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Embrace Bapu's Values: LG Sinha to Youth

Lieutenant Governor Addresses Gandhi Jayanti Celebrations

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 02: Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today paid tributes to Pujya Mahatma Gandhi on his Janm-Jayanti. The Lieutenant Governor said the ideals of Bapu are a source of inspiration for the entire humanity and it is the collective responsibility of the society to inculcate the values of non-violence, truth, tolerance and compassion in the young generation.

"We live in a time when global challenges threaten to undermine peace and stability. We must follow the ideals of Pujya Bapu to address contemporary challenges," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor was addressing the UT-level function commemorating the 156th birth anniversary celebra-



tion of Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, at Srinagar.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor said the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is turning Bapu's dreams into reality.

"The principles of self-less service- Sewa and Duties-Kartavya to which Gandhiji was committed will guide us in the journey of building 'Viksit Bharat'. With economic prosperity, we are determined to build a society powered by moral force and based on equity and justice," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor urged the people to adopt Swadeshi and buy products made by Self Help Groups and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

"Remember your roots and ageless spirit of India as you chart future course.

Society and nature must exist in harmony. Focus on Research & Development. We should also ensure that Agriculture, industry and service sectors are working in harmony for a prosperous economy," he further said.

The Lieutenant Governor also extended felicitations to the people on the occasion of the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri.

The event, organized by the Department of School Education and Department of Culture, also marked the closing ceremony of Sewa Parv.

The Lieutenant Governor congratulated the districts and schools for their excellent performance during Sewa Parv. He also felicitated members of Gandhi

● Turn on Page 2

'Operation Sindoor' victory against Ravana of terrorism: Prez Murmu

■ HT News Desk / KNO

NEW DELHI, OCT 02: Terming 'Operation Sindoor' as a victory against the Ravana of terrorism, President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday praised the Indian armed forces for giving a befitting reply to terrorists and their sponsors sitting across the border.

Addressing the Dussehra celebrations at the Red Fort here, President Murmu, according to the news agency—



Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "The Operation Sindoor carried out by our armed forces' represents a decisive victory over the Ravana of terrorism."

She said, "When terrorism strikes against humanity, it becomes necessary to counter it. Operation Sindoor is a mark of victory against the Ravana of terrorism, and we salute our soldiers for this."

● Turn on Page 2

Rajnath warns Pak on Sir Creek stance

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI/BHUJ, OCT 2: In a clear message to Pakistan, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday warned the neighbouring country against any aggression towards the Sir Creek region and said that any such move would be met with a "resounding response" that could change "history and geography".

The defence minister made the remarks at a military base near the border city of Bhuj in Gujarat as he celebrated Dussehra with soldiers and performed 'shastra puja' (worship of weapons) on the occasion.

Singh also said that the Indian military successfully achieved all the objectives of Operation Sindoor and starting a war with Pakistan by escalating the situation was not its aim.

However, his comments on the disputed Sir Creek drew much attention.

"Any aggression by Pakistan in the Sir Creek area will be met with a resounding response that will change both history and geography.

"In the 1965 war, the Indian Army had

● Turn on Page 2

Dussehra illuminates Jammu in Ravan Dahan spectacle

■ HT News Network

Jammu, Oct 02: The historic Parade Ground, Dussehra Ground Gandhi Nagar and other parts of Jammu on Thursday evening transformed into a vibrant epicenter of devotion and jubilation as thousands converged to celebrate Vijayadashami, or Dussehra, with unparalleled enthusiasm.

The evening skies erupted in a mesmerizing display of fire and fervor during the iconic Ravan Dahan,



where towering effigies of the demon king Ravana, along with his kin Meghnad and Kumbhakarna, were set ablaze in a symbolic triumph of good over evil.

This age-old ritual not only lit up the horizon but also kindled a profound sense of unity, righteousness, and cultural pride across the city.

As the sun dipped below the Tawi River's horizon, an estimated crowd of 10,000 spanning families, youth, elders, and visitors from

● Turn on Page 2

Amit Shah lauds RSS for 'nation-building'

■ HT News Network

New Delhi, Oct 2: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday lauded the RSS on its centenary, saying the organisation's workers have always been devoted to the service and security of the nation, renouncing all comforts and luxuries.

Shah, who termed himself a "proud swayamsevak", said that from the leaders at the top to workers at the grassroots, numerous personalities have been shaped by the Sangh over its 100 years.

"Heartfelt congratulations on the

centenary year of the world's largest voluntary organisation, 'Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh'. In this grand journey of the Sangh centenary, I bow to all the dedicated workers of the RSS who have devoted their lives to the service, security, and empathy of Maa Bharati," he said in his message.

The home minister said it is not easy being a 'swayamsevak' and 'pracharak' who must renounce all comforts of life for the nation-building.

"Over 100 years, countless swayamsevaks and pracharaks of the Sangh

● Turn on Page 2

IMD issues weather alert, snowfall expected in J&K

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCT 02: Under the influence of a strong western disturbance, Jammu and Kashmir is likely to receive a three-day wet spell from Saturday evening, while the higher reaches of the region are expected to experience the season's first snowfall.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a weather advisory, forecasting

a strong western disturbance, expected to impact Jammu and Kashmir and adjoining areas from October 4 (Saturday).

The Meteorological Centre in Rambagh, Srinagar, in its advisory said the system is likely to bring widespread light to moderate rainfall and snowfall, particularly over the higher reaches of the Union Territory.

The peak of this weather activity is expected between

the night of October 5 and the morning of October 7, the advisory reads.

Under the influence of this active weather system, moderate to heavy snowfall is likely in several high-altitude regions, including Anantnag-Pahalgam, Kulgam, Sinthan Pass, Shopian, Pir Ki Gali, Sonamarg-Zojila, Bandipora-Razdan Pass, Gulmarg, and the Kupwara-Sadhn Pass. Middle-altitude areas

● Turn on Page 2

Dengue Cases Cross 1,100 Mark in J&K This Year

Eliminate Stagnant Water, Use Repellents, Doctors Advise

■ HT News Desk / KNO

SRINAGAR, OCT 02: Dengue cases are on the rise in Jammu and Kashmir with 1,142 infections reported so far this year, health officials confirmed on Thursday.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO)

that the cases include 467 from Jammu, 95 from Samba, 338 from Kathua, 106 from Udhampur, 23 from Reasi, 43 from Rajouri, 12 from Poonch, 14 from Doda, 10 from Ramban, one from Kishtwar, 14 from Kashmir, and 19 from other states.

He said a total of 15,207 tests



have been conducted this year. Of the confirmed patients, only 31 required hospitalisation, seven are still under treatment, while one J&K resident succumbed to the disease at DMC Ludhiana.

"People must adopt preemptive measures to combat this painful

● Turn on Page 2

Samba woman, accomplices chargesheeted

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, OCT 2: The Crime Branch of Jammu and Kashmir Police has charge-sheeted a notorious female fraudster from Samba district and her two accomplices for a major job scam in which unsuspecting victims were duped of nearly half a crore rupees.

Officials confirmed that the charge-sheet has been filed before the Learned Court of Railway Magistrate Jammu after

● Turn on Page 2

CM's Office clarifies Nasir Wani's appointment as Advisor

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, OCT 2: The Office of the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir has moved to clear the air over the controversy surrounding the appointment of National Conference leader Nasir Aslam Wani as Advisor to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

The clarification comes after sections of the media reported that Wani's appointment had either not been finalized or lacked legal sanction, creating a flurry of political speculation in the Valley.

The CM's office described such claims as misleading, asserting that

● Turn on Page 2

Inspiring Address By Bhagwat: PM Modi

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, OCT 2: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday lauded the annual Vijayadashmi address of RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat as inspiring, and said he highlighted India's innate potential to attain new heights of glory.

He said on X, "An inspiring



address by Param Pujya Sar-sanghchalak Dr. Mohan Bhagwat Ji, highlighting the rich contributions of the RSS to nation-building and emphasising the innate potential of our land to attain new heights of glory, thereby benefiting our entire planet." Modi was an RSS pracharak before he

● Turn on Page 2

Over 100 Years, RSS Resisted Greed, Focused On Character Building: Bhagwat

■ HT News Network

NAGPUR, OCT 2: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Thursday said the Sangh, despite being lured by greed and invited to join politics, has stuck to its core

● Turn on Page 2

Your are cordially invited to join us in remembering and celebrating the life and legacy of Late Atiqo Bano being observed as

Yum-e-Meerat
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A Tribute to Late Atiqo Bano's Contributions through Meeras Mahal Museum

Organized by Majlisun Nisa, Jammu & Kashmir in collaboration with Meeras Mahal Museum Sopore and Adbee Markaz Kamraz

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Date: 5 October 2025 Time: 10:30 am

Muzamil Bashir
President
Meeras Mahal Museum

Dr. Rafeeq Masoodi
Advisor
Majlisun Nisa J&K Sopore

Shabnum Tilgami
Gen. Secretary
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Sakeena Itoo visits fire-affected families in Langkhull Nandimarg of Kulgam district, extends financial assistance

Assures both short-term and long-term relief measures to affected families

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KULGAM, OCT 02: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today visited Langkhull Nandimarg area of Kulgam district and distributed relief cheques among fire-affected families. During the visit, the Minister interacted with the affected families, expressed her solidarity with them and assured them of every possible support from the Government. She personally distributed relief cheques among the victims as an immediate measure of assistance. The Minister emphasized that the administration has been



directed to ensure swift rehabilitation and timely relief measures so that the affected families are able to rebuild their lives at the earliest. She further stated that necessary steps will be taken to extend both short-term and long-term support, including assistance under various government schemes. The Minister reiterated that the welfare of the people, especially those facing sudden calamities, remains a top priority of the Omar Abdullah led Government. She also directed the concerned officials to expedite the process of damage assessment and ensure that no affected household is left out of the relief ambit.

DC Srinagar participates in Dussehra Celebrations organized by 28th CRPF Battalion

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR OCT 02: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, today participated in the Dussehra celebrations organized by 28th Battalion of CRPF held at premises of DC Office Complex. On the occasion, the DC extended his warm greetings and best wishes to the people and CRPF jawans of the



28th Battalion deployed at Amar Niwas Complex. Highlighting the significance of Dussehra, he underscored the values of righteousness, victory of good over evil and respect for all. He further emphasized the importance of unity, communal harmony, and the adoption of ethical practices in both personal and public life.

Rana advocates for collective, sustained efforts to preserve, protect and promote tribal values

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

MENDHAR, OCT 02: Minister for Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana today underscored the urgent need for collective and sustained efforts to preserve, protect and promote the tribal values that have long defined the identity of communities in the Pir Panjal region. Speaking at a vibrant Tribal Mela organized by the Tribal Affairs Department in collaboration with the local District Administration at Sagra in Mendhar, Poonch, the Minister emphasized that tribal development must not come at the cost of cultural erosion. He called for an integrative approach that harmonizes progress with tradition, cautioning that the unchecked spread of modern influences could dilute the deep-rooted tribal customs and moral frameworks that are inherently community-driven and inclusive. The Minister reiterated Omar Abdullah Government's commitment to fostering a development paradigm that is inclusive, respectful of tribal traditions and capable of building a



resilient and self-reliant tribal society. He lauded the efforts of the Tribal Affairs department and District administration in organizing the Mela, calling it a meaningful step towards engaging with people and development with dignity. The Mela, which drew significant participation from the local populace, served as a celebration of tribal life, customs and wisdom. It provided a platform to showcase rich cultural heritage of the Tribals, featuring traditional tribal food that reflects the culinary diversity of indigenous communities. In addition, local medicinal plants were exhibited, highlighting the tra-

SMC organises “Sewa Parv 2025” Culmination Event at Jhelum River Front Rajbagh

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCT 02: The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) today concluded Sewa Parv 2025 with a grand culmination ceremony at the scenic Jhelum River Front Rajbagh, a vibrant public space along the Jhelum. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation of citizens, officials, self-help groups, and community organizations who played a vital role throughout the fortnight-long civic campaign. During the past two weeks, SMC carried out a diverse set of initiatives reflecting its vision of building a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable Srinagar. These activities included plantation drives across different parts of the city, large-scale sanitation and cleanliness campaigns, awareness programmes on waste segregation and solid waste management, awareness camps under housing schemes, streetlight repair and maintenance drives besides special sanitation operations in all wards of Srinagar. These efforts drew massive



participation from residents, students, civil society groups, and local communities, highlighting a shared sense of civic responsibility and collective ownership. Speaking on the occasion, Nuzhat Qureshi, Joint Commis-

sioner (Administration), SMC, expressed gratitude to the people of Srinagar for their wholehearted support and active involvement. She stated that “Sewa Parv has reinforced our belief that civic responsibility is a shared

duty. The collective efforts of our people have not only beautified the city but also strengthened the sense of belonging and ownership among residents. Such initiatives prove that positive change is possible when the community and administra-

tion work hand in hand.” The culmination event at River Front Rajbagh was marked by a felicitation ceremony recognizing the contributions of ward officers, frontline sanitation staff, and community groups. The programme also featured cultural performances, thematic exhibitions, and displays showcasing the journey, milestones, and achievements of Sewa Parv 2025. A special highlight of the closing ceremony was the Swachhata Pledge, taken collectively by officials, citizens, and participants, reaffirming their commitment towards cleanliness, sustainability, and active civic participation. The atmosphere was festive, engaging, and inspiring for both participants and visitors. With the formal conclusion of Sewa Parv 2025, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation reaffirmed its commitment to sustaining community-driven efforts, enhancing civic services, and expanding participatory initiatives that empower citizens and contribute to a progressive urban future for Srinagar.

KVIC organises SDTPs across J&K on Gandhi Jayanti

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SRINAGAR, OCT 02: To mark the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, celebrated on 2nd October, multiple Skill Development Training Programmes (SDTPs) were held by KVIC across various districts of Jammu & Kashmir today. The events were held in presence of Director, KVIC, J&K and Ladakh, Rajesh Kumar, and Principal, PMTC KVIC, Pampore, Anil Kumar Sharma. The programme commenced with floral garlanding ceremony to pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi,



followed by the Khadi Pledge, taken as part of the ongoing Khadi Mahotsav being celebrated from September 17th to October 23rd, 2025. Speaking on the occasion, Anil Kumar Sharma briefed the attendees about the various skill development training programmes being conducted across different districts of J&K. He emphasized the importance of skill-building in empowering youth and promoting self-employment. Addressing the gathering, Director, KVIC, Rajesh Kumar, expressed his deep gratitude towards Mahatma Gandhi for his enduring legacy. He encouraged all participants to stay motivated and continue learning new skills, which are crucial for personal growth and national development. Several participants also shared their experiences, explaining how the training programmes have helped them acquire valuable skills and opened new avenues for livelihood and entrepreneurship.

Gandhi Jayanti celebrated in Ganderbal, Rich Tributes paid to Father of the Nation

DC felicitates students, Safai Mitras for their active role in Sewa Parv campaign

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

GANDERBAL, OCT 02: District Administration Ganderbal today organized an event at Clock Tower, Duderhama to commemorate the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti. During the programme rich tributes were paid to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, while promoting his timeless values of truth, simplicity, non-violence, self-sufficiency, and cleanliness. Speaking on the occasion, the DC extended greetings to the people on Gandhi Jayanti and remembered Gandhi Ji's enduring legacy of peace, non-violence, and community service. He highlighted that during the fortnight Sewa Parv



campaign, the District Administration carried out extensive awareness drives on cleanliness, Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, and various welfare activities which would continue throughout the year. DC urged the community to extend full cooperation to the administration in its endeavors towards a cleaner environment, a drug-free society, and overall public welfare. The event featured cultural performances by students showcasing Gandhian philosophy and the importance of Swachhata as a collective responsibility. On the occasion, a felicitation ceremony was also held wherein the DC distributed certificates of appreciation among students, Safai Mitras, and other participants in recognition of their active role in the campaign and their dedicated service to society. The celebrations witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, frontline sanitation workers, and the local community. The programme concluded with a reaffirmation of the district's commitment to uphold Gandhian ideals and work collectively towards a cleaner, healthier, and more inclusive society.

Rana reviews progress of key RDD schemes in Mendhar

Stresses on timely implementation of developmental initiatives

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

MENDHAR, OCT 02: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of key development schemes undertaken by Rural Development department (RDD) for the fiscal year 2025-26, with a particular focus on Balakot and Mankote blocks.

The meeting was attended by the Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD), Shakeel A Malik; Assistant Commissioner Panchayats (ACP), Block Development Officers (BDOs) of the respective blocks and other senior officers of the department.

During the review, the Minister underscored the critical role of RDD in catalysing rural transformation, emphasizing that all development efforts must be aligned with the needs and aspirations of local communities.

He reiterated the government's commitment of timely implementation of schemes, in a transparent and people-cent-

ric manner, with enhanced convergence among departments and active community participation at every stage.

While taking stock of the Annual Action Plan, the Minister pointed out the need to bridge the gap between physical achievements and financial expenditure under major funding components including the Area Development Plan (APDP), PRI Grants, CD Panchayat funds, Tribal Sub-Plan, District Capex and the Vibrant Village Programme.

He directed officials to identify implementation challenges, remove bottlenecks and adopt a proactive approach to ensure that all ongoing works are completed within stipulated timelines.

Reviewing the progress under flagship schemes like PMAY (G) and MGNREGA, the Minister instructed Block Development Officers to take ownership of projects and expedite the execution of works in accordance with approved block-wise plans.

He laid strong emphasis on the timely disbursement of wages under MGNREGA and



called for an increase in the number of workdays generated to enhance livelihood opportunities for the rural population.

He also urged officials to resolve delays in wage payments and clear all pending

arrears within a fixed time frame.

With regard to PMAY-G (Awas-Plus), Rana directed officers to closely monitor the progress of house completions and evaluate new sanctions.

He stressed that special attention must be given to the rehabilitation of disaster-affected families and issued instructions to expedite damage assessment surveys and submit detailed proposals for assis-

tance at the earliest.

Highlighting the importance of transparency and accountability in public service delivery, Rana called for the regular conduct of social audits and strict adherence to quality standards in all development works.

He asserted that transparency forms the foundation of an accountable governance system and must be upheld without compromise.

The Minister also reviewed the progress under Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) and assessed block-wise achievements across various components like Individual Household Latrines (IHHL), Community Sanitary Complexes, Solid Waste Management units, compost pits and waste management sheds.

He reiterated that the core objective of SBM-G is to establish an effective system for waste collection, segregation and scientific disposal and urged officials to intensify their efforts to achieve this goal.

During the meeting, the Minister also stressed the significance of convergence

between the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) and MGNREGA to promote sustainable watershed development.

He encouraged the promotion of innovative livelihood models and called for greater support to Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to strengthen rural livelihoods and economic empowerment.

Taking a comprehensive review of the ongoing construction of Panchayat Ghars in Balakote and Mankote blocks, the Minister examined the block-wise progress and urged all executing agencies and stakeholders to work in close coordination to overcome on-ground challenges.

He also directed them to resolve any pending land issues without delay to ensure the timely completion of all sanctioned Panchayat Ghars.

Rana reaffirmed Omar Abdullah Government's commitment to inclusive rural development, assuring that every possible measure will be taken to deliver impactful outcomes that reflect the aspirations of the people.

Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Dar Honored with Best Performance Award in Pulwama

■ Mushtaq ul Islam

PULWAMA, OCT 2: Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Dar, District Mineral Officer (DMO) Pulwama, was conferred with the Best Performance Award by the District Administration Pulwama on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti.

The award was presented in recognition of his exemplary service and outstanding contributions



to the Geology and Mining sector in the district. The ceremony, held as part of Gandhi Jayanti celebrations, highlighted the efforts of various departments and individuals in public service.

Dr. Dar thanked the administration for the honor and reaffirmed his commitment to improving healthcare delivery in Pulwama.

KU concludes Sewa Parv 2025 with cultural, creative events

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 02: The University of Kashmir (KU) on Thursday successfully concluded the Sewa Parv 2025 celebrations, which had commenced on September 17 and culminated on Gandhi Jayanti, October 02. The concluding programme was organised by the varsity's Department of Students' Welfare (DSW) in collaboration with Shri Pran Kishor Koul Institute of Music and Fine Arts (IMFA).

The concluding programme featured a series of events at the Main Campus, including the reveal of a wall painting on themes of environment, youth power and patriotism; a homage to Mahatma Gandhi; a symposium on 'Gandhian Vision of Sewa: Relevance in Today's World'; the launch of the Sonzal-2025 poster; and a cultural programme presented by students.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, said, "The activities held

today highlight how art, dialogue and collective participation can inspire a deeper understanding of service and responsibility in contemporary society. They also reinforce the relevance of Gandhi's vision in present times."

Various administrative officers and faculty members including Controller of Examinations KU, Prof. Majid-uz-Zaman; Dean DSW KU, Prof. Pervaz Ahmed; Provost Boys KU, Prof. Meraj Ahmed, Principal IMFA, Dr. Habeeb Ullah, Cultural Officer KU, Dr. Shahid Ali Khan, and wardens from different hostels as well as students joined the Vice-Chancellor in paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi.

Controller of Examinations KU, Prof. Majid Zaman, said that the celebrations provided students with a platform to meaningfully engage with Gandhi's philosophy and to reflect on its contemporary importance.

Dean DSW KU, Prof. Pervaz Ahmed, noted that the events



held under Sewa Parv created avenues for students to participate in activities that combined

academic learning with community orientation. Principal IMFA KU, Dr. Habibullah Shah,

highlighted the significance of artistic expression in carrying forward Gandhian ideals of peace, unity and harmony.

The event was coordinated by Dr. Shahid Ali Khan, Cultural Officer, DSW KU. A large number of students participated enthusiastically in all activities, making the concluding day a vibrant showcase of creativity and reflection.

Throughout the Sewa Parv celebrations, the University remained deeply committed to the spirit of the initiative, ensuring widespread participation and collective contribution. Various offices and departments rendered their services with dedication, including the Central Library, Department of Home Science, Department of Social Work, NSS Wing, University Hostels, Landscape Division, Chief Proctor's Wing, Directorate of Lifelong Learning, Satellite Campuses, University Model School and several other important units of the University.

Skill Development Training Programmes Launched Across J&K by PMTC, KVIC on Gandhi Jayanti

■ Farooq Rather

PAMPORE, OCT 2: On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), through its Principal Marketing and Training Centre (PMTTC) Pampore, inaugurated multiple Skill Development Training Programmes across various districts of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

The events were held in the presence of Shri Rajesh Kumar, Director, KVIC (J&K and Ladakh), and Shri Anil Kumar Sharma, Principal, PMTC Pampore. The ceremonies began with a floral tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, followed by the recitation of the Khadi Pledge, aligning with the ongoing Khadi Mahotsav being celebrated from September 17 to October 23, 2025.

Addressing the participants, Shri Anil Kumar



Sharma provided an overview of the various training

programmes being conducted across J&K. He high-

lighted the significance of skill development in enhancing youth employability and promoting self-reliance through entrepreneurship.

Participants of the programme shared their personal experiences, stating that the training had equipped them with practical skills and opened new doors for income generation. In his concluding remarks, Shri Rajesh Kumar paid homage to the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and encouraged the trainees to continue their journey of skill-building. He emphasized that developing vocational skills is not only a path to personal empowerment but also a contribution to the nation's progress. The event served as a powerful reminder of Gandhi's vision of Gram Swaraj and the importance of khadi and village industries in nation-building.

Seva Parv Culminates in Kulgam with Enthusiastic Public Participation

■ Farooq Rather

KULGAM, OCT 2: The fortnight-long Seva Parv campaign concluded today in District Kulgam with a grand ceremony held at the Conference Hall, witnessing enthusiastic participation from citizens, officials, and stakeholders.

On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan (IAS), distributed sanction letters under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Mission YUVA, and other welfare schemes. As part of the Ghar Parvash initiative under PMAY-Urban and PMAY-Gramin, house keys were also handed over to eligible beneficiaries.

In his address, the DC highlighted the significance of Seva Parv, calling it a campaign dedicated to community service, social welfare, and sustainable development. He stated that the drive ensured the maximum coverage of welfare schemes, alongside public grievance redressal camps, thereby addressing local concerns effectively.

The DC also informed that cleanliness drives were conducted in all 178 panchayats of the district, and several other initiatives—including blood donation camps, health check-ups, and awareness programmes—were organized under the banner of Seva Parv. Appreciating the active involvement of government departments, institutions, youth, media, and the general public, the DC urged all stakeholders to carry forward the spirit of Seva Parv in future development efforts.

During the event, officers, officials, media personnel, and sanitation workers were felicitated for their commendable contributions throughout the campaign.

Over the two-week period, the district witnessed a vibrant series of activities ranging from plantation drives and cleanliness campaigns to health camps and welfare outreach, reflecting the true essence of public service and civic responsibility.

The ceremony concluded with a collective pledge to uphold the values of service, inclusion, and national progress in all future endeavors.

Srinagar Police Accords Warm Send-Off to Retiring Officers

■ HT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCT 2: Srinagar Police organized a farewell ceremony to honour two retiring officials—Sub-Inspector Bashir Ahmad Wagay and Head Constable Mukhtiar

Ahmad at the District Police Headquarters.

Both officers have rendered years of dedicated and commendable service to the Jammu and Kashmir Police.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Dr. G.V.

Sundeeb Chakravarty, IPS, lauded the retirees for their unwavering commitment, professionalism, and integrity throughout their careers.

He expressed his deep appreciation for their valuable contributions and extended his

best wishes for their post-retirement life.

The event was also attended by SP Headquarters Sh. Umar Shah and other officers, who joined in expressing their gratitude and admiration for the retiring personnel.

As a token of recognition, SSP Srinagar presented Certificates of Appreciation to both officers, acknowledging their dedicated service and significant role in maintaining law and order over the years.

Vibrant Karnah Festival celebrated in Amrohee Village near LoC

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KARNAH-KUPWARA, OCT 2: In a remarkable celebration of culture and community spirit, the District Administration Kupwara in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs today organized Mega Karnah Festival at tribal village Amrohee near Line of Control (LoC) in Teetwal block, under nationwide 'Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan'.

The vibrant festival was marked by great fervour and enthusiasm, drawing large crowds and offering a rich display of the region's unique tribal and cultural heritage. Set against the breath-taking backdrop of Karnah Valley, the event witnessed the participation of people from all walks of life, celebrating unity, diversity, and tradition.

The day-long festival featured an impressive array of cultural programmes, including folk music, traditional dance performances, art displays, and local cuisine stalls. Local and regional artists enthralled the

audience with their talent, while visitors experienced the authentic flavours and colours of Karnah's cultural identity.

The festival saw enthusiastic participation of people from different walks of life, including MLA Karnah, Javaid Ahmad Mirchal; Union Secretary Tribal Affairs, Vibhu Nayar; Secretary Tribal Affairs Department J&K, Prasanna Ramaswamy G; Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse; Brigade Commander 104 Brigade Tangdar, SK Pradhan; ASP Kupwara and ACR Kupwara. Senior officers from civil administration, officials civil society members and people in large number also attended the day long Karnah Festival.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Karnah highlighted the need for the administration to work for overall development of the Karnah subdivision being a far flung and backward area. While referring to the drug abuse, he sought coordination from all stakeholders to join together in eradication of the drug menace from the district



which has pushed the youth towards the wall.

Union Secretary, Tribal Affairs, while addressing the local tribal community in their language during the Karnah Festival 2025 in Village Amrohi, emphasized the Government's commitment to tribal development under the Dharti Aaba - Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhi-

yan.

He informed that the Dharti Aaba scheme is being implemented in over 60,000 villages, including Village Amrohi, and urged the villagers to participate actively in prioritizing their top five development needs. He assured that the government machinery would work shoulder to shoulder at their doorstep

to meet these needs.

Vibhu Nayar highlighted that the vision of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi is to make every tribal village a role model of development, equipped with schools, hospitals, and essential amenities. He appreciated the villagers' historical support to the Army and their contribution to curbing the menace of drugs,

emphasizing that security and development go hand in hand.

He expressed confidence that with community cooperation, the village will undergo transformational growth, becoming an example for other tribal communities.

Secretary Tribal Affairs J&K also spoke on the occasion and highlighted the need for strengthening the efforts towards eradication of drug peddling and drug abuse. He provided awareness about the 'Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan' and urged upon the people to take benefit under the Abhiyan which is meant for their upliftment and welfare.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Shrikant Balasaheb Suse welcomed the dignitaries and participants for reaching to the far flung village to participate in the mega awareness programme. He appreciated the resilience and cultural commitment of the people of Karnah and highlighted the importance of such festivals in strengthening communal harmony, boosting tour-

ism, and empowering tribal communities under the ambit of national campaigns.

During the programme, various line departments had set up awareness stalls offering information on individual beneficiary-oriented schemes, facilitating on-spot enrolment and extending services to the local populace. This outreach initiative proved highly beneficial for residents, especially in such remote border areas.

As part of the event, sanction letters and certificates were distributed among beneficiaries under various government schemes, reinforcing the administration's commitment to grassroots development and tribal welfare.

The Karnah Festival not only celebrated the heritage and traditions of the region but also served as a platform for local talent, artisans, and entrepreneurs to showcase their work. It underlined the district administration's vision of inclusive development, cultural preservation, and socio-economic upliftment of border and tribal communities.

Cooperative Movement Key to Farmers Prosperity, Rural Empowerment: Devyani Rana

■ HT News Desk

MATHWAR, OCT 2: Jammu & Kashmir Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) Vice President Ms. Devyani Rana today extolled the transformative potential of the cooperative movement, describing it as a cornerstone for revitalizing rural economies and empowering agrarian communities.

Addressing progressive farmers of Block Mathwar during an awareness programme on Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) under the Central Sector Scheme, Ms. Rana characterized cooperatives as a catalyst for collective progress and enduring prosperity.

"Cooperatives epitomize the essence of shared advancement. They convene individuals, consolidate resources, and transmute common challenges into shared opportunities," Ms. Rana said. "They cultivate an ethos of equity and inclusion, ensuring that development is not an exclusive privilege but a universal right."

She observed that in recent years the cooperative sector has been accorded unprecedented institutional and policy support by the national leadership. This infusion of vision and resources, she noted, has invigorated grassroots organizations, enabling them to serve as engines of entrepreneurship, self-reliance, and sustainable livelihoods.

Invoking the guiding philosophy of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas", Ms. Rana asserted: "These values resonate profoundly with the cooperative spirit. True progress is never the work of solitary endeavor. It is forged in solidarity, sustained by trust, and animated by collective responsibility."

Ms. Rana lamented that the political exploitation of cooperatives in earlier decades had attenuated their resilience and efficacy, eroding public confidence. "Yet today," she affirmed, "we witness a renaissance of the cooperative movement, reinvigorated and reimagined as a credible instrument of empowerment and socioeconomic mobility."

On a personal note, Ms. Rana paid homage to her late father, Shri Devender Singh Rana, a steadfast advocate of agrarian welfare. She recalled his pivotal role in laying the institutional foundations for farmer empowerment in Mathwar, including the registration and sanctioning of The Mathwar Farmer Producer Organisation Cooperative Limited. "His vision was unequivocal: that genuine progress must emanate from those who till our soil and sustain our nation. I pledge to advance that vision with fidelity and resolve," she said.

Dy CM lays foundation stones of three bridges in Nowshera

Also chairs Public Darbar at Kalsian

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

NOWSHERA, OCT 02: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary today laid the foundation stones for three vital bridge projects aimed at strengthening road connectivity in the Nowshera area.

He laid the foundation stone for the construction of a 50-meter span motorable bridge with footpath over Androoth Nallah at Village Androoth under NABARD, with an estimated cost of Rs. 292 lakh.

He also laid the foundation stone for the 28-meter span motorable bridge at Rattan Galla Kalsian, including approaches, with an estimated cost of Rs. 284 lakh.

Another major project for which the foundation was laid is a 50-meter span motorable bridge with footpath over Androoth Nal-



lah at Village Androoth, with an estimated cost of Rs. 400 lakh.

During his visit, the Deputy Chief Minister also held a Public Darbar at Kalsian, where he interacted with the people and listened to their issues and demands. The Deputy CM redressed several grievances on the spot.

The general public expressed gratitude to the Deputy Chief Minister for sanctioning and laying the foundation of these important bridges, which will greatly benefit the local population by improving connectivity and easing transportation.

SE Tilak Raj; Executive Engineer PWD Nowshera Sarwar Mehmood; besides other district and sectoral officers also accompanied the Deputy CM during the visit.

MLA Farooq Shah Flags Off Dragon Boats for Dal Lake Cleanliness Drive

■ Farooq Rather

SRINAGAR, OCT 2: In a unique celebration of Gandhi Jayanti 2025, the Jammu & Kashmir Dragon Boat Association (JKDBA) organized a large-scale Cleanliness Drive in the iconic Dal Lake, reaffirming its commitment to environmental protection and sustainable tourism.

The event was flagged off by Farooq Ahmad Shah, Hon'ble MLA Gulmarg, who served as the Chief Guest on the occasion. Launching the Dragon Boats as a symbolic start to the drive, Shah praised the efforts of JKDBA and pledged his full support to promote dragon boating as a sport across Jammu & Kashmir. He emphasized the need to make the sport accessible to all, with the vision of nurturing future national and international medal winners.

Prominent personalities present at the event included M.S. Punoo (IPS Retd.), President JKDBA; Er. Aamir Ali, Senior Vice President JKDBA; Er. Muzamil Rafiqi, Superintending Engineer LCMA; along with JKDBA office bearers,



coach Farooq Ahmad Bhat, gold medalist Zain ul Abidin, students, media representatives, and local volunteers.

Participants, including young enthusiasts and sportspersons, actively collected plastic waste and debris along the lakefront using gloves and biodegradable bags. The activity sent a powerful message of environmental responsibility, community participation, and the importance of preserving natural heritage sites.

Speaking to the media, JKDBA officials stated that such cleanliness drives will now be held regularly, and appealed to the public to join hands in protecting Dal Lake and maintaining its pristine beauty.

This initiative not only honored Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of cleanliness and civic responsibility but also blended the spirit of sportsmanship with environmental awareness, setting a positive precedent for future campaigns.

DC Bandipora presides over Gram Sabha at Kudara

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

BANDIPORA, OCT 2: As part of the Seva Parv concluding ceremony and the ongoing Aadi Karam Yogi Abhiyan, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today visited Kudara village and presided over a Special Gram Sabha aimed at strengthening public engagement and ensuring inclusive delivery of government welfare initiatives. The event witnessed the participation of representatives from various government departments and a large gathering of local residents.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner directly engaged with the public, listened to their issues, and reaffirmed the administration's commitment to grassroots development. In her address, she emphasized the importance of people-centric governance, transparency, and responsive administration, assuring prompt and effective redressal of public concerns. She further informed that Phase 4 of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) is currently under process, aimed at upgrading road infrastructure in Kudara and surrounding areas to improve connectivity and boost economic activity. The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by District Programme Officer, Poshan Project Bandipora, Yaar Ali Khan; DDC Arin, Ghulam Mohiuddin; and other concerned officers. As part of Seva Parv activities, Special Gram Sabhas were organized across all Panchayats of Bandipora district, providing a vital platform for citizen engagement, scheme awareness, and participatory decision-making, with a focus on reviewing government schemes and addressing public grievances.

SEWA PARV 2025 Plantation Drive Successfully Concluded By Social Forestry Range Budgam

"Plantation Is Our Duty And Part of Our Emaan; Students Must Lead The Way To Protect Environment"; PSAJK President

■ HT News Desk

BUDGAM, OCT 02: The SEWA PARV 2025 Plantation Drive concluded today at IIS School, showcasing a remarkable commitment to environmental conservation and community engagement. Organized in collaboration with the Social Forestry Range Budgam, the event was graced by PSAJK State President, G.N. Var, as the Chief Guest, along with senior officials from the Social Forestry Department.

SEWA PARV Launched on 17 September 2025, the initiative united educators, students, officials and community leaders in a collective effort to promote environmental responsibility and nurture a greener, healthier future for generations to come.

Speaking on the occasion, G.N. Var emphasized the importance of plantation drives in line with faith and responsibility "Plantation is part of our Emaan. As human beings, it is our duty to protect and nurture the environ-

ment, for our survival depends upon it. We must make our students aware of environmental challenges and sensitize them about the benefits of plantation. Without such awareness, our future generations will face difficulties. Life itself revolves around the environment, and therefore, protecting it is not just a necessity, but an obligation," he said.

Var also expressed gratitude to the Social Forestry Range Budgam for its remarkable efforts

"The Social Forestry Department has taken this plantation drive to a large scale, organizing programs and awareness campaigns across different places in J&K. This has greatly contributed to spreading awareness in society. I am happy to see students actively participating and becoming ambassadors of environmental care."

"Participating in the SEWA PARV 2025 plantation drive has been an amazing experience. We learned how important it is to

protect our environment and how even small efforts, like planting a tree, can make a big difference for our planet. I feel proud to contribute to a greener future," said a student.

On this occasion, Trade Union Council President, Abdul Majeed Parray, also shared his views, acknowledging the contribution of schools and the community. "We are thankful to the schools and the general public who have extended their support and participated wholeheartedly in this

initiative. Such collective efforts ensure that awareness reaches every corner. We will continue our work day and night to make plantation drives successful, so that more people get involved, become sensitized and together we can protect our environment for future generations."

"Events like SEWA PARV 2025 are crucial in educating young minds about environmental responsibility. It's not just about planting trees, it's about instilling values of care, awareness, and

sustainable living. Seeing our students actively participate gives us hope for a cleaner and greener tomorrow," said a teacher.

The officers of the Social Forestry Department highlighted that a series of plantation programs and awareness drives had been carried out across Budgam district under SEWA PARV 2025. These initiatives have helped strengthen environmental consciousness, particularly among students and youth.

HT EDITORIAL

Marriage ceremonies need to be reformed in Kashmir

A marriage is an occasion to celebrate and not to give trouble to the people living in the adjacent houses. However, in Kashmir a disturbing trend has emerged especially in the Srinagar city and other districts as well as towns. This is in the form of bursting fire-crackers during marriages and that too during the dead of the night when the people are sleeping.

There was a time when bursting of fire-crackers during marriages was considered to be unethical and whosoever did the same was looked upon with discredit in the society. Times have changed and so has the outlook of people. As on date a marriage in Srinagar or any other district or town in Kashmir is considered incomplete in case there is no arrangement for bursting of fire-crackers. Given this fact the people as a whole make arrangements for the same.

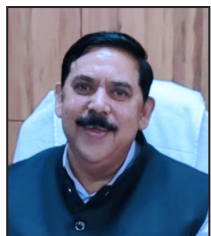
As and when a groom leaves from his home to the bride's home the same is marked by bursting of fire-crackers. Fire-crackers also burst at the bride's home as and when the groom arrives. In both the cases the people who are very remotely associated with the marriage ceremony have to face the music. If the departure of the groom or arrival of the bride would have taken place during normal time then the problems would not have been there, but that is not the case.

In the present day context a groom leaves from his home to the bride's home only after mid-night and whosoever leaves early is not looked upon with respect and dignity. A marriage ceremony is no less than a torture for the people who have nothing to do with the same. The loud bang of the fire-crackers makes the life of people virtually and that too during the dead of the night. The people who burst the fire-crackers tend to forget that they are causing trouble to the people living in the vicinity.

Trouble is more for those people who are having some illness or disease. It is important that a reformation takes place in the Kashmiri society and the elders should take a call about the same. The marriage ceremonies should be held in such a manner that no trouble whatsoever is caused to the people. It is imperative that all the functions connected with a marriage are finished before midnight so that no trouble is caused to the organisers and others.

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The RSS at 100: A Century of Nation-Building



■ Prof. Dinesh Chandra Rai

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is commemorating its 100th anniversary, a moment to reflect on a century of profound impact. What began as a small gathering in Nagpur on September 27, 1925, under the leadership of Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, has grown into what is widely regarded as the world's largest voluntary organization. At the heart of the RSS lies a powerful and elegant philosophy: Vyakti Nirman Se Rashtra Nirman—"building the nation by building the character of its people." This guiding principle has fueled a hundred-year commitment to cultural awareness, personal development, and selfless service, creating a massive network of individuals dedicated to societal improvement. The centenary is more than just a historical milestone; it's a moment to honor the deep influence this movement has had on India's national fabric.

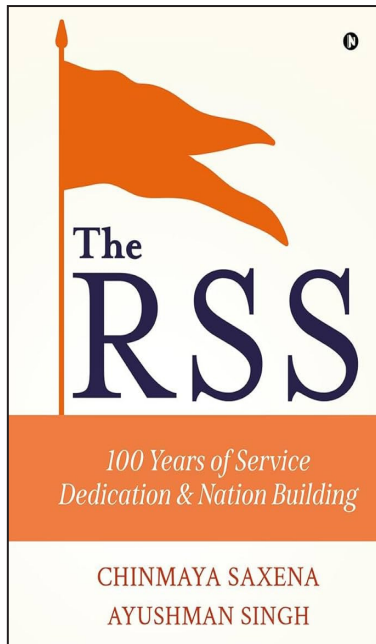
This isn't just a historical milestone; it's a profound moment for India. The government's decision to issue a special postage stamp and a commemorative ₹100 coin to honor the centenary is a significant sign of national recognition. The coin's design, which features Bharat Mata (Mother India) being saluted by swayamsevaks, is particularly symbolic. This marks the first time Bharat Mata has appeared on Indian currency, a powerful statement that weaves the

organization's foundational identity into the national narrative.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's acknowledgment of the RSS's journey as a "golden chapter" in modern Indian history further emphasizes its national importance. He has praised the organization for its tireless efforts to unify the country, transcending divisions of caste and creed. The Prime Minister has highlighted the remarkable coherence across the Sangh Parivar—the family of organizations under the RSS umbrella—which, despite their diverse functions, all operate with a single core principle: 'Nation First'. This unity in diversity is a testament to the organization's enduring societal impact. A Society's Backbone in Times of Crisis

The RSS's role as an indispensable backbone during national crises is well-established. Its tradition of disciplined service (Seva) has been on display for decades. Whether it was the coordinated relief work after the 1956 Anjar earthquake, providing support to the armed forces during the 1962 conflict, or assisting millions of refugees in 1971, the organization has consistently stepped up.

This was never more evident than during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the banner of Rashtriya Seva Bharati, over half a million volunteers served in nearly 93,000 locations nationwide. The scale of their humanitarian aid was immense. Volunteers distributed 45 million food packets and provided supplies to more than 7 million families. They also provided crucial assistance to marginalized groups, including migrant workers and nomadic people. The swift and systematic establishment of isolation centers and medical support validated the RSS's ability to act as a highly dependable parallel structure,



providing essential services when official systems were stretched to their limits.

Beyond visible crisis management, the Sangh Parivar's continuous, quiet efforts in less-publicized areas form a vital engine for national cohesion. For instance, the Deendayal Research Institute, founded by Nanaji Deshmukh, focuses on sustainable rural development, self-employment, and organic farming. This work is a practical manifestation of the philosophy of Antyodaya, which means serving the last person in line.

Shaping the Future of Education As a part of the academic community, I've seen firsthand how the RSS's long-held beliefs have influenced national policy. The organization's conviction that instruction should be delivered in the mother tongue found a voice in the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP), which now mandates instruction in the

home language up to at least Class 5, and preferably Class 8. This is a praiseworthy move toward linguistic democratization of knowledge, which has been a core tenet of the Sangh's educational philosophy for decades.

The organization focuses on shaping the individual first, believing that a society of disciplined and selfless people will automatically build a strong and unified nation. The provided article highlights several ways this philosophy is put into practice, although it doesn't offer a specific list of methods. The key is the emphasis on selfless service (Seva) and discipline. By participating in the RSS's structured activities, members are conditioned to prioritize the collective good over personal gain.

The first century of the RSS has established a durable model of Vyakti Nirman, creating a vast pool of human capital dedicated to selfless service. This model has proven its ability to catalyze a national renaissance. As we stand at the threshold of the next century, the legacy of service built by this organization should not just be a model to admire, but a universal societal commitment. The vision of a truly developed India (Vikshit Bharat) requires a renewed covenant from every citizen. This centenary is a moment for all of us to make a solemn pledge: to consistently prioritize the national interest (Rashtra Pratham) over narrow individual gains and partisan benefits. It is only by mirroring the spirit of Vyakti Nirman—through collective, selfless contribution to nation-building—that Bharat will fully realize its potential on the global stage.

The author is a Vice Chancellor, B.R.A. Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, Bihar. Email: dcr.ai@bhu.ac.in

Gandhi's Efforts for Peace in J&K, 1947



■ By Mool Rai

Mahatma Gandhi tried his best to prevent the state of Jammu and Kashmir from becoming a potential menace to peace between the two newly carved dominions of India and Pakistan.

He was not in favour of Nehru's proposal to refer the Kashmir dispute to the UNO and advised settlement by direct negotiations.

Gandhi ji paid only one visit to Jammu & Kashmir and that too in 1947 when the dark clouds were looming large over the state on account of Maharaja Hari Singh's indecision to accede to one of the newly created dominions.

As his secretary, Pyare Lal, records: "Gandhiji had always had uneasy forebodings about Kashmir and tried his best to prevent it from becoming a potential menace to peace between the two dominions".

Even at such a crucial moment Maharaja Hari Singh would not allow the Father of the Nation to visit his state. The Maharaja wrote to Lord Mountbatten that he considered Mahatamaji's visit to his state as "inadvisable from all points of view", and requested Lord Mountbatten that "He (mahatamaji) or any other political leader should not visit the state until the conditions in India take a happier turn".

Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru was distressed to hear the views of the Maharaja and on July 28, 1947, wrote to Gandhiji ".....I shall go ahead with my plans. As between visiting Kashmir when my people need me there and being the Prime Minister, I prefer the former".

Gandhi informed Lord Mountbatten about the firm stand taken by Nehru to defy the Maharaja's orders. Mountbatten had hurried consultations with Hari Singh. Faced with the possibility of an imminent visit of Nehru, the Maharaja gave his reluctant acceptance to Gandhiji's visit.

Lord Mountbatten wrote to Mahatamaji about his talks with the Maharaja and said: ".....May I, therefore, urge that you should suggest to Pandit Nehru that your visit at this moment would be better than a visit from him, for I really do not know how the future Prime Minister of India can be spared from Delhi when only 18 days are left for him to take over".

In his prayer meeting at Delhi on 29th July 1947, Gandhiji said that he was going to Kashmir "to fulfill the promise made to Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru".

Gandhi ji left Delhi on 31st July and reached Srinagar on 1st August 1947. His visit to Srinagar was regarded as an event of great political importance as just 14 days were left for the British to quit India and the popular leader-Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah—with whose help and cooperation alone Kashmir could accede to India, was still languishing in the jail.

Gandhi ji stayed at the residence of late Shri kishori Lal, a Congress worker, at Haft-Chinar. He did not address any public meeting but after intervals he gave "darshan" to the large crowds of people assembled in the spacious courtyard shouting "Gandhi ji ki Jai".

By a strange coincidence, the 1st of August was being celebrated by the state government as "the day of restoration of Gilgit". The British, it will be recalled, had assumed the civil and military administration of Gilgit from Maharaja Hari Singh on 26th March 1935 for a period of 60 years. With the impending lapse of British paramountcy Gilgit was restored to the Maharaja. Among the programme of jubulations ordered was illumination of the cities and forts. In the evening, Gandhi ji's host Kishori Lal took him in his car for a round of the city. Gandhi ji saw the Shergarhi Palace and the streets profusely illuminated. "What are these illuminations for?", he asked. On being told the reason, he made a prophetic remark: "A great mistake. They should have taken this opportunity to proclaim Gilgit's autonomy within Kashmir".

On the 2nd and 3rd August 1947, Gandhi ji held prayer meetings in Srinagar but made no reference to his meetings with the Maharaja or his Prime Minister Pandit Ram Chandra Kak. On the 3rd of August he called upon Begum Abdullah (wife of Sheikh Abdullah).

Gandhi ji left Srinagar for Jammu by car on the 4th August where he stayed at the residence of Shri JN Sharma, the then superintendent of the Ranbir Government Press. Incidentally, Sharma's was the only private house in Jammu which had spacious lawn and a large verandah and was considered by the local Congress workers as most suitable for Gandhi ji's stay.

Gandhi ji gave "darshan" to anxious crowds of people. To a deputation which met him to enquire about the future of the state, Gandhi ji said: "the future will depend on the people of Kashmir".

Gandhi ji made his mission known and broke his silence on the most burning issue of the state's future only when he had left the Maharaja's territories. He left Jammu for Rawalpindi on the 5th August stepping at the Wah refugee camp on the way.

In a statement issued by him on the 6th August, Gandhi ji said: "The will of the Kashmiris is the supreme law in Kashmir. The Maharaja and the Maharani shared this view, the sooner the will of the Kashmiris decides

the fate of Kashmir, the better". He hoped the question would be decided between the dominions, the Maharaja of Kashmir and the Kashmiris. After they could come to a joint decision much trouble would be saved. Kashmir is a big state and has a great strategic value", he concluded.

In his letter to Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru dated 6th August 1947, Mahatma Gandhi gave some details of his talks with Maharaja Hari Singh, Maharani Tara Devi and Pandit Ram Chandra Kak, Prime Minister. He said: "During my interviews with the Prime Minister, Ram Chandra Kak, I told him about his unpopularity among the people. He wrote to the Maharaja that a sign from him he would gladly resign. The Maharaja had sent me a message that he and the Maharani were anxious to see me. I met them. Both admitted that with the lapse of British Paramountcy, the true paramountcy of the people of Kashmir would commence. However much they might wish to join the Union, they would have to make the choice in accordance with the wishes of the people. How that could be determined was not discussed at the interview.....".

Events that followed Gandhi ji's visit were very significant. On 11th August the Prime Minister, Ram Chandra Kak, resigned. This was followed by the release of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and other leaders.

Gandhi ji was much distressed to hear the reports of some killings in certain parts of Jammu. His Secretary, Pyre Lal, has recorded the following conversation between Gandhi ji and Sheikh Abdullah during the latter's visit to Delhi in December, 1947. "Is it true what they say about conduct of Kashmir state troops during the post-partition troubles? Gandhi ji asked Sheikh Abdullah. The latter admitted that unfortunately it was true. Gandhi ji blazed forth: "How dare you weaken then on the issue of the curtailment of the Maharaja's powers without betraying your trust?".

Immediately on his return from Delhi, Sheikh Abdullah started a tirade against the Maharaja which culminated in the ending of the hereditary rulership in Jammu and Kashmir.

Gandhi ji had all praise for the spirit of communal harmony prevailing in Kashmir. In his prayer meeting at Delhi on 29th December 1947, he said: "It is on the Kashmir soil that Islam and Hinduism are being weighed. If both pull their weight correctly in the same direction, the chief actors will cover themselves with glory and nothing can move them from their joint credit. My sole hope and prayer is that Kashmir should become a beacon of light to this benighted sub-continent".

The author is a regular columnist and freelance writer

The Stone Memorial With The Kohima Epitaph



■ M S Nazki

Yaad na jaye beetein dinon ki: Din jo pakheru hote pinjare Me mai rakh deta, Paalataa unako jatan se, Moti ke daane deta, Sine se rahataa lagaae!

The famous epitaph "When you go home, tell them of us and say, For your tomorrow, we gave our today" was written by John Maxwell Edmonds. While it is famously associated with the Kohima Memorial, Edmonds was a classical scholar who wrote many epitaphs during the First World War.

He was an English classicist, poet, and dramatist. He authored several well-known epitaphs, and the "When you go home" phrase is one of his most famous.

The words are found on the Kohima Memorial in India, a tribute to the Allied forces who defended against the Japanese invasion in 1944.

The epitaph honors the soldiers who died during that battle. Edmonds drew inspiration from ancient Greek epitaphs, such as those written by Simonides of Ceos for the fallen Greeks at the Battle of Thermopylae.

Battle of Thermopylae.

Battle of Thermopylae was fought in 480 BC at Thermopylae between the Achaemenid Persian Empire under Xerxes I and an alliance of Greek city-states led by Sparta under Leonidas I. Lasting over the course of three days, it was one of the most prominent battles of both the second Persian invasion of Greece and the wider Greco-Persian Wars.

The engagement occurred simultaneously with the naval Battle of Artemisium: between July and September during 480 BC. The second Persian invasion under Xerxes I was a delayed response to the failure of the first Persian invasion, which had been initiated by Darius I and ended in 490 BC by an Athenian-led Greek victory at the Battle of Marathon.

By 480 BC, a decade after the Persian defeat at Marathon, Xerxes had amassed a massive land and naval force, and subsequently set out to conquer all of Greece. In response, the Athenian politician and general Themistocles proposed that the allied Greeks block the advance of the Persian army at the pass of Thermopylae while simultaneously blocking the Persian navy at the Straits of Artemisium.

Around the start of the invasion, a Greek force of approximately 7,000 men led by Leonidas marched north to block the pass of Thermopylae. Ancient authors vastly inflated the size of the Persian army, with estimates in the millions, but modern scholars estimate it at between 120,000 and 300,000 soldiers.

They arrived at Thermopylae by late August or early September; the outnumbered Greeks held them off for seven days (including three of direct battle) before their rear-guard was annihilated in one of history's most famous last stands. During two full days of battle, the Greeks blocked the only road by which the massive Persian army could traverse the narrow pass.

After the second day, a local resident named Ephialtes revealed to the Persians the existence of a path leading behind the Greek lines. Subsequently, Leonidas, aware that his force was being outflanked by the Persians, dismissed the bulk of the Greek army and remained to guard their retreat along with 300 Spartans and 700 Thespians.

It has been reported that others also remained, including up to 900 helots and 400 Thebans. With the exception of the Thebans, most of whom reportedly surrendered, the Greeks fought the Persians to the death.

Themistocles was in command of the Greek naval force at Artemisium when he received news that the Persians had taken the pass at Thermopylae. Since the Greek defensive strategy had required both Thermopylae and Artemisium to be held, the decision was made to withdraw to the island of Salamis.

The Persians overran Boeotia and then captured the evacuated city of Athens. The Greek fleet—seeking a decisive victory over the Persian armada—attacked and defeated the invading force at the Battle of Salamis in late 480 BC.

Wary of being trapped in Europe, Xerxes withdrew with much of his army to Asia, reportedly losing many of his troops to starvation and disease while also leaving behind the Persian military commander Mardonius to continue the Achaemenid Empire's Greek campaign.

However, the following year saw a Greek army decisively defeat Mardonius and his troops at the Battle of Plataea, ending the second Persian invasion.

Both ancient and modern writers have used the Battle of Thermopylae as a flagship example of the power of an army defending its native soil. The performance of the Greek defenders is also used as an example of the advantages of training, equipment, and use of terrain as force multipliers.

And thus came the famous quote:

Hear your fate, O dwellers in Sparta of the wide spaces; Either your famed, great town must be sacked by Perseus' sons, Or, if that be not, the whole land of Lacedaemon, Shall mourn the death of a king of the house of Heracles, For not the strength of lions or of bulls shall hold him, Strength against strength, for he has the power of Zeus, And will not be checked till one of these two he has consumed, O stranger, tell the Lacedaemonians that we lie here, obedient to their words (The Oracle at Delphi, in The Histories by Herodotus, translated by Aubrey de Selincourt!)

There is another ones too:

Go tell the Spartans, thou who passest by, That here, obedient to their laws, we lie.

Stranger, tell the Spartans that we behaved as they would wish us to, and are buried here.

Stranger! To Sparta say, her faithful band Here lie in death, remembering her command.

Kohima War Cemetery:

Kohima War Cemetery is a memorial dedicated to soldiers of the 2nd British Division of the Allied Forces who died in the Second World War at Kohima, the capital of the Indian state of Nagaland in April 1944. The soldiers died on the battleground of Garrison Hill in the tennis court area of the Deputy Commissioner's residence.

According to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which maintains this cemetery among many others in the world, there are 1,420 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War at this cemetery, and a memorial to an additional 917 Hindu and Sikh soldiers who were cremated in accordance with their faith. The memorial was inaugurated by Field Marshal Sir William Slim, then Commander of the 14th Army in Burma.

Entrance to the cemetery:

The Kohima War Cemetery is located in the heart of Kohima, the capital city of the Indian state of Nagaland, at the location where a decisive battle was won by the Allied Forces during the Second World War, forcing the Japanese army to retreat. This location is on the ridge below and above the tennis court. History

The History:

In March 1944, the Japanese 15th Army attacked the British troops stationed in Kohima and Imphal in northeast India with intent to prevent an attack on Burma. In the first week of April, the Japanese attacked at Kohima and Imphal via Mizoram from the Indo-Burma border, to destroy the supply bases of the British. They laid siege on the Allied forces stationed at Kohima and also at Imphal.

Reaching Kohima during April 1944, the Japanese 15th Army occupied a strategic location on Garrison Hill and continually attacked a small contingent of the Commonwealth forces, which successfully held their ground until reinforcements were brought in. In the battle at the tennis ground (now marked by white concrete lines) of the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow (which was destroyed during the war), which also involved hand-to-hand fighting between the opposing forces, the Commonwealth forces prevailed over the Japanese forces and forced them to retreat in defeat. There were heavy casualties on both sides. This battle was the turning point for the Allied forces.

In 2013, the British National Army Museum voted the Battle of Imphal and Kohima as "Britain's Greatest Battle."

Description: The stone memorial with the Kohima Epitaph

The cemetery is set in peaceful surroundings with well-manicured grassland in which roses bloom in season. The cemetery is sited at the exact location where the battle was fought, and provides a panoramic view of the city of Kohima. It is marked at its two ends by tall, concrete structures engraved with the cross. Between the two structures, along the sloping ground, a series of terraces of 3–5 metres (9.8–16.4 ft) in height have been created; these contain stone markers embedded with bronze plaques carrying the name of each Commonwealth soldier who died on the Kohima battlefield. These markers are made distinctly visible by a white wash.

There are two memorial crosses, one at the upper end and the other at the lower



er end of the cemetery.[citation needed]

The upper-end memorial is located at the highest end of the cemetery. It commemorates the names of the Indian and Sikh soldiers (917 Hindu and Sikh soldiers who had been cremated as per their religious rites) who were part of the British Indian Army and died on the battlefield. The epitaph inscribed on this memorial reads:

Here, around the tennis court of the deputy commissioner, lie men who fought in the battle of Kohima in which they and their comrades finally halted the invasion of India by the forces of Japan in April 1944.

The lower-end memorial is dedicated to the 2nd Division. It is a 15 feet (4.6 m) tall, massive stone (similar to the stone used by the Naga tribes to mark the graves of their dead) fixed over a dressed stone platform. This stone was originally located on a spur at Maram, to the south of Kohima, which was then shifted with the help of Naga people to be erected at the 2nd British Division's war cemetery.

While the top part of the memorial is marked with a cross, at the lower part lies a bronze plate that carries an epitaph. The epitaph, titled Kohima Epitaph, reads:[citation needed]

When you go home tell them of us and say for your tomorrow we gave our today'

Another notable feature at the site is a cherry tree near the tennis court where the battle was fought, where a small brass plaque reads: For Your Tomorrow, We Gave Our Today!

The original tree, from which a branch has been used to create the present tree where the plaque is fixed, had been used for target practice by the Japanese forces. It was destroyed during the battle. Hence, Kohima Battle is also known as the "Battle Under the Cherry Tree".

Close to the Garrison Hill, memorials for the 2nd Battalion, the Dorsetshire Regiment, and several other regiments have been established. There is a memorial to the dead of the 2nd Battalion, The Durham Light Infantry, inside the grounds of the Chief Secretary's Official Residence, just behind the Governor's House.

In the list of the dead marked by stones at the cemetery, there are 64 names of Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders soldiers; the memorial, however, lists 96 names, out of which the graves of 32 persons were located.

Tucked beside the iconic Kohima War Cemetery, the Garrison Hill Café is more than just a coffee stop — it's a quiet tribute to the fierce Battle of Kohima (1944), often called the Stalingrad of the East. From tables etched with battle maps to walls adorned with replica helmets and battlefield art, every corner echoes stories of courage, sacrifice, and grit. Even the lamps — fashioned from 81mm mortar shells and steel helmets — remind us of the price paid for freedom (More about this later in the story)!

Tasvir unaki chhupaake, Rakh dun jahaa ji chaahe, Man me basi ye murat, Lekin mite na mitaae, Kahane ko hai vo paraae, Yaad na jaae bite dino ki!

Battle of Kohima:

The Battle of Kohima was the turning point of the Japanese U-Go offensive into British India in 1944 during the Second World War. The battle took place in three stages from 4 April to 22 June 1944 around the town of Kohima, now the capital city of the state of Nagaland in Northeast India. From 3 to 16 April, the Japanese attempted to capture Kohima ridge, a feature which dominated the road by which the besieged British and Indian troops of IV Corps at Imphal were supplied. By mid-April, the small British and British Indian force at Kohima was relieved.

From 18 April to 13 May British and British Indian reinforcements counter-attacked to drive the Japanese from the positions they had captured. The Japanese abandoned the ridge at this point but continued to block the Kohima–Imphal road. From 16 May to 22 June the British

and British Indian troops pursued the retreating Japanese and reopened the road. The battle ended on 22 June when British and British Indian troops from Kohima and Imphal met at Milestone 109, ending the Siege of Imphal.

In 2013, a poll conducted by the British National Army Museum voted the Battles of Kohima and Imphal as "Britain's Greatest Battle". The Battles of Kohima and Imphal have been referred to by authors such as Martin Dougherty and Jonathan Ritter as the "Stalingrad of the East".

Background

The Japanese plan to invade India, code-named U-Go, was originally intended as a spoiling attack against the British IV Corps at Imphal in Manipur, to disrupt the Allied offensive plans for that year. The commander of the Japanese Fifteenth Army, Lieutenant General Renya Mutaguchi, enlarged the plan to invade India itself and perhaps even overthrow the British Raj.

If the Japanese were able to gain a strong foothold in India they would demonstrate the weakness of the British Empire and provide encouragement to Indian nationalists in their decolonization efforts. Moreover, occupation of the area around Imphal would severely impact American efforts to supply Chiang Kai-shek's army in China.

The objections of the staffs of various headquarters were eventually overcome, and the offensive was approved by Imperial General Headquarters on 7 January 1944.

Part of the plan involved sending the Japanese 31st Division (which was composed of the 58th, 124th and 138th Infantry Regiments and the 31st Mountain Artillery Regiment) to capture Kohima and thus cut off Imphal.

Mutaguchi wished to exploit the capture of Kohima by pushing the 31st Division on to Dimapur, the vital railroad and logistic base in the Brahmaputra River valley.

The 31st Division's commander, Lieutenant General Kotoku Sato, was unhappy with his role. He had not been involved in the planning of the offensive, and had grave misgivings about its chances. He had already told his staff that they might all starve to death.

In common with many senior Japanese officers, Sato considered Mutaguchi a "blockhead". He and Mutaguchi had also been on opposite sides during the split between the Toseiha and Kodoha factions within the Japanese Army during the early 1930s, and Sato believed he had reason to distrust Mutaguchi's motives.

Prelude: Imphal and Kohima campaign

Starting on 15 March 1944, the Japanese 31st Division crossed the Chindwin River] near Homalin and moved north-west along jungle trails on a front almost 60 miles (97 km) wide. Because of a shortage of transport, half the artillery regiment's mountain guns and the infantry regiments' heavy weapons were left behind. Only three weeks's supply of food and ammunition was carried.

Although the march was arduous, good progress was made. The left wing of the division, consisting of the bulk of the 58th Regiment and commanded by the division's Infantry Group commander, Major General Shigesaburo Miyazaki, was ahead of the neighbouring formation (the Japanese 15th Infantry Division) when they clashed with Indian troops covering the northern approaches to Imphal on 20 March.

The Indian troops were the 50th Indian Parachute Brigade under Brigadier Maxwell Hope-Thomson, at Sangshak. Although they were not Miyazaki's objective, he decided to clear them from his line of advance. The Battle of Sangshak continued for six days. The parachute brigade's troops were desperately short of drinking water, but Miyazaki was handicapped by lack of artillery until near the end of the battle.

Eventually, as some of the Japanese 15th Division's troops joined the battle, Hope-Thomson withdrew. The 50th Parachute Brigade lost 600 men, while the Japanese

had suffered over 400 casualties. Miyazaki had also captured some of the food and munitions that had been dropped by the Royal Air Force (RAF) to the defenders of Sangshak. However, his troops, who had the shortest and easiest route to Kohima, were delayed by a week.

Meanwhile, the commander of the British Fourteenth Army, Lieutenant General William Slim, belatedly realised (partly from Japanese documents that had been captured at Sangshak) that a whole Japanese division was moving towards Kohima. He and his staff had originally believed that, because of the forbidding terrain in the area, the Japanese would only be able to send a regiment to take Kohima.

Slim knew that there were few fighting troops, as opposed to soldiers in line-of-communication units and supporting services, in Kohima and none at all at the vital base of Dimapur 30 miles (48 km) to the north. Dimapur contained an area of supply dumps 11 miles (18 km) long and 1 mile (1.6 km) wide.] As the fall of Dimapur would have been disastrous for the Allies, Slim asked his superior, General George Giffard (commanding Eleventh Army Group), for more troops to protect Dimapur and to prepare to relieve Imphal.

The Allies were already hastily reinforcing the Imphal Front. As part of this move, the infantry and artillery of the 5th Indian Infantry Division were flown from the Arakan, where they had just participated in the defeat of a subsidiary Japanese offensive at the Battle of the Admin Box.

While the main body of the division went to Imphal (where some units had been isolated and almost all of IV Corps' reserves had already been committed), the 161st Indian Infantry Brigade, commanded by Brigadier Dermot Warren and with 24th Mountain Artillery Regiment, Indian Artillery attached, were flown to Dimapur.

Early in March, the 23rd Long Range Penetration Brigade was removed from Major General Order Wingate's Chindit force, and was dispatched by rail from around Lalaghat to Jorhat, 50 miles (80 km) north of Dimapur, where they could threaten the flank of any Japanese attack on the base.

Giffard and General Claude Auchinleck, the Commander-in-Chief of the British Indian Army, also prepared to send the British 2nd Division and Indian XXXIII Corps HQ under Lieutenant General Montagu Stopford from reserve in southern and central India to Dimapur, by road and rail.

Until XXXIII Corps headquarters could arrive at Dimapur, the HQ of 202 Line of Communication Area under Major General R.P.L. Ranking took command of the area!

The end of the operations was now in sight!

Role of the Indian Army:

The Indian Army played a crucial role at Kohima by initially defending the area with units like the 161st Indian Brigade and the Assam Regiment, delaying the Japanese advance and enduring a 13-day siege. Indian troops also provided a crucial counter-attack, and the entire campaign saw significant Indian involvement, including the actions of the Royal Indian Army Service Corps and Gurkha units, which helped secure a decisive Allied victory and marked a turning point in the Burma Campaign.

Key Contributions of the Indian Army: Initial Defense: Outnumbered Indian units, including the 1st Assam Regiment and parts of the Assam Rifles, held the Japanese advance, buying time for Allied reinforcements to arrive.

Battle of Attrition: The Indian forces turned the battle into a costly fight for the Japanese, who faced heavy casualties and eventual starvation.

Reinforcements and Counter-Attack: The 5th and 7th Indian Infantry Divisions were moved into the region to join the fight, and Indian brigades were key to relieving the besieged garrison at Kohima.

Logistical Support: The Royal Indian Army Service Corps provided essential supplies of food, water, and ammunition to the front-line troops, ensuring they could sustain their efforts.

Fierce Hand-to-Hand Combat: Indian and British forces, including those from the 161st Indian Brigade, engaged in brutal, close-quarters fighting, particularly around the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow and tennis court.

Significance of the Battle: Turning Point: The Battle of Kohima is often considered the turning point of the Burma Campaign, halting the Japanese advance and leading to their ultimate defeat in the region.

High Sacrifices: The battle involved incredible acts of bravery and sacrifice from Indian soldiers, who faced immense hardship and loss.

Higher Doses of Semaglutide More Effective for Weight Loss, Study Finds

A significantly higher dose of weight-loss drugs containing the active ingredient semaglutide can be more effective in helping people lose weight.

That's according to two new studies published on September 14 in The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology journal.

In both clinical trials, participants who received a triple dose of semaglutide medication achieved slightly more weight loss than people taking a standard dose.

The weight loss was more significant when compared to study participants who were given a placebo.

In both trials, participants were advised on lifestyle factors such as diet and exercise. Novo Nordisk, the manufacturer of semaglutide medications like Ozempic and Wegovy, funded both trials.

Higher doses of Ozempic, Wegovy led to greater weight loss

The first study Trusted Source involved 1,407 people with obesity who did not have type 2 diabetes. About 73% of the participants were female. They had a mean age of 47 and a mean body mass index (BMI) of almost 40.

The participants were followed between January 2023 and November 2024 at 95 medical facilities in 11 countries.

The majority of the participants were prescribed to a regimen involving 7.2 mg weekly doses of semaglutide medication, triple the standard dose. The other subjects were given either 2.4 mg doses or a placebo.

In that study, researchers reported that people taking the 7.2 mg dose achieved an average weight loss of 19% compared to an average 16% weight loss for those taking the 2.4 mg dose and nearly 4% for those given the placebo.

The researchers added that about half of the participants on the 7.2 mg dose lost at least 20% of their body weight while a third lost at least 25% of their body weight.

They also reported that the higher dose group showed more benefits in:

- waist circumference
- blood pressure
- blood sugar levels
- cholesterol readings

Higher semaglutide doses improved blood sugar, waist size

The second study Trusted Source involved 512 people diagnosed with obesity and type 2 diabetes. About 52% of these participants were female.

The participants had an average age of 56, a mean BMI measurement of 38, and a mean HbA1c blood sugar level of slightly more than 8. They were studied at 68 medical facilities between January 2023 and May 2023.

In that study, researchers reported participants on semaglutide doses of 7.2 mg achieved an average weight loss of 13% compared to 10% for participants given 2.4 mg doses and close to 4% for those getting



The majority of the participants were prescribed to a regimen involving 7.2 mg weekly doses of semaglutide medication, triple the standard dose. The other subjects were given either 2.4 mg doses or a placebo.

In that study, researchers reported that people taking the 7.2 mg dose achieved an average weight loss of 19% compared to an average 16% weight loss for those taking the 2.4 mg dose and nearly 4% for those given the placebo.

a placebo.

Researchers also reported that people on the 7.2 mg doses experienced more significant reductions in waist size and blood sugar levels.

In both studies, researchers said participants on the higher 7.2 mg doses reported some gastrointestinal side effects but that those health issues were manageable.

The scientists said further studies are warranted to determine long-term risks as well as benefits.

Higher doses of GLP-1s are not ideal for long-term use

Experts not involved in the new studies say GLP-1 weight loss drugs and bariatric surgery can be highly effective in helping people manage their weight.

"These drugs are the most effective medication available at this time for weight loss. However, if someone meets the criteria for surgery, that is even more effective than the medications," said Mir Ali, MD, a general surgeon, bariatric surgeon, and medical director of MemorialCare Surgical Weight Loss Center at Orange Coast Medical Center in California.

"They result in significant weight loss and improvement in many health conditions related to obesity," Ali told Healthline. "They do require long-term use as studies show a high incidence of weight regain if discontinued."

Dan Azagury, MD, an associate professor of surgery and chief of the Section of Minimally Invasive and Bariatric Surgery at Stanford University in California, said the new studies are encouraging news.

"This new dosing of semaglutide offers a new more effective option for weight loss, compared to the current maximal dose," he told Healthline. "Essentially more effective while maintaining a side effect profile that isn't significantly worse for the typical [gastrointestinal] side effects that most patients experience."

However, Azagury said there was one troubling side effect he saw in the research.

"The concern here at this new dose is the significant increase in dysaesthesia

(which includes things like skin sensitivity, skin 'pain' or 'burning sensation')," he said. "This was significantly more frequent than the lower dose (22.9% vs. 6%)."

"The upside of most side effects for these drugs is that they disappear when you discontinue," Azagury added. "In this study, 18.7% (nearly 1 in 5) patients who had these issues still had not recovered by the end of the study (it is unclear how many of those had stopped the medication or not), so that is something that will require further studies to be better characterized."

Ali noted that the recommended dose Trusted Source by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for a semaglutide drug is 2.4 mg taken weekly, so a higher dose would be outside those boundaries.

"These medications, like all medications do have side effects, some of which can be serious. If a patient is on a much higher dose, they have an increased risk for more significant side effects with long term use," he said.

"Furthermore, this [higher dose] would be considered 'off-label' use of these medications, and they are already difficult to get coverage for through insurance, so there could be a significant out-of-pocket cost for the patient," he added.

What to know about GLP-1 drugs

Glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1s) medications work by mimicking a hormone in the body that helps regulate blood sugar levels and reduces hunger pangs.

One class of the GLP-1 medications uses the active ingredient semaglutide. They are sold under different brand names.

Ozempic and Rybelsus have been approved to treat type 2 diabetes. Wegovy is approved for use in weight management.

Semaglutide drugs are available as both oral tablets and injections.

Another commonly used weight loss medication uses the active ingredient tirzepatide. Mounjaro is approved to treat type 2 diabetes. Zepbound is approved for use in weight management. These medications are available only as injections.

Previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of these drugs in helping people lose weight.

Past research has also indicated that these weight loss drugs can help lower a person's risk of cancer as well as provide benefits to heart health and brain health.

Ali stressed that weight loss medications and surgery are simply tools to help some-

"The upside of most side effects for these drugs is that they disappear when you discontinue," Azagury added. "In this study, 18.7% (nearly 1 in 5) patients who had these issues still had not recovered by the end of the study (it is unclear how many of those had stopped the medication or not), so that is something that will require further studies to be better characterized"

one in their weight loss journey.

He said if they don't adopt a healthier lifestyle that includes a balanced diet, daily exercise, and adequate sleep, then they won't be able to meet their weight loss goals.

"The goal of any weight loss intervention, whether it's medications, surgery, or just counseling, is to provide tools to change to a healthier lifestyle and diet," Ali explained. "If patients do not make these significant, long-term changes, then no intervention will remain effective for an extended period of time."

Azagury said it's important for patients to discuss weight loss strategies with their physician.

"Weight loss drugs are most effective as part of a comprehensive management," he said. "In our center, for example, patients prescribed these medications will also see our dietitians and be given access to resources and recommendations for diet change, exercise, etc. It is also important to have [a] follow-up to adapt treatment along the way."

Courtesy Healthline

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Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board to Restore Rain, Landslide Ravaged Schools in Reasi under Social Support Initiative

■ HT News Desk

KATRA, OCT 2: Reaffirming its commitment to social support in the field of education, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) has launched a comprehensive initiative to repair and renovate government schools in the Reasi district that were damaged by recent rains and landslides.

The Shrine Board, acting on the directives of its Chairman, Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha, has prioritized the urgent restoration of the affected government schools.

The schools identified for immediate intervention are

located in Katra and its adjoining areas, including Purana Daroor, Chumbra, Kakryal, Bratisala, Bagha, Panthal, Sarhi, Sirila, Hansali, Chack Bhagta, Manoon, Chamba, Dadura, Doomar, Gabber, Kanika, Kanyala, Dhanoo, Geeta Nagar, and Chanjute.

These schools faced extensive damage to classrooms, boundary walls, and sanitation facilities following heavy rains and subsequent landslides. In some cases, students were attending classes in temporary shelters or open spaces.

Shri Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB has directed the concerned officials to accord highest priority to the restoration of affected



schools and ensure timely completion of the works after

assessing the extent of damage. He emphasized that the initia-

tive must be executed with urgency so that children in these

areas can resume their education without further disruption. The CEO affirmed that the Board shall continue to stand by the people of Reasi, especially in times of adversity. The restoration work will be carried out in a phased manner over the coming months, with immediate attention on the most severely damaged schools.

As part of its social support initiatives, the Shrine Board has consistently undertaken infrastructure development and upgradation projects in Katra and its adjoining areas aimed at promoting the overall socioeconomic growth of the region.

Over the years, the Board has successfully executed several civic improvement works

in Katra town, including the renovation and upgradation of the Government Girls High School at Banganga Road, installation of ornamental railings and dual-lamp LED street lights along the central verge of the road leading to the Railway Station, Katra, besides the provision of children's playground equipment at Shalimar Park. Additionally, the Board facilitated the construction of roads and drainage systems in Ward No. 2 of Katra. The Shrine Board has also extended financial assistance to the Municipal Committee, Katra, enabling the execution of various development projects and enhancement of sanitation and other civic amenities in the town.

Budgam Embodies Spirit of Service through Sewa Parv Activities on Gandhi Jayanti

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

BUDGAM, OCT 2: District Administration Budgam today witnessed a vibrant culmination of the Sewa Parv programme, with a wide spectrum of activities organized across blocks, institutions, and community spaces, coinciding with the celebration of Gandhi Jayanti.

The day was marked by enthusiastic participation from farmers, students, women, panchayats, and civil society, reflecting the true spirit of service, awareness, and community empowerment.

At the Chief Animal Husbandry Officer (CAHO) Campus Budgam, a special awareness programme was held where the Mission Director, Dairy Development graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

The programme aimed at sensitizing farmers about the range of government schemes available, particularly online services of the Animal Husbandry Department. Detailed presentations were delivered focusing on dairy value addition, milk processing, packaging, and adoption of modern practices. Over 50 farmers actively participated and engaged in an interactive session, voicing their queries and sharing valuable feedback.

In line with the welfare-centric approach of Sewa Parv, the Social Welfare Department under Mission Shakti distributed Baby Kits at SDH Khansahib. The initiative reinforced the government's commitment to maternal and child health, ensuring that mothers and newborns receive essential support and care.

Special focus was given to adult literacy under Sewa Parv, with literacy classes conducted at Ishtique Memorial Girls Middle School Drang, HS Sail Zone Hardapanzoo, and Education Zone Hardapanzoo. These programmes created opportunities for community members to acquire basic literacy skills, thereby fostering empowerment and strengthening the foundations of inclusive development.

In a major grassroots initiative, Special Gram Sabhas were conducted in all blocks of Budgam district, including Narbal. These sabhas provided platforms for participatory governance, enabling citizens to share ideas, deliberate on development priorities, and contribute towards local planning in line with the spirit of Jan Bhagidari.

The culmination of Sewa Parv coincided with Gandhi Jayanti, celebrated across the district with zeal and reverence. Inmates of Palaash Budgam marked the occasion with enthusiasm, reflecting on the Gandhian ideals of truth, peace, and non-violence. Students of GPS Gogipathri, Zone Nagam staged cultural performances, carrying forward Gandhi Ji's timeless message of simplicity, harmony, and service. At the Municipal Head Office Magam, a Painting Competition was organized, where young participants creatively depicted Gandhian values and the essence of service through art.

Adding to the day's diverse activities, a one-day awareness-cum-training programme on fruit and vegetable preservation and processing was organized at Horticulture Zone Pakherpora. The programme focused on post-harvest management, preservation techniques, and value addition, equipping farmers with practical knowledge to enhance income and sustainability in horticulture.

The Sewa Parv 2025 in Budgam district showcased the district administration's holistic approach, bringing together multiple departments, institutions, and community stakeholders. The activities not only commemorated Gandhi Jayanti but also advanced the larger goals of service, empowerment, and participatory governance.

With active participation from farmers, women, students, and local communities, Sewa Parv Budgam concluded on a high note, leaving behind a message of collective responsibility, inclusive growth, and commitment to Gandhian values in every day life.

Rahmat-ul-Lil-Alameen ﷺ Conference Organized by Anjuman Shari Shian

Speakers Term the Prophetic Seerah a Perfect Model of Humanity

■ Ubaid Mehdi

BUDGAM, OCT 2: The Jammu and Kashmir Anjuman Shari Shian organized a Rahmat-ul-Lil-Alameen ﷺ Conference at its central office, Dar-ul-Mustafa, Shariat Abad Budgam, which was attended by prominent religious figures and dignitaries from across the valley.

The conference was presided over by the President of Anjuman Shari Shian, Hujjat-ul-Islam wal-Muslimeen Agha Syed Hassan Al-Moosavi Al-Safavi, while Hujjat-ul-Islam Molvi Nisar Hussain Walo conducted the proceedings. The welcome address was delivered by Advocate Agha Syed Muntazir Mehdi Al-Moosavi.

Among those who participated and addressed the gathering were Mirwaiz Kashmir Dr. Mohammad Umar Farooq, Grand Mufti of J&K Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam, Ayatollah Agha Syed Mohammad Aqeel Gharavi, Hujjat-ul-Islam Syed Yousuf Moosavi, along with

several other scholars, Imams of Friday congregations, and respected community leaders.

Speakers highlighted the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, describing his Seerah as the epitome of justice, compassion, and human dignity. They said the Prophet ﷺ, through his character and conduct, lifted humanity from the darkness of oppression and ignorance to its rightful station of honor. Respect for humanity, human rights, and justice, they noted, were among the most prominent aspects of his teachings. They emphasized that the Prophet ﷺ extended rights not only to human beings but also to all creatures, manifesting his status as Rahmat-ul-Lil-Alameen (Mercy for all the worlds).

In his presidential address, Agha Syed Hassan Al-Moosavi Al-Safavi touched upon the Palestine issue, stressing that the only acceptable solution is the one that is endorsed by the Pal-



estinian people themselves. He categorically rejected all externally imposed or dictated formulas.

Expressing concern over the prevailing moral decline and social disorder, Agha Hassan said these are direct consequences of drifting away from the Qur'an and the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ. He emphasized that as a community and an Ummah, it is our foremost responsibility to return to the Qur'an and Sunnah and launch collective efforts for societal reform.

On the occasion, Agha Hassan also termed the recent rotten meat scandal in Kashmir as a "tragic and shameful catastrophe." He said it was not just corruption but a heinous crime amounting to mass murder and blatant endangerment of human lives. He demanded the harshest possible punishment for those involved so that no anti-social element dares to commit such cruelty in the future.

Pulwama Admin Organises Mega Event to Conclude Sewa Parv on Gandhi Jayanti

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

PULWAMA, OCT 02: The fortnight-long festival of public service, inclusive governance and community participation "Sewa Parv" culminated today in Pulwama with a grand function organised at Government Degree College for Boys, Pulwama. The function organised on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti served as a tribute to the life and timeless teachings of the Father of the Nation.

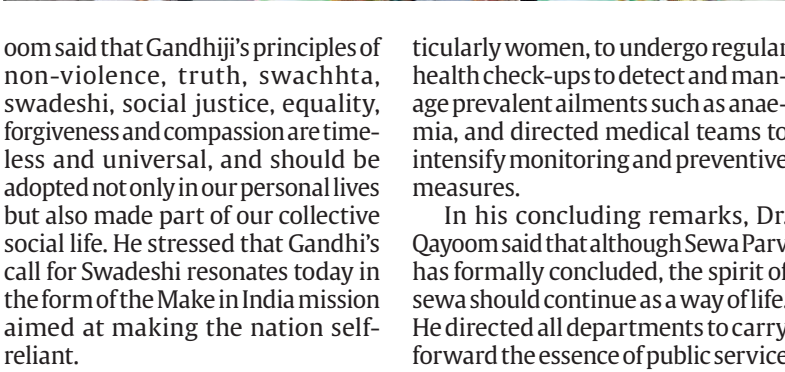
On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, accompanied by Senior Superintendent of Police, Pulwama, P.D. Nitya, inspected stalls set up by various departments, including Health, Cooperatives, Agriculture, Horticulture, Labour & Employment, Revenue, KVIB, SHGs, Handicrafts & Handloom, J&K Bank, Fisheries, ICDS and Sheep Husbandry.

These stalls functioned as a one-window solution, providing services such as scheme registrations, enrolment, awareness, grievance redressal, and help desks for the general public.

Following the inspection, the DC and SSP also distributed sanction letters, motorised tricycles and various other entitlements among beneficiaries. A plantation drive was also organised on the occasion in line with the objectives of Sewa Parv.

Meanwhile, DC Pulwama, SSP Pulwama along with district and sectoral officers paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi. The event also featured a series of cultural performances by students from educational institutions and by the Department of Information & Public Relations, conveying messages of cleanliness, care for the elderly and vulnerable, drug de-addiction, social responsibility and community service while various speakers recalled the life, struggles and teachings of Gandhi ji, underlining their relevance in today's world.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Qay-



oom said that Gandhiji's principles of non-violence, truth, swachhta, swadeshi, social justice, equality, forgiveness and compassion are timeless and universal, and should be adopted not only in our personal lives but also made part of our collective social life. He stressed that Gandhi's call for Swadeshi resonates today in the form of the Make in India mission aimed at making the nation self-reliant.

"Every citizen has a role to play in realising Gandhi ji's this dream of a self-sufficient India," he added.

DC also highlighted the relevance of Gandhiji's advocacy for local self-governance, which today finds expression in the three-tier Panchayati Raj system established across the country.

While reflecting on the achievements of Sewa Parv, the DC appreciated the efforts of all line departments in fulfilling the deliverables during the fortnight-long campaign. He made special mention of the progress achieved through health camps organised under the 'Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan', where exhaustive screening of the population was carried out besides providing other medical facilities.

He urged local communities, par-

ticularly women, to undergo regular health check-ups to detect and manage prevalent ailments such as anaemia, and directed medical teams to intensify monitoring and preventive measures.

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Qayoom said that although Sewa Parv has formally concluded, the spirit of sewa should continue as a way of life. He directed all departments to carry forward the essence of public service and inclusive governance, and called upon citizens to adopt Gandhiji's universal values in their daily lives to help build a just, compassionate and self-reliant society.

Earlier, the DC administered a collective pledge to all participants, committing to work towards making the district plastic-free, promoting eco-friendly alternatives, and waste segregation at source.

The event culminated with a felicitation ceremony, wherein district officers, reputed authors, students who excelled in their 10th and 12th board examinations as well as NEET qualifiers, top-performing NGOs, charitable trusts, entrepreneurs, sportspersons, social activists, best-performing SHGs, Mission YUVA beneficiaries and progressive farmers were felicitated for their contributions.

DLSA Jammu conducts cleanliness drive at District Court Complex Janipur to mark Gandhi Jayanti

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCT 2: District Legal Services Authority, Jammu in commemoration of Gandhi Jayanti, held a Cleanliness and plantation drive in the premises of District Court Complex Janipur, Jammu today on the 2nd October, 2025.

The event started with the floral tribute to the Father of the Nation "Mahatma Gandhi" by Y. P. Bournay, Chairman District Legal Services Authority Jammu in the presence of other Ld. Judicial Officers of District Jammu, symbolizing that the light of truth and justice shall always be the guiding force in the present times.

Y. P. Bournay, Principal District and Sessions Judge Jammu (Chairman, DLSA Jammu) while interacting with the gathering highlighted Gandhi ji's thoughts on truth, non-violence and cleanliness. He emphasized that cleanliness should begin with our own



bodies, then to our homes and finally to the outside world. He shared a powerful message about maintaining a clean environment.

A Plantation drive was also organised within the District Court Campus, where all Ld. Judicial officers planted the saplings and gave a message to make a positive impact on the environment as it is a right time to reflect on the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi and strive for peace and harmony in everyone's life.

In a heartwarming gesture, Pr. District and Sessions Judge Y. P. Bournay presented refreshment boxes to the dedicated Safai karamcharis of District Court Complex, acknowledging their hard work and contributions. The programme was attended by Ld. Judicial Officers posted at District Headquarter Jammu along with their ministerial staff. LADCs, Panel Lawyers, PLVs and staff of DLSA Jammu were also present on the occasion.

Div Com attends commemorative event on Gandhi Jayanti organised by Gandhi Global Family

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCT02: Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar attended an event organised today by Gandhi Global Family (GGF) J&K to commemorate the 156th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, at the historic Diwan-e-Aam, Mubarak Mandi Heritage Complex, Jammu.

In his address, Ramesh Kumar urged students and youth to imbibe Gandhian values in their everyday lives to build a peaceful and harmonious society. He highlighted the timeless relevance of non-violence, a cornerstone of Babu's philosophy, particularly in the present global context. He further emphasized the importance of promoting national integration and equitable development of all sections of society. Stressing on Babu's personal

commitment to cleanliness, he encouraged the gathering to adopt cleanliness of self and surroundings as a fundamental civic responsibility.

On the occasion, PadmaShri Dr. S. P. Varma, President of Gandhi Global Family J&K, called for the strengthening of global brotherhood and peace. He reiterated that simplicity, non-violence, truthfulness, self-reliance and compassion, which form the core of Gandhian philosophy, offer practical solutions to address many of the contemporary global challenges.

The day also marked the observance of International Non-Violence Day 2025. Students from different schools and Colleges highlighted Mahatma Gandhi's contributions to world peace and non-violence through speeches and presentations.

Tributes were also paid to former Prime Minister Shri Lal



Bahadur Shastri on his birth anniversary. The event was attended by people from all walks of life, including students, teachers, senior citizens and

other dignitaries, who joined in offering rich floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi.

A special felicitation ceremony was also held during the

event, wherein prominent social activists were honoured by the Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar for their exemplary services during humani-

tarian crises, particularly post Operation Sindoor and the Jammu floods.

The awardees included Summi Sahi Seth, Renu Antho-

ny, Joginder Kaur, Dr. Jyoti Malhotra, Punit Kaur, Neetu Bali, Dr. Perivinder Kaur, Dr. Dinesh Gupta, Er. S. K. Vaid, Sharat Sharma, Bhanu Pratap Singh, S. Gurdeep Singh Comrade, Er. Dalbir Singh Chib and Amit Varma. The day's proceedings were ably conducted by Dr. Perivinder Kaur, member of GGF Women Jammu.

Renu Anthony, also a member of GGF Women Jammu delivered the vote of thanks.

A comprehensive report on the recent humanitarian efforts by Gandhi Global Family J&K during Operation Sindoor and the Jammu floods was presented by Summi Sahi Seth, Vice President, GGF Women Jammu.

The event was organised under the overall supervision of the organising committee, comprising Dr. Dinesh Gupta, Dr. Robin Gill, Manish Joshi, Er. Satish Vaid, Raj Kumar, Ved Verma, Gopal Sharma and Amit Varma.

KVIB Jammu commemorates Gandhi Jayanti with reverence

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

JAMMU, OCT 2: The J&K Khadi and Village Industries Board, Division Jammu, solemnly commemorated Gandhi Jayanti, honoring the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the revered Father of the Nation.

The event paid heartfelt tribute to Gandhiji's enduring legacy as a freedom fighter and social reformer. His unwavering commitment to non-violence, truth, and rural empowerment was remembered with deep reverence. Staff members gathered to reflect on his pivotal role in India's independence movement and



his lifelong dedication to uplifting the marginalized through khadi and village industries.

The celebration included speeches and reaffirmation of the Board's mission to promote self-reliance and sustainable development in line with Gandhian principles.

The J&K Khadi and Village Industries Board remains committed to preserving and promoting the values championed by Mahatma Gandhi, continuing to inspire generations toward a more equitable and self-sufficient society.

Fortnight-long Sewa Parv concludes in Udhampur

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, OCT02: District Administration Udhampur organized an impressive function at District headquarter to mark the conclusion of the fortnight-long Sewa Parv celebrations. The event witnessed the participation of Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Dr. Umesh Shan, Assistant Commissioner Development Om Parkash, Chief Planning Officer Uttam Singh, GM DIC Kishore Singh Katoch, along with other senior officers, beneficiaries, farmers, students and school staff members.

During the programme, the DC distributed nutrition kits to TB patients and interacted with them. She also handed over sanction letters and keys under PMAY-Urban, PMAY-Gramin and HADP schemes to the beneficiaries. Officers of the District Administration who voluntarily registered as Ni-Kshay Mitras to support TB patients were felicitated, while Safai Karamchris were honoured with T-shirts and caps in recognition of their dedicated service. As part of the TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan awareness campaign, the DC flagged off Mobile Van and Auto Rickshaws carrying TB awareness messages and also pasted TB awareness stickers on vehicles.

While addressing the participants, the DC extended greetings on the occasions of Dussehra and Gandhi Jayanti. She commended the tireless efforts of all departments in ensuring the successful culmination of Sewa Parv in Udhampur District. She further highlighted the teachings and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, stressing his lifelong dedication to uplifting the poor and downtrodden.

The DC appealed to the public to maintain cleanliness, promote proper waste disposal and actively participate in keeping Udhampur neat and hygienic. She also urged citizens to come forward and voluntarily register as Ni-Kshay Mitras to support TB patients, thereby contributing to the national mission of building a TB-free India.

Health Department Doda conducts Kusht Mukti Abhiyan on Gandhi Jayanti

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

DODA, OCT 2: On the last day of the ongoing Swasth Nari Sakshat Pariwar campaign and the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the "Father of the Nation," the Health Department Doda, under the overall guidance of CMO Dr. Om Kumar, organized Kusht Mukti Abhiyan events across the district.

The purpose of observing the day was to create mass awareness about leprosy and to sensitize the public about eliminating stigma associated with the disease.

The main programme was held at the CMO office.



Among those present included BMO Ghat, Dr. Abdul Gafoor,

along with the staff of CMO and Dy CMO Office Doda.

On the occasion, a campaign vehicle was flagged off by the Dr.

Abdul Gafoor in the presence of health staff. Later, all officials and staff took a pledge to fight against leprosy stigma and to spread awareness in the community. Similar awareness programmes were organized at PHC Assar, SDH Gandoh, CHC Thathri and other parts of the district to mark the day. Apart from awareness activities, cleanliness drives were also conducted in hospitals and health institutions to promote the message of hygiene and sanitation.

The Health Department reaffirmed its commitment to continue such initiatives for the welfare of society and to work towards a leprosy-free district.

Samba launches Leprosy awareness campaign on Gandhi Jayanti, culminates Sewa Parv

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SAMBA, OCT 2: In a significant public health initiative coinciding with Gandhi Jayanti and marking the culmination of Sewa Pakhwada, the District Administration Samba today launched an extensive Leprosy Awareness Campaign with the flagging off of a specially-equipped Awareness Van. The event was led by Additional Deputy Commissioner Samba, Jagdish Singh, alongside Chief Medical Officer Dr. Vidhi Bhatial, District Health Officer Samba, Block Medical Officers and senior officials from the Health Department.

The launch of this awareness van represents a crucial step forward in the district's commitment to eliminating leprosy through early detection, comprehensive treatment and sustained public education. The mobile awareness unit has been equipped with carefully crafted audio messages and jingles designed to disseminate vital information about leprosy – its causes, symptoms, treatment options and prevention measures – directly to communities across the district. This door-to-door approach aims to break down barriers of misinformation and reach populations who may not have easy access to healthcare facilities.

Speaking at the occasion, ADC Samba, Jagdish Singh highlighted the multifaceted objectives of this campaign, emphasizing that leprosy elimination requires not just medical intervention but a comprehensive societal response. He commended the Health Department for their tireless efforts in preparing this initiative and stressed that early detection and complete treatment remain the cornerstones of success. The Additional Deputy Commissioner underscored that one of the campaign's most critical missions is to address and dismantle the social stigma that has historically surrounded leprosy, which often prevents affected individuals from seeking timely medical care.

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Vidhi Bhatial elaborated on the program's holistic approach, explaining that the



campaign extends far beyond awareness generation. The initiative encompasses early case detection through active surveillance, ensuring complete treatment adherence and conducting thorough household contact surveys to identify potential cases at the earliest stage.

Dr. Bhatial emphasized that the program places significant focus on disability prevention and medical rehabilitation services, recognizing that comprehensive care must address both the disease and its potential complications. The Health Department is providing essential support including dressing materials, supportive medicines and specially designed micro-cellular rubber footwear to patients, ensuring they receive complete medical and rehabilitative care. Furthermore, nutrition kits were distributed to leprosy patients during the event, acknowledging the crucial role of nutrition in recovery and overall health management.

The timing of this launch carries profound symbolic significance. Gandhi Jayanti, observed on October 2nd, honors Mahatma Gandhi's unwavering commitment to the upliftment of marginalized communities and his compassionate approach to those suffering from leprosy. Babu's philosophy of inclusive healthcare and

dignity for all resonates deeply with this campaign's objectives. Additionally, the event marks the conclusion of Sewa Pakhwada (Sewa Parv), a fortnight-long celebration of service and public welfare initiatives. This convergence of dates amplifies the message that public health is not merely a technical challenge but a moral imperative rooted in service and compassion.

The Leprosy Awareness Campaign represents a comprehensive strategy combining medical intervention, community engagement, and social transformation. By taking healthcare information directly to the people through the awareness van, conducting systematic household surveys, ensuring treatment completion and providing holistic rehabilitation support, the Health Department is creating a robust framework for leprosy elimination. The district administration's commitment to this cause reflects a broader vision of accessible, stigma-free healthcare that leaves no one behind. As the awareness van begins its journey through the villages and communities of Samba, it carries not just information but hope – hope for early detection, effective treatment and a future where leprosy no longer casts a shadow over lives and communities.

AHD Udhampur felicitates distinguished farmers, technocrats, facilitators on last day of Sewa Parv

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, OCT02: The concluding ceremony of the 'Sewa Parv' (Service Fortnight) was successfully held at the District Veterinary Hospital (DVH) Udhampur.

The simple but impressive function was chaired by Dr. Shevatambri Khajuria, the Chief Animal Husbandry Officer of Udhampur. During the event, Dr. Anwar Hussain Nagoo, Superintendent of the DVH Udhampur, presented a detailed report on the work accomplished during the 15-day program.

Dr. Nagoo emphasized the necessity of planning the Sewa Parv activities – such as health camps, special veterinary services, and awareness drives – in a structured calendar under the ambit of distinguished veterinary services, ensuring they align with government instructions. He also underscored the urgent need for community involvement to achieve the 'One Health' concept, a principle followed in every segment of the Parv, including health camps, animal care and disease prevention awareness, cleanliness and plantation drives and volunteer collaborations.

Dr. Khajuria, in her address, highlighted the crucial role of veterinary services in controlling zoonotic diseases like Rabies, Bird Flu, and Toxoplasmosis, reaffirming the department's commitment to disease containment and enhancing farmers' livelihoods. She also hinted at a major boost for the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sector in Udhampur. A state-of-the-art Veterinary Hospital is nearing completion in the district, with 80% of the work finalized. Furthermore, to cater to the demand and potential of poultry husbandry, a high-tech hatchery is being constructed and is scheduled to be functional by the end of the current financial year.

During the ceremony, distinguished individuals were formally recognized for their exemplary contributions. M. Iqbal was recognized as the Best Farmer. Dr. Karun Gupta and Dr. Iqbal received the award as the Best Clinician of the Mobile Veterinary Unit and Best Diagnostic Clinician respectively.

Atul Sharma was honored as the Best Employee of the Hospital, while Tilak Raj was recognized as the Best Supporter and Facilitator for tackling emergencies.

The event concluded with a Vote of Thanks presented by Dr. Raj Kumar, a Senior Veterinarian at DVH Udhampur.

Kishtwar wraps up Sewa Parv activities with Gandhi Jayanti commemoration

DC leads cleanliness drive at historic Chowgan Ground

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

KISHTWAR, OCT 2: The Sewa Parv 2025 celebrations concluded today in District Kishtwar with the commemoration of Gandhi Jayanti.

Remembering the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, a series of activities and tribute paying events were held across the district under the direction of Deputy Commissioner, Pankaj Kumar Sharma. A mega Cleanliness drive was organized at the Historic Chowgan Ground by the Municipal Council as part of the Sewa Parv celebrations.

Deputy Commissioner, Pankaj Kumar Sharma along with SSP Naresh Singh, ASP Pardeep Singh, CEO Municipal Council Mirza Muntaz Iqbal, and other district officers,

actively participated in the initiative, spreading the message of cleanliness and discouraging the use of single-use plastic.

The DC emphasized the importance of community service, cleanliness and civic responsibility in building a strong and progressive society.

Highlighting Mahatma Gandhi's teachings of non-violence, truth and social harmony, the DC encouraged everyone to continue working together to promote welfare, awareness and sustainable development across the district.

The Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, was celebrated with great zeal at GHSS Sounder. Various cultural and awareness activities were held, highlighting Gandhi Ji's vision of non-violence,



truth and universal brotherhood beyond caste, colour and creed.

The School Education Department organized Gandhi Jayanti events dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi's teachings across all educational institutions in the district, where students, teachers and staff actively participated by offering floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi.

The ICDS Department carried out diverse activities, including yoga sessions at Anganwadi Centres across all Panchayats, villages, blocks and district levels. Comprehensive cleanliness drives were also conducted at AWCs, coupled with the adoption of best practices for the safe storage of food items.

The Fisheries Department Kishtwar organized an awareness and out-

reach programme at Block Office Bounjwah, sensitizing fish farmers and the local community about key government schemes, including PMMSY, HADP, KCC and ATMA.

Additionally, departments including Health, Rural Development, Forest, Education and Social Welfare organized multiple outreach and awareness programmes across subdivisions, tehsils and blocks, ensuring mass participation and effective implementation of the Sewa Parv objectives.

The district-wide celebration not only paid tribute to the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi but also reinforced the collective commitment of the administration and community towards cleanliness, social responsibility and inclusive development.

Gram Sabhas convened across Rajouri District to mark Gandhi Jayanti

■ HT News Desk

RAJOURI, OCTOBER 2: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma, Gram Sabhas were held today across 104 tribal villages of Rajouri district with a special focus on preparing Vision Documents under the Aadi Karmayogi Abhiyan.

The initiative is aimed at ensuring participatory planning and fostering holistic development of tribal communities.

Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma attended the Special Gram Sabha at Village Argi. He interacted with the local residents and underlined the importance of community-driven development, stressing that the aspirations of the people must remain at the core of planning processes. He encouraged villagers to actively contribute in formulating the vision documents to address their priority developmental needs.

The DC said that the Aadi Karmayogi Abhiyan aims to empower the tribal communities through convergence of schemes, participatory vision planning and creation of sustainable livelihood opportunities. He added that these Gram Sabhas will play a pivotal role in preparing a roadmap for tribal empowerment and inclusive growth.

In addition, Gram Sabhas were convened across all 312 Panchayats of the 19 Blocks of Rajouri district to mark Gandhi Jayanti. The agenda included the preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP) and the formulation of the MGNREGA Labour Budget for the financial year 2026-27.

The district-wide exercise not only commemorated Gandhi Jayanti with constructive community participation but also reinforced the spirit of grassroots democracy, aligning with the vision of inclusive growth and sustainable rural development.

Reasi Admin culminates 'Sewa Parv' with focus on cleanliness, community welfare services

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

REASI, OCTOBER 2: Reasi Administration successfully wrapped up the 'Sewa Parv' activities today under the dynamic leadership of Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik.

During the fortnight, different departments organized a wide range of activities aimed at promoting community welfare and delivery of public services.

The Social Welfare Department focused on creating awareness about government welfare schemes, while the School Education Department engaged students in extracurricular activities and initiatives promoting empathy, civic responsibility, and social service. Municipal Councils and

the Rural Development Department led sanitation and cleanliness drives in towns and panchayats, and departments in the agro-allied and skill development sectors worked to deliver essential services while raising awareness among beneficiaries.

Health department organised screening camps throughout the district.

Special camps were also conducted on the themes of Disaster Management skills, Nasha Mukti J&K and Digital literacy.

On the last day, coinciding with Gandhi Jayanti, the celebrations reached their peak. Municipal Council Reasi organized a Swachhta Rally led by EO Mohammad Ajaz, with participation from school



students, volunteers, Swachhta Ambassadors and police personnel. The rally marched through the main market area with the participants raising slogans echo-

ing Gandhian values of cleanliness. A cleanliness drive was carried out along the route. The rally culminated at Zanana Park Reasi where the participants took a solemn Swachhta Pledge.

Certificates of appreciation were presented to Safai Mitras, and prizes were awarded to the winning students of the painting competition. Raj Kumar, Swachhta Ambassador was felicitated for planting over 21,000 saplings.

A mobilization event held at RRR Centre, Reasi Ward No. 4, educated students on proper disposal of recyclable materials.

Other departments also marked the conclusion of Sewa Parv with meaningful initiatives.

The School Education Depart-

ment conducted final assemblies to felicitate best performers and encouraged students to participate in acts of services such as sharing meals with those in need, helping senior citizens and volunteering for environmental causes.

The RDD Department organised special Gram sabhas to pass resolutions for a complete ban on polythene in all panchayats, while the Animal Husbandry Department held an awareness camp for farmers at Sub Unit Pouni.

The Sewa Parv, a festival of Service, dedication and resolve concluded with renewed enthusiasm and a collective resolve to foster a clean, green and compassionate Reasi, reflecting the true spirit of community service.

Congress questions silence of BJP Hindu organizations over cow smuggling case, seeks arrest of Ex Mayor, investigations by SIT

■ HT News Desk

JAMMU, OCTOBER 2 : Congress has sought immediate arrest of former BJP Mayor Chander Mohan Gupta & other accused in the heinous crime of cow smuggling hurting the religious sentiments of people and a high level investigation by a special investigation team (SIT) headed by a senior officer of integrity .

Questioning BJP & hindu organizations for their silence over the most shameful act ,the party has said that the religious sentiments of people are deeply hurt by the sensational allegations.A high level probe by a SIT

headed by senior officer of integrity should be held.

The party questioned the silence of BJP over the sensitive issue involving party's former Mayor, which exposes the double standards of BJP over such a serious issue, as it has not taken any action against its senior leader so far.

The insensitive approach of BJP' to such a religious sensitive issue despite court intervention ,after prima facie satisfaction for the registration of FIR ,speaks volumes of the BJP's duplicity.

The silence of all hindu organizations over the sensitive issue is also questionable and unfortunate, the party said.

Dussehra celebrated with great enthusiasm and religious fervor in Udhampur

■ HT News Desk

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 02: Like other parts of the country, Dussehra was celebrated with great enthusiasm and religious fervor at the Sports Stadium Udhampur late this evening. Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai, graced the occasion as the chief guest. The event was organized by the Dussehra Utsav Samiti.

Thousands of people thronged the venue to witness the grand celebrations where the effigies of Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Meghnad were set ablaze symbolizing the eternal triumph of truth over evil.

Prominent dignitaries present on the occasion included Member Legislative Assembly Udhampur West, Pawan Kumar Gupta, MLA Udhampur East, R.S Pathania,



Additional Deputy Commissioner, Prem Singh, President Dussehra Utsav Samiti, Vikram Singh Slathia besides other eminent citizens and a large gathering of enthusiastic people.

To ensure the smooth conduct of the celebrations, the district administration made elaborate arrangements including security deployment, barricading, uninterrupted power supply, drinking water facilities, medical aid and the presence of ambulances ensuring a safe .

District Samba marks successful culmination of Sewa Parv with extensive multi-departmental outreach

■ HT News Desk / DIPR

SAMBA, OCTOBER 02: District Samba today witnessed the grand culmination of Sewa Parv on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, bringing to a close a fortnight-long campaign that began on September 17. The initiative, spearheaded by the District Administration, showcased a remarkable synergy of various government departments, PRI representatives, students, and citizens in a vibrant display of community service and public welfare.

The extensive programmes touched thousands of lives across urban and rural pockets of the district, reinforcing the values of service, dedication, and good governance through multi-dimensional outreach.

The Animal Husbandry Department held impactful awareness drives for cattle breeders and dairy farmers, distributing

free veterinary medicines and offering expert guidance on scientific livestock rearing practices, breed improvement, and disease prevention measures. These efforts were widely appreciated by farmers, many of whom expressed confidence in adopting modern practices for better productivity.

The Agriculture Department conducted successful field sessions at Village Gaghere and Panchayat Ghar Patli, where around 30 farmers benefitted from distribution of high-quality vegetable seeds. Detailed training was imparted on mushroom production, beekeeping, organic farming techniques, and diversification of crops. Officers also sensitized farmers about Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and various Centrally Sponsored Schemes designed to enhance farmer income and resilience. The pro-



gramme concluded with a Nasha Mukti pledge, reaffirming the community's resolve towards building a drug-free society along with sustainable agriculture.

The Education Department observed Sewa Parv in all schools and institutions of the district. A range of activities including cleanliness drives, plantation campaigns, health and hygiene awareness sessions, community outreach

visits to orphanages and old-age homes were undertaken. The fortnight concluded with Gandhi Jayanti celebrations where debates, painting competitions, and cultural events were held, culminating in prize distribution to students and schools that excelled in various categories of service activities.

The Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Af-

fairs (FCS&CA) carried out an extensive outreach across Ramgarh, Vijaypur, Samba, Ghagwal, and Bari Brahmana. More than 600 families benefitted directly from Aadhaar seeding of ration cards, PMKAY awareness sessions, grievance redressal camps, and market inspections conducted to ensure transparency and prevent malpractices in essential commodity distribution.

The District Programme Office (Poshan) organized yoga sessions to promote healthy lifestyles, distributed nutrition kits to pregnant and lactating mothers, and spearheaded cleanliness drives at public places and Anganwadi Centres under the Swachhata Hi Sewa campaign. These efforts highlighted the importance of nutrition, wellness, and hygiene in building a

healthier society.

Adding to the spirit of the campaign, large-scale plantation drives were carried out across schools, panchayat premises, and community lands, witnessing enthusiastic participation from PRI representatives, students, local residents, and front-line workers. Saplings of fruit-bearing and shade-giving trees were planted with the message of environmental sustainability and collective responsibility.

The fortnight-long Sewa Parv in District Samba concluded on a high note with resounding success, symbolizing the true essence of people-centric governance. The district administration reaffirmed its commitment to continue such outreach initiatives in future, ensuring that the values of service, inclusiveness, and citizen participation remain central to all developmental activities.



R Ashwin To Play Entire Season of BBL with Sydney Thunder

The development comes a day after he went unsold at the ILT20 auction

■ **Nagraj Gollapudi**

CHENNAI: Ashwin, who announced his IPL retirement in August, became the first capped Indian player to play in the BBL, agreeing to play at least three matches in the latter half of the season for Thunder. That arrangement was based on Ashwin committing to play in ILT20, where he had listed the highest base price of USD 120,000. However, Ashwin went unsold when his name, listed in Set 5 for allrounders, came up for bidding with none of the six franchises showing interest. It is understood that Ashwin had requested ILT20 to remove his name from the accelerated second round of bidding, meant for unsold players.

Ashwin said he had "verbally" agreed with ILT20 to feature in the 2025-26 edition, which will be played between December 2 and January 4. With the window for direct signings closed in July, Ashwin decided to put himself at the maximum base price and was the only player to list a six-figure reserve price. Ashwin also mentioned to ILT20 that he was expecting a certain bid for

him to play in ILT20. When it became clear he was not getting that at the auction, he pulled out.

"I had agreed verbally with ILT20 but then the franchise offers were pretty low because the direct signings had been closed by all teams," Ashwin told ESPNcricinfo. "Meanwhile, Thunder came with a good deal, but since I had verbally agreed with ILT20, I entered the auction saying this is the minimum price I want to play for, else I am happy going to the BBL."

Ashwin, who ended his IPL career as the fifth-highest wicket-taker in the league with 187 strikes at an economy rate of 7.2, was a sought-after name in BBL with Hobart Hurricanes, Sydney Sixers, Adelaide Strikers and Thunder showing interest to sign him up. He became the first capped India cricketer to earn a BBL deal. Cricket Australia CEO Todd Greenberg, who was the first to have consultations with Ashwin, spoke on Thursday about the importance of having Ashwin in the BBL. "It's a big moment for the BBL to welcome Ravi here, I have been talking to him personally on a number of occasions."

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