

North in News

E-mail: ninnorthinnews@gmail.com

Postal Regd. No. JK/504/19-21

VOL. NO. 13 | ISSUE NO. 230

JAMMU, FRIDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2025

E-paper: <https://northinnews.com/epaper/> | PAGE 12 RS. 3.00

Demand for reopening of tourist destinations shall be taken up with Home Minister: CM

Addresses 17th AGM of TAAK at Gulmarg Convention Centre

Gulmarg: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today assured tourism stakeholders and players that he will take up their concerns with the Union Home Minister Amit Shah and request for opening up of several closed tourist destinations in Kashmir. The Chief Minister said this while addressing the 17th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Travel Agents' Association of Kashmir (TAAK) at the Gulmarg Convention Centre.

"On one hand we promote tourism, but on the other, many destinations remain closed. This is one of the biggest challenges in our difficult circumstances. When half of Kashmir is shut for tourism, promotion becomes meaningless. What do we



tell the tourists- that you can ride the Gondola but the ATV grounds are closed? That you can go to Gulmarg but not to Drung, or that you

can come to Pahalgam but not visit Ara and Betab Valley? Even in the worst times we had not kept these areas closed. So I assure you I will

speak to the Home Minister and request him to open these destinations. This will build confidence and help us attract more tourists," Omar said. The Chief Minister said that when tourists are told certain destinations are closed, it creates a negative perception about the overall situation in Kashmir. "We must come on one page with the central government, otherwise our efforts at promotion will not succeed," he added. Congratulating newly elected TAAK President Farooq A. Kuthoo, Omar Abdullah assured the association of full support of the government. "Mr. Kuthoo has a strong foundation to take the association forward. In these circumstances,

(Contd on Pg 2)

CSR funds amplify societal & economic impacts: LG Kavinder

Reiterates commitment of UT Admin in empowering people

Leh: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, highlighted the pivotal role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in accelerating development by supplementing government initiatives in education, healthcare, rural infrastructure, environment, and skill development. He said CSR investments not only strengthen public-private partnerships but also enhance public trust by creating visible social and economic impact, particularly in challenging terrains like Ladakh.

In a meeting with representatives of HDFC Bank and its implementing partners, including CII Foundation,



Citizens Foundation, Himmatan Society, and Partnering Hope Into Action (PHIA) Foundation, the LG Governor underlined that CSR funds contribute significantly to sustainable growth and economic stability. He noted that initiatives by leading companies improve the quality of life

by providing access to essential amenities, empowering women and youth through skill development, and fostering local entrepreneurship and job creation. Earlier, the organisations briefed the LG Governor on their ongoing work in Ladakh, which includes

(Contd on Pg 2)

SIR to remove impurities from Bihar voters' list, Rahul-Lalu want to protect infiltrators: Shah

Begusarai: Asserting that Special Intensive Revision (SIR) would remove "impurities" from voters' list in Bihar, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday asked BJP workers to caution the people against rampant "infiltration from Bangladesh" by the INDIA bloc came to power. The former BJP president made the remarks while addressing back-to-back workers' conclaves at Dehri-on-Sone and Begusarai, which were attended by party activists from 20 of the state's 38 districts. Widely regarded as the



BJP's principal strategist, Shah called upon party workers to "visit every house in the state and spread the message that all districts of Bihar will be left teeming with infiltrators from Bangladesh if they (Con-

gress, RJD and Left combine) came to power, even by fluke." He alleged that the Voter Adhikar Yatra, spearheaded by Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, was

(Contd on Pg 2)

Pak Army Chief issued orders to attend funeral of JeM militants killed in Indian attack: JeM commander

Lahore: Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir had issued direct orders to the Corps Commander of Bahawalpur and soldiers to attend the funeral of those killed in the Indian missile strikes on Jaish-e-Mohammed's headquarters on May 7, a top commander of the terror group has said. In a video that went viral on Thursday, JeM commander Ilyas Kashmiri also said that the Pakistan Army and the jihadis have become one after 25 years of his outfit's struggle.

"After the struggle of 25 years, we have brought the state, Pakistan Army, Air Force and Navy on the jihadi ideology. Those who were killed (on the May 7 Indian attack) belonged to JeM, and it was the Pakistan Army and Air Force that had taken their revenge. 'Tell me, isn't it true?' he said. Kashmiri further disclosed that after the attack on JeM headquarters in Bahawalpur, some 400 km from Lahore, Army Chief Munir issued direct orders from GHQ Rawalpindi to the Corps Commander (Bahawalpur) and soldiers to attend the funeral of those killed in the Indian

(Contd on Pg 2)

GST rate cuts affect Centre and states equally, no donor-donee model: Sitharaman

Kolkata: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday made it clear that the Centre was not considering any compensation to states for potential revenue loss arising from the latest Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate cuts, stressing that the impact will be shared "equally" and given the devolution of taxes, while the Centre's share will be even smaller. The opposition was putting pressure on the BJP-led central government, seeking compensation of potential revenue loss from GST rationalisation. Speaking at a



BJP-organised discussion on GST in Kolkata, Sitharaman said that during the GST Council meeting, several states, particularly those governed by opposition parties, raised concerns over the proposal to reduce rates, and asked what would

happen if they led to revenue losses and how that gap could be filled. Sitharaman said that in response, she had explained that there is "no donor-donee relationship" within the GST Council. "If GST is divided 50/50 between the Centre and the states, 41 per cent of the Centre's share still goes back to the states. Ultimately, the Centre retains only about 23 per cent. So if revenue falls, it affects the Centre as much as the states," she said. The Union finance minister emphasised that the Council

(Contd on Pg 2)

BRIEF NEWS

Online Gaming Act to be implemented from Oct 1: IT Minister Vaishnaw

New Delhi: The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act that bans all forms of online money games, would be implemented from October 1, IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Thursday. The Act, passed by Parliament last month, bans all forms of online money games while promoting e-sports and other online games. "The rules will be promulgated with effect from October 1," Vaishnaw said during a pre-event conference for the planned AI Impact Summit 2026 India. The minister said that the government had engaged in discussions with the industry, even after the online gaming legislation was passed. "We have engaged with the industry, we have had multiple discussions with them, we

(Contd on Pg 2)

Sebi gives Adani clean chit on Hindenburg allegations

New Delhi: Markets regulator Sebi on Thursday cleared billionaire Gautam Adani and his group of stock manipulation allegations made by US short-seller Hindenburg Research, saying it found no evidence that the conglomerate used related parties to route funds into its listed companies. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) in two separate detailed orders said the allegations of insider trading, market manipulation, and violations of public shareholding norms were found to be unsubstantiated after a detailed investigation. Hindenburg, which has since shut

(Contd on Pg 2)

SC asks States, UTs to notify rules for registration of 'Anand Karaj' Marriage



New Delhi: The Supreme Court has directed several states and union territories to notify within four months the rules for registering "Anand Karaj" or the Sikh wedding ceremony. The apex court said in a secular framework, which respects religious identity and ensures civic equality, the law must provide a

neutral and workable route by which marriages through "Anand Karaj" are recorded and certified on the same footing as other marriages. "The fidelity of a constitutional promise is measured not only by the rights it proclaims, but by the institutions that make those rights usable. In a secular republic, the state must

not turn a citizen's faith into either a privilege or a handicap," a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta said. In its September 4 order, the bench said when the law recognises "Anand Karaj" as a valid form of marriage yet leaves no machinery to register it, the "promise was only half kept".

"What remains is to ensure that the route from rites to record is open, uniform and fair," it said. The top court passed the order on a plea seeking directions to various states and UTs to frame and notify rules under Section 6 of the Anand Marriage Act, 1909 (as amended in 2012) to facilitate registration of marriages solemnised by the Sikh rite commonly known as "Anand Karaj". The bench noted the 1909 Act was enacted to recognise the validity of marriages performed by the

(Contd on Pg 2)

Verification of EVMS for Chenani assembly constituency begins in Udhampur

Jammu: The verification of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMS) for the Chenani assembly constituency in Jammu and Kashmir commenced on Thursday under tight security, officials said. This initiative follows a request from Harsh Dev Singh, the state president of the National Panthers Party, who unsuccessfully contested last year's polls from this seat in Udhampur, they said.

This is possibly the second such exercise of checking and verification of EVMS in the country this year. Ten candidates who unsuccessfully contested last year's Maharashtra assembly polls had applied for the checking and verification of EVMS, and the machines were found to be flawless on July 31, 2025, officials noted.

On September 10, Udhampur District Election Officer (DEO) Saloni Rai set September 18 and subsequent days for

(Contd on Pg 2)

J-K Police attaches case in Anantnag property in narco-terror case in Anantnag

Srinagar: Police in Anantnag district on Thursday attached immovable property worth lakhs of rupees in a narco-terror case, an official said. "The property attachment has been carried out in connection with FIR No. 57/2024, registered under Sections 7/25 of the Indian Arms Act, 13/18, 39 of the UAPA/Act, Section 5 of the Explosive Substances Act, and Section 8/20 of the NDPS Act at Police Station Mattan," a police spokesperson said. He said the attached property comprises a plot measuring three kanals and six marlas of land (18,000 square feet) located in Sangam in the Bijbehara area. "The land is registered in the name of Iqra Mushtaq, the daughter of Mushtaq

(Contd on Pg 2)

Vaishnodevi Yatra resumes after brief halt, registration starts

Katra: Registration for the pilgrimage to the cave shrine of Mata Vaishnodevi resumed on Thursday morning after authorities decided to give a go ahead for the yatra that was briefly suspended due to inclement weather. After a 22-day suspension due to a landslide and heavy rainfall, the pilgrimage to the shrine atop Trikuta hills in Reasi district resumed on Wednesday. However, it was halted on Wednesday evening due to inclement weather. With the weather improving, the yatra resumed this morning. Officials said the yatra was progressing smoothly, they said. The Shrine Board has made announcements asking pilgrims wanting to use Heli service to book tickets for choppers. Devotees thronging Katra, the base camp of Mata Vaishnodevi temple, said they were happy that the yatra has resumed. "We are happy that the yatra has begun after a long suspension. We had wished to pay obeisance at the Lotus feet of Mata, but the situation here prevented us for over a fortnight due to the

(Contd on Pg 2)

Revival of Ujh Project to benefit J&K, Punjab: Dr Jitendra

Pathankot: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said here today that the revival of Ujh Multipurpose Project would benefit Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir in multiple ways. The project was first proposed nearly 100 years ago, he recalled. The Union Minister said, after its completion, the Ujh project would enhance utilisation of waters of Eastern Rivers (Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) allotted to India as per the Indus Water Treaty to address chronic water shortages and help curb cross-border infiltration. He said, the project would facilitate irrigation of nearly 90,000 hectares of agricultural land in Gurdaspur and Pathankot in Punjab, and Samba and Kathua in Jammu & Kashmir. Talking to local residents and media persons, The Union Minister was speaking during his visit to the flood-hit villages in the Sujapur area on Day 2 of his tour to the af-



fected places in Punjab. Dr Jitendra Singh disclosed that the Ministries of Defence and Home Affairs have also now intervened in the matter from the security point of view. The inter-ministerial arrangement between the Ministries of Home and Water Resources is aimed at pushing forward

the proposal for construction of the dam on Ujh forward without further delay. Dr Jitendra Singh added. He said presently, the uncontrolled flow of water is causing damage farmland and BFS establishments during natural disasters like the recent spate of floods in Punjab. At the same time, it is

also providing vulnerable entry points for cross-border infiltration, he added. Dr Jitendra Singh recalled that the work on the Shahpur Kandi dam, located on river Ravi, had also been held up for several decades, and it was revived by this government only after the intervention by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. During his tour of the flood-affected areas of Pathankot today, Dr Jitendra Singh visited Kailashpur, Pangoli and other villages in Jampur and met the victims. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister directed the accompanying authorities to undertake immediate measures for rehabilitation of the affected and built new structures with better qualities to withstand floods in future. While interacting with the victims, Dr Jitendra Singh assured that compensation would be provided for

(Contd on Pg 2)

FROM PAGE ONE

Demand...

promoting tourism is not easy, but I want to assure you that just as we worked closely with outgoing President Rauf Tramboo, we will work with TAAK under your leadership as well," he said. The Chief Minister expressed hope that autumn and winter seasons would bring some revival, while preparations should begin in earnest for the spring season.

Highlighting the significance of today's gathering, Omar Abdullah said, "We will always remember that the first programme held at the Gulmarg Convention Centre was the 17th AGM of the Travel Agents Association of Kashmir. In future, many prestigious programmes of FICCI, CII, Government of India and Government of J&K will be held here, but the first will always remain with TAAK. "The AGM was also addressed by Advisor to the CM Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Gulmarg Pizdaa Farooq Ahmad Shah, prominent hotelier Mushtaq Chaya, outgoing TAAK President Rauf Tramboo and newly elected President Farooq A. Kuthoo. Members of TAAK from across Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh participated in the meeting.

CSR...

value collection and management, developing an apricot value chain in Sham region, promoting renewable energy, training women self-help groups in handloom and handicrafts, and supporting vulnerable communities through poverty alleviation, entrepreneurship, and capacity-building initiatives.

The Lt Governor assured all possible support from the Administration to ensure that CSR-linked programmes reach grassroots communities effectively and create long-term impact.

On the sidelines, the Lt Governor also met delegations from different parts of Ladakh. The Ladakh Buddhist Association sought assistance for the construction of a sarai in Kargil. A group of villagers from Trans-Singge La requested a demarcation exercise to ensure equal representation, while a delegation from Sheynam sought help for fencing community pastures and grazing lands.

The Lt Governor reiterated that CSR-driven partnerships between government, the corporate sector, and civil society are crucial for addressing Ladakh's unique developmental challenges and building resilient communities. He assured continued support from the Administration to scale up impactful initiatives that empower people, strengthen local economies, and contribute to the Union Territory's sustainable growth.

SIR to...

aimed at "protecting infiltrators from Bangladesh". "SIR has been ordered (by the Election Commission) to remove impurities from the voters' list in Bihar. Why should it make the stomachs of Rahul baba and Lalu ji (BJP president) churn? The reason is they are worried that infiltrators from Bangladesh, who are their vote banks, may get flushed out," claimed the home minister. "Should the infiltrators from Bangladesh be allowed to avail of facilities to which only our citizens are entitled? Should they get five gvs of free ration? Should they receive free medical insurance to the tune of Rs 5 lakh per year? Should they get pucca houses and jobs," Shah asked with a rhetorical flourish, evoking roars of a resounding "no" from the attendees.

He also termed as a "false narrative" Gandhi's allegation of vote theft, pointing out "they (Congress, RJD and Left combine) had taken recourse to similar tactics earlier when they had alleged that we were out to scrap reservations for SCs, STs and OBCs". "But you know for SCs, STs, and OBCs been tinkered with? I can assure you that as long as there is even one BJP member in Parliament, reservations cannot be scrapped," said Shah.

The remarks may be seen in the backdrop of attempts by the BJP, traditionally seen as "a party of the upper castes", to reach out to the numerically powerful deprived castes. Shah called upon BJP workers to aim for a "massive two-thirds majority" in elections to the 243-strong Bihar assembly, which are likely to be announced in a few weeks from now.

He also laid stress on the need for smooth coordination with alliance partners like JD(U), headed by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar who paid him a visit in the state capital earlier in the day, and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) of Union minister Chirag Paswan.

"You must tell the people that the positive impact on their lives, because of government schemes, was linked to the lotus (the BJP's poll symbol). But you must also keep in mind that our allies do well and that every vote cast in favour of the arrow and the hut (symbols of JD(U) and LJP(RV) respectively), would ultimately go to Prime Minister Narendra Modi," said Shah.

Known in the political circles for his organisational capabilities, the home minister disclosed that he chose to meet party workers instead of addressing rallies, as was the norm in the run-up to polls, to drive home the point that "in the BJP, it is not the leaders, but the karyakartas who run the machinery".

"You can take me as an example. I started off as a booth-level worker in Gujarat and went on to become the national president. It is only the BJP which encourages its grassroots-level workers to have the aspiration for reaching the top," Shah said.

Showing encomiums on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whom "I have known for nearly 35 years, and

never seen going on a holiday", Shah sought to draw a contrast with Gandhi, whom he accused of "getting restless if not given a chance to go on a vacation abroad every six months".

The former BJP president, whose first stopover was at Dehri-on-Sone, where he interacted with party workers from 10 districts of south Bihar known as the Magadh-Shahabad region, expressed concern over the NDA's performance in the last assembly polls being "not up to the mark" in the area.

"You must ensure an 80 per cent strike rate, for ourselves as well as our alliance partners, in the upcoming assembly polls", Shah said.

He also underscored that Bihar had reaped "the maximum benefits" of schemes launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, like the Ayushman Bharat Yojana and the Jan Dhan bank accounts, which were backed by efforts of the state government headed by Nitish Kumar, who recently announced "125 units of free electricity for consumers every month".

Pak Army...

attack at JeM headquarters and pay tribute to them. JeM chief Masood Azhar's 10 family members and four close associates were killed in India's attack on the outfit's headquarters in Bahawalpur in the Indian strikes on May 7 as part of Operation Sandoor. The Pakistan Army generals, senior police officers, and top bureaucrats had attended the funerals of those killed in Indian strikes. In an earlier viral clip uploaded to a YouTube channel on Tuesday, the JeM commander had admitted that Azhar's family was "torn into pieces" in Indian missile strikes.

Kashmiri was reportedly speaking at the Mission Mustafa Conference in Pakistan's Punjab province on September 6. Standing among several gun-wielding men, he said: "To protect the ideological and geographical boundaries of this country, we hit (wage a jihad in) Delhi, Kabul and Kandhar. And after sacrificing everything, on May 7, Maulana Masood Azhar's family members in Bahawalpur were torn into pieces (in Indian strikes)."

Tensions between India and Pakistan soared after terrorists killed 26 people, mostly civilians, in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam on April 22. In a powerful retaliation to the Pahalgam massacre, Indian armed forces carried out missile strikes on the terror targets, including Bahawalpur, a stronghold of the JeM terror group, on May 7 as part of Operation Sandoor.

A statement attributed to Azhar at the time said that India's attack on Jamia Masjid Subhan Allah in Bahawalpur resulted in the death of 10 of his family members and four close associates. Those killed included Azhar's elder sister and her husband, a nephew and his wife, another niece, and five children from his extended family.

The statement further mentioned that the attack also claimed the lives of one of Azhar's close associates and his mother, along with two other close companions. Bahawalpur became the hub of the JeM after the release of Azhar in exchange for the hijacked passengers of IC-814 in 1999.

GST rate...

operates on the principle of equality, with both the Centre and states equally responsible for outcomes of rate decisions. "A revenue impact would seriously affect the Centre as well," she added. Despite the initial concerns, Sitharaman expressed gratitude to state finance ministers for constructively agreeing to the rate cuts, and said she had written personal letters to each of them acknowledging their support.

The Union finance minister also pointed to past revenue challenges stemming from misclassification of items and "gaming of the system", citing examples like popcorn in which salted and sugary versions were taxed differently, leading to loss of revenue. Sitharaman said the reforms now aim to plug such loopholes.

She added that GST 2.0 is expected to push Rs 2 lakh crore into the economy, boosting demand and benefiting the entire 140 crore population. "This could not have been achieved with any other tax reform," Sitharaman said. The rate reductions, part of what Sitharaman called "new generation GST reforms", will take effect on September 22.

SC asks...

Sikh ceremony of "Anand Karaj". It said by the 2012 amendment, Parliament inserted Section 6 casting a duty upon the states to make rules to facilitate registration of such marriages, to maintain a marriage register and to provide certified extracts, while clarifying that omission to register would not affect the validity of the marriage. The bench said according to the petitioner, while a number of states and UTs had notified rules pursuant to Section 6, which deals with registration of marriages, several others had not yet done so. Referring to Section 6, the bench said it imposed a positive duty on every state to create a workable registration machinery for "Anand Karaj" marriages. "That duty is not contingent on the size of the beneficiary group in any jurisdiction, nor can it be deferred on the footing that other marriage laws exist in parallel," it said. The bench said availability of registration bears directly on equal treatment and on orderly civil administration.

Uneven access to a statutory facility across states and UTs, the bench said, produced unequal outcomes for similarly situated citizens while underlining the harmonisa-

tion with the existing registration regimes as "practicable and necessary".

"Where a general civil marriage registration framework is in place, it must receive applications for registration of marriages solemnised by Anand Karaj on the same footing as other marriages and, if the parties so request, it should record that the ceremony was by the Anand rite," the bench said.

Every respondent state and UT which hadn't yet notified rules under Section 6, was therefore directed to do so within four months. "With immediate effect and until such rules are notified, each respondent shall ensure that marriages solemnised by Anand Karaj are received for registration under the prevailing marriage-registration framework without discrimination," it said.

The bench said states and UTs, which have already notified the rules under Section 6, should continue to operate them. The bench directed the Centre to act as the coordinating authority and asked it to circulate within two months, the model rules compiled from jurisdictions that had already notified Section 6 rules to any state or UT that seeks guidance.

It directed the Centre to compile and present a consolidated state report before it within six months indicating compliance by the states and UTs. "Moreover, we make it clear that no application for registration of an Anand Karaj marriage or for a certified extract shall be refused on the sole ground that rules under Section 6 of the Act have not yet been notified," it said.

In specific directions to Goa, the bench, as an interim measure, asked the state to ensure all civil registration offices receive and process, without discrimination, applications for registration of marriages solemnised by 'Anand Karaj' under the existing framework.

The Centre was further directed to issue within four months an appropriate notification under Section 6 of the Goa, Daman and Diu (Administration) Act, 1962, extending the 1909 Act to Goa. Upon such extension, Goa was ordered to notify rules under Section 6 within four months.

"As an interim measure, the state (Sikkim) shall ensure that all registering authorities receive and process, without discrimination, applications for registration of marriages solemnised by Anand Karaj under the existing Rules to provide for registration and solemnization of a Form of Marriage in Sikkim (1963)," it said.

While disposing of the plea, the bench directed the Centre to consider and place within four months before the competent authority a proposal for extension of the 1909 Act to Sikkim under Article 371F(n) of the Constitution, with such restrictions or modifications as may be warranted.

Verification...

the scheduled verification of EVMs in the Chenani assembly segment. Speaking to reporters ahead of the verification, Harsh Dev Singh remarked, "Today, we have set a precedent by allowing EVMs to be opened for verification. This exercise will unfold here, and if any electoral malpractice has occurred, those responsible will face consequences."

He stated that this is the first time such a process is taking place in this area, suggesting that "this is the opening of doors for transparency. Those who have stolen votes will need to resign from their positions." Singh also alleged that the Election Commission is collaborating with the BJP to commit these irregularities.

BJP MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia, against whose election Harsh Dev Singh filed a review petition in the High Court last year, said, "In a democracy, every candidate who has contested elections and lost has the right to request verification of EVMs if they have any doubts." "Following this democratic process, our opposition party member has requested checking and recounting of votes at three polling stations, and that is currently taking place," he added.

The verification exercise is being conducted under tight security at the Government Degree College for Boys in Udhampur, from 10 am to 7 pm daily. The DEO has invited all eligible candidates of political parties of the Chenani constituency to participate in this exercise. "You are also requested to provide an acknowledgement of this intimation letter to this office for the record," the DEO said.

Singh has requested that the results of the Chenani assembly election in 2024 be declared null and void, accusing at least 19 respondents - including the Chief Election Commissioner of India - of widespread electoral law violations and misconduct during the election process.

Revival of...

damages suffered by their houses and shops Deputy Commissioner, Pathankot, Aditya Uppal briefed Dr Jiendra Singh about the spots he visited today. He informed that 250 houses were reported to be severely or partially damaged during floods near Bridge Number 4 in Sujapur. He said the exact assessment is underway. Approximately, crop damage has been reported over 7 acre land. About 1500 people were affected. However, there were no casualties in Sujapur. More than 700 persons were rescued by NDRF, Police and the Army.

The Deputy Commissioner also informed the Union Minister that about 200 people were affected in Pangoli where 25 houses belonging to SC community were severely damaged. Approximately, 6 acre crop land was swept away in khad water overflowing adjoining India Oil Petrol Pump towards Mamoon Cantt.

Yesterday, the Union Minister had visited several villages affected by the floods, such as Polla, Kohlian and the river bed of Ravi. Besides, he also visited places along the rivers Ravi and Jiali in Bamial, Chal, Amir, Simbal Sakol, Dhinda and Bhupalpur. On the occasion, the Union Minister was briefed on the level of damage suffered during the calamity.

Dr Jiendra Singh said, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is monitoring the rehabilitation of the victims and reconstruction work with respect to the damaged infrastructure. The Minister said he is also monitoring the work being undertaken in all 23 districts of Punjab, and receives reports from the local authorities on a daily basis.

Online...

have been having discussions with them for last almost three years. After passing the law, once again, we engaged with them, we also engaged with the banks and practically all stakeholders possible, and we have finalised the rules," he said.

The government will hold one more round of discussions with the industry, he promised, asserting that the Centre favours a consultative approach, "...and in case they need some more time, we will definitely look at a more consultative approach, which has been our approach on practically everything we do. But at this point of time, we are targeting that we start the implementation of new legislation from October 1," he said.

Sources said one of the concerns flagged by the industry is around how to return the money that is still left in user accounts. The government has held extensive discussions with the banks and arrived at a solution now, Vaishnav said. Parliament passed the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, in August banning all forms of online money games, while promoting e-sports and online social games.

Now an Act, after the President's nod, it aims to crack down on rising instances of addiction, money laundering and financial fraud through such applications. Following the passage of the Bill in Parliament, online gaming platforms, including Dream11, My11Circle, WinZO, Zuppe, and Nazara Technologies-backed PokerBaazi, have halted their real-money online gaming offerings.

Sebi...

down, in January 2023 published a damning report against the Adani Group, alleging Adicorp Enterprises Pvt Ltd, Milestone Tradelinks Pvt Ltd, and Rehvar Infrastructure Pvt Ltd were used as a conduit to route funds from various Adani Group companies to fund publicly listed Adani Power Ltd and Adani Enterprises Ltd.

There was no violation of Sebi's disclosure norms as the transactions between Adicorp, Milestone Tradelinks, and Rehvar Infrastructure with the conglomerate's firms did not meet the definition of a related party, Sebi board member Kamlesh C Varshney said in the two orders. It also found no violations involving substantial acquisition of securities or control that could mislead investors.

As a result, Sebi concluded that there was no basis for assigning liability or imposing penalties on the Adani entities or executives. The regulatory clean chit follows months of scrutiny and speculation triggered by Hindenburg's damning report of January 2023, which triggered a stock rout of the listed Adani Group companies, eroding more than USD 150 billion in value at its lowest point. Adani Group has repeatedly denied all allegations made in the Hindenburg report and its stocks recovered most of the losses before the a broader index meltdown set in. A Supreme Court-appointed expert panel had previously echoed similar findings, noting no prima facie evidence of wrongdoing.

J-K Police...

Ahmad Dar, a resident of Hugam in Srigufwara, Anantnag, and the niece of the accused Firdous Ahmad Bhat, "the spokesperson said. He said this action has been taken under due legal process and is part of the ongoing crackdown on individuals and properties linked with unlawful and anti-national activities.

Vaishnodevi...

suspension. Now as registration has begun again, we are content of having her darshan and seeking blessings," Tribhavan Deka, a pilgrim from Assam, said. Deka, who is on a pilgrimage to the shrine with a seven-member group, said, "We pray to Mata to keep the yatra safe and sound for all her devotees." "Like him, Savitri Devi of Uttarakhand, who has arrived in Katra along with 11 members, said, "It was the call of Mata for all of us to be here. For years, we were trying to pay obeisance here, but failed to do so. See, when the situation is bad due to heavy rains, we are here - it is her directive."

The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) announced the reopening of the yatra subject to favourable weather conditions from Wednesday morning, much to the relief of hundreds of devotees who were camping in Katra town - the base camp for the pilgrims visiting the shrine. However, the respite was short-lived, as the shrine board once again suspended the yatra amid inclement weather Wednesday evening after allowing 2,500 pilgrims during the day, the officials said.

BJP organizes blood donation and medical camp at Kupwara under Seva Pakhwada

Kupwara, Kashmir, 18 September 2025:

As part of the ongoing Seva Pakhwada to mark the 75th birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Jammu & Kashmir Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) organized a Blood Donation Camp at Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Kupwara. The initiative was inaugurated by BJP General Secretary (Organization) J&K, Ashok Koul, in the presence of senior party leaders and local functionaries.

The camp witnessed enthusiastic participation from BJP workers, supporters, and members of the local community who came forward to donate blood voluntarily. Following the blood donation drive, a medical



camp was also organized at the venue. The camp adopted a multi-disciplinary approach to provide medical consultations and distribute essential medicines free of cost to the needy patients. J&K BJP State Secretary Anwar Khan, Secretary & Prabhari Kupwara Wani Mudasir, State Media Co-Incharge Adv.

Sajid Yousuf Shah, District President Kupwara Rafiq Shah, along with other senior party activists. Addressing the gathering at SDH Kupwara, Ashok Koul said that the Seva Pakhwada is not merely a campaign but a collective effort to reach out to society with compassion, responsibility, and dedication.

Hindi Fortnight Inaugurated with Grand Ceremony at Central University of Jammu

Jammu, 18 Sept 2025: The Department of Hindi & Other Indian Languages and the Hindi Cell of the Central University of Jammu jointly inaugurated the Hindi Fortnight celebrations. The inaugural ceremony was organized under the guidance and inspiration of the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Sanjeev Jain.

The Chief Guest on the occasion was Prof. Chandrakant Singh, Professor, Department of Hindi, Central University of Himachal Pradesh. The Special Guests included Prof. Yashwant Singh, Registrar, Prof. Ritu Bakshi, Dean Students' Welfare, Prof. Bharat Bhushan, Head, Department



of Hindi, and Dr. Priyanjan, Assistant Director, Hindi Cell. The programme commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by the dignitaries, followed by Saraswati Vandana presented by the research scholars of the Department of Hindi. All the distin-

guished guests on the dais were felicitated. Welcoming the guests, Prof. Bharat Bhushan highlighted the objectives behind organizing the Hindi Fortnight. In his address, Registrar Prof. Yashwant Singh said that Hindi is not just a language but a symbol of our culture and the soul of

Mother India. Hindi has united the entire nation. He emphasized that the Central University of Jammu is at the forefront in promoting Hindi and appealed to students to contribute actively to its growth and dissemination. Prof. Ritu Bakshi, Dean Students' Welfare, stated that Hindi is a very simple and accessible language, which has crossed the boundaries of India and earned appreciation abroad. With scientific and technological development, India is witnessing transformation, and Hindi has adapted itself to these changes, becoming the language of the digital era. Chief Guest Prof. Chan-

drakant Singh observed that Hindi is not a single language but a group of languages that encompass various dialects. He described Hindi as a reflection of folk culture and elaborated on its fully developed form with several examples. He compared Hindi to a lotus flower, with all other Indian languages as its petals, and expressed confidence that the future of Hindi on the world stage is bright. He stressed the need to nurture "Hindi soldiers" for its further growth and urged the youth to preserve India's regional languages and cultures to maintain the integrity of Indian identity.

BJP inaugurates exhibition depicting PM Modi's journey of nation-building

Jammu, 18 September 2025:

J&K BJP President Sat Sharma (CA) inaugurated an impressive exhibition under the ongoing "Seva Pakhwada" at Royal Orchid Banquet Hall, Jammu, to mark the 75th birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The exhibition drew the participation of a large number of prominent leaders, party functionaries, and citizens. Among those present were BJP National Secretary & MLA Dr. Narinder Singh, Former Dy. CM Dr. Nirmal Singh, Vice-President Bharat Bhushan

(DDC Chairperson), Priya Sethi, Rajiv Charak, and Rekha Mahajan, General Secretaries Sanjita Dogra, Baldev Singh Billawaria, and Gopal Mahajan, MLAs Sham Lal Sharma, Ch. Vikram Randhawa, Arvind Gupta, and Surinder Bhagat, former MLA Ashwini Sharma, former Mayor Rajinder Sharma, Treasurer Prabhat Singh Jamwal, Media Secretary Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, District Presidents Nand Kishore Sharma, Adv. Rajesh Gupta, and Rajeev Pandita, along with senior leaders Ayodhya Gupta, Reema Padha,



Pawan Sharma, BJYM Morcha President Arun Prabbhat, Mahila Morcha President

Neha Mahajan, Minority Morcha President Ranjodh Singh Nalwa, GL Raina,

Zorawar Singh, Naveen Sharma and others. The exhibition was organized

under the supervision of Munish Khajuria, All Cell Co-Incharge, J&K BJP. Speaking on the occasion, Sat Sharma said today, The J&K BJP has inaugurated an exhibition which will continue for 3 days. He said that the exhibitions under Seva Pakhwada are being planned across all organizational districts of Jammu & Kashmir. He said that these exhibitions will portray the inspiring life journey of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his childhood struggles, and his rise as a dedicated worker who devoted his entire life to public

welfare and nation-building. "The works and decisions taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi since 2014 have strengthened the nation in every sphere, be it economic reforms, infrastructural growth, national security, or empowerment of the marginalized. His vision has not only brought about transformative changes in India but also earned the country global recognition," he said. Sat Sharma emphasized that the exhibition is not merely a tribute to the Prime Minister but also a

source of inspiration for the younger generation. He said that crores of people, especially youth, will draw motivation from Modi Ji's life, which reflects perseverance, service, and selfless dedication to the motherland. His journey is a call for all of us to contribute to the strengthening of the nation and the prosperity of the people, he added. He further called upon the common people to join the exhibition and be a part of the mesmerizing journey of the progress of a great nation under the leadership of PM Modi.

Owais Ali Bhat foundation: The foundation is out there in Jammu and Kashmir divisions and is helping flood effected people.

Jammu:18 Sept 2025:- Owais Ali Bhat foundation was established 3 years before in Jammu and Kashmir by the Chairman Owais Ali Bhat (an educationist, philanthropist, social worker). Aim of the foundation: The aim to establish the foundation was to help needy and poor people.

*LWork done by the foundation so far: Owais Ali Bhat foundation has done lot of work in education, drug related issues and also women education related things.

Recent work by the foundation: Jammu and Kashmir has recently witnessed it's worst flood situation in low lying areas near Ravi river in Jammu and Jehlum rivers in Kashmir. The volunteers of this foundation are working



to get essential food items like rice, milk, water bottles, dals etc in these areas. The foundation volunteers are working in district Budgam areas like zanipoora, Tain-gan, Pohru, Lasjan in kash-

mir and District Jammu in Gujjar nagar and other low lying areas of Jammu. The Chairman of this foundation himself met several affected families in Kashmir as well as in Jammu and assured

them to provide everything they will need in these difficult times. Words from Mudasir Hussain (one of the member and volunteer of Owais Ali Bhat foundation): It's heartbreaking to see these people suffering and how they are managing in difficult times, he said most of the people in these effected areas are poor and have lost almost everything and they are dependent on what we are giving them to eat. Words from Owais Ali Bhat (chairman of the foundation): He urged district administration and concern authorities to help them as soon as possible as they are in dire need of food and water and also appealed central govt to provide special

package to affected areas so that they can build their homes and aspirations again. He also thanked district administration Jammu Mr Rakesh Manhas (DC Jammu) for reaching out to people and helping them on time. He thanked worthy DC Budgam Dr Bilal bhat For taking care of the effected families with essential services and supporting foundation to reach out to the families. Words from Mohsin Ali Bhat (member of Owais Ali Bhat foundation): He hopes and Prays that every effected families recover from the losses soon and more and more NGOs's, foundations, individuals, companies reach out to them and help them

HDFC Bank Educates over 1,000 Teachers on Safe Digital Banking Practices

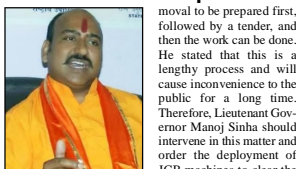
JAMMU, September 18, 2025: HDFC Bank, India's leading private sector Bank conducted a virtual session on safe digital banking practices, to sensitise over 1,000 teachers at schools and colleges across India. Through this session, teachers gained valuable insights on safe digital banking practices. This initiative was aimed at helping citizens stay vigilant and protect themselves from cyber scammers. The session included real life examples, stories and videos which helped participants understand various Modus Operandi used by fraudsters. HDFC Bank has been conducting cyber fraud awareness sessions and workshops under the secure banking initiative at various locations across the country over the past four years. The workshop covered an array of pertinent topics, offering a better understanding of digital security. Cyber Fraud Awareness: Detailed discussions were held explaining common cyber threats like phishing, phishing, smishing, remote device access, SIM swap and UPI frauds. Discussions also focused on identifying scams which take place in the guise of investments, job offers, digital arrests, fake couriers amongst

other and on methods of safeguarding against these. Real-life examples were used to deepen understanding. Secure Net-banking and Shopping Tips: The sessions highlighted best practices for secure online transactions and tips for safe online shopping. Preventive Measures: Attendees were guided not to divulge their sensitive bank credentials. Report Suspected Scams: Reporting any suspicious call/message on the Chakshu portal on www.sancharsaathi.gov.in. Commenting on this Mr. Manish Agrawal, Senior Executive Vice President - Credit Intelligence and Control - HDFC Bank said, "Lack of awareness causes people to fall for cyber frauds. It is therefore essential to sensitise people, so that they do not share confidential banking data or click on unverified links. The objective of these sessions has been to equip educators with the right knowledge to navigate the online world safely." The Bank encourages customers to be cautious and adopt safe banking habits while transacting digitally and avoid sharing their personal banking information with anyone.

People are Facing Difficulties Due To The Sidhra-Panjtirthi Road Being One-Way: Hindustan Shiv Sena LG Should Intervene To Open The Road For Two-Way Traffic: Vikrant Kapoor

Jammu, September 18 : Hindustan Shiv Sena State President Vikrant Kapoor has expressed deep concern over the difficulties faced by people due to the Siddra-Panjtirthi road being one-way. He has urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to intervene in the matter and take immediate steps to open the Road For two-way traffic.

Addressing a press conference in Jammu Vikrant Kapoor said these words. He said that the road was closed due to a landslide caused by recent heavy rains on 26th August. He said that after some debris was removed, the road has been opened for one-way traffic. Debris remains on a 50-70 foot stretch of the road, but even after so many days, the debris has not been completely removed by JCB machines. Consequently, only one-way traffic is permitted on the road, causing



significant inconvenience to general public. He stated that vehicles are allowed to travel from Panjtirthi towards Sidhra, but on their return journey, they must travel a long distance via either Narwal or Manda. He added that due to the presence of a hospital there, patients are also facing difficulties. He stated that the concerned officials are deliberately not removing the debris from this 50- to 70-foot stretch, allowing vehicles to travel only one-way. He alleged that a mafia is involved in this matter, as they want the DPR for debris re-

moval to be prepared first, followed by a tender, and then the work can be done. He stated that this is a lengthy process and will cause inconvenience to the public for a long time. Therefore, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha should intervene in this matter and order the deployment of JCB machines to clear the debris from this small stretch of road, providing some relief to the public. He also warned that if the issue is not resolved immediately, Hindustan Shiv Sena should intervene and hold a sit-in at the landslide site. Hindustan Shiv Sena State Senior Vice President and Jammu and Kashmir in-charge Ramesh Gupta, senior leaders Preet Gupta, Sunil Degotra, Jeevan Sharma, Rakesh, Baba Ram Kaith, Rohan, Abhishek, Himanshu, Anil, women's wing leader Jyoti Devi and others were also present at the press conference.

Campaign for Saturation of FI Schemes at Gram Panchayat level in all districts

Jammu, Sept 18: Reserve Bank of India has been actively associating itself with the nation-wide intensive campaign launched by Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance, Government of India (GoI), during July 01, 2025, to September 30, 2025, covering all Gram Panchayats (GPs) across all districts of the country, with the objective to achieve, inter alia, saturation of beneficiaries under the FI schemes of GoI and re-KYC of eligible accounts. Accordingly, saturation camps are being organized in all gram panchayats of the UT of J&K (i.e. 4291 GPs) through nodal bank branches and with active involvement of all other stakeholders, viz., bank branches having presence in the concerned gram panchayat, Business Correspondents (BCs)/CSPs of the concerned banks, public representatives, government functionaries, LDMs etc. In line with the directions,



State Bank of India organized a Saturation Camp on 18th September 2025 at Community Hall, E.O. Office, opp. BDO, Block Vijaypur. The event was graced by Sh. Chandrasekhar Azad, Regional Director, RBI Jammu, as Chief Guest. Other notable dignitaries included Smt. Vibha Gupta, Deputy Gen-

eral Manager, RBI; Sh. Mitesh Sharma, Sh. Rajneesh, Sh. Subin Kundal, AGM, Reserve Bank of India; Sh. Ankur Kumar Sharma, Regional Manager, RBO-III, State Bank of India; Sh. Chander Mohan Bhat, Assistant General Manager, State Bank of India; Smt. Tanjeet Kour (CM FI), Sh. Subash Chander

(LDM Samba), Sh. Rajesh Kumar Mehta (Manager FI RBO-III), Sh. Amul Bhatia (BM SBI Vijaypur), Sh. Anil Kumar from State Bank of India and officials from other banks also participated. During the conduct of these camps, accounts are being opened for unbanked adults under PMJDY. Further, to

achieve the objective of comprehensive financial inclusion of all as envisaged under PMJDY, enrollments under Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) are being done for the eligible beneficiaries. On-spot re-KYC is also being done for all eligible accounts (including PMJDY and non-PMJDY accounts) where re-KYC was due as on June 30, 2025, or falling due during July 01, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Also, awareness sessions on digital fraud prevention and ways to access unclaimed deposit & grievance redressal are an integral part of these camps. Above campaign will help bring millions of unbanked/unbanked individuals into the banking fold and lay the foundation for inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Peer Baba Kala Shah Jand Dangal Sees Fierce Competition and High-Stakes Bids - Dr Rajeev Bhagat MLA*

Bishnah, 18 September: In a display of strength, skill, and traditional wrestling, the Peer Baba Kala Shah Jand Peer Dangal Committee successfully organized a grand dangal that drew over 60 wrestlers from across various states. The event, a cornerstone of local culture and community spirit, was graced by Dr. Rajeev Bhagat, the MLA of Bishnah, who attended as the chief guest and highlighted the importance of preserving traditional sports. The atmosphere was electric as spectators gathered to witness the intense bouts, with wrestlers vying for some of the biggest bid prizes in recent memory. The top three prizes were fiercely contested, with the highest bid of Rs 31,000 going to the winner, followed by Rs 21,000 for second place and Rs 15,000 for the third-place finisher. The main bout saw a thrilling contest between Sadar Ganshu and Rishabh, who shared the first prize after a gripping match that



showcased their exceptional grappling techniques and raw power. Their performance captivated the crowd and demonstrated the high level of talent present at the event. The second prize was secured by Balkari, who fought valiantly through a series of challenging matches, earning him a well-deserved Rs 21,000. In a similarly impressive display, Babbar took home the third prize, proving his mettle against formidable opponents.

In addition to the main prizes, the dangal also featured a runner-up category with significant prize money. The first runner-up received Rs 10,000, while the second and third runners-up were awarded Rs 7,000 and Rs 5,000, respectively. These prizes not only acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the wrestlers but also serve to encourage more participation in the sport. The event was a testament to strong community support, with numerous prominent figures in attendance to cheer on the wrestlers. Among those present were Jasphal Sharma, Kasturi Lal, Balraj Mandi, Subhash Bhagat, and Devraj Bhagat. Political and social leaders also showed their support, including Yash Pal, the former Sarpanch, Absekh Jammwal, Mandal Pradhan Bishnah Rural, and Arjun Singh, General Secretary. The presence of these individuals underscored the widespread appreciation for

the traditional sport of wrestling and its role in fostering community ties. Other notable attendees included Dev Raj (Retd. ZEO), Bittu Pessi, Subash Chander, and Kasturi Sharma (Retd. SI). Their participation highlighted the broad appeal of the event, which brought together people from various walks of life. The seamless organization by the Peer Baba Kala Shah Jand Peer Dangal Committee was widely praised by all, ensuring that the day was a resounding success for both the participants and the spectators. The dangal served not only as a platform for athletic competition but also as a celebration of local heritage, bringing together families and friends to enjoy a day of exhilarating sports and community bonding. The committee has pledged to continue organizing such events, promising to make the next one even bigger and better, further cementing the legacy of this traditional sport in the region.

Omar Abdullah's announcement of five Marlas land to landless is a welcome and historic step: Rattan Lal Gupta

Jammu September 18th: Rattan Lal Gupta Senior leader and Provincial President JKNC, Jammu said that the announcement of Flood hit/ landslide/ cloudburst areas by the Honble Chief Minister Jammu and Kashmir Jenab Omar Abdullah regarding the allotment of five Marla plots to landless persons is indeed a welcome and historic step. This measure reflects the concern of the present Omar led Government towards the most vulnerable sections of society who have been deprived of basic shelter due to natural calamities. The initiative has the potential to change lives by giving dignity, security, and a sense of belonging to thousands of families who have been affected due to natural calamities. Mr Gupta emphasized that the intention of the UT Government is appreciable, it is equally important that the Union Government extends its whole hearted support to make this decision of Chief Minister a practical reality. Land allotment alone is not sufficient- development of these plots requires financial resources for basic infrastructure of residential houses along with electricity, water supply etc. The UT Government, with its limited fiscal space, cannot shoulder this burden alone. It is the duty of the Centre Government to immediately provide liberal financial assistance to J&K Govt so that the promises made do not remain confined to papers and press notes. Unfortunately, the experience of the last few years shows that many an-



nouncements by the Centre have not translated into action on the ground due to lack of follow-up and resource allocation. If the Centre is truly committed to the welfare of these poor landless people in J&K, it must release special funds and work in coordination with the UT Government to implement this scheme in a time-bound manner. Mr Gupta said that this announcement also exposes the double standards of the BJP-led government which has so far failed to provide tangible relief to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. While tall claims are made from Delhi about development and empowerment, the ground reality is that the UT continues to suffer from unemployment, inflation, and inadequate rehabilitation measures for those affected by the natural calamities and displacement.

BJP asks Omar govt for new housing colonies in densely populated Jammu and Srinagar cities

Jammu, 18 September 2025:

Dr. Hari Dutt Shishu and Zorawar Singh Jamwal Spokespersons, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, called upon the NC government and the concerned departments to take urgent and pragmatic steps to regularize already established colonies and ensure that new colonies are developed strictly in accordance with scientific and environmental norms.

Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Media Incharge, J&K BJP was also present in the press conference held at party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Dr. Hari Dutt Shishu stressed that there is unexpected massive loss consisting both of humans and the property in the recent disaster caused by torrential rain, cloud burst, illegal mining and the increasing vulnerability of certain areas to natural disasters. He emphasized that the growing population and migration from villages to major cities in the region pose a significant threat both to life and property, especially in the wake of changing climate patterns and increased instances of flash floods, landslides, and seismic activity.

"The people residing in long-established but unrecognized colonies are living in uncertainty. The government must take immediate action to regularize these settlements, many of which have existed for decades. At the same time, future planning must be guided by disaster management protocols and sustainable urban development models," Dr. Shishu said.

Dr. Hari Dutt Shishu further said that Government should immediately conduct housing need survey to cater the growing need of the housing and also take up at priority the proposed TPS alongside Ring Road from Akhnor road to Kot Bhalwal to cater the rising housing needs in Jammu city.

Zorawar Singh Jamwal, while addressing the media urged the Housing & Urban Development Department, as well as District Development Commissioners, to coordinate and conduct thorough assessments of existing colonies, especially those in vulnerable zones. Regularization, he stressed, should be accompanied by the provision of basic amenities such as water supply, drainage, waste management, electricity, and road connectivity.

Parveen Pargal Appointed All India Executive Member of Laghu Udyog Bharati from Jammu & Kashmir

Jammu, Sep 18: At the 3-day All India Executive Committee and Annual General Meeting of Laghu Udyog Bharati (LUB), held from 13th to 15th September at Samalkha, Panipat (Haryana), noted industrialist Parveen Pargal has been appointed as All India Executive Member of Laghu Udyog Bharati for the term 2025-2027.

The appointment took place in the presence of senior RSS leaders including Sah-Sakaryavah Dr. Krishna Gopal and All India Organisation Secretary Prakash Chandra Parveen Pargal, who is also serving as State President of LUB Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, has been entrusted with this national responsibility to further strengthen the voice of micro, small, and medium industries at the national level.

The meeting was attended by more than 1500 delegates from across the country. During the convention, Madhusudan Dadu was appointed as National President, Om Prakash



Gupta as National General Secretary, Arvind Dhumal (Prabhari North Zone) as National Vice President, and Anju Bajaj (J&K Prabhari) as National Secretary, along with other national office bearers and executive members.

The convention, also attended by Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini and former Chief Minis-

ter & Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, witnessed enthusiastic participation from entrepreneurs across

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Krishna Gopal emphasized that small and medium industries can progress only when entrepreneurs have the right knowledge and access to government schemes, which will help

them become self-reliant.

On the occasion, Parveen Pargal highlighted that LUB is the world's largest organisation of small industries with over 62,000 members, operating in 1060 industrial towns, covering 600 districts across India—from Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh in the north-west to Andaman & Nicobar in the south-east. He said LUB is working tirelessly for the growth of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) across the nation.

State office bearers of Laghu Udyog Bharati Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, including Senior Vice President Dinesh Gupta, Vice President Fayaz Ahmed Bhat, General Secretary Agam Jain, State Secretary Finance Ishant Gupta, State Additional Secretary Finance Rajinder Sadotra, Kathua District President Manoj Goyal was also present and attended the 3-day All India Executive Committee and Annual General Meeting of Laghu Udyog Bharati.

Central University of Jammu Students Extend a Helping Hand to Flood-Affected Communities

Jammu, 18 Sept 2025: In a commendable display of social responsibility and compassion, students from the Marketing and Supply Chain Management (MSCM) program at the School of Business Studies, Central University of Jammu, have initiated a flood relief drive to aid those impacted by recent floods in the region. The students collected and donated essential relief items, providing much-needed support to affected families. The initiative, driven by a spirit of community service, was conducted under the visionary guidance of the university's leadership. The students drew inspiration from the Hon'ble Vice-Chancel-



lor, Prof. Sanjeev Jain, whose emphasis on social outreach and civic duty has

consistently motivated the university community to engage in meaningful societal

contributions.

The initiative received immense encouragement from Prof. Neelika Arora, Dean, School of Business Studies, and Dr. Vinay Kumar, Head of the Department. The drive was conducted under the direct guidance of Assistant Professor Dr. Anju Thapa. The active support and assistance of other faculty members, including Dr. Naresh Sharma, Dr. Arun Yadav, and Dr. Shahid Mushtaq, were also instrumental in the successful organization of the collection drive, ensuring that the students' efforts would make a tangible difference.

The collected relief materials were formally handed over to the Red Cross Soci-

ety for distribution among the flood victims. The handover took place in the distinguished presence of G.R. Bhardwaj, JKPS, Additional SP, Samba, and Anju Bala, JKAS, Tehsil Head Quarter Samba. Both officials lauded the students for their proactive efforts and compassionate gesture, highlighting the importance of such initiatives in strengthening community bonds during times of crisis. This humanitarian effort by the students of the Central University of Jammu not only provides immediate relief to those in distress but also sets a powerful example of how educational institutions can become catalysts for positive social change.

Ashok Koul chairs BJP meeting in Kupwara, stresses grassroots strengthening

Kupwara, 18 September 2025: BJP General Secretary (Organization), J&K, Ashok Koul, chaired an organizational meeting with Kupwara District Office Bearers, Senior Leaders, and Former District Presi-

dents at Dak Bungalow, Kupwara. The meeting was aimed at strengthening the grassroots network of the party and finalizing the roadmap for future programmes in the district. BJP State General Secretary Anwar Khan, State Secretary, Prabhari Kupwara Wani Mudasi, State Media Co-Incharge J&K Adv Sajid Yousuf Shah, District President Kupwara Rafiq Shah, Senior Leaders Javid Qureshi, Mohd Shafi, Rehman Lone, Rashid Zargar and other senior



leaders were also in the meeting. Addressing the meeting, Ashok Koul stressed the importance of expanding the party's reach at the ground level and ensuring that every section of society feels connected with the BJP's mission. He stated that Kupwara holds immense potential, and the pri-

ority is to empower people by taking the centre people sponsored schemes of the Narendra Modi government directly to their doorstep. He said that the schemes, designed especially for the poor, downtrodden, and needy sections, must reach the last beneficiary without delay.

BJP holds blood donation camp under 'Seva Pakhwada' in Bishnah, similar camps organized across Jammu region

Jammu, 18 September 2025:

Continuing with the campaign of organizing the blood donation camps to commemorate the indomitable spirit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to serve the nation and its people on his birthday, J&K BJP under the ongoing 'Seva Pakhwada' organized a blood donation camp at Bishnah.

The camp was jointly held by BJP Kissan Morcha, led by its President Rakesh Pant, and District Jammu Border unit under

the leadership of District President Rinku Choudhary.

The camp was inaugurated by J&K BJP President Sat Sharma (CA), who lauded the efforts of the party's frontal organizations for carrying forward the spirit of service. He said that blood donation is a noble cause that directly saves lives and reflects the BJP's deep commitment towards humanitarian values.

Sat Sharma said that the series of blood donation camps across Jammu



& Kashmir during Seva Pakhwada symbolize col-

lective dedication to society. He said that the Prime

Minister Modi's life is a message of service and

sacrifice, and BJP cadres are translating that message into action by reaching out to every needy person.

Dr. Rajeev Bhagat, MLA, Ashwani Sharma, Ex-MLA, SC Morcha President & DDC Dhar-minder Kumar, were also present on the occasion.

Dr. Rajeev Bhagat appreciated the participation of donors, stating that every unit of blood donated today will give someone a new lease of life, and such initiatives must become a routine

practice. Ashwani Sharma said that service to mankind is the highest virtue, and BJP has always led from the front in such noble activities. Rinku Choudhary said that the active participation of youth and local volunteers in this camp has shown that our society is ready to shoulder responsibility in times of need.

Rakesh Pant said that the farmers and grassroots workers are the backbone of society, and their in-

volvement in social causes like blood donation reflects their spirit of solidarity and compassion.

Surjit Singh, Raj Singh Lungeh, Nazam Dutt Sharma and others were also present on the occasion.

Similar blood donation camps were also organized in other districts of the Jammu region, with enthusiastic participation from party workers and locals, reaffirming BJP's resolve to serve the people selflessly.

Babila Rakwal reviews functioning of FPOs across J&K

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18: Commissioner Secretary Cooperative Department, Babila Rakwal, today chaired a meeting to review the functioning and performance of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) across Jammu and Kashmir and identify areas for their improvement. The meeting was attended by Registrar Cooperative Societies, Mohammad Shafiq Chak; Special Secretary Cooperative Department, Additional Registrar Cooperative Societies Jammu, Director Finance Cooperative Department, Deputy Registrar from Jammu And Kashmir besides, Representative of NCDC, GM Anantnag Central Cooperative Bank, GM Jammu Central Cooperative Bank, MD KAMCO Bank, Chairman JKDFC and other



concerned officers. Speaking during the meeting, the Commissioner Secretary directed CBBOs to put up issues and difficulties being faced by them to the department for taking up the matter with appropriate authorities. She stressed on them to maintain transparency and accountability in financial transactions and

urged for strengthening governance, management structures, enhance capacity building and training for FPO members. She also asked the CBBOs of ACCB and JCB to work in coordination with their allotted mentors, so that their FPOs can start business activities by ending FY 2025-26. The Commissioner Sec-

retary instructed the concerned officers to provide strong institutional and financial backing to FPOs, enhancing marketing linkages, branding and value addition for farm produce. She further directed them to ensure timely monitoring and reporting of FPO activities, and maintaining robust coordination between the co-

operative Department, NABARD, NCDC, and CBBOs for sustainable growth. During the meeting, Registrar Cooperative Societies gave a brief presentation on 61 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) that have been registered as FPOs, 32 in Jammu Division and 29 in Kashmir Division. He further briefed that 25 FPOs are doing business as on date while as 7 FPOs have been provided market linkage/credit linkage facilities by CBBOs.

He also said that this review meeting is expected to lead to improved functioning of FPOs, enhanced transparency and accountability, and better achievement of targets, ultimately benefiting farmers and the agricultural community in Jammu and Kashmir.

DDC launches Springshed Climate Adaptability Project approved under NABARD at Shopian

SHOPIAN, SEPTEMBER 18: District administration, led by District Development Commissioner (DDC), Shishir Gupta, has launched the pioneering Springshed Climate Adaptability Project, approved recently by NABARD.

This initiative, a first of its kind in the district marks a significant milestone in the district's pursuit of sustainable development, capacity building, livelihood opportunities, and water security. The project aims to conserve natural springs, recharge groundwater, provide sustained irrigation and drinking water facilities, and preserve cultural heritage connected with water resources in the Zainapora block of the district.

DDC emphasized the importance of conservation of springs, capacity building,



and livelihood improvement through convergence. He was briefed on project components, progress, and potential issues, highlighting the need for a complementary approach. DDC directed that local administration's technical expertise and community needs be considered, em-

phasizing that project success depends on stakeholder participation and a convergent approach. Comprehensive discussions were held with line departments viz. Horticulture, Agriculture, Rural Development, and Jal Shakti to ensure seamless project execution.

Fire & Emergency Services organizes activities under Swasth Nari Sashakt Pariwar Abhiyan

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18: As part of the nationwide campaign Swasth Nari Sashakt Pariwar Abhiyan, J&K Fire & Emergency Services (F&ES) today organized a free medical camp cum drug de-addiction awareness programme cum blood donation camp at F&ES Headquarters, Batamalo. The initiative was held under the leadership of Director, Fire & Emergency Services, Alok Kumar, (ADGP), reflecting his strong commitment towards the fitness, health, and welfare of the jawans. The programme was aimed at promoting health, fitness, and overall well being among

firefighters, who serve as frontline responders in emergencies. Screening for non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and fatty liver was conducted during the medical camp with the help of advanced diagnostic tools. Specialists from the Directorate of Ayush carried out medical evaluations, while ENT and audiology services were extended by Paras Hospital. A blood donation camp was conducted in collaboration with LD Hospital and NGO Red Drop, wherein more than 30 personnel from J&K Fire & Emergency Services came forward to donate blood, demonstrat-

ing their dedication to saving lives beyond their line of duty. Drug de-addiction awareness session featured expert guidance from the Director, Rehabilitation Centre, and a motivational address by a Social Activist. The sessions focused on smoking cessation, harmful effects of addiction, and the availability of medicines to aid quitting. Deputy Director Command Srinagar, Medical Officer F&ES, eminent medical experts including the Director, Ujala Cygnus Hospital, and other distinguished specialists and social activists attended the event.

J&K KVIB organizes awareness camp/ interaction program at K.G. Polytechnic College Srinagar

Emphasis laid on availing govt. schemes to boost local industries, empower urban/rural communities

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18: On the directions of Deputy Chief Minister J&K UT (Chairman J&K KVIB), Jammu & Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB) organized an awareness camp cum interaction program today at Auditorium of Kashmir Government Polytechnic College Gogji Bagh Srinagar. The program aimed to sensitize the general public, educated unemployed youth & especially differently-abled persons about the various government schemes being implemented by the Board. Deputy CEO KVIB KD, Di-



rector RSETI, Principal K.G. Polytechnic College, Assistant Director (EMP) NCSC Gogji Bagh Srinagar, officials from line departments, branch heads of various banks, senior officers from LDM office Srinagar & Cluster JKB office and

other dignitaries attended the program. The event witnessed an enthusiastic response from the local community, entrepreneurs, aspiring persons, NGOs, especially differently-abled persons. On the occasion, participants were educated

about the wide range of opportunities available under the flagship programs of KVIB, including the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) and J&K Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP) de-

signed to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship in urban as well as rural areas. Addressing the gathering, Dy. CEO KVIB KD informed that during the last financial year district Srinagar KVIB sponsored 2447 number of cases involving project cost of Rs. 174.80 Crs and margin money of Rs. 44.25 Crs thereby creating employment opportunities for 14682 persons under PMEGP, and under JKREGP scheme 15 number of cases were sponsored involving margin money of Rs. 45.50 lacs thereby generating employment to 120 persons.

Day-2: Budgam observes Sewa Parv with enthusiastic public participation across schools, panchayats & ULBs

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 18: District administration Budgam organized a number of activities under Sewa Parv today on day two with great zeal and public participation across all 17 blocks and municipal committees of the district. Sewa Parv activities are being carried out with the vision of promoting community service, awareness, and saturation of Government welfare schemes. On the occasion, programs were organized at schools, ICDS centres, Panchayats, and health institutions to ensure active involvement of students, youth, and the general public. Series of awareness and outreach activities were held, which included Swachhta



drives & pledge ceremonies. Schools across Budgam, including HSS Hardapanzoo, HSS BK Pora, Boys HSS Khanshab, GPS Magraypora BK Pora, and various others, held Swachhta pledge cere-

monies and cleanliness drives, instilling the spirit of hygiene and responsibility among students. Mobile vehicles also moved across towns and villages spreading the message of Swachhta Hi Sewa; awareness on Nasha Mukh Bharat; Special drives and awareness sessions on drug de-addiction were held under NCORD initiatives, urging communities to play an active role in eradicating substance abuse; Poshan Mah activities in ICDS centres of BK Pora and other blocks highlighted the importance of nutrition, hazards of junk food, and healthy dietary practices, particularly focusing on children and mothers. Besides, eco-awareness

campaigns were held in Raithan Forest Range which falls under Pir Panjal Forest division on forest conservation, biodiversity protection, and the role of community in safeguarding the environment. Similarly, door-to-door campaigns were conducted in all Municipal Committees of Budgam including Chadoora. Also in other urban areas house-to-house awareness campaigns under PMAY-Urban and other welfare schemes were held to ensure maximum enrollment. Sewa Parv also witnessed enthusiastic participation from women and youth, with cleanliness drives, plantation drives, and awareness rallies being organized at village levels.

100 Farmers flagged-off from Baramulla for awareness/ training program on Horticulture practices

BARAMULLA, SEPTEMBER 18: Horticulture department, district Baramulla, today organized a one-day awareness-cum-training program under the CAPEX Budget 2025-26 with a focus on information, publication and dissemination. As part of the program, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Chief Horticulture Officer Baramulla and senior officers of the department were present at the flag-off ceremony. On the occasion, 100 farmers were flagged-off from across the district in three buses from Dak Bungalow to the Fruit Plant Nursery (FPN) Raipora, Ganderbal, where the main training sessions were scheduled. Speaking at the event, ACR



highlighted the importance of such capacity-building programs in empowering fruit growers with updated knowledge, modern techniques, and best practices in orchard management. He emphasized that such initiatives play a vital role in strengthening the horticulture sector, which is the backbone of the district's economy. The training pro-

gram will cover multiple aspects including scientific orchard management, plant protection measures, soil health, and awareness about various departmental schemes. Experts from the horticulture department will interact with farmers, disseminate information, and provide hands-on guidance to ensure better productivity and profitability.

Day-2 of Sewa Parv: Distt Shopian focuses on public health & drug awareness

Departments hold awareness sessions, plantation drives, health camps, sanitation drives & anti-drug campaigns

SHOPIAN, SEPTEMBER 18: In alignment with the national celebration of Sewa Parv, district administration Shopian today conducted a series of activities aimed at promoting cleanliness, drug & health awareness, community service and public participation. On the second day of the campaign today, multiple departments carried out dedicated programmes with active involvement of officials, students and community members. Municipal Committee Shopian organized awareness programmes on water conservation and sustainability. Agriculture department held soil testing demonstrations and Soil Health Card awareness sessions, while the Social Welfare department conducted plantation drives and Swachhta campaigns. RDD launched a series of cleanliness drives across blocks. Health department carried out maternal and child health check-ups, nutrition counselling and anaemia prevention measures, and the Education department engaged students through poster-making and essay-writing competitions under the theme 'Say No to Drugs' to spread awareness



against substance abuse. In addition, FCS&CA department organized cleanliness activities at nation depots. These initiatives reflect the collective spirit of Sewa Parv aimed at fostering volunteerism, spreading awareness, and strengthening community participation across the district.

MP- Main Altaf inaugurates Mega Kissan Mela at KVK Kulgam; felicitates farmers, distributes sanction letters

Awareness sessions, exhibitions showcasing modern agri-practices mark the event

KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 18: As part of the ongoing Sewa Parv celebrations, a Mega Kissan Mela was today organized at Kishvi Vignyan Kendra (KVK) Pom-bay Kulgam, organized by Agriculture Department & Farmers Welfare, Kulgam under centrally sponsored sub-scheme Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA). Member of Parliament (MP), Main Altaf Ahmad Larvi inaugurated the mela in presence of DDC Chairperson, M Afzal Parrey; MLA Kulgam, M.Y. Tarigami; DC Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan; Director Extension SKUAST-K, Dr. Rehana Habib; DDC members, M Abbas, Jameela Choudhary, M Ibrahim, and other officers. The mela witnessed enthusiastic participation of farm-



ers. Addressing the gathering, MP praised the farmers of Kulgam for their awareness, ability to stay updated, and adoption of modern agricultural techniques for better production.

He appreciated the strong coordination between farmers and the district administration, terming it a model worth emulation. Main Altaf emphasized that awareness and proper implementation of government

schemes is key to empowering farmers and urged intensified efforts to spread information about the wide range of schemes and programmes available for their benefit. He added that agriculture and allied sectors are priority sectors, and there are several schemes in place. Awareness is essential so that people can avail themselves of their full benefits. DDC Chairperson in his address said that such mela provide an effective platform for showcasing and demonstrating modern farm technologies. He urged farmers to adopt modern practices and machinery to enhance productivity and income.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Kulgam said that although modern farm technology is available, much

more needs to be done to make the agriculture sector more profitable. He emphasized that farmers' experiences and experiments must be valued. He further stressed that SKUAST should focus its research on controlling leaf miner and other diseases that have adversely affected apple orchards. Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner highlighted that farmers in the district are increasingly adopting modern agricultural practices. He added that agriculture and allied sectors form the backbone of the economy of the region which is a top priority sector. He highlighted various achievements in agriculture and allied sectors. Director Extension and other officers also spoke on the occasion.

North in News

EDITORIAL

PROBLEMS OF PETTY SHOPKEEPERS.

There is no denying the fact that mostly the young and qualified are facing cut throat competition in every sphere of life. There are the people who find it difficult to make both ends meet and struggle hard to save their existence and to earn livelihood sufficient enough to manage both ends meal for their families. A large number of people with very small capital, establish their small business in the shape of a 'corner shop' mostly in a corner of their house and or getting a very small shop on rental basis in and around their vicinity. Such small shop keepers feel difficulties in managing their such a petty shop. Petty shopkeepers, across the country are facing multiple challenges, including the cut throat competition from larger retailers, limited access to capital, and working capital, operational inefficiencies, rehti and pheri wallas: moving in and around the Mohallas, streets, lanes and by lanes, not only in urban areas but also in backward far-flung rural areas. Most of the petty shop keepers also face difficulties with managing credit and inventory. Many more of the petty shopkeepers also struggle with poor financial management and record-keeping skills. Many others face increasing pressure from taxation and regulatory compliance leading them to avoid digital payments and prefer cash. It has been observed that many petty shop keepers like kirana stores, often lose business to super markets and other large retail outlets, though they retain a stronghold in the food sales sector. Small shopkeepers often lack the campaigning power of larger retailers making it more difficult to other competitive prices that limit their inventory selection. More important aspect in this context is the Lack of Working Capital. A large number of petty shopkeepers /small businesses start with limited funds which can become a significant problem, if they experience, preferring to larger stores over their success. More importantly, credit losses and poor record keeping-adversely hit the interests of petty shop keepers. One of the common issues, in this concern is that of allowing customers to buy on credit and then being unable to recover the money leading to losses. There is a lack of proper financial records. Most of the petty shop keepers are unaware of cash flow management--- Many businesses fail to manage their cash flow effectively, a crucial impact of maintaining operations. Changing consumer preferences of younger generations who feel the experience of buying from branded shops to keep their egos/status unharmed. Those who feel shy in buying from petty shop keepers. Younger generations are increasingly adopting Western Shopping Habits preferring larger stores over traditional corner shops. Taxation and compliance - the burden of registering under GST and handling compliances costs can increase product prices and drive customers away impacting sales. Presently, the petty shopkeepers as well as mediocre business establishments, in Jammu are under constant pressure because of the presence of ever-increasing large scale rehtis in every nook and corner of the city and its suburban areas. The locals who establish their petty businesses, are on the brink of bankruptcy. They have to follow rules/laws of shops and establishment acts. There are reasons to believe that the presence of such a large number of rehtis, mostly belonging to non-locals have the potential to cause serious threats to the traffic/ human movement on the streets/roads as well as to local petty shop keepers because of many factors, including law and order problem, as well as a threat of snatching away the avenues of earning livelihood for a commoner.

MANVENDRA PRASAD

Bihar's economic backwardness is neither a sudden accident nor a mere result of contemporary neglect. Its roots run deep, back to the British colonial era, when exploitative land policies and extractive governance crippled the region's prosperity. The decline worsened after independence, when successive governments failed to industrialise Bihar or develop its fragile infrastructure. What was once one of the richest cultural and intellectual centres of India gradually slipped into stagnation. Bihar's political class cannot be absolved. Too often, electoral victories and sharp punchlines took precedence over good governance. The "jungle raj" era, where lawlessness was almost celebrated, further eroded the credibility of the state. This absence of vision translated into economic collapse and institutional fragility, forcing millions of Biharis to migrate in search of low-paying, backbreaking jobs across India. Alongside the hardship, they carried the burden of mockery-humiliating stereotypes, and social media



sneers. Yet, behind this ridicule lies a profound oversight. Bihar is not just another state in the Indian union; it is the cradle of India's civilisational soul. It is where Valmiki composed the Ramayana, where Buddhism and Jainism found their roots, and where the Khalsa tradition took shape. Vaishali, home to the world's first republic, and Chanakya's Arthashastra testify to Bihar's deep political wisdom. The Maurya and Gupta empires, which shaped Indian history, emerged from its soil, while Nalanda University stood as a beacon of knowledge centuries before modern universities took shape. Bihar's legacy continues to shape India's identity today. The Buddha remains the country's greatest soft power export, drawing pilgrims from across the world to Bodhi Gaya. India's national emblem, the Ashoka Lion Capital, and the Ashoka Chakra on the tricolour are Bihar's gifts to the nation. The verses of national poet Ramdhari Singh Dinkar still inspire generations. This proud history, however, offers little solace when the present is marked by poverty, humiliation, and despair. The statistics are sobering. Bihar accounts for just 2.86 per cent of India's landmass but shelters 8.6 per cent of its people. Despite this, it contributes

only 2.64 per cent to the national GDP. In 2024, its per capita income was a meagre ₹60,337 — barely one-third of the national average of ₹1.84 lakh. Bihar ranks last in literacy, poverty reduction, and multidimensional poverty. On almost every major social and economic indicator, it trails the rest of the nation. This underperformance is especially stark given Bihar's outsized political influence. With 40 Lok Sabha seats—among the largest in India — and a steady stream of cabinet ministers and bureaucrats shaping Delhi's corridors of power, Bihar should have leveraged its clout to rebuild itself. Instead, freight equalisation

policies introduced in 1952, which subsidised mineral transport nationwide, disincentivised industries from setting up in mineral-rich states like Bihar and West Bengal. Even after its repeal in 1993, Bihar never recovered the industrial base it had during the pre-independence era, when business houses like the Tatas and Dalmias flourished here. But policy distortions alone cannot explain the tragedy. Successive state leaders failed to invest in long-term reforms. The absence of land reforms, fragmented holdings, poor education outcomes, lack of job creation, and minimal public investment perpetuated a cycle

of poverty and hopelessness. Populism consistently trumped vision. And yet, Bihar's story need not remain one of decline. What Bihar needs today is not pity but purpose, not token sympathy but systemic reform. Its greatest resource is not coal or minerals, but its people — the hard-working diaspora that has excelled across India and the world. If they can transform their adopted homes, they can help transform their own. Civil society, particularly the youth, must also step forward to demand accountability and innovation. Bihar must reclaim its lost narrative — not as a "basket case," but as a land of resilience, creativity, and revival. Other states have turned their fortunes around; Bihar can too. Bihar has always been central to the idea of India. A nation that leaves one of its proudest civilisational pillars behind cannot truly rise. Bihar deserves better—and it will get there when its people, both at home and abroad, decide the time for excuses is over, and the time for action is now.

Empowering women through access to menstrual hygiene and awareness

REKHA SHARMA

Access to menstrual hygiene is not just a health issue; it is key to empowering women and girls, improving their education, and upholding their dignity. We have seen great progress in raising awareness and improving access, but there is still so much more we can do to ensure that every woman and girl has what she needs to manage her menstruation with confidence. When we make menstrual health a priority, we are not just addressing women's needs, we are building a stronger, more equitable future for everyone.

State of Menstrual Hygiene in India India is home to over 355 million menstruating women and girls. The role of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) under the Scheme is consistent across all States/UTs. ASHAs organise monthly meetings with adolescent girls in their communities to discuss health topics, including menstrual hygiene management. They also provide sanitary napkins to the girls at subsidised prices.

The positive impact of these government initiatives is reflected in the findings of the National Family Health Survey 5 (NFHS 5). The survey shows that the percentage of women aged 15-24 using hygienic menstrual protection has risen from 58 per cent in NFHS 4 (2015-16) to 78 per cent in NFHS 5 (2019-21).



Additionally, the use of sanitary napkins has increased from 42 per cent to 64 per cent.

Initiatives and Their Impact Since 2015-16, the Menstrual Hygiene Scheme has been supported by the National Health Mission (NHM) through the State Programme Implementation Plan (PIP) route, based on proposals received from the States. The States are instructed to procure sanitary napkin packs through competitive bidding to ensure cost-efficiency. In the year 2021-22, approximately 34.92 lakh adolescent girls were provided with sanitary napkin packs every month, as per data from the Health Management Information System (HMIS).

Several state governments and the central government have launched initiatives to address menstrual hygiene. The Jan Aushadhi Suvidha

Sanitary Napkin Scheme, under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP), provides affordable sanitary pads to women across India. These pads are sold at a subsidised rate of just one rupee each and are available at more than 15,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras nationwide.

Empowering Rural Women and Ensuring Menstrual Health

To address the pressing issue of menstrual health and empower women in rural India, several initiatives have emerged, with foundations playing a key role in improving menstrual hygiene by combining accessibility with awareness. One such initiative is the Shubhangi Initiative, led by the Jindal Foundation. This programme uses a social business model to produce and distribute low-cost sanitary napkins in rural communities,

addressing both menstrual and reproductive health. The initiative has reached over one million women and girls in more than 3,000 villages across Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Haryana and Delhi.

The Shubhangi Initiative not only improves menstrual health but also empowers rural women economically. By involving local women in the production and distribution of affordable sanitary napkins, the project has generated over ₹1 crore in revenue, fostering financial independence for women in marginalised communities. The initiative also combats traditional beliefs that prevent older women from using sanitary products, highlighting the broader impact of awareness campaigns.

Roadmap to a Healthier, Dignified Future

While we have made great progress, there is still much potential to ensure menstrual equity for all women and girls. By improving sanitation facilities, especially in rural areas and for women in the informal sector, we can create spaces that support menstrual health and enable women to fully participate in school and work. Access to clean, private toilets is a simple yet powerful step towards empowering women. We are also seeing great progress in educational efforts that break down myths and normalise menstruation. Community programmes

Dy. CM visits NIFT Budgam, reviews institution's academic functioning, infrastructure, ongoing developmental works

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 18: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today conducted an extensive visit to the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Campus in Budgam, undertaking a first-hand review of the institution's academic functioning, infrastructure, and ongoing developmental works.

During the visit, the Deputy CM held a brief review meeting to assess the institute's academic progress, pedagogical methodologies, and student welfare initiatives aimed at holistic development.

Afterwards, the Deputy Chief Minister held detailed tour of state-of-the-art laboratories and workshops, which form the core of NIFT's practical learning ecosystem.

He meticulously inspected the Garment Construction Lab, the Weaving Lab, the Jewellery cum Leather Lab, and the Photography Lab. He observed that students engaged in creative processes and interacted with faculty to understand the technical nuances and industry relevance of the training being imparted. Demonstrating a deep affection and personal connect with the students, the Deputy CM engaged in candid interactions with students from various disciplines. He encouraged them to leverage their world-class education to become cultural am-



bassadors of Jammu and Kashmir, showcasing the region's rich heritage and new-age potential across India. Keeping in view the interest of students in the various sports activities, he assured them that government will try to develop a patch of land nearby to campus as a sports field. Highlighting the government's focus on inclusive growth and skill upgradation, the Deputy Chief Minister urged the NIFT administration to initiate specialized workshops and training programmes for local ITI students and craft persons. He emphasized the importance of

handholding these artisans by providing them advanced techniques in craft technology, thereby enhancing the quality, marketability, and global demand of indigenous products. Later, the Deputy Chief Minister also conducted a thorough inspection of the ongoing infrastructural upgradation and developmental works across the campus. He issued strict directives to the executing agencies to ensure the highest quality standards are maintained and to adopt a zero-tolerance approach towards the use of substandard construction materials. He fur-

ther instructed them to immediately identify and carry out all necessary repair works within the institution's premises to provide a safe and conducive environment for learning and innovation.

The Deputy CM expressed satisfaction with the overall progress of the institute and reaffirmed the government's steadfast support for NIFT to emerge as a premier center of design excellence.

During the visit, Director NIFT, Prof. Dr. Monika Gupta informed the Deputy CM that community engagement is an integral part of the institute's academic curriculum. She elaborated that NIFT students regularly undertake visits to various districts to interact with and provide advanced technical guidance to local artisans, effectively bridging the gap between traditional craftsmanship and modern design sensibilities.

Pertinently, this visit underscores the government's commitment to fostering excellence in education and skill development, particularly in the vibrant sectors of fashion, design, and traditional crafts for which Jammu and Kashmir is renowned.

Among others, the Deputy CM was accompanied by Managing Director SIDCO, Superintending Engineer of R&B Budgam and other concerned officers.

Div Com reviews implementation of National Clean Air Program in Jammu City



JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 18: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar today chaired a meeting of the District Level Monitoring Committee to review the implementation of action plan for improvement of Air quality in the district and implementation of National Clean Air Programme (NCAP). The meeting was attended by Commissioner JMC, Regional Director, Pollution Control Committee, Jammu, Additional Deputy Commissioner and Joint Commissioner JMC. The Divisional Commissioner was apprised about the expenditure of funds under NCAP for 2024-25 with sector wise interventions to reduce the air pollution in the city. The key focus areas

included end to end paving of Roads for dust control, greenery development, mechanical road sweeping, greening of open areas and traffic corridors, improvement of traffic junctions for decongestion.

He was also apprised on the involvement of schools and colleges for mass awareness and public outreach programs. Reviewing the proposals of projects for the year 2025-26, the Divisional Commissioner was informed that a total of 14 road improvement works worth Rs 868.14 lakh and eight projects for development of green spaces at the cost of Rs 721.26 lakh have been taken up by the Jammu Municipal Corporation. The new projects include end to

end pavement of different roads in the city, laying of concrete interlocking tiles and beautification of garbage vulnerable points. Projects under Green spaces development include landscaping and construction of Green strips along different major roads. Enquiring about the tendering process of the projects, the Divisional Commissioner directed the concerned officials for expeditious implementation of all projects with focus on quality of works and timely completion.

He issued directions to ensure downward flow of water from the drains along the roads and construction of water soaking pits to avoid water logging.

EVM Verification Exercise for AC-61 Chenani conducted successfully in Udhampur

UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 18: The District Election Office, Udhampur, successfully conducted the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) Checking and Verification (C&V) Exercise for Assembly Constituency 61 - Chenani, in strict adherence to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) laid down by the Election Commission of India. The exercise was held today at Government Degree College (Boys), Udhampur from 10:00 AM to 07:00 PM, under proper security arrangements and in the presence of designated election officials, engineers from the Electronics Corporation of India Limited (ECIL) and eligible candidates.

The C&V process was undertaken for three polling stations - Mada-A, Mada-B, and Kud-A - following a request by applicant Harsh Dev from National Panthers Party, who had raised concerns regarding alleged tampering. The entire exercise was conducted transparently, systematically and within the prescribed time frame, ensuring complete satisfaction of the applicant. Copies of the outcome were also provided to the applicant as per SOP.

During the exercise, three Control Units

(CUs) from one polling station showed a minor clock error during diagnostic checks. Officials clarified that this was purely a technical issue and had no bearing on the polled data. Pertinently, the polled data from these machines which showed clock errors was demonstrated to the applicant, confirming that it remained completely intact and exactly as recorded on the actual poll day i.e., 01 October 2024. In line with the SOP, the applicant was given the option of random selection of EVMs from other polling stations within the same Assembly Constituency.

The process continued with diagnostic checks, mock polls and verification of polled data with VVPAT slips, which fully matched and satisfied the candidate. The District Election Office Udhampur emphasized that the entire procedure was video-recorded, carried out under tight security and followed the laid-down protocols of the Election Commission of India. The public is urged not to believe in rumours or misinformation regarding EVM tampering, as due process has been duly followed to the complete satisfaction of all concerned.

Seva Parv 2025 : Health, cleanliness, community welfare camps held across Doda

DC distribute relief kits to flood-affected families at Bhalla

DODA, SEPTEMBER 18: As part of the ongoing Seva Parv 2025 and its connected campaigns, the line departments and institutions organised a series of impactful programmes across Doda District to promote public welfare and health, spread environmental awareness and community engagement.

Special health services were provided to locals under the Swasth Nari, Sashakt Pariwar Abhiyaan at Primary health Centres (PHCs) in Gandoh, Goha - Assar, Chinta and Bhagwah in Bhaderwah Tehsil. Teams of Doctors conducted ANC check-up, NCD screening, spread anemia awareness, sputum collection and vaccination of children against different diseases. A special



lecture on menstrual hygiene was also delivered at Government Higher Secondary School Goha by Dr. Tanviya and Dr. Manjeet Singh. The RBST team of Gandoh organized a similar health camp at Sanai Gandoh where students underwent health check-ups and

made aware of different government schemes.

Educational institutions including Government Higher Secondary Schools Assar, Doda and Goha conducted awareness programmes on the theme "Say No to Drugs/Tobacco. Students participated actively deliv-

ering speeches besides taking part in debate, poster making and essay writing competitions to spread word of awareness about the harmful effects of drug and tobacco use. The programmes concluded with collective pledges by students and staff to adopt a healthy and drug-free lifestyle.

As part of health and community initiatives, the ICDS Department celebrated Poshan Maah and planted trees under the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam initiative to promote nutrition, healthy living, and sustainability.

The District Information Centre carried out a cleanliness drive within office premises to promote hygiene and environmental awareness.

Additionally, community and rural development activities were organized by the Sheep Husbandry Department, Panchayats and Municipal authorities. These included Gram Sabhas on financial inclusion, farmer training workshops on modern sheep rearing, cleanliness drives at Doda town bus stand and sports stadiums, and plantation drives at Naga Forest Bhaderwah. Relief support was also extended to flood-affected families by the DDC Doda during the visit to Bhalla Tehsil. Collectively, these initiatives reinforced the administration's commitment to public welfare, sustainable development and active citizen participation under the spirit of Seva Parv 2025.

Seva Parv: Multi public welfare, cleanliness, plantation initiatives in full swing in Rajouri

RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 18: In continuation of the ongoing 'Seva Parv' being observed across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir from 17-09-2025 to 02-10-2025, different departments organized a series of community-focused activities in Rajouri district on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma.

The Deputy Commissioner participated in a plantation drive held at Danidhar, Rajouri, reiterating the administration's commitment to environmental protection and sustainable development. The departments undertook multiple initiatives aimed at public welfare and awareness. Health camps were established by the Health Department, providing essential medical services to the residents. The Labour Department conducted awareness sessions regarding various welfare schemes of the Jammu and Kashmir Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board (JKBOCW). Extensive cleanliness drives, including the cleanliness of school premises and public spaces, were carried out with active community participation. Events focused on farmers included dissemination of



information on government agricultural welfare schemes such as the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP). The 'Mission Yuva' was also promoted to encourage youth engagement. Solid waste management received emphasis through mass awareness on waste segregation and door-to-door waste collection drives across the district. Additionally, drug awareness programmes were conducted in different schools aiming to sensitize students towards the ill-effects of substance abuse and promote healthy living. Cleanliness drives were also carried

out in school premises. Other activities like awareness on digital literacy, AB-PMJAY, Social security schemes, registration under PMMVY were also carried out with added zeal in Rajouri.

The Seva Parv serves as a platform where service to the nation finds expression through culture, art, heritage, knowledge sharing and inclusive community engagement. It will encompass diverse areas such as cultural heritage, women-led progress, care for general health and wellbeing, environmental stewardship, innovation and empowerment of marginalized communities.

Meanwhile, multiple activities were organized across different municipalities of the district as part of the ongoing Seva Parv campaign, focusing on welfare, awareness, sanitation and outreach. In Municipal Council Thannamandi, a Health Check-up Camp for Sanitation Workers was organised in collaboration with the AYUSH and Health Departments where free medicines were also distributed. Furthermore, MC staff sensitized street vendors about the benefits and provisions of the PM SVANidhi scheme, aimed at empower-

ing small vendors through collateral-free working capital loans.

In addition, Joint teams of MC Thannamandi and Jal Shakti collected water samples from local springs and raised awareness on cleanliness and water conservation. The PMAY-Urban team promoted awareness on housing schemes, encouraged households to fast-track construction, organized Grih Pravesh ceremonies, and disseminated information about Angikaar 2025 and the PM Surya Ghar program. A dedicated cleanliness campaign was conducted in the market area with active support from market shopkeepers, prominent citizens, and former ward members. Waste collection and awareness on waste segregation were carried out.

Similarly, in Municipal Council Kalakote, the PMAY-Urban team undertook an outreach campaign to promote PMAY, Angikaar 2025, and the PM Surya Ghar program. Beneficiaries expressed gratitude to the Government for ensuring last-mile outreach under the Housing for All initiative.

DC Ramban reviews implementation of Capex Budget, Financial Inclusion, Social Sector Schemes



RAMBAN, SEPTEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Aliyas Khan today conducted a comprehensive review of the District Capex Budget 2025-26, financial inclusion, job-oriented initiatives, and other social sector schemes.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Rather, Assistant Commissioner Development Mohammad Ashfaq, Executive Engineers of PWD, Jal Shakti, JPCL, Lead District Manager, district officers, and representatives of banks. Reviewing the progress of 3,554 proposed works under District Capex Budget, including 1,373 ongoing projects, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Rural Engineering Wing (REW) to expedite tendering and allotment processes to ensure

timely execution. He also intervened to resolve local bottlenecks hampering office progress.

The Deputy Commissioner instructed all executing agencies to complete works within stipulated time frame, emphasizing equitable development in both rural and urban areas. He also took a sector-wise review of Health, Education, Urban Local Bodies, RDD and PWD Divisions of Ramban and Banihal.

Progress under the Aspirational Block Development Programme (ABDP) and Tribal Plan was also discussed, with directions for early completion of sanctioned projects. Executive Engineer JPCL informed that the tendering process for all Capex Budget projects is underway. The Deputy Commissioner directed the all executing

agencies including PWD, RDD, JPCL, Jal Shakti and REW to complete the developmental works of their respective departments in time bound manner. He also reviewed restoration of roads and bridges damaged by recent heavy rains, flash floods, and cloudbursts.

Reviewing financial inclusion initiatives, the Deputy Commissioner directed bankers to achieve targets under APY, JJPY, Jan Dhan Yojana, and ASY schemes. Further, the Assistant Labour Commissioner was directed to intensify workers' registration drives. The District Social Welfare Officer was instructed to ensure coverage of all eligible beneficiaries under old age, widow, and disability pension schemes, marriage assistance, and other social security schemes.

CS reviews functioning of FCS&CA and Legal Metrology Departments

Calls for strengthening food security measures and enhancing transparency



SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18: Chief Secretary, Atul Dholoo today chaired a detailed review meeting of the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) and Legal Metrology Departments, where Commissioner Secretary, Saurabh Bhagat, presented a comprehensive overview of the functioning, achievements, and upcoming deliverables of the department. Others who were present in the meeting includes Director, FCS&CA, Kashmir/Jammu; Controller, Legal Metrology along with other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary commended the department for its achievements in digitization, Aadhaar integration, and ensuring transparency in food distribution. He stressed on the need to remove undeserving beneficiaries, strengthen consumer protection mechanisms, and ensure timely completion of deliverables to enhance efficiency in service delivery.

The Chief Secretary was apprised that the National Food Security Act (NFSA) is benefitting over 102.54 lakh individuals across 25.61 lakh families in J&K, ensuring food security to the vulnerable sections. The distribution includes 3.70 lakh quintals under NFSA, 1.59 lakh quintals under non-NFSA, 1.24 lakh quintals under PMGKAY, and 0.20 lakh quintals under State Ayushman Ann Yojana (SAAY) on a monthly basis.

It was further informed that J&K has achieved 100% Aadhaar seeding of ration cards and beneficiaries, with 96.55% authenticated transactions, thereby ensuring transparency in public distribution. The network comprises 6611 sale outlets, of which 6362 operate online through e-Pos devices. About the implementation of NFSA here it was given out that the AAY (Antyodaya Anna Yojana) consumers constitute 2.21 lakh families (8.76 lakh beneficiaries) receiving 35 kg food grains per ration card monthly, free of cost.

Moreover PHH (Priority Households) constitute 14.39 lakh families (58.63 lakh beneficiaries), receiving 5 kg of food grains per person per month and NPH (Non Priority Households) and NPHS (Non Priority Households) 31.80 lakh beneficiaries, with food grains provided at subsidized rates along with 0.89 lakh families (3.34 lakh beneficiaries) not entitled under NFSA (Non-NFSA under exclusion category). The Commissioner Secretary outlined key technology-driven reforms under SMART-PDS, which includes 100% FPS automation using e-PoS devices, Digitization of beneficiary databases and Aadhaar-based biometric authentication, Migration to the new RCMIS portal, with integration of migration ration cards under process.

With respect to E-grievance redressal mechanisms via JK-Grams portal, toll-

free numbers, and WhatsApp grievance numbers, the meeting was apprised that multiple modes are in place for the consumers to reach to the authorities for redressal of their complaints in a time-bound manner.

It was also revealed that the enforcement of strict penal provisions to curb misappropriation, black-marketing, and diversion of food grains, including fines up to Rs. 8,000/quintal of wheat/rice, Rs. 120/kg in case of sugar, along with additional penalties for supervisory officers in case of non-reporting of such malpractices had been implemented successfully in the Department.

The Department has set clear timelines for future deliverables, which includes 100% e-KYC saturation by December 2025, Full integration of migrant ration cards with PDS database by November 2025, Re-organization of the FCS&CA Department and Legal Metrology Department by December 2025, CUF facility at Bajalta (1.13 lakh KL capacity) and land acquisition for 49,000 KL storage at Srinagar. Upgradation of PoS machines from L0 to L1 by March 2026.

As far as the working of the Legal Metrology Department is concerned it was given out that the mandate of the department is inspection and verification of all the Weights & Measures (Weighbridges, Tank Lorries, storage Tanks, Petrol Dispensing Nozzles etc) besides regulation of packaged and imported commodities; inspection/regulation of E-Commerce entities; Regulation of LPG and Petroleum Products, Lodging of consumer complaints before Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, awareness of consumers, handholding of traders under BRAP/ EQDB etc besides other functions.

For safeguarding the interests of the consumers the Department had conducted 20455 inspections of shops & establishments, held 242 awareness camps, with 100 complaints received from consumers, 1256 challans booked and Rs 182.51 lakhs revenue realized from composition and other measures.

Sewa Parv 2025: Distt admin Ganderbal organizes mega grievance redressal camp

DC assures timely resolution of genuine demands; distributes sanction letters, revenue certificates, sports kits among beneficiaries

GANDERBAL, SEPTEMBER 18: As part of the ongoing fortnight-long *Sewa Parv* celebrations, district administration Ganderbal today organized a mega awareness-cum-grievance redressal camp in the lawns of the Mini Secretariat Ganderbal. The camp, presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, witnessed overwhelming participation from the general public who apprised the chair of various developmental concerns and local grievances. Locals raised several com-

Locals raised several com-

munity-based demands, including macadamization of roads, development of playfields, improvement of potable water supply, fencing of PHC Gutlibagh, completion of Guzham Bridge, creation of an agriculture sub-division at Lar, development of new industrial estates, and provision of an attendant shed at District Hospital Ganderbal.

Addressing public demands, DC assured that issues raised will be resolved promptly. On the sidelines, various departments had set up stalls to generate aware-

ness about government schemes and provide on-the-spot registration for beneficiaries under PM Surya Haat Muft Bijli Yojna, Mission Yuva, Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), ABHA ID, Social Security Schemes and J&K Bank initiatives. Speaking on the occasion, DC said that Sewa Parv is a citizen-centric initiative aimed at strengthening service delivery and building direct engagement between people and administration. He urged locals to take full advantage of the

awareness stalls and register under various welfare schemes so that the benefits reach every eligible beneficiary. He also called for active public participation in Sewa Parv, stating that it is not only a government initiative but also a collective effort of citizens to improve governance and development. Later, DC distributed sanction letters under Mission Yuva, HADP and various other beneficiary-oriented schemes, revenue certificates, sports kits and other welfare benefits among the beneficiaries.

Bandipora witnesses series of activities on Day 2 of Sewa Parv 2025

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 18: Bandipora witnessed a series of activities on day two of Sewa Parv 2025, as various departments and institutions across the district carried out cleanliness drives, awareness campaigns, plantation activities, and anti-drog programmes. The initiatives reflected collective participation of schools, colleges, municipal bodies, health, and the Forest and Social Forestry departments in promoting cleanliness, awareness, and community service. Educational institutions carried forward the campaign with enthusiasm. MS Bonapora Shahgund, HSS Ajapa, GHSS Plan and Govt HS Banyari Sharkie conducted pledge-taking

ceremonies and cleanliness drives. An anti-drug rally was held at HSS Budoah, while an essay competition on "Say No to Drugs" was organised at HSS PTL Gurez. A special cleanliness drive was also carried out at Darul Uloom Rahmaniya, GDC Bandipora faculty visited Gort MSU Malangan, where they held special classes and donated stationery items to students. Municipal Council Bandipora undertook major sanitation drives, including cleaning of Paphan Nallah in collaboration with Swachhta Ambassadors of HKM Degree College. Other activities included cleanliness of Edan Nallah, waste segre-

gation awareness, grass cutting at public places, cleanliness of Kaloosa Bus Stand and community toilets, besides door-to-door campaigns on solid waste management. Similarly, Municipal Committees Hajin and Sumbal carried out sanitation drives at CHC Hajin, Army Goodwill School and localities across Sumbal, organised anti-pollution campaigns, seized plastic, and held awareness programmes on PM SVA(Nidhi) and PMAY 2.0. Social Forestry Range Bandipora organised an awareness programme on waste management and a plantation drive at MSA Balhama in presence of ADC member for Block Arin. Plantation activities

were also held at SK Payteen schools by WUCMA and by the Range Officers of the Lakes.

Forest Division Bandipora, in collaboration with PCC Bandipora, conducted a cleanliness drive at Chiternar with the participation of students from Universal Educational Trust, sensitising them on the harmful effects of single-use plastics and the need for eco-friendly alternatives.

The day's events, conducted under the supervision of the district administration, reinforced the spirit of Sewa Parv and highlighted Bandipora's commitment to service, sustainability, and collective social responsibility.

DC Kishtwar reviews functioning of Jal Shakti Department

KISHWART, SEPTEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishwari, Panjaj Kumar Sharma today chaired a review meeting to assess the functioning of the Jal Shakti Department and to take stock of the measures being implemented to ensure adequate water supply across the district.

The DC issued a series of directions to streamline water distribution and strengthen service delivery.

He strictly directed Executive Jal Shakti Kishwari that individual water tankers should be provided to public places/Panchayats which are affected due to recent damages to the Naigad Water Supply Scheme, emphasizing that water supply should only be made available at public stands through buckets and utensils.



He further directed the ExEn Jal Shakti Kishtwar to immediately submit details of all defunct hand pumps, besides mobilizing available manpower and machinery to plug leakages and ensure proper water distribution. The ExEn was also directed to ensure uniform water supply to all residents of

The DC also sought inputs from Junior Engineers (JEs) regarding the steps taken to address the ongoing water crisis and directed them to adopt all possible measures to meet public demand. He emphasized the need for proactive coordination and timely action to ease public

hardships.

The DC instructed officials to seek support from the NHPCC, Power Project Authorities by utilizing their available water tankers whenever required. Calling for a mission-mode approach, he urged the Jal Shakti team to focus on timely repairs, effective co-ordination, and public-oriented service delivery. It is pertinent to mention here that the Ground Water Division, Jammu has already initiated repair work on eight hand pumps in Kishtwar as part of the first phase of interventions. The meeting was attended by ADC Pawan Kotwal, PO ICDS Rishi Kumar Sharma, DFO Dr. Kuldeep Kumar, ExEn Jal Shakti Sanjeev Kumar Gupta, JEs of Jal Shakti, besides other concerned officials.

[illegible]

BJP slams Rahul Gandhi over 'vote deletion' charge, says Cong trying to destabilise democracy



NEW DELHI, SEP 18

Hours after Rahul Gandhi accused the BJP and the Election Commission of 'vote deletion' in Karnataka's Aland constituency during the 2023 Assembly elections, senior BJP leader and former Union Minister Anurag Thakur launched a sharp counterattack on Thursday, calling the Congress leader's charges 'habitual, baseless allegations'.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters in New Delhi, Thakur said the Congress has repeatedly been rejected by the people under Rahul Gandhi's leadership. "Congress has lost nearly 90

elections under his leadership. His frustration has grown so much that he has made the politics of allegations his only ornament," Thakur remarked.

He further said Gandhi refuses to authenticate his claims when asked for evidence.

"Whenever he is told to submit a written oath or file an official complaint, he turns his back and runs away," he said, adding that Gandhi's track record of allegations — from Rafale and chowkidar chor hat to Pegasus — had only ended in 'humiliation and apologies in courts'.

On Gandhi's fresh allegation regarding voter deletions in Aland, Thakur cited the Election

Commission's statement that no voter's name can be deleted online without due process and opportunity of hearing.

He noted that the Congress candidate had, in fact, won the seat by over 10,000 votes in 2023.

"Does it mean Congress indulged in vote theft to win?" he asked. Referring to the Karnataka High Court's recent decision setting aside Congress leader K.Y. Nanje Gowda's victory in Malur and ordering a recount, Thakur questioned: "Does that mean Congress did vote chori in Malur?"

Thakur accused the Congress of attempting to undermine democratic institutions and destabilise the country.

"Are they trying to protect infiltrators and give them voting rights at the cost of SC/ST/OBC communities? Rahul Gandhi's statement makes it seem he stands with infiltrators," he alleged.

Rejecting any claims of bias in the functioning of the Election Commission, Thakur said Congress itself had a history of misusing the EC.

"Today, the EC is working with integrity," he asserted.

"The BJP will take every step to strengthen democracy and expose infiltrators whom Congress wants to empower," Thakur declared.



Water cannons being used to disperse agitators during a protest march by members of the Kerala Students Union (KSU) to the state Legislative Assembly against alleged police atrocities in the state, in Thiruvananthapuram.

Palaniswami hits out at CM Stalin over 'mask' row, says meet with Amit Shah fruitful

CHENNAI, SEP 18

AIADMK General Secretary and Leader of Opposition in Tamil Nadu Assembly Edappadi K. Palaniswami (EPS) on Thursday hit back at Chief Minister M.K. Stalin for what he termed as "childish" remarks over his recent meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi.

Addressing reporters, EPS said his political opponents were deliberately attempting to malign him with baseless allegations and sensationalised reports.

EPS pointed out that he had campaigned across 153 constituencies and sensed strong public anger against the DMK government.

"I understood from the protests that people want this anti-people government to go. The next Assembly election will see AIADMK return to power," he declared.

On the controversy surrounding his Delhi visit, EPS said, "I travelled with senior party leaders and state MPs. I met the Vice President at his residence in the morning and later went to see Amit Shah at night in a government-owned car. As I stepped out, I wiped my face. That moment was filmed and turned into a political issue. This is shameful and painful."

Rejecting charges that he was hiding his face, EPS said, "There



is no need for me to cover my face when meeting Amit Shah. The meeting was transparent. It is only T.V. Dhinakaran who once entered AIADMK with a mask."

He added that the Union Home Minister praised his political growth and made it clear that the BJP would not interfere in AIADMK's internal matters.

EPS also accused Stalin of double standards. "When in Opposition, he waved black flags against Prime Minister Modi. Today, he shows white flags. The CM, who called Senthil Balaji corrupt, later made him a minister. He once alleged Balaji and his brother looted Karur; now he pretends

he is clean," he said.

He further ridiculed the Chief Minister's stance on NEET, alleging that Stalin misled the people with false promises.

"He came to power by lying about NEET. Even Udhayanidhi's so-called 'secret' on NEET has vanished," EPS said.

Highlighting his demands to the Centre, EPS said he had urged Amit Shah to confer the Bharat Ratna on freedom fighter Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar. "AIADMK is a party that carries people in buses, not one that spurs thousands of crores. Where does the Chief Minister go when he travels abroad? People deserve to

Kerala a bridge between India and Europe: CM Vijayan on blue economy con-

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEP 18

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Thursday reacted to the first-ever Kerala-European Union (EU) Blue Economy Conclave, saying that the state's future is intrinsically tied to the seas.

"Kerala has always looked to the oceans not only for sustenance but also for innovation, resilience, and growth. This conclave is an opportunity to shape a global alliance for a sustainable and equitable blue economy, with Kerala as a bridge between India and Europe," said CM Vijayan on the two-day event. He is slated to inaugurate the event on Friday here, while the proceedings commenced on Thursday at the conclave venue, on the famed beach destination of Kovalam.

The two-day event brings together senior leaders from Kerala, the Government of India, and the European Union to chart new pathways for sustainable ocean-based growth.

EU Ambassador to India and Bhutan, Hervé Delphin, who is leading the European delegation, underscored the importance of the conclave as a collaborative platform.

"EU relations and partnership with India are multi-fold and multi-sectoral. With its unique potential in maritime activities, coastal resilience, wellness and tourism, Kerala presents many opportunities for European stakeholders. The conclave is therefore more than a single event — it is a collaborative platform where EU expertise and investment can accelerate India's blue economy vision and generate mutual benefits," said Delphin.

State Minister for Fisheries Saji Cherian, who travelled to



Europe to get maximum participation from EU countries, said this conclave underlines Kerala's commitment to sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, and coastal resilience.

"By joining hands with the EU and the Government of India, we aim to create opportunities for our coastal communities while ensuring the long-term health of our marine ecosystems," said Cherian.

A 'Team Europe' delegation of ambassadors and senior diplomats from 17 EU member states is attending the conclave, led by Ambassador Delphin. Representatives from Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, and Romania, along with senior officials from Austria, France, Slovenia, the Netherlands, Germany, and Sweden, are part of the mission.

Union Ministers and secretaries from both the Centre and Kerala are also participating, reflecting strong national support for blue economy cooperation with Europe.

With 600 km of coastline,

extensive inland waters, and rich marine biodiversity, Kerala is at the forefront of India's blue economy transformation.

The European Union has long placed the blue economy at the core of its sustainable growth agenda. In 2022, the sector employed 4.5 million people and generated nearly 890 billion pounds in turnover across Europe.

Flagship programmes such as BlueInvest and the European Ocean Pact are driving clean maritime transport, renewable energy, circular economy models, and fisheries sustainability, with scope for collaboration with India.

The conclave will deliberate on climate-resilient coastal development, harbour modernisation, logistics and shipping investments, sustainable aquaculture and post-harvest innovation, and his family members. The ED has already told the special court that, during questioning, the minister failed to provide satisfactory answers on either point. The ED officials have traced illegal transactions worth Rs 12.73 crore, allegedly linked to irregularities in the recruitment of primary teachers in the state, to bank accounts held by the minister.

The second concerns the omission of these transactions from the tax declarations of the minister and his family members.

The ED has already told the special court that, during questioning, the minister failed to provide satisfactory answers on either point. The ED officials have traced illegal transactions worth Rs 12.73 crore, allegedly linked to irregularities in the recruitment of primary teachers in the state, to bank accounts held by the minister.

The Enforcement Directorate is likely to seek the minister's custody for interrogation.

They added that the investigating officials are primarily seeking two clarifications from the minister regarding the fictitious transactions, the first being the source of funds behind a series of inward remittances, largely in cash, made to these bank accounts during a specified period.

Sources said the ED officials are seeking two clarifications from the minister regarding the fictitious transactions.

The first clarification relates to the source of funds behind a series of phased inward remittances, largely in cash, credited to the bank accounts during a particular period.

The second concerns the omission of these transactions from the tax declarations of the minister and his family members. The ED has already told the special court that, during questioning, the minister failed to provide satisfactory answers on either point. The ED officials have traced illegal transactions worth Rs 12.73 crore, allegedly linked to irregularities in the recruitment of primary teachers in the state, to bank accounts held by the minister.

of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in Kolkata this Saturday.

Sinha, through his counsel, is expected to respond to the Enforcement Directorate's earlier submission regarding the disputed transactions in bank accounts held by him individually or jointly with his family members.

Sources aware of the development said that, depending on the clarifications provided by Sinha through his counsel at the special court later this week,



KOLKATA, SEP 18

The fate of West Bengal Minister Chandranath Sinha will hinge on his clarifications regarding the alleged fictitious financial transactions of Rs 12.73 crore identified by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the state's primary teacher recruitment irregularities.

The matter is set for a crucial hearing at a special Prevention

Teachers job scam: Bengal Minister faces ED heat over Rs 12.73 cr 'fictitious' transactions

Gujarat: PM Modi to review progress of Rs 4,500-crore National Maritime Heritage Complex

GANDHINAGAR, SEP 18

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Gujarat on Saturday to review the progress of the ambitious National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC), coming up at Lothal in Ahmedabad district.

Envisaged as a blend of heritage, education, research, and tourism, the project is being developed at an estimated cost of Rs 4,500 crore.

Lothal, once a prominent trade hub of the Indus Valley Civilisation and home to one of the world's earliest dockyards, is being transformed into a global centre showcasing India's rich maritime legacy.

The NMHC is aligned with PM Modi's vision of Virasat Bhi, Vikas Bhi (Heritage with Development), bringing ancient

seafaring traditions to life through cutting-edge technology and immersive experiences.

The complex will house 14 galleries highlighting India's maritime history from the Harappan era to the present, along with a coastal states pavilion, four themed parks, and a recreated of Harappan architecture and lifestyle.

A 17-metre-high lighthouse museum — billed as the tallest in the world — will be among its key attractions, alongside a floating restaurant, a 100-room tent city, eco-friendly transport, and large-scale visitor facilities.

Officials said the project is expected to generate thousands of jobs, boost local industries, and position Lothal as a major international tourist destination.

A Maritime University within

the complex will also provide academic and research opportunities, strengthening India's role as a hub for maritime studies and heritage tourism. With features like the world's largest underwater open gallery, interactive exhibits, and advanced digital installations, the NMHC aims to offer visitors a world-class experience while reinforcing India's maritime identity.

Excavations by the Archaeological Survey of India in 1954 revealed a well-planned city with a sophisticated drainage system, bead-making and semi-precious stone workshops, evidence of rice cultivation, and artefacts such as seals and pottery, highlighting Lothal's role as a thriving centre of commerce, craftsmanship, and seafaring in ancient India.

Drugs valued at over Rs 143 crore seized in Mizoram & Manipur; 3 held

AIZAWL/IMPHAL, SEP 18

In a major haul, the security forces have seized drugs valued over Rs 143 crore and arrested three persons in Mizoram and Manipur over the past 24 hours, officials said on Thursday.

A defence spokesman said that in a major strike against cross-border narco-trafficking, Assam Rifles, based on specific intelligence, conducted a search operation on Wednesday night near Zote village in Mizoram's Champhai District, which shares an unfenced border with Myanmar. During the operation, troops intercepted a suspected individual carrying a consignment. On being challenged, the person abandoned the load and fled into the nearby deep jungle,

taking advantage of the terrain. A thorough search of the area led to the recovery of 34,218 kg of highly addictive and banned methamphetamine tablets valued at over Rs 102.65 crore.

The spokesman said that in another operation, Assam Rifles seized 12 grams of heroin valued at approximately Rs 8.4 lakh at Zemabawk in Mizoram's Aizawl district on Wednesday night.

Acting on specific intelligence about the trafficking of narcotics, a joint operation of Assam Rifles with the Territorial Army, Aizawl, was launched at the Zemabawk areas and during the operation, one suspected drug peddler was intercepted and searched. During the search of the individual, 12

grams of heroin were recovered from him. The apprehended individual was identified as Lalchuanmawia (25), a resident of Zote in Champhai District. The seized narcotics, along with the apprehended individual, have been handed over to the Excise and Narcotics Department, Aizawl, for further investigation. This successful operation underscores Assam Rifles' unwavering resolve to combat narco-network along the India-Myanmar border, while safeguarding the youth of the Nation from the scourge of drugs, an Assam Rifles statement said. In Manipur, security forces arrested two suspected drug smugglers and recovered brown sugar and methamphetamine tablets.

Our focus must be on economic growth, self reliance amid global turbulence:



NEW DELHI, SEPT 18

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday underlined the need to maintain steadfast focus on the nation's goals and economic growth, advocating an approach of self-reliance and a firm resolve to navigate the global turbulence.

Speaking at the 12th Annual Public Affairs Forum of India (PAFI) event, Vaishnaw, Minister for IT, Railways and I&B, said an important question on the mind of every policymaker today is how to effectively deal with rapid changes unfolding globally at the moment.

So yes, these are very interesting times. We must keep our focus very clear on what we want to achieve in our country. How do we want to grow our economy, strengthen ourselves, so that the storm which is there in the world...we should be strong enough to absorb those and pass our ship through those big storms," he said.

The Prime Minister has articulated a strong focus on growth supported by an approach of

'atmanirbharta' or self-reliance, the minister said during an interactive chat that followed.

"We must embrace the things which are produced in India, Made-in-India, in a very big way. And we must make sure that our industries are able to get that strength which makes them resilient enough to withstand any turbulence that is happening in the world," he said.

Addressing the event, Vaishnaw emphasised on consistent focus on developing talent.

"In telecom, we had set up 100 5G labs. In semiconductor, we took a target of 100 universities where the world's latest tools would be used by students for training and we achieved 278 universities where the students are actually using world's latest

EDA tools, Synopsys, Cadence, Siemens, they are using this in the world...we should be strong enough to absorb those and pass our ship through those big storms," he said.

The Prime Minister has articulated a strong focus on growth supported by an approach of

by students now stands at 28, he added.

"Nowhere in the world will you find an ecosystem or a talent development program on as big a scale and as deep in capabilities as our semicon mission is currently taking up," he said.

Vaishnaw urged the audiences to mull over the next round of reforms in Income Tax. "Give your inputs to the Finance Ministry, because we wanted to take the first round as complete simplification of the way the Act is written, so that gives you a good baseline and then the next rounds of simplification can continue to happen," he said.

The Prime Minister alluded to the Fed Fort that the next set of big reforms are in offing and that will cover every sector, the minister said exhorting people in the hall to brainstorm and share their thoughts on driving the next-generation reforms.

"In every sector, we are going to have reforms. So in whatever sector you are working, please give your ideas, share your thoughts, give your inputs to the concerned ministry so that they can start working, or you can send it to NITI or the Prime Minister's Office directly. We have got two groups of ministers set up for examining the reform ideas which come," Vaishnaw said.

The Minister further nudged young professionals present at the PAFI event to look at various laws enacted after 1947, examine their relevance from users' perspective and give feedback on whether they need to be amended or scrapped in case it has outlived its relevance in the current times.

The number of chips designed

Asian shares mostly climb after US stocks remained near record levels following the Fed's rate cut



MANILA, SEPT 18

Asian shares, led by tech stocks, were mostly higher Thursday after Wall Street indexes churned between gains and losses but, ultimately remained near their record levels following the Federal Reserve's decision to cut its main interest rate.

Japan's Nikkei 225 rose 1.3 per cent to 45,365.98, with tech-related stocks including Disney, Tokyo Electron and SoftBank among the gainers. The Bank of Japan started its two-day policy meeting, with rates expected to be left unchanged.

South Korea's Kospi added nearly 1.3 per cent to 3,455.98, with chipmakers SK Hynix and Samsung Electronics among advancers.

The Chinese markets were mixed. Hong Kong's Hang Seng slipped 0.2 per cent to 26,856.02, while the Shanghai Composite index added nearly

0.5 per cent to 3,893.95 on optimism over trade negotiations with the US and a potential TikTok agreement.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 dipped 0.5 per cent to 8,776.60 with data released Thursday showing the jobless rate was unchanged at 4.2 per cent in August, but headline employment fell by 5,400 while full-time jobs declined by 40,900.

India's BSE Sensex was up 0.4 per cent, while Taiwan's

Taiex added 1.1 per cent.

On Wednesday on Wall Street, the S&P 500 slipped 0.1 per cent and hung near its all-time high set at the start of the week. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 260 points, or 0.6 per cent, while the Nasdaq composite fell 0.3 per cent.

The swings came after the Federal Reserve cut its main interest rate for the first time this year. That move was no surprise for Wall Street, which was widely expecting it. More important was the set of projections

that Fed officials published showing where they expect interest rates to go in upcoming years.

That indicated the typical member sees the Fed cutting the federal funds rate two more times by the end of this year and once more in 2026.

Stocks initially rose following the release of the projections, which seemed to support Wall Street's widespread expectation for more cuts to interest rates. Such moves can give the economy a kickstart, and stock prices had already run to record on the bet that several cuts are on the way.

But stocks gave back gains after Fed Chair Jerome Powell stressed that they're only projections. Conditions could change quickly, and Powell warned against taking the projections as gospel.

What's making things difficult for the Fed is that the job market is slowing as inflation is remaining stubbornly high. The Fed is in charge of fixing both, but it has only one tool to do that. And helping one by moving interest rates often hurts the other in the short term.

The Fed had been holding rates steady this year because of the threat that US President Donald Trump's tariffs will raise prices for all kinds of products. Inflation has so far refused to go back below the Fed's 2 per cent target, and Fed officials don't see that happening for a few years. In other dealings Thursday, benchmark US crude shed 10 cents to USD 63.95 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, lost 10 cents.

Finance Ministry urges employees to opt for UPS before Sept 30 deadline

NEW DELHI, SEPT 18

The Finance Ministry on Thursday asked Government employees to opt for shifting to the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) well before the September 30 deadline to ensure the timely processing of their requests.

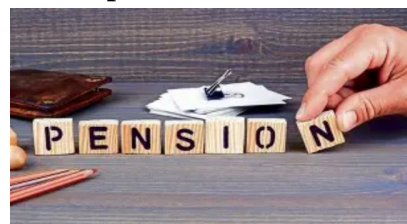
From April 1, 2025, the Government has introduced UPS as an option under the National Pension System (NPS) for Central Government employees. UPS will provide assured payouts to the employees.

In a statement, the Ministry said the last date for eligible employees and past retirees under NPS to opt for UPS is September 30, 2025.

"All eligible employees are urged to exercise their option well before the deadline to avoid any last-minute difficulties and to ensure timely processing of their requests. Employees who choose to remain in NPS cannot opt for UPS after this date," the ministry said.

Around 31,555 Central Government employees had opted for the UPS by July 10, and the last date to enrol under the scheme is September 30.

Also, the Finance Ministry, on August 25, introduced a one-



time one-way switch facility from the newly introduced UPS to the NPS.

The Finance Ministry said it has been decided that a one-time, one-way switch facility from UPS to NPS will be made available to all Central Government employees who have opted for UPS.

"This switch facility may be exercised by UPS optees any time not later than one year prior to the date of superannuation or three months prior to the deemed date of retirement in case of voluntary retirement, as applicable," it added.

The Government has extend-

ed the benefit of 'Retirement gratuity and Death gratuity' under UPS.

Further, the Government employees who opt for UPS under NPS will also be eligible for the option to avail benefits under the CCS (Pension) Rules, 2021, or the CCS (Extraordinary Pension) Rules, 2023, in the event of death of the Government servant during service or his discharge on the ground of invalidation or disablement.

The Government has also extended tax benefits to UPS as are available to NPS under the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Rupee falls 28 paise to close at 88.13 against US dollar

MUMBAI, SEPT 18

The rupee depreciated 28 paise to close at 88.13 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, on hawkish Fed and a bounce back in the US dollar.

Forex traders said traders assessed the US FED outlook following a rate cut. The US FED reduced rates by a quarter point as expected and indicated that it will steadily lower borrowing costs for the rest of the year.

Moreover, the rupee remained under pressure on worries over US tariffs on India and global trade uncertainties. Besides, sustained foreign fund outflows also dented investor sentiments.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 87.93 against the US dollar and touched an intra-day low of 88.16 before ending the session at 88.13 (provisional), down 28 paise from its previous close.

On Wednesday, the rupee appreciated 24 paise to close at 87.85 against the US dollar.

"The Indian rupee declined sharply on hawkish Fed and a bounce back in the US dollar. Fed cut interest rates by 25 bps, in line with estimates. It sees two more 25 bps rate cut in 2025 and just one 25 bps rate cut in 2026."

"Fed Chair Jerome Powell does not see elevated financial risks on tariffs. However, he raised downside concerns over labour market and GDP growth," Anuj Choudhary,



Research Analyst Currency and commodities Mirae Asset Sharekhan, said.

Choudhary added that positive domestic markets and expectations of fresh FII inflows may also support the rupee. However, any recovery in the US dollar and/or US treasury yields may cap sharp upside.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.02 per cent to 96.89. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 0.43 per cent lower at USD 67.66 per barrel in futures trade.

On the domestic equity market front, the Sensex jumped 320.25 points to settle at 83,013.96, while the Nifty rose 93.35 points to 25,423.60.

Foreign Institutional Investors sold equities worth Rs

1,124.54 crore on a net basis on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Meanwhile, Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday expressed confidence that India's exports would grow around 6 per cent this year compared to the corresponding period in 2024.

Underlining the country's strong performance in global trade despite challenges, the minister said discussions on free trade agreements (FTAs) were advancing with several countries.

"India's exports would grow around 6 per cent this year compared to the corresponding period last year. I believe we will end the year on a positive note," Goyal said, adding that discussions on free trade agreements (FTAs) were advancing with sev-

Indian industry needs to join journey of achieving developed nation: N Chandrasekaran



NEW DELHI, SEPT 18

Indian industry needs to rise to the occasion and participate in the journey of achieving the vision of a developed nation at a time when the country is rolling out several reforms, Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran

said on Thursday.

Speaking at the symposium organised by the Indian Foundation for Quality Management (IFQM), he stressed the need for collective efforts, closely with the vision of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in multiple dimensions to

achieve the goals of 'Viksit Bharat'.

"If India is to achieve its goals of economic, social, infrastructure and inclusive growth, the main purpose of Viksit Bharat, then we need to be working closely with the vision of the honorable Prime Minister in multiple dimensions," Chandrasekaran noted.

He further said the country is embarking on the journey at a time when the world is going through several challenges in terms of macroeconomic stability, geopolitical conflicts, leading to supply chain issues, production issues, and mobility of workforce.

"At this time, India is rolling out several reforms, and the industry needs to rise to the occasion and participate in this journey of achieving the vision of 'Viksit Bharat', Chandrasekaran asserted.

Japan's SMBC completes 20pc stake acquisition in Yes Bank; becomes largest shareholder

NEW DELHI, SEPT 18

Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) has completed the acquisition of a 20 per cent stake in Yes Bank from state-owned State Bank of India (SBI) and other bank investors, the private sector lender announced on Thursday.

With this transaction, SMBC has become Yes Bank's largest shareholder, while SBI continues to hold a significant stake of over 10 per cent.

This milestone marks the largest cross-border investment in an Indian private sector bank.

The completion of the acquisition also includes the appointment of two SMBC nominee directors to Yes Bank's board. This move is expected to enhance governance and foster deeper strategic collaboration between the two entities.

Yes Bank, in a stock exchange filing, stated that Shinichiro Nishino and Rajeev Veeravani Kannan have been inducted onto the bank's board.

The private sector bank stated its intention to leverage SMBC's global strengths, particularly in facilitating trade and investment flows between Japan and India, to accelerate growth in its corporate banking, treasury services, and cross-border

solutions.

"The completion of this transaction is a defining moment for Yes Bank. We are privileged to welcome SMBC as our largest shareholder and Board participant."

Prashant Kumar, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Yes Bank, said, "With the combined sponsorship of SMBC, backed by SMFG's global scale, and SBI, India's most trusted bank, YES Bank is uniquely positioned to grow stronger, expand

Japan-India business flows, and deliver long-term value for all stakeholders," he added.

Also, Yes Bank said that four domestic credit rating agencies — CRISIL, ICRA, India Ratings, and CARE — have now assigned it AA- ratings, the highest level since March 2020. These upgrades reflect the bank's strengthened capital position, robust governance, and improved business performance.

On Wednesday, the country's

Jaro Education IPO to open Sept 23; aims to raise Rs 450 crore

NEW DELHI, Sept 18

Jaro Institute of Technology Management and Research (Jaro Education) on Thursday said it is looking to raise Rs 450 crore through its Initial Public Offering (IPO), which will open for subscription on September 23.

In a public announcement, the company said it has fixed a price band of Rs 846 to Rs 890 per share for its maiden public offering.

The company's IPO — comprises a fresh issue of shares worth Rs 170 crore and an Offer for Sale (OFS) of shares valued Rs 280 crore by promoter Sanjay Namdeo Salunkhe — is scheduled to conclude on September 25.

Of the fresh issuance, Rs 81 crore has been earmarked for marketing, brand building and advertising activities, Rs 45 crore for payment of debt and the rest for general corporate purposes.

Founded in 2009 by Salunkhe, Jaro Education offers degree programs and certification programs in collaboration with its partner institutions.

JKBOSE, JKACS jointly organise UT level quiz competition on HIV/AIDS

ASCS Banihal emerges winner, selected to participate at regional level

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18: In a significant endeavour to deepen awareness and foster empathy around HIV/AIDS afflicted persons, the Academic Division of the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE), in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir AIDS Control Society (JKACS), organized a UT and Divisional Level Red Ribbon Quiz Competitions simultaneously at Jammu & Srinagar. The 19 participating teams of the final competitions were drawn from school-level and District level rounds engaging about 700 across the UT, a testament to the event's wide-reaching impact. One team each from 19 districts of the UT participated in divisional-level competitions. The final result at UT-level declared the team of Aalam Shah Convent School (ASCS), Banihal, Ramban at first place winning the



cash prize of Rs. 10,000/- followed by Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Aribal, Pulwama at second place with cash prize of Rs. 8,000/- and D.S Education Institution, Rajouri in third place with cash prize of Rs. 6,000/-. The winner team will participate in the regional level event at Haryana on 22nd of this month. Secretary, JKBOSE, Ghulam Hassan Sheikh, who inaugurated these competitions, urged the students for showing compassion towards those living with the

AIDS virus.

"The society must exhibit genuine concern towards AIDS victims. Those unfortunate people need our empathy not mere sympathy. They are integral members of society, worthy of equal respect and acceptance. Awareness is the best preventive means to save the society from this menace," he said. He also expressed his satisfaction over the collaborative effort of JKBOSE and JKACS to work for this important cause. Dr. Monika Wali, Special Guest

of Honor and in-charge IEC, JKACS, in her address emphasized on the transformative role of knowledge in eradicating prejudice. "Knowledge is the antidote to stigma, and initiatives like these are invaluable channels for spreading awareness," she observed. Dr. Sudhir Singh, Director Academics underscored the value of such programs. "Each team displayed remarkable preparation and dedication to understand AIDS-related issues. The purpose of the programme

is to educate the students to save society from this fatal disease.

Students shall act as beacon of light in spreading awareness in society," he added. Joint Secretaries of JKBOSE, other senior officers of JKACS and JKBOSE, organizers of the competitions and the students of participating institutions were also present on the occasion. Pertinently, the Red Ribbon Quiz Competition stands as a beacon of JKBOSE and JKACS's commitment to cultivate a well-informed, empathetic society. Through education and open dialogue, this initiative encourages young individuals to embrace empathy and reject prejudice. With continued efforts in this direction, JKBOSE and JKACS are paving the way for a future where understanding and compassion thrive, laying the foundation for a unified community.

DC Kathua gives away cheques worth Rs. 10.57 lakh to registered workers

Labour Department takes Special Initiative under Sewa Parv



KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 18: In a significant welfare initiative under Sewa Parv, Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today handed over cheques amounting to ₹10.57 lakh to registered workers under the J&K Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (JKBOCWBB) schemes. The Deputy Commissioner, while handing over the assistance, underlined the government's resolve towards the welfare and upliftment of the unorganized sector workers who form the backbone of infrastructure development. He said that the financial aid extended under JKBOCWBB provides vital support to workers for education of children, health assistance, marriage support, pension benefits

and relief at the time of any exigency. The DC further emphasized the need to intensify awareness to bring all eligible workers in the ambit of welfare schemes. He directed the Labour Department to ensure handholding of workers in completing formalities so that timely benefits are delivered at their doorstep. Assistant Labour Commissioner Piyusha Khajuria informed that a special registration drive under JKBOCWBB has been launched as part of the fortnight-long SEWA PARV. She said that workers are being mobilized and sensitized about the bouquet of welfare schemes available under the Board, ranging from scholarships for students to financial aid for critical health treatments and social security pensions.

DDC Chairman, DC Doda visit flood-hit areas in Village Bheja-Bhaderwah

Distribute relief material among affected households

BHADERWAH, SEPTEMBER 18: District Development Council (DDC) Chairman Doda, Dhananter Singh Kotwal, along with Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh today visited flood affected Bheja village in Bhaderwah. The visit aimed to review the ground situation and extend immediate relief to the affected families. During the inspection, the delegation interacted with local residents to under-

stand their grievances and the scale of damage caused by the floods. The Deputy Commissioner assured that measures are on to restore services, rehabilitate the affected families and initiate necessary steps for long-term flood mitigation in the region.

On the occasion, relief material including essential supplies was distributed among the affected families, ensuring that immediate needs were

met. The officials emphasized the administration's commitment to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with people during times of distress. ADC Sunil Kumar Bhutyal; SDPO, and other officials accompanied the DDC Chairman and DC. The joint initiative reinforced the district administration's dedication to ensuring prompt relief, effective rehabilitation and improved disaster preparedness for vulnerable areas.

Sewa Parv 2025: Series of awareness, community welfare activities held across Kathua on Day 2

KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 18: The Day 2 of Sewa Parv 2025 witnessed a host of awareness programmes, plantation drives, cleanliness campaigns, health camps and skill development activities across the Kathua District, promoting civic responsibility, health, and community well-being. Educational institutions across the district actively participated in anti-drug campaigns to sensitize youth about the harmful effects of substance abuse. GHSS Durang organized a symposium on 'Say No to

Drugs', where students shared their views and pledged to stay away from the menace. PM SHRI GHSS Dullangal hosted a Poster Making Competition on the hazards of Drugs & Tobacco, while GGMS Nagrota Prehta and GGMS Chagnore conducted awareness activities all spreading the message of a drug-free and healthy lifestyle. Under Poshan Maah 2025, a Growth Measurement Camp was held at AWC Budhi (E), Project Barhanti to promote child health and

nutrition awareness.

The Health Department under Swasth Nari Sashakti Parivar Abhiyaan organized screening and awareness camps across different blocks, focusing on maternal health, anaemia, cancer and NCD prevention, besides TB and sickle cell disease detection. The camps also included counselling sessions and health check-ups, ensuring accessible healthcare services for women and children at the grassroots level. In line with the vision of financial literacy and empow-

erment, RSETI Kathua, in collaboration with J&K B& NABARD organized an Awareness Camp at Village Hatli, while another programme on Banking Products was held at Mangalore. The CSC Department conducted a Cyber Security Awareness Camp at Panchayal Lowang (Bani) to educate citizens about safe digital practices. Skill and entrepreneurship promotion also remained a major highlight. ITI Kathua organized an Awareness Session on Entrepreneurship & PM Vishwakarma

Scheme, while ITI Bhaddi Billawar, ITI Bani and ITI Basoli conducted programmes on entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and self-employment, inspiring youth towards self-reliance and innovation. The district also witnessed massive cleanliness and sustainability drives. MC Kathua carried out the Ek Sath Ek Ghanta Sanitation Campaign, SUP awareness and PM Svanidhi enrolment. MC Parole and MC Hiranagar organized sanitation and awareness programmes.

Farmers acquainted with modern Horticulture Techniques

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 18: Department of Horticulture Jammu organized a Training/Exposure Visit for farmers of Jammu District to Akhnoor to acquaint them with new techniques and innovations in the Horticulture Sector. The visit was organised under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) and ATMA. Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Sayed, Chief Horticulture Officer Rakesh Kotwal, Chief Scientist KVK, R.S.Pura, Dr. Raveen Kour, District Level SMS Rakesh Kumar Bhagat and other officials of Horticulture Department were also present at the event.

The Programme drew a large number of farmers, including former Sarpanches, Lambardars and progressive



orchardists from the area. The huge turnout reflected the keen interest among the local farming community to adopt modern practices and value addition techniques in the Horticulture Sector.

Interacting with the farmers, the Director acquainted them about the Government schemes launched for Hor-

ticulture Development. He highlighted the benefits offered under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) and other Centrally Sponsored Schemes. He also assured full support from the department for en-

hancing capacity building of orchardists through training and workshops. The Chief Horticulture Officer stressed the importance of skill based trainings and practical exposure for empowering farmers. District Level SMS also provided valuable technical guidance to the orchardists

on best Horticulture practices, emphasizing plants propagation methods and effective pests and disease control.

Later, the Director visited the High Density orchards, Demonstration Plots and Mulching component units where farmers were shown practical aspects of better Orchard Management, High Density Plantation techniques and benefits of mulching in conserving soil moisture, suppressing weeds and improving crop productivity.

Technical experts from the department delivered comprehensive demonstrations on Canopy management, integrated pest and disease management, irrigation practices, nutrient management and Post Harvest handling of fruits.

DC Ramban chairs Regional Transport Authority Meeting

RAMBAN, SEPTEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan today chaired a meeting of the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) in his office chamber to deliberate on key issues related to the public transport system in the district. The meeting was attended by Additional Superintendent of Police Majeeb-ur-Rehman; Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Kuldeep Singh and other concerned officials. During the meeting, the DC, who also serves as Chairman of the RTA, along with other members conducted a comprehensive review of 28 applications seeking route permits and modifications in existing permits. The ARTO briefed the chair on the cases pre-



sented for consideration. After detailed discussions and scrutiny, several cases under the Mission YUVA and MUMKIN schemes were also approved for fresh route permits, aimed at enhancing youth participation in the transport sector and improving the accessibility of public transportation for the residents of Ramban. Issues relating fixation of route limits and regulation of e-autos were also dis-

cussed in the meeting. The Deputy Commissioner directed the Police and the Motor Vehicles Department to maintain strict check on overloading, ensure effective regulation of vehicular movement across the district, and take stringent action against traffic violators. He emphasized the importance of maintaining discipline on the roads to ensure public safety and smooth transportation.

Udhayam Jagriti 4.0 sessions on Mission YUVA organised in Government Institutions across Doda



DODA, SEPTEMBER 18: Udhayam Jagriti 4.0 sessions on Mission YUVA were today organised at the Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Doda and several other Educational Institutions in the District.

Deputy Director Employment Rafiq Ahmad Jaral imparted awareness to ITI trainees on the significance of entrepreneurship and the opportunities available under Mission YUVA. He motivated them to channelize their talent and creativity towards nation-building

and to emerge as job seekers rather than job seekers.

The programme was hosted by ITI Superintendent and attended by the faculty members of the institute and around 130 trainees. Earlier, the students were also sensitized about the objectives of Mission YUVA, which seeks to harness the potential of youth by equipping them with relevant skills, fostering innovation, and enabling them to contribute effectively to society and the economy. The event concluded with

an interactive session where students raised queries regarding entrepreneurship, start-ups, and skill development opportunities, which were addressed in detail by the Deputy Director.

Meanwhile, similar Udhayam Jagriti awareness programmes were hosted across government colleges and polytechnics of the district, where the Nodal Officers of Udhayam Jagriti delivered lectures on Mission YUVA and entrepreneurship. A total of 350 students participated in these sessions. Furthermore, Women Self Help Group (SHG) members were also engaged under the initiative, with 160 participants from various blocks and panchayats attending awareness programmes conducted by Block Project Managers (BPMs).

J&K Bank organises 'Udyami Yuva Day' event at Kishtwar

DC distributes 52 Sanction Letters to promote Youth Entrepreneurship under Mission YUVA

KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 18: J&K Bank today organised 'Udyami Yuva Day' event here in the Conference Hall New DC Office Complex as part of its ongoing efforts to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship under the Mission YUVA initiative.

The programme began with a welcome address by Cluster Head, J&K Bank Khurshid Ahmed Akhoun. He reaffirmed the bank's commitment to extend seamless financial services and support to entrepreneurs across all sections of society. Deputy Commissioner, Pankaj Kumar Sharma graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and handed over 52 sanction letters to beneficiaries under the Mission YUVA scheme. The aspiring entrepreneurs



received financial assistance sanction letters to es-

tablish their different modes of self-employment ven-

tures such as manufactur-

ing, trade and services.

The General Manager J&K Bank, Peer Masood Chishti emphasized the importance of the productive utilization of credit and timely repayment to ensure financial discipline and sustainable growth. Zonal Head J&K Bank Vinay Gupta encouraged the beneficiaries to transform their ventures into successful enterprises and contribute to local economic development. The Deputy Commissioner lauded J&K Bank's proactive role in fostering youth entrepreneurship and urged the beneficiaries to pursue their ventures with sincerity, innovation, and dedication so as to become job creators in the near future. The event was attended by ADC Pawan Kotwal, other officers of J&K Bank and Mission Yuva beneficiaries.

CM inaugurates Rs 35.67 crore water supply schemes in Tangmarg

Clean drinking water for each household and development in every village is our priority: CM Omar Abdullah

TANGMARG, SEPTEMBER 18: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today inaugurated and dedicated to the public five major water supply schemes of the Jal Shakti Department in Tangmarg, promising that these schemes mark only the beginning of a broad transformation of the Gulmarg-Tangmarg constituency.

Constructed at a cost of Rs 35.67 crore, the schemes will provide clean drinking water through modern Rapid Sand Filtration Plants to 40 habitations, covering 5,473 households and over 10,000 families with a population of 32,838. The projects inaugurated today include Lalpora, Chichilora, Kralpora, Ferozpora, Shrai and Kashipora water supply schemes, executed under the Jal Jeevan Mission by the PHE (Kashmir) Division (Tangmarg).



Addressing a large gathering after the inauguration, the Chief Minister said ensuring access to safe drinking water was not a favour but the government's responsibility. "We are only repaying the trust you have placed in us. These schemes will ensure

that families no longer have to depend on unfiltered water from rivers and wells, but will now get clean, filtered water right at their doorstep. But with this facility comes a responsibility to use water judiciously and conserve it for the future," the Chief Minister said.

Highlighting the hardships caused by erratic weather patterns, Omar Abdullah said Kashmir had witnessed both drought-like situations and devastating floods within a year. He underlined the need for rainwater harvesting and better water management to safeguard resources for coming generations.

Referring to the massive damage caused by recent floods, including the loss of 330 bridges, 1,500 km of roads, homes, agricultural land and public infrastructure, the Chief Minister praised the engineers and staff of the Jal Shakti Department for completing the schemes despite such difficult challenges. He felicitated the officials for their dedication. The Chief Minister also assured the people that his government would not stop at water supply projects but

was committed to improving roads, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities in the region.

"This investment of Rs 35 crore is just the beginning. In the next four years, we will change the map of the Gulmarg-Tangmarg constituency. There will be no village where development does not reach, no household where progress does not knock at the door," Omar Abdullah said, reaffirming his promise of inclusive development.

Expressing his deep personal connect with the area, Omar Abdullah recalled his family's roots in Tangmarg and Gulmarg. He said it was his grandmother's family that first put Gulmarg on the global tourism map, and vowed to ensure that the region's tourism potential was revived after setbacks caused by floods and restrictions.

Chief Secy seeks guidance of NITI Aayog on Tele-ICU setup in new GMCs

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today held a detailed discussion with Member, NITI Aayog, Dr. V.K. Paul, on the establishment of Tele-ICU facilities across the newly established Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.



During the interaction, Dr. Paul shared valuable insights and highlighted successful Tele-ICU models being implemented across the country by leading health technology providers such as Apollo Tele Health, Medanta, Cloudphysician, and Health Net. He emphasized the importance of studying these models to identify suitable strategies for J&K hospitals. Dr. Paul further advised that the needs and aspirations of individual hospitals, as well as their existing infrastructure, must be carefully assessed before rolling out the Tele-ICU initiative. He underscored the significance

of capacity building and staff training, which would be critical to ensuring the success of such a technology-driven healthcare model in the UT. Expressing gratitude to Dr. Paul for his guidance, the Chief Secretary reiterated the UT administration's commitment to adopting innovative healthcare solutions. He highlighted that J&K is working towards establishing Tele-ICU facilities under the hub-and-spoke model, enabling 24x7 critical care monitoring and expert consultation. Under this model, newly established GMCs would serve as spokes, linked to a robust hub and command centre within the UT. The Chief

Secretary also proposed sending an expert team from J&K to leading healthcare institutions in the country to study the functioning of Tele-ICUs and their command centres. He noted that while J&K has unique challenges due to its difficult topography and human resource constraints, the administration is determined to tailor solutions that fit the region's requirements. He further stressed the need for establishing a state-of-the-art hub within J&K, supported by expert resource persons from technology partners. This hub would not only provide training to local healthcare professionals but also enable the creation

District AYUSH Society meets at Kishtwar

Panel seeks establishment of AYUSH Medical Store, Medicinal Plant Nursery

KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma presided over a review meeting of the District AYUSH Society (DAS) in the capacity of its Chairman.

CEO DAS and District Nodal Officer AYUSH Dr. Vikram Singh Jammwal gave a detailed presentation on the infrastructure and working of the AYUSH Department in the district.

The District Nodal Officer briefed the meeting about the role of AYUSH staff in promoting preventive healthcare and treatment of lifestyle-related diseases. He also discussed the requirement of space for setting up a District AYUSH Medical Store and a Nursery for Medicinal Plants. The Deputy Commissioner



assured support by providing rented accommodation for the Medical Store and suitable land for the Nursery. The DC directed the District AYUSH Officer to increase OPD services in AYUSH institutions. He assured that the District Administration will extend all possible support to strengthen AYUSH facilities.

It was also informed that the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, will be organising the 10th Ayurveda Day on September 23, 2025. As part of the celebration, a series of activities will be held, including seminars, quiz and debate competitions, plantation drives, medical check-ups, yoga sessions, and screenings for non-communicable diseases, among others.

AIBOC Condemns Union-Busting and Unfair Labour Practices by Standard Chartered Bank

Jammu, Sept 18:

The All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC) strongly condemns the vindictive and illegal actions of Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) in terminating two principal office bearers and four members of the Association of Standard Chartered Bank Officers' Kolkata (ASCBK) on 18 September 2025 under the false pretext of "redundancy."

Those arbitrarily terminated included Com. Satyajeet Tripathy, General Secretary of ASCBK, Com. Titilama Roy, President of ASCBK, and four other active members of the union. Their services were terminated with immediate effect, and dues were forcibly settled without due process or dialogue. This brazen action has been carried out during the pendency of industrial disputes before the Central Industrial Tribunal and Labour Court, in clear violation of Section 33 of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. The law explicitly prohibits changes in service conditions or punitive measures

against employees during adjudication without prior Tribunal approval. By disregarding this legal safeguard, Standard Chartered Bank has displayed utter contempt of judicial authority. It is nothing less than union-busting and victimisation, intended to silence officers who have been courageously raising their voice against discrimination, harassment, and exploitation within the Bank. ASCBK, a registered trade union under the Trade Union Act, 1926 and affiliated to AIBOC, has consistently exposed the discriminatory and exploitative practices prevailing in SCB. The union has raised issues such as denial of NI Act holidays to officers while clerical staff enjoy them, severe pay disparity where officers are often paid less than clerical staff, and the misuse of redundancy and Performance Improvement Plan policies as tools of arbitrary dismissal. Officers have also faced extended working hours, absence of work-life balance, and extreme pressure that undermines their wellbeing. Women officers, in particular, have

been subjected to misbehaviour and harassment at the hands of senior management. To suppress this resistance, the management has gone so far as to suspend ASCBK's official social media handles, attempting to gag the voice of dissent. The latest terminations are not an isolated development but part of a continuing pattern of selective victimisation by SCB. In 2022, Com. Indrani Bhattacharyya, a Teller with 17 years of service, was terminated under the pretext of redundancy. Within months, the Bank recruited three new people in the same role, exposing the falsehood of the claim. Again in 2024, Com. Sanjay Dey was targeted with a redundancy notice. The present action of terminating union leaders in 2025 is a further extension of this systematic misuse of redundancy provisions to selectively target employees and eliminate organised resistance. AIBOC holds that these terminations are not only illegal but mala fide and vindictive. The Confederation demands the immediate reinstatement of all six terminated lead-

ers and members of ASCBK. It also calls upon Standard Chartered Bank to withdraw its anti-union and anti-officer practices and to recognise ASCBK as the legitimate representative body of its officers. At the same time, AIBOC urges the Ministry of Labour & Employment and the Reserve Bank of India to intervene without delay and hold SCB accountable for its blatant violation of Indian labour laws and contemptuous disregard of due legal process. This attack on ASCBK is not merely an assault on one union; it is a direct challenge to the entire trade union movement in private and foreign banks. If such draconian measures are left unchecked, they will embolden other multinational corporations to trample upon the hard-won rights of Indian workers. AIBOC reaffirms its solidarity with ASCBK and warns Standard Chartered Bank that these measures will be resisted with the full might of the organised banking fraternity. Unity is our strength, and injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

DC Kathua reviews arrangements for Navratra, Dussehra festivals

KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma on Thursday chaired a meeting of officers here at DC Office complex to review the arrangements for the Navratra and Dussehra festivals. The meeting deliberated in detail, asking the stakeholder departments to formulate Action Plans for cleanliness, sanitation, drinking water, uninterrupted power supply, traffic regulation and checking of rates of eatables. The Police Department was asked to come out with a detailed deployment plan for ensuring security arrangements in and around the important temples and shrines of the district.

Stress was laid on maintaining security around important shrines and temples besides different venues of Dussehra festival. The Deputy Commissioner directed concerned PWD Engineers to start repair and renovation works at Mata Bala Sundri, Mata Sukrala, Doula Mata, Jasrota Mata,



Jourian Mata shrines while the local BDOs were asked to repair bridge paths leading to the temples and shrines. Similarly, the PDD Department was asked to make provision of additional transformers for Mata Jourian and Mata Bala Sundri Shrines to meet any contingency besides ensuring uninterrupted power supply to all the shrines.

The RTO was directed to keep a check on overloading and overcharging by the transporters on Yatra routes and to take action against

the defaulters. The Traffic Police department was asked to ensure effective traffic regulation to prevent congestion during Navratra festival. Responding to the issues raised by the Mandir Committees, the DC assured

timely repair of defunct high mast lights near all Temple Shrines.

The meeting formulated committees for regular inspection of the markets to keep check on single use plastic, quality of eatables and overcharging etc.

Earlier, the Members of management committees, priests of temples and shrines projected problems and demands. The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers for immediate redressal of the same.

ADC Billawar, ADC Basohli and SDM Bani and SDM Hiranagar, joined the meeting virtually. They were also asked to ensure all logistic and other services for smooth observance of Navratra festival.

ADDC Surinder Mohan; CEO BBDA Atul Gupta; ADC Vinay Khosla; ADC Vishavjeet Singh; ADC Basohli Pankaj Bhagotra; CPO Ranjit Thakur; RTO and other officers of different departments were present in the meeting.

Seva Parv 2025: DC inaugurates plantation drive at Cremation Ground Samba

SAMBA, SEPTEMBER 18: As part of the ongoing Seva Parv 2025, Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan inaugurated a massive plantation drive at the Cremation Ground, here today. The initiative was taken by the District Administration Samba in coordination with Lions Club Samba.

At the inaugural ceremony, the DC planted three saplings of spiritual and medicinal value, symbolizing both ecological responsibility and cultural reverence. Officials from the district administration and members of Lions Club also participated by planting trees across the premises of the cremation ground. Speaking on the occasion, the DC highlighted the importance of community-driven green initiatives, stressing that plantation drives not only enhance the environment but also reflect a commitment towards sustainable development and collective responsibility.



The tree plantation is one of the important components of Seva Parv 2025, which began yesterday focusing on Seva (service), Swachhita (cleanliness), and Samanarpan (dedication). The plantation drive at the cremation ground was envisioned as a model to converge environmental conservation with cultural and social values, encouraging citizens to actively take part in greening efforts.

The drive witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers of the district administration, members of Lions Club Samba and locals making it a collective step towards a cleaner and greener tomorrow. Prominent among those present were ADC Jagdish Singh, ADC Ajay Bhatti, GM DIC Gurpreet Singh, CEO MC Yodhraj, officers, members of Lions Club and locals.

Editor, Publisher, Printer & Owner: Rajni Sharma, Published at: Sec-2, Channi Himmat, Jammu

Early Times Printing Press Samadhian Road, Jammu

E-Mail: editor.northinnews@gmail.com

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