

North in News

E-mail: ninnorthinnews@gmail.com
 editor.northinnews@gmail.com

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We are building talent pipeline that will ensure a player's journey from the school level to the national stage: LG

SRINAGAR, JUN 11: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday attended the closing ceremony of the ALFA HOCKEY Inter-School Tournament-2026 at Synthetic Hockey Astro Turf, Polo Ground Srinagar. The tournament brought together participants from 32 schools across various districts, including Kupwara, Bandipora, Kulgam and Shopian. In his address, the Lieutenant Governor congratulated all the winners and participants for their remarkable display of skills and talent during the



platform, celebrating the spirit and passion of young athletes across the region. "This tournament aimed for something beyond the scoreboard. It provided a transformative stage for our talented children to realize their true athletic potential," the Lieutenant Governor said. The

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CM Omar Abdullah calls on PM Modi; raises Statehood, economy and development issues

NEW DELHI, JUN 11: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi and discussed a range of key issues concerning Jammu & Kashmir, including the early restoration of statehood, the economic situation and developmental priorities of J&K. During the meeting, the Chief Minister conveyed the aspirations of the people of Jammu & Kashmir for the early restoration of statehood, underlining that it would mark an important step in strengthening democratic institutions, deepening public participation and advancing the

next phase of the region's development. He requested that the process be taken forward at the earliest. The Chief Minister briefed



the Prime Minister on Jammu & Kashmir's economic trajectory and ongoing development. (Contd on Pg 2)

NDA represents 80 per cent land, 76 per cent population under PM Modi: Shah

NEW DELHI, JUN 11: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said that the NDA represents 80 per cent of the land area and 76 per cent of the population, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose efforts have been tireless, uninterrupted, and without any blemish. Speaking at the 11th meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog, chaired by the prime minister, Shah said decades-old problems of Naxalism, terrorism, and Article 370, among others, have been resolved within 12 years. "You (Modi) have provided stable leadership to this country for an extended period, resulting in progress across various parameters. Your tenure will be recognised for its policy formulation and stable implementation. It will be known for the introduction of a foreign policy with a spine and formu-

lating a defence strategy that upholds the nation's dignity," he said. Shah remarked that Modi, who came from an ordinary family, has gained the public's trust for 25 years, demonstrating the strength of Indian democracy. He pointed out that in the 62 years prior, the country experienced 13 prime ministers, various political parties and coalitions, leading to a prolonged period of political instability. "Prime Minister Modi's tenure will be regarded as a golden era of stability, continuity, and decisive leadership in Indian history. Modi's tenure is commendable - tireless, uninterrupted, and without any blemish, often working 18 to 20 hours a day without taking a single day off," he said. He said the prime minister has redefined the country's democracy, which suffered

At NITI Aayog Meet, CM Omar Abdullah seeks greater investment, institutional support for J&K

NEW DELHI, JUN 11: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today participated in the 11th Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in New Delhi. The meeting was convened on the theme "Inclusive Human Development for Viksit Bharat @2047". Addressing the Council, the Chief Minister outlined Jammu & Kashmir's development journey and presented a set of priority proposals aimed at strengthening human development, economic growth and infrastructure. He emphasized that the true measure of development lies in expanding opportunities and improving the

quality of life for every citizen. The Chief Minister observed that



the people of Jammu & Kashmir had overwhelmingly chosen peace, democracy and progress, creating a strong foundation for sustained development. He highlighted significant advances in higher education, healthcare and skill development, including the operationalization of IIT Jammu, IIM Jammu and AIIMS Jammu, the expansion of medical colleges from three to ten, and the training of more than 90,000 youth under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana. Highlighting the challenges posed by difficult terrain and dispersed habitations, he noted that Jammu & Kashmir has continued to register strong social indicators, with improvements in healthcare,

democracy and progress, creating a strong foundation for sustained development. He highlighted significant advances in higher education, healthcare and skill development, including the operationalization of IIT Jammu, IIM Jammu and AIIMS Jammu, the expansion of medical colleges from three to ten, and the training of more than 90,000 youth under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana. Highlighting the challenges posed by difficult terrain and dispersed habitations, he noted that Jammu & Kashmir has continued to register strong social indicators, with improvements in healthcare, (Contd on Pg 2)

BRIEF NEWS

Dipke kicks off CJP's nationwide protest

PUNE, JUN 11: Crockroach Abha Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke on Thursday launched a nationwide agitation here demanding resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, and released an 'exam manifesto' which demanded compensation for students in the event of a paper leak. As hundreds of students and followers of the CJP participated in the protest at Savitribai Phule Pune University campus, Dipke warned that they would travel to Delhi and stage a protest on June 20 if Pradhan did not resign over the irregularities in competitive examinations. Students appearing for NEET, CBSE and CUET have suffered injustice, Dipke said. (Contd on Pg 2)

Dr Afsana Bano assigned charge of Director Family Welfare, MCH & Immunization

SRINAGAR, JUNE 11: In the interest of administration and ensuring uninterrupted patient care, the Jammu and Kashmir Government has assigned Dr Afsana Bano, Assistant Director (TB), Directorate of Health Services Kashmir, the charge of Director, Family Welfare, Maternal and Child Health (MCH) & Immunization, J&K. According to Government Order No. 469-JK(HME) of 2026 dated June 11, 2026, Dr Afsana Bano has been transferred and posted in the Directorate of Family Welfare, MCH & Immunization, J&K, where she will look after (Contd on Pg 2)

CRPF DG asks personnel to take proactive steps for safe, peaceful Amarnath Yatra

SRINAGAR, JUN 11: CRPF Director General G P Singh on Thursday directed personnel to take proactive measures to ensure a safe and peaceful Amarnath Yatra in the south Kashmir Himalayas. Singh, who is on a three-day visit to the Kashmir Valley, chaired a meeting attended by senior officers and ground commanders of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) here. "On Day 3 of his Kashmir Valley tour, DG @crpfindia Shri @gpsinghps chaired a high-level security review meeting with senior officers and ground commanders at GC Srinagar. "He emphasised taking proactive measures to ensure a safe and peaceful Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2026," the Srinagar Sector CRPF said in a post on X. The meeting focused on maintaining normalcy and intensifying operations, and ensuring a safe and peaceful Amarnath Yatra, it said. On Wednesday, the CRPF DG reviewed the force's operational preparedness for the Yatra, which is scheduled to start from July 3, and stressed the need for seamless coordination among all agencies to ensure a safe pilgrimage. He had also chaired a meeting attended by senior officers of the CRPF, civil (Contd on Pg 2)

Performing arts play a vital role in preserving India's cultural identity: HP Governor



SHIMLA, JUN 11: Cultural platforms that bring together artists from diverse regions of the country are among the most powerful manifestations of the vision of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, fostering mutual understanding, celebrating India's rich diversity, and strengthening the bonds of national unity through shared cultural experiences. This was stated by the Governor of Himachal Pradesh, Kavinder Gupta, while addressing the closing ceremony of the 71st Annual Festival and All India Drama & Dance Competition organised by the All India Artists' Association at Kali Bari Auditorium, Shimla. The prestigious national festival witnessed the participation of more than 800 artists from 18 states across the country, showcasing an impressive range of classical dance, folk performances, theatre, and mime, transforming Shimla into a vibrant confluence of India's rich cultural heritage. Addressing the gathering, the Governor said that this Festival stands as a vibrant embodiment of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat. He remarked that by bringing together artists from diverse regions and cultural back (Contd on Pg 2)

'Not an era of war': Jaishankar calls for dialogue, diplomacy and zero tolerance against terrorism



SOFIA, JUN 11: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has pushed for "dialogue and diplomacy" as the only solution amid ongoing multiple conflicts and reiterated India's stance that this is "not an era of war." Jaishankar made these remarks Wednesday after the meeting with his Bulgarian counterpart Velislava Petrova-Chamova. Jaishankar said that "the world is passing through an exceptionally volatile and uncertain future, including multiple major conflicts, concerns about economic security, recent experience of the pandemic, and recurring threat of terrorism." "India has a clear position in respect of all of them. We believe that this is not an era of war. The only solution to this conflict is dialogue and (Contd on Pg 2)

US Navy Attacked 3 Merchant Vessels with Indian Seafarers in Gulf Region; Issue Taken Up With US



NEW DELHI, JUN 11: India on Thursday said three merchant ships with Indian crew members came under attack from American military off the coast of Oman in the last four days resulting in the death of three nationals and it has strongly taken up the matter with the US. It was the first public acknowledgement of US Navy targeting ships with Indian crew. A Palau-flagged oil tanker, Manivex, carrying 24 Indian seafarers, was disabled by US forces on June 8. All crew members were safely rescued. On June 10, US struck another Palau-flagged tanker Setebello, killing three out of the 24 Indian sailors on board. Following the attack on Wednesday, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) summoned US (Contd on Pg 2)

PMEGP Loan Scam Case: CBI registers case against 19 people, unknown officials

SRINAGAR, JUN 11: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a case against 19 private people, unknown officials of J&K Bank, and unidentified public servants in connection with alleged irregularities in sanctioning and diversion of loans under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora district. The PMEGP is a central sector scheme that offers financial assistance to create (Contd on Pg 2)

Govt extends excise duty exemption to higher ethanol-petrol blends

NEW DELHI, JUN 11: The government has exempted higher ethanol-blended petrol grades from central excise duty to prevent double taxation on fuel blending activities, according to official notifications. The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) issued notifications exempting ethanol blended petrol (EBP) grades E22, E25, E27 and E30 - containing 22 per cent, 25 per cent, 27 per cent and 30 per cent ethanol, respectively - from applicable central excise duties, subject to excise duty having already been paid on petrol and

GST having been paid on the ethanol used for blending. "Ethanol blending with petrol is a manufacturing activity which can be subjected to excise duty. Petrol bears excise duty, and ethanol bears GST at their respective stages. When the two are blended, the resulting product may attract excise duty once again on the full quantity," an official statement said. For ethanol blends of up to 20 per cent, excise duty on the blended petrol was exempted by the Ministry of Finance. The exemption ensures that the duties already paid are not charged a second time on the blend. Government sources said the move is intended solely to remove a provision under the Central Excise law that could otherwise treat ethanol blending as a manufacturing activity and result in excise duty being levied a second time on the blended fuel. "The objective is to avoid any incidence of double taxation," a government source said. The exemption mirrors the tax treatment already available to existing ethanol-blended petrol grades such as E5, E10 and E20, and does not amount to a reduction in excise duty on (Contd on Pg 2)

FROM PAGE ONE

We are...

Kashmir that will ensure a player's journey from the school level to the regional level, and national stage. In recent years, synthetic hockey turfs at Polo View Srinagar, Pulwama and Poonch have opened up new avenues for aspiring players from cities, border districts and remote areas.

State-of-the-art synthetic hockey turfs are currently under construction at Bandhul Rakh and K.K. Hakku Stadium in Jammu. These projects will significantly expand the capacity for advanced training, specialized coaching camps, and rigorous talent identification programs, establishing a sustainable foundation for future national players," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor reiterated that it is our constant endeavor to provide opportunities and resources for the young talent, enabling them to move forward and contribute to building a Viksit Bharat.

"From the Ranji Trophy Championship to the 'Nasha Mukh J&K' campaigns, the exceptional dedication of our youth has already been proven across various arenas. I am proud of their spirit and I want our youth's contribution to nation-building to be second to none," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Prof. Mohammad Mobin, Vice Chancellor Cluster University Srinagar; Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services and Sports; Shri Rajiv Omprakash DIG CKR; Dr. GV Sundep Chakravarty, SSP Srinagar; Shri Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Ms Nuzhat Gul, Secretary J&K Sports Council; S. Harneet Singh Sasan, President and other members of Badal Hockey Club; senior officials, eminent sports personalities, coaches, students and teachers from various schools were present.

CM Omar...

initiatives across key sectors. He highlighted the progress achieved in infrastructure creation, public service delivery and welfare measures, while also outlining areas that require sustained support and investment.

The Chief Minister emphasized the need for continued support from the Government of India to accelerate economic growth, strengthen connectivity, generate employment opportunities, expand infrastructure and enhance public welfare across Jammu & Kashmir. He drew particular attention to the fuller harnessing of the region's hydropower potential, augmentation of rail services on the Udhampur-Srinagar line in view of the forthcoming apple season and the scheduled closure of Srinagar Airport, development of new tourism circuits, and sustained support for J&K's farmers, artisans and MSMEs. "Jammu & Kashmir is committed to being a full and productive partner in India's growth story," the Chief Minister said, adding that the early restoration of statehood, coupled with continued support from the Government of India, would further strengthen J&K's march towards inclusive growth, prosperity and good governance.

NDA...

because of festering wounds of caste, dynasty, and appeasement for 40 years.

"Our decade-long leadership has ushered in a politics of performance, eliminating casteism, dynasticism, and appeasement. This is the biggest booster dose for our democracy. The public is now free from parties focused on caste, religion, and dynasty, and is aspiring for development. There were several problems affecting the country that you solved in a jiffy with people realising that these were such simple issues," he said.

He said the tenure will be known for removing Article 370 and 35A, triple talaq, giving citizenship to refugees, CAA, and replacing 160-year-old British laws by introducing BNS and BNSS. Also, ending five-decade-old Naxalism, zero tolerance towards terrorism, surgical strike, air strike and Operation Sindoor, which gave shape to the defence policies of various countries.

"Under the leadership of Modi, the NDA today represents 80 per cent of the land area and 76 per cent of the population, advancing the politics of good governance and development," he said. Shah also mentioned that during Modi's 12 years in office, numerous forgotten freedom fighters and national heroes have been honoured.

At NITI...

education and social protection. He emphasized that development financing frameworks must adequately account for geographical disadvantages and urged the extension of the SASCI "Pride of Hills" Special Development Assistance to Jammu & Kashmir on the same principles applicable to other hill States.

The Chief Minister also highlighted Mission YUVA as a transformative initiative to promote entrepreneurship and employment. He noted that the programme has mapped entrepreneurial potential across 24 lakh households, identified over 5.5 lakh prospective entrepreneurs and contributed to a sharp rise in the number of registered startups.

Referring to the growing diversification of J&K's economy, he cited record tourist arrivals of 2.36 crore visitors in 2024, the impact of the ₹5,000-crore Holistic Agriculture Development Programme benefiting over 6.5 lakh farmers, and the contribution of nearly 8.5 lakh MSMEs to local employment and economic activity.

On infrastructure and energy, the Chief Minister highlighted Jammu & Kashmir's vast hydropower potential of 14,867 MW and underscored the importance of strength-

ening the J&K-Centre Joint Venture model beyond 2028 to fully harness the resources of the Chenab and Jhelum river basins. He also described the Udhampur-Srinagar railway as a critical all-weather connectivity corridor and a vital lifeline for the region's apple economy.

The Chief Minister sought the Union Government's support for extending the SASCI "Pride of Hills" package to Jammu & Kashmir; strengthening and expanding the J&K-Centre hydropower partnership; approval of ten new tourism circuits under a proposed ₹5,500-crore tourism development plan; institutional partnerships for the promotion of medicinal and aromatic plants, apples and wool; augmentation of railway services ahead of the apple season; and establishment of Government Medical Colleges in the eight districts that currently lack such facilities. Additional proposals relating to handicrafts and disaster resilience were submitted separately.

Concluding his address, the Chief Minister reaffirmed Jammu & Kashmir's commitment to contributing meaningfully to the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. He stated that J&K seeks partnership and convergence to transform its resilience, resources and human potential into a stronger contribution to national growth and development.

CRPF DG...

administration, Jammu and Kashmir Police and other agencies involved in securing the annual pilgrimage in the south Kashmir Himalayas.

The 57-day Amarnath Yatra will begin on July 3 via the twin routes -- the traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam track in Anantnag district and the shorter but steeper 14-km Baltal track in Ganderbal district -- and conclude on August 28, coinciding with Raksha Bandhan.

Performing...

grounds on a common platform, the festival not only celebrates India's rich artistic heritage but also strengthens the spirit of national unity. The Governor also underscored the profound role of art and culture in shaping the character and identity of a nation. He observed that cultural platforms such as this festival serve not only as avenues for artistic expression but also as powerful instruments of national integration. "When a classical dancer from Odisha and a folk artist from Manipur share the same stage, that moment speaks louder than any political speech. Our diversity is our strength," he remarked. Invoking the ancient Sanskrit verse, "Sahitya Sangeet Kala Vihinah, Sakshat Pashu Pucchha Vishana Hinah," the Governor emphasised that literature, music, and art are essential to human civilisation and social progress. He said that performing arts act as a mirror to society, preserving cultural memory, nurturing creativity, and giving voice to collective aspirations. Kavinder Gupta asked policymakers to view art and culture not merely as subjects for occasional celebration, but as integral components of education, youth development, and social advancement.

"Young people who are disconnected from their art are, in truth, disconnected from themselves," he said, while highlighting the need to safeguard traditional cultural forms in an increasingly digital world. The Governor also spoke about Shimla's historic association with theatre, literature, and cultural movements. Referring to Himachal Pradesh's rich artistic heritage, including Nati, folk theatre, and classical performance traditions, he said the State provides a natural and inspiring setting for a national cultural festival of this stature. Appreciating the efforts of the All India Artists' Association, the Governor said that the successful organisation of the festival for over seven decades reflects an enduring commitment to nurturing artistic talent and promoting cultural exchange across the country. He noted that every participating artist represented not merely a performance, but a living tradition that enriches India's collective cultural heritage.

The Governor congratulated all participating artists, organisers, judges, and volunteers for making the festival a grand success and expressed confidence that such initiatives would continue to strengthen the spirit of unity, creativity, and cultural pride among future generations. On the occasion, the Governor has also conferred the prestigious Balraj Sahni Award upon Satish Verma and Dinesh Khanna in recognition of their remarkable contribution to the field of arts. The Governor has also lauded the efforts of Rohitash Gaur, President of the All India Artists' Association, and Rekha Gaur, Vice President of the Association, for successfully organising the programme and sustaining a cultural movement that has nurtured artistic talent and promoted national integration for over seven decades.

'Not an...

diplomacy." Jaishankar also said that as the voice of the Global South, India has repeatedly underlined concerns of energy, food and fertilisers. "Where economic risks are concerned, the answer is in supply chain resilience and in further diversification. It is particularly important that maritime trade is neither impeded nor endangered. On behalf of the Global South, India has also repeatedly underlined concerns of energy, food and fertilisers," he said. "...the COVID period demonstrated the need for deeper international cooperation," he added. "As for terrorism, the world must be clear on zero tolerance. On all these issues, there was a meeting of minds between India and Bulgaria," Jaishankar informed.

Jaishankar is on a two-nation tour of Bulgaria and Finland from June 10-11. The two-nation visit is aimed at advancing India's engagement with European partners and strengthening bilateral cooperation across a range of sectors. (Agencies)

US Navy...

Charge d'Affaires Jason Meeks and he was handed a demarche or diplomatic note of protest. "We attach high importance to the welfare and well-being of our seafaring community. When this particular attack on the ship MT Settebello occurred, we lodged a strong protest with the American side," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at an inter-ministerial media briefing. "We summoned the US Charge d'Affaires and he was conveyed our deepest concern over the ongoing incidents of attacks. We also registered our strong protest," he Jaiswal emphasised that these attacks "must stop". "We further conveyed that dialogue and diplomacy is the way forward for the peaceful resolution of the conflict, and that there should be unimpeded access through the Strait of Hormuz in accordance with international law," he said.

"Therefore, we made our position very clear on each of these points, while reiterating how important the lives of our people are, welfare and safety of our people are," he added. Jaiswal said these attacks came from the US Navy that is stationed in the region.

"The three ships that have been involved in these incidents were foreign-flagged vessels. Two of them were Palau-flagged, while the third ship is Guinea-Bissau-flagged. They were not Indian-owned ships," he said. US Central Command (Centcom) has confirmed strikes on Settebello and Marivex but is yet to comment on reported strikes on Jalveer.

Mukesh Mangal, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, said evacuation of the seafarers on Jalveer has commenced.

From Settebello, all the remaining 25 crew members including 21 Indians, two Pakistanis, one Russian and one Ukrainian have been safely evacuated, he said, adding the Seaman Welfare Fund Society has been asked to pay Rs 10 lakh to family of each deceased. He said more than 18,000 Indian seafarers remained in the Gulf region, including 562 crew members aboard 13 Indian-flagged ships - 329 on vessels on the west of Strait of Hormuz and 233 on vessels in Gulf of Oman. Jaiswal said two of the three vessels were subject to sanctions administered by the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), while another had been classified as non-compliant.said.

CBI registers...

employment opportunities in rural as well as urban areas. According to an FIR registered by the CBI's last week, the case pertains to alleged criminal conspiracy, cheating, forgery, criminal breach of trust, and corruption in the sanctioning of multiple PHEMEG loans at the J&K Bank branch in Sumbal from 2022 onwards.

The FIR said that unknown bank officials allegedly entered into a conspiracy with the accused beneficiaries and private people to secure sanction of numerous PHEMEG loans. The probe agency alleged that the loan amounts released in favour of beneficiaries were subsequently diverted to accounts of the accused through forged and fictitious invoices and bills. The CBI said the alleged diversion of funds in connivance with the unknown public servants caused wrongful loss to the bank and public exchequer while resulting in corresponding wrongful gain to the accused persons and unknown public servants.

"This diversion of funds also prima-facie establishes embezzlement/misappropriation of public funds by the criminal misconduct of the unknown public servants," the FIR said.

The case has been registered against 19 accused persons and unknown public servants of KVIB, KVIC, DIC, bank officials and private people under Sections 120-B, 409, 420, 468 and 471 of the Indian Penal Code and Section 13(1)(a) read with 13(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act. Investigation in the case has been entrusted to an inspector-rank officer of the CBI.

Govt...

petrol sold for domestic consumption, officials said. The notifications came into force on June 10, the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

Officials said the tax exemption is a regulatory measure that would facilitate the introduction of higher ethanol blends in the future if required, but does not by itself signal any immediate rollout of E22, E25, E27 or E30 fuels in the retail market.

The move, they said, should not be interpreted as an immediate rollout of higher ethanol blends in the retail market. The exemption is a regulatory requirement because blending ethanol with petrol at fuel depots is considered a manufacturing activity that could otherwise attract excise duty.

BIS standards for higher ethanol blends (E22, E25, E27 and E30) have recently been issued in May 2026. The same excise duty waiver has now been extended to E22, E25, E27 and E30 vide notification dated June 10, 2026.

"This is a preliminary prerequisite for higher blends, but doesn't convey anything about roll out of higher blends, which will only be done after extensive testing and consultation," the statement said. "The sole purpose of this notification is to avoid double levy of excise duty on ethanol-blended petrol."

The extension of the tax waiver to E22 (blend of 22 per cent ethanol and 78 per cent petrol), E25, E27 and E30 blends is a preliminary step that would facilitate any future introduction of higher ethanol-content fuels, officials said, adding any rollout would be subject to extensive testing and consultations before implementation.

India has accelerated ethanol blending in petrol as part of efforts to reduce crude oil imports, cut emissions and support the agricultural sector. Ethanol blending by state-run oil marketing companies has risen from 1.53 per cent in the ethanol supply year (ESY) 2014-15 to 20 per cent in ESY 2025-26, according to the statement.

The programme has generated payments of about Rs 1.62 lakh crore to farmers since 2014-15, while helping save more than Rs 1.91 lakh crore in foreign exchange through reduced crude oil imports. It has also resulted in crude oil substitution of about 31 million tonnes and reduced carbon dioxide emissions by an estimated 93.1 million tonnes, it added.

Dipke...

accusing the government of failing to fix accountability. "Our only demand since the inception of this movement has been the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan. More than one crore students have faced injustice, but nobody is ready to take responsibility or step down," he said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi must decide whether "one crore students or one incompetent minister" was more important, he said.

Alleging that a teacher who participated in a protest at Jantar Mantar in Delhi was suspended, Dipke said timely action against those responsible for examination irregularities could have prevented the need for a nationwide agitation.

The CIP founder also announced a "five-point exam manifesto" aimed at protecting students affected by examination-related disruptions.

"Students should receive compensation of Rs 10,000 in the event of a paper leak, postponement of examinations or delay in declaration of results," he demanded. Special trains be arranged during large-scale recruitment drives and every examination should have a backup date so that cancelled tests can be conducted within 72 hours, Dipke said.

He also called for physical evaluation of answer sheets instead of online assessment, age relaxation for candidates affected by delayed examinations or results, and mandatory audits of computer-based test systems before examinations.

Contracts for conducting examinations should be awarded strictly on merit, he said.

If Pradhan did not resign, students from Pune would travel to Delhi on June 20 to intensify the agitation, he warned.

Targeting what he described as divisive politics, Dipke said public discourse has increasingly centred around religious issues over the past decade.

"It is our responsibility to ensure that politics over Hindu-Muslim divisions is not entertained. Development has stalled because attention is diverted towards such issues," he said.

Dipke also objected to attempts to label CIP supporters as "Pakistanis", and said several students and activists associated with the movement had worked to expose examination-related issues.

Explaining the symbolism of the party's name and mascot, Dipke said the cockroach represented growing frustration among the youth.

"The cockroach is a message that the youth of the country is fed up with this politics. The system is rotten and the cockroaches will correct it," he said.

Climate activist Sonam Wangechuk, who took part in the protest, expressed support to the agitation led by Dipke, describing it as an effort by an educated youth to draw attention to issues in the education sector.

Speaking at a press conference earlier in the day, Dipke assured that the protest will be peaceful and within the framework of the Constitution.

With the launch of the nationwide campaign from Pune, they will take the movement to various cities, including Jaipur, Lucknow, Amritsar and Bengaluru, before gathering at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on June 20, he said.

They were ready for dialogue with the government, but instead of dialogue, the government was suspending CIP's social media accounts, he alleged.

"CIP is a big message for the country. The government cannot ignore the youth. Instead of calling us fake, try to understand the issues and problems faced by the youth in the country," he added.

Asked about a purported photograph showing Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Dipke in the United States, which Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut flagged in a social media post, Dipke said it appeared to be AI-generated.

"How can I meet the prime minister? I was just a student in the US. Everyone knows how strict the protocols are for meeting the prime minister," he said. Until about 15 days ago, he had been looking for a job in the US, Dipke said.

Dr Afsana...

the duties of the Director until further orders. The order states that the arrangement has been made on a temporary basis and will remain subject to the outcome of any writ petitions pending before competent courts. It further clarifies that the assignment shall not confer any right upon the officer to seek preferential treatment during regularization or promotion processes, which shall be governed strictly under the prescribed rules.

The order was issued by the Health and Medical Education Department, Civil Secretariat, Jammu/Srinagar, under the authority of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir and signed by Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, M. Raju (IAS).

DC Ramban reviews functioning of Kisan Khidmat Ghars

RAMBAN, JUNE 11: Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan today chaired a review meeting to assess the establishment, operational status and effectiveness of Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) across the district. The meeting focused on strengthening the functioning of KKGs and ensuring their emergence as sustainable grassroots centres for the delivery of agriculture and allied online services. The meeting was informed that 70 Kisan Khidmat Ghars have been established in the district to facilitate farmers' access to government schemes, agricultural inputs, information and citizen-centric services. Among those present were departmental nodal officers, Krishi Udyamis and officers from the



Agriculture and allied departments. Reviewing the progress, the Deputy Commissioner directed all nodal officers to maintain close coordination with Krishi Udyamis and regularly monitor the performance of KKGs. He

emphasised the need for continuous handholding, mentoring and technical support to help the centres function effectively and achieve financial sustainability. The Deputy Commissioner directed Chief Agriculture Officer

Ramban Dr Vinay Kumar Jandial and other officers concerned to make coordinated efforts to strengthen monitoring, enhance field-level support and ensure the long-term success of the initiative. Highlighting the role of KKGs as grassroots service delivery institutions, the Deputy Commissioner asked Krishi Udyamis to intensify awareness campaigns on welfare schemes, credit-linked programmes, agriculture development initiatives and Common Service Centre services. He noted that doorstep delivery of such services would significantly ease access to government benefits for rural communities. The DC stressed that Krishi Udyamis have a crucial role in bridging the gap between the administration and farmers through proac-

Joint Director Mission Shoshan reviews functioning of Poshan Project Bhadarwah



BHADARWAH, JUNE 11: Joint Director Mission Shoshan Shavi Sharma today visited Poshan Project Bhadarwah to conduct a comprehensive review of the Integrated Development Services (ICDS) and various welfare initiatives. The Joint Director presided over a Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition

Day (VHSND) programme at Anganwadi Centre Puneja-B. She reviewed the activities and interacted with beneficiaries regarding health and nutrition services. Emphasising maternal and child health, she highlighted the need for regular immunisation, balanced nutrition and growth monitoring. The programme saw active participation from health officials, Poshan functionaries and beneficiaries. The Joint Director also inspected various Anganwadi Centres to assess the quality of services, record maintenance and nutritional support. She directed field functionaries to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries receive their entitlements under government schemes and that records are updated regularly. The Joint Director further reviewed the operations of the Poshan Tracker and evaluated the progress of different schemes, with special emphasis on the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY). She directed staff to expedite Aadhar seeding and ensure the timely registration of pregnant and lactating women.

DC Reasi inaugurates Centre of Excellence for e-governance services



REASI, JUNE 11: Deputy Commissioner Kumar Abhishek today inaugurated the Centre of Excellence for e-governance services at the District Commissioner's Office Complex, Reasi, marking a significant step towards strengthening digital governance and ensuring hassle-free, citizen-centric delivery of public services on a single platform. Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy

Commissioner stated that the Centre of Excellence has been established as a one-stop facility to provide access to a wide range of online services offered by the government. The initiative aims to streamline the delivery of digital services and ensure greater convenience, transparency and efficiency for the residents of the district. The DC informed that the centre has been equipped with dedicated operators,

including Aadhaar service operators, to assist citizens in applying for online services, tracking application status and availing government services in a smooth and time-bound manner. The facility simplifies access to e-governance services and minimises the need for citizens to visit multiple offices. Highlighting the objective behind the initiative, he observed that residents from remote areas often travel long distances to reach the district headquarters for government services and face difficulties identifying the appropriate offices or service providers. The Centre of Excellence will serve as an integrated facilitation hub, enabling citizens to access multiple services conveniently under one roof.

DC Doda reviews progress of Kisan Khidmat Ghars

DODA, JUNE 11: Deputy Commissioner Doda Krishan Lal today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the functioning and progress of Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) across the district. The meeting evaluated the status of KKGs, the range of services provided to farmers, seed and fertiliser distribution, issuance of licences, reimbursement claims, farmer registration and the overall performance of Krishi Udyamis. Reviewing KKG-wise progress, Mr Lal emphasised strengthening these centres as one-stop service hubs for the farming community. He directed all officers concerned to ensure the uninterrupted availability and timely distribution of quality seeds, fertilisers and pesticides. Among those present were Additional Deputy Commissioner Anil Kumar Thakur, Chief Planning Officer Manesh Kumar Manhas, various district officers, officials from the agriculture sector, Krishi Udyamis and other stakeholders. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the performance of



Krishi Udyamis and discussed key aspects including seed licence issuance, fertiliser distribution, qualification status of Krishi Udyamis, availability of pesticides, Wi-Fi installation at KKGs, CSC onboarding and the distribution of agricultural inputs. The Krishi Udyamis highlighted grievances regarding the timely availability of supplies and shared suggestions for strengthening operations. The Deputy Commissioner directed Sub-Divisional Officers concerned to facilitate the timely

issuance of licences to eligible Krishi Udyamis and ensure no bottlenecks hamper service delivery. He further reviewed the average daily transactions and income generated by the centres, stressing the importance of operational efficiency. Reviewing the status of reimbursement claims, the Deputy Commissioner directed that 100 percent targets be achieved in a time-bound manner. The meeting was informed that of the 112 Krishi Udyamis operating in the district, the average daily reporting stood at around 19. Expressing concern over the low reporting percentage, Mr Lal directed all Krishi Udyamis to maintain regular updates for effective monitoring. He instructed nodal officers to coordinate closely with Krishi Udyamis to address their issues promptly. The meeting further reviewed farmer registrations under different categories, including L1, L2 and L3 e-KYC verification. The Deputy Commissioner directed all Krishi Udyamis and nodal officers to accelerate the registration process to achieve targets prescribed under initiatives such as HADP, particularly in low-performing centres. The Deputy Commissioner urged Krishi Udyamis to proactively reach out to farmers to ensure they are aware of the benefits available through KKGs. He emphasised regular interaction and the dissemination of information regarding government schemes and digital services. Krishi Udyamis were directed to strengthen grassroots outreach and act as effective facilitators for the farming community.

DC Kathua reviews arrangements for International Day of Yoga

KATHUA, JUNE 11: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today chaired a meeting of officers from stakeholder departments to finalise arrangements for the observance of International Day of Yoga 2026. The meeting reviewed preparations for the district-level celebration to be held on June 21 at the Sports Stadium Kathua. A mega yoga session will commence at 6:00 am with participation from officers, students, employees, volunteers and members of civil society. The meeting was informed that a week-long series of yoga sessions and awareness programmes will be organised across the district from June 15 to June



21 under the "Yoga for Healthy Ageing" campaign. Reviewing the arrangements, the Deputy Commissioner directed the AYUSH Department to

ensure the availability of qualified instructors and make necessary logistical arrangements. The Health Department was instructed to ensure the participation of its staff and deploy

ambulances and medical teams at the venue. The Police Department was tasked with security, while the Public Works Department was directed to provide logistical support. The Education Department was asked to mobilise students, including NSS and NCC volunteers, for active participation. Mr Sharma further directed the Jal Shakti Department to ensure adequate drinking water facilities and the Municipal Council Kathua to manage sanitation and cleanliness. The Information Department was asked to undertake extensive publicity to encourage public participation. The Deputy Commissioner called for close coordination among

DDC Doda chairs DLTFC meeting under JKREGP scheme

DODA, JUNE 11: District Development Commissioner Doda Krishan Lal today chaired a meeting of the District Level Task Force Committee (DLTFC) under the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP) at the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex Doda. The committee scrutinised applications received under the JKREGP scheme, which aims to promote

self-employment and entrepreneurship among unemployed youth in the district. Out of 53 applications placed before the committee, 27 cases were approved, while the remaining applications were either rejected or kept on hold for further consideration. The committee examined various project proposals submitted by aspiring entrepreneurs seeking financial assistance under the scheme.

Mega health camp benefits 400 people at village Gai Dassa

DODA, JUNE 11: Under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Doda Krishan Lal, a mega health camp was organised today at village Gai Dassa in Medical Block Ghat. The camp was held under the guidance of Chief Medical Officer Dr Vinod Sharma and the supervision of BMO Dr Abdul Gafoor. The initiative aimed to provide comprehensive healthcare services to residents of remote areas, ensuring quality medical care reaches their doorstep. BMO Dr Abdul Gafoor monitored the conduct of the programme to ensure smooth service delivery. The camp provided general



health check-ups, screening for non-communicable diseases, eye consultations, gynaecological consultations, tuberculosis screening and on-the-spot ultrasound services. Laboratory investigations, including haemoglobin testing, were also available.

The camp received an overwhelming response, with around 400 people availing themselves of medical services. Notably, 30 ultrasound examinations were conducted on-site, providing essential diagnostic support to the remote community.

ADC Ramban inaugurates inter-zonal district-level competitions

RAMBAN, JUNE 11: Additional Deputy Commissioner Ramban Varunjeet Singh Charak today inaugurated the inter-zonal district-level competitions for the under-14, under-17 and under-19 age categories in badminton, yoga and chess at Government Model Higher Secondary School, Ramban. The inaugural function witnessed a large gathering of students, sports enthusiasts and officials. Meanwhile, the competitions in volleyball, kabaddi and kho-kho for the same age categories continued on the third day at DPL Ground, Ramban, amid active participation from young athletes representing six zones of the district. More than 203 students participated in the competitions and attended the inaugural ceremony, reflecting the growing interest in sports



among the youth of the district. Participants displayed remarkable enthusiasm, discipline and sportsmanship throughout the event. Addressing the participants, the

grounds and related facilities would be developed and made available in the coming days to help them nurture their talent. Highlighting the significance of the ongoing Nasha Mukti Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan conducted under the guidance of the Lieutenant Governor, the ADC urged young people to stay away from drug abuse and actively participate in sports and other constructive activities. He further stated that, in line with the vision of the government, sports activities are being promoted at the grassroots level to provide young athletes with the best possible platform to showcase and develop their abilities. He reiterated that every effort is being made to encourage participation and create opportunities for children to excel.

BJP Marks 12 Years of Modi Government; MP Jugal Kishore Sharma Honours Veterans



AKHNOOR, JUNE 11

Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha, Jammu), Sh. Jugal Kishore Sharma, along with MLA Akhnoor Sh. Mohan Lal Sharma, Former MLA Sh. Rajeev Sharma, and senior BJP leaders, visited BJP Block Sohla-Sungal in the Akhnoor Assembly Constituency and facilitated prominent citizens and retired persons at their residences under the BJP's nationwide programme commemorating the completion of 12 years of the Government led by Hon'ble Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi Ji.

During the visit, the leaders honoured distinguished personalities including the Principal of Government Degree College Akhnoor, retired officers from the Armed Forces including Subedar and Captain, retired Headmaster, and senior citizens associated with the historic Praja Parishad movement. The leaders appreciated their invaluable

contribution towards society, education, nation-building, and public service.

Addressing the gatherings, Sh. Jugal Kishore Sharma stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji has become the first elected Prime Minister of India to have successfully completed 4,399 days as an elected Prime Minister, reflecting the immense trust and confidence reposed in him by the people of the country. He said that the BJP is celebrating 12 years of Vikas, Vishwas and Jan Kalyan, marked by unprecedented development, transparent governance, welfare-oriented policies, and India's growing stature on the global stage.

The MP highlighted several transformative initiatives undertaken under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi and lauded his unwavering commitment towards the welfare of every section of society. He emphasized that the Government's people-

centric policies have ensured inclusive growth and have brought developmental benefits to the remotest corners of the nation.

As part of the programme, Sh. Jugal Kishore Sharma also visited Government Degree College Akhnoor and inspected the Chowki Choura Tunnel, describing it as a symbol of the nation's "Pragati Path" and the rapid infrastructure development taking place under the present government. He appreciated the pace of developmental works and reiterated the Government's commitment towards strengthening connectivity and creating better opportunities for the people.

MLA Akhnoor Sh. Mohan Lal Sharma and Former MLA Sh. Rajeev Sharma also addressed the gatherings and highlighted the achievements of the Modi Government over the past twelve years. They called upon party workers to take the message of development, trust, and public welfare to every household and strengthen public participation in the nation's progress.

Senior Leaders of BJP District President, K. K. K. Magotra, Former DDCs Sharda Bhai, Bhushan Bral, Mandal Presidents & Leaders Shamesh Bhagat, Ashok Kumar, Neeraj Sharma, Dipesh, Dalbeer Singh, Capt. Soba Ram, Rameshwar Dass, Mahila Singh, Amreek Singh, Shamla Sonia Verma, Anu Manhas, Ex Sarpanches Panches and others also present at the occasion.

Quality education, affordable health care vital for J&K's future: Khajuria

JAMMU, JUNE 11



Renowned human rights activist Om Parkash Khajuria today stressed that human resource development remains the most important foundation for the progress and prosperity of any society, asserting that no nation or region can achieve sustainable development unless it ensures quality education and accessible healthcare for its citizens.

Addressing media persons, Khajuria said that the true strength of a nation lies not in its physical infrastructure alone but in the education, health, skills, and productivity of its people. He observed that government schools and government hospitals serve as the backbone of human resource development and therefore deserve urgent attention from policymakers and administrators.

"Without investing in people, no amount of development can yield meaningful results. Quality education in government schools and affordable healthcare in government hospitals are the two most important pillars upon which the future of Jammu and Kashmir rests," Khajuria said.

Expressing concern over the present state of public healthcare institutions, he stated that several government hospitals across Jammu and Kashmir are struggling with inadequate infrastructure, shortage of manpower, and dysfunctional medical equipment. He pointed out that vital diagnostic facilities such as X-ray machines, CT Scan units, dialysis machines, ultrasound equipment and other essential medical devices remain non-functional in various hospitals, severely affecting patient care and delaying timely diagnosis and treatment.

Khajuria further highlighted

the acute shortage of specialist doctors, trained technicians, nursing staff and other healthcare professionals in several government health institutions. He said that the lack of expect doctors in various medical streams is forcing patients to seek treatment in costly private hospitals, placing a tremendous financial burden on middle-class and economically weaker families.

"The middle class is bearing the maximum brunt of this crisis. Families are compelled to spend their life savings, borrow money, or divert funds earmarked for their children's education housing and other essential needs towards expensive medical treatment. A single medical emergency often pushes a family into long-term financial distress," he remarked.

Drawing a direct connection between healthcare and human resource development, Khajuria said that a healthy population is essential for economic productivity, social stability and overall development. Poor healthcare services not only affect individual families but also weaken the workforce and hamper the region's growth potential.

He also emphasized the need to strengthen government

schools by ensuring quality teaching standards, modern infrastructure, adequate staffing, digital learning facilities and a conducive academic environment. According to him, every child, irrespective of economic background, must have access to quality education in government institutions so that talent is nurtured and opportunities are expanded across society. Khajuria urged the Jammu and Kashmir administration to undertake a comprehensive review of both the education and healthcare sectors and ensure that government institutions are adequately equipped with modern facilities, qualified manpower and sufficient financial resources. He called for immediate steps to repair and operationalize all dysfunctional medical equipment in government hospitals, vacate posts of specialist doctors and healthcare workers, improve diagnostic services, and strengthen healthcare institutions at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. "Investment in education and healthcare is not expenditure; it is an investment in human capital. A society that neglects its schools and hospitals ultimately compromises its own future," he said. Khajuria appealed to the Lieutenant Governor-led administration to accord the highest priority to human resource development by strengthening public education and healthcare across Jammu and Kashmir. He maintained that empowering people through quality education and ensuring access to affordable and effective healthcare would create a stronger, healthier and more prosperous society. Concluding, he said that the real development lies in the well-being of citizens and that a robust network of government schools and hospitals is indispensable.

INDIA Bloc has no vision, only obsession with criticising PM Modi: Bali Bhagat

As Modi sets governance benchmarks, INDIA Bloc remains directionless: Bhagat

JAMMU, JUNE 11



Senior BJP leader and former Minister Bali Bhagat today launched a sharp attack on the INDIA bloc, accusing the opposition alliance of lacking a constructive agenda for the country and surviving solely on criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Bali Bhagat said that the recent INDIA bloc meeting once again exposed the alliance's internal contradictions and absence of a coherent roadmap for India's future. He remarked that instead of presenting policies on employment, infrastructure, economic growth, national security and social welfare, the opposition remains united only by its opposition to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Reports from the INDIA bloc meeting indicated visible differences among alliance partners, with regional parties and Left leaders raising concerns over Congress functioning and coordination within the alliance.

"The INDIA bloc has become a platform for political negativity. They have no vision, no agenda, no development agenda and no roadmap for Viksit Bharat. Their only common programme appears to be abusing and criticising Prime Minister Narendra Modi every day," he said.

Bhagat stated that while the opposition is busy indulging in political attacks, the Modi gov-

"Pandit Nehru led the nation in a different era, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set new benchmarks in governance, development, transparency and service delivery. Under his leadership, welfare benefits are reaching the last person in the queue without discrimination. Corruption has been curbed through technology-driven governance, and India has emerged as a respected global power," he said.

Bali further asserted that Modi's model of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Prayas' has strengthened the foundations of good governance and accelerated India's journey towards becoming a developed nation.

He said the people of India are witnessing the difference between a government focused on delivery and an opposition focused on disruption. "While Prime Minister Modi is working for a Viksit Bharat and setting new milestones in development and good governance, the INDIA bloc continues to remain trapped in negativity and political opportunism," he added.

He expressed confidence that the people of the country would continue to support leadership that delivers results, strengthens national pride and works tirelessly for the welfare of every citizen.

Army conducts medical patrol at Songri



REASI, JUNE 11

The Indian Army conducted a Medical Patrol at Songri village on 09 June 2026 with the aim of providing health check-ups, essential healthcare services to the local population. During the

patrol, Army medical personnel carried out health check-ups, provided medical consultations, distributed medicines and offered guidance on preventive healthcare measures. The initiative benefited a large number of villagers, including women, children and elderly residents, who availed the medical services. The medical team also educated the villagers on maintaining personal hygiene, adopting healthy lifestyle practices and seeking timely medical attention for common ailments. The local population appreciated the efforts of the Indian Army in reaching out to remote areas and addressing their healthcare needs. Such outreach activities reflect the Indian Army's continued commitment towards the welfare and well-being of the people and contribute significantly to strengthening the bond between the Army and the local community.

Ridhan Singh Katal brings glory to DPS Jammu with district cricket title

JAMMU, JUNE 11



Delhi Public School, Jammu proudly celebrates the remarkable achievement of Ridhan Singh Katal of Class VII-D, who played a pivotal role in his team's victorious campaign in the Inter Zonal District Level U/14 Boys Tournament organized by the Department of Youth Services & Sports, Jammu.

The tournament was held at Khel Gaon, Nagrota from 30 May to 4 June 2026 and witnessed enthusiastic participation from teams representing Bishnah, Jaurian, Akhnoor, Miran Sahib, Jammu, Gardhi Nagar, Bhalwal and Satwara. The competition commenced with the

standout performers of the championship.

His commendable efforts helped his team secure the coveted District Cricket title, earning the winner's trophy and medal and a proud moment for the entire DPS Jammu fraternity. The distinguished Management of DPS Jammu, Hon'ble President-RCT, Sh. M.K. Ajatshatru Singh Ji, Hon'ble P.V. Kurwarani Dr., Ritu Singh Ji, Hon'ble Director, Sh. S.S. Sodhi along with the Principal, Ms. Ruchi Chabra, and staff, congratulated Ridhan on his commendable accomplishment and wished him continued success and more achievements in his future sporting endeavours.

opening fixtures on 30 May 2026, followed by the quarterfinal and semifinal rounds on 1, 2 and 3 June, culminating in the final match on 4 June 2026. Demonstrating exceptional talent and determination, sportsmanship throughout the tournament, Ridhan contributed significantly to his team's success and emerged as one of the

Historic Breakthrough Achieved at Pakaldul Hydroelectric Project in Kishtwar



KISHTWAR, JUNE 11

In a major milestone for Jammu & Kashmir's power infrastructure, the Tunnelling Operation commenced on January 23, 2024, and was completed on June 10, 2026, in a span of 29 months. The Double Shield Hard Rock Tunnel Boring Machine used for the excavation is among the largest deployed in the Himalayan region. The machine features an 8.33-metre-diameter cutter head weighing 180 metric tonnes, while its shield system and probe drill unit weigh approximately 760 metric tonnes and extend over 17 metres in length. Together with its bridges and backup gantries, the TBM measures an impressive 147 metres in total length and weighs over 1,500 metric tonnes. Project officials declared the breakthrough as a landmark engineering achievement that reflects the technical expertise, perseverance and dedication of the workforce involved in the project. The excavation of the Head Race Tunnel was supported.

significant underground excavation works in the region. The prestigious project is being developed by Chenab Valley Power Projects Limited (CVPL) and executed by Larsen & Toubro Limited. The breakthrough was achieved by TBM-1 'Marsu' after excavating a 7.30-kilometre-long Head Race Tunnel, with an overburden of 2,000 meter, through the chal-



Modi Govt redefined governance through accountability and service: Sat Sharma



JAMMU, JUNE 11

BJP J&K President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma (CA), accompanied by MLA Vikram Randhawa, and other senior leaders, inaugurated an exhibition near Bawe Wali Mata Mandir, Jammu.

BJP leadership including Vice Presidents Rakesh Mahajan, Rajiv Charak, Rekha Mahajan and Rashpal Verma, BJP Secretary Reema Padma and Arun Sharma, BJP & Yuva Morcha President Arun Prabhath, Ayodhya Gupta, Brijeshwar Singh Rana, Parduman Singh, BJP District President Jammu Rajesh Gupta and BJP District President Jammu South Naresh Singh Jasrotia, Sanjay Baru, and others were also present in the exhibition, organized jointly by the BJP's Jammu District, Jammu South District, Yuva Morcha and different party cells. The exhibition was organized

ship and inclusive development.

Sat Sharma added that from strengthening national security by empowering the poor through welfare schemes, every policy has been guided by the principle of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas'. Jammu and Kashmir, in particular, has witnessed unprecedented development, improved connectivity and expanded opportunities over the past decade. The exhibition reflects the journey of a New India that is confident, self-reliant and committed to becoming a developed nation, said Sat Sharma.

Vikram Randhawa, on the occasion, said that the Modi government's achievements are visible in the everyday lives of citizens who have benefited from various flagship programmes. He stated that whether it is providing housing to the poor, healthcare coverage to vulnerable families, financial inclusion, better infrastructure, employment opportunities for youth or empowering women through targeted initiatives, the Modi Government has worked with sincerity and dedication to ensure that the benefits of development reach the last person in the queue. He further said that the people of the country have repeatedly endorsed this model of governance because it delivers results and puts national interest above everything else.

Arun Prabhath expressed gratitude to all those who contributed to the successful organization of the exhibition.

Ashok Koul calls for collective efforts towards a clean and conscious society



RAMBAN, JUNE 11

BJP J&K General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul visited the ancient Shiv Ji Temple at Bawli Bazar, Ramban, where he paid obeisance and offered prayers for the peace, prosperity, and well-being of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Ashok Koul, joining local party workers and devotees, contributed to the cleaning efforts aimed at maintaining the sanctity of the revered shrine and preserving the region's rich cultural and spiritual heritage, participating in a cleanliness drive within the temple premises. Ashok Koul, while address-

ing on the occasion, said that cleanliness is not merely a campaign but a collective responsibility and a reflection of society's values and discipline. He emphasized that temples and other places of faith are centres of spiritual awakening as well as symbols of the country's civilizational heritage, and preserving them is the duty of every citizen.

Koul insisted that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi transformed cleanliness into a nationwide people's movement through the Swachh Bharat Mission. The success of this campaign depends upon active public participation. Every individual must contribute towards

keeping our surroundings clean and creating a society that is beautiful, aware, disciplined, and sensitive towards its cultural roots, he said.

Ashok Koul further stated that service to society, environmental consciousness, and the preservation of heritage should become an integral part of public life. He urged people, particularly the younger generation, to voluntarily participate in cleanliness initiatives and community activities to strengthen the spirit of nation-building.

As part of the BJP's Special Outreach Campaign, Ashok Koul also held interactions with eminent personalities of District Ramban to understand local concerns and exchange views on developmental and social issues. Those with whom he interacted included Madan Lal (Retired JCC Bank official), Manmohan Raj (Retired IT Superintendent), Suraj Parkash (Teacher), and Rajinder Kumar (Senior Citizen). BJP Ramban District President Neelam Langah and former District President Rakesh Thakur were also present on the occasion, along with senior party leaders and local workers.

MLA Arvind Gupta dedicates Rs 5.30 Cr Nallah Project to Mazdoor Basti

JAMMU, JUNE 11

Delivering on a long-standing commitment to the residents of Mazdoor Basti, MLA Jammu West Arvind Gupta today inaugurated the construction and improvement work of a major nallah in Ward No. 13 at an estimated cost of Rs 5.30 crore, bringing an end to a civic issue that had remained unresolved for nearly three decades.

The project, dedicated to the people of Mazdoor Basti, aims to permanently address chronic drainage problems, waterlogging and sanitation concerns that have plagued the locality for over 30 years. During heavy rains, residents often witnessed flood-like situations, causing immense hardship to families and posing serious health and safety risks.

Addressing a large gathering, Arvind Gupta said the project represents the fulfillment of a promise he had made to the people and reflects his commitment to resolving long-pending civic issues through sustained efforts and public representation.

He recalled that the issue was repeatedly taken up with the concerned departments and was also forcefully raised by him in the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly to secure approval and funding for the much-needed project.

For nearly 30 years, the people of Mazdoor Basti suffered due to inadequate drainage infrastructure. During every spell of heavy rainfall, the area would witness flood-like conditions, causing immense incon-



venience and damage. I had assured the residents that this issue would be resolved and consistently pursued the matter at every level. Today, I am pleased that this commitment has been fulfilled and work has finally begun on the ground," Gupta said.

He stated that the upgraded nallah will significantly improve drainage facilities, prevent water accumulation, enhance sanitation standards and improve the overall quality of life for thousands of residents living in the area. The MLA further said that while the nallah project marks the fulfillment of one major promise, another important commitment made to the residents, providing tap water connectivity to every household is also being actively pursued and will be achieved soon. "Every household deserves access to clean drinking water. We are working in a mission mode to ensure that no family is left without a tap water connection.

Along with better drainage, roads and sanitation, this will greatly improve living conditions in the area," he added. Residents of Mazdoor Basti expressed gratitude to the MLA for taking up their decades-old issue and ensuring its sanction. They said the project would provide long-awaited relief from recurring waterlogging and flooding concerns that had troubled generations of local residents. Prominent BJP leaders and local representatives present on the occasion included Mandal President Kushant Prajapati, General Secretary Mohit Vaid and Mandal Vice President Sonu Manhas, besides party workers and a large number of local residents. The project is part of the ongoing developmental initiatives being undertaken across Jammu West under the leadership of Arvind Gupta, with a focus on strengthening civic infrastructure and improving the quality of life for residents.

Poetry is a powerful medium to reach out to the masses: BJP

JAMMU, JUNE 11

Senior leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party emphasized the significance of poetry as a powerful medium for communicating with the masses while distributing compositions authored by Balbir Ram Rattan highlighting the achievements of Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the twelve years of his leadership.

BJP Media Incharge Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, on this occasion, expressed gratitude to Balbir Ram Rattan for presenting the achievements of the Narendra Modi government through poetry. He said that poetry possesses a unique ability to touch the hearts of people and communicate ideas in a manner that is both memorable and inspiring. Dr. Pardeep said that while facts and figures are important, poetic expression creates an emotional connection with the readers and enables them to understand the larger vision behind public welfare initiatives. He added that literature and poetry have always played a significant role in shaping public opinion and motivating societies towards positive change. He further said that creative writings based on national development and good governance help strengthen public awareness and inspire constructive participation in nation-building.

BJP State Spokesperson Dr.



Hari Dutt Shishu also described poetry as one of the most effective mediums of public communication. He said that poetry transcends barriers of age, education and social background, making it easier to reach people from all walks of life. Dr. Shishu remarked that the literary presentation of the government's achievements helps readers connect with developmental initiatives and understand their place in a more meaningful manner. He said that poetry has historically been a powerful tool for spreading social messages and continues to remain relevant in the modern era.

Author Balbir Ram Rattan expressed satisfaction over the positive response received for his work and said that writing poetry gives him an opportunity to present his thoughts, feelings and observations in a creative

form. He added that his compositions seek to highlight the transformative changes witnessed in the country under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and inspire people to participate in the nation-building process. He said that poetry enables complex subjects to be conveyed in a simple and engaging manner, thereby reaching a wider audience.

Dr. Mackson Tickoo, Incharge Social Media BJP, and Rajindrajit Advokas, BJP, and Sachin Kumar, BJP, also shared their views. They observed that poetry has historically served as an effective instrument for public outreach, education and social awareness, and continues to remain relevant in contemporary times as a meaningful means of communicating important messages to society.

Raina Raises Concern Over Difficulties Faced by Pensioners in CGHS Registration Due to Deficiencies in PPO Books

JAMMU, JUNE 11

Former Member of the Legislative Council and BJP J&K-UT Spokesperson, Girdhari Lal Raina has urged the Accountant General, Jammu & Kashmir, to take immediate steps to address the difficulties being faced by senior citizens and retired government employees in registering under the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS).

In a communication addressed to the Accountant General, Raina highlighted that a large number of Pension Payment Order (PPO) books either do not contain the Pay Matrix Level under the 7th Central Pay Commission or carry entries that are illegible. This has emerged as a serious obstacle for pensioners seeking registration under CGHS, which has recently been extended to the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

The Pay Matrix Level is a mandatory requirement for CGHS registration as it determines the subsidy to be payable by the pensioner as well as the category of medical facilities and ward entitlement avail-



able under the scheme. Owing to the absence of unreadability of this crucial information submitted by pensioners are reportedly being rejected, forcing them to approach the office of the Accountant General for authentication and certification.

Expressing concern over the hardships being faced by pensioners, particularly senior citizens, women pensioners, and those residing in remote and rural areas, Raina stated that they are being compelled to undertake repeated visits to

government offices merely to obtain information that should have been clearly recorded in their pension documents in the first place.

He emphasized that the extension of CGHS to Jammu & Kashmir is a welcome and long-awaited welfare measure for retired employees. However, procedural deficiencies should not be allowed to deprive eligible beneficiaries of timely access to these facilities under the scheme. The objective of extending CGHS can only be fully realized when pensioners are able to complete the registration process without unnecessary hurdles.

Raina has requested the Accountant General to establish a dedicated facilitation window or special help desk to process such cases expeditiously and provide authenticated Pay Matrix Level details to affected pensioners. He has also urged the authorities to issue appropriate instructions to ensure that all future PPO books contain correct, complete, and legible entries regarding the Pay Matrix Level so that similar problems do not arise in future.

Satish Sharma chairs 88th JKRTC board meeting approves 7th Pay Commission scales for employees



SRINAGAR, JUNE 11

Minister for Transport, Satish Sharma, today chaired the 88th meeting of Board of Directors of Jammu and Kashmir Road Transport Corporation (JKRTC) at Civil Secretariat, here.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary Finance, Shalendra Kumar, Commissioner Secretary Housing & Urban Development, Mandeep Kaur, Secretary Transport Avny Lavasa, and JKRTC Managing Director A.R. War, along with other board members and officers. The key decisions of the Board included approval of imple-

ment of 7th Pay Commission scales for JKRTC employees, addressing a long-standing demand, in-principle confirmation of promotions for various officers of the corporation, revised wage structure for Consolidated Drivers of the corporation. Besides, the Corporation was directed to clear all pending gratuity and pensionary claims of retired employees.

The Board also deliberated on the proposed budget for 2026-27 and discussed asset monetization, revenue enhancement, and resource optimization. Also, progress on the procurement of 200 new e-buses under the PM e-Drive Scheme was reviewed, along with the disposal of auctioned vehicles. During the meeting Satish Sharma underscored the critical role of JKRTC in delivering affordable, reliable and efficient transport services. He called for a result-oriented approach to transform the corporation into a modern, financially sustainable, and passenger-friendly entity. "Innovation, transparency and accountability must guide all policy decisions, with public convenience at the core," Sharma said. He directed the officers to prepare a comprehensive roadmap for modernizing transport infrastructure, enhancing passenger amenities, and adopting digital technologies to improve efficiency and customer experience.



North in News

EDITORIAL

Health and Education sectors need a big boost in budget allocation

Health and Education sectors need a big boost in budget allocation because they are the two pillars on which human capital, productivity, demographic dividend, and long-term national competitiveness rest, and India's current spending levels are still below global norms and below what its own policy documents recommend, and the evidence is clear that countries that sustained high growth did so by investing 6 percent of GDP in education and 5 percent of GDP in health for decades, and India in 2024-25 spent roughly 2.9 percent of GDP on health combining Centre and States and 4.1 percent on education. India has 0.7 doctors per 1,000 population against WHO norm of 1, and 1.3 nurses against norm of 3, and 0.55 beds per 1,000 against WHO norm of 3, and district hospitals in many States still lack ICU, dialysis, and blood banks, and primary health centers face 23 percent shortfall of doctors and 35 percent shortfall of specialists at CHCs as per Rural Health Statistics 2023, and the result is that out-of-pocket expenditure remains 39.4 percent of total health spend as per National Health Accounts 2021-22, and 6.3 crore Indians are pushed into poverty each year due to medical costs, and catastrophic health spending is the single largest cause of indebtedness in rural India. Ayushman Bharat PMJAY has covered 55 crore people with ₹5 lakh insurance, but hospital empanelment is thin in aspirational districts and claim ratios show under-utilization due to lack of specialists, and the pandemic exposed oxygen, ventilator, and ambulance shortages, and the lesson is that health is not a cost but an investment because WHO estimates that every ₹1 invested in health returns ₹4 in GDP through higher productivity and reduced absenteeism. In education the gaps are equally stark because ASER 2023 showed that 25 percent of Class 5 children cannot read Class 2 text and 42 percent cannot do basic division, and the learning loss from COVID has not been fully recovered, and government schools still have a 9.8 percent vacancy of teachers and 8.4 percent of schools run with single teacher, and 1.1 lakh schools have no functional girls' toilet and 1.7 lakh have no electricity, and the pupil-teacher ratio in secondary schools is 27 against NEP norm of 25, and higher education GER is 28.4 percent against NEP target of 50 percent by 2035, and only 2.7 percent of GDP goes to higher education and research combined, and the result is that 45 percent of graduates are not employable as per India Skills Report, and R&D spending is 0.64 percent of GDP against China's 2.4 percent and USA's 3.4 percent. The link between health and education is direct because malnourished children cannot learn and sick adults cannot earn. Health and Education sectors need a big boost in budget allocation, not as expenditure but as the highest-return investment India can make.

RAJNI SHARMA, EDITOR

The Fibre Economy: India's Next Big Global Opportunity

"From local abundance to global leadership in sustainable materials and future-ready" textiles



BY SHRI GIRIRAJ SINGH

India's relationship with fibre is civilisational, 5,000 years deep, woven into our villages, our traditions, and our collective identity. From the legendary muslins of Mohenjodaro, celebrated as "woven air", to the craftsmanship that travelled across continents, fibre has always been the lifeblood of our rural economy. Today, at the cusp of a global sustainability revolution, that ancient knowledge is our greatest competitive advantage.

For decades, the banana pseudostem was discarded as waste. Today, that same biomass is premium fibre, feeding export markets, sustaining rural livelihoods, and turning agricultural residue into national revenue. From waste to wealth, from local abundance to global opportunity: this is the essence of India's New Age Fibre movement, paving the way for India's path to global leadership in green materials and future-ready textiles.

New Age Fibres are sustainable, plant-based materials that blend India's traditional knowledge with modern innovation. Fibres like Bamboo, Hemp, Banana, PALF, Flax, Ramie, Sisal, Milkweed, and Kapok have existed for centuries, but are now being rediscovered for high-value uses in

textiles, defence, biodegradable composites, and premium products. They are expanding India's natural fibre basket for a greener future.

Rising incomes, global sustainability mandates, and traceable sourcing requirements are fundamentally rewiring global supply chains and driving a new fibre economy. Consumers are seeking comfort, breathability, and sustainability in everything they wear. This structural shift is why India's fibre consumption is set to surge from 15 MMT today to 23 MMT by 2030. The world is increasingly seeking exactly what India can offer: ethical, sustainable, and high-performance natural fibres backed by centuries of expertise.

This vision is supported by a clear institutional and policy framework. Under the Mission for Cotton Productivity, with a total outlay of ₹5,664 crore for 2026-2031, a dedicated ₹300 crore New Age Fibres component has been kept. Complementing this effort, the National Fibre Mission announced in the Union Budget 2026-27 provides the broader strategic framework, resting on four pillars: KRISHI-SUTRA for cultivation and raw material development, INFINITI for research and innovation, GRAM-SETU for infrastructure and enterprise creation, and GMPs for branding and market development.

The strength of this policy framework lies in decades of scientific research already delivering results. Milkweed (Aak/Madar), traditionally offered to Lord Shiva, has emerged as a breakthrough after 18 years of research at the Northern India Textile Research Association (NITRA), evolving into defence applications such as sleeping bags for soldiers operating at -20°C. These are 10% lighter than polyester

alternatives, warmer than wool, and CLO/Cell certified. Grown on 55 million hectares of wasteland without fertiliser, it can generate ₹15-2 lakh per acre annually for farmers.

Banana fibre offers an estimated 1.8 million tonnes annual production potential and additional farmer income from agricultural residue, while Bamboo can yield up to 60 tonnes of biomass per hectare, creating major opportunities for the Northeast. Hemp is also emerging as a promising global market, with cultivation already permitted in Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. Along with Flax, Sisal, Ramie, PALF, Nettle, and Kapok, these fibres are steadily expanding India's sustainable fibre base.

Building on this scientific momentum, the National Seminar on New Age Fibres became a platform where science, policy, and enterprise could converge. It brought together researchers, scientists, entrepreneurs, farmer organisations, industry leaders, and policymakers under one roof. Three Task Force reports covering all ten priority fibres were released, translating field science directly into scheme design and investment priorities.

The seminar also openly identified gaps in standards, processing infrastructure, and institutional financing, reflecting a mission focused on real execution. Key priorities emerged: scaling production from 10,000 MT to 10 lakh MT in five years, developing quality standards, promoting machinery indigenisation, reducing dependence on imported processing technology, and building cluster-based fibre ecosystems from cultivation to value addition. Together, these steps position New Age Fibres as a whole-of-government mission for rural prosperity and sus-

tainable growth.

Perhaps the most transformative frontier is fibre blending. India's real strength lies not in a single fibre, but in combining them intelligently, such as milkweed for thermal lightness, wool for warmth, bamboo for breathability, and cotton for softness. A blended fabric is not a compromise: it is a performance upgrade creating fabrics that are stronger, smarter, and more sustainable, with better comfort, moisture management, durability, and versatility across fashion, lifestyle, and technical textiles.

The benefits cascade across the entire value chain. Consumers get better comfort and functionality, manufacturers gain premium and differentiated products, and farmers benefit from diversified demand and more resilient incomes. For India, blending is more than a technical innovation: it is the bridge from raw fibre supply to globally competitive, value-added brands rooted in Indian identity.

At its core, the New Age Fibre movement is about transforming lives, creating opportunities for farmers, strengthening rural livelihoods, empowering women, and enabling entrepreneurs to build global enterprises from local resources.

Anchored in Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji's 5F Vision: Farm to Fibre to Fabric to Fashion to Foreign, India's Green Fibre Revolution is not a distant promise. The strategy is set. The institutions are engaged. The science is proven. The entrepreneurs are ready. What India is now doing, fibre by fibre, blend by blend, region by region, farm by farm, is writing the next great chapter of its textile story.

(The author is the Union Minister of Textiles. The views expressed are personal)

BRICS and the New Geography of Agri-Trade



DR. M.L. JAT



DR. SMITA SIROHI

India's BRICS Chairship in 2026 comes at a moment when agricultural trade is being reshaped beyond tariffs and market access. Climate shocks, food-price volatility, fertiliser disruptions, sustainability standards, digital traceability requirements and the need to keep markets open during crises are now central to the trade agenda.

Why agriculture is strategic. After the expansion of membership, the grouping now represents nearly half the world's population, around 40 per cent of global GDP and about a quarter of global trade. UNCTAD's recent assessment shows that intra-BRICS merchandise trade has expanded more than thirteen-fold since 2003, reaching US\$1.17 trillion in 2024. Agriculture may be only one part of this larger trade story, but it is among the most politically and socially sensitive.

When food prices rise, fertiliser supplies are disrupted or shipping routes become uncertain, the impact is felt directly by farmers, consumers and governments. This makes agriculture one of the most strategic frontiers of India's chairship. The agricultural complemen-

taries within the grouping are evident: Brazil is a major exporter of soyabean, meat and sugar. Russia is important in grains and fertilisers. India has strengths in rice, marine products, spices, buffalo meat and a wide range of smallholder-based commodities. China is a large food importer and processor. South Africa connects the grouping to important African agri-food markets. The newer members add further dimensions: the UAE and Saudi Arabia bring logistics, finance and food-security investment interests; Egypt and Ethiopia represent major food-system concerns. In Africa- and Indonesia adds palm oil, fisheries and tropical agriculture.

From complementarity to mechanisms Yet scale and complementarity do not automatically create resilient trade. The forthcoming BRICS Agriculture Ministers' meeting gives India an opportunity to steer cooperation towards practical mechanisms: trusted trade infrastructure, resilient input supply chains, market intelligence, and women- and youth-inclusive smallholder value chains. Trusted trade infrastructure should be an early priority. The

2024 BRICS Principles on Trade Facilitation in Agriculture already recognise the building blocks of modern agri-trade: SPS and TBT cooperation, equivalence, lower trade costs and digital trade facilitation. India's leadership can add value by moving this agenda towards implementation through interoperable digital certificates, credible traceability systems, Agri-Food Systems (GCWAS) faster regulatory communication and capacity building for producers and exporters.

A second priority is resilient input supply chains. Food trade cannot be separated from fertiliser, energy, feed, seed, logistics and finance. For India, this is not an abstract concern: more than half of its fertiliser and energy imports come from BRICS members, making input security central to agricultural resilience. Recent crises in West Asia have shown that production can be disrupted long before food reaches the market. Cooperation should therefore include early-warning systems for fertiliser and input markets, transparent information on stocks and prices, and mechanisms to reduce sudden disruptions in essential agricultural inputs. A third priority is market intelligence. The BRICS Grain Exchange idea points to the need for better transparency, price discovery and food-security preparedness. India could build on this by proposing an agricultural market intelligence function within the BRICS Agricultural Research Platform, which is already being positioned as a "Knowledge-to-Action" hub. Such a function could track food stocks, crop prospects, SPS alerts and commodity outlooks, helping coun-

tries respond before disruptions become crises.

Making trade farmer-centred. A fourth priority is women- and youth-inclusive smallholder value chains. If agri-trade remains confined to large commodity flows, its developmental value will be limited. The Delhi Declaration emerging from the Global Conference on Women in Agri-Food Systems (GCWAS) 2026 provides a useful starting point by placing women's agency and leadership at the centre of agri-food transformation. India can carry this spirit into the agri-trade agenda by ensuring that smallholders, especially women farmers and rural youth, are supported not only to produce for markets, but to participate more effectively in value chains. These priorities are not about creating a closed food bloc. They are about ensuring that agricultural trade works better for food security, farmers and consumers in a more uncertain world. India is well placed to shape this agenda because it brings together experience in food security management, smallholder agriculture, digital public infrastructure and agricultural research. India's chairship offers a timely opportunity to give this agenda practical shape. Even modest but well-designed cooperation can make agri-trade more reliable during crises, more transparent in its rules and more accessible to farmers. That would mark an important step towards a more resilient, trusted and farmer-centred agri-trade order.

(Director General, ICAR and Secy, DARE)
(ICAR: National Professor, MS Swaminathan Chair and former Joint Sec (G20/BRICS) DAF&W)



Jammu benefited from record infrastructure push, discrimination claims baseless: Javed Rana



JAMMU, JUNE 11

Senior Jammu and Kashmir National Conference leader and Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, on Thursday hit back at the BJP, asserting that the Omar Abdullah-led government's fair and equitable governance has left no room for allegations of regional discrimination.

He was addressing a public meeting at Samelpur Bari Brahmana in Samba district, organised by District President ST Cell Samba, Showkat Ali. The gathering was also addressed by Provincial President Jammu Rattan Lal Gupta.

Speaking on the occasion, Rana said that Jammu has witnessed unprecedented public investment across key sectors under successive National Conference-led governments.

Highlighting infrastructure development, Rana pointed out that under the latest PMGSY IV package worth 74.22 crore, a majority of the 316 approved

match the facts," Gupta said.

The Kandi belt areas of Jammu, Samba, and Kathua have been facing an acute shortage of drinking water for decades. Successive governments failed to address this long-pending issue in a comprehensive manner, causing immense hardship to thousands of families, particularly during the summer months.

Recognizing the gravity of the situation, the Omar-led Government has prioritized the needs of these water-stressed areas. Several perennial water supply schemes, which had remained neglected for years, have now been revived and accelerated. The Government is making every possible effort to ensure the timely completion of these projects so that safe and adequate drinking water reaches the people living in the Kandi belt.

Addressing the gathering, Surjya Begum former DDC Bari Brahmana and Mohinder Singh former Chairman JCC Bank, they urged the party workers to gear up bodies elections and formulate the Panchayat wise Party committees.

Both leaders reiterated the National Conference's commitment to inclusive development, regional balance and equitable governance across all parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

Among others who were present in the meeting included Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Abdul Gani Teli Chairman OBC Cell, Rakesh Singh Raka, Ashok Attri Vice Presidents Central Zone, Sudagat Gulzar District President Samba, M.L. Kaithi, Rajni Devi Working President Women Wing Jammu, Shahbaz Akhtar former Sarpanch, Swarn Singh, Prem Singh, Joginder Kumar, Yashpal, Krishan Dutt, Sushma Devi, Fresham Khullar, Raisain Ali, Col Rashid and other party functionaries were also present.

SKCC dominates with dual victories to march ahead in Youth Sports Promotion National Championship

JAMMU, JUNE 11

Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Club (SKCC) delivered a masterclass in all-round cricket at the MA Stadium, Jammu, securing back-to-back dominant victories in a single day. Led by captain Surpreet Singh, the team showcased exceptional teamwork and competitive spirit to win both the morning qualifier and the high-stakes evening quarter-final matches. Morning Match (Qualifier): SKCC Cruises to 9-Wicket Win Over Press Club 11 in the morning fixture, Press Club 11 won the toss and elected to bat first. However, they struggled to break free against a highly disciplined and consistent SKCC bowling attack. Press Club 11 was eventually bundled out for 126 runs in 17.4 overs. Kamaljeet contributed a brisk 18 runs off 11 balls, while Tejas added 18 runs from 19 deliveries.

Ashish Gupta led the SKCC bowling unit beautifully, claiming two crucial wickets. The remaining wickets were shared among the other bowlers, who chipped in to keep the pressure high. Chasing a target of 127 runs, SKCC produced a clinical and dominant batting display. They made a mockery of the target, crossing the finish line in just 15.5 overs while losing only a single wicket. Vardhan Padma anchored the chase with a patient and composed knock of 48 runs off 50 balls. At the other end, Avtar Singh stole the show with an explosive, match-winning innings of 49 runs from just 30 deliveries. For his outstanding batting performance and crucial role in the successful run chase, Avtar Singh was declared the Player of the Match. The encounter was played in a wonderful spirit of camaraderie, serving as a great

occasion to strengthen ties between the cricketers and media fraternities. Evening Match (Quarter-Final): SKCC Thrashes Ridhima Sports Club by 62 Runs SKCC carried their explosive momentum straight into the evening quarter-final match against tournament hosts Ridhima Sports Club. After losing the toss, SKCC was asked to bat first. Taking full advantage of the batting-friendly conditions under the floodlights, they posted a mammoth total of 188 runs for the loss of 5 wickets in their allotted 20 overs. The powerhouse innings was built around several aggressive knocks. Akshat Sharma led the charge with a brilliant, blistering 49 runs off just 25 balls. He was well-supported by Vardhan Padma, who contributed a quickfire 33 runs from 20 deliveries, and Bawa Barjinder Singh.

NSF Organizes Programme on Birth Anniversary of Ram Prasad Bismil



JAMMU, JUNE 11

The National Secular Forum (NSF) organized a programme at the Jammu University to commemorate the birth anniversary of renowned freedom fighter and revolutionary Ram Prasad Bismil.

Ankush Abrol, Provincial Joint Secretary of JKNC, was the Chief Guest on the occasion, while Dr. Vikas Sharma, Zonal Secretary JKNC and Former President of JURSEA, presided over the programme.

Vikshay Vashist State

Working President of NSF, was the Guest of Honour.

Speaking on the occasion, Ankush Abrol highlighted the immense contribution of Ram Prasad Bismil to India's freedom struggle. He said that the sacrifices made by great revolutionaries continue to inspire generations and that young people must learn about their courage, patriotism, and dedication to the nation.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Vikas Sharma said that the younger generation should be made aware of the role played

by freedom fighters in securing India's independence. He emphasized that society should also remember and honour these great personalities who have contributed significantly to the development and welfare of Jammu and Kashmir.

Dr. Sharma further stated that people should rise above political considerations while acknowledging the contributions of great leaders. Referring to Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, he said that the youth should study and understand his role and contribution towards Jammu and Kashmir. He added that a suitable department or Campus of University should be named after Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah so that future generations remain connected with his legacy and contributions.

Vikshay also addressed the gathering and spoke about the importance of preserving the legacy of national heroes and inspiring young people through their ideals and sacrifices.

Several students, scholars, and NSF members participated in the programme and paid rich tributes to Ram Prasad Bismil.

Movement Kalki Condemns Vandalism of Posters Honouring Medal-Winning Weightlifters

JAMMU, JUNE 11

Movement Kalki has strongly condemned the alleged vandalism of posters featuring medal-winning weightlifters from Jammu & Kashmir, describing the incident as a serious affront to the athletes, the sporting community, and the values of respect and sportsmanship that form the foundation of competitive sports.

Expressing deep concern over the incident, Ms. Sapna Hindu, General Secretary of Movement Kalki, said that the athletes whose posters were reportedly torn, damaged, and discarded in a dustbin have earned recognition and admiration through years of relentless hard work, discipline, and dedication. She stated that these sportspersons have brought laurels to Jammu & Kashmir by excelling at various state, national, and international competitions, thereby serving as role models for the younger genera-

tion. Sapna Hindu said that such acts of disrespect towards athletes are highly unfortunate and unacceptable in a society that seeks to encourage sporting excellence and youth empowerment. She emphasized that the athletes can have a demoralizing effect on their personal success but also the aspirations and pride of the entire region.

These athletes have devoted years of their lives to rigorous training, overcoming challenges and making sacrifices to achieve success. Their accomplishments have brought honour to Jammu & Kashmir and inspired countless young people to pursue sports. Any attempt to dishonour them is an insult not only to the individuals concerned but also to the entire sporting fraternity. She said she further remarked that incidents of this nature can have a demoralizing effect on aspiring athletes who look up to successful sportspersons as symbols of perseverance and achievement. According to

her, at a time when efforts are being made to strengthen sports infrastructure and encourage youth participation in various sports, such actions send a negative and discouraging message. Movement Kalki is deeply concerned that disrespecting athletes who have earned medals and accolades through their dedication undermines the efforts being made by coaches, trainers, sports institutions, and government agencies to promote a culture of excellence in sports. The organization stressed that sportspersons deserve recognition, encouragement, and public appreciation for their contributions rather than humiliation and disrespect. Demanding immediate action, Movement Kalki has urged the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council to thoroughly examine all available CCTV footage from the area where the incident allegedly took place and conduct a fair, transparent and comprehensive investigation.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD R and B DIVISION BAKSHI NAGAR JAMMU
Short e-NIT No.28of 2026-2027 Dated:-10-06-2026

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	Advertis d Cost (Rs. Lakh)	Cost of document (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Time Allowed for completion	Time and date of opening of tender	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	WATERPROOFING OF ROOFTOP AT ART CENTER AT GMCH JAMMU	PWD (R&B) DIVISION BAKSHI NAGAR JAMMU	3.25	600	2% of Advertise Cost	30 Days	22-06-2026 (12.00 PM)	"A,B,C&D"

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://jtenders.gov.in> as per below schedule :-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	10-06-2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 10-06-2026 to 20-06-2026 upto 1800 Hrs
3	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting	-
4	Bid submission Start Date	10-05-2026
5	Bid Submission End Date	20-06-2026 upto 1800 Hrs
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	22-06-2026 on or after 1200 Hrs in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Bakshi Nagar Jammu.
7	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed

stacking, custody, or transportation of such recovered materials unless specifically provided in the Schedule of Quantities.

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of e-challan through Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date, e-NIT No. and name of work duly crediting to MH 0059 (Revenue) favoring **Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Bakshi Nagar Jammu** and upload the same in treasury challan / receipt, Earnest money/Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR/BC pledged to **Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Bakshi 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) Bakshi Nagar Jammu** at the time of allotment.
- The electronic bidding system would not allow any late submission of bids after due date and time as per server time. Bidders may modify their bids by uploading their request for modification before the deadline for submission of bids. For this, the bidder needs not to make any additional payment towards the cost of tender document. For bid modification and consequential re-submission, the bidder is not required to withdraw his bid submitted earlier. The last modified bid submitted by the bidder within the bid submission time shall be considered as the bid. For this purpose, modification/withdrawal by other means will not be accepted. In online system of bid submission, the modification and consequential submission of bids is allowed any number of times. The bidders may withdraw his bid by uploading their request before the deadline for submission of bids; however, if the bid is withdrawn, the re-submission of the bid is not allowed. No bid shall be modified or withdrawn after the deadline of submission of bids.
- The date and time of opening of Financial-Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in 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) Bakshi Nagar Jammu**. The date for same shall be intimated separately.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.
- The earnest money shall be forfeited, if-
 - Any bidder/tenderer 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) Jammu's Circular No. CEJ/G/12660-87 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 ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents mentioned in NIT and SBD with technical bid online.

(E. SANDEEP GUPTA)
Executive Engineer
PWD (R&B) Division
Bakshi Nagar

DIP/J-3475/26

Chamari key threat as SL eye upset in ICC Women's WC opener

Birmingham, June 11 England Women will open their ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 campaign against Sri Lanka Women in a Group A fixture here on Friday, with the hosts expected to start strongly but the contest carrying a compelling individual storyline around Sri Lanka captain Apaththhu. The match marks the beginning of England's home World Cup journey under the leadership of Nat Sciver-Brunt, with the side entering the tournament as one of the clear title contenders. England's strength lies in their depth across departments, with a top order featuring aggressive intent through Dani Wyatt, Heather Knight and Sophia Dunkley, while Alice Caspey adds stability and acceleration in the crucial number three position.



The middle order is anchored by experience in Heather Knight and further strengthened by wicket-keeper-batswoman Amy Jones. England's bowling unit remains one of the most complete in women's T20 cricket. The spin department, led by Sophie Ecclestone and supported

by Charlie Dean, provides control in the middle overs, while the pace attack featuring Lauren Bell and Lauren Filer offers wicket-taking threat with the new ball and at the death. Sri Lanka Women, led by Chamari Athapaththu, arrive with a narrower but dangerous match plan built around individual impact moments rather than collective depth. Chamari remains the central figure in their batting structure, capable of shifting momentum rapidly in the powerplay. Support will be expected from Harsmitha Samarawickrama, Vishni Gunaratne and Imesha Dulani, who will need to provide stability around their captain. In the bowling department, Sri Lanka will rely heavily on spin to counter England's deep batting lineup. Kavisha Dilhari and Sugandika Kumari are expected to play key roles in controlling the middle overs and forcing England into periods of restraint. Historically, England have dominated this fixture, winning the majority of encounters between the two sides, although Sri Lanka's upset victory in previous years remains a reminder of their ability to challenge higher-ranked opposition when key players are fit. The Edgbaston surface is expected to offer a balance to 165 are competitive, with conditions generally supporting stroke play once batswomen are set, while also offering assistance to disciplined seam and spin bowling. Weather conditions are expected to remain stable, with minimal chances of rain, ensuring a full match. The central storyline of the contest, however, extends beyond conditions and combinations. It revolves around whether England's structured depth can contain the explosive potential of Chamari at the top of the order.

Korea Republic face Czechia in Group A opener at Guadalajara Stadium

Zapopan (Mexico), June 11 The FIFA World Cup 2026 begins its Group A action Friday morning as Korea Republic take on Czechia at Guadalajara Stadium in what promises to be an intriguing opening-day contest. This will be the first World Cup meeting between the two sides. Korea Republic arrive with the experience of 11 consecutive World Cup appearances, while Czechia return to the global stage after a gap of 20 years, adding extra significance to their opening fixture. Kick-off is scheduled for 7:30 PM (IST). Korea Republic will be led by captain Son Heungmin, with support from Lee Kang-in and Lee Jaesung in attack, while Hong Myungbo is expected to rely on the defensive presence of Kim Minjae and the midfield control of Hwang Inbeom as they look to better their opponent on a positive note.



Czechia, under coach Miroslav Koubek, will look to striker Patrik Schick for goals, with Adam Hlozek returning from injury to strengthen the attacking options. Pavel Sulc and Lukas Provod are also expected to play important roles in the final third as Czechia aim to make an impact after their long absence from the tournament. In team news, Korea Republic winger Bae Junho remains a doubt due to an ankle injury, while left-back Lee Taeseok has

returned to training following a calf issue. Czechia have a relatively stable squad, although competition for attacking places remains strong. Korea Republic coach Hong Myungbo has stated that his team is fully prepared for the pressure of opening-day action at a World Cup, emphasising that his players have understood all tactical instructions and are ready for the global spotlight. Captain Son Heungmin also spoke about the squad's strong training environment and high levels of motivation heading into tournament opener. Guadalajara Stadium, inaugurated in 2010, provides the backdrop for this Group A clash. Known for its elevated structure and bowl-like design, the venue has previously hosted major international tournaments and will now stage one of the opening to an ankle injury, while left-back Lee Taeseok has

Smriti holds the key to India's World Cup dream: Veda Krishnamurthy



New Delhi June 11: Former India batter Veda Krishnamurthy believes vice-captain Smriti Mandhana will play a decisive role in India's quest for a maiden ICC Women's T20 World Cup title, saying the opener's performances in the biggest

handers' form, especially against the strongest opponents. "When Smriti scores, India wins. So, she knows that it is very important for her to score in those big games. We've seen her do well in World Cups. She has done well in England and is one of those batters who score runs all around the globe," Veda told JioStar. India are expected to face formidable opposition during the tournament, including South Africa and Australia, and Veda believes Mandhana's contributions in those marquee encounters will be crucial. "So, I hope she does well in all the games, but more importantly, in the big games," against South Africa, against Australia, and hopefully in the semi-final and the final.

New Delhi, June 11 India will enter the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 with genuine expectations of lifting the trophy, as the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side looks to build on last year's historic ODI World Cup triumph and establish itself as a dominant force in world cricket. The tournament, which begins in England on Friday, is expected to be the most competitive edition yet. While six-time champions Australia remain one of the favourites, the gap between the traditional powerhouse and the chasing pack has narrowed considerably over the last few years. India's rise has been one of the biggest reasons for that shift. Having ended their long wait for a senior ICC title with victory in the ODI World Cup last year, the team now arrives in England carrying both confidence and belief.

Confident India target rare World Cup double in England

Success in the 50-over format has removed much of the mental burden that often accompanied previous World Cup campaigns. A T20 title would also give India the rare distinction of holding both the ODI and T20 World Cups simultaneously, an achievement previously associated with Australia's era of dominance. India's squad combines experience with exciting young talent. Captain Harmanpreet Kaur, vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, Jemimah Rodrigues, Deepti Sharma and Renuka Singh form the experienced core, while emerging players such as N Stee Charami, Yastika Bhatia and pacer Nandani Sharma add fresh energy to the squad. The batting unit remains India's biggest strength. Mandhana continues to be one of the most consistent performers in world cricket, while Harmanpreet's ability to

deliver in high-pressure situations makes her a crucial figure in the middle order. The all-round capabilities of Deepti Sharma further strengthen the side. India's pace attack has also evolved significantly. Renuka Singh remains the spearhead, while Kranti Goud and Nandani Sharma provide depth and variety. Combined with a quality spin attack, India possess the bowling resources needed to challenge the world's best teams. However, the road to the title will not be easy. Australia still boast a formidable lineup featuring Beth Mooney, Ellyse Perry, Ashleigh Gardner, Tahlia McGrath, Annabel Sutherland and Megan Schutt. Despite surrendering their title to New Zealand in 2024, the Australians remain the benchmark in global T20 cricket. Defending champions New

Zealand cannot be overlooked either. Led by Amelia Kerr, the White Ferns possess a balanced squad capable of thriving in English conditions. England, playing at home, will draw confidence from familiar surroundings, while South Africa arrive after reaching the finals of the last three ICC global tournaments. The tournament has also expanded to 12 teams, making it the biggest Women's T20 World Cup to date. The inclusion of Ireland and the Netherlands reflects the rapid growth of the women's game and adds further intrigue to an already competitive field. A new generation of players is expected to leave its mark during the event. While established stars will continue to dominate headlines, youngsters across teams are increasingly becoming match-winners on the biggest stage.

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Don't compare every youngster with Sooryavanshi: Dravid

Bengaluru, June 11 Karnataka cricket legend Rahul Dravid on Thursday described teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi as a "unique player" and warned against comparing every promising youngster with the emerging star, saying talents of his calibre appear only once in a generation. Speaking at the launch of the fifth edition of the Maharaja Trophy, Dravid said the excitement surrounding Sooryavanshi's rise should not lead to unrealistic expectations from other young cricketers. "Everyone should not be compared with Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. He is a unique player. Such players come very rarely. We should recognise and appreciate that," Dravid said when asked whether Karnataka was looking to identify a player of similar potential.



The former India captain said exceptional talents emerge only occasionally in world cricket and cannot be used as benchmarks for every youngster coming through the ranks. "He is a special talent

and we have to accept that. Hopefully, he continues to perform, goes on to play for India and wins matches for the country," he added. While hailing Sooryavanshi's achievements, Dravid emphasised that Karnataka's cricketing ecosystem should focus on nurturing a broad base of talent rather than searching for replicas of one player. He said the Maharaja Trophy plays a vital role in that process by giving young cricketers a high-profile platform to prove themselves under pressure. "I think it's a very important tournament for Karnataka cricket because it gives young boys a great opportunity to showcase their talent. There is a lot of hype around the tournament and significant media coverage, which creates pressure and expectations. That is good for their development because they will face similar situations as they move to higher levels," he said. Dravid noted that the competition has become an important scouting ground for IPL franchises, with talent spotters closely following performances.

Sachin's message helped me reset before World Cup final, says Jemimah

New Delhi June 11: As India gear up for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in England, star batter Jemimah Rodrigues has opened up about a special piece of advice she received from batting legend Sachin Tendulkar ahead of the 2025 Women's ODI World Cup final. India went on to lift the ODI World Cup title last year and will now look to add another ICC trophy when the T20 World Cup begins on June 12, with the final set to be played at Lord's on July 5. Jemimah revealed that Tendulkar reached out through her coach, Prashant Shetty, after her match-winning innings in the semi-final against Australia and reminded her to stay focused on the bigger

goal. "Sachin sir called my coach Prashant Shetty. He asked him to tell me that he understood the past couple of days had been a lot for me, the big knock against Australia in the semi-final, the joy of beating them. But he reminded me that the job was not over yet. We still had a final to win. He said, try to put that aside and start from zero. That message really helped me reset my mind. I understood that what you did before does not win you the next game. You must treat every match as a new start. That advice from a legend gave me so much clarity before the final," said Jemimah on JioStar. India opener Shafali Verma also reflected on the build-up to the final and revealed how a video note from her father inspired her ahead of the biggest match of her career.

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Road to Lord's: Breaking down the Women's T20 World Cup contenders

New Delhi June 11: The biggest ICC Women's T20 World Cup ever is set to get underway in England, bringing together 12 teams with vastly different ambitions but a shared dream of lifting the trophy at Lord's. The race for the trophy appears more open than ever. Australia remain the benchmark, but India, England, South Africa and defending champions New Zealand all possess realistic title aspirations. Group A promises a fierce battle for semi-final places, while England will fancy their chances of capitalising on home conditions in Group B. With emerging nations



continuing to close the gap and several established teams carrying genuine title ambitions, the 2026 Women's T20 World Cup could produce one of the most competitive and memorable tournaments in the event's history. Here's

a look at every team, their strengths, concerns and players who could define their campaigns. Australia Captain: Sophie Moloneyx Coach: Shelley Nitschke Best finish: Champions (2010, 2012, 2014, 2018, 2020, 2023)

Maharaja Trophy 2026 introduces three major rule changes

Bengaluru, June 11 Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) officials on Thursday announced three significant rule changes for the 2026 Maharaja Trophy KSCA T20 tournament aimed at enhancing strategy, rewarding bowlers and ensuring fair outcomes through technology. Speaking at the launch of the Maharaja Trophy governing council member Santosh Menon said teams will now be required to submit their playing XI before the toss, unlike the practice followed in the Indian Premier League (IPL), where teams announce their line-ups after the toss. "The playing XI has to be given before the teams go



for the toss. This is to ensure that there is some thinking involved in getting the impact player in and deciding who you want in the role of an all-rounder," Menon said. In another major change, runs scored on a free-hit delivery will not be counted if the batter is dismissed on that ball. Menon said the move was designed to reward bowlers who deliver a quality ball immediately after conceding a no-ball. "If a batter is bowled or

announced that ticket sales for the tournament will begin on Friday at 10 am through the District app. Ticket prices have been kept affordable, ranging from Rs. 100 to Rs. 200, to encourage fans in Mysuru and Hubballi to attend matches. "We want more and more people to get an opportunity to watch high-quality cricket in these cities. Most of the time they do not get the chance to watch IPL-like matches, and this tournament gives them that opportunity," he said. The announcements were made ahead of the unveiling of the Maharaja Trophy 2026 trophy by Indian cricketer Rahul Dravid, who attended the event as guest.

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PM Modi's 12 years a golden chapter of service, good governance, and public welfare: Piyush Goyal

Lucknow, Jun 11
Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, on Thursday, claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's continuous tenure of over 4,400 days is a significant achievement in democratic history.

He noted that Prime Minister Modi served the nation for 13 years, first as Chief Minister of Gujarat and then as Prime Minister. This will mark the completion of 25 years of his public life. He said that working meticulously in the national interest without taking a single day off is a hallmark of Prime Minister Modi's working style.

The union minister was speaking at the Vikasit Bharat Sankalp Sammelan here organised by the city BJP under the theme of "12 Years of Trust, Development, and Public Welfare" campaign, to commemorate the completion of 12 years of the central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The union minister said he had the privilege of visiting the Rashtriya Prerna Sthal and paying tribute to Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee,



Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay, and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He said that these three great personalities had a special influence on his life, and their thoughts and ideals continue to inspire nation-building even today. He said that Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee dedicated his life to the unity and integrity of the country. His struggle to keep Kashmir an integral part of India will always be remembered. He also said that Dr. Mukerjee was independent

ing development to the last person in the country. The Prime Minister's vision of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas' has become the foundation of the country's development today.

The union Minister stated that under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, India has made significant progress toward self-reliance. The resolution of a developed India by 2047 is not just the government's resolution, but the resolution of 1.4 billion citizens. He stated that when every citizen fulfills their duties and participates in nation-building, India will rapidly progress on the path of development.

Referring to global circumstances, he said that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, and ongoing conflicts in West Asia, India has robustly advanced its economy. Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, India has established its distinct identity on the global stage, and today, the world sees India as a symbol of hope and stability.

DKS meets Modi and Sitharaman, seeks push for Karnataka projects

Bengaluru, June 11
Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Thursday made a strong pitch for greater Central support to the state's development agenda, holding separate meetings with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi to press for key infrastructure and irrigation projects.

In his first meeting with the Prime Minister after assuming office as Chief Minister, Shivakumar discussed Karnataka's development priorities spanning infrastructure, investment, urban mobility, irrigation, innovation and welfare programmes. Describing the interaction as constructive, he reiterated Karnataka's position as one of the country's leading growth engines and sought closer cooperation between the Centre and the state to accelerate development and attract fresh investments. "Karnataka has always been a key contributor to India's growth story, and I reiterated our commitment to further strengthening it in West Asia, India has robustly advanced its economy. Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, India has established its distinct identity on the global stage, and today, the world sees India as a symbol of hope and stability.

capital investment, urban and rural infrastructure, and early approval and funding of major irrigation and water resource projects. Shivakumar highlighted the Karnataka government's reforms in fiscal management, digital governance, revenue administration and ease of doing business, saying the state had succeeded in balancing growth with fiscal discipline. He urged the Centre to extend support for projects that are critical to Karnataka's water security and agricultural economy, particularly the long-pending Mokedatu, Upper Bhadra, Kalasa-Banduri and Upper Krishna schemes. According to the Chief Minister, these projects are essential for ensuring drinking water supply, expanding irrigation coverage, boosting farm productivity and strengthening infrastructure across the state. The twin meetings came amid Karnataka's push to secure larger Central investments and faster clearances for strategic projects that the state government believes are vital for sustaining economic growth and meeting the needs of a rapidly expanding population. "Karnataka will continue to play a leading role in India's growth, and our government remains committed to securing every opportunity that advances the interests of our state and our people," Shivakumar said.

Odisha turns monsoon into groundwater lifeline through community-driven conservation model

Bhubaneswar, Jun 11
Odisha has emerged as a leading example of sustainable groundwater management by converting seasonal monsoon rainfall into a long-term water security asset through large-scale rainwater harvesting and aquifer recharge initiatives under the 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari' campaign.

Driven by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of water conservation through public participation, the state has developed a scalable and replicable groundwater conservation model that combines scientific planning, modern monitoring systems, and active community involvement. From rooftop rainwater

harvesting systems in educational institutions to recharge structures in ponds and tanks, Odisha is strengthening groundwater reserves while building resilience against future water stress.

The initiative focuses on capturing rainwater at its source and facilitating its recharge into underground aquifers. Across the state, rainwater collected from schools, colleges, government offices, and other institutional buildings is filtered and channelled into recharge wells. At the same time, specially designed recharge structures in ponds, tanks, and other water bodies allow surplus monsoon runoff to seep deep underground instead

of flowing away as surface runoff. These interventions have contributed to improved groundwater levels, enhanced water availability during dry seasons, and strengthened drinking water security, while also supporting agriculture and reducing the burden of water collection on households. Jajpur district has emerged as one of Odisha's most successful examples of scientific groundwater management. Between 2022-23 and 2025-26, the district constructed 117 recharge shafts under the ARUA Scheme and installed 114 Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting Systems under the CHHATA Scheme across government institutions.

Modi took India in wrong direction for past 12 years, alleges Maha Congress

Mumbai, June 11
Prime Minister Narendra Modi took India in the wrong direction and India will continue to pay a heavy price for it for many years to come, Maharashtra State Congress Committee President Harshvardhan Sapkal said today.

"It is being claimed that Narendra Modi has surpassed Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's tenure as Prime Minister, but it is difficult to identify Modi's contributions to the nation for the last 12 years. During this period, Modi took India in the wrong direction, and India will continue to pay a heavy price for it for many years to come. After an assessment of the Modi government's performance over the last 12 years, it can be said that there is neither Ram nor any noteworthy 'Kaam' (work) visible," he said. Talking to media persons at Tilak



Bhavan here, Sapkal said that before coming to power, Narendra Modi had made grand promises such as depositing Rs 15 lakh in every citizen's bank account, creating two crore jobs every year, doubling farmers' incomes, guarantee-

ing minimum support prices for agricultural produce, building 100 smart cities, eliminating terrorism, reducing petrol and diesel prices to Rs 35 per litre, making LPG cylinders available for Rs 100, and pledging that he will neither

indulge in corruption nor allow others to do so. "However, not even a single one of these promises has been fulfilled. Instead, the Indian rupee has weakened and is nearing the Rs 100 mark against the US dollar, GDP growth has declined, the 'Make in India' initiative has failed, the startup ecosystem has failed, and Modi has surrendered to the United States.

These are the Modi government's real achievements. Corruption has increased enormously during Modi's tenure, and the government has come to be identified with only two industrialists," Sapkal alleged. Sapkal stated that after Independence, India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru established India's identity as an important nation on the global stage.

'Felt cheated by officials', Uttarakhand HC summons them for explanation

New Delhi June 11:
Stating that it felt cheated by the officials regarding the appointment of a corporation head against the court's order, the Uttarakhand High Court demanded an explanation from senior IAS officer and principal secretary Meenakshi Sundaram. Hearing a petition from former Uttarakhand Power Corporation Limited (UPCL) director Praveen Tandon, the high court remarked that prima facie it appears the court was cheated by handing over the headship of Power Transmission Corporation of Uttarakhand Limited (PTCUL) to the official despite a high court order against him. Hearing the contempt of court petition, the court ordered Meenakshi Sundaram, principal secretary of power, and Additional Secretary Meharban Singh Bisht to explain the allegation levelled by Tandon; that for-



mer Managing Director of PTCUL PC Dhyani was handed over charge of Corporation head even after he was expelled after a judgment passed by the HC in February 2026. In its ordered passed on Wednesday high court also asked for explanation of Dhyani along with other officials. The petitioner

part of interim arrangement by the state government. At the same time HC also disposed off contempt of court petition.

However, Tandon alleged in his new contempt petition that Meharban Singh Bisht again handed over the charge of PTCUL head on May 15, 2026. It's also alleged that the state government prepared a new manual for the appointment of MD PTCUL to reinstate Dhyani after the High Court ordered his removal due to inadequate qualifications. High Court had ordered his removal saying that he was not qualified for being appointment as MD PTCUL.

The High Court has ordered next hearing on July 28 in the matter when Meenakshi Sundaram, Meharban Singh Bisht and PC Dhyani will have to submit their explanation before the court.

Cockroach chief met PM in US before his return to India: Sanjay Raut

Mumbai, June 11
Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena Rajya Sabha MP and chief Sena spokesperson, Sanjay Raut, today alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had met Cockroach Janata Party chief Abhijeet Dipke in the United States, before the latter returned to India. Tweeting a photograph which supposedly depicts PM Modi with Dipke, Raut said, "Somebody has sent me a photograph of a meeting which took place between Abhijeet Dipke and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They also told me that Dipke returned to India only after meeting the PM in the United States earlier. I am trying to gather more information about it."

"Abhijeet Dipke's protest is unlikely to achieve anything. Opposition parties in this country are capable of fighting against the government. The Congress organised protests all across the country against the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) question paper leak, but the media did not show these protests," he noted. "I had supported the Cockroach Janata Party's movement, but after new information came to

light, I felt it important to share this information with everybody. So far, not a single leader from any political party has joined the Cockroach Janata Party's movement," Raut said.

"We supported the youth. Our party said that if they have taken to the streets to voice their concerns, our position is that the government should listen to them. But, if anyone is actually helping the government, we are keeping an eye on it," the UBT Sena leader said. Sanjay Raut, Cockroach Janata Party founder Abhijeet Dipke reiterated his demand for the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and announced the launch of a nationwide protest against examination irregularities from Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) campus in Pune from today. Addressing a press conference in Pune today, Dipke stated that the protest campaign will begin from the SPPU campus in Pune from Thursday and then move through Jaipur, Lucknow, Amritsar and Bengaluru, before concluding at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on June 20.

Chhattisgarh: BJP, Congress begin early groundwork for 2028 assembly polls

New Delhi June 11:
The next Assembly elections in Chhattisgarh are more than two years away. Yet political activity in the state is already beginning to take on an unmistakably electoral character. From organisational restructuring to constituency level outreach and booth management, both major parties have quietly begun laying the groundwork for the upcoming Assembly elections. Both the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Opposition Congress have started strengthening their organisational networks and fine-tuning strategies for the 2028 contest. While the BJP is focusing on consoli-



dating its position and recovering ground in constituencies it lost in the last election, the Congress is working to rebuild its organisation and position itself for a return to power. For the BJP, particular attention is being paid to the 36 Assembly seats where the party was defeated in the 2023 elec-

'Missing' inquiry report on Swami axmanananda killing sparks political row in Odisha

New Delhi June 11:
The Odisha unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday alleged that the judicial inquiry report into the 2008 murder of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati was willfully suppressed and that key files related to the case went missing during the final days of the previous Biju Janata Dal (BJD) government. Addressing a press conference at the BJP state headquarters, party General Secretary Biranchi Narayan Tripathy said Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati, who had worked for over four decades among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled



Tribes in Kandhamal and other parts of Odisha, was assassinated on August 23, 2008, on the occasion of Janmashanti. Tripathy alleged that despite earlier threats and attacks on the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader, adequate security arrangements were not ensured. He claimed that the security cover provided to the Swami had been withdrawn on the day of the murder. Following the killing and the subse-

quent violence in Kandhamal, the then state government constituted a judicial commission headed by Justice Sarat Mohapatra. After Justice Mohapatra's demise, Justice A.S. Naidu took charge of the inquiry and submitted the commission's report to the state government on September 16, 2016, after nearly eight years of investigation. The BJP leader alleged that though the report was submitted in 2016, the then BJD government neither made it public nor acted on repeated demands for its disclosure. He claimed that after the BJP came to power in 2024 and initiated efforts to trace the report, the file could not be found. The official records indicate that the commission's report was forwarded to the Chief Minister's Office on September 19, 2016, for consideration. However, no decision was taken, said Tripathy. He further alleged that during the transfer of official records following the change of government in June 2024, two important files were found missing—one relating to the Swami Laxmanananda murder case and the subsequent Kandhamal violence, and another concerning the inquiry into the SUM Hospital fire.

Reliance 4IR Realty consortium bags Mumbai slum redevelopment project

Mumbai, June 11
A consortium led by Reliance 4IR Realty Development Limited which is a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) has emerged as the highest bidder for the cluster redevelopment of the 101-acre Juhu slum corridor, according to official sources.
The tender attracted participation from three leading corporate groups. Following a transparent and competitive bidding process, a consortium led by Reliance 4IR Realty Development Ltd, which is a subsidiary of Reliance Industries, emerged as the successful bidder. Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) CEO Mahindra Kalyankar said, Reliance 4IR Realty Development Limited made the highest bid in a consortium with Mahadev Realtors Juhu Pvt Ltd, which is a subsidiary of Aspect Realty. The consortium offered to pay the highest 35.10 percent premium to Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA), which is 10%



above the regular premium of 25 percent. The massive urban renewal initiative, known as the Juhu Galli SRA scheme, stretches from Juhu Galli on C D Barfiwala Road to the backyard of Hansraj Morarji Public School in Andheri. The entire project footprint spans 101.36 acres, of which 61.4 acres consist of slum areas identified for redevelopment under the project framework. Reliance's entry into the real estate redevelopment sector indicates a move to be present in the integrat-

ed smart-city infrastructure. Other bidders who had participated in the competitive bidding process for the Juhu slum redevelopment project, are the Shapoorji Pallonji Group and the JSW Group. SRA officials stated that the Maharashtra state government's high powered committee (HPC) has approved Reliance's technical and financial bid and accordingly, the state government will now issue a Letter of Award (LoA) to the Reliance-backed consortium. The consortium will pay around Rs

180 crore pending rent to tenants as well as two years of advance rent, which is around Rs 750 crore. According to SRA officials, developers usually pay 25% of the ready reckoner (RR) rate of the plot to be developed as premium to the SRA, in SRA schemes. As far as the Juhu slum redevelopment scheme is concerned, Reliance 4IR Realty Development Ltd will pay 35.10%, which is the highest among the three bidders. "As part of the stringent financial safeguards incorporated into the tender conditions, successful bidders are required to secure pending transit rent of slum dwellers along with a cumulative transit rent commitment of approximately Rs 750 crore for the next two years with Slum Redevelopment Authority (SRA). A further one year's transit rent also has to be deposited in the form of post-dated cheques with the SRA, to ensure uninterrupted rental support to eligible residents during the rehabilitation and construction period.

RBI imposes 3-year cooling-off rule for directors to curb long-term control in Cooperative Banks

Pune, June 11
In a significant move aimed at curbing monopoly and long-standing control in the cooperative banking sector, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has directed that directors who have served continuously on the boards of District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs) and Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs) for ten years must step down and observe a mandatory three-year cooling-off period.
The RBI's decision has created a stir across the cooperative sector, as it is expected to affect nearly 6,000 directors serving in Maharashtra's 31 District Central Cooperative Banks and around 434 Urban Cooperative Banks. According to the RBI circular, directors completing ten consecutive years on a bank's board will be required to observe a three-



decades. The move is expected to promote greater transparency, fresh leadership, and improved governance in cooperative banking institutions. The directive is likely to impact several political leaders, office-bearers, and influential figures who have held board positions for extended periods and a handful of families and individuals who have maintained control over cooperative banks for

India, Nepal launch real-time P2P cross-border remittance system

New Delhi, June 11
India and Nepal launched a peer-to-peer (P2P) cross-border remittance mechanism to provide citizens of both countries with seamless mobile banking. This system establishes a direct link between India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Nepal's National Payments Interface (NPI). It represents a major achievement in financial inclusion and fosters strong economic and digital ties between India and Nepal. This UPI-NPI remittance linkage will eliminate the friction of physical currency exchange and also allow Nepali businesses to gain access to a massive, tech-savvy Indian visitor demographic, driving higher transaction volumes. Now, local merchants will experience optimised cash



management and lower overhead costs associated with physical cash handling. It will foster real-time transaction settlements. This system will also eliminate the need to carry physical cash across borders. Fortunately, with the addition of Nepal, now UPI will be accepted in nine countries: Singapore, United Arab Emirates, France, Mauritius, Nepal, Bhutan, Qatar, Sri Lanka

and Cambodia. It will allow Indian travellers to make seamless payments abroad through familiar platforms. According to the Finance Ministry, the technical integration of the project is executed by the collaboration of NPCI International Payments Limited (NPCI), the international arm of the National Payments Corporation of India and the Nepal Clearing House Limited (NCHL).

EBG Group, Universal Fitness partner to launch 30 premium wellness centres across India

Hyderabad, June 11
EBG Group on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Australia-based Universal Fitness Group to establish more than 30 premium health, fitness and wellness centres across India over the next five years, backed by a planned investment of Rs 300 crore. Under the partnership, EBG Group will lead the development, rollout and operations of the Universal Fitness brand in India. The venture also plans to set up two destination wellness retreats as part of its expansion strategy. Hyderabad and Bengaluru will be the first cities to host the facilities, followed by Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Pune and other major urban centres. Speaking at the MoU signing ceremony, Dr Irfan Khan, Founder, Chairman and CEO of EBG Group, said the collaboration aims to create an integrated ecosystem combining fitness, wellness and rehabilitation services under one roof. He noted that despite India's



rapidly growing fitness industry, only a small percentage of the population regularly accesses organised fitness facilities, creating significant growth opportunities. Kumar Ramachandra, Founder of Universal Fitness Group Australia, said the partnership would bring the company's successful Australian model to India, focusing on health, wellness and preventive care. He said the initiative seeks to make fitness and wellness a priority in people's lives by offering a comprehensive wellness

experience. Anthony Karkmez, Co-Founder of Universal Fitness Group Australia, said the centres would offer premium services, advanced equipment and modern wellness amenities, addressing a gap in India's premium fitness market. He added that the company plans to introduce global fitness trends, recovery therapies and customised training programmes. The proposed facilities will feature gyms, magnesium pools, saunas, steam rooms, cold plunge pools,

physiotherapy and rehabilitation services, healthy cafes, beauty and wellness services, dedicated workspaces and family-oriented recreational facilities. The centres will cater to a broad demographic, including professionals, families, women, senior citizens and people recovering from injuries. Company officials said the first centre is expected to be launched in Hyderabad, with additional locations planned across major metropolitan cities in the coming years. The promoters aim to capture a significant share of India's premium fitness and wellness market through the integrated wellness model. The partnership seeks to address a rapidly evolving opportunity within India's wellness economy, where consumers are increasingly moving beyond traditional gym memberships towards holistic solutions that combine fitness, recovery, preventive health and lifestyle experiences under one roof.

India's GDP to grow at 6.6 percent in FY27 compared to 7.7 percent last fiscal: BMI

New Delhi, June 11
India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is set to grow at 6.6 per cent in the current fiscal as compared to 7.7 per cent in FY26, said BMI, a Fitch group company, citing weaker investments and consumption growth and trade shocks from the West Asia crisis. BMI expected the Indian Rupee to trade in the range of 95.1 against the US dollar this calendar year, and said the rupee's depreciation from its 87 average level in 2025 will support export competitiveness, offsetting the drag on GDP from the Iran conflict's terms-of-trade shock. "Looking ahead, we continue to expect 6.6 per cent GDP growth in FY2026/27. Our projection represents a visible slowdown from FY2025-26's 7.7 per cent pace but exceeds India's average 6.1 per cent per annum growth rate over the last decade," it said. BMI has attributed the slow



growth rate this fiscal to three factors. First, the impact of last year's GST reforms on domestic consumption is likely to wane. Second, higher price inflation, which BMI expects to hit 5.3 per cent in FY27 will hinder consumption growth amid disruption at the Strait of Hormuz. Third, BMI expects investment growth to slow during the fiscal year.

"This slowdown is not due to our new forecast of an accumulative 50 basis points (bps) rate hike by the RBI in FY2026/27, since the effect on growth will primarily be felt during FY2027/28," it said. Last week, government also released data on GDP growth saying in FY26, the growth accelerated to 7.7 per cent from 7.1 per cent in FY25, supported by healthy

consumption and robust investment activity. RBI in its annual report for 2025-26 said, even if the Indian banking system is expected to remain resilient, lingering geopolitical tensions and supply chain disruptions may pose near-term risks to corporate earnings and the performance of loan portfolios. The West Asia conflict and the attendant risks of elevated energy prices, supply chain disruptions, financial market volatility, uncertainty surrounding global trade policies and weather-related disruptions could pose headwinds to growth and inflation in the short run, it added. However, the report highlighted that the healthy corporate and bank balance sheets, the government's continued thrust on capital expenditure and the implementation of trade agreements with key partners are expected to sustain investment and growth momentum.

Indian stock markets end lower amid fresh blows between US and Iran

New Delhi, June 11
Indian stock markets on Thursday ended lower in a highly volatile session. Nifty 50 close below the 23,200 mark amid broad-based selling across sectors, and taking fresh cues from the United States (US) fresh attack on Iran. At close, the Sensex was down 150.63 points or 0.20 percent at 73,832.55, and the Nifty was down 53.35 points or 0.23 percent at 23,161.60. Among the sectors, private bank, media, pharma were up, while IT index shed 1.4 percent, PSU Bank, Realty, Energy, Consumer Durables were laggards. On Nifty, the stocks ending in green were M&M followed by ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, JSW Steel, Sun Pharma and Bharti Airtel. Nearly 38



stocks ended in the red. These included Infosys, HCL Technologies, Adani Ports, Eterna and Bajaj Finance. More than 80 stocks touched their 52-week low on the BSE. These included HCL Tech, LTM, Zensar Tech, EID Parry, Rail Vikas Nigam, Dalmia Bharat, Kalyan Jeweller, Swiggy, HDFC Eric, eClerx Services, Wipro, SBI Life Insurance, TCS, ICICI Prudential, P and G Reliance Industries, Jyothy Labs, Bharti Hexacom, among others. After the government's announcement on the excise cut on higher ethanol blended petrol, sugar stocks rallied. Paytm shares came under significant selling pressure, falling 4%. Adani Group stocks also remained under pressure, with Adani Energy Solutions and Adani Power declining 4.5% and 2.3%, respectively.

Piyush Goyal will visit Switzerland to foster implementation of TEPA

New Delhi, Jun 11
Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is scheduled to visit Berne, Switzerland, on June 12, where he will meet senior Swiss government officials and leading representatives of the pharmaceutical industry to advance the implementation of the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) and further deepen economic ties between India and Switzerland. This visit shows the importance India attaches to its economic engagement with Switzerland and other European Free Trade Association (EFTA) states.



The minister will meet Helene Budliger Artieda, State Secretary for Economic Affairs, and Guy Parmelin, Federal President of Switzerland. He will interact with leading representatives of the Swiss pharmaceutical industry. According to the

Commerce Ministry, discussions were around the implementation of the TEPA and addressing the operational issues arising from this agreement. On the sidelines of the visit, Goyal will engage with Swiss companies and investors in Zurich.

Govt extends CGSMFI-2.0, enhances loan limit for large NBFC-MFIs

New Delhi, June 11
The government has approved an extension in the validity of the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Microfinance Institutions-2.0 (CGSMFI-2.0) up to August (31.8.2026) or till guarantees for an amount of Rs 20,000 crore are issued, whichever is earlier, the Finance Ministry statement said here on Wednesday. In addition to this, the government also approved an increase in the maximum loan amount capped to large-sized NBFC-MFIs/MFIs from Rs 300-1000 crores under



the overall ceiling of 20 percent of Asset Under Management (AUM). According to the ministry, this step will lead to an extension in validity and increase in the maximum

amount capped to large-sized NBFC-MFIs for better utilisation and facilitate increased flow to the MFI sector. Under this scheme, eligible borrowers are both existing and new small borrowers within the regulatory definition of micro finance as prescribed by RBI from time to time. The guaranteed coverage is 80 percent of the amount in default for small, 75 percent for medium and 70 percent for large NBFC-MFI/MFIs. A guaranteed fee of 0.50 percent per annum (PA) is charged on the sanctioned amount during the first year and on the outstanding amount in subsequent years. The interest rate on loans extended by Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) to NBFC-MFIs or MFIs is capped at the External Benchmark Lending Rate (EBLR) or Marginal Cost of Funds-based Lending Rate (MCLR) plus 2 per cent per annum. Further, while on-lending to small borrowers, MFIs and NBFC-MFIs are required to keep their interest rates at least 1 percentage point below their average lending rate during the preceding six months. The CGSMFI-2.0 was launched in March this year to provide guarantee cover to Banks/ FIs through National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company.

DC Shopian Chairs DLRC, DCC meeting; Reviews Q4 financial performance of FY 2025-26

Stresses improved performance of sponsorship cases of government flagship schemes

SHOPIAN, JUNE 11: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired the District Level Review Committee (DLRC) cum District Consultative Committee (DCC) meeting of the district here at the meeting hall of the District Administrative Complex, Shopian.

The meeting was convened to review the performance of financial institutions for the 4th quarter ended March 31st, 2026, for the financial year 2025-26. During the meeting, Lead District Manager, Farooq Ahmad Dar appraised the forum regarding the major



financial milestones and achievements of the district as of March 31st, 2026. Total deposits in the district recorded a 11% growth on a Year-on-Year (YOY) basis and a 7% increase compared to the previous quarter ended December 31st, 2025. Advances grew by 17% on a YOY basis and saw a 4% increase quarter-on-quarter.

Priority Sector advances witnessed a massive surge, showing an increase of 26% on a YOY basis and a 5% increase compared to the quarter ended December 31st, 2025. The non-priority sector registered a 4% growth YOY and a 1% increase over the previous quarter. The Credit-Deposit (CD) Ratio of District Shopian stands comfortably placed at 122 as of March 31st, 2026. Against the set financial target of Rs 2507.45 Crore and a physical target of 54,369 beneficiaries under DCP 2025-26, various banks operating across

Shopian disbursed Rs 2157.98 Crore to 65,348 beneficiaries during the financial year 2025-26. With these disbursements, the district has remarkably achieved 86% of its financial targets and 120% of its physical targets. The DC underscored the importance of enhanced credit flow in social infrastructure, renewable energy, agriculture sectors of District Credit Plan to ensure achievement of 100 percent targets along with improving banking services and facilitate sustainable economic growth in the district.

Javid Dar flags off farmers group for training camp at SKUAST-Kashmir



SRINAGAR, JUNE 11: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today flagged off a group of farmers for a one-day training and awareness programme at SKUAST-Kashmir. The programme

was organized by the J&K Kissan Advisory Board with the objective of enhancing farmers' knowledge and exposure to modern agricultural practices. Around 80 progressive farmers from different areas participated in the training session. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister emphasized the

importance of capacity building and knowledge-sharing in strengthening the agriculture sector. He said that the training programme would enable the farmers to gain firsthand knowledge about high-density orchard management, integrated farming systems, waste decomposer technology.

DC Kulgam reviews implementation of PMGSY in district

KULGAM, JUNE 11: A review meeting regarding the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) in District Kulgam was held at the DC Office, Kulgam, under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam. The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Chief Planning Officer (CPO), Executive Engineer PMGSY Kulgam, and Assistant Executive Engineers (AEs).

During the meeting, the progress and achievements of PMGSY in providing road connectivity to far-flung and previously unconnected habitations through all-weather roads were reviewed in detail. The chair was informed



that, up to PMGSY-III, a total of 147 road projects and 5 bridge projects have been completed in the district. It was further informed that, under PMGSY-IV, 13 road schemes are currently under execution, while another 8 schemes are in the tendering phase. The meeting also deliberated

DC Anantnag reviews arrangements for NEET (UG) 2026, stresses adherence to SOPs, guidelines

Emphasizes necessary facilities for ease, convenience of candidates

ANANTNAG, JUNE 11: Ahead of the upcoming NEET(UG) examination scheduled for June 21, 2026, a comprehensive meeting to review the arrangements for the smooth conduct of the examination in the district, was held today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, at Dak Bungalow, Khanabal.

GM DIC, ACR (ADM), ALC, ARTO, the City Coordinator (NEET), representatives of the Police, Traffic Police, Jal Shakti, PDD, Health, F&ES, and other departments, Nodal Officers, Flying Squad Members, District Superintendents, Duty



Magistrates, and other officials attended the meeting. At the outset, the ACR (District Nodal Officer, NEET) informed that a total of 9,403 candidates are going to appear for the examination, which will be held at 29 designated centers across the district. He

said that key arrangements, including establishing a district control room and a strong room, as well as the deployment of nodal officers, magistrates, center superintendents, and a flying squad, have been put in place. Addressing the Deputy

Commissioner emphasized the need for meticulous planning and close coordination among all concerned departments to ensure the examination is conducted in a fair, smooth, and successful manner. He issued instructions to the concerned departments to ensure that all basic facilities, like drinking water, seamless electricity, dedicated healthcare, emergency response systems and accessibility are provided at the centers for ease and convenience of the candidates. Dr. Bilal instructed the concerned officials to devise plans for special transport services and proper traffic management on the examination

day, which be given advance publicity for the information of the candidates as well as the general public. He called for strict adherence to the SOPs and guidelines issued by the National Testing Agency (NTA) and directed the concerned agencies to ensure robust security, effective surveillance, Fire and Emergency Services and other critical measures at and near the examination centers.

He underscored the need for holding dry runs and mock drills, adding that the district administration is committed to extending all possible support to the NTA for the successful conduct of the examination.

Commissioner SMC conducts extensive inspection of Muharram-ul-Haram arrangements across Srinagar City

SRINAGAR, JUNE 11: In order to ensure comprehensive civic preparedness for the forthcoming observance of Muharram-ul-Haram 2026, Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb, today conducted an extensive field inspection of major Inambaras, shrines, and congregation points across Srinagar City. The inspection was undertaken to review the status of arrangements being put in place by various wings of the Corporation and to assess on-ground preparedness at key religious sites expected to witness large gatherings during the holy month. Accompanied by senior officers of SMC, including Joint Commissioners, Superintendent Engineers, Executive Engineers, Chief Sanitation Officer, Transport



Officer, Zonal Sanitation Officers, and concerned Ward Officers, the Commissioner visited several important locations, including Ayatullah Syed Yousuf Imam Bara, Bemina; Kadimi Imam Bara, Zadibal; Astaan Aalia Mir Shams-ud-Din Iraqi Shrine; Imam Bara Baghwanpora; and Imam Bara Hassanabad, among other sites.

During the inspection, the Commissioner issued strict directions to all concerned officers to ensure timely completion of sanitation, drainage clearance, road repairs, desilting of drains, maintenance of street lighting, uninterrupted water supply, and proper deployment of manpower and machinery at all identified locations.

The Commissioner stressed that all civic amenities must be made available well in advance and directed field officers to maintain continuous monitoring of the arrangements. He emphasized that no deficiency should remain unattended and that all departments must work in close coordination to facilitate devotees and ensure smooth conduct of Muharram-related activities.

Inter-Zonal U-14 Boys Kho Kho Championship begins in Baramulla

216 players from 18 zones participate in two-day district-level tournament

BARAMULLA, JUNE 11: Inter-Zonal District Level Kho Kho Competition for Under-14 Boys commenced with great enthusiasm and sporting fervour today at HS Khawaja Bagh Ground, Baramulla. The prestigious two-day championship is being organized by the Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) Baramulla under its annual sports calendar with the objective of identifying and nurturing young sporting talent across the district.

The championship was formally inaugurated by District Youth Services and Sports Officer (DYSSO) Baramulla, Mushtaq Ahmad Pamport, in the presence of Activity Incharges Mubeen Ahmad Khan (PEM) and Shabir Ahmad Thoker (PEM), along with technical officials, field staff, team managers, and participating athletes. A total of 18 zonal teams comprising 216 players from different

educational zones of Baramulla district are participating in the tournament.

The competition is being conducted on a league format, ensuring maximum exposure and competitive opportunities for all teams, with each team scheduled to play four matches during the championship. Speaking on the occasion, DYSSO Baramulla highlighted the importance of sports in shaping the character, discipline, leadership qualities, and overall personality development of young students. He encouraged the athletes to exhibit the true spirit of sportsmanship, teamwork, and fair play while striving for excellence on the field. He further emphasized that the Department of Youth Services and Sports remains committed to providing quality sporting platforms to students across the district and creating opportunities for talented athletes to showcase their abilities at higher levels of competition.

Shopian gears up for grand celebration of International Yoga Day 2026

DC chairs preparatory meeting, finalises arrangements



SHOPIAN, JUNE 11: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta chaired a preparatory meeting today here at Mini-Secretariat Shopian to review arrangements for the observance of International Yoga Day 2026, scheduled to be celebrated across the district on June 21, 2026. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held regarding the organi-

zation of yoga sessions, venue arrangements, awareness activities, publicity measures, sanitation, medical facilities and other logistical requirements to ensure the smooth and successful conduct of the event. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the significance of yoga in promoting physical fitness, mental well-being and a healthy lifestyle. He directed all

Orientation Programme on "Access to Justice at Pre-Arrest, Arrest and Remand Stage" held at Srinagar

SRINAGAR, JUNE 11: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar today organized an Orientation Programme on the theme "Access to Justice at Pre-Arrest, Arrest and Remand Stage" for police personnel and other stakeholders with the objective of enhancing awareness regarding legal safeguards, constitutional rights and procedural fairness during the criminal justice process.

The programme was attended by Principal District & Sessions Judge (Chairman DLSA), Srinagar, Haj Nawaz Zargar as Chief Guest. Speaking on the occasion, the Principal District & Sessions Judge emphasized the significance of adherence to constitutional mandates, statutory safe-



guards and human rights standards during pre-arrest, arrest, and remand proceedings. He underscored the collective responsibility of all stakeholders in ensuring fairness, transparency, and accountability within the justice delivery system. Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, Tabassum Qadir Parryay

highlighted the importance of ensuring access to justice and protecting the rights of individuals at every stage of criminal proceedings. During the technical session, Adnan Sayeed, Special Judge Anti-Corruption (CBI Cases), Srinagar, delivered a detailed presentation on the

legal framework governing arrest and remand procedures, the rights of accused persons, duties of law enforcement agencies and the role of judicial oversight in safeguarding individual liberties. The programme also witnessed valuable interactions and observations from representatives of the

Police Department, Prosecution and LADCs of DLSA Srinagar who highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts in ensuring lawful procedures, of human rights and timely medical assistance whenever required. An interactive Question and Answer session followed, enabling participants to seek clarifications and engage in meaningful discussions on various practical and legal aspects of the subject. The programme was attended by Investigating Officers of all the police stations of District Srinagar, SP Headquarters, Umar Shah lauded the efforts of DLSA Srinagar in bridging the gap between the police and judiciary ensuring access to justice for all.

India's Space sector poised for rapid growth with industry Support: Jitendra Singh

NEW DELHI/JAMMU, JUNE 11: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr. Jitendra Singh, on Thursday called upon industry leaders to significantly scale up investments in India's space sector, saying stronger participation from established industries is essential to accelerate the development of globally competitive indigenous technologies and reduce dependence on external sources. Addressing the 10th IN-SPACe Industry Connect, the Minister said India's start-up ecosystem has demonstrated remarkable innovation and technological capability, but achieving leadership in the global space economy would require enhanced funding, manufacturing strength and market access from industry stakeholders. Singh said the decision to open the space sector to private participation under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked a historic shift in India's approach to strategic sectors. He described the reforms as a transformative step that unlocked the country's entrepreneur-



potential and reshaped the space ecosystem within a short period. Highlighting key policy initiatives, the Minister said the reforms were followed by the Indian Space Policy 2023, which provided strategic direction and regulatory clarity for stakeholders. He also described the establishment of Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) as a major institutional reform that has enabled and supervised non-governmental participation across the space value chain. The Minister said the government has introduced a

Rs 1,000 crore Venture Capital Fund and a Rs 500 crore Technology Adoption Fund to support innovation and commercialisation in the sector. He added that seed funding initiatives, incubation support, skill development programmes and an AICTE-approved Space Technology curriculum are helping build a future-ready talent pool for India's expanding space economy. Referring to the rapid growth of the sector, Dr. Singh said India's private space ecosystem has expanded from a handful of pioneering enterprises to more than 400 start-ups and several hundred large and small companies. He noted that Indian firms are now developing launch vehicles, satellites, propulsion systems, Earth observation applications, space situational awareness capa-

bilities and a range of downstream solutions. He cited companies such as Skyroot Aerospace, Agnikul Cosmos, Pixxel, GalaxEye, Digantra and Dhruva Space as examples of India's growing entrepreneurial and technological capabilities in the sector. Calling for greater philanthropic support for scientific research, Dr. Singh said investments in research and innovation should be viewed as an important service to society, alongside traditional charitable contributions. He also urged industry stakeholders to openly communicate the challenges they face in the evolving space ecosystem and assured them of the government's support. Acknowledging concerns regarding faster approvals, streamlined procedures and

the need for an effective single-window mechanism, the Minister said governance should aim to incentivise innovation rather than create unintended barriers. Emphasising the importance of collaboration, Dr. Singh said the vision of "Amanirbhar Antariksh" can only be realised through stronger partnerships among government, industry, academia, investors and state governments. He observed that the agility of start-ups must be complemented by the scale, financial strength and execution capabilities of established industries. The Minister said India possesses abundant talent and entrepreneurial energy, and that the policy reforms introduced in recent years have created an enabling ecosystem for innovation and enterprise. Concluding his address, Dr. Singh said India's ambitions in the space sector cannot be achieved through government efforts alone and called upon all stakeholders to work together with ambition, confidence and commitment to establish the country as a leading force in the global space economy.

DC reviews water, power supply; Stresses responsiveness in grievance redressal

JAMMU, JUNE 11: Deputy Commissioner Jammu Dr Rakesh Minhas today chaired a meeting with officers of the Jal Shakti Department and Power Development Department to review the supply of water and power across both rural and urban areas of the district. Among those present were Additional District Commissioner Sher Singh, Executive Engineers, Chief Planning Officer Ajaypal Singh, Sub-Divisional Magistrates and other senior officers of the line departments. The Deputy Commissioner sought an update on the current supply status in view of the peak summer season and



increased public demands. He evaluated the repair status of the infrastructure damaged during last year's floods, reviewing its durability against current seasonal challenges. Dr Minhas also assessed the repair rate of power transformers and the capacity of existing repair facilities. Emphasising the need for seamless interde-

partmental coordination, Dr Minhas underlined that administrative synergy is critical to ensuring all challenges in power and water supply are effectively addressed. He reiterated that all officers concerned must remain available round the clock to attend to public grievances with responsiveness.

ADDC chairs review meeting on Mission YUVA; Emphasises target achievement, Udyam Jagriti 5.0 implementation



JAMMU, JUNE 11: Additional District Development Commissioner Jammu Sher Singh today chaired a review meeting to assess the progress and finalise action plans for Mission YUVA for the year 2026-27. The meeting held detailed deliberations on the key performance indicators and targets set under the mission. These included the mobilisation of new applications at the rate of ten per panchayat or Municipal Corporation Ward per month, with priority accorded to low-performing

areas and Vibrant Villages; processing of new applications from Self Help Group (SHG) members; timely preparation and verification of Detailed Project Reports at the sub-division level and expeditious bank sanction and disbursement of cases. Bank-related functioning was reviewed in detail. Banks were directed to ensure that branches concerned sanction or reject loan cases within 15 days and clearly record reasons for rejection in the remarks column, wherever applicable.

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Sakeena Itoo boosts healthcare, education infrastructure in Beerwah Constituency

Inaugurates State-of-Art Laparoscopy Unit at SDH Magam, lays foundation for development projects

BUDGAM, JUNE 11: Minister for Health & Medical Education, School Education, Higher Education and Social Welfare, Sakeena Itoo, today inaugurated several key healthcare facilities besides laying foundation stones for education infrastructure projects in Budgam during her tour of Beerwah constituency in the district. The Minister was accompanied by MLA Beerwah, Dr. Shafi Ahmad Wani, senior officers of the Health & Medical Education Department, School Education Department, Higher Education Department and district administration. During the visit, the Minister inaugurated a state-of-the-art Laparoscopy Unit at Sub-



District Hospital Magam, fulfilling a long-pending demand of the local population. The facility is expected to significantly enhance access to specialized surgical care and reduce the need for patients to travel outside the district for advanced medical pro-

cedures. To further strengthen the healthcare services in the constituency, the Minister also inaugurated a Laparoscopy Unit at Sub-District Hospital Beerwah, which will provide affordable and minimally invasive surgical treatment to

patients at the grassroots level. The Minister laid the foundation stone for a dedicated Administrative Block at Government Degree College (GDC) Magam, aimed at improving the academic administration and expanding institutional infrastructure. She also laid the foundation stone for a modern Auditorium Hall at Government Degree College Beerwah, which will serve as a vital platform for academic, cultural and co-curricular activities of students. Reaffirming the government's commitment towards strengthening the school education infrastructure, the Minister laid the foundation stone for the new building of Government High School Rathsun in Beerwah,

which will provide improved learning facilities and a conducive educational environment for the students. Speaking on the occasion, Sakeena Itoo reiterated the government's commitment towards equitable and balanced development across Jammu and Kashmir. She emphasized that healthcare and education remain the cornerstone sectors of public welfare. She assured that sustained efforts are being made to ensure that quality services and modern facilities reach every corner of the Union Territory. The Minister stressed the importance of strengthening public institutions and creating robust infrastructure to meet the growing needs and aspirations of the people.

DC reviews forest fire preparedness; Directs stringent prevention, response measures



RAJOURI, JUNE 11: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Atishiek Sharma today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to examine the causes of recent forest fire incidents at different locations and to strengthen preparedness and response mechanisms across the district. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed

prompt dissemination of information. He stressed the need for coordinated efforts among all stakeholders to minimise damage to forests, wildlife and human lives. To mitigate the risk of forest fires, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Forest Department to establish and maintain fire lines, construct protective ditches and create small water bodies at strategic locations for quick fire-fighting operations. He also stressed the importance of the systematic collection and disposal of dry pine needles, which act as a major fuel source.

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Javed Rana meets Jammu delegations, orders priority action on water supply, forest rights, tribal welfare



JAMMU, JUNE 11: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today met several deputations from Jammu division and took stock of their issues and concerns. He addressed a wide range of public grievances spanning drinking water supply, forest rights, tribal welfare, employment and other issues directly bearing on the daily lives of the people. During his interaction with the delegations, the

Minister emphasised that the government under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah remains deeply committed towards addressing the aspirations of every section of society. Such public interface programmes serve as a vital bridge between the administration and the people, he added. The delegations raised concerns over irregular and inadequate supply of potable water, particularly in rural and semi-urban localities. They also raised the issue of defunct handpumps at certain locations and urged the intervention of the Minister in this regard.

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DC Srinagar reviews block-wise status of development of playfields in every Panchayat

SRINAGAR JUNE 11: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo today chaired a meeting here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office to review the Block-wise progress of the initiative to develop at least one playfield in every Panchayat of the District. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Intiyaz Ul Aziz, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Assistant Commissioner Development, Tariq Ahmad, Executive Engineer REW, SDM East, Zuber Ahmad, Tehsildars of Panthachowk, Tehsildar Central Shalteng, Tehsildar Chanapora and other senior officers of Rural Development Department. During the meeting, the Deputy



Commissioner took a detailed review of the status of land identification, feasibility assessments, administrative approvals and other

preparatory works required for execution of physical works for the development of playfields in all Panchayats across the District. On

the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner was given a Block-wise updates regarding the identification of suitable land and the progress achieved so far under the initiative. He was informed that out of 21 Panchayats across the four blocks of Harwan, Qamarwari, Srinagar and Khomoh, playfields have already been developed in 10 Panchayats. The remaining Panchayats are at different stages of land identification, feasibility assessment, and approval processes. The DC directed the concerned Officers to expedite the identification of suitable land in the remaining Panchayats and ensure that all feasibility reports, technical clearances and administrative approvals.

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E-Mail: editor.northinnews@gmail.com

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

