-down meals

Make sure your dining room does not have a TV, because this leads to mindless eating which can trigger weight gain easily. When you sit down at a table and eat slowly, as you engage in conversation with your family - eating automatically becomes mindful and healthy. Random grabbing of food while busy with other work makes you feel you didn't eat enough, thereby leading to over eating during meals.

Have an egg every morning - Having an egg or two for breakfast is one of the wisest things you could do if you wanted to control your weight. Artificially flavoured, processed and pre-sweetened breakfast cereals could give you a lot of unwanted kilos. Eggs give us the protein and

vitamins our body needs and helps us stay full for longer. Have fish twice a week - Increasing your oily fish consumption is



essential protein and it also makes you feel full for longer. Avoid nibbling food all day - Snacking in between meals, nibbling on something or the other leads to unmindful eating. You end up eating far more calories than you actually require. Stick to your basic timely meals that are balanced with portions of pro-

teins, carbs and vegetables. Grab that bottle of water - Expensive Juices, fizzy drinks, and smoothies that are not home-made can prove to be expensive, and not just monetarily. It has been found that these sugary drinks are the reason for your flabby tummy. Have water when you are thirsty. You could also sip on antioxidant-rich green teas. Staying hydrated throughout the day keeps your system in perfect condition.

Learn to read labels - Do not let food labels mislead you. Foods that are labelled 'low-fat' or 'lite' many a times, have added sugar to compensate the taste if fat. Foods labelled 'diet' make us eat drink more of the same which in the long run leads to weight gain.

Do you say no to whole milk? Studies have found that the cream in whole milk has many vitamins and only around 10 per cent fat which is not so bad at all. Having a man-made bread spread instead of natural butter may not be all healthy either.

Don't like milk? The complete guide to alternatives with similar benefits

Earlier this month, former cricketer Brett Lee launched a brand of almond milk in India. The announcement got many health enthusiasts discussing the benefits of such dairy substitutes. According to Kanchan Patwardhan, nutritionist, Kanchar's House Of Health And Nutrition Centre, the fact that you cannot really bet on the purity of commercially available milk these days has made these substitutes even more relevant.

"For example, the A1 grade of cow's milk comes from hybrid cows. Their quality is questionable because hybrid cows are given hormonal injections. Hence, I suggest that if you cannot give up traditional milk altogether, then go for desi cow's milk. It is the same as A2 grade of milk," says Patwardhan.

However, when it comes to naming the best substitute for milk, experts remain divided. "According to me, if you're looking for a dairy-free alternative to cow's milk, coconut milk is a better substitute. It contains important micronutrients such as calcium and magnesium," says Dr Seemaa Saadkha, functional medicine expert, Namma Mitra Foundation. Patwardhan, on the other hand, feels almond milk is the best substitute. Here, we list some other popular dairy substitutes and their health benefits:

Coconut milk
It is a rich source of phosphorus, which prevents memory loss and improve energy levels. It also con-

tains selenium that prevents arthritis. Magnesium that calms the nerves, and capric acid, which has anti-viral and anti-fungal properties. It is best-suited for those who are lactose intolerant and those with thyroid problems.

Rice milk
It is rich in different types of vitamin B. The antioxidants in it make it an excellent detoxifier. It also reduces water retention and aids in digestion. The dietary benefits depend on the thickness of the milk, as there is no standard formula to make it. Hence, calculating ones recommended daily allowance is tricky.

Quinoa milk
It is rich in protein, magnesium, manganese and phosphorus. It helps bones grow and strengthens the muscles and nervous system. It also has anti-ageing properties.

Oat milk
It is rich in calcium, fibre and iron. It not only prevents osteoporosis, it also strengthens the bones, teeth and muscles. Oat milk is known to prevent epilepsy and paralysis. It has all the micronutrients, and is a good source of magnesium and omega 3. Almond milk has a low glycaemic index. Limited carbohydrates and more protein. Hence, it helps diabetics. However, homemade almond milk is considered better than the commercial varieties available because they tend to contain additives.



When you stop exercising, blood flow to brain decreases in 10 days

Stopping exercise for just 10 days can lead to significant decreases in blood flow to several regions of the brain, including the hippocampus, new research has found. "We know that the hippocampus plays an important role in learning and memory and is one of the first brain regions to shrink in people with Alzheimer's disease," said the lead author of the study, J Carson Smith, Associate Professor at University of Louisville, School of Public Health in the US.

It is already known that stopping exercise can result in loss of cardiorespiratory endurance and the researchers wanted to find out what impact

does the cessation of exercise have on our brains. The researchers examined cerebral blood flow in healthy, physically fit older adults (ages 50-80 years) before and after a 10-day period during which they stopped all exercise.

Using MRI brain imaging techniques, they found a significant decrease in blood flow to several brain regions, including the hippocampus, after they stopped their exercise. "Not only do they show a decrease in brain blood flow in brain regions that are important for maintaining brain health," Smith said.

Health benefits of eating Kiwi

Kiwifruit is renowned to be a nutritional powerhouse owing to generous amounts of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, minerals, vitamins and dietary fibre which are more than any other fruit in the world. Here are the health benefits of kiwifruits:

Powerhouse of Vitamins and Minerals
Essential for great hair, skin and strong immunity. Vitamin C should be consumed everyday by us.

Zespri Green and SunGold
Kiwifruits are extremely high in Vitamin C that help enhance vitality, increase immunity and alleviate sluggishness. Not only do they contain Vitamin C, they are also loaded with minerals such as potassium which help to maintain blood pressure and boost energy.

Packed with Antioxidants
Antioxidants slow down the activa-

tion of free radicals that are by-products of a normal metabolism and promote overall wellness. Since Zespri kiwifruits are packed with antioxidant galore, they serve as the healthiest fruit option for people of all ages.

Excellent source of Folate
For women who are trying to conceive or are pregnant, Zespri Kiwifruit is a great addition to your diet since it is also good for growing children.

High Fiber
Kiwifruits are rich in fibre which is a natural aid to digestion. In addition, kiwifruit contains a soluble enzyme called actinidin which helps in the digestion of proteins and relieves the bloated feeling. Kiwifruits are the only fruit containing the actinidin enzyme, making them unique and an absolute must have in your daily fruit basket.



Five superfoods to help your kid take on the world

Celebrity trainer David Kirsch has worked with A-list models and actresses such as Heidi Klum, Kate Upton, Liv Tyler, and Anne Hathaway and is now here to guide you on how to make sure your kid's diet has all the right ingredients.

In his latest book, Ultimate Family Wellness, David shares his own story of balancing fatherhood with fitness, and gives his expert advice on how to work out and eat well with the whole family. Here are his top five superfoods for children that are nutritious and tasty for both kids and adults alike:



1. Oatmeal
High in fiber, antioxidants, and tons of other nutrients, oatmeal has been a staple of our breakfast table since my girls, Emilia and Francesca, were about 15 months old. It's that hot meal mom always wanted us to have before we started our day - and she was right. It keeps blood glucose stable, which allows kids to focus for longer in school. Research has also shown that oatmeal can help lower cholesterol and improve metabolism. We like to add fresh ground cinnamon, berries, and one teaspoon (5 g) of fresh ground almond butter to our breakfast oatmeal.

2. Kiwi
This is one of Francesca's favorite fruits, and it's thankfully becoming more readily available across the USA, as Kiwi from California has started showing up in the produce section at Whole Foods on the East Coast. For a small fruit, it packs a powerful nutrient punch. Kiwis are

fat-free and low in calories, provide tons of energy, fiber, and antioxidants, and are packed with vitamins and minerals such as vitamins C and E, potassium, magnesium, lutein, folate, and zinc.

3. Watermelon
I've previously spoken in my book on the health attributes of everyone's favourite summer fruit. I happily serve watermelon to my daughters whenever I can find organic melons. This guilt-free pleasure is low in sugar and high in vitamins A and C. It is the perfect low-calorie snack. Studies suggest that for adults, watermelon could also potentially lower blood pressure and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

4. Avocado
This is an easy choice as it's one of Emilia and Francesca's superfoods. It was the first fresh fruit they ate when they were about nine months old. Oh how they loved (and still do) the taste and creamy texture. They are the perfect superfood for children because their bodies easily burn the monounsaturated fat so prevalent in avo-cados.

Walking can cut cardiovascular risk in early by half

Moderate physical activities such as walking and cycling are associated with a greater than 50 per cent reduction in cardiovascular death in people over the age of 65, says a study.

"Our study provides further evidence that older adults who are physically active have a lower risk of coronary heart disease, stroke and death from cardiovascular disease," said one of the researchers, Riitta Antikainen, professor of geriatrics at the University of Oulu, Finland.

"The protective effect of leisure time physical activity is dose dependent - in other words, the more you do, the better. Activity is protective even if you have other risk factors for cardiovascular disease such as high cholesterol," Antikainen noted.

The study assessed the association between leisure time physical activity and cardiovascular disease



risk and mortality in 2,456 men and women aged 65 to 74 years. One of the researchers, Riitta Antikainen, professor of geriatrics at the University of Oulu, Finland.

The researchers classified self-reported physical activity as moderate levels of physical activity as walking, cycling or doing other forms of light exercise (fishing, gardening, hunting) at least four hours a week.

They defined high levels of physical activity as recreational sports (running, jog-

Identified: Gene that can cure your coffee addiction

Researchers have identified a gene that appears to curb caffeine consumption, an finding which may explain why some people tend to drink fewer cups of coffee.

The study by researchers at the University of Edinburgh in the UK found that people with a DNA variation in a gene called PDS5 tend to drink fewer cups of coffee. The findings suggest that the gene reduces the ability of cells to breakdown caffeine, causing it to stay in the body for longer.

The findings also suggest that people who consume as much coffee as you do, researchers said.

The findings add to previous studies that have identified genes linked to caffeine habit and shed new light on

the biological mechanisms of caffeine metabolism. Researchers looked at genetic information from 370 people living in a village in south Italy and 843 people from six villages in northeast Italy. Each of the participants was asked to complete a survey that included a question about how many cups of coffee they drank each day.

Researchers found that people with the DNA variation in PDS5 tended to consume less coffee than people without the variation. Researchers replicated the study in a group of 731 people from the Netherlands. The result was similar but the number of cups of coffee consumed was slightly lower.

Using a sit-stand desk in office can help you lose weight

Alternating positions between standing and sitting at office may help you to achieve your weight goal, a new study has found.

The study examined the potential weight management benefits of sit-stand desks and found that regular use of a height-adjustable workstation, when combined with other low-intensity activities, is an effective measure for maintaining weight for most people.

If an individual were to stand for half-an-hour then they could burn 5.5 times more calories than they would do sitting for that entire hour. Standing for the full hour could burn an extra 8.2 calories.

Switching evenly between the two position over the course of an eight-hour day - four hours sitting and four hours standing - could result in an energy expenditure of as much as 56.9 calories for men and 48.3 calories for women.

Is your calcium tablet good for you?

If you have crossed the age of 30, it is most likely that you have been told it's time to start taking calcium supplements, and in all probability you already are popping them to avoid weak bones as you age. But it isn't as simple as it sounds. Calcium supplements may be a double-edged sword.

Daily requirement of calcium for women aged 19-24 years is 1000 mg. 51-70 years is 1200 mg and 70 plus years is 1200 mg. A healthy, varied diet is likely to provide this for most people. It is possible to increase calcium levels through diet alone.

Dr Sonali Gaur MRCOG (UK) MD Consultant Gynaecology and obstetrics, Nanavati Super Speciality Hospital explains, "Too much calcium has risks. The general advice is that patients should not self-prescribe calcium supplements, but should aim to obtain

their calcium requirement (700-1000 mg/day) from a balanced diet. In fact, ingesting too much calcium in a misguided attempt to build skeleton and may cause kidney stones, milk-alkali syndrome, or interference with iron absorption and certain medications/ treatments.

A long-term study conducted in 2013 had linked increased high calcium intake (more than 1400 mg per day) to higher death rates. The study established that people may already be getting their required calcium dosage through diet but an added pill only increased their risk of a

heart attack. The same risk was proved to be true for women who consumed less than 600 mg calcium.

Adequate calcium intake can be acquired with three portions of



dairy in a day. There is no type fits all does not apply

supplements. Dr Satish Mutha, Orthopedic, SL Raheja Fortis Hospital, Mahim says, "Women may be given dietary calcium supplements in case of dietary insufficiency or even cases where there is an issue in adequate absorption, but it still needs to be done under medical supervision."

Around menopause, women usually experience bone pains and fatigue, this may indicate calcium deficiency, but instead of self-administering it, she should head to an expert.

Not all calcium supplements are the same. One

and that's why medical intervention is extremely important. You may be taking less or more than actually needed by your body.

Calcium consumption
Calcium is an extremely important mineral in the body. It is needed for the smooth functioning of heart, nerves, and even the blood-clotting systems. Here are some important rules: Dr Sonali shares, "Calcium absorption is increased in an acidic environment, so tablets should be taken with meals." Intake of beverages that contain caffeine should be avoided or limited. Caffeine can decrease calcium absorption, and possibly lead to osteoporosis. Ingestion of oxalates (as in spinach and Swiss chard) (as in liver and raisins), and phytates (found in whole grains) also impair calcium absorption, she adds.

North in News

EDITORIAL

Nasha Mukht Abhiyan is a big success, should be continued even after 100 days completion

Nasha Mukht Abhiyan in Jammu and Kashmir is a big success, should be continued even after 100 days completion because the Union Territory, long challenged by cross-border narco-terrorism, unemployment, and post-conflict trauma, has shown that a focused, community-driven anti-drug campaign can change both data and mindsets within a short span. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment had flagged J&K as a priority State under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan after the 2019 National Survey and the 2022 AIIMS report indicated that nearly 10 lakh people, or 8 percent of the UT's population, were affected by substance use, with heroin and pharmaceutical opioids like tramadol and tapentadol emerging as the drugs of choice among youth aged 15-30, and the 100-day campaign launched by the J&K administration across all 20 districts combined enforcement, treatment, and awareness in a way that created visible momentum, and the success is measurable because the Social Welfare Department, Police, Health Department, Education Department, and NGOs together conducted over 12,000 awareness programs covering 18.7 lakh students, 9,200 panchayats, 4,600 schools, and 140 colleges, and 1.3 lakh citizens took the e-pledge, and 7,400 master volunteers were trained to act as peer educators, and the J&K Police under Operation "Sanjeevani" registered 1,240 NDPS cases and arrested 1,870 peddlers, seizing 45 kg heroin, 2,100 kg poppy straw, 1.2 lakh banned capsules, and 380 kg cannabis, and 89 properties worth ₹68 crore linked to drug trafficking had been attached under the PIT-NDPS Act, signaling that supply chains were being hit, and on the treatment side the Health Department operationalized 22 Addiction Treatment Facilities, 2 in each GMC and 1 each in all district hospitals, and the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences Srinagar and Police Drug De-addiction Centre Jammu saw OPD footfall rise by 240 percent as stigma reduced, and 11,600 new patients were registered for OPD-based buprenorphine maintenance, and the 24x7 helpline 14446 and UT helpline 0191-2475196 received 19,400 calls and the campaign's IEC strategy was tailored to local context with nukkad natak in Kashmiri, Dogri, Gojri, and Pahari, pledge ceremonies after Friday prayers and in temples, and "Wall of Fame" for Nasha Mukht Panchayats where 380 villages self-declared after social audit, and the Education Department integrated drug awareness into morning assemblies and sports became a counter-narrative with the LG's "Nasha Mukht J&K Cup" football and volleyball tournaments engaging 1.1 lakh youth in Pulwama, Anantnag, Baramulla, Kupwara, Rajouri, and Poonch. Hence Nasha Mukht Abhiyan in Jammu and Kashmir is a big success, and it should be continued even after 100 days completion.

RAJNI SHARMA, EDITOR

BY T KANNAN

On 28 February 2026, the war that diplomats had spent two years rehearsing began. American and Israeli aircraft struck Iranian nuclear and missile installations; Iran's Supreme Leader was killed, and by 2 March the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps had formally closed the Strait of Hormuz to merchant traffic, laying mines and warning off shipping. Two Indian-flagged tankers, including the VLCC Sanmar Herald, were turned back under gunfire despite prior clearance.

By mid-March, Brent had crossed \$116 a barrel; by April the United States Navy was blockading Iranian ports. Indian Oil Corporation, in a measure without recent precedent, barred its own piped-gas customers from buying domestic LPG cylinders to ration a supply suddenly under stress. This is not a refinery story alone. India imports approximately 87 per cent of the crude oil it consumes, and roughly 48 per cent of those barrels came from the Middle East as recently as last winter. But the sharper exposure is in the kitchen. Of the 33.15 million tonnes of liquefied petroleum gas India consumed in 2025, about 60 per cent was imported, and about 90 per cent of those imports originated from the Middle East. Every cylinder in every village queue is a longer logistical chain than the refinery feedstock the country has spent two decades worrying about. The fragility is structural: it is not subject to grand-bargain diplomacy; and it will be exposed each time the Persian Gulf catches fever.

The argument that follows is that India already owns the largest under-deployed civilian energy resource on earth, in plain view of every village panchayat - and that the consequent answer to Hormuz lies less in West Asian capitals than in the cattle sheds of Bardhaman, Beed and Bareilly.

BY PARUL CHANDRA

Sharing a long and porous border with Myanmar, confronting cross-border insurgency, managing refugee flows, advancing critical infrastructure projects, and countering China's growing influence leave India with little room for diplomatic idealism.

Driven by strategic pragmatism, India has had to embrace the military government of Myanmar despite the severe democratic backsliding there. New Delhi recently rolled out the red carpet for Myanmar President U Min Aung Hlaing, who seized power in 2021 through a military coup that toppled the democratically elected government of National League for Democracy (NLD) leader and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi.

India, which prides itself on being the world's largest democracy, notably refrained from hosting U Min Aung Hlaing during the first four years after the coup. However, the veneer of legitimacy the former military chief has now achieved by engineering his appointment as President through a dubious parliamentary vote helped India shrug off its hesitation.

Myanmar, after all, is of immense geostrategic importance to India, with the two countries sharing an extremely porous 1,643-km land border.

Cattle Shed Answer

The numbers are uncomfortable. Of India's 535.78 million livestock counted in the 20th Livestock Census of 2019, approximately 302 million are large bovines - the world's largest such herd. NITI Aayog has estimated that the herd produces in the order of three million tonnes of dung every day. Under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy's own technical standards, a kilogram of fresh cow dung yields roughly 0.04 cubic metres of biogas, and about thirty cubic metres of that gas carries the calorific equivalent of a single 14.2-kilogram LPG cylinder. The arithmetic produces a number so large that the policy mind, on first encountering it, tends to discard it as fanciful. It is not fanciful. It is what we have been throwing away each morning into a drain, or stacking against a wall to dry into low-calorific cakes. A village-cluster biogas plant is technically unremarkable: a pit, an inlet for slurry, a fermentation chamber where mesophilic bacteria do their patient anaerobic work over a retention of about thirty days, a holder for the methane that rises, and piped distribution to fifty or a hundred households. The plant produces, as inevitable by-product, a stream of digested slurry - the digestate - that is, gram for gram, a finer organic fertiliser than urea, with the nutrient profile of farmyard manure and none of its weed-seed burden. At cluster scale, piping gas to a hundred households at a tariff well below the prevailing LPG cylinder rate of Rs 918, the digestate alone - if sold to neighbouring farmers - covers operating cost. The household saves: the plant pays; the field gains. The principal beneficiary, however, is neither the household ledger nor the soil. She stands at the chulha. The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has put cylinders in over 10 crore poor kitchens: the harder secret of the scheme is that millions of those cylinders are refilled less

often than the policy supposes, because Rs 900 is nine hundred rupees, and a smoky chulha is free.

A piped village biogas line, refilled by the buffalo in the corner, dissolves the trade-off. The respiratory cost - the cataract, the chronic bronchitis, the asthma in the child crawling underfoot - is among the largest avoidable disease burdens in rural India. The dung the household contributes, weighed and priced at a panchayat collection centre, becomes income: the gas that returns to her stove becomes dignity. Why, then, has none of this happened at scale? The architecture exists, but it has scattered. India's legacy household-biogas programme has been folded into the Biogas component of the National Bioenergy Programme (Phase I, 2021-22 to 2025-26), with a dedicated outlay of approximately Rs 100 crore within a broader Rs 858 crore envelope. The GOBAR-Dhan portal today lists about 1,219 functional family-and-cluster plants and 163 functional Compressed Biogas plants nationally - against the SATAT scheme's target of 5,000 CBG units by 2024. The failures are not technological: the plants work where they are installed. They are institutional. The schemes have been split across three ministries - MNRE, Jal Shakti and Petroleum - each with its own forms, subsidy schedule and silence. The Indian models that work, however, are already on the ground. Uttar Pradesh's Gram-Urja pilot installs household digesters at a unit cost of about Rs 39,000, of which the family pays only about Rs 4,000; early reporting from the pilot's 2,250 plants suggests household LPG consumption can fall by up to 70 per cent where the unit is well-fed and well-watered.

Gujarat's Banas Dairy cooperative - itself a lineal descendant of the milk model Verghese Kurien gave India - pays farmers a rupee for every

kilogram of fresh dung delivered, processes it into Compressed Biogas and organic fertiliser, and is being expanded under a Rs 60-crore allocation in the state's 2026-27 budget for ten new cooperative plants.

The household micro-economics and the cooperative aggregation logic are not theoretical exercises; both are running. The international comparators sober the ambition. China built, between the early 1980s and 2014, over forty million household digesters under disciplined central subsidy - and much of that infrastructure has since fallen idle as rural-to-urban migration emptied the feedstock villages and grid LPG eroded the case for households that no longer kept cattle. Nepal's Biogas Support Programme, launched in 1992 with Dutch support, has installed over a quarter of a million domestic digesters, though field studies have repeatedly shown serious dis-adoption where aftersales service was thin.

Germany's biogas industry - about 9,600 plants producing roughly 80.6 TWh of energy in 2025 - succeeded precisely because the federal feed-in-tariff structure made it a market rather than a scheme, and because the plants are owned by farmer cooperatives that have a twenty-year reason to keep them running. The lesson is consistent: subsidy without market discipline is a monument; market without subsidy is a project for the patient. What India needs, then, is not a new mission but the seriousness to coordinate the one it has.

Consolidate biogas under a single nodal authority - MNRE is the natural candidate - with a five-year cluster-installation target written into the Finance Commission's devolution formula, prioritising the cattle-dense districts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra.

Realpolitik over idealism

A restive and unstable neighbourhood directly threatens India's national security interests, reinforcing the pressing need for New Delhi to engage with Nay Pyi Taw at the highest level.

India was the military leader's first port of call since becoming President in April. Myanmar's close ally, China - which has no qualms about the military junta's trampling of democratic norms - had already engaged with U Min Aung Hlaing on the sidelines of regional summits before he assumed the role of President. This intensifying geopolitical jostling with Beijing for influence remains a primary driver behind New Delhi's diplomatic outreach.

Following the high-level meeting between U Min Aung Hlaing and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, New Delhi sought to frame this renewed engagement not as an endorsement of a repressive regime, but as part of its belief in "sustained dialogue" with a neighbour. As Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri noted, "History has shown that disengagement doesn't give us any results that are better than engagement, and it certainly doesn't produce democratic change."

The visiting Myanmar President's assurance, in turn, that "its territory would not be permitted to be used against

India's security interests" was certainly welcomed here. This pledge is critical for two reasons. One, armed insurgents from India's Northeast have long used Myanmar's soil as a safe haven from which to launch operations in Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.

Two, the ongoing civil war in Myanmar and the consequent regional instability directly threaten Indian interests. There has already been a huge exodus of refugees into Manipur and Mizoram, forcing India to scrap the long-standing Free Movement Regime (FMR) with Myanmar and step up border fencing. Additionally, the spillover of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar's restive Rakhine State into neighbouring Bangladesh, as well as India, is also a major concern. Like India, Myanmar faces its own domestic security challenges from various armed rebel factions. Reflecting these shared anxieties, the India-Myanmar joint statement extended Indian support for Myanmar's "sovereignty and territorial integrity", while both sides also condemned the "misuse of sovereign territory for activities inimical to their security interests".

India's strategic imperatives in Myanmar also include a vital connectivity dimension. New Delhi has undertaken two

ambitious infrastructure projects in the country: the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway. Both initiatives have suffered massive delays and remain in limbo due to Myanmar's precarious security situation.

The Indian delegation raised the issue during the presidential visit, stressing that these projects remain a "major priority" for India. While U Min Aung Hlaing assured New Delhi that his administration would do everything possible to ensure their completion, achieving this is easier said than done against the backdrop of an active civil war. For now, India can only exercise patience and hope that local conditions improve enough for construction to resume. In its quest for alternative routes to bypass the narrow and vulnerable Siliguri Corridor - which could become a chokepoint in a conflict with China - India has heavily invested in the Kaladan project to connect with its landlocked Northeast. Crucially, India has already developed the strategically located Sittoung Port in Myanmar, which will allow goods to be shipped from mainland India by sea and then moved to the Northeast via river and road corridors up to Mizoram. Overlooking the Bay of Bengal.

Sydney Sweeney on 'Christy': It's a very personal issue that's important to me



Actress Sydney Sweeney hopes her upcoming film 'Christy' will 'raise more awareness' of domestic violence issues and shared that it is a 'very personal issue that's important' to her. The 28-year-old actress, who plays boxer Christy Martin in the new biographical sports drama film, told Variety: 'It's a very personal issue that's important to me, and I hope that through Christy and her story, it can raise more awareness. It's personal.'

The actress stars in the new David Michod-directed movie alongside Ben Foster, Merritt Wever and Katy O'Brian, and she can't wait for film fans to see her latest project, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She said: 'I'm so excited for everybody to see Christy Martin.'

Foster said that the abuse scenes in the film tested their limits as performers. However, the director 'created a safe space' for the two.

Speaking about his costar, Foster said: 'As we got deeper into the material and closer to shooting, all I could see is this sensitive human. And I could feel that she felt a great responsibility to represent Christy's resilience: the best she could and bring her own lantern to it. And Syd's lantern is bright.'

Foster also shared that he relished the experience of working with Sweeney, who has become one of the most talked-about women in the world in recent years.

The actor said: 'There always seems to be a bit of hoopla around her. Positive or negative, she seems to provoke a reaction. But that is not the person I first met. I only know Syd as a sensitive human, utterly professional, kind to the crew, prepared, looked everybody in the eye,

remembered their names. To me that's an old-school value system that I don't see in a lot of people in her position.'

Earlier this year, the actress shared that she feels inspired by Christy Martin.

She told Vanity Fair: 'I was blown away that her story wasn't more known on a universal global level because it's just one of the most harrowing and inspiring women that I've ever met in my entire life.'

Sweeney got herself in tip-top physical shape in order to play Christy in the movie. The actress was also determined to not use a stunt double for the boxing scenes.

She said: 'Every single fight you see, we are actually punching each other. We are going full force. I always believed that you would not be able to make it feel real if it's a stunt double or if it's faking the hits.'

For Parmish Verma, making quality music matters: Number of streams are monitored by your management, CA

Rapper-singer-actor Parmish Verma, who serves as one of the mentors on the music reality show 'I-popstar', is reflecting on the relationship between the quality of music, its success, and the responsibility of an artiste.

Parmish spoke with IANS during the promotional campaign of his reality show, and said that for him the only thing that matters is to make a good song with a long shelf-life. He equated musicians with a farmer, who sows seeds in hopes of harvesting a good crop.

Parmish told IANS, 'To make a super hit song, for me this is not the parameter. The only thing I long for is creative satisfaction, that I wanted to make a song in a certain way. A farmer sows seeds. He gets the entire crop in the end. He doesn't say, 'I sowed seeds today, I'll get a full crop tomorrow'. It may also happen that some of the seeds die. It's okay. The seed was good. In the end, you will get the entire crop. You should be proud of what you've done.'

He further mentioned that an artiste should not worry about the number of streams or likes on their songs because artistes have a dedicated team of social media and financial experts looking after that aspect. He said that music should be made with complete honesty but the musicians should also ensure that they don't go into too much of abstract tangent.

'That's why every person's journey is important because every song comes with honesty. You can't monitor how much you have streamed. That's your CA's job, that's your management's job. Having said that, you have to be very responsible also. You should ensure that your financial needs are also being met. One should not go on such an artistic tangent that the audience doesn't connect with their work at all. That will lead to frustration, which is not a good thing for any artiste,' he added.

Hina Khan channels her inner Poo, recreates Kareena Kapoor's



Television superstar Hina Khan has been on a spree of recreating iconic scenes from Bollywood superstar Kareena Kapoor Khan's hit movie Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham. The actress recently shared a light-hearted video on her

her manager, makeup artist, and hairstylist.

Dressed in a shimmering and blingy green one-piece, Hina looked stylish. The actress shares a close bond with her work team and has been associated with them for years. Her manager, who goes by the name Hina, has been working with her for over a decade, since the very initial days of Khan's television career.

For the uninitiated, Hina Khan rose to fame with her portrayal of Akshara in Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai. The show that premiered on January 12, 2009, also marked her television debut.

The actress became a household name for her character portrayal as Akshara in the show, which she was a part of till 2016. Hina also made her presence felt at the International Cannes Film Festival, where she was lauded for her poise and fashion choices.

Her photos from the Cannes Red Carpet had gone viral over social media back then. The actress is currently seen on the couple reality show Pati Patni Aur Panga along with her husband, Rocky Jaiswal. Hina was diagnosed with breast cancer last year, and the actress is putting up a brave fight against the disease.

The actress has been spreading awareness on cancer, citing her own journey and battle with the disease.

In the video, Hina can be seen playfully recreating the iconic 'Tumhe Kaafi Sult Karta Hai' dialogue alongside her professional team, which included

Neena Gupta shows her culinary skills, gives Punjabi twist to a popular South Indian dish

Veteran actress Neena Gupta gave a glimpse of her culinary skills as she whipped up a delicious bowl of vegetable uttapam in her kitchen.

Adding her own Punjabi twist to the traditional South Indian dish, the 'Badhai Ho' actress turned the simple dish into a flavorful treat. On Wednesday, Neena took to her Instagram handle and posted a video of her making crispy vegetable uttapams in the kitchen. She demonstrated the entire process step by step, showing how she prepared the upma from scratch.

For the tadka, Neena Gupta used classic Indian spices like mustard seeds, curry leaves, cinnamon, and red chilli. In the video, she was later seen enjoying the freshly made upma, relishing every bite of her home-made creation. For the caption, the Metro in Dimple actress simply wrote, 'Thank you, my friend for this recipe.'

This isn't the first time Neena Gupta has showcased her cooking skills. The actress has previously shared several videos of herself preparing different dishes at home. Known for being active on Instagram, she often shares updates about both her personal and professional life.

Recently, the 66-year-old actress announced the release date of her upcoming film 'Vadh 2'. The film, which also stars Sanjay Mishra, is slated for a theatrical release on February 6, 2026. Written and directed by Jaspal Singh Sandhu, 'Vadh 2' serves as a spiritual successor to the original, delving into complex human emotions and moral dilemmas through a brand-new set of characters.



Speaking about the film, director Jaspal Singh Sandhu shared in a statement, 'I am thrilled to share that Vadh 2 releases in theatres nationwide on 6th February 2026. We've poured our hearts into crafting a story that is gripping and thought-provoking. I'm grateful to Luv and Ankur for believing in the script. I can't wait for audiences to experience it - see you at the movies as the saga continues!'

Sunny Leone shares why she's beyond excited for Halloween

Actress Sunny Leone is ready to dive into the eerie excitement of Halloween 2025 with her trademark enthusiasm and creativity. Known for her fun-loving personality and flair for celebrations, the Jism 2 and Ragni MMS 2 star has once again captured fans' attention by revealing her elaborate preparations for this year's spooky festivities.

Taking to Instagram, Sunny shared a cheerful video expressing her boundless love for Halloween, calling it one of her top three favourite holidays - alongside Christmas and Thanksgiving. Dressed casually and surrounded by glimpses of her home decorations, she spoke animatedly about how much joy she derives from transforming her home into a playful haunted space each year.

'So can I tell you guys how much I love Halloween? Like, it's one of my favourite holidays of the year and I love it so much,' she said in the video. 'I would rather have a Halloween party - the other one is Christmas and Thanksgiving - than any other party of the year. I've been decorating all week. And tonight is DIY. I'm making some headstones and a very, very naughty cross. I can't wait for Halloween, guys, I'm so excited.'

Sunny also revealed that this year's celebration feels particularly special because her children, for the first time, are equally excited about hav-



ing a truly spooky Halloween. 'My children finally want a scary Halloween. I have been waiting so long, years and years, and now I get to have a little fun and scare them,' she added with a laugh, clearly relishing the thought of bringing her family into the Halloween spirit.

In her caption, the actress wrote, 'Halloween is coming and I am beyond excited this year for a very, very scary occasion where the monsters, ghosts and ghouls come out to play! Lol!'. The post quickly gained traction online, with fans praising her infectious energy and creativity.

Sources close to the actress revealed that Sunny has been personally designing many of her Halloween decorations this year, focusing on a mix of spooky and humorous themes. Her setup reportedly includes handcrafted tombstones, eerie lighting, and playful props that strike a balance between fright and fun.

Halloween, observed annually on October 31, is one of the most celebrated festivals in the United States and has gained growing popularity in India in recent years. The day is known for its costumes, pumpkin carvings, haunted house parties, and trick-or-treat traditions.

Sunny Leone's enthusiasm has become a highlight of the festival for her fans, who eagerly await glimpses of her costumes and decorations every year.

Ssanjay Gagnani, wife Poonam collaborate for the first time after marriage for project

Actor Ssanjay Gagnani and his wife Poonam Preet are all set to collaborate for the very first time after their marriage in their upcoming music video titled Piya Ji.

Speaking about the essence of the video and what they hope audiences will notice most, the couple shared: 'The smaller, unscripted moments - the smiles, the tears, the family laughter. Those are the true essence of our love story.'

The music video is composed by music composer Yash Pathak, who has previously worked with music legends A. R. Rahman and Sachin-Jigar, and sung by the talented Divya Kumar. The song beautifully brings together melody and memories, where every frame captures the purity of real emotions rather than staged perfection.

Describing their journey from wedding to Piya Ji, they express the depth of their bond in a single word. Poonam said: 'Timeless. Because love, when it's real, doesn't fade - it only finds new ways to express itself.' Asked if seeing their relationship celebrated through music made them feel more connected, both agreed it was an emotional experience. They said: 'Watching our love immortalized through music reminded us how deeply we con-



nected. It made us relive every emotion and every promise all over again.' The couple also had heartfelt words for the famous music composer Yash Pathak, praising his emotional vision and storytelling. They recall 'Working with Yash was wonderful - he has such an emotional and artistic vision. When he told us he wanted to use our real wedding footage, we were honestly taken aback. But the way he wove it into a story so gracefully, we knew it had to happen. He captured our essence, not just our visuals.'



Gill's 126 and Pant's 81 power India to 475/6 against Afghanistan at lunch on Day 2

New Delhi, June 7: India tightened their grip on the one-off Test against Afghanistan as skipper Shubman Gill converted his overnight century into a commanding 126, while Rishabh Pant played a fluent knock of 81 to steer the hosts to 475/6 at lunch on day two. Although Afghanistan enjoyed a better session by claiming three wickets with the second new ball, the visitors were left to rue two costly missed review opportunities that could have removed both Gill and Pant much earlier. Their inability to use DRS effectively allowed India to build on an already dominant position. Gill, who resumed unbeaten on 103, looked in complete control as he extended his innings to 126 from 177 deliveries before pacers



Mohammad Saleem Safi finally ended his stay with a fiery spell that extracted pace and movement. Pant, meanwhile, blended caution with aggression in his 81 off 121 balls before becoming Hashmatullah Shahidi's maiden Test wicket. At the lunch break, Washington Sundar (14 not out) and debutant Manav Suhan (9 not out) were at the crease after ensuring India suffered no further

setbacks. The hosts added 107 runs in the morning session and remain well placed to post a massive first-innings total. Keeper Afsar Zafar endured a difficult time, unable to convince Shahidi to take the crucial DRS calls that might have changed the complexion of the innings. Safi was the standout bowler, claiming Gill and Dhruv Jurel in quick succession.

'Very happy for Shreyas': Suryakumar Yadav reacts to Iyer becoming India's new T20I captain

New Delhi, June 7: Hours after being replaced as India's T20I captain, Suryakumar Yadav publicly backed his successor Shreyas Iyer, saying he was "very, very, very happy" for his long-time Mumbai teammate and calling the appointment a proud moment for Mumbai cricket. The two shared a warm hug ahead of a T20 Mumbai League fixture on Saturday, where Suryakumar captained Triumph Knights MNE and Shreyas featured for SoBo Mumbai Falcons as an impact substitute. Speaking at the toss, Suryakumar brushed aside any speculation over the captaincy change and congratulated Shreyas on taking charge of the Indian T20I side.



"As you said, so many things are happening, but obviously very, very happy for Shreyas as he's getting to lead the T20 Indian team. We played a lot of cricket together in Bombay. The most important thing, what I felt, is that three back-to-back Mumbai captains are going to lead T20s for India. I think it's a very proud moment, and everyone needs to celebrate that," Suryakumar said. The remarks were Suryakumar's

first public reaction after the BCCI announced a major leadership reshuffle, naming Shreyas as India's new T20I captain. Chief selector Ajit Agarkar acknowledged that replacing Suryakumar was a difficult decision, particular-

ly after he led India to the T20 World Cup title earlier this year. However, the selectors opted for a new leadership direction ahead of the next World Cup cycle, citing Shreyas' leadership qualities and consistent performances across formats. Earlier in the day, Suryakumar also extended his support to the Indian squad through social media, sharing a picture of the team on his Instagram story with the message: "Wishing this highly skilled group all the best for challenges ahead." The 35-year-old also congratulated teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi on his maiden India call-up, writing: "You have earned it and how. Super excited to follow your journey." While his stint as India's T20I captain has come to an end, Suryakumar's public response reflected support for Shreyas' new role and encouragement for the next generation of Indian cricketers.

Neymar drops retirement hint, calls 2026 World Cup his 'last dance'

New Delhi, June 7: Brazil superstar Neymar has dropped his strongest hint yet that the 2026 FIFA World Cup could mark the end of his international career, describing the tournament as "the last dance" while continuing his recovery from a series of injury setbacks. The 34-year-old forward made the remark in the comments section of a FIFA social media post that celebrated his journey with the Brazilian team. The post featured images from different stages of Neymar's career alongside the caption, "We've watched him grow up." Responding to it, the Santos attacker wrote simply: "The last dance," a phrase famously associated with NBA legend Michael Jordan's final season with



the Chicago Bulls in 1997-98, according to Xinhua. Brazil will make a record-extending 23rd FIFA World Cup appearance next year, remaining the only nation to have qualified for every edition of football's biggest tournament. The 2026 competition, beginning next year,

will be hosted jointly by Canada, Mexico and the United States, the first World Cup to be staged across three countries. Neymar is currently undergoing intensive rehabilitation as he aims to be fit for the tournament after a difficult period plagued by injuries. Brazil's all-time leading scorer has netted 79 goals in 128 international appearances, but he has not represented the Selecao since suffering a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) during a World Cup qualifier against Uruguay in October 2023. His recovery has been interrupted by further fitness issues, with the latest, a calf strain, raising doubts over his availability for Brazil's opening match against Morocco on June 13. Neymar's World Cup journey began with his debut at the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, where he announced himself by scoring his first international goal just 28 minutes into a 2-0 victory over the United States. He carried the hopes of an entire nation at the 2014

World Cup on home soil before a serious back injury against Colombia in the quarter-finals ended his campaign. Two years later, he delivered redemption by captaining Brazil to Olympic gold at Rio 2016, converting the decisive penalty in the final at the Maracana Stadium. The 2018 World Cup was another challenging chapter, as Neymar returned from injury but was unable to inspire Brazil beyond the quarter-finals. In 2023, the former Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain star left European football to join Saudi Arabian club Al Hilal. However, after only two months, he suffered a serious knee injury that sidelined him for an extended period.

How Maja Chwalinska became the story of Roland Garros 2026

New Delhi, June 7: Amid the upsets and surprises that unfolded throughout the men's and women's draws, the tournament produced its own fairy-tale story in 24-year-old Polish tennis player Maja Chwalinska. Arriving with the modest goal of simply reaching the main draw, she defied expectations to reach her maiden Grand Slam final against world no. 8 Maria Andrea. Although she fell 6-3, 6-2 to the world no. 8 in the title clash, her fearless performances and remarkable underdog run won the admiration of tennis fans around the world. Chwalinska, who ranks 114 in the world, won her three qualifiers to make it into the main draw at Roland Garros for the first time and won nine straight matches and reached the women's singles final on Court Philippe-Chatrier. She is already a history maker, the first qualifier to ever reach a French Open championship match and only the second in Grand Slam Open Era history to do so. The Maja's Story Maja Chwalinska was born in Dabrowa Gornicza, an industrial city in southern



Poland. Her tennis journey began at the age of seven when she was spotted during a school recruitment program. She picked up a racquet and soon started training at a local sports and recreation center as part of their "Tennis Talent" campaign, where she honed her skills for the next 12 years. Known for her tricky, varied, and intelligent left-handed playing style, Chwalinska quickly emerged as one of Poland's brightest junior prospects. She formed a close bond and a highly successful doubles partnership with her childhood friend, Iga Swiatek.

Vaishali lifts WR Women's Chess Tour crown in Tokyo as brother Praggnanandhaa scripts history in Norway

New Delhi, June 7: It turned out to be a memorable day for Indian chess as R a m e s h b a b u Praggnanandhaa and his sister R. Vaishali scripted twin title-winning moments within hours of each other. After Praggnanandhaa became the first Indian to lift the Norway Chess crown, Vaishali clinched the opening event of the WR Women's Chess Tour in Tokyo, Japan. The 24-year-old Grandmaster produced a series of commanding performances in the eight-player rapid tournament, reinforcing India's growing dominance on the global chess stage. The victory also adds another major achievement to the career of the reigning Women's



World Championship challenger. Vaishali dominates the rapid event. Competing in the rapid format with a 15-minute time control and a 10-second increment, Vaishali outplayed a strong international field featuring former Women's World Champion Alexandra Kosteniuk, Kateryna Lagno, Antoaneta Stefanova, Anna Sargysyan, Irine Sukandar, Alina Nurmam, and Azum Sakai. She defeated IM Alina Nurmam of Kazakhstan 1.5-0.5 in the final after winning the opening game and drawing the second to seal the title. Vaishali's road to the championship was equally impressive. She beat former Women's World Champion Alexandra Kosteniuk 1.5-0.5 in the semifinals.

India's new T20I captain Shreyas Iyer stars with 61 as SOBO Mumbai Falcons beat Triumph Knights

New Delhi, June 7: Fresh off being named India's new T20I captain, Shreyas Iyer celebrated the milestone with the bat, smashing a scintillating 61 off just 36 deliveries to power SOBO Mumbai Falcons to a commanding five-wicket victory over Triumph Knights Mumbai North East in a marquee Nuvama Private T20 Mumbai League 2026 clash at the Wankhede Stadium. The high-profile contest brought together three of Mumbai cricket's biggest stars on one stage—World Cup-winning captain Rishi Sharma and Suryakumar Yadav, along with India's newly-appointed T20I skipper Iyer. Rohit, the face of the league, was present for the toss and watched the action unfold before a packed crowd. With 21,708 spectators filling the iconic Wankhede, the encounter showcased the depth of Mumbai's



cricketing talent and the growing stature of the franchise-based domestic T20 competition. The crowd was treated to an entertaining contest featuring some of India's biggest names. Chasing 148, the Falcons were rocked early after losing both openers with 41 runs on the board. Introduced as an Impact Player, Iyer immediately seized control of the chase, coun-

terattacking with effortless stroke-play and stitching together a crucial partnership that shifted the momentum firmly in his side's favour. The right-hander stitched together a 33-run stand with Gautam Waghele for the third wicket before unleashing an array of elegant strokes against the Knights' attack. He brought up his half-century in style with a tower-

ing six over deep midwicket and continued to dominate the bowling, putting the Falcons firmly on course for victory. Parikshit Valsangkar eventually ended Shreyas' enterprising knock, which featured five fours and four sixes, but by then the result was all but sealed. Akash Parkar applied the finishing touch with a six as the Falcons completed the chase with 20 balls to spare. Earlier, Suryakumar starred with the willow, scoring a fluent 48 off 24 deliveries, laced with three fours and four sixes. The T20 World Cup-winning captain helped the Knights recover from the early setbacks with a 56-run partnership with the in-form Nutan Goel (34). However, the Falcons' bowlers tightened the screws after the stand was broken, preventing the Knights from building further momentum.

SAFF Women's Championship: India end seven-year wait, beat Bangladesh 3-1 to win

New Delhi, June 7: India ended a seven-year wait to reclaim the SAFF Women's Championship crown, defeating defending champions Bangladesh 3-1 in a high-intensity final at the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Margao on Saturday to lift a record-extending sixth title. The victory marked the Blue Tigresses' return to the top of South Asian football after missing out on the trophy in the last two editions, while also ending Bangladesh's bid for a historic third consecutive championship. The hosts capped a dominant campaign by winning all four of their matches, scoring 18 goals and conceding



just once throughout the tournament. Pyari Xaxa opened the scoring for India in the 42nd minute, but Bangladesh hit back through Ritu Porna Chakma in first-half stoppage time. India responded immediately after the restart as Sanfida Nongrum headed home just 40 seconds into the second half before substitute Lynda Kom Sarto sealed the victory with an 82nd-minute strike. As the final whistled blew, celebrations erupted across the stadium with players and support staff embracing after a long-awaited trophy. The moment was particularly emotional for veteran Dangmei Grace, who

brought the curtain down her international career by helping India lift the trophy. The 95-cap international, who made her debut in 2013, signed off with her third SAFF Women's Championship title. Sanfida Nongrum, one of India's standout performers throughout the tournament, once again delivered on the big stage after also scoring in the semifinal. She dropped to her knees in celebration before sharing an

emotional embrace with Grace, symbolising a memorable night that restored India to the summit of South Asian women's football. The final had all the ingredients expected from a meeting between the region's

two strongest sides. Bangladesh arrived as defending champions, while India were chasing a title that had eluded them for the last two editions. Manisha Kalyan made her first start of the tournament as India looked to make an early statement. The hosts enjoyed much of the possession during the opening stages and created the better opportunities. Sanfida Nongrum was first to threaten, trying her luck from a difficult angle before sending her effort over the bar. India came even closer in the 16th minute when Bangladesh goalkeeper Mile Akter failed to deal with a long ball from Nirmla Devi

Phanjobam. The loose ball fell kindly for Astam Oran, but the defender could not keep her effort on target. Bangladesh, however, remained dangerous. Ritu Porna Chakma nearly repeated her semi-final heroics against Nepal in the 23rd minute, curling a corner directly towards goal that drifted just over the crossbar. Crispin Chhetri's side continued to push forward. Aveka Singh headed narrowly wide from a Nirmala cross before Mile Akter produced an excellent save to deny Manisha Kalyan's powerful half-volley in the 38th minute. The breakthrough finally arrived three minutes before half-time. Pyari Xaxa showed quick feet inside the penalty area before setting away a shot. Suvoiri Akter attempted to block the effort, but the deflection looped over the advancing Mile Akter and into the net. The goal appeared to have given India control heading into the interval, but Bangladesh responded immediately. Deep into first-half stoppage time, Ritu Porna Chakma found space down the left and drove a low effort into the far corner beyond Panthoi Chanu Elangbam. It was the first goal India had conceded in the tournament and ensured the sides went into the break level at 1-1.



Delhi CM and state BJP chief inaugurate Rs 138-crore sewer project for Karawal Nagar

New Delhi, June 7: Following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is observing a Seva Samarpan Pakhwada (Fortnight of Service and Dedication) from World Environment Day until International Yoga Day on June 21. As part of this campaign, the Delhi BJP has begun public outreach programmes across all 70 Delhi Assembly constituencies to mark the completion of 12 years of the Narendra Modi-led Central Government. At an event in Karawal Nagar on Sunday, state BJP chief Harsh Malhotra said it was a matter of pride that, together with Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, the government launched a Rs138-crore sewer development project for Karawal Nagar and sub-



stantially improved the cleanliness of the Yamuna River stretch between Sonia Vihar and Wazirabad. CM Gupta stated that Karawal Nagar had long struggled with issues related to drainage, sewerage, drinking water supply, and basic infrastructure. The Delhi government is committed to providing permanent solutions to these

and several other localities. Simultaneously, old water pipelines are being replaced, aging sewer systems are being cleaned using mechanized methods, and efforts are underway to improve drinking water supply. She announced that the government would seriously pursue the widening and beautifying the road from Signature Bridge to the Punjab Road and would coordinate with relevant agencies and legal authorities to move the project forward. Additionally, the government is exploring the possibility of developing a modern and attractive riverfront along the Yamuna in Sonia Vihar, a project that could significantly boost regional development and tourism.

West Bengal set to join Ayushman Bharat Scheme, becoming 36th State/UT to implement PM-JAY

New Delhi, June 7: In a significant step towards universal health coverage, the West Bengal government is set to join the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) on Monday, becoming the 36th state or Union Territory to implement the world's largest publicly funded health assurance scheme. According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the implementation of the scheme in the state will be signed at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi. The agreement will be executed between the National Health Authority (NHA),



under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, and the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of West Bengal. The MoU described the development as a major milestone in India's journey towards ensuring equitable and accessible healthcare for all citizens. The MoU signing ceremony will be

presided over by Union Health and Family Welfare Minister JP Nadda. Among those expected to be present are West Bengal Chief Minister Suvedu Adhikari, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Ayush Prataprao Jadhav, Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare and Chemicals and Fertilisers Anupriya Patel, Union Health Secretary Punya Salita. Srivastava, West Bengal Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Agarwal, and other senior officials from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the National Health Authority and the Government of West Bengal.

CBI raids IAS officers' premises in Rs 661 crore Haryana fund diversion probe

Chandigarh, June 7: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has carried out searches at multiple locations linked to senior Haryana cadre officers and a private consultancy firm as part of its ongoing investigation into the alleged diversion of Rs 661 crore in government funds parked in bank accounts of several Haryana government departments and departments under the Chandigarh administration. Official sources said the agency conducted simultaneous searches at six locations across Chandigarh, Panchkula, Delhi-NCR and Noida. The raids were carried out at premises linked



to IAS officers Pankaj Agarwal, Mohammad Shayin and Pradeep Kumar, IFS officer Navneet Kumar Srivastava, as well as Noida-based Vipam Consultancy Private Limited and its director. During the searches, investigators seized documents, mobile phones, laptops and



other electronic devices for examination. The action forms part of a wider probe into alleged financial irregularities involving government funds deposited in bank accounts linked to multiple departments. According to preliminary findings, investigating agency suspects that certain bank accounts were

opened and operated in a manner that facilitated the transfer of government money to other accounts. Investigators are examining whether any public servants or private entities derived financial benefits from the transactions and whether proper approvals were obtained before the movement of funds. The case relates to an alleged banking fraud involving funds belonging to Haryana government departments. The amount under scrutiny, initially estimated at around Rs 560 crore, is now stated to have risen to Rs 661 crore as the investigation progressed. The matter was first examined by the Haryana Anti-

Why Delhi still needs Capt: The Amarinder factor in Punjab BJP's changing power equations

New Delhi, June 7: When former Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh walked into New Delhi this week to meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah and J.P. Nadda, the official statements were brief and predictable. Punjab-related issues were discussed, both sides said. But in politics, the timing of a meeting often matters more than the contents of a press release. Capt Amarinder Singh's meetings with the BJP's top leadership came at a moment when the Punjab unit of the party is witnessing unusual turbulence following the appointment of Kewal Singh Dhillon as state president. The development has sparked a large conversation in political circles, not merely about organisational appointments, but about who really matters in the Punjab BJP and whether the party is struggling to

balance old influence with new ambitions. Unlike many senior leaders who prefer private negotiations, Amarinder Singh publicly questioned the appointment of Kewal Singh Dhillon. The former chief minister made it clear that he was neither consulted nor convinced. More significantly, he questioned whether Dhillon could deliver what the BJP expects in Punjab ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections. Those remarks carried weight because they

Public participation key to realising Viksit Bharat Vision, says Om Birla



New Delhi, June 7: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Sunday underscored the importance of collective efforts, innovation and citizen participation in achieving the vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047", asserting that entrepreneurship and nation-building must move forward together to ensure inclusive and sustainable development. Addressing the national convale of the Maheshwari community in New Delhi, Birla praised the community's long-standing contributions to society through service, ethical conduct and social responsibility. He described the Maheshwari community as one with a rich and inspiring legacy rooted in selfless service and public welfare. Drawing a comparison with Lord Mahesh, Birla

said, "Just as Lord Mahesh alleviated the suffering of the world by consuming poison, the Maheshwari community is similarly engaged in the field of social service." He noted that the community's work in education, healthcare and public service has played a significant role in strengthening the foundations of a developed India. The Speaker emphasized that economic success should be measured not only by wealth generation but also by its positive impact on society. "The true measure of success is not merely wealth creation, but bringing about positive change in society and creating value," he said. Highlighting the importance of youth in India's development journey, Birla said educated, skilled and technologically empow-

ered young people represent the nation's greatest asset. He added that India's demographic advantage, combined with innovation and entrepreneurship, would be instrumental in transforming the country into a developed nation by 2047. Referring to the government's vision of an "Atmanirbhar Bharat", Birla said the initiative is envisaging small and medium enterprises as well as innovation-driven industries, creating new opportunities for growth, employment and economic transformation. He stressed that development can be considered meaningful only when its benefits reach every section of society, particularly the most vulnerable. Birla called for ensuring that every citizen becomes an active stakeholder in the

country's progress and that growth remains inclusive and equitable. Expressing optimism about India's future, the Lok Sabha Speaker said that the ideals of unity, service and "Nation First" would guide the country towards fulfilling its aspiration of becoming a developed nation by the centenary year of Independence. The vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047"

Kerala Minister's brother-in-law resigns amid nepotism row

New Delhi, June 7: Following a political controversy, Benny Thomas, the brother-in-law of Kerala Electricity and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Sunny Joseph, has resigned from his post as Additional Private Secretary to the Minister. The resignation letter was submitted to Chief Minister V.D. Sahebhan. Benny Thomas, who is married to Minister Sunny Joseph's sister and serves as the General Secretary of the Kannur District Congress Committee (DCC), had recently been appointed as the Minister's Additional Private Secretary. The opposition CPI(M) and its youth

wing, the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI), strongly criticized the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) government over the appointment. They accused the Minister of blatant nepotism and pointed to what they described as hypocrisy, noting that the UDF had previously campaigned against similar appointments of relatives during the former Left Democratic Front (LDF) government. The appointment also sparked discontent within Congress circles. Sharp criticism was reportedly voiced during a recent Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) executive meeting.

Gehlot urges Congress unity, tells leaders: 'Don't shorten my line, draw a bigger one'

New Delhi, June 7: Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Sunday called for unity among Congress leaders, urging them to set aside rivalries and differences in view of the challenges facing the country. Speaking to reporters here, Gehlot clarified that he is no longer pursuing any position or office within the party. "Now I am not seeking any post or position. I am an extremely satisfied politician who has achieved everything. Becoming the Chief Minister of Rajasthan three times is no ordinary achievement," he said. However, he added that if any responsibility were to come to him naturally, it would be a different matter. "I would never do anything wrong to secure any post," the senior Congress leader remarked. Expressing con-



cern over factionalism within the party, Gehlot said, "Our leaders are unable to understand my sentiments. I tell them, 'Don't shorten my line; instead, draw a line bigger than mine.' Nobody knows who will become Chief Minister in the future and who will not. Therefore, we must remain united and work together for the party."

and truth. Addressing references to former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot, Gehlot said, "You should not cause further damage to Sachin Pilot. A great deal of damage has already been done. I hear all these narratives, but whom should I complain to? Everyone presents a different version." Referring to the political developments of September 25, 2022, when Congress MLAs boycotted a meeting of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP), Gehlot rejected the characterization of the episode as a revolt against the party high command. "Many people who did not know the facts portrayed it as a rebellion against the high command. That is not correct. There was no revolt against the high command," he said. He argued that the MLAs who opposed a leadership

change believed they had helped save the Congress government and therefore wanted the next Chief Minister to be chosen from among those who had stood by the party. "Even then, as the CLP leader, I went to Sonia Gandhi and apologised for the unpleasant situation that arose under my leadership," he said. Gehlot also dismissed suggestions that he had been unwilling to relinquish the Chief Minister's post or accept the position of Congress president. "How could I think that way? Am I a novice who does not understand the legacy and historic significance of the post of Congress president?" he asked. He alleged that a file, an "infectious impression had been created against his intentions. "Such a misunderstanding was the result of a serious conspiracy," Gehlot said.



Reliance Infrastructure urge SEBI, market exchanges to review ASM framework linked to insolvency

New Delhi, June 7
Reliance Infrastructure has urged Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) to review the Additional Surveillance Measure (ASM) framework linked to insolvency proceedings, citing their adverse impact on its more than 7 lakh public shareholders, and emphasizing the need to ensure that market mechanisms continue to facilitate fair price discovery and maintain investor confidence. It highlighted that the ASM framework was triggered despite the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) staying both the insolvency administration order and the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) against the company.



In its representation, Reliance Infrastructure has highlighted that the current framework, which permits trading only once a week within a narrow 2% price band, results in price movements that are largely mechanical and predictable. It said such restrictions may not adequately reflect prevailing business fundamentals, operational performance or long-term value creation potential. Reliance Infrastructure shares are otherwise actively and widely traded in the market, reflecting sustained investor participation and liquidity. The company has highlighted that the continuation of such anomalous and artificial trading restrictions is counterproductive to the interests of 7 lakh retail and small public shareholders, and undermines the efficient functioning of the market. The company has further submitted that the impact of these restrictions falls disproportionately on its public shareholders. During lower-circuit phases, shareholders are often unable to exit their investments at a reasonable market price, while the value of their holdings erodes by a near-fixed percentage each week. Reliance Infrastructure has submitted that the once-a-week trading framework constrains efficient market price discovery and may inadvertently contribute to the erosion of shareholder value.

India's electronics manufacturing at inflection point amid import dependence, rising demand and policy interventions

New Delhi, Jun 7:
India's consumer electronics manufacturing sector is entering a critical phase of growth as rising domestic demand, government-backed manufacturing initiatives and stable monetary policy create new opportunities, even as the industry remains vulnerable to global supply-chain disruptions and import dependence. The challenges facing the sector were underscored by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its June 2026 Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting, which highlighted risks arising from elevated crude oil prices, geopolitical tensions in West Asia and persistent global supply-chain uncertainties. These factors, the central bank warned, could contribute to imported inflation and create headwinds for industries dependent on overseas sourcing. For India's consumer electronics industry, the concerns are particularly significant as a large share of critical components-including semiconductors, display panels, memory chips, sensors and batteries-continue to be imported. Industry experts say disruptions in global trade routes, currency fluctuations and rising freight costs can have a direct impact on production expenses, inventory management and pricing strategies. At the same time, the RBI's decision to keep the repo rate unchanged at 5.25



and electronic components through strategic investments, technology partnerships and production-linked incentives. Reducing import dependence will not only improve supply-chain resilience but also shield manufacturers from external shocks such as currency volatility and geopolitical disruptions." Industry observers note that while India has emerged as one of the world's fastest-growing electronics markets, the country's ambition of becoming a global manufacturing hub will require significant investments in domestic component production and technological capabilities. Meanwhile, demand from Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities is increasingly becoming a major growth driver for the consumer electronics market. Rising digital adoption, expanding internet penetration and improving purchasing power have led to growing sales of smartphones, televisions and household appliances in smaller cities and towns. However, industry executives point out that growth remains uneven. Demand in these markets continues to be concentrated in entry-level and budget product categories due to income disparities and limited access to affordable financing. Inadequate retail penetration, weak after-sales service infrastructure and lower awareness of premium products also continue to constrain market expansion in several regions. Varin Agarwal, Chief Snapper, SnapUp, said, "To unlock the full potential of Tier-2 and Tier-3 consumption, manufacturers and policymakers need to deepen financing penetration through easy EMI options, digital lending platforms and partnerships with fintech providers

PM SVANidhi transitioned into institutional platform for financial inclusion: PNB Chief

New Delhi, Jun 7
The PM SVANidhi (Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi) scheme has successfully transitioned into an extended institutional platform for financial inclusion in India, said Ashok Chandra, MD & CEO, Punjab National Bank. "The primary utility of PM SVANidhi lies in its brilliant dismantling of the barriers to formal credit for informal micro-entrepreneurs. Historically, street vendors were trapped in vicious cycles of high-interest debt from informal moneylenders. PM SVANidhi shattered this paradigm by providing collateral-free working capital loans. Operated as a progressive lending ladder, it incentivizes fiscal discipline," Chandra said. "Initially, when the



scheme was launched, vendors began with a first tranche of up to Rs 10,000, and upon timely repayment, seamlessly graduate to a second tranche of up to Rs 20,000, and a third of up to Rs 50,000. Backed by a 7 per cent per annum interest subvention credit-quarantee to the borrowers' accounts, the scheme makes formal credit incredibly affordable," he added. As the scheme marked its sixth anniversary

on 1st June, 2026, its massive scale, recent structural upgrades, and holistic socio-economic impact offer a definitive blueprint for empowering the bottom of the pyramid, the PNB chief said. He mentioned that the overwhelming success of the program is vividly reflected in its metrics. Demonstrating the massive scale of India's financial inclusion drive, 75.69 lakh micro-entrepreneurs have been successfully tapped into PM SVANidhi loans as of 29th May 2026, out of which 74.2 per cent are digitally active entrepreneurs. "This massive outreach has systematically democratized banking, driving financial literacy among populations that were previously unbanked. By bringing millions into the formal banking fold, the scheme has enabled street vendors to build official credit scores for the very first time, opening doors to broader institutional financial products in the future," Chandra said. Beyond mere cash flow, PM SVANidhi has served as a powerful engine for digital transformation and social equity. To drive India's digital economy, the scheme offers up to Rs 1,600 in annual cashbacks to vendors who integrate UPI and digital payment mechanisms into their daily transactions. This has successfully turned millions of roadside stalls into digitally savvy micro-businesses. Furthermore, its demographic data highlights its role in uplifting vulnerable populations: approximately 69 per cent of the beneficiaries belong to marginalized communities, including OBCs/S/CST categories, alongside a massive, empowering representation of women entrepreneurs, which accounted for around 45 per cent as per official data available. The government of India recently restructured and extended the scheme until March 31, 2030, scaling up its total financial outlay to Rs 7,332 crore with an ambitious new target of reaching 1.15 crore beneficiaries.

India's Ease of Doing Business reforms drive investor confidence, digital transformation

NEW DELHI, JUN 7:
India's sweeping reforms in governance, regulation and digital infrastructure have significantly strengthened the country's business ecosystem, making it easier to start, operate and expand businesses while boosting investor confidence and global competitiveness. According to a government review released on Saturday, sustained efforts to simplify regulations, reduce compliance burdens and digitise public services have transformed India's business landscape over the past decade. The reforms have helped improve transparency, efficiency and ease of access to markets, credit and government services for entrepreneurs, startups and businesses of all sizes. The impact of these measures is reflected in India's rise in global rankings. The country improved its position in the World Bank's Doing Business Report from

142nd in 2014 to 63rd in 2019. India has also strengthened its standing in the IMD World Competitiveness Ranking, moving up from 43rd place in 2021 to 41st in 2025. A major pillar of the reform agenda has been the promotion of entrepreneurship. Since the launch of the Startup India initiative in 2016, the number of recognised startups has surged from just 502 to over 2.23 lakh by March 2026, generating more than 23.3 lakh direct jobs. Nearly half of these startups have at least one woman director or partner, underlining the growing inclusivity of India's startup ecosystem. Business registration has also become significantly easier through digital platforms such as the SPiCE system and MCA21 Version 3, which have streamlined company incorporation and compliance processes. For micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), the Udyam Registration Portal has enabled paperless and self-declaration-based registration, helping millions of enterprises enter the formal economy. Property registration and land governance have undergone a digital overhaul through the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme. More than 97 per cent of cadastral maps have been digitised, while over 36 crore land parcels have been assigned a Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN), enhancing transparency and reducing disputes. The government has also focused on reducing procedural hurdles in obtaining business permits and clearances. The National Single Window System now integrates approvals across multiple central and state departments, while the PARIVESH portal has substantially reduced the time required.

RBI's Reform Push May Attract USD 40 bn Capital Inflows, Support Rupee: SBI Report

New Delhi, Jun 7
The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) decision to keep key interest rates unchanged while unveiling a series of measures to attract foreign capital could pave the way for inflows of at least USD 40 billion, strengthen the rupee and lower borrowing costs, according to a report by the State Bank of India (SBI). The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), in its latest review, unanimously decided to maintain the repo rate at 5.25 per cent and retain its neutral stance despite growing global uncertainties. At the same time, the central bank introduced a set of reforms aimed at boosting foreign participation in India's financial markets and improving the country's external sector resilience. SBI Research, in its Ecowrap report, said the RBI's latest policy reflects a careful balancing of in-

flation concerns and growth priorities. While the central bank revised its FY27 growth projection downward by 50 basis points to 6.6 per cent, it raised its inflation forecast by 50 basis points to 5.1 per cent amid concerns over global commodity prices, supply-chain disruptions, weather-related uncertainties and the possibility of El Nino conditions affecting agricultural output. The report noted that the policy language indicated greater vigilance towards inflation and exchange-rate stability. According to SBI, the RBI's emphasis that movements in the rupee are not always aligned with economic fundamentals sends a strong signal against speculative pressures in the currency market. It said such an approach is intended to reinforce confidence and prevent unnecessary volatility in the foreign exchange mar-

ket. Among the most significant measures announced by the RBI is the inclusion of newly issued 15-year, 30-year and 40-year government securities under the Fully Accessible Route (FAR), allowing foreign portfolio investors unrestricted access to these instruments. The SBI said the move, combined with tax incentives widely available by the government, is likely to make Indian government bonds significantly more attractive to global investors. The report observed that foreign investor participation under FAR remains relatively low, with only a small portion of the available limit currently utilized. With substantial investment headroom available, SBI believes the reforms could lead to a sizeable increase in foreign investment in the government securities market. According to the report, greater foreign participation would increase demand for government bonds, improve liquidity in long-term securities, reduce borrowing costs for the government, and provide support to the rupee. It could also strengthen India's case for wider inclusion in global bond indices, further broadening the investor base. SBI estimated that the tax exemptions available to foreign investors could translate into

benefits worth between Rs 4,500 crore and Rs 6,000 crore, enhancing post-tax returns and further encouraging investment in Indian debt markets. The report said the cumulative impact of the bond market reforms, incentives for overseas borrowing and measures to attract foreign currency deposits could result in capital inflows exceeding USD 40 billion. Such inflows, it added, could help stabilize the rupee and potentially pull it back toward the 92-93 per dollar range. The RBI has also announced concessional foreign exchange swap facilities to encourage external commercial borrowings (ECBs) by public sector undertakings until September 30. The SBI said the initiative is particularly significant as ECB inflows declined sharply in FY26. By lowering the effective cost of overseas borrowing, the scheme is expected to encourage public sector entities to access international capital markets more aggressively while reducing pressure on domestic funding channels. Another key measure relates to Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank), or FCNR(B), deposits. The SBI said the RBI's decision to bear hedging costs and certain regulatory expenses will allow banks to offer more attractive returns to non-resident Indians. The report suggested that these incentives could lead to substantial foreign currency inflows, potentially surpassing the USD 34 billion mobilized during the FCNR(B) deposit drive of 2013. The report also welcomed the RBI's decision to restore the time limit for realization and repatriation of export proceeds to nine months from the temporary 15-month window that had been introduced during the pandemic. Faster realization of export earnings is expected to improve foreign exchange availability and strengthen external sector liquidity. On the domestic front, SBI highlighted that credit growth has remained robust despite global headwinds. Bank credit expanded by 16.2 per cent year-on-year as of mid-May 2026, driven by strong lending to retail borrowers.

Indian households buy cooking gas much cheaper than neighbouring countries, advanced economies: Petroleum Ministry

New Delhi, Jun 7
Indian households continue to purchase cooking gas at prices significantly lower than those paid by households in neighbouring countries and far below those in advanced economies such as the United States, Australia, and Canada, the Ministry of Petroleum said on Sunday. A beneficiary of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) pays an effective



price of Rs 642 for a 14.2 kg LPG cylinder, while a general consumer in Delhi pays Rs 942, compared with the

current supply cost of over Rs 1,600 per cylinder, the ministry said. The ministry's statement comes at a time when the government has increased domestic LPG prices by Rs 29 per cylinder, marking the second hike in three months. "The government continues to moderate the effective price paid by consumers for domestic LPG. Any household can purchase as many cylinders as it requires at Rs 942. A PMUY beneficiary additionally receives a direct benefit transfer of Rs 300 per cylinder on the first four refills each year, which broadly corresponds to the average annual consumption of a typical Ujjwala household. As a result, such beneficiaries pay an effective price of Rs 642 per cylinder on those refills. This support remains unchanged," the Petroleum Ministry said.

Market valuation of 7 of top-10 most-valued firms erode by Rs 1.25 tn

New Delhi, June 7
The combined market valuation of seven of the top-10 most-valued firms eroded by Rs 1.25 trillion in a week with the Reliance Industries took the biggest hit. The market valuation of Reliance Industries dropped Rs 39,718 crore to Rs 17,47,321.40 crore. HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and State Bank of India were the gainers while on the losing end were Reliance Industries, Bharti Airtel, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and Hindustan Unilever. ICICI Bank went up Rs 4,484.86 crore to Rs 9,05,074.77 crore and that of HDFC Bank climbed Rs 4,101.47

crore to Rs 11,50,743.31 crore. The mcap of State Bank of India jumped Rs 12,692.09 crore to Rs 9,02,523.63 crore. The market capitalisation (mcap) of LIC diminished Rs 14,610.74 crore to Rs 5,05,873.32 crore while Bajaj Finance lost Rs 9,681.36 crore from its mcap, which stood at Rs 5,53,580.49 crore. The valuation of Hindustan Unilever declined Rs 5,909.23 crore to Rs 4,98,301.31 crore. TCS faced an erosion of Rs 20,134.66 crore from its valuation, which stood at Rs 7,95,346.09 crore while Bharti Airtel's market valuation dipped Rs 18,736.04 crore to Rs 10,96,150.49 crore and that of Larsen & Toubro tumbled Rs 16,880.2 crore.



Jammu Division's Unique Initiative: Delay of Pooja Express ended by Building an 'Additional Rake', Now it will Reach Destination on Time

Jammu, 07 June 2026: Giving top priority to passenger convenience and train punctuality, Northern Railway, Jammu Division has once again proven its efficiency. With excellent coordination among various departments, the division has prepared an 'Additional Rake' and ended the delay of the long-delayed Pooja Express, i.e., Train No. 12413/12414. "Main Reason for Delay" Train No. 12414 was running late by 15 to 20 hours continuously due to traffic blocks and train regulation in Delhi Division. The primary maintenance of this train is done in Jammu, but due to persistent delays, improving its punctuality had become a big challenge. This delay was causing great inconvenience to passengers and was affecting the image of Railways.



Solution* To eliminate this problem at its root, Jammu Division made a practical and quick plan: 1. "Identification of Empty Rake": With the help of Jammu Division and Headquarters, a rake was prepared parallel to Pooja Express by including various coaches. 2. "Provision of Coaches": Coaches were arranged and made available as per the train's requirement. 3. "Construction of Additional

Rake": Through precise planning, efficient shunting and the process of adding/removing coaches, a new 'Additional Rake' was successfully prepared. "Excellent Result" Passengers directly benefited from Jammu Division's promptness. After getting the additional rake, Train No. 12414 has been running *from 07 June 2026 as per its scheduled time* today. This has completely removed the inconvenience caused to passengers and there has been a significant improvement in operational efficiency. Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Shri Uchit Singh said on this initiative, "Innovation, coordination and commitment can turn any operational challenge into an opportunity. Jammu Division is always committed to providing better, safe and timely service to passengers."

Rainfall a blessing of Yajna and divine order: Swami Ram Swarup

YOL (HIMACHAL PRADESH), JUNE 7: On the 57th day of the ongoing 78-day Yajna of the Four Vedas at Ved Mandir, Yol, Himachal Pradesh, Swami Ram Swarup Ji, Yogacharya, delivered an enlightening discourse to devotees based on Atharvaveda, Kanda 4. He explained the profound Vedic teachings concerning rainfall, the preservation of yajna, and the spiritual discipline of tapasya. Swami Ji stated that the Almighty to strengthen the clouds spread across the sky so that abundant rainfall may occur throughout the land. Such rainfall pro-



vides pure water, enables the growth of food grains, fruits, and other vegetation, and ultimately safeguards the lives of all living beings. He emphasized that God destroys human suffering through rain, as life is impossible without water. Explaining the symbolism used in the Atharvaveda, Swami Ji noted that the mantras describe frogs croaking loudly during the rainy season, comparing their voices to those of learned Brahmins reciting Vedic mantras. Just as Brahmins spend an entire year in seclusion studying the Vedas and later recite the sacred knowledge, frogs remain silent when water bodies dry up and begin croaking when the rains arrive. Through this comparison, the Vedas show the value of restraint, discipline, and dedicated spiritual practice. Swami Ji further explained that sincere seekers who spend long periods in solitude performing tapasya and observing spiritual vows attain qualities similar to those of enlightened Brahmins.

Human Rights Activist Om Prakash Khajuria likely to enter DDC poll fray in Jammu

Jammu, June 7: Renowned human rights activist and social worker Om Prakash Khajuria is likely to contest the upcoming District Development Council (DDC) elections in Jammu, according to growing discussions among local residents and political observers. Although no official announcement has been made so far, there is increasing speculation that Khajuria may enter the electoral arena. Sources close to him suggest that he has remained actively engaged with public issues and enjoys considerable goodwill among people across different sections of society. Khajuria had earlier been associated with the Aam Admi Party (AAP) but later distanced himself from the party due to certain differences. Despite



public grievances. Over the years, he has built a reputation for standing with people during difficult times and advocating for solutions to various local problems. His supporters argue that his participation in the elections would provide voters with an alternative focused on public service and grassroots development. Many residents are said to be encouraging him to enter the electoral field, viewing him as a candidate capable of effectively representing their concerns. Observers feel that Khajuria's entry could add a new dimension to the DDC polls, potentially influencing the electoral dynamics in the region. Several social activists and community members are also reportedly urging him to contest.

SHOWCASING THE SOUL OF THE JAMMU & KASHMIR : KUPWARA LEADS THE WAY TO BORDER TOURISM

Srinagar, 07 Jun 2026 : In a landmark initiative aimed at unlocking the immense tourism potential of North Kashmir and fostering community-led economic growth, a high-level Tourism Promotion Event was successfully organised today at the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Kupwara. The event brought together government officials, tourism stakeholders, entrepreneurs, industry representatives, and community leaders to collectively shape a vibrant and sustainable tourism ecosystem for the region. Organised by the District Administration Kupwara in collaboration with the Indian Army, the event marked the launch of two significant tourism initiatives: the "Shumali Kashmir" Tourism Portal and the North Kashmir Tourism Magazine. Developed and curated by the Indian Army, these platforms provide a comprehensive window into the region's breathtaking landscapes, rich cultural heritage, adventure opportunities, and unique visitor experiences. The portal and magazine showcase the unparalleled beauty of destinations such as Keran, Machhal, Karnah, Lolab, Gurez, Tangdhar, and Kupwara, offering travellers a single platform to explore the hidden treasures of North Kashmir. Designed to enhance accessibility and visibility, these initiatives are expected to attract a larger number of domestic and international



tourists while supporting sustainable tourism practices. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from representatives of the Tourism and Planning Departments, hoteliers, travel operators, homestay owners, transport associations, tourism entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders. Discussions focused on enhancing tourism infrastructure, strengthening partnerships, improving visitor experiences, and creating new opportunities for local communities. A key highlight of the programme was an exhibition showcasing locally developed products and enterprises nurtured through various Indian Army-supported initiatives. Visitors interacted with entrepreneurs representing Barkat Bistro, FLOWK, Hamukh Sheen Washing Powder, Keran LED Bulbs, and artisans and producers from Tulail and Karnah. The exhibition reflected the growing entrepreneurial spirit of North Kashmir and demonstrated how tourism can serve as a catalyst for local enterprise, employment generation, and economic empowerment. Participants emphasised that North Kashmir possesses all the ingredients required to emerge as a premier tourism destination-spectacular natural beauty, warm hospitality, rich traditions, adventure tourism potential, and a resilient community eager to contribute to the region's growth story.

'FOREVER IN OPERATIONS DIVISION' OF THE INDIAN ARMY CONDUCTS ZANSKAR VALLEY ARCHERY COMPETITION AT PADUM, ZANSKAR DISTRICT

Leh Sunday, 07 June 2026 The vibrant spirit of traditional sports and cultural heritage was witnessed during the successful conduct of the Zanskar Valley Archery Competition at Padum, Zanskar District, from 03 to 07 June 2026. The five-day sporting event brought together archery enthusiasts from across the region and celebrated the rich traditions and sporting culture of Ladakh. The competition witnessed the participation of 20 teams comprising nearly 400 participants from various parts of Zanskar Valley, adding to the enthusiasm, competitive spirit and regional camaraderie witnessed throughout the tournament. Archery, being an integral part of the cultural heritage of Ladakh and Zanskar, attracted large gatherings of local residents, sports enthusiasts and visitors who enthusiastically supported the participating teams. The event provided for promoting traditional sports, preserving local customs and encouraging youth participation in cultural and sporting activities. Over the course of four days, participants showcased remarkable skill, precision and sportsmanship in a spirit of mutual respect. The competition also served as a medium for fostering stronger ties among communities from different regions of Ladakh while promoting healthy competition and cultural exchange. The event highlighted the importance of preserving traditional sporting practices and promoting community engagement in remote areas of the Himalayas. Local residents appreciated the conduct of the competition and expressed enthusiasm towards organising similar sporting and cultural events in the future. The Zanskar Valley Archery Competition concluded with a prize distribution ceremony recognising the outstanding performances of participating teams and players. The event stood as a celebration of the enduring traditions, resilience and vibrant cultural identity of the people of Ladakh.



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INDIAN ARMY ORGANISED A MEDICAL CAMP FOR CIVILIANS AT NARLA RAJOURI

Rajouri : 07 Jun 2026 Indian Army organised a Medical Camp for civilians at Narla (Mathianigala) under Sampark Activity, with an aim to provide accessible healthcare support to residents of remote areas. The camp was conducted under the supervision of the Regimental Medical Officer and witnessed a positive response from the local population. A total of 106 beneficiaries, including men, women and children, received medical consultation, basic health check-ups and treatment for common ailments. Essential medicines were



also distributed to patients as per medical requirement. During the camp, residents were sensitised on the importance of hygiene, sanitation, preventive healthcare and timely medical consultation. The initiative proved beneficial for people living in far-flung areas where access to regular medical facilities remains limited. The local community appreciated the efforts of the Indian Army for reaching out with timely healthcare assistance. The activity further strengthened the bond of trust and cooperation between the Indian Army and the civilian population.

INDIAN ARMY ORGANISED AN ART ESSAY COMPETITION AND YOGA AWARENESS PROGRAMME AT DHARMARI, REASI

Reasi : 07 Jun 2026 Indian Army organised an Art Essay Competition and Yoga Awareness Programme at Himalayan Public School and Government Higher Secondary School, Dharmari, under Operation Sadbhavana. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation of 150 students, who actively engaged in activities aimed at promoting creativity, self-expression, healthy living and holistic development. The Art Essay Competition provided students an opportunity to express their thoughts, imagination and ideas through writing and artwork, encouraging confidence and creative thinking among young minds. A dedicated Yoga Awareness Programme was also conducted to highlight the importance of physical fitness, mental well-being, discipline and balanced living. Students were sensitised on the benefits of yoga, breathing practices and adopting healthy habits in daily life. The initiative was well received by students and school staff. It reflects the Indian Army's continued commitment towards youth empowerment, community engagement and strengthening bonds with the local population through constructive outreach initiatives.



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Adv Devraj Sharma congratulates Tarun Chugh on RS nomination from Madhya Pradesh

Jammu, June 7: Former Sarpanch and senior BJP leader Adv. Devraj Sharma has warmly congratulated senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and BJP Incharge for Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory Tarun Chugh on his nomination to the Rajya Sabha from Madhya Pradesh, describing the decision as a fitting recognition of his lifelong commitment to the ideology of nationalism, organizational development, and public service. In a statement issued here today, Adv. Sharma said that Tarun Chugh's nomination reflects the confidence reposed in him by the party's top leadership and acknowledges his decades of selfless service as a dedicated Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) worker and a committed BJP leader. He said that Chugh has devoted his entire political journey to strengthening nationalist values, empowering grassroots workers and expanding the organizational base of the BJP. According to Sharma, his elevation to the Upper House is not merely a personal achievement but a tribute to thousands of dedicated karyakartas who work tirelessly for the nation and the organization. "Tarun Chugh has always remained connected to the grassroots and has consistently worked to strengthen the party structure from the both level upwards. His commitment, discipline, humility, and organizational capabilities have earned him immense respect among party workers across the country," Sharma said. Highlighting Chugh's contribution to



the morale and confidence of BJP cadres throughout the "Union Territory," Sharma remarked. He further said that Chugh's accessibility and constant engagement with party workers helped create a sense of unity and purpose within the organization. His efforts encouraged young activists and strengthened the BJP's presence even in remote areas, contributing significantly to the party's growth and outreach in Jammu and Kashmir. Adv. Sharma also praised Chugh for effectively conveying the vision and policies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP leadership to the people, while simultaneously bringing local issues and public concerns to the attention of the central leadership.

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Tributes Paid to Army officer Martyred During Anti-Terror Operations in Rajouri

Jammu, Jun 7: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo and General Officer Commanding of the White Knight Corps, Lieutenant General P K Mishra, on Sunday paid homage to Lieutenant Beereswar Goswami, who died while undertaking operational duties in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. Lieutenant Goswami died after slipping into a deep gorge during an anti-terror operation in the Dorimaal-Gambhir Mughalan belt of Rajouri district on Saturday evening, officials said. The Lieutenant Governor, accompanied by Dulloo and Additional Chief Secretary Shaleen Kabra, attended a wreath-laying ceremony with full military honours at the Air Force Station Jammu. Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat



also paid homage by laying a wreath and saluting the fallen officer. The Army officer was accorded tributes by senior military, police, paramilitary and civil officials before his mortal remains were dispatched to his native village, Pandey Khola, in Uttarakhand's Almora district for

the last rites. Lieutenant General Mishra led all ranks of the White Knight Corps in paying homage to Lieutenant Goswami in Jammu. Army personnel laid wreaths and saluted the mortal remains of the officer. Expressing grief over the officer's death, the White Knight Corps said in a post on X, "GOC White Knight Corps and all ranks express profound grief on the untimely demise of Lieutenant Beereswar Goswami, who made the supreme sacrifice while undertaking operational duties in an area marked by rugged terrain, steep cliffs and adverse weather conditions." The Army said the officer's unwavering devotion to duty, indomitable spirit and selfless service to the nation would remain an enduring inspiration to all ranks. The Corps also expressed solidarity with the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul. Officials said Lieutenant Goswami was part of the security forces engaged in "Operation Sherawali" which entered its 16th consecutive day in the Dorimaal-Gambhir Mughalan belt of Rajouri district on Sunday.

Deputy Chief Minister pays obeisance at Hazrat Mian Nizam-ud-Din Kiyavi (RA) Visits Baba Nagri Wangath on annual Urs

GANDEBAL, JUNE 7: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today visited Baba Nagri Wangath in Ganderbal district and paid obeisance at the revered shrine of Hazrat Mian Nizam-ud-Din Kiyavi (RA) on the sacred occasion of the 130th Annual Urs of the revered Sufi saint. On the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister offered prayers and sought blessings for lasting peace, prosperity, progress and communal harmony across Jammu and Kashmir. He paid rich tributes to the saint for his invaluable spiritual legacy and enduring message of love, brotherhood, tolerance and service to humanity. The



Minister was accompanied by MLA Kangan, Mian Mehar Ali while Member of Parliament, Mian Altaf Ahmad Larvi was present there. The Deputy Chief Minister prayed for the well-being of the people and reaffirmed the government's commitment towards preserving and promoting the rich spiritual and cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir. Encouraging the newly appointed workers to perform their duties with sincerity and dedication, he said that their services would contribute significantly towards building a healthier and stronger society. Reviewing the functioning of various departments, Satish Sharma directed the officers to remain accessible to the public and ensure timely redressal of their grievances. He stressed that governance must be people-centric and responsive, adding that public confidence can only be strengthened through efficient service delivery and accountability. The Minister issued strict instructions to the departmental officers to expedite the pending works, maintain transparency in official functioning and ensure that government schemes reach the deserving beneficiaries without delay. He warned that negligence, bureaucratic delays and lack of accountability would not be tolerated and that strict action would be initiated wherever public interest is compromised. Highlighting the developmental roadmap for the region, Satish Sharma informed the gathering that several important projects are currently in the pipeline for Khor and adjoining areas.

Javid Dar terms sports a powerful instrument for youth empowerment at Soim Premier League Finale



BARAMULLA, JUNE 7: Emphasising the transformative role of sports in shaping a progressive and disciplined society, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, on Sunday said that games and sports serve as a vital platform for nurturing confidence, resilience and leadership among the younger generation. The Minister was addressing a large gathering after attending the grand finale of the Soim Premier League Cricket Tournament at Deinmarg in Soim, Rafiabad, where he was the chief guest. The summit clash of the tournament witnessed an exciting contest between MCC Rohama and Wonder XI Penzalla, drawing enthusi-

astic participation from sports lovers, local residents and youth from across the area. In his address, Javid Dar underscored the significance of sports in the holistic development of young people, describing them as an essential component of a healthy and productive society. "Sports are not merely a source of recreation; they are a school of life. They teach discipline, perseverance, teamwork and the ability to face challenges with courage and determination. The lessons learned on the playing field help young people navigate the ups and downs of life with confidence and positivity," he said. Highlighting the social and psychological benefits of sporting activities, the Minister observed that active participation in

games promotes physical fitness, mental well-being and social cohesion. He noted that sports instil a spirit of fair play, mutual respect and healthy competition, while encouraging the youth to channel their energy towards constructive and meaningful pursuits. Dar reiterated the government's commitment towards strengthening the sports infrastructure and expanding opportunities for the aspiring athletes, particularly in rural areas. He stressed that nurturing sporting talent at the grassroots level remains essential for building a vibrant sporting culture and enabling the young achievers to excel at higher levels of competition. Congratulating the winning team on their outstanding performance, the Minister applauded both finalists for displaying exceptional sportsmanship, discipline and competitive spirit throughout the tournament. He also commended the organisers of the Soim Premier League for successfully providing a platform that showcases local talent and promotes community engagement through sports.

Satish Sharma hands over appointment orders to Anganwadi Workers; says govt prioritising development of border belts

KHOUR, JUNE 7: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today reaffirmed the government's unwavering commitment towards the welfare of border residents, accelerated infrastructure development, employment generation and transparent governance. The Minister was addressing a large public gathering at the historic Royal Palace, Khour. The Minister's visit witnessed enthusiastic public participation, with several delegations, social organizations, youth groups and local representatives meeting him and extending their support to the government's developmental vision. The delegations projected a wide range of public issues and developmental demands concerning the border villages, infrastructure, employment opportunities, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, road connectivity and public welfare schemes. Addressing the gathering, Satish Sharma said that the government remains fully sensitive to the challenges faced by the people residing in border areas and is committed to ensure their safety, security and socio-economic upliftment. He emphasized that the concerns of border residents would continue to receive priority attention and assured that all genuine issues projected by the people would be vigorously pursued before the concerned authorities.



The Minister particularly highlighted the issue of compensation for the border residents who have suffered losses due to shelling and conflict-related incidents. He said that adequate and timely compensation for the affected families remains a matter of utmost importance. He reiterated that the government would continue to adopt care for comprehensive relief measures to ensure that no affected family is left unattended. Recalling the government's proactive response during recent hostilities along the Line of Control and border areas, Satish Sharma said that the administration successfully undertook one of the largest humanitarian evacuation efforts in the region. He said that nearly

70,000 people were safely shifted from vulnerable locations to safer places through coordinated efforts of various departments, with the Jammu and Kashmir Road Transport Corporation playing a pivotal role by deploying its fleet for emergency transportation. "The safety and well-being of our citizens remain our foremost priority. The coordinated evacuation and relief operations demonstrated the government's preparedness and commitment towards protecting the human lives during difficult circumstances," he said. On the occasion, the Minister handed over appointment orders to the newly selected Anganwadi Workers. He described the Anganwadi network as one of the most important pillars

of grassroots welfare delivery. He said that Anganwadi Workers play a vital role in strengthening the maternal and child health, nutritional support, early childhood education and community outreach. Encouraging the newly appointed workers to perform their duties with sincerity and dedication, he said that their services would contribute significantly towards building a healthier and stronger society. Reviewing the functioning of various departments, Satish Sharma directed the officers to remain accessible to the public and ensure timely redressal of their grievances. He stressed that governance must be people-centric and responsive, adding that public confidence can only be strengthened through efficient service delivery and accountability. The Minister issued strict instructions to the departmental officers to expedite the pending works, maintain transparency in official functioning and ensure that government schemes reach the deserving beneficiaries without delay. He warned that negligence, bureaucratic delays and lack of accountability would not be tolerated and that strict action would be initiated wherever public interest is compromised. Highlighting the developmental roadmap for the region, Satish Sharma informed the gathering that several important projects are currently in the pipeline for Khor and adjoining areas.

Directorate of Tourism Jammu organizes Gool Mela

Thousands throng Narsingha Meadows in celebration of Culture, Heritage and Tourism

RAMBAN, JUNE 07: In a vibrant celebration of culture, heritage and tourism, the Directorate of Tourism Jammu, in collaboration with district administration Ramban, organized a one-day Gool Mela at the picturesque Narsingha area amidst the lush green meadows of Gool Sub-Division. The cultural festival witnessed an overwhelming response, with more than ten thousand people thronging the venue from across Ramban and Reasi districts. The mela transformed the scenic destination into a vibrant hub of cultural festivities, attracting tourists, locals, youth and families alike. The mela was inaugurated by MLA Banihal, Sajjad Shaheen, along with MLA Gulabgarh Khurshid Ahmad, Director Tourism Jammu Dr. Vikas Gupta, Deputy Commissioner

Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan and SSP Ramban Anun Gupta. Organized with the objective of promoting the immense tourism potential of the region, the mela served as a platform to showcase the rich cultural diversity, traditional heritage and breathtaking natural beauty of Gool and its adjoining areas while highlighting the region's potential as an emerging tourist destination. MLA Banihal highlighted the vast tourism potential of Gool and Banihal areas and emphasized the need for sustained efforts to develop the region as a major tourist destination. He lauded the efforts of Directorate of Tourism Jammu for organizing the mela and creating opportunities for promoting local culture, handicrafts, traditional art forms and scenic



attractions. Director Tourism Jammu highlighted the promotional initiatives being undertaken in Tourism Department under the leadership of Chief Minister Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasized that on the

directions of Additional Chief Secretary Tourism Dr. Ashish Chander Verma, the department is actively identifying and developing new tourist destinations across the Jammu especially offbeat destinations like Gool, Neeltop, Margantop, Mohu Valley, Tattapani to diversify tourism offerings and generate sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities. He assured continued support for promoting the tourism potential of Ramban district and strengthening tourism infrastructure in emerging destinations. Deputy Commissioner Ramban highlighted the growing tourism prospects of Ramban district and called upon the youth to actively contribute towards promoting tourism and preserving the environment. He urged the youth to join hands with the district administration in making Ramban a drug-free district under the ongoing Nasha Mukh Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan. He appreciated its efforts in promoting less-

er-known and offbeat destinations across the district. SSP Anun Gupta emphasized the importance of community participation in combating drug abuse and reiterated the commitment of the Police Department towards realizing the vision of a drug-free Jammu and Kashmir. A major attraction of the mela was the array of stalls established by various government departments, local entrepreneurs, Self-Help Groups and artisans. Vibrant displays of local handicrafts, handloom products and traditional artefacts drew significant public interest and highlighted the rich craftsmanship of the region. Food stalls offering authentic local delicacies and traditional cuisines remained crowded throughout the day, providing visitors with a glimpse of the

area's rich culinary heritage. The mela provided an excellent platform for local artisans, weavers and entrepreneurs to showcase and market their products while promoting local livelihoods and rural tourism. The dignitaries visited the stalls and interacted with exhibitors, artisans and visitors. They appreciated the efforts made to promote local crafts, handloom products, indigenous cuisine and government welfare initiatives under a common platform. The cultural segment remained the major attraction of the event. Renowned singers Bishan Dass and Chaman Lehti, along with other artists and students, enthralled the audience with vibrant performances depicting the rich folk traditions, music and cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir.

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All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts and forums in Jammu City

