

North in News

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LG expressed gratitude to PM Modi and Union Minister Gadkari for Zozila Tunnel

Asia's longest bi-directional tunnel is scripting a new future of year-round connectivity between the Kashmir and Ladakh : LG

SRINAGAR, JUNE 9: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today joined the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari at the breakthrough ceremony of the historic Zozila Tunnel. The Lieutenant Governor expressed gratitude to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Nitin Gadkari for making this vision a reality and said that the landmark project will usher in a new era of connectivity and development for Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh. Asia's longest bi-directional tunnel is scripting a new future of year-round connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh. This



engineering marvel will significantly reduce travel time, ensure safer travel and provide substantial fuel savings. "Today is undoubtedly a historic day. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the people of Union Territories of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh. Under the

leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji and the relentless efforts of Union Minister Nitin Gadkari Ji, the Zozila Tunnel will emerge as a lifeline for the region, strengthening supply chains, boosting tourism and providing vital strategic support to our Armed Forces," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor along with the Hon'ble Union Minister inspected the tunnel and expressed his deepest appreciation and commendation to all the engineers, personnel and workforce who have worked day and night under extremely challenging weather conditions at such

(Contd on Pg 2)

Twin initiatives to ensure impregnable border: Shah

NEW DELHI, JUN 9 : Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said the government's Land Port Management System (LPMS) and Smart Border initiatives will together create an impregnable and secure border, curbing illegal activities. Addressing the launch of the LPMS, a centralised digital platform to modernise and streamline operations across the country's land ports, the home minister said 11 more land ports will be developed over the next three years, bringing the total to 26. The concept of the Land Ports Authority of India emerged in 2012 and



border areas, promoting legitimate trade and finding solutions to challenges like migration. Shah said the launch of the LPMS will eliminate 90 per cent of paperwork and 40 to 60 per cent of the waiting time through single-window clearances. He said his ministry is working on a four-pronged strategy to secure India's borders with the concept of Smart Border, in which the Land Ports Authority will have a crucial role. Special attention has been given to the requirements of all stakeholders, as well as to security, in the LPMS. Shah

took shape from 2012 to 2014, he said. After 2014, it received a new direction under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Shah said. He said land ports have played an important role in the overall development of

(Contd on Pg 2)

World leaders congratulate Modi on becoming longest-serving elected PM

NEW DELHI, JUN 9 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi has received warm congratulatory messages from some world leaders on the eve of his becoming the longest-serving elected prime minister of India. Leaders from across the globe hailed Prime Minister Modi's "transformative governance", his advocacy for the Global South and his vision of an inclusive and economically dynamic India, an official statement said. Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Disanayaka, through a letter, conveyed warm congratulations of the government and people of Sri Lanka to Prime Minister Modi. "This milestone is a testament not



only to your years in office but also to the trust and confidence that the people of the world's largest democracy have repeatedly placed in your leadership," Disanayaka said. The Sri Lankan president also highlighted India's remarkable economic and social transformation and noted that Prime Minister Modi's vision has inspired many beyond India's borders, including Sri Lanka. PM Modi visited Sri Lanka from April 4 to 6, 2025, his fourth visit to the island nation, during which he was conferred the 'Mitra Vibhushana', the island country's highest civilian honour accorded to a foreign dignitary. The visit reaffirmed India's Neighbourhood First

(Contd on Pg 2)

Pak teen detained along LoC in Poonch

MENDHAR/JAMMU, JUN 9 : A 14-year-old Pakistani boy was detained by the Army after crossing the Line of Control (LoC) into the Indian side in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, officials said. The teenager was intercepted by the alert troops in the forward area shortly after he crossed the border in Nagri Tekri area of Mendhar sector, they said. According to the officials, preliminary investigations indicated that he may have inadvertently strayed across the

(Contd on Pg 2)

12 years of Modi govt integrated J-K into India's mainstream journey: Jitendra Singh

JAMMU, JUN 9 : Union minister Jitendra Singh on Tuesday said the 12-years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government integrated Jammu and Kashmir into India's mainstream journey. In addition, J-K also benefited from the Modi government's transformative journey marked by decisive governance, infrastructure



development, technological advancement and welfare schemes reaching the

last mile, the minister of state in the prime minister's office (PMO) said in a special public outreach programme at Hiranagar in Kathua district. "From empowering the poor and farmers to strengthening India's global standing, these years have laid a strong foundation for the vision of Viksit Bharat and created new opportunities for every citizen," Singh said. He highlighted the transformative changes witnessed across the country during the last 12 years under the leadership of Modi and said the period has been marked by inclusive governance, technological advancement and empowerment of every

(Contd on Pg 2)

BRIEF NEWS

Probe ordered after pregnant woman forced to walk for medical aid

BANIHAL/JAMMU, JUN 9 : Authorities have ordered an inquiry after a pregnant woman was allegedly forced to walk to seek medical assistance due to the non-availability of an ambulance in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district. Ramban Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Kamal G Zadoo has ordered an inquiry following allegations that an ambulance driver refused to travel to the remote Tangar village to transport 23-year-old Nayeema Banoo, officials said. Banoo reportedly developed pregnancy-related complications and required urgent medical attention. According to local residents, her family

(Contd on Pg 2)

Drug peddler's house worth Rs 1.10 cr attached in Kathua

JAMMU, JUN 9 : The police on Tuesday attached a property worth over Rs 1.10 crore belonging to an alleged drug peddler in Kathua district, officials said. The attached property was a double-storey house in Ramkot in Billawar and belonged to Mohd Arif, a local, they said. Officials said the property was attached under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act after it was identified as having been allegedly acquired through proceeds from drug sale. The action was carried out under the supervision of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kathua Mohita Sharma.

(Contd on Pg 2)

CM Omar Abdullah, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari jointly inspect progress of Zozila Tunnel project

CM calls tunnel a 'transformative' project; highlights its positive impact on economy, education & healthcare. Urges air connectivity for Kargil



MINIMARG (DRASS), LADAKH | JUNE 09: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today accompanied Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari during the historic breakthrough ceremony of the Zozila Tunnel. Marking a major engineering milestone, both ends of the strategically important tunnel on the Srinagar-Leh National Highway were successfully connected today. The breakthrough was initiated by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, who pressed a remote-triggered blasting mechanism at the East Portal site near Minimarg in Ladakh. The event was witnessed by

Jammu & Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and other senior officials. With this development, the project moves closer to completion of what will be one of the most critical all-weather road links between Kashmir and Ladakh. Once operational, the tunnel is expected to reduce travel time across Zozila Pass from 1-1.5 hours to just about 15 minutes, significantly improving year-round mobility. The tunnel is a geographically vital infrastructure project measuring 13.153 km in length, 9.5 metres in width, and 7.57 metres in height.

(Contd on Pg 2)

Railways to run special Katra-Haridwar service on Somvati Amavasya next week

JAMMU, JUN 9 : To facilitate the travel of pilgrims during the upcoming Somvati Amavasya, the Northern Railway's Jammu division will operate a special train service between Katra and Haridwar next week, an official said on Tuesday. The special train (No. 04606) will depart from Katra in Jammu and Kashmir at 6.15 pm on June 14 and arrive in Utranakhand's Haridwar at 6.30 am the following day. On the return journey, Train No. 04605 will leave Haridwar at 5.20 pm on June 15 and reach Katra at 7 am the next day, a railway spokesperson said. He said the service will be operated as a fully reserved special train and only one round trip has been scheduled to

cater to the expected rush of devotees during Somvati Amavasya. A total of 16 coaches will be attached, including Sleeper, General, AC 3-Tier and AC 2-Tier coaches, the spokesperson said, adding the train will halt at major stations en route, including Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan, Jammu Tawi, Pathankot Cantt, Jalandhar Cantt, Ludhiana, Ambala Cantt, Saharanpur and Roorkee. Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Jammu Uchit Singhal said the special train has been arranged as Somvati Amavasya witnesses a significant surge in the number of devotees visiting the revered Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills

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FROM PAGE ONE

Asia's...

a high altitude. "Connectivity drives development and brings economic prosperity. Over the last 12 years, unprecedented work has been done in this sector across the country. There has been a significant improvement with regard to road, air and rail connectivity in these regions. Given the scale of ongoing projects in Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh, I am confident that this will not only boost trade and tourism but will also significantly strengthen national security, especially in border areas. I hope this project will be completed at the earliest and dedicated to the people of Ladakh and Jammu Kashmir," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor also stated that the completion of this infrastructural marvel will offer immense convenience to devotees of Baba Amarnath Ji coming to Jammu Kashmir from across the country. As the Chairman of Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board, I once again extend my gratitude and congratulations for this achievement," he said. The approximately 14-kilometre bi-directional tunnel is being developed at a cost of around Rs 6,800 crore. Situated at elevations ranging from 2,900 metres to 3,310 metres, the project represents one of the most challenging mountain infrastructure undertakings in the world and showcases India's remarkable engineering prowess. The tunnel will be equipped with state-of-the-art safety and operational features, including an advanced ventilation system, automatic fire detection system, modern CCTV surveillance, and cross-passages for pedestrian safety. The project also incorporates eight cut-and-cover sections, four bridges, forty culverts, snow galleries, catch dams, avalanche protection structures, approach roads, and other modern safety measures. Upon completion, the Zojila Tunnel Project will reduce travel time between Sonamarg and Minamarg from nearly two hours to approximately thirty minutes, resulting in substantial savings in both time and fuel.

Twin...

said. This arrangement, in conjunction with the concept of Smart Border, will build an impenetrable and secure border, he asserted. Shah said after 2014, the Land Ports Authority of India received a new direction under Modi's visionary leadership. "Moving beyond a security-centric approach, land ports were developed as the first line of defence for security, a medium for trade facilitation and a bridge for people-to-people connectivity," he said. Shah said land ports have not only enhanced business but have also strengthened security and helped convert illegal trade into legal trade. He said the LPMS is being launched on a historic day, when Modi completed 12 years in the nation's service, marking 4,398 continuous days as the prime minister. Shah said on June 10, Modi will become the longest-serving prime minister of the country, breaking the record of the first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. He said after taking charge in 2014, Modi has made public welfare his watchword and the last 12 years have been a testimony to providing basic facilities to the country's deprived citizens. The home minister said a fundamental change has occurred in the country's democracy over the last 12 years. "We all know that dynasticism, casteism and corruption had become festering wounds in our democratic system, and people were habituated to living with those. Prime Minister Modi brought fundamental changes in the system by introducing the politics of performance," he said. The politics of performance replaced the politics of caste, corruption and dynastic influence, and as a result, governments kept getting reelected in the states, bringing stability

in policies and making it easy to implement and monitor those, he added. "If anyone could be credited for the introduction of the politics of performance, it is Narendra Modi," Shah said. He said Modi has always considered power as "sadhana" (dedication) and serving the country has been his mission. He has been a "Nishkalam Karmaayogi" after completing 4,398 consecutive days as the prime minister of India, the home minister added. Modi has monitored the implementation of public-welfare schemes and ensured that they achieved full saturation, he said. Shah said the prime minister has ensured that every citizen of the country would have a "pucca" house, adding that about four crore people have got such houses and two crore more have been identified. The prime minister has made similar efforts to ensure that people have toilets at home, tap water, Rs 5 lakh in health reimbursement, and five to seven kg of free ration per month, he added.

India used to be among the "fragile five" economies in the world but it is among the top five economies now and also, the fastest-growing economy, Shah said. He said during Modi's tenure, 25 crore people have come out of poverty and India is progressing with stability amid global instability. The prime minister has also introduced the concept of women-led development rather than just women's development, he said. Dishing out development figures, Shah said 81 crore people are receiving five kg of free ration per month, 98 crore "Jan Dhan" accounts have been opened, 44 crore Ayushman Bharat cards for free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh have been generated, 16 crore people have got "Nal se Jal" or tap water at their homes, 13 crore farmers have received Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman, 12.76 crore toilets have been built and four crore people have got houses.

He said India is number one globally in digital transactions, number two in mobile manufacturing and number three in creating a startup ecosystem. The GDP figures of the last 12 years testify to these achievements, Shah asserted. He said India's COVID-19 management was an example for the world. "Whether it is the Covid pandemic or difficult economic situations due to wars in different parts of the world, the government has steered the country, taken it forward and seen it marching towards its goal at a fast pace," he said.

World... policy, with Sri Lanka among the closest beneficiaries of India's steadfast partnership, including India's pivotal support during Sri Lanka's economic difficulties in 2022.

Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea James Marape, in a personal video message, described Prime Minister Modi as "a role model and an example of leadership". "Lifting over 200 million people out of poverty to good life today is an amazing feat," he said. Prime Minister Marape expressed Papua New Guinea's warm friendship and its desire to further consolidate bilateral ties. PM Modi's historic visit to Papua New Guinea in May 2023, the first-ever by an Indian prime minister, for the Third Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC-III) Summit was a landmark moment in India's engagement with the Pacific Island nations. The visit underscored India's role as a committed partner of the Global South.

Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago Kamla Persad-Bissessar also congratulated PM Modi on this occasion, noting that under his leadership, India has evolved as a leading voice on global matters. She highlighted Modi's journey from humble beginnings to leading a nation of 1.4 billion people across three terms, and underscored India's significant achievements in foreign policy, economic growth, infrastructure and socio-economic development.

Prime Minister Modi paid a landmark visit to Trinidad and Tobago from July 3 to 4, 2025, the first bilateral visit by an Indian prime minister in 26 years, coinciding with the 180th anniversary of the arrival of Indian immigrants to Trinidad and Tobago.

Pak teen...

LoC from the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The boy was taken into custody for questioning and was being treated in accordance with established procedures, the officials said, adding security agencies were conducting further inquiries to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the crossing and to rule out any security concerns. They said the boy is likely to be repatriated after the completion of the investigation.

12 years...

section of society. The minister outlined several landmark initiatives and reforms undertaken by the government, including expansion of infrastructure, strengthening of social welfare schemes, digital governance, financial inclusion, healthcare, education and rural development. The benefits of these initiatives have reached the remotest regions of the country, ensuring that development is not confined to urban centres alone," he said. Referring to J-K, Singh said the region has witnessed holistic development over the past decade, with significant improvements in connectivity including Katra Expressway Corridor, multiple tunnel projects, public infrastructure, healthcare facilities, educational institutions and employment opportunities. He noted that various centrally sponsored schemes have accelerated socio-economic growth and improved the quality of life of the people. The minister reiterated the government's commitment to the vision of Viksit Bharat and called upon citizens, particularly the youth, to actively participate in the nation's development journey.

He said the achievements of the last 12 years have laid a strong foundation for building a developed, self-reliant and prosperous India by 2047. Earlier, upon his arrival, Singh attended a commemorative programme held at Mela village of Hiranagar in memory of late Amarjeet Sharma who was found dead in his native village in June 2024. He said the achievements of the last 12 years have laid a strong foundation for building a developed, self-reliant and prosperous India by 2047. Earlier, upon his arrival, Singh attended a commemorative programme held at Mela village of Hiranagar in memory of late Amarjeet Sharma who was found dead in his native village in June 2024. He said the achievements of the last 12 years have laid a strong foundation for building a developed, self-reliant and prosperous India by 2047. Earlier, upon his arrival, Singh attended a commemorative programme held at Mela village of Hiranagar in memory of late Amarjeet Sharma who was found dead in his native village in June 2024.

CM Omar...

built at an altitude of around 11,578 feet above sea level. It is a horseshoe-shaped, single-tube, two-lane road tunnel designed to ensure uninterrupted connectivity even in extreme weather conditions. The project is being executed by the National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited. Speaking at the ceremony, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah described the tunnel as a project that will "transform daily life" in the region. He said it would ease access to education, healthcare and markets, and significantly boost tourism and trade. "It will

bring improvements in people's lives that we may not fully realise today," he noted, while congratulating the local population.

The Chief Minister also welcomed the breakthrough as the fulfilment of a long-pending demand of the region, while stressing the need to complete the remaining works at the earliest so that the tunnel can be fully operational. On broader connectivity, Omar Abdullah highlighted the need for improved air connectivity for Kargil. He said efforts had been made in this direction but more support was required. Referring to this, he said there remains "one aspiration still unfulfilled" and urged the Union Minister to support regular flight connectivity for Kargil, expressing hope that it would soon become a reality. He concluded by congratulating the people of Drass and appreciating the efforts of all stakeholders involved in the project.

Also present on the occasion were Chief Executive Councillor of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Kargil Dr Mohd Jaffer Akhoun, Member of Parliament Ladakh Haji Mohd Hanefza Jan, along with senior civil, military and project officials.

Railways to...

in Katra town of Reasi district. "A huge increase in the number of devotees is witnessed on Sonvati Amavasya for visiting Mata Vaisno Devi shrine. This special train is being run with the objective of facilitating passengers and managing the extra rush," he said. Singh requested passengers to make reservations immediately and travel only with a valid ticket. Passengers can contact 139 for information regarding ticket availability and reservation status, he said.

Probe...

contacted the 108 ambulance service which responded and reached Dharamkund Zero Point on the Ramban-Gool Highway. However, residents alleged that the ambulance staff refused to proceed further to Tangar village despite repeated requests and being informed about the patient's condition. They claimed that the woman and her attendants were left with no option but to undertake a difficult journey on foot and later seek a lift in a private vehicle before reaching the ambulance. The patient was subsequently shifted to the Ramban District Hospital for treatment. Senior Assistant District Officer Mela subsequently submitted a complaint on Tuesday to the Health Department, seeking action against the ambulance staff and demanding measures to prevent similar incidents in future. Acting on the complaint, Zadoo issued an official communication to the Batote block medical officer (BMO), directing him to conduct a detailed inquiry into the allegations.

The BMO has been directed to conduct a comprehensive investigation and submit a detailed report to the CMO's office within two days for further necessary action. When contacted, Zadoo said the 108 ambulance service operates under a contractual arrangement but the Health Department consistently ensures that ambulances reach all road-connected villages.

"We make every effort to ensure that ambulances reach remote villages with road connectivity," he said. The CMO assured that appropriate action would be taken in accordance with the rules after the inquiry report is received.

Drug...

According to police, the property was estimated to have a market value of around Rs 1.10 crore. They said Mohd Arif had been involved in

UP Government Invites Balwant Thakur for Prestigious Theatre Workshop

JAMMU, JUNE 9

In a significant initiative aimed at enriching professional theatre education, the Bhartendu Natya Academy, an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Government of Uttar Pradesh, has invited eminent theatre director and Padma Shri awardee Balwant Thakur to conduct a week-long intensive theatre workshop in Lucknow beginning on June 10, 2026.

Bhartendu Natya Academy was established by the Government of Uttar Pradesh with the objective of providing theatre education of a standard comparable to the National School of Drama for the Hindi-speaking region. The academy offers postgraduate courses in dramatics and maintains a vibrant theatre repertory that stages high-quality productions across Uttar Pradesh and at national and international platforms. As part of its commitment to excellence, the academy regularly invites distinguished theatre practitioners and scholars from across the country to conduct specialized workshops and training programmes for its students.

The invitation extended to Balwant Thakur is being viewed as a major opportunity for the academy's students and theatre



enthusiasts, considering his vast experience and international exposure in the field of theatre. Recognized as one of India's leading theatre personalities, Balwant Thakur has devoted more than four decades to theatre direction, training, research, and cultural activism. His pioneering work in contemporary Indian theatre and his innovative efforts in taking theatre to remote and conflict-affected regions have earned him national and international acclaim.

A recipient of the prestigious Padma Shri, Balwant Thakur has represented Indian theatre in numerous countries and has participated in theatre festivals, cultural exchanges, workshops, seminars, and training pro-

grammes across Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America. His theatre learning and exposure encompass a wide range of global performance traditions, including contemporary theatre practices, experimental theatre, community theatre, physical theatre, and intercultural performance methodologies. Over the years, he has closely interacted with some of the world's most respected theatre institutions and practitioners, enriching his artistic vision with diverse international perspectives.

Through the forthcoming workshop in Lucknow, participants will have the unique opportunity to benefit from Balwant Thakur's extensive knowledge, creative insights, and global understanding of theatre. The programme is expected to provide valuable practical training in acting, stagecraft, performance techniques, character development, and contemporary theatre practices, thereby contributing significantly to the professional growth of emerging theatre artists.

The workshop is anticipated to be a memorable learning experience and a major academic enrichment exercise for the students of Bhartendu Natya Academy.

Rakesh Sangral launches infrastructure project under MLA Raina's Guidance

JAMMU, JUNE 9



Under the guidance of MLA RS Pura-Jammu South, Dr. Narinder Singh Raina, District General Secretary Rakesh Sangral today inaugurated the construction work of lanes and drains in Ward No. 68, Lane No. 16/56. The project, being undertaken at an estimated cost of Rs 50 lakh, aims to improve sanitation, strengthen drainage infrastructure, and enhance connectivity for local residents. Speaking on the occasion, Rakesh Sangral said that the project reflects the commitment of Dr. Narinder Singh Raina towards strengthening civic infrastructure and addressing

the day-to-day concerns of the people. He noted that the development work would help resolve long-pending issues such as damaged lanes, inadequate drainage facilities, and waterlogging during the rainy season.

Conveying Dr. Raina's message, Sangral emphasized that the development of basic infrastructure remains a top priority and that every ward of the RS Pura-Jammu South constituency will continue to receive focused attention under the ongoing development initiatives. He further stated that several lane and drain projects have already been completed, while many others are currently under execution across the con-

stituency to improve civic amenities and enhance the quality of life of residents. Strengthening grassroots infrastructure, he added, is essential for achieving sustainable urban development and better living standards. Sangral also urged the concerned officials and executing agencies to maintain high construction standards and ensure the timely completion of the project so that the public can benefit from the development works without delay.

Local residents welcomed the initiative and expressed gratitude to Dr. Narinder Singh Raina and Rakesh Sangral for prioritizing infrastructure development in the area. They said 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 Dr. Himja Mehngi, Reena Sathia, Usha Rajput, Raj Kumar Dr. Subhash Abrol, Vir Bakshi, and party leaders, officials from the concerned departments, local representatives, and a large number of residents.

DC Doda reviews Poshan Project implementation

DODA, JUNE 09: Deputy Commissioner Doda Krishan Lal today chaired a review meeting to assess the implementation and progress of various nutrition and welfare initiatives under the Poshan Project in the district. Among those present were Programme Officer ICDS Akhtar Hussain Qazi, ACP Mushraf Hafiz, CPO Manesh Kumar Manhas, CEO Bhushan Kumar Pathak, CMO Dr Vinod Sharma, Executive Engineer PHE Division, Food Safety Officer, CDPOs, BDOs and other officers concerned.

A PowerPoint presentation highlighted performance, achievements and targets under various schemes and interventions. The meeting reviewed the enrolment status of children aged six months to six years in Anganwadi Centres, pre-school education activities, growth monitoring, immunisation coverage, nutritional support programmes and the health status of pregnant and lactating mothers. Discussions were also held on institutional deliveries, implement-



ation of the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), availability and distribution of fortified rice, recruitment of Sanginis and Sahayikas, identification of Anganwadi Centres for development as crèches and Bal Vidyalayas and the status of convergence activities among the ICDS, Health, Education, Rural Development and PHE departments to ensure effective service delivery at the grassroots level. The Deputy Commissioner directed the departments concerned to ensure 100 percent registration of

eligible beneficiaries under PMMVY and other nutrition-related schemes. He stressed the need for regular health check-ups of pregnant women and children, timely vaccination and stronger referral mechanisms for high-risk pregnancies and severely malnourished children. He directed the Health Department to work closely with ICDS functionaries to reduce anaemia among women and children through awareness campaigns, supplementation programmes and regular screening. He also instructed officials to

intensity awareness drives on maternal health, breastfeeding, complementary feeding and hygiene to improve nutrition outcomes across the district. The Deputy Commissioner further directed the Education and ICDS Departments to identify suitable government buildings for shifting Anganwadi Centres presently operating from rented accommodations and to improve infrastructure wherever required. He emphasised the need for safe, child-friendly learning environments in all centres. Stressing accountability and effective monitoring, he directed CDPOs and supervisory staff to undertake regular field inspections, maintain updated records and ensure timely reporting through digital platforms. He also instructed the Food Safety Officer to conduct periodic inspections of food supplied to Anganwadi Centres and organise capacity building programmes for Anganwadi Workers on food safety, nutrition and child care practices.

Javed Rana meets Jammu region delegations, assures priority redress of public grievances

JAMMU, JUNE 09: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Rana, today met several deputations from Samba, Bari Brahmana, Nagrota and other areas of Jammu region, assuring them that their genuine issues would be addressed on priority. The delegations highlighted various developmental concerns pertaining to their respective areas and sought the Minister's intervention for their early redress. A delegation from Samba highlighted the problem of irregular water supply and sought necessary intervention for ensuring adequate drinking water availability. Another deputation raised matters related to implementation of the Forest Rights Act and requested



expeditious disposal of the pending cases. A separate delegation urged the Minister to take steps for strengthening and upgrading the healthcare infrastructure to improve delivery of medical services to the people. Several other deputations also projected local developmental issues and sought redress of public grievances pertaining to their respective areas.

Interacting with the deputations, the Minister reiterated that prompt redress of public grievances remains one of the foremost priorities of the government. Javed Rana directed the concerned officers to examine the issues projected by the deputations and take appropriate measures for their timely resolution.

Controller LMD conducts awareness camp on Jan Vishwas reforms in Kathua

KATHUA, JUNE 09: Controller Legal Metrology Department J&K Shiv Kumar Gupta today conducted a tour of district Kathua, during which he chaired an awareness camp organised by the Legal Metrology Department Kathua. The camp aimed to sensitise consumers, traders and stakeholders about the provisions of the Legal Metrology Act and the reforms introduced under the Jan Vishwas framework 2.0. Among those present were Ajeet Bawa and Vikrant Verma, Presidents of the Industrial Association Kathua; Jang Bahadur, President, Beopar Mandal Kathua; Shyam Sunder, President, Chadwal PSC Association; and representatives of various trade bodies, industrial associa-



tions, faculty members, consumers and traders. Participants were sensitised about their rights and responsibilities under the Legal Metrology Act and the Consumer Protection framework. Addressing the gathering, the Controller stressed the need to build greater awareness among consumers and traders about the role and functioning of the Legal Metrology

Department, particularly in the context of the recently introduced Jan Vishwas reforms. He highlighted the importance of consumer awareness in relation to commodities and services involving LPG, Motor Spirits (MS), High Speed Diesel (HSD) and packaged food items, and emphasised the need for transparency and fairness in trade practices.

YSS Kishtwar conducts inter-school zonal tournaments and Fit India Run

KISHTWAR, JUNE 09: The Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Kishtwar organised inter-school zonal level tournaments in Chess, Badminton and Football across Zones Kishtwar and Nagseni. In Zone Kishtwar, the U-14 Boys Football competition was held at Chowgan Ground Kishtwar, the U-14 Boys Chess event at GHSS Boys Kishtwar and the U-14 Boys Badminton competition at TTI Kishtwar. A total of 127 students participated in these competitions. Zone Nagseni organised the U-17 Boys and Girls Badminton competitions at BVM HSS Kishtwar, with a total participation of 79 students. The tournaments provided a platform for young athletes to showcase their talent and prepare for higher-level competitions. YSS Kishtwar also organised a Fit India Run under the Fit India Movement as part of the ongoing 100-Day Nasha Mukta Jammu and



Kashmir Abhiyan. The event saw participation of 3,185 students and staff members from educational institutions across the district. The Fit India Run was conducted at several institutions, including HSS Filler, HSS Patnazi, HS

Affari, HS Bandrena, UPS Upper Kundwari, HSS Boys Kishtwar, HS Galhar, HS Cherhar, MS Gulabgarh, MS Lower Huller, MS Indra Nagar, MS Bhata Palmar, MS Kundhali, MS City Girls, UPS Razna Palmar, UPS Ward No. 2,

UPS Lanyal, MS Poochie Khurd, UPS Ramli, UPS Zargar Mohalla, UPS Sheikh Pura, UPS Umer Mohalla, UPS Seman Kadal and UPS Matta, among others across the district. The activities aimed to promote physical fitness, healthy living and awareness against substance abuse among students and youth. The events were conducted under the direction of Director General Youth Services and Sports J&K Anuradha Gupta, under the supervision of District Development Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma and under the guidance of DYSSO Kishtwar Jaffer Haider Sheikh. The successful conduct of both the tournaments and the Fit India Run was made possible through the efforts of all Zonal Physical Education Officers, PEMs, PETS, REK teachers, GMS and field staff of YSS Kishtwar.

DC Doda approves in-situ promotion of three Revenue Department employees

DODA, JUNE 09: A meeting of the Committee constituted for examination and disposal of time bound (In-situ) promotion cases of eligible Revenue Department employees in district Doda was held today at the DC Office under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Krishan Lal. The committee undertook a detailed review of service records and eligibility criteria of employees whose cases had been placed before it. After thorough scrutiny and deliberation, it approved time bound (In-situ) promotion in favour of three eligible employees, with effect from their respective due dates. The approved cases comprised one Driver from Tehsil Office Bhaderwah, one



Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) from DC Office Doda and one MTS from Tehsil Office Doda. The committee emphasised the need for timely processing of service-related matters and reviewed the status of pending cases to ensure that eligible employees receive their due benefits without unnecessary delay. It reiterated that all promotion cases must be processed strictly in accordance with prescribed rules

and guidelines to maintain transparency and fairness. The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner Revenue and Accounts Officer, Tehsildar Bhaderwah, Tehsildar Bhalla and Tehsildar Chilly Pingal participated virtually. The committee directed all officers concerned to furnish complete service records and requisite documents in a timely manner.

170 entrepreneurial cases approved under Mission YUVA in Reasi

REASI, JUNE 09: A meeting of the District Level Implementation Committee under Mission YUVA was held today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek to review the progress of the scheme and consider fresh applications from aspiring entrepreneurs. During the meeting, 170 applications verified by the Small Business Development Units (SBDUs) were placed before the committee. After detailed scrutiny, all 170 cases were approved for financial assistance, skill development training and other support under Mission YUVA. The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned banks to ensure prompt

disbursement of sanctioned loans and expedite clearance of all pending cases. Stressing the importance of capacity building, he instructed the departments concerned to intensify skill development initiatives by organising additional training sessions at Dhamari and launching more training batches across the district. He emphasised that enhanced awareness and wider registration under Mission YUVA would enable more eligible youth to avail the benefits of the scheme and establish sustainable livelihood ventures. He called upon all stakeholders to work in coordination to maximise outreach and ensure timely support to aspiring entrepreneurs.

JKAACL organises release of Suham Prakash by Prem Nath Pandita

JAMMU, JUNE 09: The J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) today organised a book release function for Suham Prakash, written by author Prem Nath Pandita (Prem), at KL Saigal Hall, Jammu. Dr Rajeshi graced the occasion as Chief Guest, while Additional Secretary JKAACL Sonali Arun Gupta presided over the function. Chief Editor (Gojri) JKAACL Dr Javid

Rahi, ML Pandita and the author Prem Nath Pandita (Prem) were present in the presidium. In her welcome address, Sonali Arun Gupta emphasised the contemporary relevance of such literary works and their contribution to the understanding of religion and culture. Speakers elaborated on Suham Prakash, underlining the author's devotion to spiritual and cultural themes.

Satish Sharma reviews Sports Calendar 2026-27, sports development across J&K

JAMMU, JUNE 09: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today chaired a review meeting to assess the proposed Sports Calendar 2026-27 and the roadmap for sports development across Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services & Sports, Shahid Choudhary and Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council, Nuzhat Gul and other senior officers. Reviewing the proposed calendar, Satish Sharma emphasised that sports have emerged as a powerful vehicle for youth

empowerment, social transformation and economic development. He stated that the government is committed to create world-class sporting opportunities for the young athletes from every district, ensuring that talent from even the remotest areas receives adequate exposure and support. The Minister highlighted that the proposed calendar includes a wide spectrum of activities ranging from international and national championships to district-level competitions and community sports programmes. He lauded the efforts being made to strengthen the grassroots sports and create a sustainable sporting ecosystem across Jammu & Kashmir. Satish Sharma

expressed satisfaction over the inclusion of several major events, including the hosting of the South Asian Wushu Championship and the Asian Aerobic Gymnastics Championship in Srinagar, which are expected to place Jammu and Kashmir prominently on the international sporting map. He said such prestigious events will not only promote sports excellence but also showcase the region's capabilities as a destination for national and international sporting events. The Minister also reviewed plans for the organization of district leagues in cricket, football and hockey, tribal sports leagues, women's sports leagues, chess and car-

rom leagues, athletics meets, cycling events and a series of youth-centric programmes under the 'My Youth, My Pride' initiative. He stressed the need to ensure broad-based participation of youth, women, tribal communities and special-abled sports persons. Referring to flagship initiatives such as the Women's Super 10 League, Kashmir Super League, Ganderbal Super League, Pro Kabaddi Championship, Jammu Cyclothon and other district and community-based competitions, Satish Sharma said these events will greatly help identify the emerging talent and create a vibrant sporting culture throughout Jammu & Kashmir.

The Minister also underlined the importance of sports as a tool for social awareness and positive behavioural change. He appreciated the proposed integration of the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan through Sports, observing that sports can play a transformative role in steering youth away from substance abuse and towards healthy and productive lifestyles. Calling for effective coordination among all the stakeholders, Satish Sharma directed officials to ensure timely preparations, robust infrastructure support, transparent selection processes and maximum outreach so that every aspiring athlete gets an opportunity to participate and

excel. He emphasized the role of technology in sports governance and directed the concerned departments to leverage the digital platforms for athlete registration, event management, talent tracking and performance monitoring. He said that the integration of technology with sports development would enhance transparency, efficiency and accessibility. Reaffirming the government's commitment towards nurturing the sporting talent, the Minister said Jammu and Kashmir possesses immense potential across a range of disciplines and that sustained investment in sports infrastructure, coaching, competitions and scientific training will help produce

national and international champions. Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services & Sports, Shahid Choudhary subsequently briefed the Minister on the extensive preparations being undertaken for successful implementation of the Sports Calendar. He also apprised the Minister of the activities already conducted under various youth and sports initiatives, including grassroots competitions, community sports programmes, talent identification drives and district-level championships. He informed that coordinated efforts are being made to strengthen sports infrastructure, improve access to training facilities and maximize youth participation.



PoJK is an integral part of India; Brutality against civilians cannot be tolerated: Shiv Sena (UBT)



JAMMU, JUNE 9

The Jammu & Kashmir unit of Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) has strongly condemned the recent violence reported from Rawalakot and Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK) and expressed serious concern over the alleged suppression of civilians by the Pakistani administration. The party reiterated that PoJK remains an integral part of India and that the safety, dignity, and rights of the people living there are of paramount importance.

Issuing a special press statement, Shiv Sena (UBT) J&K President Manish Sahni said: "The bloodshed unfolding in

PoJK is not merely a law-and-order issue; it reflects a systematic attempt to suppress the voices of local residents. Pakistan has pushed this beautiful Himalayan region into instability and unrest while trying to conceal its own political and economic failures."

Sahni alleged that the decision to ban local organizations such as the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) under anti-terror laws and the reported use of force against protesters expose the authoritarian nature of Pakistan's governance in the region.

He further stated that for decades, Pakistan has economically and politically exploited the territory while failing to

address the basic needs and democratic aspirations of its people. According to Sahni, the deployment of security forces against civilians demanding essential services and rights demonstrates Islamabad's inability to govern the region effectively.

Calling upon the international community, including the United Nations and global human rights organizations, Sahni urged them to raise their voices against what he described as serious human rights violations in PoJK. He also expressed concern over reports of restrictions affecting medical services and healthcare access during the unrest.

Sahni appealed to Narendra Modi and the Government of India to continue asserting India's position on PoJK at international diplomatic forums and to intensify efforts highlighting the situation in the region.

He emphasized that, in Shiv Sena (UBT)'s view, PoJK is constitutionally a part of India and that any suffering faced by the people there should remain a matter of concern for the nation. A. Vikas Bakshi, Sanjeev Kohli, Sanjay Bhatt, Aditya Mahajan were present on this occasion.

Modi-led Government Has Failed on All Fronts During Its Twelve Years in Power : Rattan Lal Gupta

JAMMU, JUNE 9

The Provincial President Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Rattan Lal Gupta said that the twelve-year rule of the BJP-led Government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has failed to deliver on several major promises made to the people of India. The Government came to power promising employment, economic prosperity, women's empowerment, farmers' welfare, and corruption-free governance. However, the ground reality presents a different picture.

Issued a statement at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan, Jammu Unemployment continues to remain one of the biggest challenges facing the country. Millions of educated youth are struggling to secure jobs despite repeated assurances of large-scale employment generation. The growing frustration among job seekers reflects the failure of the Government's economic and employment policies.

The promise of doubling farmers' income has remained largely unfulfilled. Rising costs of fertilizers, seeds, diesel, and agricultural inputs have increased the burden on farmers, while returns from agricultural produce have not kept pace. Farmers across the country continue to face financial distress. Women's empowerment, which was highlighted as



a priority, has not translated into adequate economic opportunities and security for women. A large section of women still struggles for employment, financial independence, and equal participation in the workforce.

The Indian Rupee has witnessed significant depreciation against the US Dollar over the years, increasing the cost of imports and putting pressure on the economy. This has also contributed to inflationary trends affecting common citizens.

Price rise has become a major concern for every household. The prices of essential commodities, cooking gas, edible oils, vegetables, and other daily necessities have increased substantially, adversely affecting the middle class, salaried employees, farmers, labourers, and economically weaker sec-

tions. Another serious concern is the repeated incidents of paper leaks in competitive examinations. Such incidents have shattered the dreams of lakhs of students and job aspirants who spend years preparing for examinations. These failures have undermined confidence in the recruitment system and created uncertainty among the youth.

The country has also witnessed several instances of financial irregularities and scams that have raised serious questions regarding transparency and accountability in governance.

Jammu and Kashmir, once known for its unique identity, rich culture, and constitutional guarantees, has been reduced to a Union Territory, thereby diminishing the powers of the elected Government and weakening democratic institutions. Such actions raise serious concerns about the future of federalism and democratic governance in the country.

The people of India deserve answers and effective governance rather than mere slogans and publicity. The Government must acknowledge its shortcomings, address the pressing concerns of unemployment, inflation, farmers' welfare, women's empowerment, examination reforms, and economic stability, and work sincerely for the welfare of all sections of society.

Beyond party lines, leaders rally behind development agenda; signals emerging national consensus: Varinderjeet

JAMMU, JUNE 9

Chairman, National Sikh Front (NSF), S Varinderjeet Singh today said that the reported support extended by a large number of Trinamool Congress Members of Parliament to the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), coupled with the resignation of senior party leaders, reflects a growing national faith in development-oriented governance and a broader shift in the country's political discourse. In a statement issued here today, Varinderjeet Singh observed that political rifts across the country are increasingly favouring stability, accountability, good governance and nation-first politics. He said that when elected representatives voluntarily rise above party lines to support a larger national vision, it reflects the strength and credibility of that vision. The NSF Chairman stated that the NDA Government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has transformed the political narrative by shifting the focus from rhetoric to results, from promises to performance and from vote-bank politics to development-centric governance. He said that initiatives relating to infrastructure devel-



opment, digital empowerment, economic reforms, women empowerment, social welfare and national security have generated confidence among citizens as well as public representatives across the country. "Political loyalties may shift, but public expectations never do. Leaders who understand the aspirations of the people naturally gravitate towards platforms that deliver tangible results and inspire confidence in the future," he remarked. Varinderjeet Singh said that the developments unfolding in West Bengal should not be viewed merely through the prism of political arithmetic. Rather, they represent a large message emerging from across the country that development

has become the new common language of Indian democracy and performance. The new breed of political credibility. "When leaders from diverse political backgrounds begin converging around a common vision of development and national progress, it signals not merely a political shift but the emergence of a new national consensus," he asserted.

Referring to Jammu and Kashmir, the NSF chairman said that the visible improvements in infrastructure, tourism, connectivity and public service delivery have further strengthened public confidence in development-focused governance. He maintained that India today is witnessing a transformational shift in public expectations where governance, transparency and delivery are increasingly shaping political outcomes.

Expressing hope that such developments will contribute towards stronger governance and greater political stability, Varinderjeet Singh reiterated that all initiatives promoting national unity, inclusive development, social harmony and economic progress deserve support from every citizen committed to India's bright future.

Army celebrates World Environment Day at Surankote, Poonch

JAMMU, JUNE 9

The Indian Army celebrated World Environment Day at Town Campus, Surankote by organising an Awareness Lecture, a Drawing Competition and a Tree Plantation Drive. The event aimed to promote environmental consciousness among students and encourage active participation in the conservation of nature.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER CORRIGENDUM NOTICE			
Corrigendum Details			
Corrigendum No.	Completion Publish Date as per BRRPS	Tender No.	
433	JUL_25_26	Open Tender	
Name of Work	Procurement/Alternate Control Office in the Jammu Division	Date Time of Closing	Date Time of Ligning Tender
04 OF 2026		20.06.2026	20.06.2026
Advertiser	Sliding Start Date	on per BRRPS	
501553/24	17.06.2026		
Estimated Value (Rs.)	Period of Completion	3 Months	
100350.00			
Micro (Rs.)			
18187.2026	18.07		
Tender No: 433, TENDR, JUL_25_26, Date: 16.03.2024, Closing Date: 19.06.2024			
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE			

CCI Jammu holds interactive session with Bhagwati Nagar College Interns

JAMMU, JUNE 9

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI), Jammu, organized an interactive session for interns from Government Women College, Bhagwati Nagar, in collaboration with the Institute of Mass Communication and Skill Development (IMCSD), Jammu at the Chamber House, Rail Head Complex, Jammu.

The programme was aimed at providing students with practical exposure to the functioning of trade and business institutions while enhancing their understanding of entrepreneurship, economic development, and the role of industry bodies in addressing issues affecting the business community.

During the session, Arun Gupta, President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Jammu, interacted with the interns and shared valuable insights into the functioning and objectives of the Chamber. He explained the role played by the organization in representing the interests of traders, industrialists, and entrepreneurs, as well as its contribution towards the growth and development of trade and industry in the Jammu region.

Addressing the students, Gupta encouraged them to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset and explore opportunities for



innovation and self-employment. He emphasized the importance of supporting local businesses and promoting products manufactured within the region, stating that strengthening local enterprises contributes significantly to economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development.

Highlighting the growing influence of digital platforms, he urged the interns to use social media responsibly and effectively to promote Jammu's tourism potential, cultural heritage, historical landmarks, and scenic destinations. He noted that young people can play an important role in enhancing the visibility of the region and attracting tourists through creative digital content and responsible online engagement.

The session witnessed active participation from the interns, who raised several questions related to entrepreneurship,

emerging business opportunities, startup culture, and the role of the Chamber in addressing challenges faced by traders and industrialists. Arun Gupta responded to the queries and encouraged the students to remain proactive in acquiring knowledge and developing professional skills.

The interactive programme provided students with a valuable learning experience and a deeper understanding of the economic ecosystem of the region. Participants appreciated the initiative and described it as an insightful opportunity to interact with business leaders and gain practical knowledge beyond the classroom.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks and a renewed commitment to fostering greater interaction between educational institutions and industry bodies for the benefit of aspiring young professionals.

Youth National Conference Organizes Interaction Programme at Rahain Border Belt, Samba



JAMMU, JUNE 9

The Youth National Conference today organized an interaction programme at Rahain Border Belt, where a large number of local youth participated and shared their concerns and aspirations. The programme was organized by Central Zone Vice President Rohit Dogra.

The meeting was chaired by Sardar Tejinder Pal Singh Aman, Provincial President, Youth National Conference Jammu. Prominent leaders present on the occasion included Hameed Choudhary (President, Central Zone), Rajeshwar Singh (Youth Leader), Atul Singh (Vice President, Jammu Urban), Fareed Choudhary (Vice President, W&S Samba), Gopal Malik, Ayush Goswami, Jatin Sambhal (District Coordinator, Samba), Abhi Jaisalwal, Sunil Randhawa, Raj Kumar, Aniket Verma, and several other Youth National Conference members and local residents.

During the interaction, the youth highlighted several issues affecting the area. Their primary concern was the education sector. They informed the leadership that there is only one High school in the area and demanded its upgradation. They also pointed out the severe shortage of teaching staff, due to which the school remains largely non-functional. The youth urged the authorities to provide adequate staff to ensure quality education for local students. The participants also raised concerns regarding the local playground, requesting its proper maintenance and development. They emphasized that there is no other suitable playground in the area and that promoting sports activities is essential to keep young people engaged and away from the growing menace of drug abuse. Another important issue raised by the youth was the lack of employment opportunities for local residents in private factories operating in the area. They alleged that prefer-

ence is often given to workers from outside the region and demanded that local youth be given priority in recruitment. The participants also highlighted the incomplete Community Hall attached to a local temple and requested that the construction work be completed at the earliest so that the facility can be utilized for community welfare activities.

Addressing the gathering, Sardar Tejinder Pal Singh Aman assured the youth that all the issues raised during the meeting would be taken up with the concerned authorities and government departments. He said every effort would be made to ensure the early resolution of these genuine public demands.

Aman emphasized that the youth of the border areas are the backbone of the nation and deserve equal opportunities to thrive. He said that the aspirations, concerns, and developmental needs of border youth must be addressed on priority to ensure their active participation in national and social progress. He also encouraged the youth to actively participate in the upcoming Local Body and Panchayat Raj elections and assured them that their aspirations and political participation would be strongly supported.

Speaking on the occasion, Hameed Choudhary and Rajeshwar Singh also assured the gathering that they would collectively work towards resolving the issues related to the school, community hall, playground, and employment opportunities for local youth, and would pursue these matters with the concerned

University of Jammu and NZATI organize two-day capacity building programme

JAMMU, JUNE 9

A two-day Capacity Building Programme (CBP) for Jammu and Kashmir Accounts Service Probationary Officers commenced today at the Northern Zonal Accounts Training Institute (NZATI), Jammu. The programme is being organized by The Business School (TBS), University of Jammu, in collaboration with NZATI, with the objective of enhancing the professional competencies of probationary officers through expert-led sessions on financial management, performance evaluation, public-private partner-

ships, organizational behaviour, emerging technologies, and communication skills.

The programme was formally inaugurated by Shri Rajesh Talwar, JKAS, Director Finance and Principal, NZATI, who welcomed Shri Rajesh Kotwal, JKAS, Director Accounts and Treasuries, Jammu, and the participating probationary officers. Addressing the gathering, the speakers emphasized the importance of continuous capacity building and professional development for officers entrusted with the responsibility of managing public finances.

Prof. Amisha Gupta, Director

and Professor, The Business School, University of Jammu, and Programme Consultant and Lead Coordinator, presented the introductory remarks and highlighted the design, objectives, academic framework, learning outcomes, and significance of the training programme. Dr. Farah Choudhary, Associate Professor, The Business School, University of Jammu, and Programme Consultant and Coordinator, also addressed the participants and briefed them on the programme structure and training methodology.

JKPCC Kissan Congress submits charter of demands seeks urgent relief measures for farmers in J&K

JAMMU, JUNE 9

In a strong push for safeguarding the interests of the farming community, Jammu & Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) Kissan Congress Chairman, Bharat Priye, on Tuesday submitted a detailed memorandum to the Additional Commissioner in the office of the Divisional Commissioner Jammu, highlighting the pressing challenges confronting farmers across the Union Territory and seeking immediate government intervention.

The memorandum, submitted on behalf of JKPCC Kissan Congress and the farming community of Jammu and Kashmir, outlined a comprehensive 18-point charter of demands aimed at addressing the growing economic distress faced by farmers due to rising cultivation costs, shrinking landholdings, erratic weather patterns and inequitable institutional support and market uncertainties.

Speaking on the occasion, Bharat Priye said that agriculture continues to be the backbone of Jammu and Kashmir's rural economy and the primary source of livelihood for a vast section of the population. However, mounting input costs and recurring climatic challenges have pushed farmers into a cycle of financial hardship, necessitating urgent and decisive action from the administration.

Among the key demands raised was the complete waiver of electricity tariffs on agricultural irrigation pumps and tube wells to reduce farming costs and enhance agricultural productivity. The Kissan Congress also called for strict monitoring of seed quality and stringent action against those involved in the sale of fake or substandard seeds, pesticides and fertilizers that often result in heavy losses for farmers. Expressing concern over recurring fertilizer shortages during crop seasons, the memorandum urged the administration to ensure uninterrupted availability of urea, DAP and other essential fertilizers through government outlets and cooperative societies.

The Kissan Congress further demanded the introduction of a subsidized diesel scheme for



farmers to offset the rising costs of ploughing, irrigation, sowing and harvesting operations. Special emphasis was also laid on the plight of border farmers residing along the International Border and the Line of Control. The memorandum sought compensation at four times the prevailing market rate for land rendered inaccessible due to border fencing and security restrictions, along with special relief packages for those affected by cross-border shelling.

Highlighting the increasing vulnerability of agriculture to climate-related disasters, Bharat Priye called for a comprehensive and farmer-friendly crop insurance mechanism that ensures timely assessment and direct compensation for losses caused by floods, droughts, hailstorms, pest attacks and unseasonal rainfall. The memorandum also stressed the need for a remunerative Minimum Support Price (MSP) regime and establishment of effective procurement centres across Jammu and Kashmir to protect farmers from exploitation by middlemen and ensure fair returns for their produce. To address the growing debt burden on the farming community, JKPCC Kissan Congress sought a comprehensive debt-relief package, including waiver of interest on crop loans and restructuring of outstanding agricultural debts.

The organization also urged the administration to strengthen irrigation infrastructure through repair, desilting and modernization of canals and water channels, many of which are presently in a dilapidated condition. It further demanded a

dedicated compensation mechanism for crop losses caused by wild animals such as wild boars, monkeys and porcupines, which have emerged as a major threat to agricultural production in several districts.

Other significant demands included expansion of social security coverage for agricultural labourers and marginal farmers, strengthening cold storage and warehousing infrastructure, promotion of horticulture and high-value crops, timely release of PM-KISAN benefits, establishment of Farmer Facilitation Centres in every tehsil, introduction of a special climate-resilience package and prompt compensation for acquisition of agricultural land for public projects.

The memorandum also called for revitalization of agricultural cooperative societies to improve farmers' access to affordable credit, quality farm inputs and modern agricultural machinery.

Bharat Priye emphasized that the farming community of Jammu and Kashmir has been making invaluable contributions to food security and rural development despite numerous challenges. He urged the administration to consider the demands sympathetically and initiate prompt action to strengthen rural livelihoods, ensure agricultural sustainability and restore confidence among farmers. The Kissan Congress expressed hope that the administration would take immediate cognizance of the issues raised and formulate a comprehensive roadmap to address the concerns of farmers, who continue to remain the backbone of the Union Territory's economy.

Blood Donation Camp draws strong response at Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust in Jammu

JAMMU, JUNE 9

A blood donation camp was successfully organized at the Sahir Luthiawati Cultural Hall of Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust, Gujjar Colony, Jammu, bringing together citizens, healthcare professionals and social workers in a collective effort to support a life-saving cause. The camp was jointly organized by the Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust and Adani Ambuja ACC Cement Group.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from people belonging to different sections of society and various parts of the region. Alongside the blood donation drive, free medical consultations were also provided by a team of specialized doctors and healthcare professionals, making the programme beneficial to both donors and local residents.

The camp was inaugurated by Arshad Ali Choudhary, Chairman of the Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust. Welcoming the participants, he appreciated the efforts of the organizers, volunteers and medical staff who contributed to the success of the initiative. He highlighted the importance of voluntary blood donation and described it as a noble act that can help save countless lives.

In his address, Choudhary



specially lauded the role of Adani Ambuja ACC Cement Group and the organizing team comprising Kartik Chib, Lakshit Khajuria, Nasir Firdous and Abdul Wahed for encouraging youth participation and ensuring smooth arrangements for the event. He also thanked the medical fraternity for extending their support and expertise.

Several dignitaries spoke on the occasion and emphasized the need for regular blood donation drives to meet the growing demand for blood in hospitals and emergency situations. Among those who addressed the gathering were Er. M. Sadiq Azad, General Secretary of the Trust; Bashir Ahmed Noon, Financial Advisor; Dr. Manzoor Hussain Pumbia, Chairman of the Health and Medical

Committee; Shouket Javed, Senior Trustee; and Haji Hamid Hussain, Senior Trustee.

The medical team from the Department of IHBTT, Blood Centre, SMGS Hospital, Jammu, played a crucial role in conducting the camp. The team included Dr. Hilal Ahmed Malik, Senior Staff Nurse - Sunita, FMPHW Rifat, Counsellor Sunita Rani, Technician Pawan and other healthcare professionals.

To recognize their valuable contribution, donors and volunteers were felicitated with certificates and gifts by the organizers. The event concluded with refreshments being served to all participants, marking the success of a meaningful initiative dedicated to community welfare and public health.

Vedic knowledge alone leads to self-realization and liberation: Swami Ram Swarup Ji

YOL, JUNE 9

On the 59th day of the ongoing 78-day Jayna dedicated to the study and recitation of all four Vedas at Veda Mandir, Yol, Himachal Pradesh, Swami Ram Swarup Ji, Yogacharya, delivered a spiritual discourse based on Atharvaveda Mantra 9/10/15, enlightening devotees about the path of self-realisation, divine knowledge, and liberation.

Explaining the mantra, Swami Ji said that Almighty God has already bestowed divine knowledge upon humanity in the form of the four Vedas. Therefore, the foremost duty of every man and woman is to approach learned Vedic scholars, acquire the knowledge revealed by God through the Vedas, destroy their sins through righteous conduct, and ultimately attain liberation (Moksha).

Referring to the mantra, Swami Ji explained that God, through the voice of a sincere seeker, conveys a profound spiritual truth. The seeker prays, "Yadhi Astu Me vijayanti-O Lord, I do not know who I truly am or what my real nature is." The seeker admits that his true identity remains concealed beneath the veil of Maya, mani-



fest in the form of desires, anger, pride, greed, and other worldly attachments.

Swami Ji elaborated that while the soul resides within the body as a conscious and eternal entity, it becomes entangled in the numerous defects and impurities born of Prakriti (material nature). As a result, the soul becomes attracted to external objects perceived through the senses and gradually forgets its own true nature as a conscious spiritual being. This ignorance leads the individual into the endless cycle of birth, death, and suffering.

Further explaining the mantra, Swami Ji said that the seeker acknowledges his true mind has bound the soul within the illusion of Maya. He prays that if, by the grace of God, he could receive the same divine Vedic knowledge that was revealed in the hearts of the ancient Rishis at the beginning of creation, then he would attain self-knowledge and realize God.

Urging devotees to become spiritually wise, Swami Ji emphasized the importance of participating in Vedic satsangs and studying the Vedas under the guidance of learned scholars. He stated that God has prescribed only one path for crossing the ocean of worldly sorrows and attaining true happiness: the path of following Vedic wisdom. All other practices contrary to Vedic teachings have been described in the Vedas as forms of Maya, which continue to keep living beings trapped in suffering.

Concluding his discourse, Swami Ram Swarup Ji called upon all seekers to return to the shelter of the God-revealed Vedas, just as people did in earlier ages, and follow the divine guidance explained in the Atharvavedic mantra for attaining spiritual enlightenment and everlasting peace.

Delegation raises pending revised rental compensation issue of land owners with MoS for Defence

SRINAGAR, JUNE 9

Under the able leadership of BJP Jammu South District President Shri Naresh Jasrotia, a delegation from Kunjwani Mandal (Jalochak and Katuchak) met the Honble Minister of State for Defence, Shri Sanjay Seth, at his office in Srinagar today.

During the meeting, the delegation strongly raised the long-pending issue of Revised Rental Compensation for local lands acquired by the Army. The members apprised the Honble Minister that landowners here have been awaiting compensation at revised rates for a considerable period, causing significant hardship and concern among the affected families. They urged the Ministry to take necessary steps to



ensure that the rightful dues of the landowners are released at the earliest. The Honble Minister of State for Defence gave a patient hearing to the delegation and assured them

of positive action on the matter. He further conveyed that the issue would be taken up with the concerned authorities for appropriate and expeditious resolution.

The delegation comprised Kunjwani Mandal President Ajay Pratap Singh, Mandal General Secretary Vikram Charak, Industry Cell Convener R.S. Pura (Jammu South), Naresh Chadank, along with Shami Ji, Anil, Nishu, and Pawan.

The delegation also expressed its sincere gratitude to BJP Jammu & Kashmir UT President and Rajya Sabha MP Shri Sat Sharma, as well as Honble Minister Dr. Narinder Singh Raina, for their continued support and efforts in strengthening the important public-interest issue.

Army conducts youth awareness programme under Nasha Mukti Drive



SUNDERBANI, JUNE 9

As part of its ongoing efforts to promote a healthy and drug-free society, the Indian Army organised a comprehensive Youth Awareness Programme at Government High School Nathal in the Sunderbani region under the banner of the Nasha Mukti Drive. The initiative was aimed at educating students about the dangers of drug abuse and encouraging them to lead disciplined, responsible and healthy

lives. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and teachers, who actively engaged in the awareness session. During the lecture, Army personnel highlighted the growing threat of substance abuse among youth and explained how addiction can adversely affect an individual's physical health, mental well-being, academic performance and social relationships. The students were informed about

the long-term consequences of drug dependency and the importance of making informed and responsible life choices. The speakers emphasized that young people are the future of the nation and play a crucial role in shaping society. They urged students to remain focused on their studies, develop positive habits and stay away from harmful influences that could divert them from their goals. The session also stressed the importance of self-discipline, hard work and strong moral values in achieving success in life. In addition to creating awareness about the harmful effects of drugs, the programme sought to instill a sense of patriotism, social responsibility and national pride among the participants. Students were encouraged to contribute positively to their communities and become ambassadors of the anti-drug movement by spreading awareness among their friends, families and neighbours.

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Jammu Tourism Neglected under NC Government: Rohin Chandan

JAMMU, JUNE 9

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) District Jammu South Media Secretary Rohin Chandan today strongly criticized the National Conference (NC) government for its alleged discriminatory policies towards the Jammu region, particularly in the vital sector of tourism. Chandan asserted that the NC-led administration is treating Jammu like a stepchild, resulting in the systematic neglect of its rich tourist destinations and near-total collapse of tourism-related economic activities.

Issuing a press note, Chandan stated that despite Jammu's immense potential, tourist spots across the region remain underdeveloped and poorly promoted. The tourist destinations of Jammu are undeveloped, causing tourism to be "almost nil," he said. He accused the Tourism Department of consistently discriminating against Jammu and playing with the sentiments of its general populace, and will continue to do so if the government's policies are not taken, Chandan added. Highlighting the economic fallout, Chandan emphasized that promoting tourism in



Jammu is essential for generating revenue and creating much-needed employment opportunities for the youth of the region. The people of Jammu have always been discriminated against. For this, the government should take some steps, and the Tourism Department should do something so that employment opportunities increase in Jammu," he demanded. He urged the Omar Abdullah government to immediately initiate concrete measures to boost tourism infrastructure and marketing efforts focused on the Jammu region.

Chandan pointed out that Jammu has consistently faced discrimination in practice, particularly under the National Conference government, which

has denied the region its due rights. As a result, Jammu's tourism sector has lagged far behind and deteriorated significantly over the years. "Jammu region offers a rich blend of spiritual pilgrimages, historical palaces, and scenic hill stations," he noted, listing prominent attractions that have been neglected by successive governments.

The BJP leader highlighted key destinations including Bhaderwah, Patnitop, Sanasar, Bahu Fort, Bagh-e-Bahu, Mubarak Mandi, Akhnour Fort, Bhimgarh Fort, Amar Mahal Museum, Raghunath Temple, PeerKho, Mansar and Surtisar Lakes, Nandini Wildlife Sanctuary, and numerous other pristine locations. These sites possess unparalleled potential to attract both domestic and international tourists, offering a perfect mix of spirituality, heritage, adventure, and natural beauty.

These places in the Jammu region have always been neglected by previous governments," Chandan lamented. He stressed that developing these tourist spots would not only generate substantial revenue for the Union Territory but also provide sustainable measures opportunities to thousands of local residents, including youth, guides, hoteliers, transporters, and artisans.

North in News

EDITORIAL

Road infrastructure at next level, pre-2014 rural areas were not taken care of

Road infrastructure at next level, pre-2014 rural areas were not taken care of because the developmental lens for decades remained restricted to urban centers and politically visible projects, while vast stretches of villages in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal, Uttarakhand, the Northeast, and hinterlands of Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh waited for all-weather connectivity that never came, and the numbers tell the story that in 2014 only 55 percent of habitations with population above 500 in plain areas and 250 in hill areas were connected by all-weather roads under PMGSY, and in J&K the figure was just 47 percent, leaving over 3,200 villages cut off for 4-6 months due to snow, landslides, or monsoon, and the consequences were not just inconvenience but systemic exclusion because farmers could not take milk, vegetables, or apple boxes to mandis and lost 30-40 percent to distress sales, and patients died en route as ambulances could not reach during winter, and teachers and doctors refused postings, and children dropped out after 8th class because high schools were 15 km away on foot, and industries avoided rural areas citing logistics cost, and the economic isolation kept poverty sticky, and the reason pre-2014 rural areas were not taken care of was a mix of low funding, contractor-politician nexus, no third-party quality audits, and the absence of political will to prioritize last-mile connectivity over headline projects, and the PMGSY launched in 2000 moved slowly with only 3.8 lakh km built in 13 years, and maintenance was absent so 40 percent of roads became non-motorable within 5 years, and hill states suffered more because forest clearances, land acquisition, and gradient norms were not streamlined, and in J&K the situation was worse due to security and the legacy of conflict, and the post-2014 shift began with a clear policy that road is not just transport but the first step of governance, education, health, and market, and the Centre raised PMGSY funding from ₹14,200 crore in 2013-14 to ₹19,000 crore in 2015-16. The results are that 7.42 lakh km of rural roads have been sanctioned and 6.9 lakh km completed by 2024, taking all-weather connectivity to 99.2 percent of eligible habitations, and the pace rose from 73 km per day in 2013-14 to 114 km per day in 2022-23, and the quality changed because 5-year maintenance is now part of the contract. In J&K the transformation is stark because pre-2014 only 1,800 km was built in 13 years under PMGSY, while from 2014 to 2024 over 17,300 km was completed, connecting 2,140 villages that had no road. In J&K, and it has turned geography from destiny to advantage, and that is why the next decade will be written not in reports but on the milestones that now exist where there were none.

RAJNI SHARMA, EDITOR

A Decade of PMSMA: Transforming Maternal Health and Accelerating India's Journey Towards Safe Motherhood



BY JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA

Every safe pregnancy is a reflection of a nation's commitment to its women. In a country which experiences nearly 2.9 crore pregnancies annually, ensuring safe motherhood at scale requires robust health systems, sustained political commitment, timely interventions, and equitable access to quality healthcare services.

The remarkable decline in maternal mortality over the past decade stands among India's most significant public health achievements. This progress has been driven by sustained investments in maternal health, strengthened service delivery systems, community participation and a relentless commitment to ensuring that every woman has access to quality care throughout her pregnancy journey.

At the heart of this transformation is the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA), which marks ten years of advancing safer motherhood across the country.

Envisioned by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the scheme was launched on 9th June 2016. PMSMA as a nationwide movement to provide assured, comprehensive and quality antenatal care services, free of cost, to all pregnant women on the 9th day of every month during the second and third trimesters of pregnancy.

The choice of the 9th day carries a deeper significance. Pregnancy is a journey of nine precious months, each month bringing new hope, anticipation and responsibility. By dedicating the 9th day of every month to maternal health, PMSMA serves as a reminder that every pregnancy deserves continuous care, monitoring and support throughout all nine months, until the safe arrival of a healthy newborn.

One of the most important lessons in maternal health is that no pregnancy is entirely risk-free. A pregnancy that appears normal today can develop serious compli-

cations tomorrow. Recognizing that any pregnancy can become high-risk without warning, PMSMA introduced a simple yet transformative approach by identifying risks early, monitor them closely and ensure timely referral and management. Every high-risk pregnancy identified represents an opportunity to prevent a maternal death, a stillbirth, a newborn complication or lifelong disability. By shifting the focus from treating complications to preventing them, PMSMA has strengthened India's maternal healthcare system and made pregnancy safer for crores of women.

One of the defining strengths of PMSMA has been the institutionalization of a fixed-day, assured platform for specialist-led antenatal care, bringing predictability, accountability and continuity to maternal health services across the country. Under the programme, pregnant women are screened for nearly 25 HRP conditions, including severe anaemia, hypertension, gestational diabetes, infections and other complications that can threaten maternal and newborn survival, if left undetected.

As evidence emerged that high-risk pregnancies require continued monitoring beyond routine antenatal care, visits by a Specialist/Medical Officer under PMSMA, the Government of India further strengthened the programme through the launch of the Extended PMSMA (E-PMSMA) strategy in 2022.

Under E-PMSMA, high-risk pregnant women receive additional follow-up visits over and above the regular PMSMA session to ensure timely management until safe delivery. The initiative introduced name-based tracking of high-risk pregnancies and strengthened follow-up mechanisms up to the 45th day after delivery, ensuring that vulnerable women remain under continuous care throughout pregnancy and the immediate postnatal period. Incentives for Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs), accompanying high-risk pregnant women, and additional visits have further strengthened referral compliance and continuity of care.

To further strengthen implementation, monitoring and accountability, the Government of India has developed a centralized PMSMA digital portal that serves as the backbone of programme management across the country. The portal enables real-time reporting of service delivery, name-based tracking of high-risk preg-

nancies, monitoring of programme performance and evidence-based decision-making at national and state levels. Importantly, the platform also allows private-sector specialists and community volunteers to register and contribute to the programme, reinforcing the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji's vision of Jan Bhagirdari that lies at the heart of PMSMA.

The success of PMSMA also highlights the importance of convergence across India's maternal health ecosystem. Working in synergy with initiatives such as Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK), Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan (SUMAN), National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS), POSHAN Abhiyan, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), Ayushman Bharat and Midwifery Services, Optimization of Post Natal Care (OPNC), PMSMA has contributed to building a stronger continuum of care for women throughout pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period.

At the heart of this transformation are India's frontline healthcare workers i.e. Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA), Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs), Community Health Officers (CHOs), nurses, midwives and medical officers. Their tireless efforts in community mobilization, counselling, screening, referral and follow-up have ensured that maternal health services reach women even in the most remote and underserved areas of the country.

The impact of these collective efforts is increasingly visible in national health outcomes. According to the latest Sample Registration System (SRS) estimates for 2022-24, India's Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has declined to 87 per 100,000 live births, bringing the country significantly closer to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal target of reducing the MMR to below 70 per lakh live births by 2030.

These gains are also reflected in broader maternal health indicators. The recently released National Family Health Survey (NFHS-6, 2023-24) reports that institutional deliveries have increased to 90.6% from 88.6% in NFHS-5 (2019-21), while antenatal care coverage has improved from 92.6% in NFHS-5 to 95.9% in the NFHS-6. These achievements demonstrate that more women are accessing essential maternal health services than ever before,

creating valuable opportunities for early detection of complications and timely interventions. Achieving such progress while managing one of the largest annual birth cohorts in the world underscores the scale and effectiveness of India's maternal health programmes. The scale and reach of PMSMA over the past decade have been unprecedented. Since its launch in 2016, more than 7.5 crore antenatal check-ups have been conducted under the programme across the country. Importantly, PMSMA has enabled the identification of over 1.17 crore high-risk pregnancies.

These achievements are not merely numbers. They represent millions of mothers whose complications were detected early, whose pregnancies were monitored more closely, and whose lives as well as those of their newborns were protected through timely and quality healthcare services.

For every mother, pregnancy is a journey of hope. For every family, it is the promise of a new beginning. Yet pregnancy continues to carry avoidable risks for far too many women across the world. PMSMA was built on a simple but powerful belief, that no woman should lose her life while giving life, and no family should lose a mother to a preventable pregnancy-related complication.

As India celebrates a decade of PMSMA, we celebrate much more than the success of a public health programme. We celebrate millions of safer pregnancies, healthier mothers, stronger beginnings for newborns and the collective efforts of healthcare workers, communities and families who have contributed to this transformation.

The journey ahead is clear. We must continue strengthening quality antenatal care, high-risk pregnancy tracking, midwifery-led services, digital innovations and equitable access to maternal healthcare. The experience of PMSMA has reaffirmed a simple truth: when every pregnancy is monitored, every risk is identified early and every woman receives timely, respectful and quality care, maternal deaths become preventable rather than inevitable. Ten years of PMSMA is therefore not merely the celebration of a programme. It is a testament to what can be achieved when political commitment, empowered frontline workers, digital innovation, community participation and quality healthcare services come together with a singular purpose to ensure that every mother survives and every newborn thrives.

Civilisational resurgence

BY TUHIN A. SINHA

As India marks 12 years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, one of the most profound transformations has been the quiet yet decisive resurgence of Bharat's civilisational identity. Far from being a mere political project, this has been a cultural re-awakening — an assertion that a nation, with one of the world's oldest living civilisations need not apologise for its heritage, its temples, or its sacred symbols. The government has acted not as a loud ideologue but as a quiet enabler: clearing judicial logjams, investing in infrastructure, repatriating stolen treasures, and restoring dignity to neglected aspects of our history.

This is not majoritarianism as some obsolete intellectuals might conveniently aver; it is civilisational self-confidence long overdue. For decades, successive governments and political parties treated the Ram Janmabhoomi issue as a perpetual court dispute, happy to let it fester. The BJP-led government under PM Modi adopted a solution-oriented approach, respecting the judiciary while ensuring the matter reached a conclusive verdict. The Supreme Court's 2019 judgment paved

the way, and on 22 January 2024, Prime Minister Modi participated wholeheartedly in the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of Ram Lalla as the chief yajman. His presence at the temple's inauguration sent a powerful message: Hindus need not be apologetic about their civilisational icons.

Lord Ram is not just a deity but the embodiment of India's cultural ethos — maryada, dharma, and national unity. This event marked a turning point, ending centuries of hesitation and ignited national pride. Temple vicinities have historically been economic and social hubs in Bharat. The Modi government has revived this model through massive infrastructure development around sacred sites, generating unprecedented employment and tourism revenue. In Ayodhya, visitor numbers surged from about 5.75 crore in 2023 to over 16 crore in 2024, with projections exceeding 50 crore in 2026.

The city now earns Rs 8,000-12,500 crore annually from tourism and allied sectors, projected to reach Rs 18,000 crore by 2028. This boom has spurred around 1.2 lakh direct and indirect jobs, thousands of new MSMEs, and a surge in hotels

and local businesses. Property values near the temple have multiplied five- to tenfold. Varanasi's Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, inaugurated in 2021, has welcomed over 25 crore devotees, injecting Rs 1.25 lakh crore into Uttar Pradesh's economy. Tourist footfalls in Kashi reached record levels, with massive gains in hospitality, retail, and handicrafts.

Mathura-Vrindavan has seen pilgrim arrivals jump over 100 per cent, generating over 30,000 direct and indirect jobs, alongside growth in homestays and women-led enterprises. Ujjain's Mahakal Lok Corridor has transformed the city: tax collections rose sharply, footfall multiplied, and the temple economy now drives broader urban prosperity. These developments prove that respecting civilisational anchors creates inclusive growth, particularly benefiting small traders, artisans, and local communities. The Modi government's decision to restore the full six-stanza version of the Vande Mataram — after decades of a truncated rendition — is symbolically profound.

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's composition celebrates Bharat as a nurturing mother. Partial adoption in the

past reflected a mindset uncomfortable with unapologetic cultural nationalism. Singing it in its entirety at official functions affirms that the nation's spiritual and geographical unity is non-negotiable. It directly challenges radical ideologies that viewed the motherland through divisive lenses and re-integrates a foundational cultural symbol into public life. Under PM Modi, India has repatriated over 600 stolen antiquities from countries including the US, UK, Australia, and Canada.

These include Chola-era bronzes like the Natarajastatue, idols of deities such as Ganesha and Manikkavichavakar, and Buddhist relics. Each return is more than an artefact reclaimed — it is civilisart Road infrastructure at next level, pre-2014 rural areas were not taken care of because the developmental lens for decades remained restricted to urban centers and politically visible projects, while vast stretches of villages in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal, Uttarakhand, the Northeast, and hinterlands of Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh waited for all-weather connectivity that never came, and the numbers tell the story

Training programme on fruit tree management and Khet Bachao Abhiyan held at Udheywala



JAMMU, JUNE 09: A training programme on Fruit Tree Management and Khet Bachao Abhiyan was organised today at Udheywala, Jammu. More than 150 farmers from different parts of Jammu district participated in the programme. Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Syed attended as the chief guest. Among those present were Chief Horticulture Officer Jammu RK Kotwal, Dean

Faculty of Horticulture and Forestry SKUAST-Jammu Prof Vikas Tandon, Dr Neeraja Gupta, Rakesh Kumar Bhagat (DL-SMS), Shrestha Gaur (MCC Jammu), Horticulture Development Officers of various zones and other departmental officers concerned. Addressing the gathering, the Director highlighted the importance of scientific orchard management practices, adoption of modern horticultural

technologies and timely action has been taken so far, leaving the public vulnerable to further tragedies. Khajuria strongly criticized what he described as administrative apathy and lack of accountability, stating that government departments are duty-bound to ensure the safety of citizens and cannot remain indifferent when lives are at risk. He emphasized that development infrastructure should facilitate public convenience and safety, not become a source of danger. Demanding immediate intervention from the senior authorities, Khajuria urged the administration and the concerned department to conduct an urgent safety audit of the entire road stretch and take prompt corrective measures before another precious life is lost. He also called for fixing responsibility for the delay in addressing a matter that has repeatedly been brought to the notice of the authorities. Appealing to the administration to act without further delay, Khajuria said that safeguarding human life must remain the highest priority and the concerns of the local residents deserve immediate and serious attention. He warned that continued inaction on such critical safety issues could lead to more avoidable accidents and public resentment.

TBS University of Jammu and NZATI launch two-day capacity building programme for J&K Accounts Service probationary officers



JAMMU, JUNE 09: A two-day Capacity Building Programme (CBP) for Jammu & Kashmir Accounts Service Probationary Officers commenced today at the Northern Zonal Accountancy Training Institute (NZATI), Jammu. The programme is being conducted by The Business School (TBS), University of Jammu, in collaboration with NZATI, with the objective of enhancing the professional competencies of probationary officers through expert-led sessions on financial management, performance evaluation, public-private partnerships, organisational behaviour, emerging technologies and communication skills. Director Finance and

Principal NZATI Rajesh coming Director Accounts & Treasuries Jammu in inaugural session highlighted the importance of participating officers. The inaugural session highlighted the importance of

continuous capacity building and professional development for officers entrusted with managing public finances. Prof Amisha Gupta, Director & Professor, The Business School, University of Jammu, and Programme Consultant & Lead Coordinator, outlined the academic framework, learning outcomes and significance of the training initiative.

Unsafe electric poles on Miran Sahib-Brij Nagar road a grave threat to public safety: Khajuria



RS PURA, JUNE 9

Renowned human rights activist Om Parkash Khajuria has expressed grave concern over the unsafe condition of electric poles installed along the main road connecting Miran Sahib and Brij Nagar, terming the situation a serious threat to human life and public safety. Addressing the issue, Khajuria said that several electric poles erected dangerously close to the roadway have become a major cause of accidents and continue to endanger commuters, pedestrians, schoolchildren, and local residents on a daily basis. He alleged that the negligence of the concerned authorities has transformed a vital public road into a hazardous stretch where a major mishap can occur at any time.

Highlighting the gravity of the situation, Khajuria recalled the tragic incident that occurred nearly five months ago when a 21-year-old youth reportedly lost his life on the spot after colliding with one of the dangerously placed electric poles. He said the unfortunate death not only devastated the bereaved family but also exposed the alarming disregard for public safety by the concerned department. The human rights activist noted that residents of Miran Sahib, Brij Nagar, and adjoining localities have repeatedly approached officials of the Power Development Department (PDD), urging them to relocate, remove, or adequately secure the hazardous poles. However, despite several representations

and public appeals, no concrete action has been taken so far, leaving the public vulnerable to further tragedies. Khajuria strongly criticized what he described as administrative apathy and lack of accountability, stating that government departments are duty-bound to ensure the safety of citizens and cannot remain indifferent when lives are at risk. He emphasized that development infrastructure should facilitate public convenience and safety, not become a source of danger. Demanding immediate intervention from the senior authorities, Khajuria urged the administration and the concerned department to conduct an urgent safety audit of the entire road stretch and take prompt corrective measures before another precious life is lost. He also called for fixing responsibility for the delay in addressing a matter that has repeatedly been brought to the notice of the authorities. Appealing to the administration to act without further delay, Khajuria said that safeguarding human life must remain the highest priority and the concerns of the local residents deserve immediate and serious attention. He warned that continued inaction on such critical safety issues could lead to more avoidable accidents and public resentment.

NC using statehood issue to deflect attention from unfulfilled promises: Adv Devraj

R.S. PURA, JUNE 9

Senior BJP leader and former Sarpanch Adv. Devraj Sharma on Tuesday launched a scathing attack on the Omar Abdullah-led National Conference government over its proposed legislation to seek restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. Describing the move as a "mere political drama, eye-wash and diversionary tactic," Sharma alleged that the ruling dispensation was attempting to shift public attention away from its growing list of unfulfilled promises and governance failures. Addressing media persons, Adv. Sharma said that the National Conference government had come to power on the basis of a series of commitments made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, but even after the passage of considerable time, not a single major promise has been fulfilled. Instead of addressing pressing public concerns such as unemployment, inflation, infrastructure development, youth welfare, rural development and basic civic issues, the government has chosen to indulge in symbolic political theatrics, he remarked. "The proposed protest at Jantar Mantar is nothing but an attempt to create a false narrative and gain political mileage. It is a deliberate effort to divert the attention of the people from the government's inability to deliver on its electoral commitments," Sharma asserted.



The BJP leader further pointed out that both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have repeatedly and unequivocally stated on several occasions that statehood to Jammu and Kashmir would be restored at an appropriate time. In view of these clear assurances from the country's highest leadership, Sharma questioned the rationale behind organizing protests against the very government that has already committed itself to restoring statehood. Expressing surprise over the NC government's stance, Adv. Sharma said that the ruling party was creating an impression as though the absence of statehood was the sole obstacle preventing effective governance in Jammu and Kashmir. He observed that except for certain subjects, particularly the Home Department, the elected govern-

ment already exercises authority over most administrative departments. "People deserve to know what extraordinary changes or miracles the Omar Abdullah government claims it will achieve after statehood is restored when the majority of departments are already functioning under the elected government. If governance is lacking today, the responsibility lies with those who are in power and not with the constitutional status of the Union Territory," he said. Sharma accused the National Conference leadership of making lame excuses to justify its inability to provide efficient governance. He maintained that blaming the lack of statehood for every administrative shortcoming is an insult to the intelligence of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The former Sarpanch further stated that the people had voted with hopes of development, transparency, employment generation and better public services, but were now witnessing political posturing instead of tangible action on the ground. He urged the NC government to focus on governance and fulfilment of election promises rather than staging protests and indulging in what he termed "politically motivated spectacles." Adv. Devraj Sharma reiterated that the Bharatiya Janata Party remains committed to the welfare, development and democratic aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

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

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Short e-NIT No. DGN/28 of 2026-27 Dated 06-06-2026

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

S. No.	Name of Work	Name of Division	Advertised Cost (in lacs)	Cost of document (in ₹)	Earnest Money (in ₹)	Time Allowed for completion	Time and date of opening of tender	Class of contract
1	Reconstruction of road from J&K Resort to Tuliza Nagar Canal road (Under Cities & Towns) (CRT) Sector Capex Budget 2026-27	PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar	40.00	600	80000 (2% of the Advertised Cost)	01 Month	(1200 Hrs) on or after 17-06-2026	'A' & 'B' Class

Position of AAA :- Accredited.
Position of TS :- Sanctioned.
Major Head of Account :- (Under Cities & Towns) (CRT) Sector Capex Budget 2026-27.

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website: <http://jktenders.gov.in> as per below schedule:

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	06-06-2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 06-06-2026 to 16-06-2026, 1800 Hrs
3	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting	11-06-2026 at 1300 Hrs. in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu
4	Bid submission Start Date	06-06-2026
5	Bid Submission End Date	16-06-2026 upto 1800 Hrs
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	17-06-2026 on or after 1200 Hrs in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu
7	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed

Special Condition :-

- Security deposit shall be deposited by the contractor within 10 days of issuance of LOI, failing which the concerned tender issuing authority shall forfeit the EMD and recommended contractor for blacklisting and issue a fresh tender forthwith.
- The contractor shall initiate the work within 10 days of entering into the agreement, failing which the concerned Executive Engineer shall terminate the contract and issue a fresh tender after imposing penalties viz. forfeit security/LD as per T&C of the BID document and recommended contractor for blacklisting.
- The work shall be completed by the concerned contractor as per the timeline stipulated in BID document/agreement, failing which action shall be initiated against contractor by forfeiting EMD and shall be recommended for blacklisting.

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of e-challan through Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date, e-NIT No. and name of work duly crediting to 0059 (Revenue) favoring Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu and upload the same in the treasury challan/receipt, Earnest money/Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR/BC pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu. The CDR/FDR/BC shall be valid for 45 days beyond the bid validity period. The original instruments in respect of cost of documents, EMD and relevant documents of LI to be submitted to the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu at the time of allotment.
- The electronic bidding system would not allow any late submission of bids after due date and time as per server time. Bidders may modify their bids by uploading their request for modification before the deadline for submission of bids. For this, the bidder need not to make any additional payment towards the cost of tender document. For bid modification and consequential re-submission, the bidder is not required to withdraw his bid submitted earlier. The last modified bid submitted by the bidder within the bid submission time shall be considered as the bid. For this purpose, modification/withdrawal by other means will not be accepted. In online system of bid submission, the modification and consequential submission of bids is allowed any number of times. The bidders may withdraw his bid by uploading their request before the deadline for submission of bids; however, if the bid is withdrawn, the re-submission of the bid is not allowed. No bid shall be modified or withdrawn after the deadline of submission of bids.
- The date and time of opening of Financial-Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial-bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu. The date for same shall be intimated separately.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.
- The earnest money shall be forfeited, if ->
 - Any bidder/tender withdraws his bid/tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
 - Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within specified time period after issue of letter of acceptance.
 - Failure of successful bidder to execute the agreement on same day of allotment of work contract as per Chief Engineer PW (R&B) Department Jammu's Circular No. CEI/G/12600-87 dated 07-10-2021.
- Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
- Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.
- To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) as per Information Technology Act-2008. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendors.
- The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No financial bid will be accepted in physical form.
- Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.
- Bidders must upload scanned copy of all necessary documents mentioned in NIT and SBD with technical bid online.

..Sd..
(**Dr. Karanjeet Singh**)
Executive Engineer
PWD (R&B) Division
Gandhi Nagar

DIP/J-3343/26

Federer to return to flushing Meadows as US open announces special exhibition event

New York, June 9: Tennis great Roger Federer is set to make an emotional return to the US Open later this year, seven years after his last appearance at Flushing Meadows, with organisers announcing that he will headline a special exhibition event in New York. The 20-time Grand Slam champion will feature in "Roger Federer: An Icon Returns to New York" on August 25, bringing one of the sport's most celebrated figures back to a venue that played host to some of the finest moments of his career. Federer, who retired in 2022 after a remarkable 24-year professional career, remains the only man to have won five consecutive US Open singles titles, achieving the feat between 2004 and 2008. His return is expected to be among the marquee attractions of this year's tournament festivities. Reflecting



on his bond with the tournament, Federer said the US Open holds a special place in his heart. "The US Open has always been one of the most special tournaments for me. So many unforgettable moments of my career happened in New York, and Arthur Ashe Stadium is a place that means a great deal to me. I have missed being part of that atmosphere and feeling the incredible energy that the fans bring every year," Federer said, joining the Swiss icon at the exhibition will be fellow tennis legends, including Andy Roddick, Andre Agassi and John McEnroe. Federer's last US Open appearance came in 2021, when he was defeated by Hubert Hurkacz in the quarterfinals. He finished his illustrious career with 20 Grand Slam titles and 103 ATP singles trophies before bidding farewell at the Laver Cup in London in 2022.

Suthar reveals he trained with red ball during IPL before dream Test debut

New Delhi, June 9: India's newest Test spinner Manav Suthar revealed that he began preparing with the red ball during IPL 2026 itself after sensing a Test opportunity could be around the corner. The 23-year-old left-arm spinner made a dream start to his international career in the one-off Test against Afghanistan in New Chandigarh, claiming 6/33 in the first innings and becoming only the fifth Indian bowler to take a five-wicket haul on Test debut. Suthar, who played under Shubman Gill at Gujarat Titans in the IPL, received his maiden Test cap from the spinner Kuldeep Yadav before the match. Looking back on the moment, he described it as the fulfilment of a life-long dream. "Gautam sir and the skipper informed me that would be making my debut. It was a very proud



moment because, ever since I started playing, it had been my dream, my father's dream, and everyone's dream for me to play Test cricket for India. From the very first day I started playing and as I progressed through the ranks, red-ball cricket meant everything to me. It is the pinnacle of the sport. So, whether I was playing U-19 cricket or the Ranji Trophy, the goal was always to play Test cricket for India. Kuldeep bhai's speech while presenting me with the cap was very motivating. Everyone encouraged and motivated me a lot, so it felt really special," Suthar said on JioStar. His debut could hardly have gone better. India registered their biggest-ever Test victory by 6 wickets, while Suthar's six-wicket haul put him in elite company. He also became the first Indian spinner since Ravichandran Ashwin in 2011 to take a five-for on Test debut. Suthar revealed that once he entered the selection conversation, he started

preparing specifically for the red-ball format despite being in the middle of an IPL season. "When my name came up in the team, I was practising with the red ball during the IPL as well, thinking about how I would approach things if given the opportunity. After coming here, I had three or four long practice sessions. With bowling, it's not really about how many hours you put in. If you enjoy bowling, you can bowl 20-25 overs without even realising it. So, the key is to keep bowling as much as you can," he said. The spinner also explained how he quickly assessed the conditions in New Chandigarh and realised there was enough help for slow bowlers. "When they were bowling, a few deliveries were turning. When I was batting, the odd ball was holding up. So, I felt there might be some assistance for the spinners on that track. As soon as I bowled my first over, the ball was turning, so I tried to bowl my stock ball as much as possible on that wicket," he said. Only Narendra Hirwani's remarkable match figures of 16/136 against the West Indies in 1988 remain better than Suthar's effort among Indian bowlers on Test debut. Despite the historic performance, Suthar said he focused only on maintaining consistency and sticking to his strengths. "I didn't want to get carried away, but my focus was on consistently putting the ball in the right area since the beginning. I have focused on spot-bowling, and whatever consistency I have today is because of that. My favourite wicket was obviously the first one, my debut wicket. It will always remain my favourite."

FIFA And IFAB Illustrate Law Changes That Will Come into Effect At The 2026 World Cup

New Delhi, June 9: The International Football Association Board (IFAB) made changes to the laws of the game which will be applied from the 2026-27 season onwards as well as at the World Cup, which kicks off on Thursday (June 11) in the United States, Mexico and Canada. * A player who covers their mouth with their hand, arm or shirt in confrontational situations will receive a red card. * The new rule comes into effect after Benjamin's Gianluca Prestianni was accused of making discriminatory slurs to Vinicius Jr with his mouth covered. Prestianni was given a six-game suspension by UEFA, with his ban extended worldwide. * However, players who cover their mouths while having friendly conversations with club team mates on opposing teams, for example, will not be punished. * Players who leave the



field of play to protest about a referee's decision will be shown a red card. * The rule will also apply to any team official who incites players to leave the field of play in protest. * Teams which cause a match to be abandoned will now forfeit the match. * The new rule comes into effect after Senegal stormed off the field in protest at a penalty awarded against them in the Africa Cup of Nations final, before they returned to beat hosts Morocco 1-0 after extra time. * Referees will start a visual five-second countdown with a raised hand. * If the ball is not in play at the end of the countdown, a throw-in is awarded to the opponents. * If a goal-kick is not taken at the end of the countdown, a corner kick is awarded to the opponents. * SUBSTITUTION PROTOCOL * Players have 10 seconds to leave the field when the substitution board has been shown. *

Players must leave the field at the nearest point on the boundary line. * If the player being substituted does not leave the field of play within 10 seconds, the substitute may enter only at the first stoppage after one minute has elapsed following the restart and the referee gives them the signal. * Exceptions: player injuries, concerns related to safety and security. OFF-FIELD TREATMENT * An outfield player must leave the field of play for one minute after the restart if medical staff entered the pitch to treat them. * Exceptions: goalkeeper injuries, collisions between a goalkeeper and outfield player.

Iran alleges FIFA World Cup ticket quota revoked amid US tensions, questions political interference

New Delhi, June 9: With the FIFA World Cup 2026 set to kick off in just days, Iran's Football Federation (FFIRI) has claimed that its official ticket allocation for the group stage has been revoked, alleging that the move has prevented its supporters from purchasing tickets through official channels. The development comes against the backdrop of heightened political tensions between the United States and Iran, adding a fresh layer of controversy to the tournament being co-hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. FFIRI claims fans can no longer buy tickets through official channels. In a statement, the FFIRI said that under FIFA regu-



lations, eight per cent of the ticket capacity for the England players who performed well in the series, as Alice Capsey, who was the Player of the Match in the series decider with a superb innings of 82 runs has moved up 13 places to improve to 30th on the list for T20I batters. Bangladesh spinner Nigar Sultana has moved up two slots to come in at the 18th position in the batters' ranking. While England veteran Heather Knight moves to 21st position after moving up four spots, England spinner Linsey Smith will enter as the number 1 T20I bowler as

Australian Badminton Open: MR Arjun-Hariharan Amsakarunan storm into men's doubles second round

New Delhi, June 9: India's MR Arjun and Hariharan Amsakarunan advanced to the second round of the men's doubles at the Australian Badminton Open after a commanding straight-games victory over American pair Arden Quan Lee and Stanley King on Tuesday. The Indian duo dominated proceedings from the outset at Olympic Boulevard, sealing a comfortable 21-13, 21-13 win in their opening-round encounter.



However, there was disappointment for India's other men's doubles pair, Achuthanjan Rao Daddavarapu and Arjun Reddy Pochana, who bowed out in the opening round after a 21-15, 21-15

Women's ICC Rankings: Amelie Kerr back on top as Harmanpreet Kaur makes top-10 return

New Zealand star Amelie Kerr has reclaimed the No. 1 spot in the ICC Women's T20I All-rounder Rankings, overtaking West Indies captain Hayley Matthews in the latest update released on Tuesday, just days before the start of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026. Kerr moved back to the summit after Mooney slipped to second following her absence from West Indies' final match of the recent tri-series in Ireland. However, the battle for the top ranking remains closely contested, with Kerr holding a slender lead of just five rating points over the Caribbean skipper. The rankings update also



brought good news for India, with captain Harmanpreet Kaur returning to the top 10 in the T20I batting rankings. Harmanpreet climbed one place after her unbeaten half-century in the series-deciding match against England in Taunton. Mooney continue to occupy the top two spots in the T20I batting rankings and will head into the Women's T20 World Cup as the world's No. 1 and No. 2 batters, respectively. Indian skipper Harmanpreet Kaur has improved her position by one spot and is back in the top 10 list bowler as

she has maintained her narrow advantage in the no.1 position ahead of Pakistan counterpart Sadia Iqbal. There are gains inside the England players who performed well in the series, as Alice Capsey, who was the Player of the Match in the series decider with a superb innings of 82 runs has moved up 13 places to improve to 30th on the list for T20I batters. Bangladesh spinner Nigar Sultana has moved up two slots to come in at the 18th position in the batters' ranking. While England veteran Heather Knight moves to 21st position after moving up four spots, England spinner Linsey Smith will enter as the number 1 T20I bowler as

Prasidh Krishna replaces Mohammed Siraj in India's T20I squads for Ireland and England tours

New Delhi, June 9: Fast bowler Mohammed Siraj has been ruled out of India's upcoming T20I series against Ireland and England after being advised rest under a workload management programme, with Prasidh Krishna named as his replacement. The BCCI announced on Tuesday that the decision was taken following discussions between the board's medical team and the team management to ensure Siraj gets adequate recovery ahead of a busy international



load management programme. The decision has been taken as a precautionary measure to ensure adequate recovery ahead of a long international season," the board said in a statement. Prasidh earns a return to India's T20I setup after an impressive IPL 2026 campaign with Gujarat Titans, where he picked up 16 wickets in 12 matches. The right-arm pacer has represented India in five T20Is, claiming eight wickets, with his last appearance in the format coming against Australia in Guwahati in November 2023. He is also part of India's squad for the upcoming three-match ODI series against Afghanistan, which begins on June 13. The T20I side

will be led by newly appointed captain Shreyas Iyer, with Tilak Varma serving as vice-captain. The squad also features 15-year-old batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavansi, who could become the youngest player to represent India in international cricket. India will play two T20Is against Ireland in Belfast on June 26 and 28 before travelling to England for a five-match series from July 1 to 11. The team will later compete in the men's T20 event at the Asian Games in

India receive major boost as Rohit Sharma, Hardik Pandya return for Afghanistan ODI series: Report



New Delhi, June 9: India's senior stars Rohit Sharma and Hardik Pandya are set to make their return in the upcoming three-match ODI series against Afghanistan after clearing their fitness assessments, sources told ANI. According to the sources,

both players have successfully passed their fitness tests and are expected to join the Indian squad shortly before the series begins. "Hardik and Rohit are all set to play the ODI series against Afghanistan; both have cleared their fitness test and will soon join the team," sources told ANI. The update comes after uncertainty over the duo's availability, with their participation hinging on clearance from the BCCI Centre of Excellence (CoE). Both sustained injuries during the IPL 2026 season while representing Mumbai Indians. Rohit has been recovering from a lingering hamstring issue, while Hardik has been undergoing treatment for persistent back spasms that ruled him out during the latter stages of the tournament.



Akhilesh Yadav claims BJP may replace candidates in 225 UP seats, says public anger threatens ruling party

Lucknow, June 9: Samajwadi Party (SP) President Akhilesh Yadav has claimed that the ruling BJP is facing growing public discontent in Uttar Pradesh and may be forced to replace candidates in nearly 225 Assembly constituencies ahead of the 2027 state elections.

In a strongly-worded post on X, Akhilesh Yadav alleged that the BJP leadership has lost confidence in a large number of its sitting legislators, particularly in regions where the party suffered setbacks in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Claiming that major changes were being planned within the BJP, Akhilesh Yadav said, "I have heard that the BJP is changing its candidates in all the Assembly seats of Allahabad (Prayagraj)



because the party feels that its MLAs and leaders were more focused on personal gains while Lok Sabha seats slipped away in 2024." The SP chief further asserted that a similar formula was being considered across all 43 Lok Sabha

constituencies won by the INDIA bloc in Uttar Pradesh, as well as in several seats where, according to him, the BJP managed victory despite public opposition. "This means that candidates may be changed in approximately

225 Assembly seats. It is also being heard that many BJP MLAs themselves are unwilling to contest the next election as they see little hope of defeating the PDA (Pehhda, Dalit and Apsandhyak) alliance," he said. Akhilesh Yadav claimed that the BJP's traditional support base has significantly eroded and that many of its legislators are reluctant to invest resources in what they perceive as a losing battle. The SP president attributed the alleged anti-incumbency against the BJP to issues such as inflation, unemployment, corruption, law and order concerns, power leaks, crimes against women, and what he termed attacks on constitutional values and reservation rights. "Current BJP MLAs have understood the extent of public anger. The

BJP government's policies have led to widespread resentment among people," Akhilesh Yadav said, listing allegations ranging from corruption and extortion to favouritism and injustice. The BJP, however, dismissed the SP leader's claims and advised him to focus on his own party's affairs. Senior BJP leader and MLC Vijay Bahadur Pathak said the BJP continued to enjoy strong public support and pointed to the party's recent electoral performances in states such as Bihar, Assam and West Bengal. "It is entirely BJP's internal matter where the party chooses to field in elections. Akhilesh Yadav should avoid making statements based on hearsay, as it only reflects political immaturity," Pathak said.

Major tragedy averted in Manikaran as three Punjab tourists swept into the Parvati river while taking selfies

New Delhi, June 9: Three tourists from Punjab narrowly escaped a tragedy after being swept away by the strong currents of the Parvati River in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu district on Tuesday, officials said.



The incident took place near Manikaran, a popular pilgrimage and tourist destination, where members of a family from Punjab had stopped along the riverbank after visiting a gurdwara in the area.

According to local authorities, the tourists were taking selfies close to the river when they reportedly lost their footing and were pulled into the fast-flowing waters.

Eyewitnesses raised an alarm as soon as they noticed the tourists struggling in the river, prompting an immediate rescue effort. Two of the individuals managed to reach the riverbank after being car-

ried some distance downstream and were assisted to safety by local residents. The third tourist was rescued by an emergency response team that rushed to the spot following reports of the incident. Officials said the prompt action of local people and rescuers helped avert what could have turned into a major accident.

Police and administrative officials also reached the scene soon after receiving information about the incident. Preliminary reports indicated that all

three tourists were safe and did not suffer any serious injuries. However, the episode created panic among visitors present in the area for some time.

Authorities said the identity of the family had not been officially disclosed. An inquiry into the circumstances leading to the incident is underway. Following the rescue, Kullu Superintendent of Police appealed to tourists to exercise caution near rivers, streams, and other water bodies in hilly regions.

Congress demands expulsion of Girish Mahajan from cabinet and BJP for insulting Indian Army

Mumbai, June 9: Maharashtra State Congress Committee President Harshvardhan Sapkal demanded that Maharashtra Water Resources Minister Girish Mahajan should be expelled from both the cabinet and the BJP for insulting the Indian Army's role in fighting Khalistani terrorists during 'Operation Blue Star', conducted at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, in June 1984. The Congress demand came after senior BJP leader and Maharashtra Water Resources Minister Girish Mahajan attended the 42nd anniversary of 'Operation Blue Star' on Saturday, June 6, at the Damdami Takasl headquarters in Mehta Chowk, Amritsar, as an official representative of the BJP. Senior BJP leader and Maharashtra Water Resources Minister Girish Mahajan allegedly called 'Operation Blue Star' a "black day" and dubbed those killed in the military action against Khalistani



separatist terrorists as "martyrs" while also criticising India's then prime minister Indira Gandhi, who ordered the military action. Mahajan compared the Indian Army action against Khalistani separatists to the invasion of the Golden Temple by Afghan ruler Ahmad Shah Abdali. "For us, 'Operation Blue Star' is a black day. Our brothers and sisters were martyred and killed," he allegedly

said, while addressing a gathering in Amritsar on Saturday. "BJP leader and minister Girish Mahajan's statement regarding 'Operation Blue Star' in Amritsar is extremely irresponsible, detrimental to national interest and insulting to the valour of the Indian Army. By questioning 'Operation Blue Star', implemented to protect the integrity of the country and national security, Mahajan has insulted India's fight against Khalistani terrorism. Mahajan, who has taken an anti-national stand, must be immediately expelled from the cabinet and the BJP itself," Maharashtra State Congress Committee President Harshvardhan Sapkal demanded here on Tuesday. "Operation Blue Star" was conducted against any religion. It was a very difficult and necessary operation carried out by the Indian Army against armed Khalistani terrorists plotting to divide India. The then Prime

Minister Indira Gandhi, despite being fully aware that her own life would be in danger, took this tough decision, prioritising the unity and integrity of the country. Later, she was assassinated by Khalistan sympathisers. The son of Maharashtra, General Arun Kumar Vaidya, who led this operation, was also targeted and assassinated by terrorists. Girish Mahajan is denigrating the sacrifices of these great personalities who made the supreme sacrifice for the unity and integrity of the country," Sapkal said. "Minister Girish Mahajan's statement has exposed the anti-national tendencies of the BJP and the Rashtriya Swamivak Sangh (RSS). If Indira Gandhi had not implemented 'Operation Blue Star', India would have been divided. Mahajan has raised doubts despite the fact that Indira Gandhi had to sacrifice her life for the integrity of the country," Sapkal said.

8 of his family killed in Delhi fire, now Radhe Shyam Aggarwal dies as entire family is wiped out

New Delhi, June 9: Radhe Shyam Aggarwal, 80, died on Tuesday at Max Hospital in Delhi's Saket where he had been admitted for several days. He was the lone remaining member of the Aggarwal family that lost eight other members in the tragic hotel fire in Delhi's Malviya Nagar last week.



Eight of his family members, including wife Prem Lata, son Vivek Aggarwal, daughter-in-law Tarjani Aggarwal, two granddaughters Jivisha and Varya, and three other relatives were killed in the deadly fire. The family had been living at the Flourish Inn hotel in the vicinity of Radhe Shyam. All the members had come to Delhi after doctors informed them that Radhe Shyam may not have much time left. But the fire had other plans. Little did they know that they will leave

this world even before the man they had gathered to attend to. Radhe Shyam was not informed about the tragedy but he sensed something was amiss. According to a report by NDTV, he kept inquiring about the absence of his family members at the hospital, unaware of the tragic end to his family. With Radhe Shyam's death, the Aggarwal family's Gurugram home now remains empty with no occupants. The fire, which

broke out in the building, claimed 21 lives, including several foreign nationals, while multiple injured persons are currently undergoing treatment at various hospitals. Preliminary investigations revealed serious violation of safety and licensing norms, including unauthorised commercial expansion, illegal addition of rooms, obstruction of evacuation routes and misuse of permissions granted under the Bed & Breakfast policy.

7 killed, several injured in fire at illegal cracker factory near Jaipur

Jaipur, June 9: At least seven people, including a child, were killed and several others injured in a massive fire that broke out at the godown of an allegedly illegal cracker factory in the Khoh Nagauriya area on the outskirts of Jaipur on Tuesday. According to police and fire brigade sources, a man identified as Feroze from New Delhi, in association with Wasim, was allegedly operating an illegal cracker manufacturing unit and godown in Aayesha Nagar Talai Colony. The fire reportedly broke out around 11:15 a.m. in the section where crackers produced at the nearby factory were being stored. Around 20 labour-



ers were working at the factory when the incident occurred. While some workers were rescued by local residents and teams from the police and Civil Defence, others managed to escape on their own. Local residents also helped save the lives of a couple of severely burnt victims by pulling them

out of the premises and rushing them to hospital. The injured were initially taken to nearby hospitals, while those in critical condition were referred to the SMS Hospital in Jaipur. The Principal and Controller of SMS Medical College Hospital, Jaipur, Dr. Deepak Maheshwari, said,

Fadnavis okays amendments to GST, Maharashtra Public Universities Act

Mumbai, June 9: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis approved several important decisions related to the restructuring of departments under various ministries, the streamlining of the process for approving new colleges in the state, and amendments to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Act, in a cabinet meeting here on Tuesday. An important decision was taken to restructure state ministerial departments by approving a proposal from the General Administration Department. Accordingly, the number of administrative departments, which is currently 33, will be increased to 43. Two sub-departments included in the same department will henceforth function as separate departments. The restructuring will not create any new posts; instead, it will



divide work more effectively among existing officials to facilitate the final approval of new colleges being set up in the state, the opening of new facilities in existing colleges, and the introduction of new courses, subjects, and additional units to ensure that students have more educational options available in their locality. As per the proposal of the state Finance Department, the cabinet approved the amendment to the Maharashtra Goods and Services Tax (MGST) Act, 2017, to maintain consistency with the provisions of the Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) Act, 2017. Cabinet approval has been given to make necessary changes in the Maharashtra Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which is expected to help increase the uniformity between the state and central GST laws, in order to

facilitate the final approval of new colleges being set up in the state, the opening of new facilities in existing colleges, and the introduction of new courses, subjects, and additional units to ensure that students have more educational options available in their locality. As per the proposal of the state Finance Department, the cabinet approved the amendment to the Maharashtra Goods and Services Tax (MGST) Act, 2017, to maintain consistency with the provisions of the Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) Act, 2017. Cabinet approval has been given to make necessary changes in the Maharashtra Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which is expected to help increase the uniformity between the state and central GST laws, in order to

make the tax system more coherent and effective. The cabinet approved the proposal of the Industries Department to increase the loan-raising powers of the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) through the promulgation of an ordinance and necessary amendments to the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation Act, 1961. The decision is expected to make it easier to raise funds for industrial infrastructure development and accelerate industrial projects in the state. These decisions of the state cabinet are expected to strengthen the objectives of making the state administration more efficient, promote expansion in the higher education sector, enable more coherence in the tax system, as well as increase economic capacity for industrial development.

Amritsar Rural Police, Central agencies arrest duo linked to cross-border handlers, recover two hand from them

Chandigarh, June 9: In a major breakthrough in the ongoing drive to make Punjab a safe and secure state, in line with the directions of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, the Amritsar Rural Police, in a joint operation with Central Agencies, apprehended two individuals linked to cross-border handlers and recovered two hand grenades from their possession. Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav said here on Tuesday. The arrested individuals have been identified as Davinder Singh, a resident of village Chugh in Tarn Taran district, and Rajvinder Singh, a resident of Sursingh in Tarn Taran. Apart from the hand grenades, police teams also impounded their Hyundai Verna



sedan bearing registration number PB 46 AL 7846. DGP Gaurav Yadav said preliminary investigations revealed that the accused were acting on the directions of their foreign-based handlers. The

recovery of the hand grenades points to a larger conspiracy aimed at disturbing peace and public order in the border state, he added. The DGP said that further investigations are underway to establish

both forward and backward linkages in the case and identify other associates involved in the network. Sharing operational details, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Amritsar Rural Kanwalpreet Singh Chahal said that police teams had received credible intelligence that Davinder Singh and Rajvinder Singh had retrieved a consignment of explosive material sent by their handlers from across the border and were conspiring to carry out a terror activity to disrupt peace and harmony in the state. Acting swiftly, police teams, under the supervision of DSP (Investigation) Gurnidherpal Singh Nagra and DSP Ataraj Yadwinder Singh, launched an intelligence-led operation and apprehended the duo in the Khasa area, he said.

NIA raids 18 locations in Punjab, Haryana in probe against Shahzad Bhatti-linked terror network

New Delhi, June 9: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday carried out extensive searches at 18 locations across Punjab and Haryana as part of its investigation into three terror-related cases linked to Pakistan-based terrorist gangster-turned-terror operative Shahzad Bhatti. In an official statement, the agency said coordinated raids were conducted across nine districts of the two states. During the searches, NIA teams examined several premises, questioned individuals believed to be connected to the investigations, and seized digital devices, documents, and other materials for further analysis. The agency said it had also gathered information relating to communication channels, financial transactions, and the activities of suspects believed to be associated with the network. According to the NIA, all evidence collected during the operation has been sent for forensic and technical examination. The agency has

also issued notices to several individuals for further questioning as investigators attempt to unravel what it described as a larger cross-border conspiracy allegedly operated by Bhatti from Pakistan. The searches were linked to three separate cases in which Bhatti's involvement has surfaced during investigations. One of the cases relates to the grenade attack carried out in March 2025 at the residence of social media influencer Roger Sandhu in Jalandhar. The NIA said its probe into the incident led investigators to Bhatti's network, following which he was chargesheeted as an absconding accused in April 2026. Another case under investigation concerns the explosion that took place at the Women's Police Station in Sirsa, Haryana, in November 2025. The agency stated that its inquiry revealed the involvement of Bhatti in the attack. In May 2026, the NIA filed a chargesheet against nine accused in the case.

Kiran Bedi pitches Bharat Skill Exchange as 'solution' to India's skill challenge

New Delhi, Jun 9
Bharat Skill Exchange, a platform aimed at bridging the skill gap in India through trust and transparency, held a launch event in the national capital on Tuesday. The platform connects high-potential learners, verified training institutions, and impactful sponsors in a transparent ecosystem. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Jayant Chaudhary, who attended the event, said he "commends" the effort. "There is an innate hunger and ambition in our skilled people. There is also a growing understanding that skills are not qualifications and mere qualifications are not going to give you the job or that opportunity," Chaudhary said. Dr Kiran Bedi (IPS-Retd) and one of the founders and promoters, said there is a problem of skills, and "Let's be the solution to the problem".



Contributions are held securely in escrow, training progress is tracked in real time, and funds are released only upon verified milestones, Dr Bedi said. "Strengths of Bharat Scale Exchange are 100% trust, 100% transparency, and 100% technology. There is no corruption, no diversion, no clipping, nothing. It is very credible," she stressed. "The startup is recognised by the DPIIT, the Government of India's Startup Initiative," she further informed. Mentioning PM Narendra Modi, she said, "As our Prime Minister says, become a job giver. So, we are creating job givers." Real-time traceable impact will also be done, she said, and added, "It will be known, in real time, what you studied. Did you complete attendance? Did you fail? That training institution will tell us the impact." Bharat Skill Exchange offers four courses for new - Advanced AI & Web Integration; Build Smart Applications; Advanced VLSI Chip Design Program (AVCDFP); Graphic design and Motion graphics.

DPIIT leads Industry outreach in UP to accelerate reforms, exports and investment growth

Lucknow, Jun 9
The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Government of India, in collaboration with Invest UP, on Tuesday organized an awareness workshop on key government schemes, programmes and policy initiatives, bringing together leading industry associations and stakeholders to enhance outreach, strengthen industry engagement, and promote wider participation in India's industrial growth agenda. The workshop was chaired by Dr. Jai Prakash Shivahare, Joint Secretary, DPIIT, and attended by the Invest UP CEO and representatives from major industry bodies, including ASSOCHAM, FICCI, PHDCCI, DICCI, Laghu Udyog Bharti, IIA, CII, and other stakeholders. Addressing the industry association and media, Dr. Shivahare highlighted the Government of India's continuing efforts to improve the business environment



through the Jan Vishwas reforms. He noted that several outdated and redundant laws have been removed under the Jan Vishwas legislation, reducing compliance burdens and improving ease of doing business. He also emphasized the government's focus on expanding trade partnerships to mitigate the impact of global uncertainties, including the West Asia crisis and tariff-related challenges in key export markets. Underlining the importance of exports in driving

economic growth, Dr. Shivahare urged industries to focus on developing value-for-money, export-oriented products. He noted that India has concluded more than nine Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) over the past five years, covering nearly 39 countries, including 27 in particular, thereby creating new opportunities for exporters and businesses. He further emphasized the government's growing focus on reciprocal certification mechanisms within FTAs to facilitate smoother market access.

The workshop served as a platform for dialogue and knowledge sharing, with participants discussing ways to improve the dissemination of information about government schemes and strengthen stakeholder engagement. Industry representatives suggested simplifying application procedures, expanding awareness campaigns, and enhancing support for participation in trade fairs and exhibitions. Suggestions were also made to explore greater CSR support for startups and create a unified plat-

form for accessing policy information. Speaking on the occasion, Invest UP CEO Vijay Kiran Anand said that Uttar Pradesh is actively complementing national reform efforts through regulatory simplification and digital governance initiatives. He highlighted the role of Nivesh Mitra 3.0 in strengthening the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) and creating a more investor-friendly ecosystem. He noted that the state has established dedicated foreign investor facilitation mechanisms, is actively participating in international trade and investment forums to position Uttar Pradesh as a preferred investment destination, and is promoting the flagship Industrial Investment & Employment Promotion Policy 2022 along with the UP FDI/FCI, Fortune Global 500 & Fortune India 500 Companies Investment Promotion Policy 2023.

Salesforce Commits to Creating One Million AI Learners in India by 2030

Hyderabad, Jun 9
Salesforce President and CEO (South Asia), Arundhati Bhattacharya, on Tuesday announced the company's commitment to create one million AI-enabled learners in India by 2030, highlighting the growing demand for artificial intelligence skills and the widening gap between job opportunities and available talent. Speaking on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Salesforce's Centre of Excellence (CoE) in India, she said the biggest challenge facing the country in the AI era is the shortage of skilled professionals. Citing global projections, she said the World Economic Forum estimates that 170 million new jobs will be created worldwide, while around 92 million roles may be displaced, resulting in a net gain of



nearly 78 million jobs. In India, a joint study by NASSCOM and Deloitte projects demand for AI professionals to rise from 650,000 to 1.25 million by 2027, she said. She noted that AI-related job postings in India have more than doubled, increasing from 2.9 per cent to 6.5 per cent of total postings, while the number of available skilled profes-

sionals remains significantly lower than industry demand. According to Bhattacharya, 58 per cent of Indian organisations have identified an urgent need for AI reskilling and upskilling, while 40 per cent of employers view workforce readiness as the biggest barrier to AI adoption. She said advances in gen-

erative and agentic AI have democratised access to the technology, allowing people to work with AI using natural language rather than requiring specialised programming skills. However, she stressed that language accessibility alone does not make individuals AI-ready, underscoring the need for structured training. To address the skills gap, Salesforce will focus on four key pillars, including partnerships with government initiatives, educational institutions, industry partners and customers. Bhattacharya said the company will actively support the IndiaAI Mission and collaborate with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, while continuing its engagement with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

Stock markets snap two-day losing streak, Sensex Gains Nearly 400 pts



New Delhi, Jun 9
Indian stock markets snapped a two-day losing streak and ended higher amid easing geopolitical tensions and moderation in crude oil prices. At close, the Sensex was up 394.50 points or 0.54 per cent at 73,918.76, and the Nifty was up 119.10 points or 0.52 per cent at 23,242.10. Nifty midcap index rising 1.3 per cent and smallcap index advancing 1.7 per cent.

Among the sectors, all other sectoral indices ended in the green, except IT and media. PSU Bank was up 3.6 per cent, Nifty Bank up 2 per cent, Private Bank index up 1.6 per cent and Realty index up 1.6 per cent. On Nifty, the biggest gainers were InterGlobe Aviation, Jio Financial, Eicher Motors, SBI and Apollo Hospitals. On the losing end were ONGC, Titan Company, NTPC,

Power Grid Corp and Tech Mahindra. Indian rupee ended 36 paise higher at 95.35 per dollar versus the previous close of 95.71. On the BSE, over 100 stocks touched their 52-week high. These included Cemindia Project, Data Patterns, J&K Bank, Aster DM Health, Symra SGS, Federal Bank, and Sai Life Sciences, among others. In the individual stock performers, Rail Vikas Nigam (RVNL) gained 3 percent, NLC India fell 2 percent, InterGlobe Aviation climbed nearly 4 percent, and BlueStone Jewellery share price slipped 1.7 per cent. Shares of Adani Green Energy Ltd jumped 9 per cent. Brent crude futures also cooled down to around \$93.3 per barrel. The advance-decline ratio favoured buyers as 2380 stocks gained and 904 fell.

Centre notifies Coal Exchange Rules for establishment of Coal Exchanges

New Delhi, Jun 9
The Ministry of Coal has notified the Coal Exchange Rules, 2026, paving the way for the establishment of Coal Exchanges in the country. The rules were published in the Official Gazette, following the enactment of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2025. The Gazette had introduced the concept of a Mineral Exchange and empowered the Central Government to promote transparent and efficient trading of minerals, including coal and its processed forms. The Ministry of Coal had already designated the Coal Controller Organisation (CCO) in December 2025 as the authority responsible for



registering and regulating Coal Exchanges. Eligible entities will be authorized by CCO to establish and operate Coal Exchanges, frame market rules and by-laws, and facilitate coal trading. Registrations will be granted for a period of 25 years. "The introduction of Coal Exchanges marks a paradigm shift in coal marketing by moving from the

Nearly 12 lakh MSEs registered on GeM, procurement reaches Rs 8.69 Lakh Crore

New Delhi, Jun 9
The Government e Marketplace (GeM) has emerged as a key driver of India's digital governance transformation by enabling transparent, technology-driven, and citizen-centric public procurement, the platform said on the occasion of its milestone journey since inception on August 9, 2016. Designed as a major governance reform, GeM has shifted government procurement from manual and fragmented processes to a digital, data-driven ecosystem. The platform has reduced human intervention, enhanced transparency, and simplified access to government procurement opportunities for businesses across the country.



The GeM has also contributed to improving the ease of doing business by enabling enterprises of all sizes to participate in government supply chains through online onboarding, transparent bidding, digital contract management and end-to-end procurement processes.

Over the years, participation of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) on the platform has witnessed significant growth. Registered MSEs have increased from 2,396 in 2016-17 to more than 11.9 lakh currently. Procurement from MSEs

has surged from Rs 69 crore to over Rs 8,69 lakh crore, while order volumes have grown from 2,994 to more than 2.17 crore during the same period. The platform has also expanded opportunities for traditionally underrepresented groups. Women-owned MSEs registered on GeM have risen from 268 in 2016-17 to over 2.16 lakh, with procurement value increasing from Rs 8 crore to more than Rs 93,327 crore. Startup participation has also grown sharply, rising from 88 entities to over 40,000, while procurement from startups has increased from Rs 2 crore to over Rs 61,400 crore. Similarly, registered SC/ST MSEs have increased from 85 to

India emerging as global hub for affordable healthcare & pharma innovation: Ravi Teja

Hyderabad, Jun 9
India has emerged as the "Pharmacy of the World" through its scale, quality, affordability and reliable supply of medicines, Ravi Teja, Deputy Director, Department of Commerce, Government of India, said on Tuesday. Addressing a press conference in Hyderabad on the occasion of completion of 12 years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government and India's pharmaceutical export growth, he



said the Indian pharmaceutical sector had grown from around USD 20 billion to USD 60 billion over the last 12 years and was expected to touch USD 130 billion by 2030. He said India's pharmaceutical exports increased from USD 14 billion in FY2015 to USD 31 billion in FY2026, registering a compound annual growth rate of 7.22 per cent. India currently supplies around 20 per cent of the global generics demand and

States remained India's largest pharmaceutical market, with exports reaching about USD 10.5 billion. He added that exports to countries such as France, Brazil, the United Kingdom and South Africa have also witnessed significant growth during the last 12 years. Highlighting India's global role during the COVID-19 pandemic, he said the country supplied vaccines and medicines to several nations under the Vaccine Maitri

initiative, strengthening its position as a reliable global health partner. He said India was now moving from volume-driven growth to high-value pharmaceutical innovation with increasing focus on biosimilars, biologics, gene therapies, vaccines, speciality medicines and API self-reliance. Initiatives such as Biopharma SHAKTI and expansion of medicinal infrastructure would further strengthen.

Bombay HC quashes DoT spectrum charge demand, giving Vodafone Idea Rs 2,113-crore relief

Mumbai, Jun 9:
Vodafone Idea (Vi) informed the stock exchanges through a regulatory filing on Tuesday that the Bombay High Court has quashed the one-time spectrum charge (OTSC) demand raised by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) against the company and its erstwhile subsidiary. Spice Communications, providing relief of Rs 2,113 crore.



According to Vi, the Bombay High Court has also directed the return of bank guarantees furnished to the DoT after it levied one-time spectrum charges

for radio spectrum holdings beyond 6.2 MHz. In its filing, Vi stated that the court quashed the original demand notices issued to Idea Cellular.

Javid Dar reviews arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haram in Baramulla, stresses inter-departmental coordination for peaceful observance

BARAMULLA, JUNE 09: Emphasising the spiritual significance of Muharram-ul-Haram as a period of reflection, sacrifice, compassion and commitment to truth and justice, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Elections, Javid Ahmad Dar, today chaired an extensive review meeting at Baramulla to assess the preparedness of various departments for smooth observance of Muharram-ul-Haram across the district.

The meeting was attended by MLA Baramulla Javid Hassan Baig, MLA Pattan



Javid Riyaz Bedar, M.L.A Sopore Irtshad Rasool Kar, M.L.A Wagoora-Kreeri Irfan Hafiz Lone, senior officers of the civil and police administration,

heads of various departments, representatives of Shia organisations, civil society members and other stakeholders. Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, S.F Hamid briefed the Minister on the arrangements being put in place by the district administration for the peaceful and hassle-free observance of Muharram. He informed the meeting about the measures being undertaken across the key sectors, including power supply, drinking water, sanitation, healthcare services, road connectivity, traffic management and public distribution systems.

During the meeting, repre-

sentatives of various Shia organisations and associations highlighted several issues and requirements concerning the provision of essential services during the holy month. Addressing the meeting, Javid Dar said that Muharram-ul-Haram carries profound religious and historical importance and serves as a source of inspiration for humanity by conveying the timeless message of sacrifice, patience, truth and righteousness. He stated that it is the collective responsibility of all departments to ensure that devotees are able to observe the sacred month in a peaceful and dignified manner.

Div Com Kashmir reviews SMRDA Projects, Stresses timely completion of Development Works



SRINAGAR, JUNE 09: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Tuesday chaired a high-level review meeting of the Srinagar Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (SMRDA) to assess the physical and financial progress of ongoing developmental projects.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Commissioner Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), Vice Chairman Srinagar Development Authority (SDA), Additional Deputy Commissioners of Srinagar

and Budgam, Chief Engineer R&B, and senior officers of SMRDA. During the meeting, SMRDA Officers presented comprehensive presentation outlining the status of various projects being executed through different implementing agencies. It was informed that a total Capex outlay of 72,702 lakh has been approved for the financial year 2025-26, against which 7846 lakh has been released. The meeting was informed that out of 15 ongoing projects, one project has been completed both physically and financially, while seven projects have achieved physical completion.

Director Sericulture Kashmir visits Allachizab Village in Kupwara, reviews its developmental plan under VVP

KUPWARA, JUNE 9: Director Sericulture Kashmir, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat today visited the Vibrant Village of Allachizab in Kupwara district to assess its developmental profile and review the progress of various initiatives being implemented under the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP).

On his arrival, the Director convened a meeting of concerned officers at Panchayat Ghar Allachizab during which he took a comprehensive appraisal of the developmental agenda and ongoing projects being executed in Allachizab Village under the Vibrant Villages Programme. He stressed the importance of timely



implementation of development works and effective coordination among departments to ensure holistic growth of the village. The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, Executive Engineers of R&B, PHE, and other officers from concerned departments. Later, the Director chaired a public interaction programme in the village. During the interaction, large number of local residents and senior citizens highlighted different developmental issues and demands, including upgradation of the local school and health centre, water supply augmentation, macadamization of roads and other day to day problems.

Secretary DLSA Budgam visits Central Jail Srinagar

Conducts Legal Awareness Programme on Plea Bargaining, Prisoners' Rights

BUDGAM, JUNE 2026: As per plan of action for the month of June 2026 issued by J&K Legal Services Authority, Secretary, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Budgam, conducted a visit to the Central Jail Srinagar to review the functioning of legal aid services and interacted with inmates. The programme was conducted under the guidance of O.P. Baghat, Chairman DLSA (Principal District & Sessions Judge) Budgam. The visit was conducted in the presence of the Superintendent, Central Jail Srinagar, who accompanied the Secretary DLSA Budgam during the inspection of the Legal Aid Clinic, Mulaqati Area, and the awareness programme.



Amongst many good practices adopted by the jail administration, the Superintendent Central Jail

for breastfeeding mothers near the reception area of the jail. The Secretary appreciated this thoughtful and dignified initiative aimed at ensuring privacy, comfort, and convenience for breastfeeding mothers visiting the prison. The Secretary expressed satisfaction over this welfare-oriented measure and lauded the efforts of the jail authorities in creating a more inclusive and humane environment for visitors. During the visit, the Secretary inspected the Legal Aid Clinic functioning within the jail premises and assessed the legal assistance being provided to the inmates. The Secretary also visited the recently established Mulaqati Area and reviewed the facilities

made available for prisoners and their visitors. As part of the visit, a legal awareness programme was organized on the topics "Plea Bargaining" and "Rights of Prisoners." The programme aimed at sensitizing inmates about the legal remedies available to them and the rights guaranteed under law during incarceration. Fozia Shafi, Assistant LADC Budgam and Minhaj, Assistant LADC Srinagar served as the resource persons for the programme who elaborated on the concept of plea bargaining, its legal framework, benefits, and procedure, while also educating the inmates about their fundamental and statutory rights as prisoners.

Dr Karwani inspects construction work in Transit Accommodations for PM Package Employees

SRINAGAR, JUNE 09: Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (Migrant), Dr. Arvind Karwani, accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Relief, Kailash Devi concluded a week long inspection tour of transit accommodation sites for PM Package Employees under construction in North, Central, and South Kashmir.

Dr Karwani was accompanied by concerned engineers and senior officials from the district administration. While interacting with the site engineers at the construction sites, he emphasized on achievement of targets in a time



bound manner. He particularly underlined on the importance of early completion of allied works like boundary wall, internal roads and basic amenities at the sites, so that the possession of allotted quarters can be handed over to the employees at the earliest possible, as per the criteria laid down by the Government. He enjoined upon the engineers to ensure quality of the work and execution strictly as per the approved DPR. The team of officers also interacted with PM package employees at

of their children. Pertinent to mention that 6000 quarters at 20 different locations across the Kashmir valley under PMDP programmes are being constructed for PM Package employees, out of which about 4700 flats stand constructed. The construction work on allied works like boundary wall, internal roads, drainage, elevators and community hall etc is also going on in full swing. Dr Karwani assured employees that all possible efforts are being made to ensure that employees are handed over possession of flats by next month at most of the locations.

Baramulla, Srinagar, Budgam, Kulgam and Anantnag and gave a patient hearing to their demands, particularly related to the allotment of quarters, basic amenities like water supply, power supply, sanitation, education and recreation facility

DC Anantnag visits Chittergul, takes stock of Muharram arrangements

Emphasises seamless facilities for smooth observance

ANANTNAG, JUNE 09: Ahead of the upcoming holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram, Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat today visited Chittergul to take first hand stock of arrangements that have been put in place by various line departments for smooth observance of Muharram. The DC was accompanied by ACR, ACD, SP Ashnagam, Exen R&B, CEO MCA and other concerned officials. During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with community elders, representatives, and local residents to enquire about the availability of essential services and facilities. He reviewed the arrangements related to drinking water, electricity, sanitation, healthcare and directed the concerned departments to ensure that all necessary facilities are put in place well in time. Responding to the issues raised by the community representatives, Dr. Bilal assured them of full administrative sup-



port for the smooth and hassle free observance of Muharram. He emphasized the importance of close coordination between line departments and community members to facilitate organisation of religious gatherings and processions in a seamless manner. The Deputy Commissioner also appreciated the cooperation of the community and urged all concerned to work collectively for maintaining harmony and public convenience during the holy month.

Workshop on Aquifer Mapping, Ground Water Management held at Anantnag

ANANTNAG, JUNE 09: A one day workshop focusing on "Aquifer Mapping and Ground Water Management in part of Anantnag District" was held today at Dak Bunglow, Khanabal. The event was organized by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under the aegis of the Ministry of Jal Shakti and was attended by GM DGS, Scientists from CGWB, SIE, PWD, SDM, DFO, AD Tourism, Exen R&B, DSWO, Tehsildars and officials from PHE, I&FC, Agriculture and sectors and other departments. The primary agenda of the workshop centered on the strategic integration and sharing of hydrological data to ensure sustainable water resource management in the region. The resource persons from



CGWB emphasized the unique to parts of Anantnag district. The scientists from CGWB elaborated about the groundwater management study to be held in collaboration with various departments in villages and panchayats of the district. The departments were briefed about the respective roles for successful conduct of the study and generation of reliable data.

DC Ganderbal reviews SANJY-2026 preparedness; Directs timely completion of all works for smooth and safe Yatra

GANDERBAL, JUNE 09: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today chaired a comprehensive review meeting here to assess the preparedness and progress of developmental and logistical arrangements being undertaken for the smooth conduct of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY)-2026 along the Baltal axis. During the review, the DC took a department-wise assessment of works included in the Action Plan-2026 and directed all executing agencies to ensure completion of pending works by June 20th, well ahead of the commencement of the annual pilgrimage. Superintending Engineer Public Works (Roads and Buildings) Department informed the meeting that



works relating to development of parking facilities, improvement of footpaths and pony tracks and installation of barricades for crowd management at Baltal are progressing satisfactorily. Superintending Engineer KPDCI apprised the meeting that the augmentation of the electricity distribution network, installation of street lighting and other works are being carried out

on priority to ensure uninterrupted power supply at Baltal, Domail, Transit Camp and other Yatra locations. Similarly Executive Engineer Irrigation and Flood Control department was directed to complete all assigned works within the stipulated time. The Health Department informed that adequate medical arrangements have been put in place, includ-

ing deployment of ambulances, emergency response teams, manpower and medical equipment at designated health facilities and base camps. The Labour Department and Animal Husbandry Department informed the meeting that registration of labourers and service providers associated with the Yatra is being carried out on a priority basis. DC directed the Assistant Commissioner Labour to expedite the registration process. In order to ensure optimal utilisation of parking space, plying of smooth traffic along the yatra route, concerned officers were directed to compile and submit effective parking and transport plan. The meeting also reviewed arrangements related to telecommunications, sanitation, ration supply.



Chief Secy calls for saturation of beneficiary-oriented schemes

SRINAGAR, JUNE 09: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high-level review meeting attended by the concerned Administrative Secretaries to assess the implementation and saturation of individual beneficiary-oriented schemes being executed by various departments across Jammu and Kashmir. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary stressed the need for ensuring complete saturation of all eligible beneficiaries under these welfare schemes by proactively reaching out to the people and generating mass awareness through different communication channels. The Chief Secretary impressed upon all the concerned departments to bridge the gap between identified targets and beneficiaries already covered under different schemes. He directed them to



make concerted efforts to ensure that the benefits of these schemes reach every intended beneficiary in a time-bound manner. Emphasising the importance of grassroots outreach, Dulloo called for the formulation of concrete action plans to identify and enrol all eligible individuals and households under the schemes. He maintained that it is the responsibility of the administration to ensure that every deserving beneficiary receives the benefits meant for them and that leaving eligible persons uncovered would amount to a disservice to the people. He further directed the departments to undertake periodic reviews of their respective schemes and fix measurable targets at every administrative level so that the benefits are extended to all eligible beneficiaries in a systematic and efficient manner.

Earlier, Commissioner Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring Department, R. Alice Vaz, informed the meeting that a total of 66 beneficiary-oriented schemes are currently being implemented in the Union Territory through 18 departments. She highlighted that these schemes are designed to provide direct benefits to the people and play a crucial role in improving their socio-economic well-being. Giving a detailed presentation, the Commissioner Secretary outlined the targeted beneficiary groups under each scheme and the nature of assistance being extended through cash transfers, food security, housing support, health-care services, educational assistance and livelihood promotion initiatives.

Ensure seamless arrangements, essential services during Muharram-ul-Haram: Deputy Chief Minister to officers

SRINAGAR, JUNE 09: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary today undertook an extensive tour of several Shia-majority areas of Srinagar to review the arrangements being put in place for smooth and peaceful observance of the forthcoming holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram. During the day-long visit, the Deputy Chief Minister inspected various Imam Bars and prominent religious sites, including the revered Shrine of Mir Shams-ud-Din Araki (RA) at Zadibal, the historic Imam Bara Zadibal and historic Imam Bara Hassanabad. He assessed the facilities and services being



arranged for the devotees and mourners during the holy month. The Deputy Chief Minister, accompanied by MLA Hazratbal, Salman Ali Sagar and MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq, also visited Imam Bara Gulshan Bagh, Baghwanpora, Nawabagh in Lal Bazar and Bota Kadal, where he interacted with the local representatives and residents to gather first-hand feedback regarding the ongoing preparations.

Viksit Bharat is a vision of empowered citizens effective institutions, responsible leadership

Speaker addresses conference of CPA India Region Zone-II



CHANDIGARH, JUNE 09: The vision of Viksit Bharat is ultimately a vision of empowered citizens, effective institutions and responsible leadership. It is a vision where every citizen becomes a stakeholder in national progress and every legislator becomes an agent of positive transformation. This was stated by the Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rafter, while addressing a two day conference of CPA

India Region Zone-II held at Chandigarh on 8 and 9 June in presence of Speaker Lok Sabha Shri Om Birla, Deputy Chairman Rajya Sabha Harivansh, Speaker Haryana Legislative Assembly Harvinder Kalyan, Presiding Officers and legislators. The Speaker, while speaking on the topic "Role of Aware Society and Legislators in realizing future challenges and goal of Viksit Bharat - 2047", said that under the vision

of a developed India or Viksit Bharat, our Nation is moving with confidence towards becoming a global leader in economic growth, innovation, governance, sustainability and human development. The Speaker said that no vision can be realized by the governments alone. The true architects of a developed Nation are its citizens and the true custodians of democratic aspirations are its legislators. He added that a democracy flourishes when the citizens are informed, engaged and conscious of both their rights and responsibilities. "An aware society is not merely one that participates in elections; it is one that actively contributes to public discourse, respects constitutional values, upholds social harmony and remains vigilant in safeguarding democratic institutions," maintained the Speaker. Rather stated that unprecedented technological advancement has empowered the citizens but it has also created new challenges in the form of misinformation, polarization and declining trust in institutions.

Sakeena Itoo reviews healthcare arrangements for forthcoming holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram

Directs for deployment of adequate medical teams, emergency response units, essential medicines at key locations



The meeting was attended by MLA Uri, Dr. Sajjad

SRINAGAR, JUNE 09: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess and strengthen healthcare arrangements being put in place for the forthcoming holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram. During the meeting, the Minister took a detailed appraisal of the preparedness of the Health Department to ensure seamless medical services for devotees participating in Muharram processions and gatherings. The meeting was attended by MLA Uri, Dr. Sajjad

Shafi, MLA Khansahib, Saifuddin Bhat; MLA Beerwah Dr. Shafi Ahmad; MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Ali Sadiq; MLA Lal Chowk, Sheikh Ahsan Pardesi; MD NHM, MD JKMSCL, Director SKIMS, Principals of all GMCs, Director Health Kashmir, Director ISM, CMOs and other senior officers of health department. Addressing the participants in the meeting, the Minister emphasized on the need for a coordinated and proactive approach to provide prompt healthcare facilities at all designated congregation points and procession routes. She directed the administrators of SKIMS, JVC Hospital, SMHS and other city hospitals to establish

medical camps for the facilitation of mourners during this holy month. The Minister instructed officers to establish round-the-clock medical camps at identified venues and ensure availability of specialist doctors, paramedical staff and life-saving drugs. She also called for strengthening emergency preparedness in hospitals to cater to any unforeseen situation. The Minister further stressed on ensuring adequate stock of essential medicines, blood supplies and emergency medical equipment in all major healthcare institutions. She asked officials to conduct regular monitoring of arrangements and address any gaps well in advance. Highlighting the importance of public convenience and safety, Sakeena Itoo directed the officers to maintain close coordination with district administrations and other line departments for effective implementation of healthcare arrangements. She also underscored the need for uninterrupted functioning of ambulance services and emergency healthcare facilities throughout the holy month. The Minister further stressed on ensuring adequate stock of essential medicines, blood supplies and emergency medical equipment in all major healthcare institutions. She asked officials to conduct regular monitoring of arrangements and address any gaps well in advance.

Rana lays foundation for flood protection works worth 2.47 cr at Fattu Kotli, inspects damaged Tawi embankment at Bhagatpur

JAMMU, JUNE 09: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today laid the foundation stone for restoration and construction of flood protection works worth 2.47 crore at Fattu Kotli, Garkhal along the left bank of River Chenab. The Minister was accompanied by MLA Akhnoor, Mohan Lal Bhagat and senior officers from the department. Addressing on the occasion, the Minister affirmed that strengthening flood management infrastructure remains a top priority for the government and the intervention at Fattu Kotli will bolster the resilience of vulnerable areas against flood threats. He underlined the importance of building durable and effective protective structures along the vulnerable riverbanks to safeguard the lives, property and agricultural land from the recurring menace of floods. Javed Rana emphasised that with the monsoon season approaching, it is imperative to expedite flood protection works across the Union Territory. He directed the concerned departments and executing agencies to ensure timely completion of the works with strict adherence to prescribed quality standards, leaving no room for delays or lapses. The Minister reiterated the government's commitment towards developing robust flood mitigation infrastructure and assured that all vulnerable stretches along the major rivers would be addressed on priority. He called upon the officers to adopt a proactive and responsive approach towards maintenance and strengthening of existing protective structures ahead of the approaching monsoon, particularly in areas susceptible to erosion and inundation. Earlier, the Minister also inspected the damaged Tawi embankment at



Bhagatpur village in Marh Block of Jammu district. During his visit to Bhagatpur, the Minister inspected the damaged portion of the Tawi embankment and sought detailed report from the officers regarding the restoration plan. He stressed the need for adopting a proactive approach towards maintenance and strengthening of flood protection infrastructure, particularly in areas prone to erosion and inundation. The Minister also interacted with the local residents and public representatives, who appraised him of various issues concerning the flood protection and water management in their respective areas. He assured them that all their genuine concerns would be addressed in a time-bound manner.

Two BSF personnel injured in multi-vehicle crash on Jammu-Srinagar national highway
RAMBAN/JAMMU, JUN 9: Two Border Security Force officers sustained injuries after a bus carrying security personnel for deployment on Amanrath Yatra duty collided with two other vehicles on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway in Ramban district on Tuesday, officials said. The injured personnel have been shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment. Their condition is stated to be stable. Meanwhile, authorities have initiated an investigation into the circumstances leading to the accident, officials said. They said a bus, carrying BSF personnel from Jammu to Anantnag for Amanrath Yatra duty, first collided with a passenger vehicle, a Maruti Ertiga, and then hit a tractor-trailer at Peerah along the busy highway. Assistant Sub-Inspector Sanjeet Kumar and Head Constable Arveen Kumar suffered minor injuries in the accident and were evacuated to Ramban district hospital for treatment, the officials said.

Dr. Ashish Chandra leads Khet Bachao Abhiyaan event in Anantnag, calls for shift to organic, sustainable farming

ANANTNAG, JUNE 09: With the aim to promote sustainable agricultural practices and enhance awareness among the farmers about scientific and environment friendly farming techniques, an awareness programme under the Khet Bachao Abhiyaan was organised today by Agriculture Department Anantnag at Khanabal here. Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Dr. Ashish Chandra Verma, presided over the program. The program was attended by District Development Commissioner, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, Director Extension, SKUAST-K, Dr. Rehana Habib, CAO, CHO, CAHO, DD Fisheries, DSHO, Head KVK Dooru,



field officials from Agriculture and allied departments besides progressive farmers and representatives of agr related cooperative societies of the district. Addressing the gathering, the ACS said that Khet Bachao Abhiyaan is a significant initiative aimed at encouraging sustainable agriculture through scientific and judicious use of resources including fertilizers, land and water while pushing for organic and eco-friendly farming practices. He stressed the need for adopting productive agricultural technologies and scientific farming methods keeping in view the agro climatic conditions and soil health and environmental balance. He called for protecting the top soil layer (humus) and progressive shifting of agriculture towards natural and organic methods stating the same will have huge scope in the long run.

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