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JKPs Water Sports
Festival 'Jashn-e-dal
2023' commences
in Dal Lake
P12

Div Com Kashmir reviews
arrangements for the 3rd
edition of 'Vistata Kashmir'
P3



Post Art-370 Abrogation, J&K Witnessing all round Development at a Massive Pace : H S Puri

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR/JAMMU, JUN 17: Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Saturday said after the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing development in all sectors. Talking to reporters on the sidelines of a programme in Udhampur in the Union Territory, he also hit out at Delhi Minister and AAP leader Atishi on her remark in London that India has the "largest number of malnourished" people, saying "they are making irresponsible statements".

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming State Visit to the US, Puri said, "Relations with the US have witnessed a lot of improvement. Many



issues will come up for discussion (during the visit). Issues related to terrorism generally come up for discussion and if

there is international cooperation against terrorism, it will definitely benefit many of our states."

Prime Minister Modi is visiting the US from June 21-24 on the invitation of President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden. They will host Modi at a State Dinner on June 22. The visit also includes an address to the Joint Session of the Congress on June 22.

On the objections raised by the Congress over the renaming of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in Delhi as the Prime Ministers' Museum and Library Society, the Union minister said he was surprised that the centre was named after "just one prime minister".

How many prime ministers did the country have? "I am surprised over the naming of the centre after just one prime minister", he said.

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Continuous Infiltration Bids An Attempt To Keep "Terrorism Alive" In J&K: DGP

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: Jammu and Kashmir's Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh Saturday said that of late, continuous infiltration bids are being made along the LoC in J&K in a bid to keep the "terrorism alive." He said terrorism was dying down in J&K but some successful infiltration bids have taken place in Rajouri-Poonch areas in which some militants managed to sneak in who targeted civilians and security forces.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of Jashn-e-Dal program in Srinagar, DGP Singh, said that for the first time after a long gap, people of J&K are reaping the peace dividend's as children are going to school, business activities going on without disruptions and tourists



arriving in large numbers. "Terrorism is dying a slow death but some attempts from across the LoC are being made continuously to push in terrorists just to keep the terrorism alive. Security forces have foiled majority of infiltration bids this year but yes, some terrorists have managed to enter into this side from Rajouri-Poonch and Kupwara sectors. They targeted civilians and security forces recently," he said, adding that operations are on to track these groups and very soon they will

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

NEWS BRIEF

First Agniveer batch of J&K light infantry attested

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: The first batch of Agniveers of the Jammu & Kashmir Light Infantry were attested in a befitting ceremony on Saturday at the Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry Regimental Center, Srinagar-based Defence spokesman said.

The attestation ceremony was held in the presence of their emotional parents and proud instructors.

The young boys have been transformed into confident, capable, smart, and proud soldiers and citizens, the spokesman said.

The momentous ceremony commenced with Rashtriya Salute to the National Flag followed by oath

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Mainly Dry Weather Forecast As Night Temp Rises In J&K

JAMMU, JUN 17: Amid forecast for mainly dry weather from June 18, minimum temperatures recorded an increase at most places in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday.

A meteorological department official here said that Srinagar recorded a low of 16.0°C against 15.6°C on the previous night and it was above normal by 1.2°C for the summer capital.

Qazigund, he said, recorded a low of 13.4°C against 14.0°C on the previous night and it was above normal by 0.1°C for the gateway town of Kashmir.

Pahalgam, he said, recorded a low of 9.4°C against 7.8°C on the previous

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Drug peddler arrested in Handwara: Police

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Saturday claimed to have arrested a drug peddler in Handwara and recovered contraband substance from his possession.

"A police party of Police Station Kralgund at a checkpoint established at Kralgund near Eidgah, intercepted a suspicious person who tried to flee from the spot after noticing the police party but was apprehended tactfully. He has been identified as Mohd Amin Bhat @Umar son of Rayaz Ahmad resident of Kralgund. During the search, 40 grams of Charas was recovered from his possession," a police spokesman said in a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Sadhus From Across India Reach Jammu For Upcoming Amarnath Yatra

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JUN 17: Sadhus from across the country have started flocking to the winter capital Jammu to join the annual Amarnath pilgrimage which is scheduled to start in the Valley next month.

Over 200 Sadhus, including women, have arrived at their traditional Ram Mandir base

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

ACS Home reviews progress regarding issuance of individual Arms licences in J&K

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Home, RK Goyal today reviewed the status of various services related to Arms licenses including issuance and renewal of individual arms licenses, being provided through NDAL-ALIS portal.

The ACS advised the District Magistrates to extend assistance to the general public desirous of availing various services

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

BJP Ready For Assembly Polls In J&K: Ravinder Raina

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: The BJP on Saturday said it was ready for assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir and appealed to the Election Commission to announce dates for the polls in the Union territory.

Addressing a party rally here, Jammu and Kashmir BJP president Ravinder Raina said, "Former chief minister

TURN ON.....PAGE 02



CS visits sites of ongoing Sgr Smart City works

Asks for accelerating works to complete them at an earliest

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta conducted an extensive tour of the Srinagar city to make on spot assessment of ongoing developmental and beautification works being carried out under Srinagar Smart City Mission.

The Chief Secretary was

TURN ON.....PAGE 02



Amarnath Yatra: Shrine Board opens online helicopter booking for pilgrims

■ MK News Network

JAMMU, JUN 17: Shri Amarnath Shrine Board has opened online helicopter booking for the pilgrims of Shri Amarnath Yatra starting from July 1. The 62-day long pilgrimage is starting from July 1 and ending on August 30 (Rakshabandhan). According to official sources, the online

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

India surprised world by administering 220 cr vaccine doses: Jitendra

■ MK News Network

JAMMU, JUN 17: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh on Saturday said that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India had surprised the world by administering 220 crore Covid vaccine doses through a fully digital platform (COWIN), not even imagined by the developed western countries.

Speaking after inaugurating Free Telemedicine Mobile Camp "Doctor on

TURN ON.....PAGE 02



98.10 PC FAMILIES COVERED UNDER PMJAY-SEHAT SCHEME IN J&K

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: Ambitious 'ABPMJAY-SEHAT' has proved a savior for an ailing 65 year old 'Anchal Das' of ward number 7, Kathua, when he got hassle free treatment in a most convenient way he would have never even dreamt of.

All his life, Das toiled hard to feed his family of 7 but things turned haywire when doctors advised him Ureter (PCNL) surgery. His world fell apart. Saving being



luxury for him due to meagre monthly income of Rs 8,000, Das could save just a few hundred bucks a month.

Das was virtually broken on the mere thought of managing Rs 58, 000 for his surgery and subsequent treatment. But despair turned into hope with "ABPMJAY-SEHAT coming as a savior.

The health scheme came as life booster when I was treated in a hospital for free and with great care", says Das

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

9 Years of Modi Govt Transformed J&K: Devender Rana

■ HT News Network

MEERUT, JUN 17: Senior BJP leader Mr Devender Singh Rana today said the



return of peace in Kashmir after abrogation of Article 370 by Narendra Modi Government has transformed J&K and changed the entire narrative with fear and hate mongers itching for regaining political space, they rightly lost due to their self-centric, deceptive, dubious, exploitative, and anti-people discourse for lust of power.

"With pathbreaking economic and developmental initiatives set in motion by the Centre and implemented in missionary mode by the Lieutenant Governor's administration, the face of

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Post Art-370.....

"We had Pandit ji (Jawahar Lal Nehru), who had a lot of contributions, followed by Gulzarilal Nanda, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira ji, PV Narasimha Rao ji and Manmohan Singh ji," the minister of housing and urban affairs, and petroleum and natural gas said.

"What one can say about the Opposition? One youth leader went to London and said there are 38 crore Indians who are hungry. The prime minister is providing free dry ration to 80 crore people since the outbreak of the (coronavirus) pandemic. They are making irresponsible statements," he said.

Atishi had said in London on Thursday that India has the "largest number of malnourished" people, despite being the second largest producer of food in the world.

The minister said, "Development works are happening across the country. When Modi took over in 2014, it was said that the northeastern region is the most neglected but he made sure that every minister visits the region once in a month to ensure its development."

He also said after the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35A in August 2019, Jammu and Kashmir is also witnessing massive development in all sectors.

Puri said this was his sixth visit to Jammu and Kashmir in the past couple of years and "we are witness to massive footfall of tourists, setting up of IIM, AIIMS, hospitals and other educational institutions".

"I feel some works are pending due to some obstacles but they are being taken care of to further speed up the development," he said.

Puri said the Devika river project, costing Rs 190 crore, will be completed within the next three months. "This is North India's first river rejuvenation project which will offer a unique destination both for pilgrims and tourists," he said. (Agencies)

Continuous....

be zeroed in.

He said recently six infiltration bids were foiled and yesterday (June 16), five terrorists were killed along the LoC in Jagmugund area of Kupwara district from whose possession a large quantity of arms and ammunition was recovered. "It was only yesterday, another bid was foiled in Poonch sector where a group of terrorists were pushed back and not allowed to enter into this side," the DGP said.

Asked whether the continuous infiltration bids was a violation of existing Ceasefire pact, the J&K police chief said the agreement is being followed in spirit by either sides, but "there are some efforts to push in militants into this side to keep the pot boiling."

To a query about arrangements for the upcoming Yatra, the DGP said that all the security arrangements are being done to ensure smooth and peaceful pilgrimage. "We will ensure every pilgrim goes back with great memories," he said.

The DGP said that on great thing was that the people of J&K have rejected the violence and living a peaceful life. On narcotics and addiction of large number of J&K youth towards drugs, he advocated a social initiative by civil society to curb the menace apart from the ongoing war against drugs by police.

Earlier, addressing the gathering, he said Jashne-Dal is an opportunity to showcase Kashmir's hospitality. "Some 600 children having interest in water sports are participating in the event. We want to provide them a platform at national and international level," he said, adding that Dal lake is not just beautiful but peaceful as ever. "People are roaming around and planning their trips without fear," he said. The DGP said that some elements are still hatching conspiracies to disrupt peace but "police is active and fighting on all fronts to foil such plans."

Sadhus From....

camp in the old city's Purani Mandi area and are upbeat to offer their prayers at the 3,880-metre high holy cave shrine in south Kashmir Himalayas, housing the naturally formed ice-Shivling.

The 62-day long pilgrimage will commence on July 1 from the twin tracks – the traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam route in the Anantnag district and the 14-km shorter but steep Baltal route in the Ganderbal district.

The first batch of pilgrims, including a group of Sadhus, is leaving for the Yatra from Jammu on June 30.

"I am performing the Yatra for the first time and waiting eagerly to reach Kashmir, the name of which fills our chest with pride as Kashmir to Kanyakumari is India," a 58-year-old sadhu from Andhra Pradesh, Vasudevanand Sarawari, said.

The sadhu reached the Ram Temple after conducting 'Char Dham', a pilgrimage of four holy places – Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath – by foot.

"I am thankful to my Lord for giving me an opportunity to seek his blessings by joining the Amarnath pilgrimage this year. One should perform the Yatra at least once in the lifetime," he said amid chants of "Bham Bham Bhole" and "Har Har Mahadev" from his fellow sadhus, staying in small groups inside a large hall at the temple complex, in praise of Lord Shiva.

Authorities have beefed up security across Jammu and Kashmir in view of the Yatra from Lakhampur – the gateway to Jammu and Kashmir bordering Punjab – to the cave shrine including various base camps enroute for a peaceful pilgrimage.

"I am satisfied with all the arrangements. I paid my obeisance at Mata Vaishno Devi shrine after reaching here some days back. Jammu and Kashmir is an abode of holy places and we, in Andhra Pradesh, have high esteem for the region," he said.

Purnima, a resident of Assam, said she has been

religiously visiting the cave shrine every year for over the past 13 years, barring one year break due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"When I was seven-year-old, I was not able to speak or walk and my mother took a pledge to undertake Amarnath Yatra till I am cured. She used to take me to the shrine on her back and after 10 years of pilgrimage, I regained the strength to walk and speak as well," she said, expressing her excitement to embark on the Yatra once again.

Kanchan Chohan, a Sadhvi from Indore, said she had renounced the worldly life and is looking for peace. "This is my first yatra and I will come again and again till my last breath." Radey Sham Maharaj, the priest at the temple said, so far 207 Sadhus and Sadhis have reached the Ram Temple for the Yatra.

"Like yesteryears, all arrangements for the devotees for their lodging and boarding at the temple have the capacity to accommodate over 2,000 Sadhus," he said.

"Besides food and shelter, medical facilities and proper sanitation will be ensured in active coordination with the district administration so that there is no inconvenience to the sadhus," the priest said.

He said coolers and air conditioners are available in good numbers to help the sadhus to beat the heat.

"The registration counter will be opened (by the authorities) on June 30 to facilitate the sadhus," he said.

Many of the sadhus have already conducted the Yatra many times and said they will pray for everlasting peace while paying obeisance at the shrine. (Agencies)

ACS Home.....

including issuance and renewal of arms licenses, utilizing the online NDAL-ALIS platform.

He impressed upon them to take immediate steps for timely processing of applications received for grant of Individual Arms Licenses strictly in terms of the instructions issued vide Government Order No. 30-Home of 2023 dated 18.01.2023.

In order to have speedy verification of antecedents from the CID, he asked them to employ dedicated electronic channels by the licensing authorities.

In the meeting, it was reiterated to strictly adhere to the provisions contained in the Arms Act and the Arms Rules, so that the bonafide applicants, eligible for grant and renewal of these licenses are facilitated as envisaged in the online services being provided through NDAL-ALIS portal of Government of India.

The meeting was attended by Special DG, CID, Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir and all the District Magistrates of the UT.

BJP Ready.....

Omar Abdullah accused us a couple of days ago of running away from elections. I request the EC with folded hands to announce the dates for elections in Jammu and Kashmir."

Raina said the party was confident of forming the government in Jammu and Kashmir as Prime Minister Narendra Modi had worked for peace in the Union territory and welfare of its people.

"BJP is completely ready for the assembly elections in JK. We are confident that the people of Kashmir will wholeheartedly vote for BJP this time. The work done by Modiji for the poor and the underprivileged will make the people of Kashmir vote for BJP.

"BJP is ready for all elections – be it Lok Sabha, assembly, or local bodies. No one needs to be scared, the people have to decide and the verdict will come in the political battlefield. I am confident that BJP will form the next government in JK," he added.

Launching the party's "Har Ghar Chalo" campaign, Raina said the aim of the Modi government was to work for the welfare of the poor.

"We want the poor to be happy, we want to serve the poor. Everyone should feel this government belongs to him, everyone should feel that they are getting justice," he said.

Making a pitch for the next year's Lok Sabha polls, Raina said, "We want BJP to win Lok Sabha elections from Kashmir."

He appealed to the people of Kashmir to give one chance to BJP. "We will work for development and welfare of the people. We will work for communal harmony and brotherhood," he added.

Talking to reporters after the rally, Raina said Modi has brought peace to Jammu and Kashmir which has made the BJP popular in the Union territory.

"Modi sahib has worked for the welfare of people of Jammu and Kashmir, brought peace to Jammu and Kashmir. It is the reason that BJP is moving ahead in JK," he said.

He said National Conference leader Omar Abdullah should know that elections are announced and conducted by the Election Commission and not by the prime minister or a political party. (Agencies)

CS visits.....

accompanied by Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Commissioner SMC & CEO Srinagar Smart City; VC Lakes Conservation and Management Authority; VC, SDA and other concerned officers from line departments.

During the tour, the Chief Secretary visited Moominabad Batamalo, Tatoo Ground, Jhelum Riverfront Development Project, Traditional Souq Market and Craft Center, GhantaGhar, Srinagar Plaza, Nishat Garden precinct, Northern Foreshore Road, and Shalimar Canal.

Dr. Mehta observed that the developed Jhelum Riverfront together with Srinagar Plaza near GhantaGhar are going to become major attractions in the city. He directed the concerned officers to

further accelerate the pace of work and ensure completion of all these projects at the earliest.

Reviewing the progress of Dal Lake cleaning at Nishat, the Chief Secretary expressed satisfaction over the cleanliness of the water body. He said that the water body looks much better than earlier, but also emphasized on greater efforts for even better outcome. He directed the VC, LC&MA to expedite the Houseboat sewerage connections and shift their focus towards the cleanliness of interiors of the lake also. He also directed them to start water sports activities in the Dal for adding charm to the lake and creating livelihoods.

Dr Mehta observed that the city is fast changing for better with the brisk pace of completion of smart city projects. He added that these ongoing works would further give a massive facelift to the city thereby enhancing its appeal for all the residents and tourists.

On visit to Dal Lake, Dr Mehta inspected the work of lake front development along Northern Foreshore Road of the Lake from Nishat to NaseemBagh including pedestrian walkway. The development also has components of cycle track construction & viewing decks.

The Chief Secretary highlighted the need for connecting all the houseboats with the STPs. He directed for utilizing the 36 MLD capacity of Sewage Treatment optimally and connect all the 900 houseboats in the lake with the Sewage lines forthwith.

The Chief Secretary also examined the works for upgradation and redevelopment of NishatBagh precinct including allied road works, pathways, plaza, wooden deck and landscaping of its surroundings including that of the development of Shalimar canal.

The Chief Secretary was informed that the development of the footpath including its finishing, cycle tracks, green spaces, landscaping and undergrounding of electrical cables etc is the part of the project at Foreshore Road. The project is to be completed at a cost of Rs 32.50 Cr.

The Chief Secretary was assured by the executing agencies that they are committed to complete all these projects at the earliest. They apprised him that they would enhance the pace of work on each site. They further said that they shall work day in and day out for meeting all the deadlines set by him during the visit.

On the occasion he was apprised that out of 137 SSCL works, 66 stands completed and the work is going on more 77 projects. These projects will not only upgrade infrastructure but would also improve quality of life of the citizens.

Shrine Board....

booking for helicopters has started for the service to be available from Srinagar, Baltal and Pahalgam routes.

Sources however, said that the fare for this year's yatra has also not been hiked.

As of now, more than 2.5 lakh have registered online for the yatra, sources said adding that around five lakh devotees are expected to visit this year to the cave Shrine.

Sources further added that the booking for helicopter tickets will be done through the official website of the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB).

The Global Vectra Helicorp Limited and Arrow Aircraft Private Limited are the service operators for the Baltal route while Heritage Aviation Pvt Ltd will be operator for Pahalgam route.

The services of M S Pawan Hans Limited operators will operate from Srinagar to the holy cave, official sources added.

Preparations to welcome the pilgrims are in full swing and instructions have also been passed to complete all the arrangements by the respective district administrations from the gateway Lakhampur to Kashmir between by June 20.

India surprised.....

Wheels" at block Mandli in Billawar belt of Kathua district, Dr Singh informed that this is the third phase of first-ever mobile telemedicine service being provided in Jammu and Kashmir purely from non-government sources.

"The first phase covered more than 60 villages in remote Gandoh in district Doda and the second phase covered far-flung villages situated along the International Border in district Kathua previously deprived of adequate medical services," he stated.

The Minister said, "the free telemedicine mobile camp today at Mandli in Billawar is being run with the support of voluntary groups."

Dr Singh said, this free telemedicine facility at Billawar today will overcome the problems of 'Accessibility, Availability and Affordability'.

He said, all the three obstacles like quality of services, doctors and assistance, distance of travelling and cost of consultation/treatment are targeted and solved efficiently through this facility. Ordinarily, a metro hospital will cost a patient more than fifty thousand and may take two to three weeks time.

"This type of free telemedicine mobile camp will solve all the problems especially for those having weak socio-economic background," Dr Singh added.

Emphasising that India today is technologically at par with the most developed countries of the world, Dr. Singh asserted that such telemedicine services as provided today are at par with the ones provided anywhere in the world and the advanced robotic surgeries would also be done in future using telemedicine services.

The mantra of PM Narendra Modi 'Seva, Samparan and Start-up' is being followed in these free telemedicine mobile services with extraordinary medical facilities for people with low socio-economic background as this government is dedicated to the poor, said Dr. Singh.

9 Years of.....

Jammu and Kashmir has altogether changed," Mr Rana said while addressing public meetings in Meerut and Bulandshahr Lok Sabha Parliamentary constituencies along with Choudhary Bhupendra Singh, BJP State President UP, Member Parliament Rajinder Aggarwal, Dr Bhola Singh, UP Ministers, Dr. Arun Saxena, Surinder Tomar, MLAs and other senior party leaders, as part of the month-long Maha Jansamparak Abhiyan by the BJP to highlight the Modi Government's commitment to supporting the common citizens through various initiatives.

Responding to curious queries of the audience about the encouraging turnaround in the Valley situation, leading to unprecedented tourist footfall in Jammu and Kashmir during the past three years, Mr Rana said this is because the people have realized the futility of alien gun culture and developed stakes in peace for development, progress, and prosperity. Obviously, this has unnerved the fringe vested interests who thrived on instability and unrest for furthering their political agenda for decades. But, seeing the peoples' preference for peace over stone-pelting and shutdown syndrome, they too have now fallen in line and started seeking their political rehabilitation. He took jibe at, what he called, political chameleons, who cried hoarse over the developments of August 5, 2019 and had publicly sworn not to participate in any democratic exercise are now talking about democracy being in danger. Where had their love lost for democracy when they boycotted elections to the basic democratic institutions like Panchayats, semi urban and urban local bodies nearly three years ago, he asked and said that they wanted to create obstacles in empowering the people at the grassroots level. They have treated J&K as their fiefdom and power as their birthright, he observed.

"People of Jammu and Kashmir have not only reposed their faith in peace, after having realised its dividends, but also vetoed the entitlement of dynasts to corridors of power as a matter of their elite right," Mr Rana said, adding that the BJP will continue to work towards fulfilling the mass yearning for stability and normalcy in this part of the country – a jewel in the crown of India. He said the Prime Minister's mission of Naya Jammu and Kashmir is to be carried forward by consolidating the gains of peace to bring about economic emancipation to the people. The influx of over 1.8 crore pilgrim, nature and adventure tourists last year has brought cheer in the lives of lakhs of stakeholders engaged in tourism trade. The anticipated two crore arrivals this year has put the administration and the stakeholders in pro-active mode to make the stay of visitors comfortable and memorable. He said the tourism being the major mainstay of Jammu and Kashmir is hugely dependent on peace and this realisation among the people has made all the difference.

Mr Devender Rana also spoke about the domestic and foreign investments pouring in for the infrastructural development and exuded confidence that Jammu and Kashmir will witness a new era of growth and job generation in years to come. The miseries of nearly three decades of turbulence have been overtaken by a promise of bright future in the land of saints and sages where equal opportunities of progress and development are available to all segments of society, irrespective of religion or region, caste or ethnicity as per the Prime Minister's cherished agenda of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Paryas.

98.10 pc.....

while expressing his deep gratitude to the J&K Administration for this historic initiative. For someone whose only means to earn a living is toiling hard in the fields of Kashmir, even a small injury would mean empty bellies back home.

Similarly, Abdul Razzaq Dar had five family members solely dependent on him for all their needs. For the last eight years, he had been going through tough time in performing his daily work due to his knee pain.

With a meagre annual income of Rs 50000, Dar could have hardly thought of a proper treatment and his condition was deteriorating with each passing day.

And this was the time when 'Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana SEHAT' scheme came as a blessing for distressed Dar. Dar availed benefit of a government scheme for the first time in his whole life and was completely appreciable of government for this great help.

Finally, after eight long years of hurt and wait, Dar got his knee replaced in a private hospital under ABPMJAY-SEHAT scheme which was not less than some miracle for him.

Prime Minister, Narendara Modi, in his commitment towards developing India as a healthy nation, launched this ambitious Ayushman Bharat PMJAY scheme on 26th December, 2020.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the scheme was implemented through insurance mode with private Bajaj Allianz GIC as the implementing agency. This is for the first time that a public funded Health Insurance Scheme meant for the entire population is being implemented in the UT.

The scheme primarily focuses on financial protection from catastrophic health expenditures, which is the pillar of Universal Health Coverage. It is delivered through both public and private healthcare providers for second-

ary and tertiary care health services. It provides a cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year. All Medical and surgical conditions are included with minimal exclusions. It covers both Pre and Post hospitalization expenses and all pre-existing conditions are covered from day one.

This cashless treatment facility being provided by central government under ABPMJAY-SEHAT scheme after the abrogation of Article 370 for poor and needy families has substantially reduced their out-of-pocket expenditure as well as financial bankruptcy due to severe and prolonged illness, and expensive treatment.

With substantial health insurance coverage to populace of the Union Territory, J&K has bagged best performing Union Territory category for enrolment under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).

Under this scheme, more than 81.22 lakh persons (78.74%) have been registered making them eligible for free and quality treatment in empanelled hospitals of the country.

Nearly, 81.20 lakh persons have been issued golden cards. State Health Agency has also launched a citizen friendly facility for citizens to avail golden cards. The citizens can visit the website setu.pmjay.gov.in and register themselves and their families with details of ration cards issued by the Food and Supply Department and download their golden cards.

Earlier, SHA rolled out an ambitious door-to-door exercise to achieve 100 percent saturation under the Ayushman Bharat PMJAY SEHAT scheme.

AB-PMJAY SEHAT scheme has been like a ray of hope for poor families who couldn't afford health treatment at premier medical institutes of the country.

First Agniveer.....

taking, parade review by the Commandant, piping of Agniveers and concluded with the Regimental Song and the National Anthem with the Agniveers dedicating themselves with resolve to serve the Nation.

They commenced their rigorous training on January 1, 2023.

Their training of 24 weeks has enhanced their physical fitness and endurance, sharpened their senses, made them mentally robust and taught them the skills of a soldier necessary to achieve victory in battle.

The training also focused on building their character, imbibing regimental traditions, military history and ethos, camaraderie and above all an unrelenting spirit.

The Agniveers will undergo another seven weeks of intense training before they join their units located across the country, the spokesman said.

"In addition to military training, the Agniveers received instructions on varied subjects which empower them to be responsible, wholesome and contributing citizens of our great Nation," the spokesman said.

'They embody teamwork, leadership, and dynamism. Their discipline, vibrance, dedication and determination to persevere against all odds is the spirit of a confident generation which will carry the nation in the 21st century,' he added.

"They have chosen a path, a way of life which is demanding, yet extraordinary and glorious and today they realised their dreams against all odds thus, setting an example for the youth of our nation in general & Kashmir in particular and will save as role models for the future 'Agniveers,'" the spokesman said.

Mainly Dry.....

night and it was 0.9°C above normal for the famous tourist resort in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

In Kupwara town, he said, the mercury settled at 12.2°C against 11.4°C on the previous night and it was 1.0°C below normal for the north Kashmir area.

Kokernag recorded a low of 13.1°C against 13.4°C on the previous night and it was normal for the place, the officials said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of 8.8°C against 7.6°C on previous night and it was below normal by 0.5°C for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, he said.

Jammu recorded a low of 25.9°C against 24.5°C on the previous night and it was 0.4°C above normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal recorded a low of 14.3°C (0.1°C above normal), Batote 16.2°C (0.2°C above normal), Katra 22.0°C (0.1°C above normal) and Baderwah 14.0°C (above normal by 0.3°C). Ladakh's Leh and Kargil recorded a low of 7.9°C and 11.7°C respectively, he said.

The Met department has forecast isolated light rains in Jammu and Kashmir during next 24 hours and mainly dry weather thereafter for June 23.

Drug peddler.....

News Observer (KNO). Accordingly, police said that a case under FIR number 49/2023 under relevant sections of law has been registered in PS Kralgund and investigation has been initiated.

"Community members are requested to come forward with any information regarding drug peddling in their neighbourhood. Persons found indulging in drug peddling will be dealt as per law. Our consistent actions against drug peddlers should reassure the community members that we are making efforts to keep our society free from the scourge of drug menace," police said.

DC Srinagar reviews measures towards TB Free Srinagar

Over 17000 Presumptive Tests for TB detection conducted till May this year

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: In order to review the current status of TB Elimination Programme being implemented in Srinagar, a meeting of District TB Control Society was held under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Srinagar (DC) Mohammad Aijaz Asad here at Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex to accelerate the progress towards TB elimination from District.

During the meeting, the DC also took appraisal about implementation of Ni-Kshay Mitra initiative launched under Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan to provide additional patient support to improve treatment outcomes of TB patients.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner, who is also the Chairman District TB Control Society was given a detailed appraisal about Public and Private Sector engagement under

National TB Elimination Programme in the District through a PowerPoint Presentation. The DC took a detailed overview of the Programme activities including TB Notification achievement against the set targets for 2023 (Jan-May), TB Cases Notified by DTC Srinagar, Presumptive TB Testing done, Number of Presumptive TB Examined/Enrolled for Diagnosis at PHIs & MC. The DC was also briefed about Screening conducted for Comorbidities and TB Elimination Strategy.

On the occasion, the DC stressed the Officers to further improve the efforts and work in close coordination to achieve the goal of TB free Srinagar. He also emphasized on setting quantifiable and measurable presumptive testing targets.

The DC further asked for operating additional centres for TB notifications at suitable Health Institutions of the District.



While reviewing the implementation of Nikshay Mitra initiative, the DC said this is a part of the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan launched with the view to combat chal-

lenges of tuberculosis through multi-sectoral response. He said the Nikshay Mitra initiative has been envisioned to bring together all community stakeholders to support those on TB

treatment and accelerate the progress towards TB elimination.

The DC said though the efforts of the Administration are yielding significant results, the

Nikshay Mitras play a pivotal role in filling gaps and addressing social causes by adopting/handholding the TB patients in Srinagar District.

While discussing the operational plan for effective implementation of Ni-Kshay Mitra initiative, the DC was informed that in Srinagar District, as many as 184 registered Ni-Kshay Mitras are providing Nutritional support to the TB patients.

He was also informed that out of 214 total patients seeking TB care activities in different Medical Zones as many as 64 patients have consented for Community Support.

The DC was further apprised that all CD Panchayats in Srinagar District have become TB Free.

On the occasion, the DC asked the concerned Officers to work in mission mode for such noble cause and ensure registration

of more Ni-Kshay Mitras in Srinagar District at the earliest.

During the meeting, it was given out that as many as 17448 Presumptive Examination for TB detection were conducted from January to May this year by District TB Society Srinagar. A total of 38223 such tests were also conducted during the year 2022. It was also given out that Srinagar is well on the path to become TB Free District shortly.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Yaseen Lone, District Statistics & Evaluation Officer, Anika Mushtaq, HOD Community Medicine, GMC, Srinagar, Dr Saleem, District TB Officer, Dr Tehjeena, District Health Officer, Dr Asifa, Assistant Drug Controller, all Zonal Medical Officers, Medical Officer, DTC, Medical Officer, NTEP, JLN, BMO, Hazratbal and WHO Consultant, Praveen Kumar Yadav.

Rajnath Singh to Hold Talks with Vietnam's Counterpart in New Delhi

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will be holding talks with his Vietnam's counterpart in New Delhi on June 19 regarding the strengthening of bilateral cooperation.

As per an official communique, Minister of National Defence of Vietnam General Phan Van Giang will be on a visit to India between June 18-19, 2023. The visiting dignitary will hold a bilateral meeting with Rajnath Singh in New



Delhi on June 19 to carry forward the India-Vietnam defence cooperation.

"Both sides will also exchange views on regional and global issues of mutual interest. The Minister of National Defence of Vietnam will also undertake a cultural visit to Agra, during his stay in India," reads the communique.

India and Vietnam share a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Bilateral defence relations form a significant pillar to this partnership. Defence engagements between the two nations have diversified to include wide-ranging contacts between the services, military-to-military exchanges, high-level visits, capacity building and training programmes, cooperation in UN Peacekeeping, ship visits and bilateral exercises, it added.

It is pertinent to mention that during the visit of the Rajnath Singh to Vietnam in June 2022, major overarching guiding documents namely 'Joint Vision Statement on India-Vietnam Defence Partnership towards 2030' and a Memorandum of Understanding on 'Mutual Logistics Support' were signed that have significantly enhanced the scope and scale of defence cooperation between both the countries.

Everyone Can Make Promises But Modi Govt's 'Strong Point' Is Delivery, Says Jaishankar

NEW DELHI, JUN 17: Everyone can make promises to people but the Modi government's "strong point" is that it delivers services and projects in a given timeframe, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday.

He was speaking during a function held at Badarpur here as part of the BJP's mega outreach campaign — 'Samparkse Samarthan' — to mark the completion of the nine years of the Narendra Modi government.

"After elections, they forget (their promises made to people), but in Modi 'sarkar', people today are seeing the delivery (of services and projects)," the Union minister told reporters after attending the function at the site of an Eco Park being developed at NTPC's Thermal Power Plant

area in Badarpur.

The Eco Park project is currently underway, and South Delhi MP and BJP leader Ramesh Bidhuri said the park is planned to be inaugurated in December.

Jaishankar praised the NTPC for the project and the party MP and other local leadership for working on such a green project.

"This Eco Park will become a new lung of Delhi. I congratulate all who are part of this project, and it will not only help in mitigating pollution, but enhance ease of living of people and ease of doing business too by promoting economic activities around it. Modi 'sarkar' doesn't just offer promises. It completes what work it starts in a given timeframe, and delivers it, shows it to people," he said. Later interacting with media,



the Union minister said, the "strong point" of the Modi government is "delivery", as everyone can make promises.

"For Modi government, 'vikas'

is the first commitment, so it's a 'teerth' (pilgrimage) of commitments," Jaishankar said.

The BJP has organised a "Vikas Teerth Yatra", which began from

Eco Park at Badarpur, and Jaishankar and several senior BJP leaders were part of it.

People in Badarpur will also see "which government delivers and which government only promises," the minister said, without naming anyone.

As an External Affairs Minister, "I can tell you that I visit countries across the world, see many cities and capitals," he told reporters.

He said he wanted the best practices in the world to come to India.

It is also Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision "as whenever he sees abroad a process, say of cleaning a river or building a station or adoption of a new technology, he wishes to bring those best practices to India too," Jaishankar said. (Agencies)

Srinagar's popular mandi of sacrificial animals gives miss to hussle, busstle

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: For the first time in the recent past, there is no hustle and bustle at the Eidgah ground here where a huge rush of people was usually being witnessed ahead of the Eid-ul-Adha, to buy the sacrificial animals.

Unlike the past, one of the prominent places to purchase animals on Eid—Eidgah is giving a deserted look.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), nearly ten days ahead of the Eid-ul-Adha, the Bakewells and the mutton dealers have not made their presence so far at Eidgah ground to sell the

sacrificial animals.

Ashiq Ahmad, one of the locals, said that the sacrificial animals are not being sold the way it was. "The major markets for the sacrificial animals are no longer abuzz with trade. I am planning to buy sacrificial animals for Eid, but the markets in this regard have not been set up so far," he said.

General Secretary of Mutton Dealers Association, Mehrajud Din, when contacted that the adequate livestock is available at present, but the fact is that the mandis and markets in this regard are being set up in the last 6-7

days here.

"Almost 80 per cent of the people prefer to buy sacrificial animals in the last week and thus the markets in this regard are being set up in the last week," he said.

He further added that the markets and Mandis in this regard are being chosen by the government itself while the place has not been selected so far. "We are expecting that the place in this regard would be selected in the coming days following which the markets will once again witness the rush of shoppers," General Secretary of Mutton Dealers Association, said.

Tengpora sterilisation centre to be made functional to curb rising dog menace

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: Authorities are making a sterilisation centre in the Tengpora area here functional to curb the rising dog menace.

Dr Tawheed Ahmad, SMC Veterinary Officer, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the centre in Tengpora is going to help in the augmentation of the sterilisation process.

"As of now, we have one sterilisation centre functional in Shuhama (in Ganderbal) where just around 5 to 10 dogs can be sterilized per day, but the centre at Tengpora is big where around 50 dogs can be sterilized per day," he said.

He said the animal birth control programme is going on here for years but the capacity for sterilization at Shuhama was very low. "The surgeries have been recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and later it was adopted by India," he said.

Dr Tawheed said that sterilisation process is put on a halt during winter as dogs can die due to hypothermia and such things are followed in other parts as well.

The capacity of the Tengpora sterilization centre is 210 dogs per week which will help in curbing the rising canine population.

People from various areas of

Srinagar are up in arms against the government for failing" to take concrete steps to curb the dog menace.

The doctors said surgeries of a few dogs per day won't make any impact on the ground and there is a need for carrying out the sterilisation process at a large scale. They said sterilizing and vaccinating the dogs would effectively control their population, prevent rabies and reduce canine attacks.

An official from the anti-rabies clinic SMHS told KNO that from April 01, 2022 to March 31, 2023, as many as 6,875 bite cases were reported, with most of them from Srinagar.

Giving details, the official said among animal bites in the last year 4,912 animal bite cases were reported from Srinagar at ARC SMHS, 317 from Budgam, 201 from Baramulla, 134 from Kupwara, 168 from Bandipora, 301 from Ganderbal, 221 from Pulwama, 138 from Shopian, 147 from Kulgam, 85 from Anantnag and 231 from other areas.

Providing yearly data on bite cases, he said, "From April 01, 2015, to March 2016, a total of 7,061 bite cases were reported to ARC SMHS, followed by 5,832 cases from April 2016 to March 2017, 6,802 cases from April 2017 to March 2018, 6,397 cases from April 2018 to March 2019, 6139

cases from April 2019 to March 2020, 4,808 from April 2020 to March 2021, 5,469 from April 2021 to March 2022 and 6,785 from April 2022 to March 2023.

He added 49,383 cases have been registered in anti-rabies clinics from April 2015 to March 2023. Rabies is an invariably fatal viral disease resulting in approximately 59,000 human deaths per year globally, with 95 percent of cases occurring in Africa and Asia.

The only way to prevent a rabies death is vaccination of an animal bite victim. In Kashmir, the burden and characteristics of dog bites are not routinely captured by the health system in place

An engineer following her passion of calligraphy

Saiqa Rashid says one shouldn't sacrifice passion for anything

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: An engineer from Srinagar has been following her passion for calligraphy as it gives her "peace of mind".

Saiqa Rashid, working as Assistant Engineer in the Power Development Department (PDD), while talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said she has been following her passion apart from attending to duties and managing the family.

"Calligraphy has been my hobby and passion since childhood. After I got settled, I started giving more time to my hobby," she said, adding, "My kids are also enjoying it."

Saiqa said it is very important to give your thoughts the right direction rather than sitting idle at home which gives way to negative thinking. She said people must learn how to grow up in any field and live a positive life. "If you are sitting idle, you will spend more time on mobile and may get involved in wrong activities or activities with zero output," she said.

Whatever I have to write in calligraphy, I research a bit about it and that helps me in learning more things, she said. "I have participated in several calligraphy exhibitions and have sold dozens of pieces. I am very much satisfied with my work as it gives me peace of mind."

In her message to the youth, Saiqa said, "Don't waste your time in futile exercises. Professions are not limited to engineers and doctors; there are hundreds of options for youth to make their name. And, being a government employee doesn't mean you don't have your dreams. Calligraphy is my hobby and passion. One shouldn't sacrifice passion for anything."

Kerala Library Advisory Committee members visit SPS Library

Director Libraries briefs delegations about Public Library scenario in JK

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JUNE 17: Kerala Library Advisory Committee members visited SPS Library complex here today.

The visiting delegation comprised Legislators, K Ansalan and KJ Maxi; Secretary Kerala, Niyamasabha, A M Basheer; Librarian, M R Indu, Assistant Librarian, Shameena S and other officials of the Kerala Legislative Assembly.

The members of the delegation visited Oriental Research Library and various sections of SPS Library. They also interacted with the library users present in the complex. The visiting delegation appreciated the huge and diverse collection of Manuscripts and Rare Books maintained by Oriental Research Library.

The Director, Libraries & Research, J&K, Mohammad Rafi gave a brief overview



of the Public Library scenario in J&K and the new initiatives being taken by the Department to reinvent Public Libraries as multifaceted hubs for youth development and empowerment. The Director Libraries said that J&K has the distinction of having oldest libraries in the region including SRS Library Jammu established in 1879 and

SPS Library Srinagar established in 1898. He said these two central libraries have a collection of around 1 lakh titles including rare books and manuscripts. He said as a part of this initiative free reference books and study material has been made available in Public Libraries across J&K for various Competitive Examinations including Civil Services,

NEET, JEE, CAT, CLAT, GMAT, SSB etc. He said given the overwhelming demand by the students, the Libraries Department has, on the recommendation of UT-Level Library Advisory-cum-Purchase Committee (UTLLAPC), made available around 350 titles of free reference books/study material in its libraries to help students.

Div Com reviews Shivkhori Shrawan Mahotsav arrangements

Religious rituals & Bhajan Sandhya will be organised during Shawan month

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JUNE 17: Divisional Commissioner and Chairman of the Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board (SSKSB), Ramesh Kumar today presided over a meeting to discuss the arrangements for the forthcoming Shivkhori Shrawan Mahotsav at the Shiv Khori Shrine in Reasi.

Attending the meeting were key officials, including Director Tourism Jammu, Vivekananda Rai; Deputy Commissioner Reasi, Babila Rakwal and the members of the SSKSB.

The meeting discussed the activity plan featuring a series of events to be held from 10th July to 28th August 2023, every Monday, to celebrate the month of Shrawan as a time for Shiva worship and Pooja at Shiv Khori Shrine Ransoo.

To create a memorable experience for pilgrims and visitors, a variety of events have been scheduled for each Monday of the Shrawan month. These activities encompass bhajan concerts, stage performances, katha and sermons, bhajan competitions, screen-



ings of movies and documentaries, art competitions and exhibitions, as well as religious ceremonies.

During the meeting, discussions revolved around the tentative budget, program details, contingency plans, the reception of devotees and the provision of amenities for the visitors. Additionally, emphasis was placed on promoting tourism in the region while respecting religious beliefs.

The presence of non-official members, including Prof Chander Mouli Raina, retired scholar and astrologer from Sanskrit University Kote, Jammu;

Dr Shiv Prasad Raina, scholar and astrologer from Jammu and Prof Lalit Magotra, retired professor from the University of Jammu and President of Dogri Sanstha Jammu, proved valuable in providing insights to ensure the success of the program and projection of the holy shrine as a major pilgrim tourist destination.

The Shivkhori Shrawan Mahotsav is anticipated to be an exceptional event that will inspire devotion and foster a deeper connection with Lord Shiva among the participants and attendees.

Horticulture Deptt Budgam holds awareness camp in Zone Kremshore

■ HT News Network

BUDGAM, JUNE 17: Chief Horticulture Officer (CHO) Budgam, Dr. M Iqbal Baba along with his team today visited Kalshipora in Horticulture Zone Kremshore where he presided over an awareness cum grievance redressal camp organized by the Department of Horticulture.

The camp aimed to create awareness about different schemes and management of diseases/pests, especially "Apple Leaf Blotch Miner" in Apple Orchards, in case the pest spreads in the area.

The CHO stressed upon participating farmers to follow the Advisories issued by the Department of Horticulture in letter and spirit so that the infestation of the pests is managed in orchards. He also advised the field functionaries of the Department to remain alert and keep monitoring about the emergence of "Apple Leaf Blotch Miner".

The farmers were also made aware of the Schemes of the Department besides were provided on spot awareness regarding online submission of Application Forms to avail different Schemes of the Department.

Later, he listened the grievances of the farmers who were present and were resolved on the spot. He assured all farmers that the Department will leave no stone unturned to solve their issues

Two -day Career Development and Skill Enhancement Program held at IUST

■ HT News Network

Awantipora, June 17. CIED-IUST Foundation in association with Indokash Professional Private Ltd. organized a Two -day Career Development and Skill Enhancement Program for the youth. During the program, a panel of experts deliberated on different issues concerning skilling, upskilling, reskilling and entrepreneurship in the face of requirements of IR 4.0. Welcome the participants, Director CIED IUST, Dr Pervez Ahmad Mir, said that considering the changing landscapes of Industry and technology, the emphasis has to be on constant learning and innovation. Talking about the role of CIED in developing innovation and entrepreneurship culture, he said exposing the University students to concepts and processes of incubation, ideation, entrepreneurship is the need of the hour. A Career Acceleration program was conducted by Ms Kirti CEO of Mojo Pundit -Institute of Career Coaching and Training, Global who also assured to have a dedicated facility at IUST Campus for personalized counselling, training, and placement assistance to students in their professional journeys. Dr. Tauseef Ahmed and Mr. Amjid Rizvi, Director -Indokash Professional Pvt. Ltd also delivered and emphasized on resilience, adaptability, and continuous learning in the face of a rapidly changing job market. They advised the participants to think innovatively and develop an entrepreneurial spirit of pursuing opportunities.

SP Hqrs Baramulla flags off road race organized by St. Joseph School Baramulla

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, June 17: In an effort to promote fitness & encourage community engagement, and on the theme of 'Say No To Drugs & Save Environment', SP Hqrs Baramulla Ms Divya D-IPS, along with enthusiastic students, participated in a thrilling road race organized by St. Joseph School Baramulla.

The road race, which aimed to foster a spirit of sportsmanship and unity among the students, was flagged off by SP Hqrs Baramulla along with Principal Fr. Anthony Peppin, wherein about 100 students of St. Joseph School Baramulla participated. The race commenced from GDC Boys Khawajabagh to St. Joseph School Baramulla.

Expressing his delight at the event, SP Hqrs Baramulla emphasized the significance of physical fitness in leading a healthy and balanced lifestyle. She emphasized the importance of sports and extracurricular activities in shaping the overall development of students, both academically and personally.

DC Kulgam attends Iconic Yoga session held at Kulgam

Says Yoga helps in physical, mental, psychological development

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, JUNE, 17: Department of Ayush Kulgam today organized an Iconic Yoga session in the premises of Mini-Secretariat Kulgam.

Besides, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam Dr. Bilal-Mohi-Ud-Din-Bhat, officers and officials of Mini-secretariat Kulgam participated in the Yoga Session.

During the Yoga session Yoga instructor from the Department of Ayush Kulgam demonstrated various Yoga Aasanas which were followed by the participants. Participants were also taught awarded and awarded about the health benefits of various Aasanas which they can take on a daily basis to stay.

Speaking on the occasion the Deputy Commissioner said that Yoga helps all



round development of a person, including physical, mental and psychological development.

Additional District Development Commissioner, Showkat Ahmad Rather, Additional Deputy Com-

missioner Viqar Ahmed Giri, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Mir Imtiyaz-ul-Aziz District Nodal officer Ayush Dr Abdul Rehman and other officers and officials participated in the event

DC Bandipora felicitates Class 12 toppers, holds detailed interactive session on Career Counseling & Guidance

Emphasized on importance of education as transformative Force



■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, JUNE 17: In a Felicitation cum Career counselling and Guidance programme organised at Mini Secretariat Bandipora, Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr. Owais Ahmed on Saturday felicitated meritorious students of recently declared Class 12 results from different areas of district.

It is worth to mention that Bandipora bagged 06 position on divisional level in Kashmir division including students from far off places of Gurez.

Speaking on the occasion DC, Dr. Owais said that the

event was organised to serve as a platform to celebrate the academic excellence of meritorious students and showcase the district's commitment to nurturing and recognizing talent.

Dr. Owais applauded dedication, perseverance, and tireless efforts of students that culminated in remarkable results.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of education as a transformative force and encouraged all students to aspire for greatness, reminding them that their hard work and determination can pave the way to a prosperous future.

He said the felicitation

ceremony is not only a celebration of individual achievements but also a testament to the collective efforts of teachers, mentors, and parents who played a pivotal role in shaping the academic journeys of these toppers.

The students who were felicitated include the students from Science, Arts and Commerce besides students from tribal communities.

From science stream Monisa Bashir of HSS Hajin bagged first position securing 98.6 percent, Ayman Showkat of GHSS Bandipora and Mohammad Toufeeq ul Islam of NM BHSS Bandipora Bagged 2nd and 3rd positions respectively.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Divisional Forest Officer J.V FOREST DIVISION BARAMULLA

e- NIT No. 08 of 2023-24 Dated 12-06-2023

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble President of India, e-tenders (Two cover system) are invited from registered, reputed and resourceful Contractors/Firms registered with Jammu & Kashmir Govt./Central Govt. Organizations for the following works:

S. No	Name of the work	Adv. cost Rs in Lakh	Bid security EMD INR	Cost of tender Documents	Class of Contractor	Time of Completion
1	Planting of Polybag raised saplings and Naked root saplings and providing and fixing of Barbed wire fencing with Angle Iron Posts in cement concrete Blocks in Compartment 59 Raja Nallah I, Uri Range, J.V Forest Division No. of Posts=839	19.09	38180	800	Other B,C Forest B	45 Days
2	Planting of Polybag raised saplings and Naked root saplings and providing and fixing of Barbed wire fencing with Angle Iron Posts in cement concrete Blocks in Compartment 59 Raja Nallah II, Uri Range, J.V Forest Division No. of Posts=855	21.416	42832	800	Other B,C Forest B	45 Days
3	Planting of Polybag raised saplings and Naked root saplings and providing and fixing of Barbed wire fencing with Angle Iron Posts in cement concrete Blocks and Construction of water Harvesting Structure in Compartment 60 Badgran, Uri Range, J.V Forest Division No. of Posts=998	22.29	4458v	800	Other B,C Forest B	45 Days

The position of codal formalities in respect of above work(s) as under:

Position of Funds	Budgeted
Position of AA	Accorde
Position of TS	Accorde
The e-NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, scope of work, Bills of Quantities, (B.O.Q), Terms & Conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the website:-www.jktenders.gov.in.	
Publishing Date:	13-06-2023
Download Start Date	13-06-2023 from 10:00 am
Bid submission Start Date:	13-06-2023. from 10:00 am
Bid submission End Date:	26-06-2023 from 4:00 pm
Date of Opening of Technical Bid through online:	27-06-2023 at 11:30 am in the office of the The office of Conservator of Forests Kashmir North Circle Sopore.
Date of Opening of Financial Bid through To be opened (Online)	after technical evaluation online: is completed. Date will be notified separately.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

1. The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website: <https://jktenders.gov.in>.

2. Bids uploaded must accompany Govt. Treasury Receipt (cost of tender document) in the shape of Treasury Challan for the amount shown against the work above to be deposited in Govt. Treasury under Account Head 0406- Forest and Bid Security in the shape of EMD for requisite amount and pledged to Divisional Forest Officer J.V Forest Division Baramulla

3. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of bids.

4. The bidders have to submit their Technical & Financial bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No Technical or financial bid will be accepted in physical/hard form. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.

5. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents i.e BSD Form, Valid Registration Card issued by PWD/CPWD/Forest Dept. duly renewed for the current year 2022-23, PAN, Valid GST Registration, Govt. Treasury receipt (Cost of Tender Document).

6. The successful bidder has to produce Valid Labour Registration Certificate issued by Labour Department after issuance of award of contract.

7. As per rule 171 of GFR-2017, Performance Security shall have to be deposited by successful bidder to the order of 3% of the value of contract and if there are compelling circumstances, performance security in excess of three percent may also be demanded.

8. The Department will not be responsible for any delay in online submission of the bid due to any reason (technical or otherwise).

9. The Department shall not be held responsible for selection criteria/policy matter being adopted by the Directorate of Information regarding publishing the NIT, in any of the newspaper under circulation.

10. The Tender Accepting Authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

11. All other terms and conditions shall remain same as per PWD form 25 (double leaf) and as per the details documents.

Dated:- 17-06-2023
No. DFO/J.V/Acctts/2023-24/e-Tendering/33-34
DIPK-3672/23

Sd/- Divisional Forest Officer,
J.V Forest Division,
Baramulla

SMVDSB secures hat-trick by winning first position in the 4th 'National Water Awards-2023'

■ HT News Network

Katra, June 17: In recognition of the significant strides made by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) to promote water conservation and proper management of water in the category of 'Best Institution for Campus Usage', bagged in a row the First Prize for the 3rd time in the 4th 'National Water Awards-2023', thereby securing a hat-trick.

The Vice President of India, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar conferred the 4th National Water Awards today at an award distribution ceremony being organised at Plenary Hall, Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi by the Depart-

ment of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD & GR) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti. A total of 41 winners including Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, covering 11 categories from various states across the country selected on the basis of their work.

National Water Awards (NWA) have been instituted to recognize and encourage exemplary work and efforts made by States, Districts, individuals, organizations, etc across the country in attaining the vision of a 'Jal Samridhdh Bharat'. Besides, it seeks to create awareness among people about the importance of water and motivate them to adopt best water use practices.

The prestigious award was received



on behalf of the Shrine Board by Sh. Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board who thanked the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti for recognising the work

done by the Shrine Board for water conservation and proper water management successively for the 3rd time, adding that this award will encourage and motivate Shrine Board for con-

tinuing in its endeavour to adopt and promote best water usage practices also in future. The Shrine Board besides making concerted efforts to provide the best possible facilities to the pilgrims under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, JK UT, inter alia, taking continuing initiatives and adopting best water management practices and techniques for water conservation. These include the construction of water harvesting ponds, afforestation drives in Trikuta Hills, installation of Water ATMs, recycling of sewage treatment plants, water for reuse in flushing of toilet blocks, installation of waterless urinals and rooftop rainwater harvesting etc. In addition, the Shrine Board has been planting more than 1.50

lakh seedlings every year in the forest area for retention of water and prevention of soil erosion. Banganga river rejuvenation also remained a focus area for Shrine Board wherein water management and environment management are taken together for implementation to restore the lost ecology of the polluted stretches of the river by construction of drainage with sewer network system with interceptor chambers to divert polluted water. Noteworthy, that the Shrine Board has been awarded consecutively for the past many years in recognition of its initiatives taken in varied spheres. This included the 'Best Swachh Iconic Place' award under the initiative of Swachh Bharat Mission of Government of India.

Worst condition of Mendhar Salwah Road.

■ M S Nazki



Poonch. The residents of Salwah and adjoining areas in Mendhar Sub Division have expressed resentment against the concerned authorities for dilapidated condition of Mendhar - Salwah road. Condition of the road is so bad that most of the operators have stopped plying their vehicles on it. The road is broken at many places and has potholes posing a risk of accident.

Social Activist Nazeem Khatana have said that the condition of the road is getting worse which may lead to any mishap. They informed the Concerned Authorities is not paying any heed to make the road fit for vehicles to ply-through it even though many accidents have taken place on this road. Khatana said that the concerned department has failed to undertake even the blacktopping of the road. "Despite visiting the concerned authorities repeatedly, no action is evident on the road," they claimed. "We are suffering immensely due to the bad condition of the road," Khatana said urging the J&K LG to look into the matter and get the road repaired through the concerned

GDC Ramgarh organises "Pledge Taking Ceremony on Yoga"

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, JUNE 17: The National Service Scheme (NSS) Unit-Prabha of Government Degree College Ramgarh celebrated 'International Yoga Day 2023' under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav by organizing week long activities on Yoga. The second activity in the series was "Pledge Taking Ceremony on Yoga" which was held today under the supervision and leadership of Prof. (Dr.) Geetanjali Andotra, Principal of the College. Prof. Seema Sharma, Head, Department of Education said that "we are thrilled to take the Yoga Day Pledge and promote the immense benefits of yoga within our community. Yoga is not only a physical exercise but also a powerful tool for mental and emotional well-being.

Div Com visits Yatri Niwas to inspect Shri Amarnath ji Yatra arrangements

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, JUNE 17: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar today visited Yatri Niwas - Bhagwati Nagar to take stock of arrangements being made at the Jammu base camp for the Annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2023.

The Divisional Commissioner chaired a high level meeting of the stakeholder departments and reviewed in detail the arrangements being put in place for the comfortable stay of the pilgrims and their safety.

The Divisional Commissioner was accompanied by DIG, Jammu Kathua Range, Shakti Pathak; Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Avny Lavasa; DIG CRPF, Ashok Samyal; Commissioner JMC, Rahul Yadav;



Director Tourism, Vivekanand Rai; SSP Jammu, SSP Traffic, SSP Security besides senior functionaries of Health, CRPF, Jal Shakti, PWD, JPDCL and other concerned departments.

The Div Com reviewed in detail provision of transportation, accommodation for Yatri, setting up of Langars, setting up of communication centres, medical facilities, deployment of

medical team at Yatri Niwas, sanitation, installation of temporary toilets and mobile toilet vans in Bhagwati Nagar area, uninterrupted supply of electricity, adequate water supply, traffic arrangements etc.

For foolproof security, the Div Com passed directions to the security agencies for deployment of a sufficient number of personnel and installation of

additional CCTV cameras. He also directed for augmentation of the amenities at the yatri niwas.

The Div Com instructed JMC to start beautification of the chowks and major rotaries. The Tourism department was asked to install hoardings and banners on prominent locations, right from Lakhampur to showcase the tourist destinations of Jammu region to attract the tourists to these places.

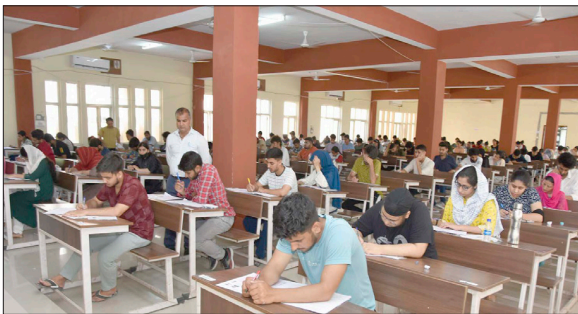
The PWD was asked to start blacktopping of Bhagwati Nagar to Yatri Niwas road and erecting barricades. The JPDCL was instructed to put in place provision for uninterrupted power supply during Yatra days and functioning of DG set well on time. He also stressed on installation.

42 % increase recorded in candidates appearing for SKUAST-J CET UG 2023

HT News Network

JAMMU, JUNE 17: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu (SKUAST-J), under the guidance and leadership of Prof. S.K. Gupta, Vice Chancellor today conducted Common Entrance Test-2023 (CET) for admission to the undergraduate degree programmes in different faculties for the academic session 2023-24.

The Vice Chancellor visited all the centers to oversee the conduct of the examination. The examination was conducted under the supervision of Prof



Rajinder Peshin, I/C University Examination Cell, SKUAST-Jammu. The entrance examination was held at 5 different centers located at GGM Science College, Jammu; SPMR, Commerce College, Jammu; Padma Shri Padma Sachdev Government College for Women, Gandhi Nagar;

Faculty of Veterinary Sciences and Animal Husbandry, R S Pura and Faculty of Agriculture, Chatha. An overwhelming response is received for admission to various professional undergraduate programmes in the university. Out of total 3291 applicants, 2775 including the candidates

from other states appeared in the CET-2023 which comes to 84.30 per cent of the total applicants for admission to B.Sc Hons Agriculture, B.V.Sc & AH, B.Tech Biotechnology, B.Sc Hons Horticulture, B.Tech Agricultural Engineering, B.Tech Dairy Technology for 337 seats including 19 seats for economically weaker sections of the society. Besides these, there is ICAR and Veterinary Council quota of 39 seats and state govt quota of 08 seats which is over and above the sanctioned strength of seats. This year the number of candidates was the highest as compared to last year.

DDC Member W B Khan inaugurates welcome gate

■ M S Nazki



MENDHAR BJP Leader & DDC Member Mendhar Wajid Bashir Khan inaugurated the welcome gate Near Sangla Chowk In Mendhar area of Poonch district amid a sizeable gathering of people's

Khan said that, though the inauguration of the gate may be a very small thing, it is of great significance to the development of the town.

"This will not only enhance the beauty of the town but also determine its existence," he said.

The Khan appealed to the people of Mendhar to support the departments and the administration in implementation of various developmental works in their areas.

SDM Mendhar M J Khan AEE PWD, SHO and BJP party leaders, Sarpanch and Panch Attending the programme.

DC, SSP Doda flag off "Rally of Valley" from Baderwah towards Sinthan Pass

■ HT News Network

BHADERWAH, JUNE 17: The picturesque region of Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing an exhilarating time-speed-distance (TSD) 4-wheeler rally known as the "Rally of Valley."

This high-octane event comprises participants from different regions of India. With its challenging route spanning approximately 1050 kilometers, the rally has traversed the treacherous roads of Chamba, Jammu, and reached Baderwah the previous day.

Today, the rally was flagged off by the Deputy Commissioner Doda, Vishesh Mahajan along with SSP Doda, Abdul Qayoom, from Govt Degree College Baderwah ground. The rally shall pass through Kishtwar, Sinthan Pass towards Kupwara district.

The rally kicked off on June 14, 2023 from Chamba and reached Doda on 16th June. The district administration of Doda headed by Vishesh Pal Mahajan, DC Doda and Abdul Qayoom, SSP Doda welcomed the participants and made all the necessary arrangements.

More than 30 teams from different parts of the country are participating in this rally.

As one of the largest events in the country, this rally is expected to generate immense interest and enthusiasm among the youth of Doda and JK. It promises an unforgettable experience, blending awe-inspiring landscapes with adrenaline-pumping moments.

The rally will proceed to Kishtwar - Sinthan - Srinagar and touch the LOC in Keran sector.

DC Doda Flags off group of PRIs & Watershed Committee members for 5-Day outreach programme under WDC PMKYSY 2.0

■ HT News Network

DODA, JUNE 17: Vishesh Mahajan, Deputy Commissioner Doda, today flagged-off a group of 25- PRIs and Watershed Committee members for a 5-day Capacity Building tour to National Institute of Rural Development in Hyderabad. The training program aims to enhance their skills and knowledge in integrated watershed management under the PMKYSY 2.0 initiative. The departing members are associated with the IWMP Project Panjsoo/Shiva, which falls under the purview of the WDC/PMKYSY 2.0. The tour programme is being managed by ACD Doda, Phulail Singh under the directions of Commissioner/Secretary RDD Mandeep Kaur.

The training program, organized by the state-level nodal agency Jammu and Kashmir, under the Rural Development Department and Panchayat Raj, will take place at the National Institute of Rural Development in Hyderabad.

Arrangements reviewed for Eid-ul-Azha in Kishtwar

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner, Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav today chaired a meeting of officers and members of Majlis-e-Shura to finalise the preparations for the upcoming festive occasion of Eid-ul-Azha.

The meeting was attended by SSP Kishtwar, Khalil Ahmed Poswal-JKPS; ADC Kishtwar, Inderjeet Singh Parihar; ACR Kishtwar, Varunjeet Singh Charak; ACP, Zakir Hussain Wani; Tehsil-dar Kishtwar, Muneeb Umar, along with representatives from Majlis-e-Shura Kishtwar besides other concerned officers of line departments. During the



meeting, several important decisions were made to ensure a seamless celebration of Eid-ul-Azha in the district. The Deputy Commissioner directed the officers of the Jal Shakti and JPDCL departments to guarantee uninterrupted water and electricity supply throughout the district during the Eid days. The Jal Shakti department was

specifically instructed to deploy water tankers as required to prevent any shortage of drinking water. The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kishtwar informed the meeting about the security arrangements to ensure the smooth conduct of the festival. Stringent security measures have been taken across the district to ensure the safety.

Vice Chancellor SKUAST Jammu chairs 4th SAC meeting of KVK Samba

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, JUNE 17: Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Samba organized 4th Scientific Advisory Committee meeting today at KVK, Head Quarter under the chairmanship of Prof. Surinder Kumar Gupta, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Jammu.

The meeting was attended by member DDC, Subash Bhagat, Chairman BDC, Radha Krishan and Dr. Sabhajeet Singh, Senior Scientist and IIM representative of Regional Institute.

The meeting was organized to deliberate upon the progress report of 2020-21, 2021-22 and finalize the action plan of 2023-24.

In the meeting, officers of the various line depart-



ments shared their valuable information. The meeting was attended by the district heads of line department including Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, Sericulture, Divisional Forest Officer, Information Officer, Social Welfare Officer, Fisheries, Small Scale Industry, Irrigation Officer, Lead Bank Manager, District Development Manager NABARD, Soil Conservation Officer, Farmers and Farm Women.

Prof. S.K. Gupta, Vice Chancellor, in his presidential address, suggested KVK to spread maximum awareness on integrated Farming System, Value addition of Fruits and Vegetables, promotion of Protected Cultivation and dairying to the farmers of the Samba district. He laid emphasis on increasing the farmer income manifold through various agro technological interventions. He appreciated the strong linkages.

EDITORIAL

The Imperative Shift :
Moving Towards a
Polythene-Free Kashmir

The Valley of Kashmir, known for its breath-taking landscapes and serene beauty, has been grappling with a growing environmental concern - the increasing use of polythene. In recent years, the rampant use of polythene bags and packaging materials has led to severe ecological damage, posing a threat to the region's fragile ecosystem. In response to this alarming situation, a polythene-free initiative has been launched, aiming to curb the usage and promote sustainable alternatives.

The surge in polythene usage in Kashmir has brought along a myriad of environmental consequences. Polythene bags are non-biodegradable and can persist in the environment for hundreds of years, contributing to pollution of water bodies, clogging drainage systems, and affecting soil fertility. The widespread use of polythene has led to a rise in littering, endangering wildlife, including avian and marine species.

Furthermore, the burning of polythene waste releases toxic chemicals into the air, exacerbating air pollution and posing health risks to humans and animals alike. These adverse effects not only tarnish the natural beauty of Kashmir but also disrupt the delicate balance of its ecosystems.

The Polythene-Free Initiative is a step towards sustainable alternatives.

Recognizing the urgent need for action, the polythene-free initiative in Kashmir aims to address the root cause of the problem by encouraging the use of sustainable alternatives. The initiative promotes the adoption of eco-friendly materials such as jute bags, cloth bags, and biodegradable packaging options. Public awareness campaigns, along with collaborations between government bodies, local businesses, and community organizations, are crucial components of the initiative. By educating the public about the harmful effects of polythene and the availability of sustainable alternatives, the initiative seeks to bring about a behavioral shift and reduce the demand for polythene products.

While the polythene-free initiative holds immense promise, it is not without challenges. Some individuals may resist change due to habit or convenience, and the availability of affordable alternatives may be limited initially. To overcome these hurdles, it is crucial to engage all stakeholders and provide incentives for businesses to transition to sustainable packaging. The government can play a pivotal role by implementing and enforcing stringent regulations on the production, sale, and use of polythene. Moreover, investing in research and development to improve the affordability and accessibility of eco-friendly materials will ensure the sustainability of the initiative in the long run.

As the polythene-free initiative gains momentum in Kashmir, it presents an opportunity for the region to reclaim its environmental integrity. By reducing the usage of polythene and promoting sustainable alternatives, we can protect the exquisite natural beauty of Kashmir for generations to come and create a greener, healthier future.



AUBAID AHMAD AKHOON



"In the realm of relationships, warmth is the foundation that fortifies love, bringing comfort and joy to hearts that intertwine."

In the tapestry of human existence, relationships weave the threads that form the fabric of our lives. While love is often extolled as the pinnacle of connection, there are deeper nuances that transcend religious beliefs and speak to the very essence of our humanity. The virtues of warmth, kindness, softness, consideration, and acknowledgement, when embraced, resonate with the divine teachings found in various religious traditions. These qualities, akin to the first knock of cool wind on your window after an eternal summer, have the power to uplift our spirits and create harmonious bonds that transcend time and space.

The Universal Call for Warmth: Across different faiths, the concept of warmth is upheld as a divine virtue. In Islam, the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) emphasized the importance of kindness and compassion, reminding believers to treat others with warmth and gentleness.

In the context of Christianity, Jesus demonstrated a remarkable level of compassion in his engagements, reaching out to those who were marginalized, offering solace to the tired and burdened, and extending a welcoming attitude to everyone. Hinduism speaks of warmth as a form of divine grace, encouraging devotees to offer a welcoming heart to every soul they encounter. Regardless of religious background, the call for warmth unites us in recognizing the intrinsic value of extending kindness and compassion to others.

The Treaty of Hodaybiyyah, a significant event in Islamic history, exemplifies the power of warmth and kindness even in challenging circumstances. When negotiating the treaty, the Prophet Muhammad displayed remarkable patience, understanding, and willingness to find a peaceful resolution, despite initial obstacles. This demonstration of warmth and diplomacy ultimately led to a harmonious agreement, highlighting the importance of extending kindness even in times of conflict.

"Kindness is a mark of faith, and whoever is not kind has no faith." (Sahih Muslim)

"Kindness, like a delicate flower, blooms even in the most arid landscapes, spreading beauty and hope."
Aubaid Ahmad Akhooon

Kindness: A Path to Divine Love: Kindness, too, finds its roots in religious teachings. The Golden Rule, present in various faiths, encourages believers to treat others as they would wish to be treated. Buddhism teaches the cultivation of loving-kindness, emphasizing the transformative power of compassion and generosity. In Sikhism, selfless service (seva) is a pillar of faith, urging devotees to extend kindness and support to all, regardless of their backgrounds. The embodiment of kindness allows us to experience the divine love that transcends individual beliefs and connects us all as part of a greater whole.

"Be kind, for whenever kindness becomes part of something, it beautifies it. Whenever it is taken from something, it leaves it tarnished." (Sahih Muslim)

"Softness is the gentle touch that mends broken hearts and soothes wounded souls, offering solace in a world of harshness."
Aubaid Ahmad Akhooon.

Softness: Embracing Vulnerability: Within religious teachings, the virtue of softness emerges as an invitation to embrace vulnerability and foster emotional safety. The tenderness with which God is portrayed in many traditions demonstrates the value of gentleness and understanding. The Prophet Muhammad's (Pbuh) gentle approach to resolving conflicts, as seen in the Treaty of Hodaybiyyah, and offering guidance exemplifies the significance of softness. Similarly, in Buddhism, the practice of compassion encourages practitioners to meet suffering with a gentle and empathetic heart. By embodying softness, we create spaces where others feel safe to share their burdens and find solace.

"Consideration is the compass that guides our actions, helping us navigate the intricate paths of empathy and respect."
Aubaid Ahmad Akhooon

Consideration: Walking the Path of Empathy: Religious texts urge believers to cultivate consideration, demonstrating empathy and mindfulness toward others. Hinduism encourages followers to practice ahimsa, or non-violence, which entails being considerate and respectful towards all beings. The Treaty of Hodaybiyyah, with its focus on peaceful coexistence and respect for the rights of both parties, exemplifies the importance of consideration. By considering the well-being and perspectives of others, we foster

HT - EDIT

Nurturing Hearts:
The Power of Warmth, Kindness,
and the Treaty of Hodaybiyyah

Kindness: A Path to Divine Love: Kindness, too, finds its roots in religious teachings. The Golden Rule, present in various faiths, encourages believers to treat others as they would wish to be treated. Buddhism teaches the cultivation of loving-kindness, emphasizing the transformative power of compassion and generosity. In Sikhism, selfless service (seva) is a pillar of faith, urging devotees to extend kindness and support to all, regardless of their backgrounds. The embodiment of kindness allows us to experience the divine love that transcends individual beliefs and connects us all as part of a greater whole.

understanding, harmony, and unity, transcending religious boundaries in the pursuit of a compassionate world.

"Acknowledgement is the gift of validation, a radiant spark that ignites confidence and inspires the blossoming of potential."
Aubaid Ahmad Akhooon

Acknowledgement: Reflecting Divine Grace: Within religious contexts, acknowledgement holds profound significance. Recognizing and honoring the inherent worth and dignity of every person mirrors the divine grace bestowed upon humanity. Islamic tradition places importance on acknowledging the contributions and experiences of others, regardless of their social status. The Treaty of Hodaybiyyah serves as an example of this principle in action. In the negotiations of the treaty, the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) acknowledged the concerns and grievances of both the Muslim and non-Muslim parties involved, working towards a resolution that respected the rights and dignity of all. By acknowledging the perspectives and needs of others, we reflect the divine within them and foster a sense of deep connection.

In the annals of human history, the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stands as a beacon of light and guidance. His teachings and actions continue to inspire millions around the world. One significant aspect that holds immense importance is his emphasis on unity, cooperation, and generosity. In this regard, the role of Hazrat Haritha bin Nauman, a companion of the Prophet (PBUH), stands out as a shining example of selflessness and devotion to the cause.

The Generosity of Hazrat Haritha bin Nauman: Hazrat Haritha bin Nauman had several properties surrounding the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah (Masjid Nabwi). During his blessed lifetime, the Prophet (PBUH) entered into multiple marriages, which encompassed not only religious wisdom but also societal benefits. Whenever the Prophet (PBUH) solemnized a marriage, Hazrat Haritha bin Nauman would present one of his rooms as a gift. This room would become the residence of the esteemed wife of the Prophet (PBUH). Such was the extent of Hazrat Haritha's devotion that he eventually gifted all his properties in the same manner to the presence of the Prophet (PBUH).

The Peace Treaty with the Jews: During the same period, the Prophet (PBUH) entered into a peace treaty with the Jewish tribes, as a gesture of goodwill and harmony between the Muslim immigrants (Muhajirin) and the local supporters (Ansar). This treaty, which was documented, outlined the terms that the Jews would not engage in warfare against the Muslims, cause them harm, or provide assistance to anyone who attacked the Muslims. In return, the Muslims guaranteed the Jews' safety, protection of their lives, wealth, and religious freedom. The Jewish

tribes involved in this treaty were Banu Qaynuqa, Banu Qurayza, and Banu Nadir.

The Brotherhood between Muhajirin and Ansar: In addition to the peace treaty, the Prophet (PBUH) established a unique bond of brotherhood between the Muhajirin and the Ansar. This brotherhood, known as "Mawakhat," was established at the house of Hazrat Anas bin Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) after the construction of the Prophet's Mosque. On this occasion, the Prophet (PBUH) instructed: "In the name of Allah, become brothers with each other."

The Impact of Brotherhood: The impact of this brotherhood between the Muhajirin and the Ansar was so profound that it echoed through the ages. The immigrants were moved by the genuine love, care, and support they received from their Ansar brothers. They expressed their amazement, saying, "O Messenger of Allah! We have never seen people like them before. They have shown us such empathy and consolation that there is no comparison to it. They have been so abundantly generous that no example can match it... To the extent that during times of hardship and struggle, they separate themselves from us and include us as equal partners when it is time for prayer, meaning the reward. We are afraid... that all the rewards of the Hereafter may be taken away by this act alone."

The Prophet's Response: Upon hearing their heartfelt words, the noble Prophet (PBUH) responded, "No! That cannot happen until you continue to praise them and supplicate for them."

Some scholars have written that the act of brotherhood demonstrated by the Ansaris is a unique characteristic of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), as no previous Prophet had shown such deep fraternity within their community.

There is a tradition that recounts how the Ansari Muslims divided half of their belongings among their migrant brothers. If someone had two houses, they would give one to their brother. Likewise, they shared half of everything they owned. There is a specific case mentioned where an Ansari had two wives, and he offered one of them to his migrant brother, suggesting that the migrant should marry her after the waiting period (iddah) had been completed. However, the migrant Muslim did not find this arrangement appealing.

Conclusion: The example of Hazrat Haritha bin Nauman and the establishment of brotherhood between the Muhajirin and the Ansar serve as timeless reminders of

And unity, cooperation, and selflessness that characterized the era of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Hazrat Haritha bin Nauman's generous offerings of his properties to accommodate the Prophet's marriages showcased his unwavering devotion. Similarly, the peace treaty with the Jewish tribes highlighted the Prophet's commitment to fostering harmonious relationships and ensuring the protection of religious freedom for all.

Furthermore, the establishment of brotherhood between the Muhajirin and the Ansar created an unbreakable bond of love and support. The mutual care and empathy between these groups left an indelible mark on the hearts of the immigrants, who were overwhelmed by the compassion they received. The Prophet's response, emphasizing the importance of continuous praise and supplication for their Ansar brothers, exemplified his wisdom and recognition of their invaluable contribution.

This remarkable era of unity and cooperation holds timeless lessons for humanity. It teaches us the power of selflessness, the significance of fostering peace and harmony, and the profound impact of genuine brotherhood. By reflecting on the actions and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions like Hazrat Haritha bin Nauman, we can strive to cultivate these virtues in our own lives and contribute to a more harmonious and compassionate society.

In essence: While love remains a cherished cornerstone of our existence, the qualities of warmth, kindness, softness, consideration, and acknowledgement hold immense value in religious teachings. These virtues embody the essence of divine love, fostering compassion, understanding, and harmony. The Treaty of Hodaybiyyah exemplifies the power of warmth and kindness, even in challenging circumstances, demonstrating the potential for peaceful resolutions through empathy and acknowledgment. "Warmth is the sunlit embrace that melts away the chill of isolation and nurtures the seeds of connection."

As we study the noble examples from the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), let us draw inspiration from their selflessness and dedication. May we embrace unity, cooperation, and empathy in our interactions, fostering a world that reflects the values taught by the Prophet (PBUH) and continues to thrive on the principles of love, compassion, and understanding.

"Acknowledgement is the gentle breeze that carries the fragrance of appreciation, nourishing the roots of self-worth and gratitude." Aubaid Ahmad Akhooon.

About the Author: Aubaid Ahmad Akhooon is a renowned Educational Columnist, Motivational Speaker and an Associate Editor of the weekly publication 'Education Quill.' He currently serves as the Senior EDP Head at DD Target PMT Kashmir, a reputable institute renowned for its coaching classes in the medical/JEE/Foundation Classes.

For the most part, the focus of contemporary emergency management has been on natural, technological and human-made hazards such as flooding, earthquakes, tornadoes, industrial accidents, extreme weather events and cyber attacks.

However, with the increase in the availability and capabilities of artificial intelligence, we may soon see emerging public safety hazards related to these technologies that we will need to mitigate and prepare for.

Over the past 20 years, my colleagues and I along with many other researchers have been leveraging AI to develop models and applications that can identify, assess, predict, monitor and detect hazards to inform emergency response operations and decision-making.

We are now reaching a turning point where AI is becoming a potential source of risk at a scale that should be incorporated into risk and emergency management phases mitigation or prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

AI and hazard classification

AI hazards can be classified into two types: intentional and unintentional. Unintentional hazards are those caused by human errors or technological failures.

As the use of AI increases, there will be more adverse events caused by human error in AI models or technological failures in AI based technologies. These events can occur in all kinds of industries including transportation (like drones, trains or self-driving cars), electricity, oil and gas, finance and banking, agriculture, health and mining.

Intentional AI hazards are potential threats that are caused by using AI to harm people and properties. AI can also be used to gain unlawful benefits by compromising security and safety systems.

In my view, this simple intentional and unintentional classification may not be sufficient in case of AI. Here, we need to add a new class of emerging threats the possibility of AI overtaking human control and decision-making. This may be triggered intentionally or unintentionally.

Many AI experts have already warned against such potential threats. A recent open letter by researchers, scientists and others involved in the development of AI called for a moratorium on its further development.

Public safety risks

We Need To Prepare For The Public Safety Hazards Posed By AI

Press Trust Of India



Public safety and emergency management experts use risk matrices to assess and compare risks. Using this method, hazards are qualitatively or quantitatively assessed based on their frequency and consequence, and their impacts are classified as low, medium or high.

Hazards that have low frequency and low consequence or impact are considered low risk and no additional actions are required to manage them. Hazards that have medium consequence and medium frequency are considered medium risk. These risks need to be closely monitored.

Hazards with high frequency or high consequence or high in both consequence and frequency are classified as high risks. These risks need to be reduced by taking additional risk reduction and mitigation measures. Failure to take im-

mediate and proper action may result in severe human and property losses.

Up until now, AI hazards and risks have not been added into the risk assessment matrices much beyond organizational use of AI applications. The time has come when we should quickly start bringing the potential AI risks into local, national and global risk and emergency management.

AI risk assessment

AI technologies are becoming more widely used by institutions, organizations and companies in different sectors, and hazards associated with the AI are starting to emerge.

In 2018, the accounting firm KPMG developed an AI Risk and Controls Matrix. It highlights the risks of using AI by businesses and urges them to recognize

these new emerging risks. The report warned that AI technology is advancing very quickly and that risk control measures must be in place before they overwhelm the systems.

Governments have also started developing some risk assessment guidelines for the use of AI-based technologies and solutions. However, these guidelines are limited to risks such as algorithmic bias and violation of individual rights.

At the government level, the Canadian government issued the Directive on Automated Decision-Making to ensure that federal institutions minimize the risks associated with the AI systems and create appropriate governance mechanisms.

The main objective of the directive is to ensure that when AI systems are deployed, risks to clients, federal institu-

tions and Canadian society are reduced. According to this directive, risk assessments must be conducted by each department to make sure that appropriate safeguards are in place in accordance with the Policy on Government Security.

In 2021, the U.S. Congress tasked the National Institute of Standards and Technology with developing an AI risk management framework for the Department of Defense. The proposed voluntary AI risk assessment framework recommends banning the use of AI systems that present unacceptable risks.

Threats and competition Much of the national level policy focus on AI has been from national security and global competition perspectives the national security and economic risks of falling behind in the AI technology.

The US National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence highlighted national security risks associated with AI. These were not from the public threats of the technology itself, but from losing out in the global competition for AI development in other countries, including China.

In its 2017 Global Risk Report, the World Economic Forum highlighted that AI is only one of emerging technologies that can exacerbate global risk. While assessing the risks posed by the AI, the report concluded that, at that time, super-intelligent AI systems remain a theoretical threat.

However, the latest Global Risk Report 2023 does not even mention the AI and AI associated risks which means that the leaders of the global companies that provide inputs to the global risk report had not viewed the AI as an immediate risk.

Faster than policy

AI development is progressing much faster than government and corporate policies in understanding, foreseeing and managing the risks. The current global conditions, combined with market competition for AI technologies, make it difficult to think of an opportunity for governments to pause and develop risk governance mechanisms.

While we should collectively and proactively try for such governance mechanisms, we all need to brace for major catastrophic AI's impacts on our systems and societies.

Gulf News

India Is Seeking High Value Semi Conductor Technology From US During Pm Visit

Meeting With Ceo's May Lead To Increased Investment In Critical Areas



ARUN KUMAR SHRIVASTAV

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the United States, there's hope for significant developments in defence, business, and technology cooperation between the two countries. The visit will be marked by discussions on sealing a big-armed drone deal, high-level meetings with CEOs of top American companies, breakthroughs in semiconductor supply chains, and the elevation of the Indo-US technology partnership. These developments will showcase the growing importance of the US-India relationship and the potential for further collaboration.

During Prime Minister Modi's visit, the United States has been pushing for the signing of a substantial armed drone deal with India. This deal would enhance India's defence capabilities and deepen the defence partnership between the two nations. The armed drones are expected to provide India with advanced surveillance and strike capabilities, bolstering its national security. The negotiations for the deal will gain momentum, indicating a positive step towards strengthening defence cooperation between the US and India. There's no specified number set yet for the armed drones, but the need for purchase has been confirmed.

According to sources familiar with the event and its arrangements, a private meeting is scheduled between the Prime Minister and prominent US companies' top 20 business leaders, such as Mastercard, Accenture, the Coca-Cola Company, Adobe Systems, and Visa. The meeting is expected to be facilitated by the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF), led by Dr Mukesh Aghi. Notable figures attending the meeting include



Shantanu Narayen, the Chief Executive Officer of Adobe Systems; Julie Sweet, the CEO of Accenture; Ryan McInerney, the CEO of Visa Inc; Michael Miebach, the CEO of Mastercard; and James Quincey, the CEO of Coca-Cola.

The discussions focused on exploring opportunities for collaboration, attracting investments, and expanding business ties between India and the United States. These engagements aim to create a conducive environment for companies from both nations to thrive and contribute to economic growth. The meetings also underscore the importance of India as a critical market for American businesses.

This meeting will occur after Prime Minister Narendra Modi attends the State Dinner at the White House and before embarking on an official visit to Cairo, following an invitation from Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.

More on this, a collaborative effort to foster cooperation in critical and emerging technologies is underway between the United States and India, with National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan at the forefront. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Joe Biden announced the initiative as the US-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technol-

ogy (CET) during a meeting in Tokyo in May 2022. Its primary objective is facilitating collaboration in artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductors, and telecommunications.

Recognising the immense potential of these cutting-edge technologies, both nations have come together to explore avenues for cooperation and knowledge exchange. By leveraging each other's expertise and resources, India and the United States aim to foster innovation, drive economic growth, and address global challenges through technological advancements.

The ICT initiative holds great promise for

advancing research and development in critical sectors. Artificial intelligence and quantum computing, for instance, have the potential to revolutionise industries and drive transformative changes across various domains. By joining forces, India and the US seek to harness the power of these technologies for societal benefits, including improved healthcare, sustainable development, and enhanced cybersecurity.

Another critical area of focus for iCET is semiconductor technology. Given the increasing global demand for semiconductors and the recent supply chain disruptions, collaboration in this field is paramount. India's semiconductor design and manufacturing prowess, combined with the US' technological expertise and industry leadership, could pave the way for mutually beneficial partnerships and robust semiconductor supply chains.

Furthermore, telecommunications plays a vital role in connecting societies and driving digital transformation. Through it, India and the United States aim to enhance cooperation in this domain, leveraging their strengths to develop advanced communication networks, 5G technologies, and secure information exchange frameworks.

The iCET initiative represents a significant step forward in the India-US strategic partnership, emphasising shared values, mutual trust, and a commitment to technological advancements. The collaboration benefits both nations and has broader global innovation and progress implications.

As Doval and Sullivan lead the iCET initiative, there is optimism regarding the outcomes it can yield. The close cooperation between India and the United States in critical and emerging technologies has the potential to shape the future of various industries, drive economic growth, and contribute to addressing pressing global challenges.

(IPA Service)

Glad that IAF is now inducting women officers in all roles & branches : President

■ HT News Network

Hyderabad, June 17 (UNI) President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday said that she is glad that the Indian Air Force (IAF) is now inducting women officers in all roles and branches.

There is a substantial number of women fighter pilots which is bound to increase, Murmu said while addressing the cadets after reviewing the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) of the 211th course with full military splendour at the Air Force Academy (AFA) in Dundigal near here.

She said the career of the cadets is challenging, rewarding and highly honourable. They have to carry forward the great legacy of those who have served in the Indian Air Force before them.

The President said that the Indian Air Force has a very inspiring motto 'Touch the sky with glory', 'Nabhah sprisham deeptam' and expressed confidence that the cadets would imbibe the spirit of this motto and live up to the expectations the nation has from them.

Murmu said that the great role played by the brave warriors of the Indian Air Force in defending the country in the wars with the hostile neighbour in 1948, 1965 and 1971 is written in golden letters.



They demonstrated the same resolve and skills at the Kargil conflict and later, in destroying the terror hideout at Balakot. Thus, the IAF has a legendary reputation of professionalism, dedication and self-sacrifice, she added.

The President said that the IAF also contributes to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Recently the IAF sprang into action despite adverse weather conditions during

the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria to provide medical aid and disaster relief.

Earlier, the successful evacuation operation to airlift more than 600 Indians and other nationals stuck in Kabul, involving flying and landing in a hostile environment is a testimony to the high capabilities of the Indian Air Force.

She said that the ability to absorb technology at a rapid pace would be essential for defence preparedness at land, sea and

air and added that each and every officer of the armed forces has to keep in mind an integrated perspective of defence preparedness. "I am happy to note that the IAF is taking steps to be ever-ready, especially future-ready keeping in view the overall security scenario including the challenges of fighting a high technology war in a network-centric future battle space. I am delighted to be here at the Combined Graduation Parade of Indian Air Force Officer Trainees. I congratulate all the trainees being commissioned into the different branches of the Indian Air Force."

This is the first occasion in the history of AFA that the President has reviewed the IAF parade. On this occasion, eight officers each of the Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard as well as two Vietnamese Trainee Officers were also awarded wings on successful completion of flying training.

Telangana Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan, and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal V R Choudhary were present on the occasion. On this occasion, eight officers each of the Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard as well as two Vietnamese Trainee Officers were also awarded wings on successful completion of flying training.

Telangana Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan, and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal V R Choudhary.

Akhilesh Yadav Says "PDA" Can Defeat BJP, Skips Opposition Unity Question

■ HT News Network

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav today at an NDTV Conclave in Lucknow revealed his formula to defeat the ruling BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. PDA -- Pichle, Dalit, Alpasankhyak (Backward Classes, Dalits, Minorities) -- will defeat NDA, he said.

Skirting pointed questions on his party's view of a grand united Opposition front for next year's general elections, Mr Yadav maintained his only slogan for Uttar Pradesh is "Defeat 80, Remove BJP".

"The BJP will be defeated in all 80 Lok Sabha seats in UP if bigger national parties back us," Akhilesh Yadav said, stressing that he has always maintained that the seat distribution should be decided keeping in mind which-ever alliance partner is strongest in a particular state. Mr Yadav cited his party's earlier alliances with the Congress and Mayawati's BSP for the state and national elections, claiming the Samajwadi Party has always been an honest and accommodating alliance partner.

"Wherever SP has been in alliance, you wouldn't hear of us fighting over seats," he said.

BJP activists hold demonstration against Chamba killing in Hamirpur

■ HT News Network

Texas, June 16 (UNI) A powerful tornado that hit the city of Perryton in the US state of Texas has killed at least three people and injured up to 100 people, the MyHigh-Plains local broadcaster reported on Thursday, citing authorities.

Three people have been confirmed dead, 56 have been injured and two were missing after the tornado hit the city, the media reported, citing Perryton Fire Chief Paul Dutcher and Ochiltree County Sheriff Terry Bouchard.

Dutcher also said that between 25 and 30 mobile homes in the city have been destroyed after the tornado directly hit the northern part of Perryton, adding that two blocks of businesses have been destroyed in downtown Perryton.

Officials with the Ochiltree General Hospital told the broadcaster that at least 75 people have come through the hospital with various injuries.

The broadcaster cited officials with US energy company Xcel Energy as saying that the power in the city was shut down for safety purposes. The city hospital, where the victims have been taken, was running on backup generators.

WB LoP Suwendu hits out at Mamata

■ HT News Network

Kolkata, June 17 (UNI) West Bengal Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari on Saturday took a sharp jibe at Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Taking to twitter, Adhikari alleged, "Shahjahan Sheikh; the less popular Frankenstein created by Mamata Banerjee, is a 'scale model' of Keshto Mondal who has turned Basirhat Sub Division & a large part of North 24 Parganas district into his personal fiefdom. "" A renowned Mafia who ruled the roost during the Left Front regime as the Leader of the 'Red Flag (Action Squad' was given a Red Carpet Welcome by Mamata Banerjee into her party when the Left Front was about to be ousted, " he further alleged.

"Since then Shahjahan Sheikh took control over the Fish Farms of the district & established his reign. In 2019, after the Lok Sabha Elections, the Basirhat Sub Division witnessed Post Poll Violence of the worst kind. Shahjahan Sheikh masterminded the attacks on BJP Karyakartas after a significant number of Voters of many Gram Panchayat areas, voted in favour of the BJP," Adhikari stated.

Congress Chief Attacks PM Modi Over Jobs

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking him which 'toolkit' he is a part of as his government has ruined Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and snatched lakhs of government jobs.

"By snatching lakhs of government jobs, ruining PSUs... Which toolkit is @narendramodi part of? Doesn't the Modi government believe that PSUs are an important part of the country's economy?" a rough translation of Mr Kharge's tweet in Hindi read. Sharing data and graphs in a video presentation attached to his tweet, the Congress chief said that the Modi government has done away with 3.84 lakh jobs from seven PSUs, decreased women's employment in the central government by 42 per cent and increased contractual or casual government jobs by 88 per cent.

"Why did the Modi government snatch 3.84 lakh jobs from only seven PSUs? Why did the jobs of women decrease by 42 per cent in the central government? Why did contract/casual government jobs increase by 88 per cent?" he questioned on Twitter.

Lambasting the BJP government over the 'Make in India' campaign, the Congress chief charged that the 'high voltage propaganda' of "Make in India" was only to 'enhance PM Modi's image'.

"The high voltage propaganda of 'Make in India' was only to enhance its image, what did the country get from it?" Mr Kharge tweeted.

The Congress and the BJP were in a war of words over the renaming of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Society as the Prime Ministers' Museum and Library Society on Friday.

India To Manufacture BrahMos Missiles, Drones In UP Defence Corridor: Rajnath Singh

■ HT News Network

Lucknow: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said "not only nuts and bolts", but BrahMos missiles, drones and electronic warfare systems will also be manufactured and assembled in the Uttar Pradesh defence corridor.

The Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UPDIC) is an aspirational project that intends to reduce the dependence of the Indian aerospace and the defence sectors on foreign suppliers.

"What is important is that in the UP defence corridor, not only nuts and bolts or spare parts will be manufactured, (but) drones, UAVs, electronic warfare (systems), aircraft and BrahMos missiles will also be manufactured and assembled," Mr Singh told a gathering at an event here on "Atmanirbhar Bharat" The minister said an "enabling" environment has been prepared for defence manufacturing through defence corridors in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

Mr Singh said that about the UPDIC, "I have been told that for this corridor, the land which is planned to be acquired is around 1,700 hectare. Of this, more than 95 per cent of land has already been acquired".

Of this, 36 industries and institutions have been allotted nearly 600 hectare of land, he said, adding that 109 MoUs have been signed, with an estimated investment value of more than 16,000 crore. So far, investment of about 2,500 crore has been made in the UPDIC by various entities,



Mr Singh said. The UPDIC took off to an encouraging start with the announcement of investments worth over 3,700 crore in defence production at a meet organised in Aligarh in 2018. Listen to the latest songs, only on JioSaavn.com

Six nodes --- Agra, Aligarh, Chitrakut, Jhansi, Kanpur and Lucknow -- have been identified for developing the UPDIC. "What is important is that in the UP defence corridor, not only nuts and bolts or spare parts will be manufactured, (but) drones, UAVs, electronic warfare (systems), aircraft and BrahMos missiles will also be manufactured and assembled," Mr Singh told a gathering at an event here on "Atmanirbhar Bharat" The minister said an "enabling" environment has been prepared for defence manufacturing through defence corridors in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

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Fresh Violence In Manipur As Mobs Vandalise Police Armoury, Fire On Forces

■ HT News Network

Guwahati: Automatic weapons were fired from Kwakta in Bishnupur district and Kangvai in Chura-chandpur district of conflict-torn Manipur last night, and intermittent bursts of firing were being reported till early this morning, police and army sources have said. An empty house was also set on fire in Langol by miscreants today.

Multiple incidents of mob build-up and attempted vandalism and arson have also been reported.

Joint forces of the Army, Assam Rifles, Rapid Action Force and state police undertook a Flag March in Imphal East district till midnight. An arson attempt was reported at the Palace Compound near Advance Hospital. A mob of about 1,000 congregated last evening and attempted arson and vandalism. The RAF fired tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse the mob, in which two civilians were injured.

Mob build up near Manipur University was also reported. 200 to 300 people gathered near Thongju at



10.40 pm and attempted to vandalise the residence of the local MLA. A column of the RAF dispersed the crowd.

Another mob last night also attempted to vandalise the armoury of Irlingbam Police Station in the Imphal West district. 300 to 400 people tried to ransack the police station at 11.40pm. The crowd was dispersed by the RAF.

According to Army sources, a mob of 200 to 300 people surrounded the BJP office a little after midnight at Sinjemai, and an Army column dispersed the crowd. The mob also attempted vandalism at the

residence of state BJP president Adhikarimayum Sharda Devi in Imphal West at midnight, but it was prevented by the Army and RAF. The crowd was dispersed, according to Army sources. The attacks in Manipur come a day after the home of the Union Minister RK Ranjan Singh was burnt down by a mob of 1200 which lobbed petrol bombs. Another mob last night also attempted to vandalise the armoury of Irlingbam Police Station in the Imphal West district. 300 to 400 people tried to ransack the police station at 11.40pm. The crowd was dispersed by the RAF.

Amit Shah Meets People Affected By Cyclole Biparjoy At Hospital In Gujarat

■ HT News Network

Kutch (Gujarat): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday visited Mandvi Civil Hospital and met the people admitted there after being affected by Cyclone Biparjoy.

Meanwhile, Mr Shah also met the people of Kathda village in Mandvi district.

Earlier today, Union Home Minister conducted an aerial survey of areas affected due to Cyclone Biparjoy in Gujarat's Kutch. Later during the day, Mr Shah is scheduled to hold a review meeting with Mr Patel and other senior officers. Cyclone Biparjoy, which originated in the Arabian Sea and swept across the west coast of India, made landfall on



Thursday night around 10 km north of the Jakhau Port in Kutch in Gujarat. The cyclone weakened into a 'deep depression' and is further expected to weaken into a 'depression' in the next 12 hours, India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in the early hours today. According to IMD, the cyclonic storm weakened

into a 'deep depression' at 11:30 pm on Friday over South-east Pakistan. "Cyclonic Storm Biparjoy weakened into a Deep Depression at 2330 hours IST of yesterday, June 16, 2023, over Southeast Pakistan adjoining South-west Rajasthan and Kutch about 100 km northeast of Dholavira. To weaken fur-

ther into a Depression during next 12 hours," IMD said in a tweet.

Meanwhile, earlier it was reported that several trees were uprooted in Bhuj, Kutch, due to the impact of the cyclone. The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team carried out the clearance work on Friday.

A total of six National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams evacuated 127 civilians from Rupen Bandar Government Primary School and shifted to NDH School Dwarka after Cyclone Biparjoy made landfall in coastal areas of the state on Thursday evening. According to NDRF, the evacuated civilians include 82 men, 27 women and 15 children. With a prediction of heavy rainfall for the next two days for Gujarat.

German Court Denies Indian Baby's Custody To Parents: Reports

■ HT News Network

A court in Berlin's Pankow has denied the custody of 27-month-old Ariha Shah to her parents and handed her over to Germany's Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt). Ariha has been in the custody of the Jugendamt since September 2021.

The court granted Ariha's custody to the German state on Friday and dismissed the claim of her parents that the injury sustained by her was "accidental". India Today reported. The report said Ariha's parents expressed faith in the Indian government and said they are confident that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Foreign Minister Dr Jaishankar would work towards bringing their child back to India. "From today, we hand over Ariha to 140 crore Bhartiyaas," they were quoted as saying.

An Indian Express report said the child's parents had initially sought her custody but had then requested that she be given to the Indian Welfare Services.

Denying custody to the parents or the Indian Welfare Services, the court pointed to two injuries that Ariha had suffered - a head and back injury in April 2021 that happened while she was being bathed and a genital injury in September 2021, the report stated. The report said the court stated parental care was being denied to "avert the existing danger to the child".

Militants kill 37, abduct 6 others in attack on Ugandan school

■ HT News Network

Kampala, June 17 (UNI) The death toll from an attack by rebels of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in Uganda's western district of Kasese has climbed to 37, a military spokesperson said here Saturday.

The ADF rebels attacked Lhubirira Secondary School Friday night in Mpondwe, about 2 km from the border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), burning a dormitory.

Among the victims, 17 students were burnt to death, Felix Kulayigye, Uganda's military spokesperson, told Xinhua by phone. "Three students have been rescued. The army is pursuing the rebels to rescue the other six abducted students."

At least eight students who were sent to the hospital remain in critical condition.

The ADF, which is a branch of the Islamic State in Central Africa, is a Ugandan rebel group that is holed up in the jungles of eastern DRC. The rebel group is blamed for causing havoc in villages in eastern DRC.

The Ugandan military and their Congolese counterparts launched joint operations on the rebel group in November 2021. Police said eight other people were in hospital with critical injuries after the attack at the



Lhubirira Secondary School in Mpondwe.

Privately-owned NTV Uganda television said on Twitter that the death toll stood at 41, while state-run New Vision newspaper said it was 42. New Vision said 39 of the dead were students, and that some of those killed died when the attackers set off a bomb as they fled.

Neither police nor the military said how many of the dead were school-children.

The assailants, numbering about five, burnt down a dormitory and looted food, police and the military said. Major General Dick Olum, the

army's commander for western Uganda and in charge of a military deployment in the Democratic Republic of Congo, said the attackers had stayed in the town two days before the attack, marking their target.

He said an unidentified youth had gone to the school to check its layout before the attack.

"That is how the attackers came and locked the boys' door. The boys really tried to fight back, but they were overpowered. The attackers had lit mattresses," Olum told reporters from Mpondwe, according to a video posted on Twitter by the Daily Monitor newspaper.

Blinken 2 day visit to China to revive bilateral contacts

■ HT News Network

Washington, June 17 (UNI) US Secretary of State Antony Blinken will travel to Beijing on June 18-19 to hold a series of meetings with senior Chinese officials in a bid to recommence the bilateral dialogue that was in many respects put on hold following the spy balloon incident.

The visit will take place amid ongoing tensions in bilateral relations, including US sanctions to limit technology exports to China, as well as Washington's military support for Taiwan, which Beijing has repeatedly described as unacceptable. This will be Blinken's first visit to China in his current role and also the first US Secretary of State visit to Beijing since 2018. It took the Biden administration almost six months to put this visit back on the schedule as it was originally set for February.

It remains unknown though who exactly Blinken will meet with and whether he will have a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping. As the sec-



retary said himself, his plan in Beijing will be to build up on the dialogue between the nations commenced by US President Joe Biden and Xi during their engagement in Bali, Indonesia last year.

On Friday, Blinken outlined three objectives of his upcoming trip. First, he will seek to establish open and empowered communications between the countries to responsibly manage the relationship, including by discussing challenges, addressing misperceptions, and avoiding miscalculations. Second, Blinken plans

to advance US interests and values, including speaking directly and candidly about "very real concerns" on a range of issues. The last objective is to explore the potential for cooperation on transnational challenges between the United States and China, including global economic stability, illicit synthetic drugs, climate, and global health. The US top diplomat believes that the achievement of all three goals is in the national interests of both China and the United States, as it will make it possible to

secure both countries and the whole world in the face of growing strategic competition between the two superpowers. Ukraine is also expected to be the focus of discussion in China. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Kritenbrink said on Wednesday that the United States expects a "full and robust" exchange on the situation in Ukraine and Blinken will once again reiterate US expectations regarding Chinese actions and potential consequences in that regard.

600 former detainees sue LA County over sexual abuse in juvenile halls

■ HT News Network

Los Angeles, June 17 (UNI) Nearly 600 people had joined in a series of lawsuits alleging that they were sexually abused and harassed while in custody at Los Angeles County's juvenile facilities, the Los Angeles Daily News reported Thursday.

Attorney Doug Rochen, who filed lawsuits on behalf of the former detainees, was quoted by the report as saying that the current situation was "like an avalanche."

"The reality is that we probably don't even know today how many people were really affected," Rochen said.

The suits against the county and more than 200 unnamed officers alleged children, as young as 12 years old at the time, were assaulted at Camp Kilpatrick, Central Juvenile Hall, Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall, and Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall during the 20-year period.

Los Angeles County gave officers "uncontrolled and unsupervised intimate access" to the minors so that the victims were assaulted in their cells, in showers, and in common areas.

Joe Biden Mocked After Ending Gun Control Reform Speech With "God Save The Queen"

■ HT News Network

In a goof up, United States President Joe Biden unexpectedly signed off a speech on gun control reforms by saying, "God save the Queen, man", as per a report in Fox News. Many audience members present in the room at the University of Hartford campus in Connecticut on Friday were perplexed by the same. A student questioned the President about his "fourth-place standing in the 2020 Iowa caucuses" to which he replied, "Is that the truth? Now, do not make a lie - as that scene in the John Wayne movie - don't make me a dog-faced, lying, pony-soldier." "I will stand in front of

each section - no, I really mean it -- if you can see the camera they can see you. It is the least consequential part of this whole meeting for you, I promise," he added. He then said, "All right. God Save the Queen, man," before turning around to figure out how to exit the platform. It is to be noted that "God Save the Queen" was the national anthem of the United Kingdom under Queen Elizabeth II, who died in September last year. It was also used as a customary nationalistic statement during her seven-decade-long reign. Interestingly, the phrase used by Mr Biden is also closely identified with the country that colonised the US. Connecticut, where the



President was speaking, was one of the 13 colonies which formally renounced British rule in 1776, the outlet added. The White House

pool report also seemed puzzled by Mr Biden's comment. White House Principal Deputy Press Secretary Olivia Dalton provided

an explanation for his remark to Todd Gillman of Dallas Morning News and said, "He couldn't do the full ropeline due to weather, and was commenting to someone in the crowd." This is not the first time such an incident has taken place. In September last year, President Biden forgot about the death of Indiana Representative Jackie Walorski and repeatedly searched the crowd for her and called her name while on stage at an event. Ms Walorski died in a car accident in August 2022.

At that time, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said that Mr Biden was looking for the Congresswoman because she was "top of mind."

Russia clears 15 more rice companies for imports

■ HT News Network

ISLAMABAD: Amid a declining trend in rice exports in the outgoing fiscal year, a ray of hope has emerged with the registration of 15 more rice establishments for exports to the Russian Federation.

The Department of Plant Protection (DPP) of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research recommended these establishments to the Russian Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (Rosselkhoz nadzor) after a technical audit.

"This marks a huge suc-



cess towards boosting up exports and the overall economy of the country," the food ministry said in a statement on Friday.

Russia restricted imports from Pakistan due to pest

interception in rice. However, it lifted the ban in 2021 and allowed only four mills which had complied with quality standards.

The DPP, with the support of the Rice Exporters Asso-

ciation of Pakistan (REAP), took special steps to upgrade 15 more mills as per the guidance document of Russia for compliance with the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements for rice exports.

Tireless efforts were made in this direction to ensure these establishments are brought in conformity with the SPS requirements to export rice through improvement in the quality and quantity of rice. Now, 19 rice companies can export rice to Russia. The move is good news for rice farmers, especially in Punjab and Sindh as their main source of earnings is based on these exports.

Iran, Cuba sign package of bilateral documents

■ HT News Network

Tehran, June 17 (UNI) Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel and Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi have agreed on multilateral cooperation, including in the field of IT and telecommunications, the Cuban Granma newspaper reports.

Six bilateral documents - a general program of comprehensive cooperation and five industry agreements - were signed by the two leaders on Friday following official talks in the Cuban capital of Havana, Granma said.

The parties agreed to



deepen bilateral ties and expand consultations through the ministries of foreign affairs and justice ministries. Memorandums of understanding were signed between the customs of the two countries;

a new agreement between the communications ministries of the two countries implies cooperation in the field of telecommunications, IT and postal services. On Wednesday, Iranian President Ebrahim

Raisi arrived in the capital of Cuba on an official visit, after traveling to Venezuela and Nicaragua as part of his three-nation tour of Latin America. During the Iranian president's visit to Nicaragua, the leaders of the two countries signed three documents concerning joint work in the legal, economic and healthcare spheres. In Venezuela, Raisi and Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro signed 25 agreements on cooperation and investment in the production and processing of oil and gas, mining, metallurgy, and the creation of a joint shipping company.

Return, Lead In Next Elections, Pak PM Urges Brother Nawaz Sharif: Report

■ HT News Network

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has urged his elder brother and the supremo of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) to return from London and lead the poll campaign of the party in the general election and become the premier of the nation for a record fourth time, a media report said on Saturday.

Addressing a meeting of the central general council meeting of the party on Friday where he was re-elected as the president of the PML-N, Shehbaz, 71, indicated that Nawaz Sharif would return to the country soon. Geo News reported "I was waiting for my elder brother - who has been in self-imposed exile

in London since November 2019 owing to health reasons - to return to Pakistan and then hold the party meeting so he could hand over the PML-N's presidency back to him," he said during the meeting.

Nawaz Sharif, 73, has been living in London since November 2019 for medical treatment after a Pakistani court allowed him a four-week reprieve. Nawaz Sharif, who has served as the prime minister of Pakistan for three non-consecutive terms, was serving seven-year imprisonment in the Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore in the Al-Azizia corruption case before he left for London.

Shehbaz said that a meeting of the central general council was held as the election commission's sword was hanging,



Premier Shehbaz Sharif was given the PML-N's presidency after his predecessor - Nawaz, the three-time prime minister - was disqualified by the Supreme Court and barred

from holding any party position.

During the meeting, Shehbaz said that the PML-N needed young leadership, and commended Nawaz Sharif's daughter and the party's 49-year-old senior vice-president Maryam Nawaz for her hard work.

"You will see that the map of politics will change when Nawaz Sharif returns to Pakistan," Shehbaz said. Coming to his governance, the prime minister once again reminded the workers that his government took charge at a time when they did not get roses but thorns.

"Inflation has broken the back of the people, oil prices are touching the sky. The coalition government decided together that we would face the tough times," he said, adding that in the budget, the government increased the

salaries of employees and pensions. "We have still locked horns with the International Monetary Fund [and] Pakistan will continue on the path of development," the premier further said. On the criticism of Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Shehbaz said that those people within the party pulling his leg have no right to remain part of the PML-N. At the meeting, Maryam lauded the workers that stood with the party in its difficult times. "The party is standing today because the workers stood by the party during its difficult times," she said. She also lauded Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for running the current government along with coalition partners. "Be it a big or small decision, Shehbaz Sharif did not do anything without Nawaz Sharif's approval," Maryam told.

DE&CC Kulgam organises Job Fair to facilitate unemployed youth

Director Employment says Deptt will start Free short term employment oriented courses

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, JUNE 17: In an endeavour to provide a suitable & convenient platform to the educated unemployed youth/Job seekers and facilitate their interaction with the Private Companies and Employers for Training, Skill-ing and placement, District Employment & Counselling Centre (DE&CC) Kulgam today organised one day Job Fair in the office premises here at Kulgam.

The Job fair was inaugurated by Director Employment J&K, Nisar Ahmad Wani.

Joint Director Employment Kashmir,

Hakeem Tanveer Ahmad, Assistant Director Employment, DE&CC Kulgam Nowshad Anjum Mir and other officers were also present on the occasion.

12 Private Companies and Skill Development Organisations operating in Education, Finance, Skill Development, Agriculture, Automobile and Insurance sectors including Team Brain Development Institute Pvt. Ltd, M/s Ilena Technologies, M/s Green Planet Bio-products, WizKids Educorp, M/s Think & Win Technologies, M/s Future Solutions Pvt. Ltd, Imperial Institute Kulgam, Nivia Bupa Health Insurance Company, Bajaj Allianz, Tata AIA Life, SBI Life and Ashoka Leyland participated in the event with around 600 vacancies.



Resource Persons from line departments including Sheep Husbandry Department, Animal Husbandry Department, Women Development Corporation, Handloom and Handicrafts department, KVIB also disseminated the information about their respective schemes and programmes.

The event saw an overwhelming response from the Job seekers and companies.

Dir visited the stalls and interacted with the participating youth and representatives of private companies.

While addressing the audience, Director Employment emphasized upon the youth to come out of the traditional mind set up and participate in such kinds of events to extend their

horizons of vision and wisdom.

He advised the participants to upgrade their skills as per the Job market demand/trends and enhance their chances of employment.

Director informed the participants that unemployed youth (25-30 per batch) from each district will be imparted short term employment/ entrepreneurship oriented training as per the market/industry demand and for this purpose applications from eligible and desirous youth shall be invited from 20th June 2023 by the respective District Employment & Counselling Centres. These training/ skill development courses will be conducted in collaboration with NIELIT, IHM, IMPA&RD, Universities,

MVD Doda organises Eye checkup, Awareness camp for Transport operators

■ **HT News Network**

DODA, JUNE 17: The Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) Doda, in collaboration with the Health Department and Traffic Police Department, organized an eye checkup camp cum awareness program for drivers at the Bhagwah bus stand.

The primary aim of the program was to generate awareness among transport operators about proper healthcare and address the issues of public concern.

The program focused on creating awareness among the driver community about the importance of healthcare, emphasizing how it can improve their driving skills and prevent mishaps on the road.

During the health checkup camp, Rajesh Gupta, ARTO Doda, highlighted the significance of maintaining the health of drivers and cleaners to ensure quality service to the public.

Recognizing that drivers are the backbone of the transport system, he emphasized the need to prioritize their health and well-being, thereby reducing accidents and incidents on the road.

In addition to the medical checkup camp, the Motor Vehicles Department, in coordination with officers from the Traffic Police and Health Department, also addressed the issuance of licenses and J&K permits to unemployed youth. This aspect of the program aimed to provide information and guidance on the proper procedures for obtaining licenses and permits, promoting a safer and regulated transport system.

DC Rajouri reviews implementation of Deen Dayal Antyodaya National Rural livelihood Mission

■ **HT News Network**

RAJOURI, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting to review the implementation of Deen Dayal Antyodaya National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) in the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Khurshid; District Officer NRLM, Javed UI Sofi, and Block Program Managers.

During the meeting, it was informed that NRLM has four components which include social mobilization, community institutions and capacity building, financial inclusion, and livelihood promotion and convergence. It was also informed that 09 blocks of the district out of 19 have been covered under NRLM, 4741 SHGs have been formed till date with 31563 members.

The participants had a threadbare discussion on the future action plan for the formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs), SHG bank linkages, financial inclusion.

"Swacch Bharat Mission": National Garbage Men Day organised at Shopian

■ **HT News Network**

SHOPIAN, JUNE, 17: National Garbage Men Day was today organised in the premises of the Mini Secretariat, Shopian with full zeal and enthusiasm in order to appreciate the efforts of sanitation heroes for their services in keeping surroundings clean.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Shopian, Yar Ali Khan while speaking on the occasion said that the major focus of the administration is to ensure proper sanitation and hygiene across the district.

While addressing newly engaged sanitation works for Panchayats, he stressed upon them to act as ambassadors of sanitation and cleanliness by creating awareness among the masses for proper disposal of waste.

He also appealed to the general public to keep their environment safe and pollution free and support these sanitation workers to maximize their potential in ensuring cleanliness at grassroots level.



In the event, participation of elected representatives was highly appreciated and the general public was appealed to provide full support to the efforts of the administration for the purpose of Swatch Villages.

On the eve of this event, sanitation workers were facilitated with protection gears like Uniform, Gloves and Hand Carts.

Among others, Joint Director, Planning, Shopian, Khursheed Ahmed Khatana, Assistant Commissioner, Panchayat, Manzoor Ahmad, BDOs and other concerned were present. ep their environment safe and pollution free and support these sanitation workers to maximize their potential in ensuring cleanliness at grassroots level.

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MD JJM, DC review progress of Jal Jeevan Mission projects in Ramban district

■ **HT News Network**

RAMBAN, JUNE 17: Mission Director, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Dr. Gulam Nabi Itoo and Deputy Commissioner Ramban Musarat Islam today jointly convened a meeting of coordinating departments of the JJM and reviewed the activities, works being done in the district.

Chief Engineer Jal Shakti, Hamesh Manchanda, Superintendent Engineer Anil Gupta, CPO Dr. Kasturi Lal, Xen Rajiv Gai, AEEs, JEs and other concerned attended the meeting. The MD took a detailed review of the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission and status of works being executed by Jal Shakti Department under JJM schemes in the district. Executive Engineer Jal Shakti, through a powerpoint presentation, apprised about the status of ongoing works including laying of supply Pipes, construction of rapid sand filtration plants and digging of bore- wells etc.

He informed that the district has a total 57738 households out of which 28297 have



water supply connections and the rest will be covered by the end of 15 August 2023.

It was informed that the total schemes approved for the district are 88 and all works have been tendered. It was also informed that 196 works have been allotted under JJM. During the meeting, various issues including Har Ghar Jal certification (HGJC), NABARD Funded schemes, Water Quality Monitoring & Surveillance (WQMS), Training of women for use of FTKs, status of Swachh Jal se Suraksha, IEC activities, physical and financial status of JJM was also reviewed and directions were issued for the proper and timely implementation of JJM.

DC, SSP Rajouri visit border village Rajdhani to address people's concerns

■ **HT News Network**

RAJOURI, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal, along with Senior Superintendent of Police, Amar Jeet Singh, visited the border village of Rajdhani in block Manjakote today to listen to the public issues. The purpose of their visit was to address the concerns of the residents living in the border areas and to assure them of early redressal of their genuine issues.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner listened to the public issues of the village and assured the residents that their genuine concerns would be redressed in a time-bound manner. The major issues raised by the residents were the sanctioning of additional border bunkers, PHC, scarcity of water, dilapidated condition of PS Lamibari etc.

While speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner urged the public to work side by side with the district admin-



istration for the development of the district. He assured the residents that the District Administration is committed to providing all the basic facilities to the border residents so that they do not face any inconveniences and assured them that their concerns would be addressed on a priority basis.

The Senior Superintendent of Police, Amar Jeet Singh, also emphasized the importance of maintaining law and order in the border areas. He assured the residents of the full support of the police department in addressing their concerns and maintaining peace and harmony in the area.

Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar inaugurates Jal Shakti Kendra

■ **HT News Network**

KISHTWAR, JUNE 17: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Dr Devansh Yadav inaugurated Jal Shakti Kendra here under 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan - Catch the Rain' campaign. Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Department, Sunil Sharma was also present at the inaugural ceremony held, the other day.

The Jal Shakti Kendra would act as a knowledge centre for dissemination of information related to water conservation techniques and it will be manned by



senior officers/officials of the department including IEC district Coordinator.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that the main objective of opening of Jal Shakti Kendra is to generate awareness

among the general public and all stakeholders regarding water conservation / preservation methods including rain water harvesting, renovation of traditional and other water bodies/tanks, reuse and

recharge of bore wells preservation and judicious use of water. He informed that the main motive to establish Jal Shakti Kendra is to spread mass awareness about the Jal Jeevan Mission and different schemes under this prestigious project with the aim to provide "Har Ghar Jal". He urged the general public to develop water saving habits and use the precious natural resources judiciously to save it for future generations. Executive Engineer PHED Sunil Sharma also stressed on the need to adopt Rain water harvesting.

Agriculture Dept Anantnag holds awareness prog on DKLMS

■ **HT News Network**

ANANTANG, JUNE 17: One Day Awareness Programme on "Daksh Kisan Learning Management System" (DKLMS) was today organized by Agriculture Production Department Anantnag today at Government Degree College, Bijbehara under "Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP)".

The event was chaired by Chief Horticulture Officer Anantnag Roshan Din Dar and was attended by Principal Government Degree College Bijbehara, Agriculture Extension Officer Bijbehara from Agriculture Department and HOD Botany who were



among the renowned personalities participating in the event.

A large number of College students who participated in the event were provided awareness regarding "Daksh Kisan innovative web portal" that offers a comprehensive Learning Management System with over 121 certificate courses, featuring multi-lingual videos and learning material in four languages.

Moreover, pamphlets were also distributed amongst the students in the event having a simple QR code on the pamphlet that on scanning opens the homepage of DAKSH KISAN Portal where students can register themselves for free and undertake skilling course of their liking.

Alongside, students were imparted awareness about various developmental schemes of the Agriculture Department and its allied sectors through visual mode by way of displaying videos, showcasing various benefits being provided under these schemes to the general public, especially aiming at providing employment opportunities for the unemployed youth.

District Administration Budgam felicitates 12th class toppers

DC Budgam advises students to follow their passion & work hard

■ HT News Network

BUDGAM, JUNE 17: The District Administration Budgam today felicitated students for their exemplary performance at both district as well as divisional level in recently announced 12th class results in Kashmir.

The function was presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC), Budgam, Akshay Labroo (IAS) and was held at Conference Hall, here.

Among the students, who were felicitated include 12th class topper Shahid Bashir from Chadoora, Jahangir Yousuf from Soibugh, Sadia Shafi from Chadoora, Syed Sakeena from Budgam and specially-abled student Mohammad Imran Bhat from Bemina.

Mohammad Imran Bhat has topped the exam in CWE category at divisional level.



During the interaction, the students shared their experiences and strategies of passing their exams with flying colours.

During felicitation, the DC presented momentous to the meritorious students.

Extending his greetings to the students, the DC advised them to follow their passion with determination and create a niche in the fields they aspire to go.

He said that the sky is the limit for the students, who are passionate to achieve their goals and remain content to the hard work and dedication.

The DC said that the need is to explore diverse options and fields having huge potential for growth instead of indulging in any kind of rat race.

He extended his best wishes to all students

and asked them to become best examples for the society to have ambition to serve the humanity in their best capacity.

Meanwhile, students as well as parents expressed their gratitude to the DC for encouraging them to do better in future.

Among others, ADDC Budgam, Dr Akram-ullah Tark, CEO Budgam Romana Qazi, Principals of various Higher Secondary Schools, parents and other concerned were also present on the occasion. He said that the sky is the limit for the students, who are passionate to achieve their goals and remain content to the hard work and dedication.

The DC said that the need is to explore diverse options and fields having huge potential for growth instead of indulging in any kind of rat race.

PIB Jammu organises Rural Media Workshop (Vartalap) at Doda on 9 years of good governance

■ HT News Network

DODA, JUNE 17: Press Information Bureau, Jammu, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India today organised a Rural Media Workshop (Vartalap) in district Doda. The Rural Media Workshops are being organized by PIB in collaboration to build a direct interface between the Government and the journalists working at district and sub-district levels across Jammu division.

Deputy Commissioner, Vishesh Paul Mahajan, who was the chief guest on the occasion said, Media being the fourth pillar of democracy must be balanced,



unbiased and should be at the forefront to highlight developments across various sectors going on in the district. A journalist must maintain checks and balances and should do the responsible reporting at all costs. Senior Superintendent of Police, Ab. Qayoom said the biggest role of the media is to bring in trans-

parency and accountability in the system as the media is the torch bearer of the society. The good and bad of the society can be brought to the public only with the help of media, Sh. Qayoom added. Joint Director PIB, CBC J&K, Ladakh Region, Sh. Gulam Abbas in his address said, path breaking reforms and the

phenomenal infrastructural development has taken place in the nine years of the government under PM Narendra Modi. Journalism plays a vibrant role in the development of the district as people get to know about various schemes, policies and programs of the government only through media, Sh. Abbas added. Additional Superintendent of Police, Doda, Sh. Shakeel-ul-Rehman informed about the police reforms brought about in last nine years by the government and said, be that the introduction of modern weaponry, armoured vehicles, CCTV surveillance in the detection of crimes and the traffic management system.

'Vitasta Cultural Festival'

Mesmerizing pre-events at Srinagar, Budgam witness overwhelming participation

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JUNE 17: The jam packed auditoriums of Srinagar's Amar Singh College and Nawa Kadal Women's College witnessed captivating moments, on Saturday, as folk artists took the stage during pre-event programmes of renowned 'Vitasta Cultural Festival'.

Similar programmes were organised at various locations in central Kashmir's Budgam district as well. The range of these artistic performances included mesmerising art forms such as Bhand Pather, Gojri, Dhambali, Bach Nagma, Rauf and other captivating expressions of cultural heritage including performances of traditional songs,



graceful dances and others presentations. The artistic performances highlighted diverse range of fascinating art forms of Jammu and Kashmir's rich cultural heritage and traditional legacy. Pertinently, a range of pre-event programmes featuring cultural performances and exhibitions of Jammu and Kashmir's heritage are currently being held in various locations across the Valley. These events aim to encourage active public participation

and foster a bond with the upcoming three-day 'Vitasta' cultural festival', which is scheduled to be held at the esteemed Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) from June 23 to 25.

The prestigious festival, along with its pre-events, is being organised by the Union Ministry of Culture, through the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala. One of the primary purposes of this festival is to carry forward Prime Minister, Nar-

endra Modi's, vision of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' (One India, Great India) under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav initiative.

Additionally, the festival aims to serve as a platform for artists representing diverse art forms of Kashmiri folk culture and provide them with a valuable opportunity to display their skills while also contributing towards preservation and promotion of illustrious artistic heritage that characterises Kashmiri folk culture. Meanwhile, the organisers have announced a range of pre-events scheduled to take place at various picturesque spots in Srinagar and elsewhere tomorrow (on Sunday). The venues included Srinagar's Kong Posh Park, Zero Bridge, Zabarwan Park.

CBC organises Outreach and Communication Programme on 9 Years of Good Governance in Doda

■ HT News Network

DODA, JUNE 17: Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Field Office, Doda today organised a one day Integrated Outreach and Communication Programme on 9 Years of Seva Sushan & Garib Kalyan, Mission LiFE and EBSB here in Government Higher Secondary School Boys. Deputy Commissioner, Vishesh Mahajan, was the Chief Guest of the Programme.

Addressing the gathering, Vishesh Mahajan said that the welfare schemes launched by the government aim to serve the masses, and people must come forward to get the benefits of these schemes.

While appreciating the role of CBC Doda, he said it is playing a crucial role spreading mass awareness about Welfare Schemes of Government of India.

Speaking on the theme 9 Years of Seva Sushan and Garib Kalyan, Mohammad Ashraf Wani, District Information Officer said that the wide range of initiatives & flagship Welfare Schemes of the government have immensely benefited the common man in different areas of life.

Dir Horticulture conducts comprehensive tour of Kulgam, Pulwama

Assess impact of Apple Leaf Blotch Miner pest affecting apple orchards

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, JUNE 17: The Director of Horticulture Kashmir, Mr. G. R. Mir conducted a comprehensive tour of various areas of District Kulgam to assess the intensity and impact of Apple Leaf Blotch Miner affecting apple orchards.

Accompanied by Chief Horticulture Officer, Kulgam, Subject Matter Specialist, Kulgam and scientist from KVK, Kulgam, Dr. Khurshid Ahmad, the Director assessed the intensity of the infestation and interacted with local orchardists.

The Director's visit primarily focused on fruit growing belts in the district, with particular emphasis on areas affected by the

Apple Leaf Blotch Miner. Orchards in Yaripora, Matibugh, Badroo, Kokergund, H. M. Bugh, Katpora, Hangul bush, Tarigam, and Batapora were among the locations he visited.

The Director also extended his tour to District Pulwama, visiting various areas viz. Lassipora, Petipora, Nowpora, Panzran, Achan, Litter etc. to gain insights into the spread of the pest. By observing and engaging with local farmers, the Director aimed to understand the specific challenges faced by orchardists in this region.

The emergence of the Apple Leaf Blotch Miner, a new insect pest in certain areas of the Kashmir Valley, has been attributed to the diversification of crops and



changes in pest dynamics influenced by climate factors.

During the visit, the Dir observed pest-infested orchards and engaged in discussions with local orchardists to understand the challenges they are facing. He emphasized on the importance of following the

advisories issued by SKUAST-K (Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir) and the Department of Horticulture, Kashmir, to effectively control the pest and minimize its impact on fruit crops.

Furthermore, the Director stressed the need to

enhance awareness among orchardists about the identification and management of the Apple Leaf Blotch Miner. By disseminating knowledge and best practices, the Department aims to empower orchardists to take proactive measures to protect their orchards.

During the visit, the

Director also reviewed the availability of pesticides in the market that are necessary for controlling the Apple Leaf Blotch Miner. Ensuring the availability and accessibility of appropriate pest control measures is crucial for orchardists to effectively manage the pest and safeguard their crops. Mr. G. R., Director of Horticulture Kashmir, emphasized the Department's commitment to supporting the orchardists in combating the Apple Leaf Blotch Miner and promoting sustainable fruit cultivation practices. He urged orchardists to actively collaborate with the Department and research institutions to stay updated on the latest advancements in pest management techniques.

DDC Chairperson Ganderbal visits several areas to assess issues, needs of people

Conducts surprise inspection of PHC Kachan, BHS Shallabugh

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, JUNE 17: The District Development Council Chairperson (DDC) Ganderbal, Nuzhat Ishaq today visited several areas of the district to take stock of various issues and problems being faced by the people. During her day-long tour, the DDC Chairperson visited Hatbura, Shallabugh, Sehpora, Kachan, Paribal, Chundina and other areas.

During the visit, she interacted with the locals of these areas who put forth their demands and issues of public importance including augmentation of power supply, health facilities, water facility, drainage system, macadamization of roads and cleaning of Irrigation Canals etc.

Her extensive tour start-



ed with a surprise inspection at PHC Kachan and BHS Shallabugh. At Boys High School Shallabugh she checked the attendance of teachers. Staff position in the Schools, accommodation position, toilet and drinking water facilities, status of books and uniform available to the students, school buildings were also reviewed and necessary instruction were given to the concerned officers to mitigate them. The DDC

Chairperson interacted with the students and appealed to them to understand the concepts of a subject rather than mugging up the facts.

To bring the Government schools at par with private schools in the region, the DDC Chairperson asked the teacher fraternity to encourage questioning by the students besides focus should be laid on bringing the innovations in the learning and teaching pro-

cess, she added.

DDC also interacted with the patients at PHC Kachan and enquired about the facilities being provided to them. DDC Chairperson directed BMO concerned to provide better facilities to the patients besides minimize the referral system so the burden at the District Hospital is reduced.

She reviewed the status of the work of shifting of HT line from JNV Hatbura to Gogigund via Chundina through marshy fields and which was a long pending demand of the area. On the occasion, people of the area thanked DDC Chairperson Nuzhat Ishaq for full filling the long pending demand of the area. She also inspected the proposed site of the bridge at Paribal. On the occasion the Chairperson said that the bridge has been kept under NABARD.

Fiction Writers' Guild Pays Tribute to Filmmaker Zahid Manzoor and Discusses Future of Fiction Writing in Kashmir

■ Zubair Qureshi

In a solemn ceremony held at the central office of the Fiction Writers' Guild in Aabiguzar Lalchowk, Srinagar, the 261st session of the guild took place on Saturday. The session commenced with a heartfelt tribute to the late Zahid Manzoor, a renowned filmmaker and producer, where fateh was offered and supplications were made in his favor. Presided over by the esteemed writer, Mr. Shahbaz Hakbari, the session featured the presentation of three captivating short stories by eminent writers. Ms. Naheed Muneer presented her English short story, 'A Girl with a Cheerful Smile,' while Ms. Deeba Nazir, Sahitiya Awardee, shared her memoir titled 'Sue, Shahaar Te Meoun

Shure Paan.' Additionally, Dr. Nazir Mushtaq, President of the Fiction Writers' Guild, presented his Urdu short story, 'Yahi Sach Hai.'

Following the reading of the stories, a fruitful discussion ensued, opening up new avenues for fiction writers in Kashmir. The session was attended by esteemed individuals, including Dr. Nazir Mushtaq (President of the Guild), Engineer Shafi Ahmad (General Secretary), Yousuf Shaheen, Suhail Salim, Shakeel-ur-Rehman, Zubair Qureshi, Miss Ilfah, Dr. Rafia Wali, Dr. Shahzada Saleem, Dr. Nasreen Malik, Masooda Rajpuri Ma'am, Rehana Shajar, Sadia Mushtaq, and Mohammad Wasif.

During his presidential address, Mr. Hakbari initiated a healthy discussion regarding the future of fic-

tion writing in Kashmir. He provided a synopsis of all three stories, offering critical appreciation and acknowledging the writers' efforts in portraying reality through the lens of fiction.

In a subsequent announcement, the General Secretary of the Guild revealed that the next session would feature a book-releasing function as a tribute to the late President Shazada Bismil. The date for the book release will be announced in the forthcoming session. Shahbaz Hakbari expressed his gratitude, stating, "The Fiction Writers' Guild is a platform that enables talented individuals to showcase their creativity and storytelling abilities. It is essential that we continue to foster and support the growth of fiction writing in Kashmir, keeping it

alive for generations to come." Engineer Shafi Ahmad, General Secretary (JKFWG) added, "The upcoming book-releasing function will not only commemorate the late President Shazada Bismil but also serve as a testament to the literary legacy of the Fiction Writers' Guild. We invite all literature enthusiasts to join us and celebrate the power of storytelling."

261st session of the Fiction Writers' Guild concluded on a hopeful note, inspiring writers to continue their endeavors in weaving tales that reflect the rich tapestry of life in Kashmir. 261st session of the Fiction Writers' Guild concluded on a hopeful note, inspiring writers to continue their endeavors in weaving tales that reflect the rich tapestry of life.

JKPs Water Sports Festival 'Jashn-e-dal 2023' commences in Dal Lake

SRINAGAR, JUN 17: Director General of Police, J&K Shri Dilbag Singh declared open a 3-day Water Sports festival 'Jashn-e-dal 2023' today at a function held on the banks of Dal Lake.

Over 600 players will participate in the three days extravaganza, officials said.

The event is being organized by Jammu and Kashmir Police under its Civic Action Programme.

Declaring open the festival, the Director General of Police, said that the word celebration comes to fore itself when they speak of the Dal Lake and what could be better than to celebrate water sports activities Jashn-e-dal in the Dal Lake.

He said that after the successful conduct of the G20 summit, the Dal Lake is looking more attractive and he was happy that the Jashn-e-dal festival has been organised after a gap of one year.

He hoped that the number of Dal lovers would get bigger and bigger each passing day.

The DGP said that the Dal Lake has not only attracted its lovers from all around the world with its beauty and charm but it has helped & supported a number of our youth to hone their water sports talent which they successfully exhibited in different competitions at national and international level.

He congratulated all the players who have



excelled in different water sports games at different levels and also lauded the role of the Water Sports Association.

He added that Jammu and Kashmir Police has worked as the backbone for providing support and assistance to the water sports association and assured that JKP will con-

tinue its support by providing different platforms.

The DGP said that Dal Lake has witnessed and tolerated many turbulent times during the last more than 30 years and it is time to pay back all the happy moments and celebrate the prevailing peace with it.

District Srinagar Pencak Silat championship commences

Srinagar, Jun 17: The two-day district championship event organized by District Srinagar Pencak Silat Association in collaboration with Pencak Silat Association of J&K under the aegis of J&K Sports Council commenced at Indoor Hall Polo ground Srinagar here, today.

More than 790 players from drawn from different schools and clubs are participating in the championship.

Mohammad Iqbal, in-charge manager of Indoor Sports Complex was chief guest on the inaugural ceremony, and office bearers of the state and district association units of J&K Pencak Silat Association were also present on the occasion.

While referring to the athletes, the chief guest said that the athletes have shown a considerable improvement in performance at both national and international levels. This spurt in the performance is an outcome of the availability of modern-day training facilities, coupled with the grooming of athletes on scientific lines along with the emergence

of robust sports culture, he added.

"The participants shall compete in different age groups including pre-teen, sub-junior, junior in both boys and girls besides senior men and women events will also be held," said Irfan Aziz Botta Treasurer, Indian Pencak Silat Federation.

The best formers of the event will be shortlisted for the forthcoming state and national level championships to be held this year.

Meanwhile, the first match of the three-match series between South Kashmir Sports Council Cricket Academy and Baramulla Cricket Academy was played at Jhelum Stadium Baramulla.

The Baramulla Cricket Academy after winning the toss elected to bat first. The team bundled out for 154 runs in their allotted quota of 25 overs, losing all wickets in the pursuit.

Burhan bowled a brilliant spell conceding 30 runs and claiming 4 important wickets. He jolted the opponents and they were unable

to recover from the damage inflicted by his tight line and seam.

While chasing the target South Kashmir Cricket Academy scaled down the finish line in 24.1 overs for the loss of 8 wickets. Thanks to the vital knock of Adnan who scored well and compiled 37 runs, South Kashmir Academy pocketed the first match of the encounter.

Burhan for his brilliant spell was adjudged player of the match. He received the winning memento from the ace cricketer of J&K, Parveez Rasool.

One more cricket match was played under a community program at KNS Stadium Radpora Srinagar between the local teams yesterday. The match was played under floodlights starting in the evening and was in progress till late night. The matches played under floodlights have been a game-changer in increasing community participation in sports.

Meanwhile, Sports Council Gymnastic Academy is imparting training and aims to provide the same level of training and facilities in all the districts of J&K.

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