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PAGE 12

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LG visits Mubarak Mandi heritage complex in Jammu, inspects damage to ancient temple

JAMMU, JUN 8 : Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday visited the Mubarak Mandi heritage complex in old city here and also inspected the damage caused to an ancient temple in its close vicinity. Accompanied by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, the Lt Governor reviewed the ongoing restoration and conservation works at the heritage complex and the temple. A portion of the wall of the nearly 200-year-old Gadadhar temple collapsed outside the Mubarak Mandi heritage complex on June 4 following rain, triggering concerns among locals who blamed the ongoing excavation and restoration work near the shrine for the collapse. Talking to reporters, Dulloo said renovation



of 11 buildings at the heritage complex is underway, with nine to 10 projects expected to be completed by March 2027. Mubarak Mandi, located in the heart of the old walled city overlooking the

Tawi river, was the royal residence of the Dogra dynasty rulers till 1925 before the last Maharaja moved to Hari Niwas palace in the northern part of Jammu. In 2005, Mubarak Mandi was declared as a

protected monument and subsequently Mubarak Mandi Jammu Heritage Society (MMHS) was constituted next year to take over the complex for its protection, preservation, maintenance and restoration works. The first vision document for its conservation was prepared by Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) in 2008 and a comprehensive master plan was later prepared and approved in 2019. Primarily, the complex is zoned out in six zones – Public Zone, Knowledge Centre, Interpretation and Collection Galleries, Lifestyle, Experiential Spaces and Crafts Bazaar. Under this master plan an amount of Rs 144.15 crore is to be

(Contd on Pg 2)

India witnessed many transformations in last 12 years: PM Modi

NEW DELHI, JUN 8 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday highlighted the various welfare measures undertaken by his government in the last 12 years, saying India has witnessed many transformations and at the core of these changes is the welfare of the poor and the welfare of the poor. On the completion of the second year of his third term, Modi cited initiatives like the Direct Benefit Transfer, Swachh Bharat, PM Awas Yojana and Ayushman Bharat, and said they have been driven by a simple objective of ensuring people have dignity and opportunity. "Over the last 12 years,



India has witnessed many transformations and at the core of these changes is the welfare of the poor and the welfare of the poor. On the completion of the second year of his third term, Modi cited initiatives like the Direct Benefit Transfer, Swachh Bharat, PM Awas Yojana and Ayushman Bharat, and said they have been driven by a simple objective of ensuring people have dignity and opportunity. "Over the last 12 years,

ensure that the benefits of development reach those who were left behind for decades. "It is also glad that technology has played a vital role in ensuring a better quality of life for the poor," he said in the post with

(Contd on Pg 2)

J&K Govt sanctions over Rs.7cr for strengthening infrastructure for Kashmiri Migrants in Jammu

SRINAGAR, JUN 8: The Government of Jammu & Kashmir, led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, has sanctioned key infrastructure projects worth Rs.7.05 crore under the Capex Budget aimed at strengthening facilities and enhancing welfare measures for Kashmiri migrants residing in Jammu. The approved projects include the construction of a Multipurpose Community Hall at Migrant Camp Muthi, Jammu, which will also accommodate a library and

dedicated shops for Self Help Groups (SHGs). The initiative is intended to strengthen community engagement, promote livelihood opportunities, and enhance social support systems within the migrant camp. In addition, approval has been accorded for the construction of a new office building for the Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrants), Jammu. The proposed facility is expected to improve administrative efficiency and further strengthen the delivery of

migrant-related welfare schemes and services. The total technically vetted cost of the sanctioned works stands at Rs.7.05 crore, to be executed under the Regular Capex Budget, subject to fulfillment of all codal formalities, financial norms, and prescribed procedures. The Government reiterated its commitment to ensuring sustained welfare, dignity, and improved living conditions for Kashmiri migrants through focused infrastructure development and institutional strengthening

7.8 magnitude quake in Philippines kills at least 35, collapses buildings, sparks tsunami

DAVAO (PHILIPPINES), JUN 8 : An offshore earthquake with a magnitude of 7.8 hit the southern Philippines on Monday, killing at least 35 people, injuring more than 200 others mostly in ruined buildings and sending a 1-metre tsunami into nearby coasts. Several mostly low-rise buildings collapsed or sustained heavy damages in the hard-hit city of General Santos. Tsunami damage was reported in at least one southern coastal village. Smaller waves were measured in Indonesia and Palau and as far away as southern Japan. The quake also triggered a landslide in Gian, a municipality in the province of Sarangani, that



killed 13 villagers. Rene Punzalan, a provincial disaster mitigation official, told the DZBB radio network. Four other vil-

lagers died in Sarangani, he said. The major earthquake was the strongest to hit the Philippines this year, Teresito Bacolcol, the director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, said. He warned people to seek advice before returning to damaged buildings and houses, which could collapse due to aftershocks. The United States, a treaty ally of the Philippines, said it was coordinating with Manila and was ready to support Philippine response efforts. France, Japan and New Zealand also expressed support. "Our pickup truck suddenly jerked and I thought we had a flat tire," Rod Sosmeña, a regional director of the Office of Civil Defence, told The Associated Press from General Santos, where he was

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BRIEF NEWS

Properties of two drug peddlers worth Rs 4 crore attached in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, JUN 8 : Immovable properties worth about Rs 4 crore belonging to two drug peddlers was attached by authorities in Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar district on Monday, police said. "Srinagar Police has attached immovable properties worth approximately Rs 4 crore belonging to two drug peddlers under the provisions of the NDPS Act, 1985," a police spokesperson said. He said properties worth approximately Rs 3 crore belonging to Gulam Ahmad Dar were attached by Sangam police. "The attached assets include a residential house, land and commercial shops. Investigation established that the properties were acquired

(Contd on Pg 2)

Defence Secy reviews operational preparedness in Leh Sector

LEH/JAMMU, JUN 8: Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh has visited the forward areas along the Indo-Pak and Sino-Indian borders in the Leh Sector and reviewed the operational preparedness, border infrastructure and logistical sustainability of troops in Ladakh. During visits to forward areas in eastern Ladakh, including base camp and northern glacier, Singh interacted with troops and commended their unwavering dedication, courage and professionalism in safeguarding the nation's security under the most challenging conditions. "Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh visited Leh

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Police reviews arrangements for Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2026, Muharram observances in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, JUN 8 : Kashmir Zone Inspector General of Police V K Biri on Monday took stock of the arrangements for the peaceful conduct of the Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2026 and Muharram observances across Kashmir at a meeting held here, officials said. All Range DIGs of Kashmir Zone and other senior police officials attended the meeting, they said. The officers presented detailed briefings outlining security arrangements, logistical requirements, and district-wise

preparedness plans for the smooth conduct of the Shri Amarnathji Yatra (SANJY-2026), a police spokesman said. He said the discussions focused on measures adopted to ensure the pilgrims' safety and the effective management of the pilgrimage routes. Reviewing the arrangements for the upcoming Muharram observances across the Valley, the IGP emphasised the need for adequate security, effective traffic management, and coordination with the civil

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Multi-layer security net planned for safety of Amarnath pilgrims in Kathua

JAMMU, JUN 8 : As thousands of pilgrims gear up for the annual pilgrimage to the 3,880-metre-high Amarnath cave shrine next month, police in Kathua have activated a multi-layered security grid, blending drone surveillance, high-way domination and intensified ground-level checks along the yatra route. At a security-review-coordination meeting at district police lines Kathua on Monday, Senior Superintendent of Police Mohita Sharma directed officers to maintain maximum alertness and leave no room for complacency during the 57-day yatra which is starting on July 3. The meeting brought together officers from the police, Army, BSF, CRPF and intelligence agencies to fine-tune a coordinated security strategy aimed at ensur-

ing foolproof arrangements without compromising pilgrim convenience, a police spokesman said. Giving a comprehensive presentation on the yatra's security architecture including surveillance, convoy management, QRT deployment and emergency response preparedness, the SSP emphasised on heightened vigilance, seamless coordination, strict compliance with security protocols and a pilgrim-friendly environment. She directed the supervisory officers to strengthen security arrangements through regular inspection of Langars, lodgement centres, and other yatra-related facilities, while maintaining close surveillance over suspicious movements and anti-national elements. Officers present at the meeting were

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Over 1.6 Lakh candidates applied for post-result services: CBSE

NEW DELHI, JUN 8: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Monday said its post-result services portal was fully functional during the notified application period and more than 1.6 lakh candidates successfully submitted requests for over 3.8 lakh answer books. In a statement on X, the board said the application window for verification and re-evaluation was fully functional throughout the notified period, June 2-7, under the supervision of government technical agencies and

teams from the IITs. "During the above application period, more than 1.6 lakh candidates successfully submitted requests pertaining to over 3.8 lakh answer books, reflecting the extensive utilisation of the services by the candidates," the CBSE said. The board said the system remained under monitoring by cybersecurity teams throughout the operational period to prevent malicious traffic and cyber threats. It also said CBSE teams provided support to students through its helpdesk and

(Contd on Pg 2)

Bail Rule Not Absolute in Heinous Offences: HC



JAMMU, JUNE-08: The High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has rejected the bail plea of Harbindar Singh, an accused in the Udhampur murder case, holding that the principle of 'bail is the rule and jail is an exception' is not an absolute rule and cannot be applied mechanically in serious offences like murder. Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi dismissed the bail application filed under Section 483 of BNS, 2023, seeking bail in FIR No. 118/2023 registered at Police Station Rehambal, District Udhampur, for offences under Sections 302/34 IPC. The trial is pending before the Court of Additional Sessions Judge, Udhampur. The case relates to the alleged murder of Ravi Kumar at Hope Centre. According to the prosecution, on April 1, 2023, Police

(Contd on Pg 2)

INDIA bloc meeting: Oppn leaders vow unity, seek Pradhan's resignation, to write to CJI on SIR

NEW DELHI, JUN 8 : Stressing unity against the BJP, the opposition INDIA bloc members on Monday unanimously decided to demand Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's immediate resignation over the NEET-CBSE row and write to the chief justice of India on the SIR exercise and "vote loot". At the meeting, top leaders of several opposition parties called for the need to safeguard democratic values and address people-centric issues such as unemployment, inflation, "atrocities" against oppressed sections, and sought an all-party meeting to discuss them along with the "precarious" economic situation in the country. They also decided to meet



after every two months to ensure opposition unity, with the next meeting scheduled in Hyderabad for August, while continuing with Parliament coordination during the upcoming Monsoon Session. The BJP has called the INDIA bloc "a figment of imagination" that lacked

conviction on the ground, claiming that there was an implosion within the opposition alliance with disagreements involving the Congress, DMK, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and the Left parties. Leaders of 22 opposition parties and Independent MP Kapil

Sibal were part of the deliberations that lasted for more than two-and-a-half hours at the Constitution Club, amid a BJP surge in the run-up to the next Assembly elections cycle and the 2029 Lok Sabha polls. Earlier, Kharage had said that leaders of 25 opposition parties met on

(Contd on Pg 2)

FROM PAGE ONE

LG visits...

spent on different sub-projects of this heritage complex.

The work on few sub-projects has been completed and the work on other sub-projects is would be taken up shortly for their completion on time.

The temple dedicated to Vishnu and Lakshmi was constructed during the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh in the mid-19th century. It is managed by the Dharmarth Trust.

"Since there was a pressing need for parking in the area, a parking facility is being constructed by Smart City Limited. During the course of this work, a slab adjoining the temple collapsed. Repair work has already begun and is progressing, and it is expected to be completed within a few days," the chief secretary said.

He said the effort of Smart City Limited is to create a parking facility with space for at least 200 vehicles. The LG reviewed the ongoing repair and renovation works which are underway on a total of 11 buildings, he said.

Around nine or 10 of these projects have achieved approximately 80 to 90 percent completion and are expected to be completed by March 2027.

In addition, Dulloo said there are plans to take up five new projects, including the development of facilities such as a laser show, light-and-sound show, and other visitor amenities.

On the delay in completion of the project, Dulloo attributed it to inadequate funding in the past, saying the pace of work had accelerated over the last four to five years after funds started becoming available.

"Some of the restoration work was carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) authorities while the Mubarak Mandi Heritage Society has also undertaken a number of projects and done good work.

Highlighting the progress made so far, Dulloo said several facilities, including a restaurant, cafe and library, have been developed as part of the restoration project, and assured that further conservation and renovation works would be taken up wherever necessary.

India...

#12YearsOfGaribKalyan. Modi said through the Direct Benefit Transfer and digital platforms, support is reaching people directly and transparently.

"This has reduced leakages, improved efficiency and strengthened trust in governance. This is how the journey of furthering 'Garib Kalyan' has become a collective movement towards human empowerment and realising our dream of a Viksit Bharat," he said.

Modi was sworn-in as prime minister for the third consecutive time on June 9, 2024, following another decisive victory in the 2024 Parliamentary elections. He took oath as prime minister for the first time on May 26, 2014. His second term began on May 30, 2019.

7.8 magnitude...

travelling when the quake struck at 7:37 am. "The shaking was very strong and people dashed out of houses into the streets," Sosmena said.

More than 100 students in uniforms and a dozen teachers had gathered for a flag-raising ceremony in a coconut tree-ringed grade school compound in the rural town of Malita in Davao Occidental province when the ground shook, turning the first day of school after a two-month summer break into chaos. "Their excitement on the first day of school turned to trauma," school principal Rosavel Cachueta told the AP.

Some of the young students screamed in panic and wept but most remained seated and still, preventing any injuries, Cachueta said, adding that a motorcycle was damaged when a shed crumbled to the ground.

At least four people remained missing in General Santos, a port city of more than 700,000 people and a regional hub for the tuna export industry.

Search and rescue teams worked to find people who may have been trapped in a supermarket, a warehouse, a grade school, and other small buildings that either collapsed or were severely damaged, officials said.

The international airport in General Santos was temporarily shut due to the earthquake and 17 domestic flights were cancelled, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines said.

The quake was centred at sea off Mindanao, the second most populous island in the Philippine archipelago. According to Bacolcol, the quake occurred at a depth of 33 kilometres, about 32 kilometres southwest of Maasin town in Sarangani province.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ordered the cancellation of classes and directed disaster-response agencies to immediately get to work in quake-hit provinces, saying "the national government is moving and we will not leave Mindanao behind."

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said the threat of a tsunami largely passed about five hours after the quake.

Philippine officials also lifted a tsunami warning by mid-afternoon. Six shanties on stilts were damaged in a coastal village in Zamboanga del Sur province due to the quake and taller waves, officials said.

Aside from the landslide in Sarangani, most of the other deaths were caused by collapsing buildings and falling debris, including in a damaged mosque, in the southern provinces of South Cotabato and Davao Occidental, and on Balut Island, according to Sosmena

and another disaster-mitigation official, Ednar Dayanghirang.

The DZRH radio network in Manila reported that a four-storey commercial building where its provincial station was located partly collapsed and staffers dashed to the ground floor without injuries.

Waves of 1 metre were monitored in the provinces of Sultan Kudarat and Sarangani. A 1.4-metre wave hit at one time in Kiamba town, Bacolcol said.

The quake was also felt in Malaysia's Sabah state on Borneo island. Sabah is just a boat ride away from southern Philippines. An 85-centimetre tsunami was measured by a gauge off Indonesia's Sulawesi island, and the PTCW said 30-centimetre waves were measured in Palau.

Waves up to 20 centimetres were detected on the remote Japanese island of Chichijima and the central Japanese town of Kushimoto, the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

The Philippines is often hit by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of seismic faults around the ocean.

The archipelago is also battered by about 20 typhoons and tropical storms each year, making it one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

Police reviews...

administration to facilitate the peaceful conduct of Muharram processions.

Reviewing the overall security framework, Birdi stressed the importance of strict adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and effective coordination among all agencies.

The IGP directed officers to remain prepared for any contingency, including operational challenges, natural disasters, and other unforeseen situations, through a synchronised response mechanism.

Highlighting pilgrim safety as the foremost priority, Birdi assessed the deployment strategy and preparedness of road opening parties (ROPs).

Calling for enhanced surveillance, regular area domination, and continuous monitoring of highways and vulnerable stretches along the routes, the IGP instructed officers to strengthen nighttime security measures and maintain heightened alertness to deter any untoward incidents.

He also directed officers to conduct mock drills to test existing SOPs and improve operational efficiency wherever required.

Multi-layer...

also instructed to intensify intelligence generation, promptly share actionable inputs, and maintain close coordination with intelligence agencies and other stakeholders to ensure a robust and proactive security grid, a spokesperson said.

He said directions were issued to ensure security along the Border National Highway (BNH) and Railway Track with special focus on round-the-clock domination, checking points, and area domination patrols.

Emphasis was also laid on completing census and tenant verification drives along BNH, at hotels and dhabas, and among factory workers to rule out the presence of any anti-national elements in the vicinity of the Yatra route, the spokesperson said.

The Kathua SSP emphasised strengthening surveillance and response capabilities by intensifying drone-based monitoring, installation of X-Ray machines, and deploying Dog Squads for anti-sabotage checks at vital installations, including Base Camp Lakhnapur and yatra locations, and ensuring the operational readiness of QRTs.

She also stressed seamless inter-agency coordination among police, CAPFs, civil administration, traffic police, health services, and other departments, with a focus on prompt information sharing, joint preparedness, and effective response to any exigency.

Officers were also directed to ensure effective management and security of yatra mini-convoys and to enhance CCTV coverage at all important Yatra locations with dedicated 24x7 monitoring.

Sharma reiterated the need for high operational readiness and coordinated efforts to ensure the safe, smooth, and successful conduct of the yatra.

Over 1.6 Lakh...

grievance redressal channels.

The clarification came amid certain media reports and social media posts regarding the functioning of the Post-Result Services Portal.

Addressing concerns raised by some students and parents, CBSE said the message "Roll Number Not Found" was displayed only when a candidate had not successfully applied during the first phase of the post-result services process - the Answer Books Photocopy Application Window.

"CBSE has taken note of certain media reports and social media posts regarding the functioning of the Post-Result Services Portal. To clarify doubts of some of these students and parents, it is informed that the message 'Roll Number Not Found' is displayed when a candidate had not successfully applied during the first phase of the Post-Result Services process, namely the Answer Books Photocopy Application Window," the board said.

"As clearly outlined earlier, only those candidates who had applied for their scanned answer books during the preceding stage (Answer Books Photocopy) were eligible to avail the subsequent stage of Verification of Issues Observed and Re-evaluation of Answers," the

board said.

The CBSE has been embroiled in controversy after some Class 12 students claimed that the scanned copies of their answer sheets, uploaded by the board, did not match their handwriting, raising concerns about potential mismatches in the OSM system.

Last week, the cabinet secretariat announced the formation of a one-member committee to investigate the procurement of services for the OSM system by the CBSE. (Agencies)

Bail...

Station Rehalamb received a telephonic message from the hospital regarding the suspicious death of Ravi Kumar, following which proceedings under Section 174 CrPc were initiated. During enquiry, the body was shifted to the mortuary and post-mortem was conducted.

The prosecution alleged that during the inquest it surfaced that Shubam Angral, Sadiq and Gourav Kumar, with common criminal intention and over non-payment of Rs 1 lakh, killed the deceased. Thereafter, the inquest proceedings were converted into a murder case and FIR No. 118/2023 under Sections 302/34 IPC was registered on May 8, 2023.

During investigation, the Investigating Officer visited the spot, prepared the site plan, recorded statements of witnesses under Section 161 CrPc and seized one DVDR through the Naib Tehsildar, which was sent to CFSL Chandigarh. Accused Gourav Kumar was arrested on May 9, 2023, while Shubam Angral and Sadiq were arrested on May 10, 2023.

As per the prosecution, the arrested accused disclosed during questioning that petitioner Harbinder Singh had allegedly instructed them through a WhatsApp video call to beat Ravi Kumar and show him the video. It was further alleged that on the petitioner's instructions, some cameras were switched off and the deceased was beaten from March 27 to March 30, 2023.

The prosecution further alleged that Harbinder Singh came to the centre on March 30, 2023 and assaulted Ravi Kumar. The deceased was allegedly beaten with a wooden stick and a thick plastic pipe, and the petitioner allegedly kicked him hard in the stomach, causing severe injuries. Weapons of offence were recovered on the basis of disclosure statements. After completion of investigation, charge-sheet was filed against the petitioner and three others on August 3, 2023, and charges under Section 302 IPC were framed on March 4, 2024.

Appearing for the petitioner, Senior Advocate P.N. Raina with Advocate J.A. Hamal argued that the petitioner was innocent and had been falsely implicated. It was submitted that out of 37 prosecution witnesses, 23 had already been examined and the evidence recorded so far did not connect the petitioner with the alleged offence.

Opposing the bail plea, Government Advocate Sumeet Bhatia submitted that the petitioner was involved in a heinous crime punishable with life imprisonment or death. He argued that the petitioner was a notorious criminal involved in several other cases and that around 14 to 15 prosecution witnesses were still to be examined.

The Court referred to Supreme Court judgments including *Y. v. State of Rajasthan*, *Prasanta Kumar Sarkar v. Ashis Chatterjee*, and the recent decision in *Justice Mehmood v. UT of J&K*, observing that bail jurisprudence requires balancing the rule of liberty with factors such as gravity of offence, nature of evidence, antecedents of the accused, possibility of influencing witnesses and danger of justice being thwarted.

Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi observed that though "bail is the rule and jail is an exception" is a cardinal principle, it is not absolute. The Court said the principle must be weighed against the facts of each case, especially where the charge is murder and material witnesses are yet to be examined.

The Court noted that 23 out of 37 witnesses had been examined, while 14 material witnesses were still to be examined. It further observed that the petitioner himself pleaded that he was involved in nine other cases, out of which he had been acquitted in six, while three cases were still pending trial.

Rejecting the plea of delayed trial, the Court held that the trial had substantially progressed and the remaining witnesses were material witnesses whose statements were of paramount importance.

Keeping in view the nature of accusation, severity of punishment, stage of trial and antecedents of the petitioner, the High Court held that Harbinder Singh did not deserve to be enlarged on bail at this stage.

Accordingly, the bail application was dismissed as being devoid of merit. (JNF)

INDIA bloc...

the issue of alleged "political retribution" during and after the recent West Bengal polls.

The deliberations began with a call to forge unity and rework the opposition strategy to take on the BJP, while ironing out the differences within after the defeat of regional outfits Trinamool Congress and DMK in the recent Assembly polls in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, respectively.

The meeting also came at a time when the Narendra Modi government completed 12 years in office in its third consecutive term.

Addressing a press conference after the meeting, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge said, "We have agreed on five issues. A letter would be sent to the chief

justice of India (CJI) soon on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, 'vote loot' and 'stealing of elections'.

"It was also unanimously agreed to demand the immediate resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan because he presided over the betrayal of lakhs of youth who appeared in NEET and CBSE," he said. Flanked by Rahul Gandhi, Akhilesh Yadav, Mamata Banerjee and other senior leaders of the grouping, Kharge said, "We are going to raise many people-centric issues, which all the parties have unanimously agreed to."

"The opposition leaders also decided to continue coordination during the upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament, with daily morning meetings at the office of the leader of opposition," he added.

The Congress veteran also said that all the opposition leaders aired their views freely at the meeting, which Shiv Sena-UBT's Uddhav Thackeray and JMM's Hemant Soren joined virtually.

Among those who attended the meeting were Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Kharge from the Congress, Mamata Banerjee and Abhishek Banerjee from the Trinamool Congress, Akhilesh Yadav from the Samajwadi Party, Tejashwi Yadav from the RJD, Omar Abdullah from the National Conference and Mehbooba Mufti from the PPP, along with Left leaders.

NCP(SP) leader Supriya Sule, CPI(M)'s Brittas, CPI's Raja and leaders of some smaller parties were also part of the deliberations.

Kharge urged the opposition leaders to strengthen unity to confront the political, economic, social and foreign policy challenges facing the country due to the Modi government's "misgovernance".

He claimed that the assault on the Constitution continued while the probe agencies were persistently being used as tools to "harass", "intimidate", and "bully" political opponents.

He also pointed to the "complete mismanagement" of the examination system, dashing the hopes and aspirations of lakhs of youth.

According to sources, Rahul Gandhi told the meeting that he was 100 per cent sure that elections are "robbed" in the country.

The ex-Congress chief also stressed unity, and said one must bring everyone together with love and affection.

The issue of aligning with the youth-led political movement Cockerroach Janta Party (CJP) also cropped up during the discussions, with Akhilesh Yadav and Omar Abdullah calling for associating with the outfit, and Mamata Banerjee speaking about supporting civil society movements.

Akhilesh Yadav, who spoke about "vote chori" and said the Bengal polls were "robbed", appealed to the Congress to show a big heart and back the strongest regional parties.

Uddhav Thackeray also lauded Banerjee for having fought the polls like a "lioness".

RJD's Tejashwi Yadav said the bloc's strategy must focus on the 2029 Lok Sabha polls and urged everyone to hit the streets.

Omar Abdullah urged all the opposition parties to look ahead at the 2029 general elections, stressing that the Congress is the glue that holds the INDIA bloc together.

The last official meeting of the INDIA bloc was held in Delhi on June 1, 2024, after the Lok Sabha polls. The bloc originally comprised more than 25 parties.

Properties of...

through proceeds of narcotics trafficking," the spokesperson said.

In another case, Nowhatta police attached a residential property worth approximately Rs 1 crore belonging to Mohd Shafi Sheikh, he said, adding that the property was identified as an illegally acquired asset generated through drug trafficking. The attachments were carried out under the relevant provisions of the NDPS Act to prevent concealment, transfer or disposal of properties derived from illicit narcotics trade, he said.

Defence...

Sector from June 5-7, 2026, reviewing operational preparedness, border infrastructure and logistical sustainability with senior military commanders at HQ 14 Corps", PRO Defence said on X.

As per the reports, he held detailed discussions with senior military commanders at the headquarters of the Fire and Fury Corps on the prevailing security situation and measures aimed at enhancing operational readiness.

During the visit of the secretary, Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma also visited the forward areas in the Ladakh sector on Saturday and reviewed the prevailing security situation and operational preparedness of troops.

During the visit, Sharma was briefed on the operational readiness, border management measures and ongoing capability enhancement initiatives aimed at strengthening the Army's defensive posture in the region, the officials said.

The Army Commander took stock of the overall security environment and assessed the preparedness of formations operating in the challenging highaltitude terrain.

He also reviewed various measures being undertaken to enhance operational capabilities and maintain a high level of vigilance along the border. (Agencies)



Director Health Services Jammu reviews healthcare services in Poonch and Rajouri districts

JAMMU, JUNE 08: Director Health Services Jammu, Dr Poonam Sethi, accompanied by the Epidemiologist, Dr Rashmi Sharma, Directorate of Health Services Jammu concluded a comprehensive two-day review visit to the districts of Poonch and Rajouri aimed at assessing healthcare delivery, programme implementation and patient care services across the districts. During the visit, Dr Poonam Sethi undertook an extensive inspection of District Hospital Poonch visiting various wards and sections of the hospital to evaluate their functioning and service delivery. She interacted with doctors, nursing staff and healthcare workers, emphasising the importance of maintaining professionalism, punctuality, humility and patient-centred care. She directed all healthcare personnel to extend every possible assistance to patients and attendants and ensure



quality healthcare services at all times. The Director also reviewed the functioning of key facilities including the Assured Treatment Facility and Dialysis Unit, where she assessed service delivery mechanisms and instructed the staff concerned to further strengthen these critical services in the larger interest of patient care. On the second day, a high-level review meeting was held at District Hospital Poonch where Chief

Medical Officer Poonch, Dr Parvair Ahmed Khan, presented a detailed overview of the achievements and progress under various national and state health programmes in the district. Accordingly, instructions were given to Medical Superintendent and District Hospital Poonch, Dr Mohd Shafoeq; Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Dr Ruby Naz Bhatti; District Health Officer and District Tuberculosis Officer, Dr Mohd

Azam; Block Medical Officer Mendhar, Dr Gazala Chowdhury; Block Medical Officer Surankote, Dr Mohd Yousif; Block Medical Officer Mandi, Dr Reyaz Jan and members of the District Programme Unit and Block Programme Unit teams from all blocks to conduct training sessions at regular intervals for all schemes. In addition, monitoring and evaluation of all the schemes must be carried out.

The review highlighted commendable performance in OPD and IPD services, TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY Sehat and Vay Vandana schemes, Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) screening, cancer screening and follow-up as per format and digital health initiatives under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) including Electronic Medical Records (EMR).

Additional Deputy Commissioner reviews preparedness for Muharram observance in Jammu

JAMMU, JUNE 08: Additional Deputy Commissioner, Jammu, Anusya Jamwal, today chaired a meeting to review the preparedness for the smooth and peaceful observance of Muharram in the district. The main day of observance falls on June 26, 2026.



The Additional Deputy Commissioner reviewed the arrangements pertaining to sanitation, functioning of street lights, water supply, deployment of water tankers, availability of health teams and other essential facilities. She issued necessary directions to the officers concerned for ensuring that all requisite arrangements are completed well in time. She also reviewed the police and security arrangements

with the police officers. Among those present were the Assistant Commissioner (General), Jammu, Sania Haq Khan; District Health Officer, Jammu, Dr Sophia Jan; Deputy Director, Information (PR), Jammu, Moksha Dogra; Deputy Superintendent of Police (Headquarters), Farha Nishat; Deputy Superintendent of Police (Traffic), City Jammu,

Ashwani Sharma, and officers from other line departments and the Jammu Municipal Corporation. Representatives of religious bodies were also present. The representatives of religious bodies shared their requirements and highlighted general issues that need to be addressed prior to the observance to facilitate smooth conduct of processions and related activities.

District administration Udhampur mourns demise of Deputy Commissioner's father

UDHAMPUR, JUNE 08: The officers and officials of the District Administration Udhampur convened a condolence meeting today to mourn the untimely demise of the father of the Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Minga Sherpa. The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Jugal Kishore; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Prem Singh; Programme Officer (Poshan), Subash Dogra; Chief Planning Officer, Utan Singh; Assistant Commissioner, Revenue, Dr Umesh Shan and other district officers and officials. As a mark of respect, the gathering observed a two-minute silence and offered prayers for the eternal



peace of the departed soul. Expressing sorrow over the loss, the officers and officials conveyed their condolences to the bereaved family. They prayed to the Almighty to grant strength, courage and fortitude to

the family in this hour of grief and to bestow eternal peace upon the departed soul. The administration extended its sympathies and support to the family during this time.

Social Welfare Department organises career counselling and awareness programme at GHSS Bhalra under PM-AJAY scheme

BHADERWAH, JUNE 08: The Department of Social Welfare, Doda in coordination with the Agriculture, Horticulture, Sheep Husbandry, Education and Rural Development (RDD) departments, the Industrial Training Institute (ITI), Mission YUVA, J&K Bank and other line departments, organised a career counselling and awareness programme at Government Higher Secondary School Bhalra, Bhaderwah, under the PM-AJAY scheme. The programme saw the participation of students, faculty members and representatives of various government departments and other stakeholders. The event was conducted under the guidance of the Director, Social Welfare Department, Jammu and the close supervision of the District Social Welfare



Officer, Doda. It was coordinated by the Tehsil Social Welfare Officer (TSWO), Bhaderwah, Shahnavaz Ahmad, with the objective of creating awareness among students about educational opportunities, career planning, skill development, self-employment initiatives and various government welfare schemes. During the

programme, resource persons from different departments delivered information sessions on career opportunities, vocational education, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, skill development and employment-generation schemes. Students were sensitised about the importance of informed career choices, personality devel-

opment, competitive examinations and higher education opportunities. Representatives from J&K Bank highlighted financial literacy initiatives, educational loan facilities and self-employment schemes. Officers from the Agriculture, Horticulture and Sheep Husbandry departments informed participants about livelihood

and entrepreneurship opportunities in their respective sectors, while representatives from ITI and Mission YUVA elaborated on skill development programmes and vocational training opportunities for youth. Addressing the participants, the Tehsil Social Welfare Officer stressed the importance of career counselling in shaping students' future and encouraged them to make the best use of the educational, vocational and employment opportunities available through various government initiatives. The programme concluded with an interactive session during which students engaged with the resource persons and sought guidance on various career-related matters.

KVK Doda conducts awareness-cum-training programme under Khet Bachao Abhiyan at Village Dhara

DODA, JUNE 08: Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Doda, under the administrative control of SKUAST-Jammu, organised an awareness-cum-training programme under the Khet Bachao Abhiyan at Village Dhara, Block Bhaderwah, District Doda in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture Doda.

The programme was conducted under the leadership of the Vice-Chancellor of SKUAST-Jammu, Dr B N Tripathi and the guidance of the Director (Extension), SKUAST-Jammu, Dr Anirish Vaid. More than 50 farmers, farm women and rural youth participated in the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, Scientist (Agriculture Extension), KVK Doda, Dr Arvinder Kumar, highlighted the objectives of the Khet Bachao Abhiyan, a nationwide awareness and capacity-building campaign launched jointly by the Indian Council of



Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India. He emphasised the importance of balanced fertiliser application, scientific nutrient management, the judicious use of urea and the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices to maintain soil health, enhance productivity and conserve natural resources.

Chief Scientist and Head, KVK Doda, Dr Amit Singh Charak, informed the participants that the campaign aims to strengthen farm outreach through timely

advisories, active Panchayat-level participation and the effective dissemination of scientific technologies and government welfare schemes among farming communities. He stressed the significance of natural farming, biodiversity conservation, environmental protection and reducing cultivation costs while ensuring food and nutritional security. Farmers were also apprised of various government-sponsored schemes including HADP, PM-KISAN, JKICP and other agricultural development programmes.

During the programme, experts from KVK Doda and the Agriculture Department interacted with farmers and deliberated on soil health management, climate-resilient agriculture, natural farming practices, integrated nutrient management and sustainable crop production. Participants were sensitised about the adverse effects of indiscriminate fertiliser use and the importance of preserving soil fertility for long-term agricultural sustainability.

The programme concluded with an interactive session during which farmers raised queries related to crop production, soil health and government schemes. The experts addressed the concerns and provided practical recommendations. The participants appreciated the efforts of KVK Doda in organising such awareness programmes aimed at empowering farmers and promoting sustainable agricultural development in the district.

Khet Bachao Abhiyan awareness camp organised at Katra

REASI, JUNE 08: As part of the ongoing month-long Khet Bachao Abhiyan, Department of Agriculture Jammu organised an awareness camp at Panchayat Koth Manotriya, Katra, Sub-Division Reasi, to educate farmers about the judicious use of fertilisers, balanced nutrient management, soil health conservation and the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices. During the programme, farmers were sensitised about the importance of applying fertilisers based on crop requirements and soil test recommendations to enhance productivity while maintaining long-term soil fertility. The participants were also informed about the adverse effects of the excessive and indiscriminate use of chemical fertilisers on soil health and the environment. Emphasis was laid on the adoption of natural and organic farming practices as sustainable alternatives for improving soil quality and ensuring environment-friendly agricultural production. The officers and experts interacted extensively with the farmers and addressed their queries on balanced fertiliser application, nutrient management, organic inputs, soil health improvement

and eco-friendly farming techniques. They encouraged farmers to adopt scientific and sustainable farming practices to increase crop yields while preserving natural resources. Among those present were Plant Protection Officer, Jammu, Raju Mahajan; Assistant Director (Law Enforcement), Jammu, Kuldeep Singh; Head of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Reasi, Dr Banarsi Lal; Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer, Reasi, Aftab Malik; and Agriculture Extension Officer, Reasi, Karandeep Singh.

The speakers highlighted various initiatives of the Agriculture Department aimed at promoting balanced fertilisation, soil health management and sustainable agriculture. They also urged farmers to avail themselves of the benefits of departmental schemes and programmes designed to improve farm productivity and income. The participating farmers appreciated the initiative and expressed their commitment to adopting balanced fertiliser use and sustainable farming practices to improve crop productivity, maintain soil health and ensure long-term agricultural sustainability.

Divisional Commissioner and IGP Jammu review Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra arrangements in Ramban

RAMBAN, JUNE 08: Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, and the Inspector General of Police, Jammu Zone, Bhim Sen Tuli, today visited Ramban district and reviewed the arrangements being put in place for the smooth and successful conduct of the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026. They also assessed the progress of the National Highway-44 four-laning project from Nashri to Banihal. Among those present were the DIG, DKR Range; Deputy Commissioner, Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan; the SSP, Ramban; the SSP Traffic NHW, the ADC, Ramban; the Project Director, NHAI; the SDM, Banihal; the SDM, Ramsoo; and officers

from the District Administration, Army, CRPF, SDRF, Police and other stakeholder departments. At the outset, Deputy Commissioner, Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan, briefed the Divisional Commissioner and the IGP Jammu regarding the comprehensive arrangements being made for the convenience, safety and welfare of pilgrims undertaking the annual holy pilgrimage. The Divisional Commissioner inspected various facilities at Yatri Niwas, Chanderkote, including accommodation, sanitation, drinking water supply, power availability, medical facilities and security arrangements. He also reviewed arrangements at langar sites at Chanderkote, Yatra



Camp Lamber and other designated locations along the yatra route. While reviewing arrangements at Yatri Niwas, Chanderkote, the Divisional Commissioner directed all stakeholder departments to ensure completion of the

remaining works and establishment of all essential facilities before June 20, 2026. He emphasised the installation of adequate toilet units at identified locations, proper sanitation and waste management systems, uninterrupted power supply, sufficient bedding capacity and efficient management of langar facilities. He further directed the SDRF to remain fully prepared with equipment and manpower to respond promptly to any situation during the yatra period. The Divisional Commissioner instructed the Fire and Emergency Services Department to ensure all necessary fire safety measures at lodging centres, langar sites and other locations with pilgrim

footfall. He directed the department to maintain readiness of fire tenders and emergency response teams. The Divisional Commissioner directed the Executive Engineer, JPDC, to ensure uninterrupted power supply at all lodging centres, camps and langar sites besides arranging an adequate number of generator sets as backup. The Divisional Commissioner directed the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Department, to ensure adequate water supply and creation of sufficient storage facilities at all lodging centres, langar sites and other identified locations to cater to the requirements of pilgrims and service providers. A three-hour discussion was held on various aspects of the

arrangements required for the smooth conduct of the pilgrimage. The Divisional Commissioner also emphasised the timing and movement plan of both Pahalgam-bound and Baltal-bound yatra convoys, including designated halts, traffic regulation measures and cut-off timings, and issued necessary directions for their strict implementation. Reviewing preparations at Yatra Camp Lamber, the Divisional Commissioner directed all concerned departments to expedite the pace of work and ensure completion of all pending arrangements by June 20, 2026. The Divisional Commissioner also reviewed the road and tunnel construction projects undertaken by NHAI.

Ward 68 residents thank MLA Dr. Narinder for sanctioning development works worth Rs 12 Cr



JAMMU, JUNE 8

Residents of Ward No. 68 expressed their heartfelt gratitude to MLA Dr. Narinder Singh Raina, for securing approval for various development projects worth approximately Rs 12 crore in the area.

A public programme was organized to acknowledge the MLA's efforts and commitment towards strengthening infrastructure and improving civic amenities in the ward.

Speaking on the occasion, local residents appreciated Dr. Raina for taking up key developmental issues and ensuring that long-pending demands of the people were addressed through the sanctioning of major projects. They said the approved

works would significantly improve roads, drainage, public utilities, and other essential facilities, benefiting thousands of residents.

They stated that the sanctioned development works fulfill a long-pending demand of the area that had remained unresolved for nearly 70 years. They said successive governments and representatives had failed to address the issue despite repeated requests from the public. The programme was attended by several BJP leaders and prominent citizens. Those present included Naresh Singh Jasrotia, District President, R.S. Pura-Jammu South; Rakesh Sangral, General Secretary, Jammu South; Ajay Partap Singh, President, Kunjwani Mandal; Vikram Charak,

General Secretary, Kunjwani Mandal; Reena Slathia, Himja Mehngi, Usha Rajput, Satya Rajput, and Rinku Kumar, Booth President.

Among other distinguished participants were Dr. Subhash Abrol, President, Greater Kailash Welfare Society; Vir Ji Bakshi; and Retired DIG J.L. Sharma, who lauded the developmental initiatives being undertaken in the constituency and appreciated the efforts of the elected representatives in addressing public concerns. The event was organized by Naresh Charak, Convenor, Industry Cell, R.S. Pura-Jammu South, along with Rajkumar, President, SC Morcha, Kunjwani Mandal, and senior BJP leader Nepal Chand. The organizers highlighted the importance of public participation in the development process and reaffirmed their commitment to working closely with the administration and elected representatives for the welfare of the area.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Narinder Singh Raina assured the people that development would continue to remain a top priority and that every effort would be made to ensure timely execution of the sanctioned projects.

He thanked the residents for their support and cooperation and reiterated his commitment to the overall progress and prosperity of Ward No. 68 and the Jammu South constituency.

Khet Bachao Abhiyan Awareness Camp Organized at Kotli Manotriya, Katra

REASI, JUNE 8

As part of the ongoing month-long Khet Bachao Abhiyan, the Department of Agriculture Jammu organized an awareness camp at Panchayat Kotli Manotriya, Katra, Sub-Division Reasi. To educate farmers about judicious fertilizer use, balanced nutrient management, soil health conservation, and the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices.

During the programme, farmers were sensitized about the importance of applying fertilizers based on crop requirements and soil test recommendations to enhance productivity while maintaining long-term soil fertility. The participants were also informed about the adverse effects of excessive and indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers on soil health and the environment. Emphasis was laid on the adoption of natural and organic farming practices as sustainable alternatives for improving soil quality and ensuring environmentally friendly agricultural production.

The officers and experts interacted extensively with the farmers and addressed their queries regarding balanced fertilizer application, nutrient management, organic inputs, soil health improvement, and



eco-friendly farming techniques. They encouraged farmers to adopt scientific and sustainable farming practices for increasing crop yields while preserving natural resources.

The awareness programme was attended by Shri Raju Mahajan, Plant protection Officer (PPO) Jammu; Shri Kuldeep Singh, Assistant Director Law Enforcement (ADLE) Jammu; Dr. Banarsi Lal, Head, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (VKV) Reasi; Shri Aftab Malik, Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer (SDAO), Reasi; and Shri Karandeve Singh, Agriculture Extension Officer (AEO), Reasi. The speakers highlighted

various initiatives of the Agriculture Department aimed at promoting balanced fertilization, soil health management, and sustainable farming practices. They also urged farmers to avail themselves of the benefits of departmental schemes and programmes designed to improve farm productivity and income.

The participating farmers appreciated the initiative and expressed their commitment to adopting balanced fertilizer use and sustainable farming practices for improving crop productivity, maintaining soil health, and ensuring long-term agricultural sustainability.

Coromandel International and Samunnati Sign MoU to Strengthen Agri-Input Access for FPOs and Rural Agri Ecosystem



JAMMU, JUNE 8

Coromandel International Limited, one of India's leading agri-solutions providers, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Samunnati Agri Value Chain Solutions Private Limited, India's leading agri-ecosystem platform. This collaboration will enable supply, promotion and distribution of agri-inputs to Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) across India. The MoU was signed by Madhab Adhikari, EVP & Business Head (Fertiliser, SSP & Nano)

Coromandel and Suresh Rajagopal, Executive Director, Samunnati in the presence of Mr. Narayanan Velayan, Executive Director - Crop Nutrition, Coromandel and other senior officials of Coromandel and Samunnati. The collaboration aims to strengthen market access and improve availability of high-quality agri-inputs from Coromandel, leveraging Samunnati's extensive FPO network and Coromandel's expertise in crop nutrition, crop protection and agri services. The partnership will also

explore customized marketing support initiatives, product demonstrations and technology adoption programs to support sustainable agricultural growth. In addition, Samunnati Finance Private Limited may provide financial assistance to eligible FPOs and agri ecosystem participants for procurement of Coromandel products, subject to separate arrangements and regulatory requirements.

Narayanan Velayan, Executive Director - Crop Nutrition, Coromandel, said, "This partnership with Samunnati aligns with our commitment to delivering innovative and sustainable agri-solutions to farmers across India. By combining Coromandel's strong product portfolio and field expertise with Samunnati's deep engagement with FPOs and agri value chain participants, we aim to improve access to quality agri-inputs, support the growth of a more resilient and efficient agri ecosystem."

Suresh Rajagopal, Executive Director, Samunnati, said, "At Samunnati, we are committed to enabling collective prosperity across the agri ecosystem.

Anger, bad desires and sensuality are humanity's greatest enemies: Swami Ram Swarup Ji

YOL, JUNE 8

On the 58th day of the ongoing 78-day Yajna dedicated to the recitation and propagation of all four Vedas at Ved Mandir, Yol, renowned Vedic scholar and Yoga Acharya Swami Ram Swarup Ji delivered an enlightening discourse based on Atharvaveda Mantras 7/77/1-2, emphasizing the destructive nature of bad desires, sensuality (Kaam) and anger (Krodh). Addressing devotees, Swami Ji stated that bad desires and anger are among the most powerful enemies of human beings. Repeated indulgence in these negative tendencies only strengthens them, ultimately leading to the destruction of one's character, peace and happiness. He explained that the Vedas compare bad desires and anger to barking dogs and wolves that carry away calves, symbolizing how these vices relentlessly torment and ultimately ruin human life. Swami Ram Swarup Ji stressed that reg-



ular practice of Asanas, Pranayama, meditation and spiritual discipline helps individuals overcome inner enemies such as bad desires, anger, pride, greed and attachment. He noted that a disciplined yogic lifestyle enables a person to attain mental balance, inner strength and lasting happiness. Highlighting the importance of self-control, he said that whenever someone attempts to disturb our peace through anger or hos-

tility, such negativity can be neutralized through sincere spiritual practices including Yoga, Naam-Jap and austerity. He added that God always protects the righteous and ensures that those driven by anger and wrongdoing ultimately face the consequences of their actions.

Swami Ji further explained that the Vedic tradition of Yajna (Agnihotra) plays a vital role in cultivating self-restraint, purifying the mind and senses, promoting good health and attracting prosperity. By living in accordance with Vedic principles, individuals can lead a balanced, disease-free and contented life.

Concluding his discourse, Swami Ram Swarup Ji urged devotees to maintain Yoga practice. Yajna/Agnihotra and Vedic study an integral part of their lives. He said that this timeless Vedic path destroys sins, grants longevity, peace and prosperity, and ultimately guides a person towards the supreme goal of Moksha (liberation).

Lavender festival showcases Baderwah as India's purple revolution hub: Adv. Devraj Sharma

JAMMU, JUNE 8

Senior BJP leader and former Sarpanch Adv. Devraj Sharma has lauded the visionary leadership and tireless efforts of Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh in making the Lavender Festival a resounding success and positioning Baderwah as the country's leading centre of the Purple Revolution.

In a statement issued here, Sharma said that under the dynamic guidance of Dr. Jitendra Singh, Baderwah has emerged as a national model for agri-entrepreneurship, scientific farming, rural livelihood generation and sustainable economic growth. He noted that the Lavender Mission has not only transformed the agricultural landscape of the region but has also opened new avenues of income and self-employment for farmers, youth and women.

Adv. Sharma also highly appreciated the dedicated contribution of the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Jammu, whose scientific interventions, technical expertise and continuous support have played a pivotal role in popu-



larizing lavender cultivation and other aromatic crops across the region.

He described the Lavender Festival as a unique platform that provided students, farmers, entrepreneurs and aspiring agri-startups with an invaluable opportunity to learn about the cultivation, processing and commercial potential of aromatic and medicinal plants, herbs and essential oil-bearing crops. The event, he said, effectively showcased the remarkable achievements of the Lavender Mission while highlighting value-addition opportunities and the immense future prospects of the sector.

"The transformation witnessed in Baderwah is a shining example of how science-driven agriculture can

uplift rural communities and create sustainable livelihoods. The Lavender Festival has become a symbol of innovation, entrepreneurship and agricultural diversification," Sharma remarked.

He further stated that the participation of scientists, industrial partners, progressive farmers and agricultural experts enriched the festival by providing firsthand insights into lavender cultivation, marketing strategies, essential oil extraction and entrepreneurship opportunities. Their experiences and success stories served as a source of inspiration for young farmers and students seeking to explore emerging opportunities in the agri-sector.

Adv. Devraj Sharma expressed confidence that the continued support of the Central Government, CSIR-IIIM Jammu and other stakeholders would further strengthen Jammu and Kashmir's position as a premier destination for aromatic and medicinal plant cultivation, contributing significantly to the vision of an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and a prosperous rural economy.

Govt. must take strict measures to rein in the liquor Mafia: Hindustan Shiv Sena



JAMMU, JUNE 8

Expressing serious concern over the open fleecing of the public by the liquor mafia Hindustan Shiv Sena State President Vikrant Kapoor has urged LG Manoj Sinha to take strict action against those charging above the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) and to cancel their licenses. He stated that the liquor mafia is openly robbing people by charging prices higher than the MRP, while officials from the concerned department are turning a blind eye to the situation.

Vikrant Kapoor made these remarks while addressing a

level. With a large number of tourists expected to visit from other states in the coming days, witnessing this extortion would not only damage the state's reputation but also cast a negative shadow on the image of the LG administration.

Vikrant Kapoor remarked that while shopkeepers generally do not charge more than the MRP for any commodity, the liquor mafia has become so unbridled that they are arbitrarily charging customers exorbitant amounts, while the concerned officials remain in a deep slumber. Vikrant Kapoor has urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to take stringent measures to rein in the liquor mafia and provide relief to the common people. He also reiterated his demand for the cancellation of licenses held by those engaging in such overcharging. He requested the Lieutenant Governor to take cognizance of the matter and issue instructions to the concerned officials to take strict action against the guilty. Hindustan Shiv Sena's State Senior Vice President and J&K in-charge Ramesh Gupta, senior leaders parveen Gupta, Sunil Debgotra, Jeevwan Kumar, Rakesh, Baba Ram Kaith, Abhishek, Himanshu and Amit along with women's wing leader Jyoti Devi and others were also present during the press conference.



Sat, Ashok review District training camps, mobilize leaders for '12 Years of Vishwaas, Vikas and Jan Kalyan' campaign



JAMMU, JUNE 8

J&K BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma (CA), along with BJP J&K General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul, Lok Sabha MP Jugal Kishore Sharma, Rajya Sabha MP Ghulam Ali Khatana, and former Deputy Chief Minister Dr. Nirmal Singh, addressed an organizational meeting at the BJP headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

The meeting was attended by senior party leaders who have been assigned responsibilities as speakers for various district-level training camps being organized across Jammu and Kashmir under the Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay Prashikshan Mahabhyasan 2026. A comprehensive review of the recently concluded district-level training camps was under-taken, while detailed discussions were held regarding the effective conduct of the upcoming phases of

the training programme. Sat Sharma, while addressing the meeting, emphasized that the training initiative is aimed at strengthening the party's organizational structure and equipping party workers with ideological clarity, leadership skills, and effective public outreach capabilities. He said that well-trained and dedicated workers are the backbone of the Bharatiya Janata Party and play a crucial role in carrying the party's vision and policies to every section of society.

Sat Sharma also reviewed preparations for the series of programmes being organized 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 highlighted that the programmes include special outreach initiatives, plantation drives, Swachh Bharat Abhyan

activities, Pragati Path Yatra, Bharat Sampark Sammelan, Jan Kalyan Shirs, International Yoga Day celebrations, exhibitions showcasing the achievements of the Modi Government, workshops on natural farming, and several other public engagement activities.

Sharma called upon the senior BJP leaders to actively spearhead these programmes across Jammu and Kashmir and ensure maximum public participation. He stressed that these initiatives should be transformed into effective mass outreach campaigns to connect with every section of society and make people aware of the transformative achievements and welfare initiatives undertaken by the Narendra Modi-led government during the past twelve years.

Ashok Koul underlined the importance of continuous organizational training and grassroots engagement. He said that the Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay Prashikshan Mahabhyasan is instrumental in creating a disciplined, ideologically committed, and service-oriented cadre capable of effectively addressing public concerns and strengthening the party at every level. He asked the designated speakers and party functionaries to ensure the successful implementation of the training camps and organizational programmes with dedication and commitment.

CCI expresses deep concern over alarming rise of chain snatching, burglaries and thefts across Jammu



JAMMU, JUNE 8

Arun Gupta, President Chamber of Commerce & Industry expresses deep anguish and concern over the alarming rise of chain snatching, burglaries and thefts across Jammu. He said the rising wave of daylight burglaries have installed a deep sense of insecurity and fear among the business community and public.

While quoting some incidents of thefts Sh. Arun Gupta said

that on May 26 daylight burglary was reported in New Plot where thieves broke in the locked house and stole cash and valuable items. Multiple thefts were reported in Gumat area targeting residential air conditioners and recently the thieves dismantled the roof of a shop in Gumat area for stealing the valuable items from the shop. Similarly there are many other theft cases reported in and around Jammu.

Arun Gupta pointed out that while the police are currently actively engaged in uprooting drug abuse from society, it is highly evident that the individuals involved in these recent thefts and snatching cases are themselves heavily driven by drug abuse. He emphasized that tackling the drug menace is directly linked to curbing these street crimes.

Arun Gupta further said through the Jammu Police is working honestly to apprehend the culprits, but recurring incidents of theft have created panic among the business community. He said that we cannot compromise with safety and security

of the public. We expect swift and proactive intervention from the law enforcing agencies for a safer environment so that peace and confidence is restored among the masses. He said that there is urgent need for a dedicated investigation in the matter to dismantle the gang targeting innocent people.

He urged upon the law enforcing agencies to accelerate the high definition CCTV Cameras at all critical intersections and vulnerable inner lanes, deploy additional patrolling units and establish routine check points in high risk zones especially during night hours.

We also appeal to the public and residents to remain vigilant and immediately report any suspicious individual and movement of vehicles to the nearby Police parties and also avoid wearing costly items or carrying easily accessible items in quiet areas to remain safe.

Kesri convenes anti-drug awareness meeting along RS Pura border

R.S. PURA, JUNE 8

Shiv Sena Hindustan organized a large anti-drug awareness meeting at Chak Shera village along the R.S. Pura border under the chairmanship of Jammu and Kashmir President Pandit Rajesh Kesri. The meeting witnessed the participation of local residents, youth, and party members, with a special focus on addressing the growing menace of drug abuse among border-area youth.

Speaking on the occasion, Pandit Rajesh Kesri expressed concern over the increasing attraction of some youngsters towards narcotics and emphasized the need for collective efforts to bring them back onto the right path. He said that drug addiction poses a serious threat to society and the future of the younger generation, and therefore awareness at the grassroots level is essential.

An awareness campaign was conducted during the meeting to educate villagers about the dangers of drug abuse, particularly the spread of heroin in border villages. Residents were urged to remain vigilant and immediately inform the local police, village sarpanch, or community leaders whenever they notice suspicious activities or individuals involved in drug trafficking.

Kesri stated that anti-national elements across the border do not want the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to progress and



contribute to the nation. He alleged that narcotics, especially heroin, are often smuggled through drones and dropped in border areas with the intention of trapping young people in addiction. He stressed that such conspiracies must be defeated through public awareness and community cooperation.

He further appealed to parents, teachers, social organizations, and village elders to play an active role in guiding the youth towards education, employment, sports, and opportunities to serve the nation, including recruitment into the armed and security forces. The youth are the future of the country, and it is our collective responsibility to protect them from the scourge of drugs," he

said. Shiv Sena Hindustan assured the villagers that it would continue to organize awareness drives and support all efforts aimed at safeguarding the younger generation from the dangers of narcotics. Among those prominently present on the occasion were village Pradhan Suresh Kumar, Ghara Ram, Ajay Bharti, Anchal Singh, Lal Singh, Bittu Ram, Asha Rani, Pooja Devi, Satya Devi, Darshan Devi, Neha Devi, Vijay Kumar, Satpal, and a large number of local residents. The meeting concluded with a collective pledge to strengthen the fight against drug abuse and ensure a safer and healthier future for the youth of the border region.

MLA Arvind Gupta inaugurates Rs 60 lakh lane & drain project in Ward No. 39

JAMMU, JUNE 8

Reaffirming his commitment towards strengthening civic infrastructure and improving public amenities across Jammu West, MLA Jammu West Arvind Gupta today inaugurated the construction work of lanes and drains in Ward No. 39.

The project, being undertaken at an estimated cost of Rs 60 lakh, aims to improve sanitation, strengthen drainage facilities and provide better connectivity for the residents of the area.

Speaking on the occasion, Arvind Gupta said that the project would address long-pending civic issues, including damaged lanes, inadequate drainage systems and waterlogging during the rainy season. He emphasized that the development of basic infrastructure remains a top priority and assured that every ward of Jammu West would continue to receive focused attention under the ongoing development initiatives.

The MLA stated that several lane and drain projects have already been completed or are underway across Jammu West to enhance civic amenities and improve the quality of life of the people. He reiterated that strengthening grassroots infrastructure is essential for ensuring sustainable urban develop-



ment and better living standards. Arvind Gupta directed the concerned officials and executing agency to maintain high-quality construction standards and ensure the timely completion of the project. He stressed that public funds must be utilized efficiently for maximum public benefit.

Local residents welcomed the initiative and expressed gratitude to the MLA for taking up the much-needed development work. They stated that the project would provide significant relief from drainage-related problems and improve overall

civic conditions in the locality. Among those present on the occasion were BJP State Treasurer Prabhat Singh Jammwal, Mandal President Kushant Prajapati, party leaders, officials from the concerned departments, local representatives and a large number of residents. The gathering appreciated the continuous efforts being made by MLA Arvind Gupta towards the development of Jammu West and expressed confidence that such initiatives would further accelerate the pace of progress in the constituency.

Common Agenda, Convenor and Strong Leadership Essential for the 2029 Battle: Manish Sahni



JAMMU, JUNE 8

Manish Sahni, President of the Jammu & Kashmir unit of Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasahb Thackeray), welcomed the meeting of the INDIA Alliance held at the Constitution Club in New Delhi, describing it as an important step towards strengthening the democratic opposition in the country. He said that the time has come to move beyond meetings and photo opportunities, and that the alliance must now take concrete and timely decisions to address the political challenges ahead.

Sahni said that the unity of opposition parties played a significant role in preventing the BJP from securing an outright majority in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. However, he noted that the 2029 electoral battle would be far more challenging and would require a well-organized and strategic approach from the opposition.

He emphasized that if the INDIA Alliance wishes to emerge as a credible and effective alternative in 2029, it must immediately take three key steps: announce a Common Minimum Programme, appoint a full-time

convenor for the alliance, and present a clear national leadership face before the people.

Manish Sahni suggested that Shiv Sena Chief Uddhav Thackeray should be projected as the national face of the alliance for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. He said, "Among the opposition leaders confronting the Modi-Shah combine today, Uddhav Thackeray stands out as one of the most resilient and principled leaders. Even in the most adverse circumstances, he has never compromised on his political ideology, democratic values, or constitutional commitments."

Referring to Jammu and Kashmir, Sahni said that after the BJP's success in the West Bengal Assembly elections, the Union Territory has increasingly become a political priority for the party leadership. He alleged that attempts to politically destabilize the democratically elected government in Jammu and Kashmir have intensified.

Sahni further stated that the INDIA Alliance should not restrict itself to electoral politics alone. He called upon all opposition parties to unite and launch nationwide movements and protests against rising inflation, unemployment, farmers' distress, concerns of youth,

Army reaches out to veterans and Veer Naris in remote Dharmari, Reasi



REASI, JUNE 8

Demonstrating its unwavering commitment towards the welfare of the veteran fraternity and their families, the Indian Army organised an interaction programme with Ex-Servicemen and Veer Naris at Dharmari in the remote and mountainous region of Reasi district, Jammu and Kashmir.

The event brought together 15 Ex-Servicemen, 03 Veer Naris and 12 local residents, providing a dedicated platform for open dialogue on issues concerning veterans' welfare, pension-related matters, healthcare assistance, educational opportunities for children, employment prospects for dependents and access to various government and Army-sponsored welfare schemes.

During the interaction, Indian Army representatives reaffirmed the Army's enduring bond with its veterans and

assured participants of all possible assistance in addressing their concerns. Detailed information was shared regarding welfare initiatives, healthcare facilities, resettlement opportunities and support mechanisms available to Ex-Servicemen and

their families. The programme underscored the Indian Army's continued efforts to reach out to veterans residing in remote and far-flung areas, ensuring that no member of the military family remains disconnected from welfare networks and institutional support. The interaction also provided an opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable contribution and sacrifices made by Ex-Servicemen and Veer Naris towards the nation. Participants expressed their appreciation for the initiative and lauded the proactive efforts of the Indian Army in fostering a strong and enduring relationship with the veteran community. The event concluded with a reaffirmation of the Indian Army's steadfast commitment towards the welfare, dignity and well-being of Ex-Servicemen.

Samba Police seizes 06 vehicles for illegal mining

SAMBA, JUNE 8

Continuing its drive against illegal mining, Samba Police has seized six vehicles in the jurisdiction of Police Stations Samba and Ghagwal which were being used for illegal transportation/mining of the construction material. Police teams headed by SHO PS Samba, Incharges of Police Posts Supwal & Goran of PS Samba and Incharge of Police Post Rajpura while performing patrolling duty in their jurisdictional areas have seized three dumpers bearing registration Nos. JK21C-2988, JK08R-5558, JK21C-0372, a tractor trolley bearing registration No. JK21L-9218 and two tractor trolleys without registration Nos. which were being used for illegal transportation/mining of the construction material in the area. The above-mentioned vehicles have been seized by Samba Police and handed over to the Geology & Mining Department Samba for further legal action.



North in News

EDITORIAL

Peace, progress and governance the only aspirations of people of UT

Peace, progress and governance the only aspirations of people of UT because after decades of disruption, uncertainty, and narratives imposed from outside, the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir have made it unambiguously clear through their choices, their participation, and their everyday priorities that they want normalcy, opportunity, and accountable administration, not conflict, not slogans, and not the politics of fear. The evidence lies in the record 58.46 percent turnout in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the highest in 35 years, and the peaceful, festive conduct of the 2024 Assembly elections where 63.88 percent voted without a single major incident. The long queues of youth for recruitment rallies of police, Army, Agri, banks, and PSUs, and more than two crore tourists almost every year since 2023 who are welcomed by homestay owners, shikara walas, pony walas, and hotel staff whose livelihoods now depend on stability, and the 5.2 lakh registrations on the JK Employment Portal, the 8,400 startups recognized by DPIIT from the UT, and the 84,000 houses completed under PMAY-Urban and PMAY-Gramin, and the 100 percent electrification and 75 percent tap water coverage under Jal Jeevan Mission, and the 1.5 lakh crore worth of investment proposals received after the 2021 Industrial Policy with ₹38,000 crore already grounded in IT, manufacturing, food processing, and tourism, and the 3 new medical colleges, 2 AIIMS, 7 nursing colleges, and IIT, IIM, and NIFT campuses that have begun to reverse the education exodus, and the 35,000 km of roads macadamized under PMGSY and PWD since 2019, and the completion of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link that brings Kashmir into the national railway grid and cuts travel time and cost, and the 4 national highways, 2 ring roads, and Zojila Tunnel that end geographic isolation, and the 200 percent increase in GST collection and 42 percent rise in own tax revenue that shows economic formalization, and the 98 percent Aadhaar saturation and 100 percent DBT coverage that has reduced leakages in pensions, scholarships, and welfare, and the 45,000 self-help groups under JKRLM that have given women credit, dignity, and voice, and the 7,000 youth trained under Himayat and Udaan who are now placed in corporates, and the 1,100 panchayats that went digital with e-GramSwraj and have started publishing accounts, and the Back to Village and My Town My Pride programs where officers spend nights in villages to solve grievances on the spot, and the LG's Grievance Cell that disposed of 4.8 lakh complaints with 92 percent satisfaction, and the decline in stone pelting from 2,654 incidents in 2016 to zero in 2023 and 2024, and the fall in civilian killings from 55 in 2019 to 14 in 2023, and the surrender of 190 youth who were misguided, and the surrender-cum-rehabilitation policy that gives them skill and stipend, and the opening of cinema halls in Srinagar, Pulwama, and Shopian after 32 years, and the night flights from Srinagar airport, and the G20 Tourism Working Group meet in 2023 that showcased normalcy to 60 countries, and the Khelo India Winter Games in Gulmarg that drew 1,200 athletes, and the Tulip Garden that hosted 3.7 lakh visitors in 25 days. All of this is possible only because peace has returned as the baseline. The UT's story now is not about what was lost, but about what is being built, and what is being built is a life of dignity, and dignity needs no slogan, it needs systems.

RAJNI SHARMA, EDITOR

Ethics of AI and the edge of expression

BY RAJDEEP PATHAK

Courtesy the Instagram handle of The Indian Express, the sight of factory workers wearing head cameras to train artificial intelligence should trouble anyone who cares about dignity at work. What looks like a modern data-collection exercise is, in reality, a new form of labour extraction, where the human effort is being captured, packaged, and fed into machines that may one day – very soon – replace the very people who supplied the knowledge. In a textile factory in Nagpur, worker Ashish Narayan reportedly described the experience in a bitter phrase when he said that it feels like “working in your own grave, while you make your own casket.”

This is so powerful because it says what many people hesitate to admit openly, and that is the AI economy can depend on human skill while quietly erasing human value. The practice at the centre of this issue is known as ‘egocentric data’, which means first-person recordings of how people perform physical tasks. Cameras worn on the forehead or body capture movements, gestures, and decision-making patterns so machines can learn to imitate them. This is not just a technical process. It is also a workplace relationship. When workers do not know what is being recorded, where it goes, or how it will be used later, the line between training and surveillance becomes dangerously thin.

The first ethical issue is ‘consent’. If workers fear losing their jobs or already earn very little, they cannot truly refuse. So ‘voluntary’ participation can be coercive in practice. The second issue is ‘ownership’. When a worker’s movements, skills, and speed train a profitable AI, who gets the value? If only the company benefits, the worker has effectively given unpaid intellectual labour in

physical form, while receiving only a small hourly wage and no share of long-term gains. The third issue is ‘privacy’. Constant recording in factories can capture more than work tasks, revealing habits, relationships, stress, and sensitive personal details about workers and their safety, per se.

This raises a deeper concern for India, which has become a battleground for global AI firms looking to enter enterprise markets, win developers, and lock businesses into their ecosystems. That competition may create jobs in the short term, but it also risks normalising a model where workers are turned into data sources before being replaced by the systems they helped create. The danger is not limited to factories. If this logic spreads, it could reshape how we think about labour itself. Human effort may no longer be valued for the dignity it carries, but only for the data it can generate.

That is a dangerous shift in a country where inequality already affects who gets secure work, who gets lower wages, and who gets listened to. This practice bypasses basic intellectual property fairness. Decades of specialized, tacit experience, such as the nuanced, unwritten intuition a human worker develops over a lifetime of labour, are extracted without fair compensation or long-term residuals. Critics argue that this process functions as a systematic expropriation of human craftsmanship, commodifying highly precise labour to feed growing corporate capital.

The trajectory of human progress has always been mirrored by the tools we create. From the steam engines of the Industrial Revolution to the silicon chips of the digital era, technology has consistently redefined the boundaries of work, society, and identity. Today, we stand on the precipice of a far more profound shift, encircled by the

ever-expanding rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and advanced robotics. No longer confined to executing pre-written code or mathematical scripts, modern AI models can reason, generate creative content, and systematically learn to replicate complex physical tasks. Yet, as AI deepens its roots into our daily workflows, it brings along an uncomfortable dynamic.

The rapid deployment of these technologies has outpaced our legal framework and ethical vocabulary. We find ourselves balancing between an automated future of unprecedented productivity and a dystopian landscape characterized by labour exploitation, the erasure of individual agency, and a fundamental misunderstanding of what makes human expression unique. Beyond the immediate social and economic strains, the unchecked expansion of artificial intelligence faces a more volatile, physical constraint – that of geopolitics and energy. The narrative surrounding AI often paints it as an ethereal, weightless cloud of pure intellect. In reality, it is an immensely fragile physical infrastructure business that relies heavily on cheap, stable natural resources and highly concentrated supply chains. Recent global instability has exposed this reality. The US push on technology relies on huge, long-term investments, amounting to many billions of dollars from Middle Eastern state funds. But local political conflicts in that region have put those investments at risk. At the same time, data centres are hitting big energy shortages at home. In the US, about 40 percent of server power comes from natural gas.

As geopolitical tensions raise fuel prices, the cost of running these centres have gone up sharply.

Beyond the hype, more than 80 percent of corporate AI projects collapse before or immediately after the proof-of-concept stage because of poor data inte-

gration and huge upfront costs. Crucially, when algorithms leave structured digital sandboxes, such as code repositories, curated text databases, or predictable logistics grids and confront the chaotic, messy reality of physical, emotional human life, they fail spectacularly. A viral video from a “Future Era” robot store in Shenzhen captures this limitation. A multimillion-dollar humanoid robot took the stage to perform Michael Jackson’s 1983 hit “Billie Jean.” At first it managed a few preprogrammed, passable moves. But when it stepped onto a slightly raised edge of the stage, its balance system collapsed.

The robot stumbled in jerky, mechanical contortions. The act ended not with applause but with a technician walking onstage, seizing the inert machine by its frame, and dragging it off like broken office equipment. It is implied that genuine artistic expression depends on subtle micro-dynamics – facial shifts, the intentional catching of breath, and the charged weight of silence. Those cues arise from an interior emotional life like grief, joy, defiance or vulnerability. Lacking inner consciousness, machines can only mimic such forms, producing an uncanny, hollow caricature or mimicry. Artificial intelligence is neither an omnipotent digital messiah nor a harmless, cute novelty designed for social media entertainment. It is a highly powerful, deeply flawed, and resource-intensive automation tool. If we are to build an ethical future, our regulatory priorities must shift away from abstract sci-fi worries of machine sentience and focus directly on tangible human protections. We must establish rigid legal firewalls around data collection, ensuring that egocentric data harvesting can never be used as a coercive tool to strip workers of their livelihood without clear compensation.

The Ultimate Reality Hack

BY SUNIL SHARAN

Recently (on May 7 and 8), Swami Sandarshananda of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur, presented a beautifully modernized view of Hinduism in two succinct commentaries. However, a large segment of the educated class in India, trained to view reality entirely through a Mill-Macaulay-Marxist framework, tends to dismiss traditional faith as backward and ancient knowledge as obsolete mythology.

This bias is particularly entrenched in our elite institutions, making one wonder how many readers actually engaged past the opening lines of those profound commentaries. It is with these sceptical readers in mind that the following exploration is offered. Written from the perspective of a non-expert with a scientific background and tailored for a contemporary Gen-Z audience, this is not a traditional religious discourse. Instead, it is a conceptual journey into the technical architecture of one of history’s most radical philosophies.

The modern vibe check is reaching a breaking point. Our generation is hyperconnected yet deeply fragmented, constantly toggling between the polished simulations of social media and the existential dread of a world that feels increasingly noisy. We look for a spiritual

fix, but usually, that just leads us to expensive crystals or mindfulness apps that feel like putting a band-aid on a structural software error. If you are a humanities student obsessed with ontology (the study of being) or a physics nerd looking for the master equation of existence, it is time to move past the idea that ancient Indian thought is just a collection of peaceful platitudes.

Let us rebrand the conversation. We need to perform a hard reset on how we view Advaita Vedanta. It is not a religion; it is a high-level engineering manual for the human operating system. It is an intellectual tech stack designed to debug the code of the ego and reveal the singular server running the entire simulation. In humanities seminars, you are likely to encounter Western philosophy as a discursive, academic pursuit. From Plato to Postmodernism, the goal is often to build an intellectual map of reality through reason and language. It is essentially a theoretical simulation.

You can master the logic of Kierkegaard or Sartre while sipping an oat milk latte, and your internal state of consciousness remains exactly the same. The map is the end goal. Ancient Indian philosophy, however, is termed Darshana, which translates to vision or point of view. It is less about thinking and more about observing. If

Western philosophy is a lecture on the optics of a lens, Darshana is the engineering calibration that allows the lens to actually focus. It is the difference between studying the theory of light and actually flipping the switch in a dark room.

To understand where Advaita fits, we need to look at the Shat-darshana, the six major orthodox schools of Indian thought. Think of these as different specialized engineering departments, each with a specific user manual for reality: Nyaya and Vaisheshika: The Logic and Material Science departments. They handle the rules of debate and the atomistic structure of the world. Samkhya and Yoga: The System Architecture and UI/UX departments. Samkhya enumerates the components of nature, while Yoga provides the practical interface to control the mind. Mimamsa: The Protocol and Procedure department, focused on the ritualistic data of the Vedas.

Vedanta: The Core Research and Development department based on the Upanishads. Within the Vedanta department, you find various subclasses based on different system interpretations. There is Dvaita (Dualism – User and System are eternally separate) and Vishishtadvaita (Qualified Non-dualism – User is a component of the System). Then there is Advaita Vedanta (Non-

dualism). This is the most radical subclass. It posits that the User, the System, and the Code are all one single, non-dual reality called Brahman.

The perception of multiplicity, of being separate from the person next to you or the phone in your hand, is just a rendering error known as Maya. If we treat Advaita Vedanta as an engineering textbook, we can strip away the mysticism and look at its functional specs through Ontology and Epistemology (the theory of knowledge). This is a structural Error 404. We superimpose the qualities of the Not-Self (the fluctuating data of our bodies, our thoughts, and our social media feeds) onto the Self (the constant, unchanging background of awareness).

You think you are your anxiety, rather than the screen upon which the anxiety is being projected. How do we know what is real? Advaita uses Jnana as its primary tool. This is not knowing a fact like a trivia answer; it is a cognitive recalibration. It is an epistemological shift where you learn to distinguish between the Signal (Atman/Consciousness) and the Noise (the world of objects). To achieve this, Advaita uses a systematic negation algorithm called Neti-Neti (“Not this, Not that”). You delete every false identification – “I am not this body, I am not this social status, I am not this memory”.



DC Kathua presides over awareness programme under 100-day Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan

KATHUA, JUNE 08: As part of the ongoing 100-day Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, the District Administration Kathua, in collaboration with the Department of Excise, today organised an awareness programme at Chak Drab Khan in Block Nagri. Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rajesh Sharma presided over the programme. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner said the meaningful engagement of youth in education, skill development and productive activities was the most effective



way to protect them from drug abuse. He urged the youth to avail themselves of the benefits of various government initiatives

including Mission YUVA and Tejaswini, which are designed to promote entrepreneurship, self-employment and skill enhancement. The Deputy Commissioner informed the gathering that the District Administration would soon organise counselling sessions for students who had recently passed their Class 10 and 12 examinations to guide them on higher education, career opportunities and skill development avenues. He further announced that a multi-department awareness and outreach camp would be organised in the village shortly to educate the public about various Centrally Sponsored and Union Territory Government welfare

schemes. On the occasion, the participants also took a Nasha Mukht pledge to spread awareness about the harmful effects of narcotics and to contribute towards the success of the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan. Appealing to the public to support the campaign, the Deputy Commissioner called upon all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, community leaders and youth, to join hands in making Kathua a drug-free district and to contribute towards the success of the 100-day Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan.

Director of Horticulture Jammu reviews development activities in Poonch district

POONCH, JUNE 08: Director of Horticulture Jammu, Gul Syed visited Poonch district and conducted a comprehensive review of horticulture activities being carried out in the area. During his visit, the Director held a meeting with the Horticulture Officer and non-gazetted staff of the Horticulture Department Poonch. He reviewed the progress of various departmental schemes and discussed measures to improve horticulture services for farmers. Gul Syed also visited the Government Fruit Plant Nursery Poonch and the MOCH Rajpura Mandi, where he inspected the ongoing activities and



infrastructure. He issued necessary directions to the Horticulture Development Officer and nursery staff regarding the grafting of pecan nut plants and stressed the importance of maintaining high-quality planting material. The Director directed the

department to establish demonstration plots of high-density fruit plants in the nursery so that farmers can observe their performance and be motivated to adopt high-density orchards instead of traditional low-yielding orchards of normal density.

Div Com Kashmir reviews Flood Mitigation Preparedness, Disaster Management Readiness across Districts

SRINAGAR, JUNE 08: In view of the impending monsoon season, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Monday convened a high-level meeting with Deputy Commissioners of the Valley to review flood mitigation measures, disaster preparedness, and the status of emergency response infrastructure across the region.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners, senior officers from the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), the Irrigation Department, and the Assistant Commissioner Central.

During the review, the Divisional Commissioner assessed the preparedness of districts with regard to updating the India Disaster Resource Network (IDRN) inventory, formulation of

contingency plans, availability of rescue shelters, identification of flood-prone villages and low-lying areas, network shadow zones, and the availability of satellite communication sets with field officers. He also reviewed district-wise data on operational helpdays, boats, dewatering pumps, awareness programmes, and mock drills conducted to enhance disaster response capabilities.

Emphasising the need for proactive preparedness, the Divisional Commissioner directed all Deputy Commissioners to replenish critical resources and ensure timely updating of the IDRN portal with details of rescue equipment and other essential resources.

He further underscored the importance of round-the-clock

functioning of District Emergency Operation Centres and instructed district administrations to formulate comprehensive contingency plans to facilitate swift rescue operations and effective flood mitigation during emergencies.

To strengthen inter-agency coordination, he directed the district administrations to share the geographical coordinates of all operational helpdays with the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), SDRF, Police, and the Army.

Special instructions were issued to the district administrations of Ganderbal and Anantnag to undertake Yatra-specific disaster management preparations to ensure the safety and security of pilgrims during the forthcoming pilgrimage season. The Divisional

Commissioner also instructed the Deputy Commissioner Baramulla to facilitate the allotment of land for the establishment of a permanent SDRF deployment at Gulnagar, aimed at enhancing emergency response capacity in the tourist destination.

Also, he urged all Deputy Commissioners to convene meetings of respective District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs) to strengthen inter-departmental coordination, optimise resource sharing, and sensitise all stakeholders regarding disaster preparedness and response mechanisms.

He stressed on ensuring a coordinated response framework to effectively tackle any flood-related exigencies during the monsoon season.

Administrative Judge lays Foundation Stone for New Lawyers' Chambers at District Court Complex Anantnag

ANANTNAG, JUNE 08: Administrative Judge for District Anantnag, Justice Rajesh Oswal, conducted an official visit to the District Court Complex here today to lay the foundation stone for the construction of new Lawyers' Chambers-a pivotal infrastructural upgrade for the district's legal fraternity. Upon his arrival, he was accorded a ceremonial Guard of Honor. The official proceedings commenced with a welcome address by the Principal District & Sessions Judge

(PD&SJ), Anantnag, Tahir Khurshid Raina. During the program, the Interim President of the District Bar Association, Advocate Peer Shah, presented a comprehensive memorandum of demands to the Administrative Judge on behalf of the legal community. Justice Oswal, in his keynote address, underscored that the proposed chambers represent more than just architectural growth; they mark a significant milestone in strengthening the justice delivery system.

DDC Doda reviews progress of capex works



DODA, JUNE 08: To accelerate developmental activities in the district, District Development Commissioner Doda, Krishan Lal today chaired a review meeting on Capex works at the conference hall of the DC Office, Doda.

During the meeting, officers from various departments presented detailed updates on the ongoing developmental projects across the district. He issued directions to ensure quality execution and timely completion of all sanctioned works.

The meeting also reviewed

the performance of Urban Local Bodies, with a focus on developmental and civic improvement works including drainage systems, sanitation, beautification initiatives, lane and drain construction, solid waste management and other urban infrastructure projects.

The meeting laid special focus on works pertaining to the Health Department, including the construction of health buildings, boundary wall fencing and BMO complexes.

Reviewing the works under the Rural Development Department, the District Development Commissioner assessed the progress under BDC grants and the physical performance under MGNREGA. The District Development Commissioner directed all officers concerned to expedite work and ensure completion within the stipulated timelines.

DC Anantnag inspects SANJY track, crucial locations

Takes on site review of facilities, overall arrangements

ANANTNAG, JUNE 08: Deputy Commissioner Anantnag (Yatra Officer Pahalgam Axis), Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat today conducted a comprehensive inspection of the Shri Anamath Ji Yatra (SANJY) track and crucial transit locations extending up to Sheshnag. The DC was accompanied by a team of senior officers and representatives from concerned agencies, including Commandant BRO, CEO PDA, ADC, SES Jal Shakti, PWD and KPCL, ACD, SDM Pahalgam, CMO, Exen JG, DD FR&S, AD PCS&CA, advance party members, DE BS&NL and representatives from telecom service providers. The aim of the day long

on site inspection was to take stock of the facilities and to review the overall arrangements for the upcoming SANJY-2026.

The inspection commenced from the Nunwan Base Camp where the DC inspected the facilities for potable water, electricity, health care, tentage and other essential services being put in place in a time bound manner. He called for early installation of adequate number of toilets, taking necessary measures for hygiene and sanitation and preparation of space for langars so the devotees are facilitated properly.

At Chandanwari, the DC issued similar instructions, asking the

concerned officers that proper functioning of hospital, essential stock storage and telecom services at the station be ensured.

During the track visit, the DC inspected the physical condition of the track, the logistical arrangements handled by BRO (BEACON) and assessed the track decongestion needs as well as the demarcation of vulnerable areas and safety and utility layouts.

At Sheshnag, the DC held a review meeting with all the officers and issued several key directions to facilitate a smooth, safe and seamless Yatra for ease and convenience of the pilgrims. The Chief Medical Officer was directed to

establish robust medical facilities and basic emergency first-aid setups at suitable intervals along the track, which must include the deployment of dedicated medical staff and a sufficient stock of oxygen cans to assist pilgrims facing high-altitude challenges.

Furthermore, the Superintendent Engineers from PW(R&B), KPCL (PDD), and Hydraulic Jal Shakti, along with the Executive Engineer of Flood Control, were directed to ensure flawless infrastructure, stable water supplies, and effective mitigation measures to address the issues of emergent nature.

Key aspects of Draft Master Plan-2044 reviewed at Anantnag

ANANTNAG, JUNE 08: A meeting to discuss various aspects of GIS-based Draft Master Plan-2044 for Anantnag, Bijbehara and Mattan towns with public representatives,

line departments and other stakeholders was held today at Dak Banglalong, Khanabal.

The meeting was attended by MLA Anantnag West, Abdul Majeed Bhat, MLA Shangus (Anantnag East), Reyaz Ahmad Khan, ADC, Vikas Ahlawat, Chief Town Planner, CPO, CIO, Exens Irrigation and REW, CEO MCA, EOs of MCA, Bijbehara and Mattan, officials from Pollution Control Board besides representatives of market and trader association, civil society members and other stakeholders attended the meeting. The proceedings focused on evaluating inputs received from various stakeholders to ensure comprehensive and planned urban development in the region. The ADC informed that the Draft Master Plan 2044 is available on District

Website and about 150 objections/suggestions have been received from general public, traders association and other stakeholders so far. During the meeting, key aspects of the Draft Master Plan were reviewed and discussed threadbare. A detailed GIS-based map was presented, highlighting various land-use categories including residential, commercial, agricultural, industrial, and horticultural zones across the three towns. It was informed that a primary survey of all three towns viz. Anantnag, Bijbehara, and Mattan, has been conducted to gather ground-level data for effective planning. On the occasion, regional-level issues were delineated upon, with emphasis on addressing key developmental challenges in a coordinated manner. The stakeholders stressed the need to give a practical and implementable shape to the Master Plan and to address all genuine concerns and suggestions while finalizing the document.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
CORRIGENDUM TO STBA NOTIFICATION
In partial modification to the STBA notification issued by this office, it is notified that due to the National Holiday on 26.06.2026, the last date for receipt of revised applications has been revised.
Instead of: Applications will be received in Commercial Branch, DRM Office, Jammu between 10.00 hrs. to 15.00 hrs. on 26.06.2026.
Read as: Applications will be received in Commercial Branch, DRM Office, Jammu between 10.00 hrs. to 15.00 hrs. on 25.06.2026.
All other terms and conditions of the notification shall remain unaltered.
SAVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 198405

District Admin Baramulla mourns demise of Father of DC Udhampur

BARAMULLA, JUNE 08: District Administration Baramulla has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of Shri Dawa Sherpa, IPS (Retd.), former Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) and father of Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Minga Sherpa. Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, S. F. Hamid, expressed deep condolences on the sad demise and conveyed his heartfelt sympathies to Minga Sherpa and the bereaved family. He prayed for strength and courage to the family to bear this irreparable loss and for eternal peace to the departed soul. Officers and officials of the District Administration Baramulla also joined in expressing their sympathies and solidarity with the bereaved family during this difficult time.

Plantation Drive conducted at Doodhpathri to promote Environmental Conservation

BUDGAM, JUNE 08: Forest Department today organized a plantation drive at the picturesque tourist destination of Doodhpathri as part of its ongoing efforts to promote environmental conservation and ecological sustainability. The drive was attended by Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Khansahib, Jahangir Ahmad Giri, and Munsiff Chadoora, Syed Touyeb Bukhari, among other officials and stakeholders.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT
PHE MECHANICAL DIVISION SOUTH JAMMU
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
#NIT/PHE/JMS/10 of 2026-27 Dated 05-06-2026
Executive Engineer PHE Mechanical Division South Jammu, on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, invites tenders by a tendering mode from registered tenderers for:

Name of the Work	Name of the Division	Cost of Tender Document/Tender Fee (Rs)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Validity of Rates
1	2	3	4	5
Providing and Fitting of components to 250 KVA manuvr. voltage stabilizer installed at GPS - Gandhi Nagar near Noh Pan	PHE Mech. Division South Jammu	Rs. 200.00 (Non Refundable) In the shape of a challan/singla window challan of JMC (sent) to Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Mech. Division South Jammumunder fee receipt through online payment through the JMC link http://www.jmc.gov.in/online-payment.html	@ 2% of estimated cost/tender value in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division South Jammu	Bid shall be valid for 180 days

1) Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://tenders.gov.in> from 06-06-2026 (11:00 AM) and uploaded from 06-06-2026 (04:00 PM) to 12-06-2026 (3:00 PM). The complete bidding process will be online <http://tenders.gov.in>
2) Bids must be accompanied by EMD and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 3 & 4 of the table.
3) The bid shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 180 days from the date of opening of bids. In any bidder/tender withdraws his bid before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the tenderer shall be debarred from participating in tendering process for a period of 1 year.
4) The Technical bids of the tenderer received shall be opened online in the office of Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Department PHE Mechanical Division South Jammu on 12-06-2026 at 3:00 P.M. or any other day convenient to the Ex. Engineer in the Office of Executive Engineer, PHE Mechanical Division South Jammu.
5) The Financial bids of the tenderer received shall also be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Department PHE Mechanical Division South Jammu during office hours and shall be communicated separately.
6) Cost of bidding document in shape of a challan/singla window challan of JMC pledged to Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Mech. Division South Jammumunder fee receipt through online payment through the JMC link <http://www.jmc.gov.in/online-payment.html>
7) The original instruments in respect of cost of document, EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR and other relevant document of a bidder will be required to be submitted to the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mech. Division South Jammu within 05 days after opening of financial bids in the office. In case the original documents are not submitted by the bidder within 05 days after opening of financial bids, the tender will be cancelled and the bidder will not be allowed to participate in any further future tendering process in the division for a period of one year.
8) Other details can be seen inside the detailed tender document.

No: PHE/MS/884-88
Dated:- 05-06-2026

DIPJ-3311/26

A.I.E. Sub Div
Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech. Division South Jammu

Kapil Dev on Shreyas Iyer replacing Suryakumar Yadav: 'Only selectors can explain the decision'

New Delhi, June 8: Former India captain Kapil Dev has weighed in on India's recent T20I captaincy reshuffle, which saw a major change in the leadership setup. On Monday, the 1983 World Cup-winning skipper said the decision to replace Suryakumar Yadav with Shreyas Iyer must have been carefully evaluated by the selectors before being implemented.

On Saturday, the Ajiit Agarkar-led BCCI selection committee announced India's squads for the upcoming tours of Ireland and England, as well as the 2026 Asian Games, with the biggest talking point being Iyer's appointment as T20I captain in place of Suryakumar. Sharing his views on the leadership change, Kapil said the move would have been



made after considerable thought by the selection committee. "I think the selectors must have thought about it, and that is why they made the change," Kapil Dev told IANS. He further added that those closely involved with the game and

experts on television, can comment on it," he added. Shreyas Iyer's remarkable return to the top

After enduring several setbacks in recent years, Iyer's elevation to the T20I captaincy marks a remarkable turnaround. He had fallen out of India's T20I plans after December 2023 but has now forced his way back into the setup, and that too as captain, through consistent performances and strong leadership credentials. In 2024, Iyer led Kolkata Knight Riders to their third IPL title. He had earlier guided Delhi Capitals to the IPL final in 2020 and Punjab Kings to the summit clash in 2024, becoming the first captain in IPL history to lead three different franchises to an IPL final. He also captained Mumbai to the Syed

Mushtaq Ali Trophy title in the 2024-25 season. Iyer was drafted into India's squad for the home T20I series against New Zealand ahead of the T20 World Cup as a replacement for the injured Tilak Varma, but he did not get an opportunity to play. The 31-year-old now returns to the T20I setup not only as a batter but as India's 15th captain in the shortest format. The captaincy switch also marks the second successive instance of an Indian captain being replaced soon after lifting an ICC trophy. Earlier, Rohit Sharma led India to the Champions' Trophy title in March 2025 but was replaced by Shubman Gill as ODI captain ahead of India's tour of Australia later that year.

Brazil dealt Wesley injury blow ahead of FIFA World Cup opener; Ancelotti calls up Ederson

New Delhi, June 8: Brazil's preparations for the 2026 FIFA World Cup have suffered an early setback after defender Wesley was ruled out of the tournament with a thigh injury, forcing head coach Carlo Ancelotti to make a late change to his squad. The Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) confirmed on Sunday that the AS Roma full-back sustained an adductor muscle injury in his left thigh during Brazil's 2-1 friendly win over Egypt in Cleveland. Subsequent MRI scans revealed the extent of the problem, ruling him out just days before the Selecao begin their World Cup campaign. In response, Ancelotti has called up Atalanta midfielder Ederson, who is expected to join the squad in the United States on Monday. The injury leaves



Brazil without a natural right-back in their 26-man squad, increasing the likelihood of experienced defenders Danilo and Ibanez being deployed in the position during the tournament. "The MRI scan revealed a muscle injury to the adductor muscle in his left thigh," the CBF said in a statement. "The CBF regrets the injury. Wesley is a player much loved by the squad and will always be considered part of this team as it seeks to win its sixth World Cup title."

Brazil will kick off their Group C campaign against Morocco on June 13 at the New York-New Jersey Stadium before facing Haiti in Philadelphia on June 19 and Scotland in Miami on June 24. Despite the setback, Brazil remain among the favourites to lift the trophy, boasting a star-studded squad that includes Allison, Ederson Moraes, Marquinhos, Casemiro, Bruno Guimaraes, Neymar Jr., Raphinha, Vinicius Jr. and teenage.

India register historic innings and 300-run Test win over Afghanistan; Sundar, Suthar dominate

New Delhi, June 8: India completed the biggest victory in their Test history as debutant spinner Manav Suthar starred in a crushing 564/8 Test win over Afghanistan on the third day of the one-off Test at the New PCA Stadium on Monday. After posting a mammoth 564/8 declared in their first innings, India bowled Afghanistan out for 152 before lunch and enforced the follow-on. In the second innings, visitors collapsed for 112 as the hosts wrapped up the contest in emphatic fashion. Making his Test debut, left-arm spinner Suthar emerged as the standout performer, claiming a six-wicket haul in Afghanistan's first innings and finishing with seven



wickets in the match to cap a memorable introduction to international cricket. Opting to bat first, India piled up 564/8 declared thanks to centuries from Gill and Rahul, while Sudharsan and Pant narrowly missed out on three figures. Washington's unbeaten half-century further frustrated Afghanistan

as the hosts established complete control of the contest. Suthar's six-for dismantled Afghanistan in first innings Afghanistan resumed Day 3 at 113/5 but failed to offer sustained resistance despite Rahmat Shah's fighting 60. Suthar ran through the lower order to finish with outstanding figures of 6/33, helping bowl out the visitors for 152 and securing a massive 412-run lead. Asked to follow on, Afghanistan made a more promising start through Abdul Malik and Sediquallah Atal, who stitched together a 42-run opening partnership. Rahmanullah Gurbaz also chipped in with a quickfire 24 as the visitors attempted to extend the contest. However, India's bowlers soon regained control. Mohammed Siraj provided the breakthrough before Washington Sundar struck repeatedly to derail Afghanistan's resistance. Spinners wrap up historic victory. Washington removed Rahmat Shah, Hashmatullah Shahidi and Atal in a decisive spell, reducing Afghanistan from a promising position to 98/5. Kuldeep Yadav then joined the party, while Suthar added another wicket as the tail folded quickly. Afghanistan were eventually dismissed for 112, with injured Sharafuddin Ashraf unable to bat, sealing India's biggest-ever Test victory by margin and underlining the gulf between the two sides.

The Lions, The Elephants and The Canaries: Football's colourful identities

New Delhi, June 8: Starting from June 11, the Elephants will battle the Lions and the All Whites will lock horns with the Sky Blues. If you are wondering what this is all about, these are not wildlife encounters but the popular nicknames of some of the 48 nations that will compete in pursuit of the coveted FIFA World Cup 2026 title. In football, nicknames are far more than mere labels. They reflect a team's identity, history, culture and the emotional bond between players and supporters. The stories behind the nicknames of this year's World Cup participants offer a fascinating glimpse into the heritage and traditions of nations across the globe. Let us begin with New Zealand, the lowest-ranked team in the tourna-



ment. The national side is popularly known as the All Whites. During the qualification campaign for the 1982 FIFA World Cup, New Zealand appeared in an all-white uniform against Taiwan in 1981. A commentator referred to them as the 'All Whites', a play on the famous 'All Blacks,' the nickname of the country's national rugby team. The name has endured since Uruguay, meanwhile, occupies a special place in World Cup history. The South American nation won the inaugural World Cup in 1930 and lifted the trophy again in 1950. Having declined to participate in the European editions of 1934 and 1938, Uruguay remained unbeaten in World Cup competition for 24 years before losing to Hungary in the semi-finals of the 1954 tournament. Uruguay's nickname, La Celeste ('The Sky Blue'), dates back to August 15, 1910, when the team defeated Argentina 3-1 in Montevideo while wearing sky-blue jerseys for the first time. The colour became synonymous with national pride and was subsequently adopted as a permanent symbol of the team.

Florentino Perez re-elected as Real Madrid president after club's first vote in two decades

New Delhi, June 8: Florentino Perez will remain at the helm of Real Madrid until 2030 after securing a convincing victory in the club's first contested presidential election in nearly two decades, overcoming challenger Enrique Riquelme on Sunday. The 79-year-old won 65 per cent of the vote at Real Madrid's Valdebebas training complex, earning the backing of members to extend a presidency that has overseen one of the most successful periods in the club's history. Riquelme received 35 per cent support in an election that drew 33,555 voters. The result marks Perez's latest triumph since first taking charge of the



Spanish giants in 2000. Having largely run unopposed in recent years, the veteran administrator faced his first serious electoral challenge since 2006 amid growing debate over the club's sporting direction and ownership model. Perez called the election despite having two years remaining on his current mandate, seeking a fresh endorsement from members after Real Madrid endured a second consecutive season without major silverware and watched rivals Barcelona retain the LaLiga title. "I would like to congratulate Florentino Perez's campaign on its victory. Real Madrid will not go another 20 years without an election," Riquelme told reporters.

Stockholm Diamond League: Duplantis suffers first defeat in nearly two years as Marschall triumphs

New Delhi, June 8: Australia's Kurtis Marschall produced one of the biggest upsets of the season at the Stockholm Diamond League, defeating Olympic champion Armand Duplantis and ending the Swedish star's remarkable streak of 40 consecutive victories in men's pole vault. Competing in front of his home crowd, Duplantis arrived in Stockholm hoping to break his own world record of 6.31m for a 16th time. Instead, the Olympic and world champion endured a rare off day, settling for second place after failing to clear six metres or a final attempt at 6.05m. Marschall capitalised on the opportunity, clearing 5.90m on his third attempt to secure a memorable victory and hand Duplantis his first defeat since July 2023. "It was time to lose, it was a very long



time (since the last time). I can't finish that I won 40 in a row, it's pretty sick, but it's also sick that I lose in Stockholm, which is the most important competition of the year for me," Duplantis told Swedish broadcaster SVT, as per Reuters. "This is not the last time I will lose, but I hope it's the last time I lose in Stockholm. I'm going to make sure of that, that it doesn't happen again," he added. The competition got off to an uneasy start for the Swede, who failed his opening attempt at 5.60m. Although he recovered to clear the height on his second try and comfortably negotiated 5.80m,

he was unable to find his usual rhythm as the bar was raised. Despite the disappointment, Duplantis remained philosophical and hinted that his focus may have been partly on his upcoming wedding. "You're either lucky in love or lucky in life. The wedding is soon, so maybe it's a huge silver lining to the whole thing," the Swede said. "It's a shame, because I really didn't want to have a bad performance here in Stockholm, where so many support me and give me love." In the women's category at the Diamond League meeting, world champion Melissa Jefferson Wooden claimed victory in the women's 100 metres with a time of 10.84 seconds. Emerging as the only athlete in the field to break the 20-second mark, American sprinter Kenny Bednarek dominated.

'Let him be, he's only 15': Sourav Ganguly's issues plea amid Vaibhav Sooryavanshi hype

Kolkata, June 8: Former India captain Sourav Ganguly has called for patience and perspective following Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's historic selection in India's senior men's team, urging fans and experts not to burden the 15-year-old with excessive expectations at the start of his international journey. Sooryavanshi forced his way into the national setup after a record-breaking IPL 2026 campaign, prompting selectors to include the teenage sensation in India's squads for the upcoming tours of Ireland and England, as well as the 2026 Asian Games. The Bihar batter became the youngest player ever selected for the Indian men's team, surpassing a 36-year-old record held by Sachin Tendulkar.



Ganguly urges fans to give younger time Speaking at a Kabuni event at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai, Ganguly said the teenager should be allowed to

grow naturally despite the growing spotlight surrounding him. "We should let him be, he is only 15 years old right now. I don't think he will think too much about

the pressure. We have seen him play in the IPL, but the pressure of playing for India is different," Ganguly said. IPL heroics paved way for India call-up Sooryavanshi enjoyed a sensational season with Rajasthan Royals, finishing as the highest run-scorer in IPL 2026 with 776 runs at a remarkable strike rate of 237.30. Left-handed batter smashed a record 72 sixes during the tournament and emerged as one of the most dominant performers of the season. His fearless batting earned him a clean sweep of major individual awards, including the Orange Cap, Most Valuable Player, Emerging Player of the Season, Super Striker and Super Sixes honours. India's immediate white-ball schedule includes a two-match

Monaco GP 2026: Kimi Antonelli triumphs in chaotic Monaco Grand Prix, extends title advantage

New Delhi, June 8: Amid the late-race drama that unfolded on the streets of Monte Carlo, Kimi Antonelli kept his composure to claim victory at the Monaco Grand Prix and extend his lead in the Formula One Drivers' Championship standings. The Mercedes driver converted pole position into a commanding win, finishing ahead of Ferrar's Lewis Hamilton and Red Bull's Isack Hadjar. Seven drivers failed to see the chequered flag in a chaotic race marked by crashes, mechanical issues and multiple retirements. Antonelli made a flawless start and comfortably held onto the lead when the lights went out. Meanwhile, reigning world champion Max Verstappen suffered an early setback as his Red Bull appeared to enter anti-stall mode, dropping him down the order before he eventually became the race's first retiree. With Verstappen out of contention, Antonelli gradually built a healthy advantage over Hamilton and local favourite Charles Leclerc, while sev-

eral others encountered reliability issues as the race unfolded. The race looked likely to end without drama until the final stages when Lance Stroll crashed at the last corner of the Circuit de Monaco with about 20 laps to go. The Safety Car bunched up the cars and briefly threatened Antonelli's comfortable lead. However, it also allowed several drivers to pit and serve time penalties with little impact on their positions. The excitement ramped up after the restart when Leclerc crashed at the same corner as Stroll. Officials had to pause the race to check for damage and track issues at the crash site. Leclerc's retirement was crucial for the podium battle. Hadjar moved into third place, securing his first Formula One podium for Red Bull. Although Pierre Gasly finished ahead of him, two five-second penalties pushed Gasly down the line in fourth, while Liam Lawson took fifth.

India to host five-day BRICS Agriculture Summit in Indore from June 10

New Delhi, June 8: India will host a five-day meeting of BRICS nations in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, beginning Tuesday, bringing together representatives from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa to discuss key issues related to agriculture and food security. Union Agriculture Minister Shriyraj Singh Chouhan announced on Monday that the summit will comprise a three-day Agriculture Working Group meeting from June 10 to 12, followed by a two-day BRICS Agriculture Ministers' Meeting on June 12 and 13. The discussions will focus on a wide range of issues, including food security, farmer welfare, nutrition, climate-resilient and smart agriculture, digital farming technologies, global agricultural trade, supply chains, research collaboration and knowl-



edge exchange. Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and robotics in agriculture will also be on the agenda. Highlighting the importance of the gathering, Chouhan said that BRICS has emerged as a powerful voice of developing nations on the global stage. He noted that the summit would provide an important platform for member countries to strengthen cooperation and

Chhattisgarh CM Sai reiterates commitment to responsive governance, reviews development and welfare schemes

New Delhi, June 8: Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Monday emphasised that the success of governance depends on ensuring welfare schemes reach every eligible beneficiary through accountable, sensitive and citizen focused administration. He said no deserving citizen should be deprived of government benefits and directed officials to work with a positive approach and a strong sense of public service. Reviewing development works and welfare programmes in Balod and Mohla-Manpur-Ambagah Chowki districts under the ongoing Sushasan Tihar 2026 campaign, the Chief Minister said that the initiative is more than an administrative exercise. He said it serves as an important bridge between the government and the people, helping strengthen



public trust through direct engagement and effective grievance redressal. The review meeting, held at the Chief Minister's residence office in Raipur, was attended by collectors, superintendents of police and senior officials. Discussions covered revenue administration, rural and urban development, agriculture, healthcare, education, law and order, and the implementation of various flagship schemes. Sai recalled his visits to public grievance camps and village meetings organised under Sushasan Tihar, where he interacted directly with citizens, heard their concerns and assessed the actual status of government programmes on the ground. He noted that despite the intense summer heat, administrative teams had worked with commitment to address public grievances and said the same

spirit must continue in the future. Reviewing pending revenue matters, the Chief Minister instructed officials to expedite the disposal of cases related to mutation, partition, land demarcation and map corrections. He said that the old cases should be resolved on priority so that citizens are not forced to endure prolonged delays. CM Sai also directed officials to accelerate implementation of the Chief Minister's Swamitva initiative and complete the updating of revenue records at the earliest. The Chief Minister the progress of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana in both rural and urban areas and directed officials to complete the maximum number of sanctioned houses before the onset of the monsoon. He also stressed the need to train more local masons so that housing construction can proceed at a faster pace and future requirements can be met efficiently. Reviewing the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, Sai reiterated the state's target of installing five lakh rooftop solar systems by 2027. He instructed officials to launch intensive awareness campaigns and ensure that households understand both the financial and energy related benefits of the scheme. With the kharif season approaching, the Chief Minister directed officials to ensure there is no shortage of fertilisers or seeds for farmers. He also called for wider awareness regarding the use of nano urea and nano DAP, asking officials to spread information about their benefits across villages. CM Sai instructed the district head of the departments to ensure that all eligible farmers.

Akhilesh continues with allegation of theft of offerings despite denial from Ram Temple Trust

New Delhi, June 8: Politics over claims of theft of crores of rupees from the offerings made to the Ayodhya Ram Temple continued for the second day with Opposition and ruling party leaders targeting each other over the religious matter. Samajwadi Party National President Akhilesh Yadav, who raised the issue on Sunday along with his party's Ayodhya leader Pawan Pandey, continue their allegations on Monday too. Akhilesh Yadav on Monday wrote on his social media post, "Explanation itself is not clear". He said, "It seems like a normal thing for them every week, so normal that they don't even consider it 'remarkable' anymore. The facial expressions and body language are full of frustration and despair."



All trust members should be brought together to provide explanations, and CCTV evidence should be used to verify the data. Once all trustees are together, the truth will emerge because not everyone is the same. When there's no single individual at the center of this alleged fraud, what significance does one individual's explanation hold?"

Akhilesh Yadav claimed that the Sanatan society of the entire world has become even more suspicious and hurt by this very weak explanation. Last night, Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust general secretary Champat Rai clarified the former minister Pawan Pandey and Akhilesh Yadav allegations. He said that the trust undergoes periodic internal audits. Representatives from the trust and SBI Bank are involved in this exercise. The audits last several days. The same process is currently underway and no irregularities have been found so far. UP BJP President Panjaj Chaudhary, hitting back at SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, said, "Who is saying this? Something has gone missing. Akhilesh Yadav keeps

saying things, but we won't keep responding to him. This is not a government issue. The temple administration will respond." Yesterday, Pawan Pandey, a former minister in the Samajwadi Party government, claimed in Ayodhya that between 75 crore and 77.5 crore had been stolen from the Ram Temple offerings. SP chief Akhilesh Yadav also said the government's silence on the matter was suspicious. The court should take cognizance of the matter. On the other hand, Shankaracharya Avimukteshwarananda, has fully supported Akhilesh Yadav in Agra and said, "When you make a thief your protector, what will he do? Earlier, it was done in the name of land. Now it's being taken directly from the bank."

India calls for immediate de-escalation of West Asia conflict, citing immense human suffering

New Delhi, June 8: Following the rise in tensions in West Asia and the Gulf region, India, calling the developments a matter of utmost concern to the international community on Monday, reiterated its call for immediate de-escalation of the conflict. New Delhi urged a diplomatic solution to the West Asia problem as the way forward for regional peace and stability. Marking a sharp escalation in West Asia, Israel and Iran traded fire on Monday, their war's 100th day, putting the already fragile truce in serious jeopardy and threatening to reignite an all-out regional war. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated that this conflict has now lasted over 100 days and has already caused immense human suffering. "It has also had a debilitating impact on the global econ-



omy and energy supplies," the MEA said. Meanwhile, the Indian Embassy in Tehran also issued a high-priority travel advisory on Monday, urging all Indian citizens to completely avoid travelling to Iran and advising those currently within the country to leave immediately. The emergency communication comes on the heels of major military escalations over the last 24 hours, which have seen multi-city kinetic engagements, airstrikes on strategic installations, and heavy projectile salvos across the region. "In view of the latest developments in the region, the Embassy reiterates its earlier advice to all Indian Nationals to avoid any travel to Iran. Indian Nationals presently in Iran are also advised to exit the country by available means of transport," the Indian Embassy in Tehran said on Monday. Issuing a statement, the MEA said, "India deeply regrets the renewed attacks in West Asia. These developments are a matter of utmost concern to the international community. This conflict has now lasted over 100 days.

SC invokes Article 142 to acquit POCSO convict after victim marries him

New Delhi, June 8: The Supreme Court on Monday acquitted a man convicted under stringent POCSO act after he married the victim on attaining majority age. Taking note of the developments, including their marriage, the court invoked extraordinary powers under Article 142 of the Constitution to ensure "complete justice". A Bench of Justices JK Maheshwari and Atul S Chaudhkar allowed the appeal filed by Tamil Nadu resident Maruthupandi against his conviction under Section 5(1) read with Section 6 of the POCSO Act and acquitted him of the charges. However, the apex court clarified that the relief was being granted in



the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case and would not serve as a precedent. "Therefore, at this stage, without entering into the merits of the case, in the peculiar facts, as narrated above, we deem it appropriate to exercise our plenary power under Article 142 of the Constitution for setting aside the judgment of conviction and sentence of the appellant," the Justice Maheshwari-led Bench said. The case stemmed from a complaint lodged by the victim alleging that the accused had repeatedly engaged in sexual intercourse with her on a promise of marriage when she was a minor. Following the trial, a Fast Track Mahila Court in Dharmapuri convicted Maruthupandi.

Right-wing YouTuber Maridhas arrested for derogatory remarks against TVK, CM Vijay

Chennai, June 8: A right-wing YouTuber, darling of the Sangh Parivar, Maridhas, who has been posting abusive and derogatory videos about the Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) government and Chief Minister Joseph Vijay, as well as a woman minister, was arrested from his residence in Madurai on Monday. The arrest followed an FIR registered by the Chennai Police Cyber Crime Wing on the charge of posting 'derogatory and obscene' remarks against a woman minister in the Vijay cabinet. A special police team from Chennai picked him up from his residence in Madurai in the morning and brought him



here for further inquiry. According to the police, Maridhas has posted

TVK functionaries. Ever since the Vijay government assumed office, he has been accusing the TVK of being a quisling of the 'missionary mafia' and a threat to national security. He was booked under various sections of the BNS, including section 79 (punishment for insulting the modesty of a woman) and section 352 (2) (the act of making, publishing or circulating statements or reports containing false information, rumours, or alarming news, including through electronic means, with intent to create or promote hostility among groups). Predictably, the BJP condemned the arrest, describing it as an assault on freedom of expression. BJP Mahila Morcha national president and former legislator Vanathi Srinivasan took to 'X', saying, "The TVK government is following the footsteps of the previous DMK government in threatening social media commenters exposing the failures of the administration." Using arrests as a tool to crush freedom of thought and stifling criticism is not good for any government." Echoing similar sentiment, Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) founder S Ramadas criticised the arrest, saying the right of media persons should be protected, and vindictive action against them should be given up by the government.

MP Rajya Sabha race heats up as Meenakshi Natarajan files nomination; BJP fields third candidate, tightens contest

New Delhi, June 8: The political contest for the third Rajya Sabha seat from Madhya Pradesh intensified on Monday as Congress candidate Meenakshi Natarajan filed her nomination papers at the Madhya Pradesh State Assembly Secretariat in Bhopal. She submitted her papers to Assembly Principal Secretary Arvind Sharma, who is serving as the returning officer for the



elections. Several senior Congress leaders, including Leader of Opposition Umang Singh, state Congress president Jitu Patwari, and former Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh, accompanied Natarajan during the nomination process. The electoral battle has become significantly more complex after the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (Bharatiya Janata Party) announced its deci-

sion to field a third candidate. Earlier, the BJP had announced only two candidates—Tannu Chugh and Rajneesh Agrawal—while the Congress had fielded a single candidate for the third seat, leading to an initial expectation that the BJP would secure two seats and the Congress one. However, with the BJP now entering the fray for the third seat, political equations have shifted, bringing into focus the role of cross-voting and potential vote transfers among

MLAs. The BJP does not appear to have a clear numerical advantage for the third seat, making the outcome uncertain and increasing the possibility of strategic political maneuvering. Reacting strongly to the BJP's move, Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Jitu Patwari accused the party of exposing its "anti-women stance," despite its public claims of promoting.

Mere existence of Dargah does not automatically make land a Waqf Board property, says Madras High Court



New Delhi, June 8: The Madras High Court said that Dargah's existence on a land does not automatically bring the property under the control

of the Waqf Board. While hearing the matter, Justice K. Govindarajan Thilakavadi stated that the Waqf Board is required to legally establish ownership over the land, Bar and Bench reported. "Mere existence of a Dargah does not automatically confer jurisdiction upon the Board unless the institution is established or treated as a Waqf in accordance with law," read the High Court order, dated June 5. These observations were made as the High Court set aside a resolution of the Tamil Nadu Waqf Board regarding appointment of a Mutawalli.

Viyash Scientific to acquire Italy's BioForLife for Rs 188 Cr Strengthening Global Pet Care Business

Hyderabad, June 8 Hyderabad-based Viyash Scientific Limited, through its wholly owned subsidiary Alivira Animal Health Limited, has signed a binding agreement to acquire a 100 per cent stake in BioForLife (BFL), a leading pet care company headquartered in Milan.

The acquisition, valued at Rs 188 crore in cash, is expected to be completed during the second quarter of FY27, the company announced today.

The transaction marks a significant milestone in Viyash Scientific's strategy to expand its footprint in the rapidly growing global Companion Animal Health Generics market.

The acquisition will strengthen Alivira's companion animal health business globally and enhance its presence in the European pet care sector.

Italy is among Europe's five largest animal health markets, with com-

panion animal care emerging as one of its fastest-growing segments, driven by increasing pet ownership, pet humanisation trends and higher spending on preventive and specialised veterinary care.

BioForLife specializes in the development, commercialization and distribution of pet care products.

The company has built a strong portfolio spanning nutritional supplements, pharmaceuticals and rapid diagnostic tests, while also expanding into high-growth segments such as dermatology and ophthalmology.

With an established sales network reaching more than 80 per cent of veterinary clinics across Italy, BioForLife provides strong market access and customer relationships that are expected to support future growth initiatives.

The acquisition will provide Viyash Scientific, headquartered in

Jubilee Hills, with a platform to introduce products from Alivira's development pipeline into the Italian market.

At the same time, it will create opportunities to expand BioForLife's product range across Alivira's operations in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America.

Commenting on the development, Dr. Haribabu Bodeputi, Managing Director and Group CEO of Viyash Scientific Limited, said the acquisition is an important step toward building a leading global companion animal health business.

He noted that BioForLife offers an established platform in one of Europe's most attractive pet care markets and strengthens the company's regional presence.

According to him, combining BioForLife's commercial reach with Alivira's product development capabilities will help accelerate growth, broaden the compa-

nion animal health portfolio and create greater value for veterinarians, pet owners and business partners.

Dr. Bodeputi also said the company sees significant opportunities to introduce innovative products into India and other international markets through its global network, adding that the investment reflects Viyash Scientific's commitment to sustainable growth, strategic expansion and long-term value creation.

The acquisition will also strengthen Alivira's leadership team, with BioForLife's existing executives expected to continue managing business operations while driving new growth initiatives.

The transaction builds on Alivira's track record of international expansion, having successfully acquired and integrated multiple animal health companies across Europe, Latin America and Asia over the past decade.

India on list of authorised countries to export aquaculture products to EU beyond September

New Delhi, June 8

India has been included on the list of countries authorised to export aquaculture products, eggs, honey and animal casings to the European union beyond September under the amended European Union Regulatory Framework, said a Commerce Ministry statement here on Monday.

The EU notified an amendment to Regulation (EU) 2021/405 through Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1189 in view of growing concerns relating to antimicrobial resistance.

This revised regulation will come into effect from September this year and lays down additional requirements for countries exporting specified animal-origin products to the European Union.

According to the Commerce Ministry, India's inclusion in the list of authorised countries ensures continuity of exports of these products to the EU market beyond September.

It's good for the fisheries sector, as their exports from India to the EU are currently

valued at USD 1.59 billion.

This achievement is a result of the Commerce Ministry's close coordination with the Export Inspection Council (EIC) and other stakeholders.

"The Department of Commerce has been actively engaging with the European Commission to address regulatory requirements and market access issues, while the EIC has strengthened India's Official Control System through enhanced inspection, testing and certification mechanisms in line with European union regulations," the statement said.

The Department of Commerce, Export Inspection Council and other stakeholders, including the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), will continue to work closely with EU-approved establishments and regulatory authorities to ensure smooth implementation of the regulatory requirements and maintain high standards of quality and food safety in export products.

Adani Harbour bags 10-Year contract for Argentina's first LNG export to India

Mumbai, June 8 Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) officially announced here on Monday that its step-down subsidiary company has secured a 10-year marine services contract to enable Argentina's first liquefied natural gas (LNG) export, marking its entry into South America and expanding its international marine services footprint.

The contract has been awarded to APSEZ's step-down subsidiary, The Adani Harbour International FZCO, through a consortium with the Argentina-based Meridian Group, after a global competitive tender process, conducted by Southern Energy SA (SESA). The award of the contract has strengthened APSEZ's presence across international energy logistics value chains and underscores its growing capabilities in specialised marine services, according to a company statement.

The contract will be executed through Meridian Transportes Maritimos SA, which is a 51:49 joint venture between Adani Harbour International FZCO and the

Meridian Group, according to the statement.

In its first phase, the project is expected to produce 2.45 MT of LNG annually, which is equivalent to approximately 28 cargoes per year, making it Argentina's first operational LNG export project.

Under the agreement, the consortium will provide end-to-end marine services, including tugboat operations for LNG carriers, offshore logistics and supply support and crew transfer services.

The scope will be supported by four high-specification tugboats, one anchor handling tug supply vessel and one crew boat, according to the contract statement.

APSEZ Whole-time Director & CEO Ashwani Gupta said, "This project reflects our growing capability to support large-scale energy infrastructure projects across geographies. With marine operations in 12 countries and a growing fleet of marine assets supporting ports, LNG terminals, national oil companies, refineries and offshore facilities, we bring deep operational expertise to

complex maritime environments. By combining these capabilities with strong local partnerships, we are helping create reliable maritime ecosystems that enable new energy trade corridors and strengthen long-term supply resilience."

Argentina is emerging as a major new LNG supplier, with agreements in place to support exports of up to 10 million tonnes (MT) annually to India from 2027. The Southern Energy Floating Liquefied Natural Gas (FLNG) project is expected to play an important role in connecting this growing supply base with global demand centres.

The Southern Energy FLNG project is being developed by SESA, a joint venture between Golar LNG and Pan American Energy (PAE). Located in the San Matias Gulf in Argentina's Rio Negro Province, the project will liquefy natural gas from the General San Martin pipeline aboard the Floating Liquefied Natural Gas (FLNG) vessel Hilli Episeyo, with commercial operations expected to begin in September 2027.

India's agro-processing sector entering new phase with stimulus of consumption growth and monetary stability

New Delhi, June 8

India's agro-processing, flour milling, grain processing and food processing sector is entering a new phase supported by rising household consumption, urbanisation, and rising preference for branded staple foods.

As per official data, this sector serves a market of more than 1.4 billion consumers, forming a critical link between agriculture and retail consumption.

This industry is witnessing a growing demand for packaged atta, pulses, besan, semolina, and value-added food products. Interestingly, this sector is also leveraging the government initiatives aimed at strengthening food processing infrastructure, reducing post-harvest losses, and improving supply-chain efficiency.

In June, the RBI Monetary Policy Committee's (MPC) move of keeping the repo rate unchanged at 5.25 per cent and maintaining a "neutral" stance will provide a supportive operating environment for this sector.

Food processors and flour millers are heavily dependent on working capital financing for procurement, inventory

stocking, and seasonal purchases of agricultural commodities.

For instance, stable borrowing costs will help companies manage cash flows more efficiently with support investments in modernisation, automation and capacity extension.

The premier central bank also projected India's GDP growth at 6.6 per cent for FY27, which indicates continued growth in consumption-led sectors. This sustained economic growth translates into higher spending on packaged and branded food products, particularly in urban and semi-urban markets.

Mahesh Kewlani, Director, KewlaniAgro Industries Pvt. Ltd., said, "India's agro-processing sector is evolving beyond growing consumption to rising consumer expectations. Across staples like flour, pulses, and rice, consumers increasingly value consistency, quality, and trust."

The RBI's June 2026 monetary policy decision is a positive step for the industry. Stable interest rates and adequate liquidity support long-term investments, efficient inventory management, and stronger supply chains."

He highlighted that while challenges such as commodity price volatility, weather disruptions, and rising logistics costs remain; disciplined operations and prudent financial management will be critical.

"We remain optimistic about the sector's future. Backed by strong domestic demand and a resilient agricultural ecosystem, India is well-positioned to strengthen its role in both domestic and global food markets. Companies that continue investing in quality, efficiency, and consumer trust will be best placed to capture the next phase of growth." Raw material prices remain vulnerable to weather disruptions while rising energy costs, transportation expense and packaging costs continue to pressure margins.

RBI has raised its FY27 inflation forecast to 5.1 per cent and flagged concerns over elevated crude oil prices, supply-chain disruptions and monsoon-related uncertainties. These factors could impact both agricultural output and procurement costs for processors, particularly those dependent on wheat, pulses and other grains.

Sigma Advanced Systems Bags Rs 208 Cr Defence Export Order

Hyderabad, June 8 Sigma Advanced Systems has secured an export contract worth USD 21.97 million (around Rs 208 crore) for the manufacture and supply of 40,000 units of 155 mm M107 artillery shell bodies to a North American customer.

The company release today said the contract would be executed over a six-month period, with production and deliveries scheduled within the timeframe. The order marks Sigma's expansion from fuse manufacturing into complete artillery shell component production.

The project involves manufacturing 155 mm artillery shell bodies, a key structural component used in modern artillery ammunition systems. The company said the required export authorisation from the Department of Defence Production under the Ministry of Defence has already been obtained.

Commenting on the development, Sigma Advanced Systems CEO and Executive Director Sunil Kalidindi said the order reflected growing international confidence in India's defence manufacturing ecosystem and Sigma's precision engineering capabilities. The company stated that the order strengthens its position in the global defence supply chain and opens opportunities for future ammunition manufacturing programmes.

India's electronics manufacturing services (EMS) industry is entering a decisive growth phase and could expand beyond \$150 billion by FY30, according to a new report by KPMG in India. The assessment comes at a time when global electronics supply chains are undergoing major realignments, creating fresh opportunities for countries seeking a larger role in manufacturing and exports.

The report suggests that India has emerged as one of the fastest-growing electronics manufacturing destinations over the past five years, supported by rising domestic consumption, government incentives, and global companies looking to diversify production beyond traditional manufacturing hubs.

Rapid rise, bigger opportunity According to the report,

India's electronics manufacturing services (EMS) market may cross \$150 billion by FY30, says KPMG report

the country's EMS market has expanded from nearly \$10-12 billion in FY20 to around \$40-45 billion in FY25, reflecting a sharp increase in manufacturing activity across consumer electronics and mobile devices. KPMG noted that India has successfully built scale in electronics assembly, particularly in high-volume manufacturing segments. However, the sector now faces the challenge of moving beyond assembly-led growth and capturing a greater share of value across the supply chain. The report described the current phase as a crucial turning point, stating that while manufacturing volumes have grown substantially, deeper participation in design, components, engineering, and intellectual property ownership remains limited. Global shift creates opening for

India The study highlighted that global electronics manufacturing is being reshaped by geopolitical developments, supply-chain resilience strategies, and increasing technological complexity. With multinational companies diversifying production networks and reducing concentration risks, India is positioned to benefit from the ongoing restructuring of global manufacturing ecosystems.

The report estimates that the worldwide EMS market, currently valued at around \$640-650 billion in 2025, could cross the \$1 trillion mark in the early 2030s, driven by expanding demand for connectivity solutions, electrification technologies, and outsourced manufacturing. Despite this opportunity, India currently accounts for only about 5-6 per cent of global EMS manufactur-

ing, indicating significant headroom for expansion.

"India's EMS sector has reached a pivotal moment with firm foundations of scale, but the next phase of growth will be defined by depth. Realising India's potential will require sustained investment in component ecosystems, engineering depth, and supply chain sophistication to unlock higher value participation in global electronics manufacturing," said Rohan Rao, Partner, Automotive & Lead, Electric Mobility, KPMG in India.

The report concluded that the coming five to ten years will be crucial for determining whether India can evolve from a large-scale assembly destination into a comprehensive electronics manufacturing powerhouse with deeper value-chain participation.

Over 580 million Jan Dhan accounts brought crores of Indians into formal banking system: Sitharaman

New Delhi, June 8

Over 580 million Jan Dhan accounts have helped bring crores of Indians into the formal banking system, ensuring that welfare benefits, low-cost insurance, and pensions reach beneficiaries directly without leakages, union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said. In a post on X, she stated, "Garib Kalyan is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guarantee of dignity, opportunity and employment for every Indian." She also added that India has distinguished itself globally in its fight against poverty and deprivation.

Launched on August 28, 2014, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) is among the world's largest financial inclusion initiatives. As per the government data, 55 per cent of the PMJDY account holders are women, while 67 per cent of accounts are opened in rural and semi-urban areas. Under the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system, approximately Rs 45 trillion has been credited directly to beneficiaries' accounts. Today, around 94 per cent of India's adult population has access to a bank account. PMJDY aims to provide banking access to every unbanked household, based on the principle of ensuring banking for the unbanked, security for the unsecured, and financing for the unfunded. Accounts under the scheme offer zero-balance facilities, free RuPay debit cards, accident insurance cover, and overdraft options. Under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), 57.26 crore loans have been sanctioned amounting to Rs. 39.48 lakh crore for providing collateral-free institutional finance up to Rs 20 lakh to micro/small business units for income generating activities in manufacturing, trading, services sectors, including agriculture allied activities.

Stock markets witness bloodbath, Sensex losses over 700 pts amid escalating tensions in West Asia

New Delhi, June 8

Indian stock markets on Monday extended their losing streak for a second consecutive session amid fresh tensions in West Asia.

At close, the Sensex was down 719.08 points or 0.97 per cent at 73,524.26, while Nifty was down 23,274.26 points or 1.04 per cent at 23,123.

Indian rupee witnessed a sharp fall,

settling 77 paise lower at 95.71 per US dollar.

Among the sectors, all indices ended in negative territory with the Realty and Metal indices being worst performers. Other sectors like Auto, Consumer Durables, IT, Media Infrastructure, Power, Energy and Oil & Gas sectors also fell during the session.

On Nifty, Max Healthcare, Power

Grid Corporation, Bharat Electronics, Tech Mahindra and Nestle India were the top gainers while Wipro, Jio Financial Services, Eterna, Hindalco Industries and Shriram Finance emerged as the top losers.

Among the 140 stocks touched their 52-week high on the BSE while over 100 stocks touched their 52-week low.

Those on the highs included Astar

DM Health, Adani Energy, Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences, ACME Solar, Federal Bank, JK Bank, Sai Life Science, Laurus Labs, Ather Energy, among others.

While on the low were Wipro, Swiggy, Rail Vikas Nigam, TCS, SBI Cards, Reliance Industries, EID Parry, Blue Dart, Dalmia Bharat, eClerx Services, GlaxoSmithKline, Emami, among

others.

Among the tech stocks, Tata Consultancy Services and Oracle Financial Services declined while the metal stocks also witnessed selling pressure led by NALCO, Hindustan Copper, Lloyds Metals & Energy, Jindal Stainless, Vedanta, NMDC, SAIL, and Welspun Corp.

Gold financing and jewellery stocks

also witnessed selloff with Muthoot Finance, IIFL Finance and Manappuram Finance falling by up to 6 per cent amid the declining gold prices. In the global markets, Japan's Nikkei declined 3.8 per cent, South Korea's Kospi was down 4.8 per cent, Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index slid nearly 2 per cent, while mainland China's CSI 300 declined 1.5 per cent.



DC Srinagar visits several Imambaras across City to take on spot assessment of arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haram

All line Departments directed to ensure seamless arrangements through coordinated efforts

SRINAGAR JUNE 08: In preparation for the forthcoming holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram 1448 Hijri, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, today undertook an extensive visit to various prominent Imambaras in the City, including Imambaras at Zaidabal, Hasanabad Rainawari, Baghwanpora Lalbazar to take a firsthand appraisal of the arrangements being made for the smooth and peaceful observance of Muharram. The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by Additional Deputy



Commissioner Srinagar, Aadi Fareed, Joint Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Nuzhat Khurshid, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintendent Engineer

R&B, Shabir Ahmad, Superintending Engineer SMC, Sajad Kawasa, Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Tahir Sajad, Executive Engineers of R&B, KPDC, Water Works, and senior Officers from the Departments of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Social Welfare, Fire & Emergency Services, Forest and other line departments. On the occasion, the DC passed several onspot directions to the line Departments and stressed on elaborate arrangements and sustained efforts facilitating the observance of important proceedings & provisions. Regarding essential services, the DC instructed officers of the KPDC and Water Works Department to ensure uninterrupted electricity and drinking water supply. He directed the Executive Engineer Water Works to keep adequate arrangements for water tankers at locations where additional water supply may be required. The DC asked the SMC and allied Departments to ensure all Street lights including High Mass lights around Imambaras are functional well before the start of the Holy month. He also stressed on ensuring cleanliness of lanes.

MLA Devsar inaugurates Naib Tehsil Office at Nowbugh Kund; Lays Foundation Stone for Library



KULGAM, JUNE 08: MLA Devsar, Peerzada Feroze Ahmad, today inaugurated the newly constructed Naib Tehsil Office at Nowbugh Kund. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shalazad Alam, along with district officers and local residents. On the occasion, the MLA also laid the foundation stone of a library to be established under the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). The library aims to promote a culture of reading and learning by providing students and youth with a dedicated educational and reading

space. Later, the MLA, accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner and senior officers, visited the progress of ongoing developmental works being executed at the revered shrine. During the visit, he directed the concerned agencies to ensure the timely completion of the project and emphasized the importance of maintaining quality standards in all developmental works. The MLA also visited the Benagam water canal near the Migrant Colony in Chowgam to assess the irrigation water shortage being faced by local farmers.

DIPR's Cultural Unit organises Short Play at GBHSS Zainakote under 100-Day Nasha Mukt Abhiyan

SRINAGAR, JUNE 08: As part of the ongoing 100-Day Nasha Mukt Abhiyan, the Cultural Unit Kashmir of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) today organised an impactful short play at Government Boys' Higher Secondary School (GBHSS), Zainakote, Srinagar, to raise awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse.



The Principal and staff of the institution appreciated the DIPR for conducting such informative and awareness-oriented programmes among the youth. They emphasized the importance of sustained awareness campaigns in preventing drug abuse and encouraging healthy lifestyles among students. The event forms part of the department's continued efforts to support the objectives of the Nasha Mukt Abhiyan through cultural and educational outreach initiatives across Kashmir.

DC Pulwama reviews Mission YUVA implementation in district

Stresses intensified awareness, timely credit linkage, entrepreneurship support for youth, SHGs

PULWAMA, JUNE 08: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Administrative Complex, Pulwama to assess the implementation and progress of Mission YUVA (Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan) across the district.



lighting the progress achieved under various components of Mission YUVA, including Udyam

Mission YUVA is a flagship initiative of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment among youth by providing awareness, capacity building, credit linkage and enterprise support. At the outset, Assistant Director Employment, Pulwama presented a detailed presentation high-

holding of beneficiaries. Emphasising the importance of Udyam Jagriti, Dr. Qayoom directed the Udyam Jagriti Nodal Officers and concerned departments to further intensify awareness campaigns and training programmes with special focus on students, youth and SHG members so that every eligible youth is informed about the opportunities available under Mission YUVA. He said that Udyam Jagriti programme under Mission YUVA aims to create awareness about entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities and motivate youth to become job creators rather than job seekers.

Agriculture Department organises awareness camp under 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan' at Shopian

SHOPIAN, JUNE 08: Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shopian, in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Shopian today organized one-day awareness programme under the month-long national flagship campaign "Khet Bachao Abhiyan" at the Auditorium Hall of Government Degree College, Shopian. Month-long national flagship programme "Khet Bachao Abhiyan" was launched on June 1, 2026 and will continue until June 30, 2026, with the objective of promoting soil conservation, sustainable agriculture, and improved



farmer awareness across the district. The programme was presided over by Agriculture Minister, Ravinder Kumar Tripathi and attended by officers from the Agriculture Department, allied departments, KVK Shopian, and a large number of farmers from across the district. Addressing the gathering, Ravinder Kumar Tripathi highlighted the significance of the month-long campaign and stated that the Agriculture Department is conducting awareness programmes throughout the district to encourage sustainable farming practices and strengthen soil health management. He emphasized the need for the judicious use of pesticides and fertilizers to maintain ecological balance, enhance soil fertility, and ensure long-term agricultural sustainability.

During the programme, experts provided detailed guidance on the scientific and balanced use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers, stressing the importance of minimizing excessive chemical applications to protect public health and the environment. Farmers were encouraged to adopt eco-friendly and soil-friendly agricultural practices that contribute to sustainable crop production and environmental conservation. The awareness session also focused on the promotion of integrated nutrient management, responsible pesticide usage, soil health improvement.

Muharram-UI-Haram, Mata Kheer Bhawani Mela arrangements reviewed at Anantnag

ANANTNAG JUNE 08: A meeting to review the arrangements for the ensuing holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram and auspicious Mata Kheer Bhawani Mela-2026 was held today at DC Office Anantnag. ACR, Tariq Ahmad Malik, SDM Doora, Parvaiz Rahim, SP, Sunny Gupta, AKTO, Inspector Traffic Police, officials from Health, FCS&CA, F&ES, PHE, PDD and other concerned departments attended the meeting. On the occasion, threeday discussions were held regarding the arrangements to be put in place to ensure smooth observance of Muharram and Mata Kheer Bhawani Mela by the respective communities. Regarding Muharram, ACR stressed upon officers to make timely and proper arrangements of security, water and power supply, sanitation, medical facilities, ration, firewood, among others. He said that proper plans be devised to ensure all religious gatherings and processions are held smoothly and in a seamless pro-

er. The ACR emphasised maintaining proper hygiene and cleanliness around Imam Baras and procession sites adding that prior visits to the three prominent places in the district be conducted by the concerned officers. He said medical teams along with ambulances shall be deployed along with availability of staff and medicine besides adequate supply of potable water and electricity shall be ensured during this period. Regarding Mata Kheer Bhawani Mela-2026 arrangements, the ACR instructed that all essential facilities including water supply, electricity, accommodation and bedding be provided to the devotees at Logripora. Emphasis was laid on deployment of fire tenders, installation of Shamiyana, availability of LPG for langars, blankets for devotees and special SRTC Buses for ferrying the pilgrims and putting in place other logistics for smooth observance and conduct of the religious activities.

DC Bandipora conducts extensive Field Tour of Sumbal Sub-Division

BANDIPORA, JUNE 08: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Monday conducted an extensive field tour of Sumbal Sub-Division to assess on-ground preparedness for the forthcoming Muharram observance and Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2026. During the tour, the Deputy Commissioner visited several Imam Baras including Dangerpora and other adjacent areas and also inspected the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra Transit Camp at Shadipora. She reviewed the arrangements being put in place by various departments and took stock of the facilities available for devotees and pilgrims. The Deputy Commissioner interacted with local representatives, and residents, and sought feedback



regarding public requirements and ongoing preparations. She directed the concerned departments to ensure uninterrupted power and water supply, proper sanitation, health-care facilities, road connectivity, and other essential services. At Transit Camp Shadipora, Indu Kanwal chib inspected the infrastructure and reviewed the facilities being arranged for devotees. She stressed the need for close coordination among departments to ensure smooth and hassle-free arrangements. She emphasized that all necessary measures should be completed well in advance for successful and peaceful conduct of upcoming religious events.

Bandipora Admin Gears Up for SANJY-2026; DC Reviews Preparations at Sumbal, Inspects Shadipora Transit Camp

BANDIPORA, JUNE 08: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Monday chaired a meeting at Dak Bungalow Sumbal to review arrangements for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY)-2026 and ensure that all necessary facilities are put in place for the devotees. The meeting was attended by ADC Bandipora, Zaffar Hussain Shawl; ASP Bandipora, Mir Murtaza; SDM Sumbal, Murtaza Ahmad; and other concerned officers from the district administration, Police, Army, CRPF, and various line departments associated with the Yatra. During the meeting, a comprehensive review of preparations related to drinking water supply, electricity, healthcare, sani-



tation, traffic management, transportation, and other essential services was conducted. Officers briefed the chair on the ongoing works and preparedness at the Shadipora Transit Camp. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need for coordinated efforts among all departments and directed officers to complete all pending works well in time. She stressed that adequate facilities should be ensured for the convenience, safety, and comfort of the devotees. Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner conducted an on-site inspection of the

Shadipora Transit Camp to assess the arrangements on the ground and directed the concerned departments to expedite the remaining works so that all facilities are ready well before the commencement of the annual pilgrimage. The Deputy Commissioner reiterated that seamless coordination among all stakeholder departments is essential for the smooth conduct of SANJY-2026. She directed officers to maintain close monitoring of all preparatory works and ensure timely completion of assigned tasks. Emphasizing a proactive approach, she stressed that all arrangements should be put in place well in advance to provide a safe, comfortable, and hassle-free pilgrimage experience for the devotees.

CS reviews rehabilitation measures taken for migrant populations in J&K

Orders immediate handover of completed transit accommodations among the employees

SRINAGAR, JUNE 08: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting to review and address various issues pertaining to PM Package employees serving in the Kashmir Division, with a focus on transit accommodation, career progression, rehabilitation measures and welfare initiatives for displaced communities.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Additional Chief Secretary, Public Works Department; Principal Secretary, DMRR&R; Commissioner Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs; Commissioner Secretary, Planning; Commissioner Secretary, GAD; Secretary, Revenue; Secretary, Rural Development Department; Secretary, Transport; Relief Commissioner (Migrants); Chief Engineers of R&B Department; representatives of various departments and senior officers of DMRR&R. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary took a detailed review of the transit accommodation infrastructure created for PM Package employees across differ-



ent districts of Kashmir. Stressing the need for optimal utilization of the facilities, he directed that all completed flats be allotted and occupied at the earliest. He instructed the Relief Commissioner (Migrants) to ensure that all completed accommodations are taken over by the eligible employees by the end of July this year without fail. The Chief Secretary also reviewed the status of flats under construction at various sites. He further examined the status of allied infrastructure and utility services including electricity, drinking water supply, internal road connectivity, boundary walls and Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) to ensure that the

colonies are fully functional and habitable. The meeting also discussed plans for operation and maintenance (O&M) of the transit accommodations as well as migrant colonies in Jammu. Deliberations were held on creation of additional accommodation facilities in Jammu, with land identified at Purkhoo for expansion. Reviewing the service-related issues of PM Package employees, the Chief Secretary took stock of matters concerning promotions, preparation of seniority lists and inter-district transfers within the Kashmir Division. Departments presented cadre-wise details of PM Package employees and informed the meeting.

Several other issues concerning the welfare and rehabilitation of displaced persons were also discussed. These included cases under the Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme (RAS) relating to deceased employees, provision of adequate budgetary support for

operation and maintenance of migrant colonies by line departments, and development of an integrated online portal for digitization of records of displaced communities including Kashmiri Pandits, West Pakistan Refugees (WPRs) and families displaced from Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK). The Principal Secretary, DMRR&R, Chandraker Bharti gave the meeting a comprehensive overview of the rehabilitation and resettlement initiatives being undertaken by the Department. He informed that the department has prepared a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for operation and maintenance of migrant colonies across Jammu and Kashmir divisions and that works would be taken up after completion of the requisite formalities. He further apprised the meeting that the PoJK Bhawan at Suketar has achieved nearly 50 percent physical progress and is targeted for completion by January next year. He also informed that the Community Hall at Jagti has reached around 90 percent completion and is nearing completion.

Javid Dar reviews Muharram arrangements in Sumbal, Budgam

SRINAGAR, JUNE 08: In view of the forthcoming observance of Muharram-ul-Haram 2026, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives, Elections, Javid Ahmad Dar, today chaired separate review meetings in Sumbal Bandipora and Budgam districts to assess the preparedness of various departments and ensure seamless arrangements for the devotees during the holy month.

At Sumbal, the Minister took stock of the arrangements being put in place for the devotees across Sonawari and adjoining areas. The meeting was attended by MLA Sonawari Hilal Akbar Lone, Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Indu Kanwal Chib, senior officers of the civil and police administration, heads of various depart-



ments, representatives of Shia organisations, civil society members and other stakeholders. Deputy Commissioner Bandipora briefed the Minister regarding the measures being undertaken by the district administration for smooth, peaceful

and hassle-free observance of Muharram. She informed the meeting about the arrangements related to power supply, drinking water, sanitation, healthcare, road connectivity, traffic management and public distribution services. Representatives of

various Shia organisations and associations projected several issues and requirements concerning essential services during the holy month. The Minister gave a patient hearing to the concerns raised and directed the concerned departments to take immediate and necessary measures for their timely redressal.

Emphasising the religious significance of Muharram-ul-Haram and the administration's responsibility towards the public, Javid Dar underscored the need for close inter-departmental coordination to ensure that the devotees do not face any inconvenience during the observance. He instructed the officers to complete all necessary arrangements well in advance and maintain constant monitoring of the facilities being provided. The Minister laid spe-

cial emphasis on sanitation and cleanliness around Imambaras, religious congregational sites and procession routes. He directed the Municipal authorities and the Rural Development Department to intensify cleanliness drives, ensure proper waste management and deploy adequate manpower and machinery throughout the Muharram period.

He further instructed all the line departments to ensure uninterrupted delivery of essential services and maintain prompt response mechanisms to address the public grievances. Reiterating the government's commitment towards facilitating the smooth conduct of religious events, the Minister assured that all genuine demands projected by the representatives would be examined on priority and addressed in a time-bound manner.

Director Agriculture Jammu concludes two-day tour of Poonch district; reviews developmental activities and interacts with farmers

POONCH, JUNE 08: Director Agriculture, Jammu, Anil Gupta, today concluded his two-day tour of District Poonch, aimed at reviewing developmental activities, assessing the progress of ongoing schemes and interacting with farmers and field functionaries.

On the first day, the Director, accompanied by the Chief Agriculture Officer, Poonch, Jograj Singh Salathia attended the Vibrant Villages Programme at Nangali Sahib, Poonch. Later, the Director chaired a review meeting at the office of the Chief Agriculture Officer, Poonch, to assess the physical and financial progress achieved under the various schemes and programmes implemented by the Agriculture Department in



the district. During the meeting, the Chief Agriculture Officer presented a detailed overview of the ongoing developmental activities, achievements and challenges. The Director stressed the need for timely execution of programmes, effective utilisation of available resources and the achievement of targets fixed for the current financial year. He also stressed the importance of closely monitoring field activities and ensuring maximum outreach of government schemes among the farming community. On the second day, the Director visited Sub-Division Surankote, accompanied by the Chief Agriculture Officer, Poonch and other district and sub-divisional officers. The Director first visited the hi-tech polyhouse of Farhad Choudhary, son of Mohd Bashir, a resident of Village Madana, Zone Lassana, Sub-Division Surankote. He inspected the functioning of the protected cultivation unit and appreciated the farmer for adopting modern agricultural technologies. Speaking on the occasion, the Director said protected

cultivation had emerged as a viable option for enhancing farm productivity, improving crop quality and generating higher income for farmers. He encouraged farmers to take advantage of the government support available under various departmental schemes for establishing hi-tech agricultural infrastructure. The Director then participated in an awareness programme organised under the ongoing Khet Bachao Abhiyan at Samote, Zone Surankote. During the interaction, he sought feedback from farmers on the challenges they faced in agriculture and discussed the latest technologies being adopted at the farm level. The Director also enquired about the benefits farmers were receiving under various departmental schemes.

Indian Culture is the foundation of Nation Building: Governor Kavinder Gupta



SHIMLA, JUNE 8: The Governor of Himachal Pradesh, Kavinder Gupta said that Indian culture is the foundation of nation building and emphasized the need to connect the younger generation with the country's rich cultural heritage, traditions and moral values. He said that a strong and prosperous nation can be built only when its youth remain rooted in the civilizational values that have guided India for centuries. The Governor was addressing the Bharatiya Sanskriti Gyan Pariksha Prize Distribution Ceremony organized by the All World Gayatri Pariwar in Shimla today. He also felicitated the meritorious students who excelled in the examination and lauded their dedication towards learning about India's rich cultural heritage, traditions and values. Kavinder Gupta said that the Bharatiya Sanskriti Gyan Pariksha provides an effective platform for promoting cultural awareness, ethical values, patriotism and national consciousness among students and plays an important role in



strengthening their connection with India's cultural roots. Gupta said that India's ancient scriptures and knowledge traditions continue to offer valuable guidance for building a responsible and value-based society. He stressed that while modern education is essential for acquiring knowledge and skills, cultural and moral education is equally important for nurturing responsible citizens and dedicated nation-builders. Highlighting the significance of values in public life, the Governor said that truth, discipline, integrity and service should form the cornerstone of a student's character. He urged young people to take pride in India's glorious heritage and contribute positively towards society through their conduct and commitment. Referring to the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, he said that the goal of a developed India can be achieved through a generation

empowered with knowledge, skills, values and a strong sense of national responsibility. He called upon students to actively participate in the nation's progress and become agents of positive change. The Governor appreciated the efforts of the All World Gayatri Pariwar in organizing the examination and promoting cultural education among students. He congratulated the students who excelled in the examination and also lauded the role of teachers and parents in instilling values and character among children. On the occasion, Kavinder Gupta felicitated meritorious students for their outstanding performance in the Bharatiya Sanskriti Gyan Pariksha. State Coordinator of Gayatri Pariwar V.K. Bhatnagar, Deputy Coordinator Shri Girijanand, members of the Gayatri Pariwar and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

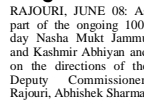
Khait Bachao Abhiyan conducted at Gali Pindi in Zone Sathra, Poonch district



POONCH, JUNE 08: As part of the ongoing Khait Bachao Abhiyan, an awareness and field campaign was organised today at Gali Pindi, Zone Sathra, District Poonch, aimed at promoting scientific horticultural practices and safeguarding soil besides

addressing other production challenges. The campaign was led by Director Horticulture Jammu, Gul Syed, in the presence of Chief Horticulture Officer Poonch, Utam Lal; District Level Subject Matter Specialist (Plant Pathology), Abdul Hamid; District Horticulture Officer, Ajay Gupta and Horticulture Development Officer Mandi, Mohd Farid. During the programme, the officers interacted with farmers and orchardists, inspected field conditions and highlighted the importance of timely plant protection measures, proper orchard management and adoption of modern horticultural technologies. The farmers were educated about disease and pest management practices to enhance productivity and ensure sustainable horticulture development in the district.

MVD Rajouri and Health Department organise awareness-cum-medical camp



RAJOURI, JUNE 08: As part of the ongoing 100-day Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan and on the directions of the Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma, the Motor Vehicles Department, Rajouri, in collaboration with the Health Department, Rajouri, today organised an awareness-cum-medical camp at Bala Bus Stand, Rajouri. The programme was aimed at creating awareness among drivers, conductors and the general public about the harmful effects of drug abuse and the importance of adopting a healthy and addiction-free lifestyle. Speaking on the occasion, ARTO, Rajouri, Ashiq Rafiq Malik, highlighted the dev-

astating social, economic and health consequences of substance abuse. He urged the participants, particularly commercial vehicle drivers, to stay away from drugs and contribute towards making society drug-free. He stressed that drug abuse not only affects an individual's health but also poses a serious threat to road safety. The ARTO further informed that the District Administration, Rajouri, has established a Drug De-addiction Centre at the Old Hospital, Rajouri, to provide coun-

selling, treatment and rehabilitation facilities to affected individuals. He also stated that a 15-bedded de-addiction ward has been set up at the Government Medical College, Rajouri, to strengthen treatment and recovery services for those battling substance abuse. Medical officers and health experts from the Health Department also addressed the gathering and sensitised participants about the ill effects of drug addiction, preventive measures and the availability.

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