

BRIEF NEWS

180 IAS, 200 IPS officers directly appointed every year: Dr Jitendra

180 IAS and 200 IPS officers are directly appointed every year through the Civil Service Examination. Sharing this information in the Rajya Sabha today, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (In

■Turn to page 2

‘Har Ghar Tiranga’ campaign – a big hit in Jammu and Kashmir

The ‘Har Ghar Tiranga’ campaign under the aegis of Azadi ka Amrit Mohatsav is a big hit in Jammu and Kashmir with a large number of people joining the celebrations to mark the 75 years of India’s Independence. The common citizens, politicians and soldiers are jointly campaigning to show patriotism toward the country.

■Turn to page 2

Not afraid of Narendra Modi, will not be intimidated: Rahul Gandhi on action in National Herald case

Launching a scathing attack on the prime minister, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi Thursday said he is “not afraid of Narendra Modi” and will not be “intimidated” by the Enforcement Directorate action in the National Herald case. Gandhi’s reaction came a day after the ED sealed the office of Young Indian in Herald House in the national capital, and the Delhi police briefly barricaded his residence and the party office here.

■Turn to page 2

Sajad Lone bats for release of Mirwaiz from house arrest

People’s Conference chairman Sajad Gani Lone on Thursday threw his weight behind the Hurriyat Conference demand for release of the head of the separatist amalgam, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who has completed three years of house detention. “Spare a thought for Mirwaiz Kashmir. He is under continued detention for the last four years. And none of

■Turn to page 2

Maharashtra ATS nabs Parvez Zubair in terror-funding case

Maharashtra Anti Terrorism Squad (ATS) arrested one Parvez Zubair in a terror funding case on Thursday in Mumbai. The arrest was made under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. A court has sent Zubair to ATS custody till August 10. Zubair has been accused of being in touch with

■Turn to page 2

There was no need for youth to pick up arms given J&K’s enormous resources: LG Manoj Sinha

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Jammu and Kashmir’s Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Thursday said that given the enormous resources in the region, there was no need for the youth to pick up arms in 1990. Addressing a gathering at Ranipora, Mattan, Anantnag, the LG, said that J&K has been bestowed with enormous resources and potential. “There was no need for the youth to pick up arms (in 1990). Even today, some people not happy with the region’s peace continue to misguide young boys,” the LG said. He said that post 2019, the pace of development has touched new heights. “Before 2019, only 6 km roads were constructed and today 20 kms are being constructed. Before 2019, only 2500 kms were macdemised and today 7500 kms of road are being macdamised per day,” the LG said. He said today J&K farmers are most happy people given their income. “We are best UT after Punjab and Haryana as far as farmer’s income is concerned,” the LG said.

Road construction in J&K gathers record pace after scrapping of Article 370

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

The pace of construction of roads has increased after the scrapping of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019 from 6.54 kilometres to 20.6 kilometres a day. Now, the total length of roads in Jammu and Kashmir has touched 41,141 kilometres. The increased pace of macadamization of roads and growing road length indicate how rapidly Jammu and Kashmir has developed during the past three years.



According to official data, road length in Jammu and Kashmir has increased to 41,141 kilometres and the percentage of blacktop roads has reached 74 per cent as

DGP Dilbag inaugurates Containerized Shooting Range, flags off Bullet resistant light motor vehicles

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

The Director General of Police, J&K Dilbag Singh inaugurated Containerized Shooting Range besides flagged off Bullet Resistant, Marksman Tactical Intervention Light Motor Vehicles at a function held at Armed Police Complex Humhama today. ADG CRPF, J&K Daljit Singh Chodhary, IG CRPF Ops Kashmir, Manvinder Singh Bhatia, ADGsP J&K, S.J.M. Gillani, M.K Sinha, Danesh Rana, IG CRPF Srinagar Ops Sector, Charu Sinha, IGP Traffic Vikramjit Singh, DIG CKR, Sujit Kumar, DisG CRPF Mathew A John, Randeep Rana, DIG AP/IR Kashmir Shahid Mehraj, SSP Srinagar, AlsG PHQ, SSP Budgam, Commandants of Srinagar based JKAP/IR battalions, officers of Police Construction Division and other senior officers of Budgam district and CRPF were present on the occasion.

The DGP was received by senior officers of Police & CRPF and was presented

nagar Ops Sector, Charu Sinha, IGP Traffic Vikramjit Singh, DIG CKR, Sujit Kumar, DisG CRPF Mathew A John, Randeep Rana, DIG AP/IR Kashmir Shahid Mehraj, SSP Srinagar, AlsG PHQ, SSP Budgam, Commandants of Srinagar based JKAP/IR battalions, officers of Police Construction Division and other senior officers of Budgam district and CRPF were present on the occasion.

The DGP was received by senior officers of Police & CRPF and was presented

■Turn to page 2

No progress on resumption of India-Pakistan trade talks: MoS Muraleedharan in Rajya Sabha

NEW DELHI, AUG 04

Union Minister of State (MoS) for External Affairs V Muraleedharan on Thursday said that there has not been any progress between India and Pakistan since 2019 regarding the resumption of trade. In August 2019, relations between India and Pakistan worsened when Pakistan decided to downgrade diplomatic ties with India, recall its high commissioner from

New Delhi, expel the Indian envoy to Islamabad and suspend bilateral trade. On being asked whether there has been any progress concerning the resumption of trade ties with Pakistan since 2019, the minister in his written response to Rajya Sabha in his written response in Rajya Sabha said: “In August 2019, Pakistan announced the suspension of bilateral trade with India. Pakistan partially relaxed its

ban on trade with India in September 2019 by permitting trade in certain pharmaceutical products. There has not been any progress regarding resumption of trade with Pakistan since then.” In June, Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari emphasized the country’s interest in trade and engagement with India saying that Pakistan was isolated on the world stage due

■Turn to page 2

ban on trade with India in September 2019 by permitting trade in certain pharmaceutical products. There has not been any progress regarding resumption of trade with Pakistan since then.” In June, Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari emphasized the country’s interest in trade and engagement with India saying that Pakistan was isolated on the world stage due

■Turn to page 2

PSPS Govt PG College for Women Gandhi Nagar organises District Level Patriotic Song Competition



Taliban claim they unaware of al-Qaeda leader in Afghanistan



Ramban team clinches inter- block district level Kabbadi title



He said that government led by him is committed to the welfare of Artisans. The LG inaugurated Rs 4.50 Cr Martand Chainstitch cluster. The cluster has been established by the J&K Khadi & Village Industries Board (KVIB) under Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries being administered by Ministry of MSME (GOI), meant for development of clusters to make the traditional industries more

productive & competitive. Speaking on the occasion, Sinha reiterated the commitment of his administration in preserving the traditional arts turning moribund for lack of promotion and patronization and stated that UT administration is alive to the aspirations of associated artisans and workers.

He acknowledged the sheer grit and

■Turn to page 2

Jammu and Kashmir reports 779 fresh Covid-19 cases, one death

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Jammu and Kashmir reported 779 fresh covid-19 cases while one person succumbed to the virus during the last 24 hours, officials said on Thursday.

They said that 142 cases were reported from Jammu division and 637 from Kashmir Valley, taking the overall tally to 467422.

■Turn to page 2

India to host UN Security Council members for special meeting on counter-terrorism in October

NEW DELHI, AUG 04

India will host diplomats of the 15-nation UN Security Council on October 29 for a special meeting on counter-terrorism.

India is halfway through the second year of its two-year term as an elected non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.

India’s tenure at the Council will end in December when the country will also preside as President of the powerful

■Turn to page 2

Security Forces Arrest 3 Terrorists Tasked With Conducting Terror Attacks In Handwara

NEW DELHI, AUG 04

A joint team of Jammu and Kashmir police, 21 Rashtriya Rifles (RR) of the Indian Army and 92 Battalion Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), apprehended three terrorists from Handwara and seized one pistol, one pistol magazine, seven pistol rounds and two grenades from them.

■Turn to page 2

Man dies during chase, another held with heroine, cash in J&K: Police

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

A man died after being hit by a vehicle, while another one was arrested along with heroine and cash over one crore during a dramatic chase by police in Udhampur district, police said on Thursday.

In a statement, police said that on Wednesday patrolling party of police station Udhampur which was on duty near Gole Mela patrol pump noticed two persons moving in a suspicious manner.

The statement reads that on seeing the police party both persons ran towards main road and one person while on the run was knocked down by unknown vehicle, injuring him seriously.

It reads that police party on duty immediately shifted



the injured person to district hospital from where he was referred to GMC Jammu and during treatment he succumbed to his injuries.

“He (deceased person) has been identified as Mukhtiar Ahmed s/o Khalil ur Rehman of Kupwara. His other accomplice Jagtar Singh S/o Jarnail Singh of Punjab was immediately nabbed and after thorough search of his vehicle heroine

approximately 250 gm was found along with huge cash amounting to Rs 1, 91, 34, 030 of different denominations,” it reads.

The statement said a case under relevant sections has been registered and investigation has been set into motion.

“Preliminary investigation reveals that both the persons

■Turn to page 2

Fake SIM Card Case: Charge Sheet Filed Against Vendors For Forgery

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

State Investigation Agency of Jammu and Kashmir Police on Thursday filed chargesheet before Kupwara court against SIM card sellers for allegedly using forged documents.

The charge sheet was filed before the court in case FIR No. 08/2022 u/s 420, 468, 471, 120-B, 201 IPC of P/S CIK/SIA against two accused persons namely Idress Ahmad Baba alias Idress Pir son of Abdul Ahad resident of Wuder Payeen Handwara and Asif Ahmad Dar son of Mohd Jamal Dar resident of Khaipora Rajwara Handwara who are in judicial custody.

The accused are agents of franchisee namely Bin-amin communication Zachal-



dara Handwara. The case was registered in Police Station CIK/SIA Srinagar. The franchisee/POS was found issuing SIM cards through uploading fake documents and using fraudulent means for carrying out illegal

■Turn to page 2

Another batch of 388 pilgrims leave for Amarnath cave shrine from Jammu

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

A batch of 388 pilgrims left the Bhagwati Nagar base camp here on Thursday to pay obeisance at the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir Himalayas, officials said.

The 43-day yatra commenced on June 30 from the twin base camps — traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam in south Kashmir’s Anantnag and 14-km shorter Baltal in central Kashmir’s



Ganderbal district.

The 35th batch left in a convoy of nine vehicles amid heavy security of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), they said.

According to officials, 103

pilgrims heading for Baltal were the first to leave the Jammu base camp in four vehicles, followed by the second convoy of 12 vehicles carrying 285 pilgrims for Pahalgam.

Officials attribute the fall in the number of pilgrims visiting the cave shrine to twin factors — poor weather conditions and the yatra inching towards its conclusion.

A total of 1,43,919

■Turn to page 2

Govt must stop harassment of youth of J&K : Rattan Lal

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

National Conference Jammu unit has extended full support to the Financial Accounts Assistant (FAA) aspirants’ cause who are agitating against the Govt seeking the immediate release of their selection list. The support was announced by the senior National Conference leader and party’s Provincial President of Jammu Province, Rattan Lal Gupta during his visit to these protesting aspirants at the protesting site in front of Press Club Jammu here today.

Accompanied by other National Conference leaders, Rattan Lal Gupta also joined the ‘Protest Dharna’ of FAA aspirants. While addressing the protest gathering at the site the senior National Conference leader asserted that the demands raised by these aspirants are very just and genuine and government should fulfil these at the earliest. He informed that the FAA aspirants’ delegation has met the National Conference President and Member Parliament, Dr Farooq Abdullah who assured them that their issue was taken in the

Parliament. Later, the National Conference Member Parliament Hasnain Masoodi has raised the issue of FAA aspirants in the Parliament, he added.

Rattan Lal Gupta castigated the Jammu and Kashmir Administration for causing harassment to the youth of J&K despite knowing that they are already in utter chaos due to rising unemployment and joblessness. He accused the administration of pursuing anti-youth policies and said that the cancellation of some

■Turn to page 2

180 IAS, 200 IPS officers directly appointed every year: Dr Jitendra

dependent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh, who is also Minister Incharge Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT), informed that the annual intake of IAS officers to CIVil Service Exam (CSE) was increased to 180 in 2012. Similarly, intake of IPS officers through CSE was increased to 200 from CSE-2020.

Replying to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Dr Jitendra Singh said, optimal intake of directly recruited (DR) IAS officers increased on the basis of the recommendations of Baswan Committee. The Committee had also recommended that any number above 180 would a) compromise quality; b) exceed the LBSNAA’s capacity and; c) lead to distortion in the career pyramid of IAS officers, particularly for senior posts in the Government of India.

The Minister stated that as on 01.01.2022, there are 1472 vacancies in IAS and 864 vacancies in IPS in various States. He added that occurrence and filing up of vacancies is a continuous process. It is the endeavour of the Central Government to fill up the vacancies in the cadres. The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) conducts Civil Services Examination (CSE) for filling up vacancies on direct recruitment basis in the category of IAS & IPS every year.

The Minister also informed that to fill up vacancies in the Promotion Quota, Selection Committee Meetings are held by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) with the State Governments.

Pertinent to mention that the Department of Personnel & Training(DoPT) has been, from time to time, urging upon the different state governments to carry out a timely Cadre Review of the Services. This not only helps in filling up the vacant posts in IAS, IPS and other services but also helps in identifying possible new vacancies. Ever since the Modi government took over in 2014, it has been proactive in filling up the vacant posts.

The UPSC convenes meetings of Selection Committee from time to time and deliberates upon the induction of officers from State Provincial Services into the IAS depending upon the cadre and vacancy position in the respective States.

Maharashtra ATS nabs Parvez Zubair in terror-funding case

Anees Ibrahim, the younger brother of fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim and of conducting terror funding activities for Dawood Ibrahim.

As per the ATS, Zubair used to work for Dawood Ibrahim under different aliases and had been absconding for a long time. His arrest was made on the basis of specific information received by the Central investigation agency.

An ATS official said that Zubair has visited Dubai 54 times between 2014-2022.

ATS has registered a case against Zubair under Sections 17 and 18 of UAPA.

Zubair’s lawyer said in court that Zubair had received a message on a chat application with someone a year ago and the ATS was making a case against his client on that basis even though his client had not responded to the chat.

A case was registered against Zubair in the year 1993 at Dharavi police station under section 323 of IPC.

ATS said it is investigating a terror funding case.

Earlier in June this year, 2022, Yusuf had been arrested from Kashmir for terror-funding Lashkar-e-Toiba. The accused had transferred money to Junaid Mohammad following which he had been produced before a Pune court.

The Maharashtra anti-terror body had arrested Junaid Mohammad for working for Lashkar-e-Toiba and recruiting people. He used to recruit youths from different states after radicalising them.

Meanwhile, in June this year the Maharashtra ATS said it had arrested a suspect identified as Yusef from Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) for his alleged involvement in funding and recruitment for the terror outfit LeT. The arrested accused Yusuf was also presented in a court in Pune.

Yusuf allegedly transferred funds to one accused Junaid Mohammad who was arrested on May 24 this year from the Khamgaon Taluka in Jammu and Kashmir’s Buldhana district. The ATS on June 2 had arrested another wanted suspect in the same case, Aftab Hussain Shah, 28, a carpenter from J&K’s Kishtwar. Shah is accused of being the link between Junaid Mohammed and a LeT operative based in a foreign country.

Further, on June 10 this year, the ATS took custody of Inam-ul-Haque from Saharanpur. He is allegedly a partner of Junaid Mohammad who was arrested by ATS from Pune.

Jammu and Kashmir reports 779 fresh Covid-19 cases, one death

Among the cases, 172093 are from Jammu division and 295329 from Kashmir Valley.

Providing district wise details of the cases, they said, Jammu reported 59 cases, Udhampur 10, Rajouri 5, Doda 18, Kathua 11, Samba 5, Kishtwar 15, Poonch 7, Ramban 11, Reasi 1, Srinagar 248, Baramulla 156, Budgam 80, Pulwama 15, Kupwara 45, Anantnag 40, Bandipora 22, Ganderbal 6, Kulgam 23and Shopian 2.

There was one death reported from Jammu during the time. So far 4774 people succumbed to the virus and among them include 2345 from Jammu division and 2429 from the Valley.

Besides, they said, 645 727 Covid-19 patients recovered during the last 24 hours—297 from Jammu division and 430 from Kashmir Valley. There are now 4991 active cases—1483 in Jammu and 3508 in Kashmir.

The officials said there was no new confirmed case of mucormycosis (black fungus) reported today. So far 51 black fungus cases have been confirmed in J&K, the officials said. They also informed that 10885 doses of covid-19 vaccine were administered during the time in J-K. (Agencies)

‘Har Ghar Tiranga’ campaign – a big hit in Jammu and Kashmir

In Kupwara, the councillor of Ward 4 Lateef Ahmad hoisted the National Flag at his residence to mark the celebrations.

People in the Kashmir Valley are willingly and enthusiastically hoisting flags in their buildings – be it homes, hotels or restaurants.

The Tricolour is also flying high in many public places like Lal Chowk in Srinagar and Kokila Chowk in Kishtwar.

In Pulwama, the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign has gained momentum as students, besides taking active part in essay, painting and singing competitions, are also partici-

pating in Tiranga rallies in all educational institutions in the district.

Under the Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan, people of Anantnag district have also started hoisting tricolor on rooftops of their houses.

“The locals are very happy and are in a positive mood for this campaign”, said a local resident.

The Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force and the Army also joined the campaign by hoisting the National flag at their posts and office buildings.

In a tweet, BSF Kashmir said, “Participation of @BSF_Kashmir in #HarGharTiranga campaign with the celebration of the 75th year of independence for a commitment to nation-building”.

‘Har Ghar Tiranga’ is a campaign under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to encourage people to bring the Tiranga home and to hoist it to mark the 75th year of India’s independence.

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is an initiative of the Government of India to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of independence and the glorious history of its people, culture and achievements.

PM Modi on Sunday called upon all citizens to turn the ‘Har Ghar Tiranga’ campaign into a mass movement by hoisting or displaying the national flag at their homes and using the ‘Tiranga’ as a display picture on their social media accounts between August 2 and August 15 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of India’s Independence.”

“Under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, from the 13th to the 15th of August, a special movement – ‘Har Ghar Tiranga’ is being organized. Let us further this movement by hoisting the National Flag at our homes,” said Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday while addressing the monthly radio programme ‘Mann Ki Baat’. (AGENCIES)

There was no need for youth to pick up arms given J&K’s enormous resources: IG Manoj Sinha

perseverance of these artisans which has let this master craft transfer from generation to generation. He ensured them that every effort would be made to make these traditional handicrafts more remunerative and lucrative for the artisan community.

“There is heartfelt attachment of Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji towards all Indian trades and crafts. With the active support of the Central Government, the administration is extending every possible hand-holding support so that the age-old and pristine craftsmanship is preserved in its true essence. He outlined that he personally would be more than happy to materialize whatever this community desires to be done by his administration,” the LG said, adding that every country and society in itself is identified by the specific arts, crafts and music. “Kashmir is known for its exquisite crafts and craftsmanship. I am indebted to the artisan community of the UT for professing art forms and possessing skill sets that are renowned not only in Country but world over.”

Vice Chairperson, J&K KVIB, Dr Hina Shafi Bhat announced that the establishment of the Crewel embroidery cluster is one among many steps the Board is taking for promotion of traditional arts and crafts. “Crewel work is pristine in nature which is predominantly done by women are predominantly,” she said. (KNO)

DGP Dilbag inaugurates Containerized Shooting Range, flags off Bullet resistant light motor vehicles

vehicles with enhanced safety measures have Run Flat Tyre system with PTZ cameras installed.

The DGP later inaugurated Containerized Shooting Range at JKAP 13th Bn., Humhama, Budgam. DGP and Spl. DG CRPF fired some practice rounds on the occasion.

The 40 feet long Containerized Shooting Range (CTSR) meets all international standards of the safety and pollution with software capability of decreasing and increasing firing range of upto 300 mtrs. The air conditioned shooting range which can be utilized 24×7 and can also be easily transported to any other location. The shooter can fire in standing, kneeling and lying positions and it has Electronic Multi-Function Targets and Virtual targets systems. The CTSR has one Control Station each outside the Container and a monitoring tab near the shooter to monitor the firing and the control station is capable of printing the firing result of the shooter.

The ISO certified system is capable of displaying and recording shot location on the target, possible score, aggregate score, indicate mean point of impact, indicate type of exercise in progress, show group size and MPI etc.

ADGP Hqrs PHQ and AIG Provision & Transport PHQbriefed the DGP about the features of Containerized Shooting Range (CTSR) and its monitor control system. They also briefed about the safety measures of the Bullet Resistant Vehicles.

Not afraid of Narendra Modi, will not be intimidated: Rahul Gandhi on action in National Herald case

Gandhi termed these actions an “attempt at intimidation”.

“We will not be intimidated. We are not afraid of Narendra Modi,” he told reporters outside Parliament. “They may do whatever they want. It does not matter.”

“I will continue to work to protect the country and democracy and maintain harmony in the country. I will continue to do my work whatever they may do,” he said in his first response after the ED sealing the Young Indian office.

On the barricading issue, he said “truth cannot be barricaded”, and added his party will continue to protest.

The former Congress chief said the BJP government thinks its can “silence us by putting some pressure on us”.

“But we will not be silenced,” he said. “What Narendra Modi and Amit Shah are doing in this country and against democracy, we will stand against it whatever they may do. It does not matter.

Sajad Lone bats for release of Mirwaiz from house arrest

us has talked about him. My apologies,” Lone said.

In a series of tweets, the separatist-turned-mainstream leader appealed Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to release the Mirwaiz at the earliest.

“Humble appeal to Amit Shah sahib and Manoj sinha sahib to please ensure that he is released as soon as possible. He has himself been a victim of violence.

“Let it be known. There are many wars in Kashmir. And in our real war he is an unapologetic moderate,” Lone said. The former minister said while he may differ politically with the Mirwaiz, the separatist leader “inspires us as a religious head.”

“A religious head who spearheaded the forces of moderation. Mirwaiz Kashmir has stuck to utterances which are moderate and represent the true essence of Islam. He has re-

ligious duties. His continued incarceration is a crime against him and against all those whom he inspires at a religious level,” Lone added.

Hurriyat Conference, in a statement, condemned the “arbitrary, despotic and extra judicial act” of the authorities of forcibly detaining its chairman in his house, leading to “gross violation of all his fundamental and basic human rights”.

“All channels of communication are blocked to him and all outreach to people friends and party cadre, barred,” it said.

APHC in a statement said that it’s chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq today completed three years of continuous house detention under which the authorities placed him on 4th of August 2019 , when J&K was downgraded to a UT of India and its special status revoked.

“We appeal to Government of India to release all Kashmiri political prisoners unconditionally including Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and resume the process of conflict resolution through peaceful means , which is dialogue,” it added. (Agencies)

No progress on resumption of India-Pakistan trade talks:

MoS Muraleedharan in Rajya Sabha

to past policies.

India revoked Article 370 to withdraw the special status to Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcated the state into two Union Territories – Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Meanwhile, in another response in the Rajya Sabha, the minister said around 546 Indians or believed to be Indian fishermen are in Pakistan custody.

“As per available information, 546 Indian or believed to be Indian fishermen under Pakistan custody are from the state of Gujarat. It has been reported that Indian fishermen along with their boats are apprehended by Pakistani authorities for allegedly fishing in Pakistani waters and charged under the Fisheries Act of Pakistan.”

“Government attaches the highest priority to the welfare, safety and security of Indian fishermen. As soon as cases of apprehension of Indian fishermen and their fishing boats by Pakistan are reported, immediate steps are taken by the Indian Mission in Islamabad towards seeking consular access from the Pakistan Government. All possible assistance, including legal assistance, is extended to the fishermen for their early release and repatriation, along with the release of their boats.

Meanwhile, the Rajya Sabha was adjourned till 12 noon amid uproar on misuse of Central investigation agencies with both opposition and treasury benches raising allegations against each other over the issue. (AGENCIES)

Road construction in J&K gathers record pace after scrapping of Article 370

compared to 66 per cent in 2019.

Under pothole-free road programme, a target of 5,900 kilometres was made for 2021-22 of which 4,600 kilometres of road length have been made pothole-free so far.

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir this year was once again ranked among the top three at the national level for construction of road length per year under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) as the PWD constructed PMGSY road length of 3,284 kms in 2021-22 and connected 114 habitations through road networks by executing 427 schemes in a year.

Jammu and Kashmir has continued to improve its performance for construction of road length per year since 2019 as its ranking advanced from 12th to 9th in 2019-20 and then third for the consecutive years 2020-21 and 2021-2022.

All habitations, with over 1,000 population as per the 2011 census, have been provided road connectivity. The provision of road connectivity for the habitations with 500 population by 2022-23 is also being taken up.

Reforms in PWD

During the past three years, PWD has witnessed massive reforms, which include the implementation of J&K PWD Engineering Manual 2021, formulation of Road Maintenance Policy-2021, J&K Macadamization (execution and quality control) and DLP Enforcement Manual, SOP for regular departmental actions, introduction of online management monitoring accounting system, introduction of two-party quality control mechanism, introduction of Tameer Taraqqi and Hamari Sadak mobile Apps, etc.

In 2021-2022, the Public Works Department, according to the official data, redressed 356 grievances on Meri Sadak and 32 on CPGRAMS– Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System, an online platform available to the citizens 24×7 to lodge their grievances with the government.

For 70 years J&K had no proper road connectivity

It’s unfortunate but true that J&K was without proper road connectivity for 70 years. It took 12 to 14 hours to cover 300 km distance from Srinagar to Jammu and vice-versa, during the past three years the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway has been revamped and now it takes only 6 to 7 hours to travel between the two capital cities of J&K.

The J&K’s so-called special status acted as the biggest impediment in its development with the common man being the biggest sufferer. The scrapping of Article 370 led to the common man becoming a priority.

The former rulers in the erstwhile state promised the moon and stars to the people but failed to deliver. From 1947 to 2019 they just kept people busy by making announcements about the project reports being ready. But these reports never saw the light of the day.

Connectivity holds the key

After 2019, the Centre worked on these project reports and ensured that common people get all the benefits which they couldn’t get for seven decades. Many development projects that were in limbo or incomplete have become a reality and many more are likely to come up in the next few years.

Connectivity holds the key and the dispensation led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is leaving no stone unturned to ensure that the issue of J&K’s connectivity with the rest of the country gets resolved once in for all.

During the past three years, J&K has become like other parts of the country. The denizens of the Himalayan region are getting what they deserve. They were kept away from the country under the illusion of “special status” by their so-called “Messiahs,” who ruled the erstwhile state for 70 years but failed to deliver.

From 1947 to 2019 politicians kept people busy by raising slogans and making announcements.

Proper road connectivity is the lifeline of any region and J&K after August 5, 2019, is moving closer towards to the best possible connectivity. Things are moving at a fast pace and no one is being allowed to become complacent. Results and change are visible and the figures are speaking.

Connecting inaccessible habitations

The government has embarked on a mission to connect

the habitations which remained inaccessible since 1947. The road network is being expanded, especially in rural and far-flung areas. Many targets have been achieved under various schemes implemented for the construction, improvement and upgradation of roads and bridges.

The schemes like Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY), Bridge Programme, Central Road & Infrastructure fund (CRIF), NABARD, Road Sector, Cities & Towns (Macdamization), Languishing Projects and Pothole Free Road schemes etc are being implemented in letter and spirit.

The politicians, who ruled J&K in the yesteryears had forgotten that road connectivity holds the key to developing the rural areas. The link roads connecting villages with the main roads were either not constructed or were never macadamized.

Good governance concept was missing

The very concept of providing good governance was missing in J&K till August 2019. Things changed after Jammu and Kashmir’s transition into a Union Territory. The helmsmen shifted their focus toward the issues confronting the common man and tried to come up with solutions.

As J&K celebrates the third anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370, the J&K administration can proudly claim that it has achieved phenomenal success in its endeavour to construct better roads in the Union Territory.

According to the officials 53 projects worth Rs 58,477 crores in various sectors such as roads, power, health, education, tourism, agriculture, skill development under the Prime Minister Development Package (PMDP) are under implementation in Jammu and Kashmir and more are in the offing.

India to host UN Security Council members for special meeting on counter-terrorism in October

UN organ for the month.

India chairs the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee for 2022 and will in October host diplomats of the 15-nation Security Council, including the US, China and Russia, for the counter-terrorism committee’s special meeting.

Current members of the Security Council are Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway and the UAE, along with five permanent members China, France, Russia, the UK and the US.

“Mindful of the increasing threat posed by the misuse of new and emerging technologies,” the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) has decided to hold a special meeting on this theme,” with the support of its Executive Directorate (CTED), in India on October 29, 2022, according to information on the Committee’s website.

It said the special meeting will specifically focus on three significant areas where emerging technologies are experiencing rapid development, growing use by member states (including for security and counter-terrorism purposes), and the increasing threat of abuse for terrorism purposes, namely Internet and social media, terrorism financing, and unmanned aerial systems (UAS).

Govt must stop harassment of youth of J&K : Rattan Lal

selection lists and surfacing of recruitment scam have exposed the tall claims of the Govt to bring transparency and end corruption in J&K. He lamented that what could be more unfortunate than the youth getting compelled to come on roads for their very genuine demands. He asserted that the demands raised by the FAA aspirants are quite genuine and assured unflinching support of National Conference to them in their struggle for the due rights.

Rattan Lal Gupta asked the Lt Governor Manoj Sinha to end further harassment to the FAA aspirants and issue directions to the Administration to release their selection list at the earliest.

Prominent among those who accompanied Rattan Lal Gupta during his visit to the protest site were National Conference Provincial Secretary Sheikh Bashir Ahmed, National Conference Provincial President OBC Cell Abdul Gani Teli ,National Conference District President Tejinder Singh Aman, Youth National Conference Provincial Secretary Nitesh Goswami,, D.D. Mehra, Sahil Kerni and Jatinder Bhat.

Security Forces Arrest 3 Terrorists Tasked With Conducting Terror Attacks In Handwara

The joint parties were conducting Naka checking, during which they arrested the three terrorists, who tried to flee the spot on seeing the checking parties.

The J&K police along with Indian Army’s 21 RR and 92 Bn CRPF were conducting Naka checking at the fruit mandi crossing at Handwara. The three terrorists were also at the same location and tried to flee the spot on seeing the checking parties. However, the security personnel arrested them and recovered the weapons from them.

The initial probe revealed they were tasked to conduct terror attacks in Handwara to cause loss of life and to disrupt peace in the region. The timely and quick action by the security teams averted a terrorist attack in the area. The nabbed terrorists have been identified as Manzoor Ahmed Kumar; Showkat Ahmed Bhat and the name of the third terrorist was withheld until name ascertainment.

In relation to this, an FIR has been registered in the local police station in Handwara under the UAPA and Arms Act. (Agencies)

Another batch of 388 pilgrims leave for Amarnath cave shrine from Jammu

pilgrims have left from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp for the Valley since June 29.

The yatra is scheduled to end on August 11, coinciding with Raksha Bandhan.

A total of 36 people, mostly pilgrims, have died during the ongoing Amarnath Yatra till now. Additionally, 15 pilgrims had died in the flash floods at the cave shrine on July 1. (Agencies)

Fake SIM Card Case: Charge Sheet Filed Against Vendors For Forgery

activities, the SIA said.

On the basis of evidence collected, allegations were proved against the above mentioned accused persons who had issued SIMs by forging the election cards of different persons without their knowledge, it added.

Floriculture deptt targets to cover 75 schools of Jammu Div

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

To promote institutional plantation and to inculcate the importance of growing trees among youth, Department of Floriculture Parks and Gardens Jammu, in collaboration with Department of School Education, on Thursday organised a plantation and cleanliness drive in Government Higher Secondary School Shastri Nagar here under the aegis of "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav". On the direction of Principal Secretary School Education Department J&K, B. K. Singh and Commissioner/Secretary Floriculture Parks and Gardens J&K, Sheikh Fayaz Ahmed, the Department of Floriculture, Parks & Gardens Jammu has set the target of organising plantation drives in 75 schools of Jammu Division to commemorate the country's 75 years of Independence.

The plantation drive was inaugurated by Director Floriculture Jammu, S. Jatinder Singh and Director



tor School Education Jammu, Dr. Ravi Shankar Sharma in presence of CEO, Jammu, Suraj Singh Rathore, Deputy Director Floriculture, Sunil Singh, Principal GGHSS, Shastri Nagar, Geetu Bangotra along with school staff, Floriculture Officers and Assistant Floriculture Officers of the Floriculture, Parks & Gardens Department Jammu.

The Director Floriculture Jammu, while speaking on

the occasion, informed that the department has identified fifteen schools for the plantation and cleanliness drive in Jammu district.

The drive is aimed to accomplish the Clean India and Green India Mission of the government and would cover all 75 identified schools of Jammu Province by August 15, 2022.

In his address, the Director School Education urged the students to plant atleast

one plant in their vicinity to contribute in decreasing the ill effects of deforestation and Global warming and developing a sustainable environment. He also briefed them about the Indian independence struggle.

To continue this chain, plantation and cleanliness drive was also conducted in GGHSS Nowabad in the presence of the Principal of the school and Assistant Floriculture Officer Atul Sharma, teachers and students of the institution.

GDC Pouni hosts series of contests ahead of Independence Day celebration

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Government Degree College Pouni in last month organized a series of Inter-collegiate Singing, Debate and Essay Writing Competitions in the run up to the Independence Day Celebration and as part of Az

Cultural Committee conducted the events under the supreme guidance and supervision of the College Principal Prof. Rajni Bhagat.

Prof. U S Liza, Convener Co-curricular and Cultural Activities Committee was the In-Charge of the event.

The theme of the Debate and Essay Writing Competition was, "India After Independence. The event witnessed overwhelming participation of the college students.

In Debate competition, the students strongly put forth their point of views by speaking for and against the topic and gave reasons to support their arguments and statements. Around 20 students participated in the essay writing competition to commemorate the 75th Independence Day.

Dr. Tarsem Kumar administered the Essay Writing Competition, while Prof. Balbir Kumar, Prof. Jaspal Singh and Prof. U S Liza evaluated the essays submitted by the students.

The names of top two contestants of each event were forwarded to the Nodal College, GDC Reasi.

With the winners of today's event a



total six students, Shami Kumar and Deepak Sharma – the winners of Singing competition, Nusraat Jaan and Priya Sharma winners of Essay Writing Competition, and Vaishali Sharma and Monika Sharma the winners of Debate competition, along with Prof. Jaspal Singh went to Reasi College to compete in the District level.

Nusraat Jaan from GDC Pouni emerged the runner up in the District level Essay Writing Competition winning a cash prize of 3000 rupees. Principal GDC Pouni, Prof. Rajni Bhagat congratulated the winner, and appreciated Prof. U S Liza, Convener Co-curricular Activities.

Meanwhile, to promote the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign, NSS Unit of Government Degree College Pouni organised an awareness rally here from the college campus to Boulian locality.

The campaign was held under the aegis of Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav – to mark the 75th year of Indian Independence. The rally was organised under the guidance of the Principal Prof. Rajni Bhagat and was inaugurated by NSS Convener, Prof. Balbir Kumar, HOD Economics.

The NSS Volunteers disturbed around 30 national flags among the heads of the families of the village, Boulian. The central objective behind the initiative was to encourage people to hoist the national flag and to invoke the feeling of patriotism in the hearts of the people and to promote awareness about the Indian National Flag.

Prof. U S Liza, Co-convenor NSS, encouraged students to come forward and display their patriotism by participating in the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign.

DRAC approves 39 Rent Assessment Cases in Ramban

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 03

The District Rent Assessment Committee (DRAC) Ramban today approved 39 rent assessment cases of different departments here at its meeting chaired by which met under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner, Mussarat Islam.

Assistant Commissioner Revenue,

Viqar Ahmed Giri, district officers of line departments and officers from the Police and Army, besides owners of buildings attended the meeting.

The rent cases pertaining to Police, Traffic Police, FCS&CA, Army, Revenue, Agriculture, Health, ISM and other departments were approved by the Committee.

The Committee discussed the fixa-

tion of rent of the structures housing the government offices across the district.

As many as 40 rent assessment cases were put up for discussion, out of which 39 cases were approved by the committee in the presence of building owners and respective departmental representatives, while 1 case was deferred for the next meeting.

DIC Kathua kick-starts second round of Plantation Drive under Green J&K Initiative

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

In continuation to the Green-J&K initiative, General Manager, District Industries Centre Kathua, Prem Singh today kicked off the second round of plantation drive at Industrial Estate IID centre, Govindsar Kathua.

The plantation drive by the Department of Industries and Commerce is being conducted under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner, Rahul Pandey.

During the first plantation drive held on July 13, 2022, about 500 plant saplings were planted in different Indus-

trial estates of Kathua in collaboration with the department of Social Forestry. In today's drive, the Industrial Estates of IID Centre Govindsar and SIDCO Industrial Area Kathua were covered by planting 500 saplings of different plants. The Plantation Drive was carried out with active support from M/s Shails Sports, IID Centre Govindsar, Kathua and Kohinoor Reclamations, SIDCO Industrial Area Kathua.

In this connection, GM DIC Kathua convened a series of meetings with the unit holders to encourage them to plant more and more trees to make the Indus-

trial Estates pollution free.

Speaking on the occasion, the General Manager said that the aim of this plantation drive was to generate awareness among the people especially Industrialists about the importance of planting trees. "Tree plantation is very important for the safe environment and the initiative will go a long way in making life better" he hoped. The GM stated that the plantation would continue till all industrial estates are covered and maximum plants are planted. The unit holders assured full support to the department in this genuine cause.

DC reviews tourism trade scenario in Kathua District

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 03

Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rahul Pandey today discussed the roadmap for formulating an inclusive District Tourism Plan here at a meeting of stakeholder departments held in the conference hall of DC office Complex.

At the outset, the DC took a comprehensive review of the present tourism and trade scenario in the district and called for making concerted efforts to tap the huge tourism potential of the district. The Deputy Commissioner enjoined upon the stakeholders to promote the potential tourist spots of the district, local lifestyle, cuisine & culture in coordination with information and culture departments.

Laying thrust on promo-



tion of Kathua specific tourism, the DC called for devising a workable action plan involving all stakeholders besides training local youth as guides for promoting local culture, art and projecting the area on the tourism map of J&K.

The DC also called for upgrading the facilities so as to ensure pleasant and mem-

orable experiences of the tourists coming to the district. The DC urged the officers of the tourism department to make a strategy to showcase the tourist profile of the district across the UT by utilising the already available (Variable Message Displays) VMDs in other districts.

The DC exhorted upon

the stakeholders to replicate the best practices from states of Himachal, Uttarakhand etc to promote adventure and religious tourism, besides exploring off-beat destinations and homestays. The meeting was attended by CPO, CEO LSDA, BBDA, District Cultural officer and other stakeholders.

Second Round of Jammu Employment Mela held in Block Arnia

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

To spread awareness about financial assistance and other benefits provided to unemployed youth for setting up of self-employment ventures suitable to their skill, training, aptitude and local conditions, District Administration Jammu, under the overall supervision of Deputy Commissioner Avny Lavasa, has launched the second round of two months long Jammu Employment Festival. It is pertinent to mention that the Mega campaign, kick-started on the August 1 from block Akhnoor, would witness 20 Awareness camps spanning over the period of two months covering all the blocks of the district.

The event was showcased with the stalls of different departments including Agriculture, Himayat, Women Development Cooperation, Handlooms/Handicrafts, Horticulture, Polytechnic and Industrial Training Institutes, Animal Husbandry and Sheep Husbandry, District Industries Centre, SC ST OBC cooperation and Fisheries department. Members from the PRIs and officials from the district administration participated in good numbers. With the aim to register



and provide online employment counselling and registrations, skill training courses available not only at the UT level but also at the Pan India level, the programme is aimed to target unemployed youth of the district with awareness of ongoing government programmes with main focus on employment opportunities available through different departments. The programme will help youth, particularly those looking for start-up initiatives through technical support. The youth will particularly benefit from the integration of the employment portal of Jammu & Kashmir with the National

Career Service portal of India with an aim to connect the opportunities with the aspirations of youth and facilitate the registration of job seekers, job providers, skill providers, and career counselors. With the support and coordination of the PRI members from block Arnia, a large number of Youth participated in the event and flocked various registration counters set up by different departments and approximately 200 youth from the Arnia block registered themselves on the various portals for self-employment through District Employment and Counselling Centre Jammu.

Atal Dulloo calls for encouraging agriculture, horticulture businesses

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo chaired a review of implementation of projects under National Horticulture Board in a meeting held at Civil Secretariat here today. Deputy Director NHB, Sansar Ahmed was also present at the meeting.

The ACS was apprised of horticulture potential of all districts, including Ramban, Kathua, Kishtwar, Baramulla and Kulgam. It was revealed that several projects have already been identified and shortlisted in these districts and are at different stages of being materialised. Some projects include protected cultivation, functional pack houses, high density plantations, extraction and processing of lavender, walnut nurseries etc.

It was emphasised by the



ACS that the nurseries empanelled under the scheme seek certification under the NHB. Representatives from SKUAST-J and SKUAST-K were also encouraged to submit project proposals to benefit through the governmental initiative. Requisite support and guidance were also assured to the agriculture universities.

The ACS said that all progressive farmers, entrepre-

neurs and other interested parties be encouraged besides Area Marketing Officers and Chief Horticulture/Agriculture Officers also motivate them in their respective districts. All viable business ideas, under the scheme, must be supported so that they encourage future participation by others as well, he said. It would also eliminate confusion and further generate aware-

ness among the masses, he concluded.

Director Horticulture Planning & Marketing Vishesh Paul Mahajan; Director Horticulture Jammu, Ram Savak; Director Agriculture Jammu, KK Sharma; Managing Director among representatives of SKUAST-J, SKUAST-K and other government officers were also present at the meeting.

Raghav Langer inspects GMC-J doctor’s residential enclave

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Secretary, Planning Development and Monitoring Department, Dr. Raghav Langer today conducted a detailed inspection of Doctor’s Residential Quarters of Government Medical College Jammu situated opposite to K.C Theatre Complex, Jammu.

The said building complex is more than 45 years old and is presently in a dilapidated condition. Secretary Planning took a serious view of the same and directed the concerned Engineers and Departmental officials to immediately prepare the DPR’s for major renovation of the said building complex and submit it to the Government for further appraisal. The Doctor’s Enclave consists of total 14 Buildings comprising of 58 flats, besides parks/garden and common facilities.

Chief Engineer, PWD Jammu, Manzoor Hussain, apprised the Secretary that the Preliminary Estimates for major internal repairs,



exterior work, complete electric fitting and landscaping have been prepared and the DPR’s shall be submitted shortly. Administrator Government Medical College Jammu, Ashwani Khajuria and Associated Hospitals, who accompanied the Administrative Secretary, was directed to follow up the same and in the meantime ensure cleaning of drains, bush cutting etc on immediate basis. Rajinder Gupta, Superintending Engineer PDD (JPDCL) Jammu was directed to ensure necessary capacity augmentation and renovation of the sub-station building. Dr. Raghav Langer apprised the officers that Principal Secretary to Government, Health & Medical Education Department, on intimation regarding the state of affairs of the said building complex, has taken immediate cognizance of the issue.

ected to follow up the same and in the meantime ensure cleaning of drains, bush cutting etc on immediate basis. Rajinder Gupta, Superintending Engineer PDD (JPDCL) Jammu was directed to ensure necessary capacity augmentation and renovation of the sub-station

building. Dr. Raghav Langer apprised the officers that Principal Secretary to Government, Health & Medical Education Department, on intimation regarding the state of affairs of the said building complex, has taken immediate cognizance of the issue.

DC advises students to hold group discussions to gain knowledge

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Ghat on Thursday celebrated its Annual Day by organizing a mega event today, which was inaugurated by District Development Commissioner Vikas Sharma.

The DDC inspected the science and other models made and displayed by the students and appreciated the efforts of teaching staff and the students. A colourful cultural programme was also presented by the students of the school to showcase the cultural ethos and invoke patriotic feelings among the audience. On the occasion, the School Tarana, written by Master Sheikh Hafiz Furqani and School Magazine "Mehak" were also released by the Chief Guest (DDC).

BDC Chairperson Ghat, Shareefa Begum; DDC Councillor Ghat, Gulshan Ara; Chief Education Officer, Prahalad Bhagat; District Information Officer, Mohammad



Ashraf Wani; Principal GHSS Ghat Sudesh Kumar; Principal GHSS Trown Tanveer Ahmad Wani; Staff of the GHSS Ghat, Students and parents of the students participated in the programme.

The DDC, while speaking on the occasion, applauded the

efforts of the Principal, teachers and students for organizing a grand event to mark the annual day celebration. He urged the staff and the students to inculcate original ideas and discuss these with their peers to encourage group discussion. He stressed upon the students

to imbibe the essence of democracy, learn tolerance and work for upholding the communal harmony and brotherhood in the society. He wanted the students to participate in sports activities and in-grain in them the moral values to become good citizens.

Chairman DDC Doda calls for speedy construction of vital Road projects

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Chairman District Development Council Doda Dhananter Singh Kotwal today asked the Forest and the Executing agencies to resolve the bottlenecks impeding construction of road projects taken up in different parts of the district.

He was speaking at a meeting held in the conference hall of the DC office complex to discuss the status of road projects held up due to pending Forest clearances.

The Chairman DDC sought updated details on each project being executed by PMGSY and PWD departments including the status of Joint inspections, uploading of documents on Parvesh Portal etc. Besides, he also sought reasons for the delay in the Forest clearances in favour of the held up projects.

With regard to the projects yet not been uploaded on the



Parivesh portal, the Chairman asked the concerned to ensure immediate joint inspections and upload all the requisite documents. He also directed to follow the forest clearance cases for their timely disposal.

The Chairman informed the functionaries that the general public was pinning high hopes

from these road projects. "The construction of these projects is also top priority of the District Development Council and needs special attention" he added. Other council members also asked the departments to explore the possibilities for construction of more roads for the convenience of the general public.

Among others present in the meeting were Vice Chairperson, DDC Sangeeta Rani Bhagat; DDC members, BDC Chairpersons, ADDC Doda, SE PWD, AC R Doda, DFO Bhaderwah, DFO Social Forestry, Ex En PMGSY Doda, Thathri, EX En PWD Doda, and other concerned officials.

Horticulture department gears up for monsoon plantation in Samba

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

To gear up Monsoon fruit plantation in sub-tropical areas of Jammu Division, the Horticulture Department Samba today organised awareness cum interaction programmes here at Panchayat Utterbehani, Purmandal of district Samba. The event was chaired by Joint Director Horticulture Jammu, C. L Sharma.

DDC Member, Avtar Singh was the Guest of Honour of the event also attended by Chief Horticulture Officer Samba, Mukesh Sharma, District Horticulture Officer, Hamid Ahmed, HDO Purmandal, Shreshtha Gour, Sarpanch, Sunita Sharma, besides a large number of farmers including women and PRI members.

Addressing the farmers / fruit growers, the Joint Director said that the objective of organizing such camps was to promote awareness among the farming community regarding the schemes of the department with special focus on plantation schemes. He said that the



rainy season is best suited for new plantations, especially in the Kandi areas. He advised the farmers to develop orchards by adopting a cluster approach to avail maximum benefits of the departmental schemes. He impressed upon the farmers to adopt integrated farming in their fields and avail the benefits of Alovera plantation, provision of bore well, water harvesting tanks, drip irrigation, mechanization, protected cultivation, tools & implements etc. for enhancing their income manifold. he further advised them to

frequently interact with the field functionaries of the department to know about the new technologies and project the problems being faced by them in the fields.

The Joint Director urged women farmers to establish individual units for fruit processing/ fruit drying/ spices preparation etc. for which the government has made available liberal funding in the department.

The District Horticulture Officer Samba elaborated in detail about both the centrally and UT sponsored schemes of the de-

partment. He also laid emphasis on planting cash crops like Strawberry and exotic fruit crops like Dragon Fruit in their fields so as to get more income from the same area, thereby helping the farmers in doubling their income.

Later, fruit plants of different cultivars were also given to the farmers/beneficiaries for new plantation to be covered under Area Expansion Programmes of the department.

HDO Purmandal conducted the proceedings of the programme.

ABDM: A revolutionary step for upgrading healthcare system across country

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 04: With the rollout of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), citizens of J&K will be able to get digital health identification card for effective and timely medical care.

The ABDM was launched by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in September 2021 aiming to usher a revolutionary change in India’s healthcare system.

ABDM aims to develop and support the integrated digital health infrastructure across the country. It will bridge the existing gap amongst different stakeholders of Healthcare ecosystem through digital highways in J&K.

Recently after the rollout of ABDM in J&K, separate directorate under the Directorate National Health Mission for smooth implementation of the mission was established.

“Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) will empower individuals with accurate information to enable informed decision making and increase accountability of healthcare providers,” said Additional Mission Director ABDM, Dr Shafkat Hussain who has expertise and experience of managing important programmes and institutions in J&K Govt besides being certified Chief Information and Security Officer by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology GOI to make ABDM successful in J&K.

The ABDM envisages to establish state-of-the-art digital health systems, to manage the core digital health data, and the infrastructure required for its seamless exchange.

An official said that it will create a system of personal health records, based on international standards, easily accessible to individuals

and healthcare professionals and services providers, based on individual’s informed consent besides promotion of development of enterprise-class health application systems with a special focus on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for health.

The official added that it is for the first time that the healthcare institutions and professionals in the private sector will actively participate with public health authorities in the building of ABDM through combination of prescription and promotion.

The implementation of ABDM is expected to significantly improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of health service delivery. Patients will be able to securely store and access their medical records (such as prescriptions, diagnostic reports and discharge summaries), and share them with health

care providers to ensure appropriate treatment and follow-up. They will also have access to more accurate information on health facilities and service providers. Further, they will have the option to access health services remotely through tele-consultation and e-pharmacy.

ABDM will also provide choice to individuals to access both public and private health services, facilitate compliance with laid down guidelines and protocols, and ensure transparency in pricing of services and accountability for the health services being rendered.

Similarly, health care professionals across disciplines will have better access to patient’s medical history (with the necessary informed consent) for prescribing more appropriate and effective health interventions. The integrated ecosystem will also enable better continuum of care.

ADDC Kulgam reviews arrangements for celebration of I-Day 2022

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

The Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Kulgam, Riyaz Ahmad Sofi today convened a meeting of Officers to review arrangements being put in place by different departments for celebration of Independence Day, 2022.

During the meeting DPL Kulgam was selected as the main venue for the celebration where the Chief Guest will unfurl the national flag at District Level.

Threadbare discussion was also held with regard to the security arrangements, traffic regulation, seating arrangements, Full Dress Rehearsal, decoration, Shahnaiwadan, PAS, power and water supply, transport arrangements, sanitation, Medicare facilities, invitation cards, Barricading at venue of the function, etc.

The ADDC directed all officers to make fool-proof



arrangements at all levels in advance for the National event to make it a great success. He instructed the Officers to ensure all related arrangements are made well in advance and work in close coordination for the smooth conduct of Independence Day celebrations across the district.

PDD and Jal Shakti depart-

ments were directed to ensure proper management of electricity and water including water tankers at the venue. The CMO was asked to ensure proper medical facilities along with staff and ambulances at the venue of celebration.

The EO of Municipal Council Kulgam was directed by the DC to ensure proper sanitation

and cleanliness of the main venue and town. The meeting was attended by ADC, SDM Noorabad, JD-Planning, ACD, CEO, Principals from Colleges, Commandant CRPF 18th battalion, DSP-HQ, all Tehsildars, Ex. Engineers of R&B and PHE, DYSSO and other district and sectoral officers of the district.

7 Vehicles involved in illegal mining seized by G&M Team at Anantnag

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

In its continued efforts to curb illegal mining in the district, the Geology and Mining (G&M) Team Anantnag headed by District Mineral Officer, Anantnag Dr. Showkat Ahmad Bhat today seized 07 vehicles found involved in illegal

extraction/transportation of Minor minerals in the district. The operation was carried out by Geology and Mining Department in various areas of Anantnag including Sandrani Nallah near Sadura/ Damjan, Aarpath Nallah near Teilwani Shangus and Bijbehara as a result of which 07 vehicles including 01 Dumper, 01 tipper

and 05 tractors were seized. Strict action as per rules shall be taken against all persons involved, said DMO. It is worthwhile to mention that the Geology and Mining Department is continuously conducting surprise raids in the areas having apprehension of illegal mining in Anantnag.

SDH Sopore, Pulwama, Ganderbal get NBEMS seats

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

In a yet another significant development, which is expected to drastically improve the healthcare services in Jammu and Kashmir, SDH Sopore, District Hospital Pulwama and Ganderbal have been accredited by National Board of Examinations (NBEMS) in various departments.

SDH Sopore has been accredited in the Department of Anaesthesia and 2 Diploma seats have been sanctioned by NBEMS. District Hospital Ganderbal has been accredited in the Department of Family Medicine and Radiodiagnosis and 1 seat has been sanctioned by NBEMS in each

Department.

District Hospital Pulwama has been accredited in the Departments of Paediatrics and Anaesthesia with sanction of 4 and 2 Diploma Seats respectively.

In addition, JLNH Hospital, Srinagar, District Hospital Kulgam and SDH Kupwara have recently received 6, 2 and 4 more seats respectively in various Departments for DNB/ Post Diploma DNB/ Post MBBS Diploma Courses.

Among new GMCs, GMC Anantnag has received the maximum number of 24 Diploma seats in 8 Departments viz ENT, Family Medicine, Paediatrics, Anaesthesia, Radiodiagnosis, Ophthalmology, OB Gynae and TB & Chest Diseases.

GMC Doda has got 2 DNB seats in General Surgery. In addition to this, NBEMS has approved 6more seats for SKIMS Soura and Bemina. With this, the total P.G seats approval for J&K has risen to 204 for 2022 session and this is over and above the DM/MCH and MD/MS courses already being run in the UT of Jammu & Kashmir.

Mission Director, NHM, J&K, Yasin Choudhary while giving details about the development said that the commencement of DNB courses in district hospitals

of J&K is an important endeavour to address the key concerns of shortage of specialists and providing quality care, and added that 6 seats were approved for DHs in 2020 session and 145 seats (107 Broad specialty and 38 Superspecialty) were approved for J&K in 2021 session. Of this, 2 students were admitted for 2020 session and 48 students were admitted for 2021 session.

During 2022 Session, J&K has received an approval of 204 seats and this is the maximum number in the country as acknowledged by Dr. Anurag Aggarwal, Additional Director, NBEMS.

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Atal Dulloo reviewed progress of Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM-FME) scheme in Jammu & Kashmir, in a meeting held at Civil Secretariat here today.

The centrally sponsored PM FME scheme aims at providing financial, technical and business support for upgradation of existing micro food processing enterprises.

A PowerPoint presentation was given to the ACS in which the role of the scheme, respective capacity building measures, subsidies, use of common infrastructure and Common Incubation Centres etc were reviewed. He was presented action taken report and project implementation plan by senior officers at the meeting.

It was informed that the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MOFPI) has sanctioned 3 Common Incubation Centres; for milk and its products in Narwal Jammu, for fish in Achabal Anantnag and at Doabgah Sopore for apples.

An indicative list of promotional activities planned by the departments was also



shared with the ACS. It was informed that District Resource Persons (DRPs) have been appointed and their online training has been completed. The ACS asked the officers to ensure timely completion and compliance of training programmes.

The ACS instructed the officers to take substantial steps in implementation of the scheme whose physical and financial progress would be assessed by him.

The ACS expressed displeasure upon unwanted delay and dereliction on approving loans of some candidates. The bank officials were given strict instructions in this regard and were also asked to submit detailed summary of rejected and pending cases along with plausible reasons. Similarly, the Dis-

trict Nodal Officers were also asked to analyse the causes of rejection and small number of registrations. The ACS said that the number of registrations and sanctioning of cases under the scheme needs to be ramped up for its successful implementation. He also suggested that DCs hold regular meetings to solve issues pertaining to Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) and One District One Product (ODOP) initiative.

The ACS directed officers to start preparing DPRs etc for new proposed Common Infrastructures. Conclusions were drawn on CIC at Samba for spices and pickles, and another at Chadoora which would be dedicated to

dairy products. The officers were told to go ahead with tendering process in this regard. Non performing DRPs be replaced and vacant positions of DRPs be filled immediately, the ACS directed. DRPs must ensure that they encourage people's participation in this scheme, he maintained. The meeting was attended by Director Horticulture Planning & Marketing Vishesh Paul Mahajan; Director Horticulture Jammu, Ram Savak; Director Agriculture Jammu, KK Sharma; Managing Director, J&K Agro Development Corporation, Arun Manhas among District Nodal Officers and others. Officers from Kashmir division and all districts participated through video conference.

ADC B'pora conducts extensive tour of Wular Lake; meets locals to discuss developmental issues

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

The Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bandipora, Waseem Raja on Thursday conducted an extensive tour of the Wullar Lake including Laharwalpora village.

On the occasion, locals presented various issues before the ADC.

Waseem Raja gave on spot directions to the concerned officers for proper maintenance of the lake and for addressing the day to day issues of the inhabitants of the areas lying adjacent to Wullar Lake pertaining to roads, safe drinking water, fisheries, cleanliness, etc.

He said the Administration is committed to create employment generation avenues and development of the tourism sector in these areas and to engage youth in various employment generation programmes.

He directed the concerned departments to work with extra zeal for



facilitating the locals of these areas to promote tourism and employment generation facilities.

The ADC urged the youth to take benefit from various youth oriented schemes of the Government.

The ADC was accompanied by a team of officers from WUCMA, Revenue, Rural Development, fisheries, Jal Shakti, PDD and local representatives.

Earlier, the ADC chaired a meeting of concerned officers and locals of Laharwalpora and other adjacent areas to discuss various issues pertaining to these areas.

Palli, Kartholi Panchayats take lead in creating Solid waste Management system

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Deputy Commissioner Samba, Anuradha Gupta today launched Solid Waste Management Programme in Palli and Lower Kartholi Panchayats.

The twin Panchayats have become first in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir to accomplish the task in an institutionalized manner.

Panchayat Palli had shot to prominence when the Prime Minister of India addressed the maiden national PRI Conference from here to mark the celebration of National Panchayat Day on April 24, 2022.



The local Panchayat has decided to charge a nominal amount as collection charges from each household and the waste so collected shall be recycled and disposed of in a scientific manner.

With the administrative support of RDD, Samba and the technical collaboration of the Regional and Urban Development Agency (RUDA), the Panchayat would impart necessary training to volunteers as well as the manpower hired under the scheme to make waste disposal an income generating activity.

Deputy Commissioner,

Samba while speaking on the occasion, informed that this model will be replicated in every Panchayat in the district in coming days.

BDC, Chairperson Bari Brahmana, Rajni Devi also spoke about the benefits of the SWM system and assured to put in personal efforts to motivate people to contribute towards making the mission a success.

Sarpanch Palli, Randhir Sharma appreciated the efforts of the District administration in facilitating the setting up of the waste management system for the

Panchayat and assured that each household shall actively participate in making Palli a Zero Waste Panchayat. A swachta pledge was also administered to the participants and technical presentation was made by Sanjeev Arora, CEO, RUDA. Additional District Development Commissioner, Rajinder Singh; Assistant Commissioner Development, Sidharath Dhimman, Assistant Commissioner, Panchayat, DIO, BDO, Bari Brahmana, PRI members and local residents were also present on the occasion.

NABARD sensitizes Bankers regarding Centrally Sponsored Schemes

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

In order to sensitize the bankers regarding various schemes of Govt of India implemented through NABARD, a one-day sensitization workshop was held at J&K Bank Hall Shopian.

The workshop was attended by Lead District Manager, Branch Managers of various banks of the district. Besides, Officers from line departments were also present.

The programme was aimed at disseminating the information about various centrally assisted bankable schemes in Agriculture and allied sectors such as KCC, FPOs, Agri Infrastructure Fund, Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund, Agri clinics and Agri Business Scheme among others.

These schemes have a benefit of subsidy of 33% or interest subvention of 3%. There is also the provision of hand-



holding support and portal-based application generation. DDM NABARD, Rouf Zargar explained each scheme in detail through the power-point presentation. He gave the detailed process of applying and getting bank credit support for undertaking various economic activities in agriculture and allied

sectors. He urged the banks and departments to create awareness among the farmers, fruit growers and youth to enable them to set up such units in the district. The banks were advised to follow the guidelines of the scheme and process the applications in a time-bound manner.

DC Poonch reviews Independence Day- arrangements

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Deputy Commissioner, Indir Jeet today chaired a meeting of the concerned officers to review arrangements for the Independence Day-2022 celebrations, here at Dak Bunglow.

The DDC reviewed the necessary preparations, security arrangements, Barricading, decoration of venue, fault free public address system, seating arrangement, fire safety arrangements, cultural programme, parade preparations etc for Independence Day celebrations.

The DDC instructed the concerned departments to make the arrangements well in time for smooth celebration of the National Event.

The meeting was informed that the main function will be held at sports stadium where the Chief Guest would unfurl the National Flag and take salute at the march past to be presented by contingents.

Reviewing the security arrangements, the DC asked for adequate deployment of security personnel on all entry and exit points and around the main venue. The DC gave directions to the concerned officers to launch a cleanli-



ness drive in and around the venue. He also directed for putting in place health care arrangements at the venue.

The SDMs were directed to make similar arrangements in block/tehsil level.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the PDD and PHE to ensure uninterrupted Power and water supply on the Day of celebration.

It was informed that Full Dress Rehearsal would be held on August 13 and screening of cultural activities at Sheesh Mahal on 10th of August 2022.

The Information Department was asked to make arrangements for a fault free Public Address System and media coverage of the event. The DC also said that the Cel-

ebration would begin with playing of Shahnai by the Information Department.

ADDC Poonch, Abdul Sattar, Gen Manager DIC, Dr. Zakir Hussain, CEO PDA, Dr. Tanveer Khan, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Principal Government Degree College Poonch, Prof. Musarrat Hussain Shah, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Shafiq Mir, District Treasury Officer, Rashid Dostum, DYSP Head Qtr., Nawaz Ahmed, District Information Officer, Vishal Deep Chandan, Head Qtr Assistant (Tehsildar), Jahangir Hussain, Commentator, Pardeep Khanna, CEO Education Bishamber Das, Tehsildar Haveli, Anjum Bashir Khan Khattak,

DYSSO, Mohd. Qasim, ARTO, Basharat Mehmood, XEN PWD POONCH, XEN PDD, Irshad Hussain, XEN PHE, Muneer Hussain, CEO Municipality, Mushtaq Hussain, CDPO besides others attended the meeting.

NOTICE

I, Sunita Sharma W/o Sh. Rajesh Sharma R/o 311, Dhakki Saranja, Pir Mitha Jammu UT of J&K Pin Code:180001, going to applying for home stay facility at H.No. 146, Upper Gumat, Kanzi House, Jammu, Objection if any may convey to Director Tourism Jammu within 15 days after the publication of this notice.

EDITORIAL

Decision to schedule elections in J&K ECI's Prerogative

Says There Has Been 'Substantial Decline' In Militant Attacks From 417 In 2018 To 229 In 2021

The decision to schedule elections in Jammu and Kashmir is the prerogative of Election Commission of India, Ministry Of Home Affairs, Government of India said on Tuesday.

In a written reply to a question about the time-frame by which the situation in Kashmir would be brought to normal for starting democratic process in the Valley, Minister of State in MHA, Nityanand Rai said the Government had constituted a delimitation Commission, which has notified Orders on 14th March, 2022 and 5th May, 2022 on delimitation of Parliamentary and Legislative Assembly Constituencies of the Jammu and Kashmir.

"Thereafter, the Election Commission of India has initiated revision of electoral rolls of voters of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The decision to schedule elections is the prerogative of the Election Commission of India," he said in reply to the question by parliamentarian A. Ganeshamurthi in the ongoing Monsoon Session of the Parliament.

Rai said the Government has a policy of zero tolerance against militancy and the security situation has "improved significantly" in J&K.

"There has been substantial decline in (militant) attacks from 417 in 2018 to 229 in 2021," he said in the reply, a copy of which is with GNS.

The Government, he said, has taken various measures to normalize the situation in the Kashmir valley. "These include a robust security and intelligence grid, proactive operations against (militants), intensified night patrolling and checking at Nakas, security arrangements through appropriate deployment and high level of alertness maintained by the security forces."

Moreover, he said, the Government has taken several steps for all round development of Jammu and Kashmir including implementation of PMDP, 2015, Flagship programmes, establishment of IIT & IIM, two new AIIMS and fast tracking of infrastructure projects in roads, power etc. Besides, he said, a new Central Scheme is being implemented for industrial development of J&K with an outlay of Rs. 28,400 Crores which would provide employment to 4.5 Lakhs persons.

The junior minister in MHA responded in negative to a question by the parliamentarian whether it is a fact that incidents of militant attacks are rising.

"Combating (militancy) is a continuous process. The Government has taken various steps in this regard including strengthening of legal framework, streamlining of intelligence mechanism, setting up of National Investigation Agency (NIA) for investigation and prosecution of (militancy) related cases, having various hubs of National Security Guards (NSG), stepping up border and coastal security, modernization of police forces and capacity building of state police forces etc".

Due to "concerted and coordinated efforts of all the stakeholders", he said, militancy related violence has been contained to a large extent in the country.

He said there were 229 militancy related incidents in J&K last year in which 42 security personnel and 41 civilians were killed. 117 security personnel and 75 civilians were injured during 2021, he said. In 2020, he said there were 244 militancy related incidents in J&K in which 62 security personnel and 37 civilians were killed. 106 security personnel and 112 civilians were injured in the year, he added.

Killing Zawahiri: US is back in Af-Pak

Anju Gupta

Al Qaeda (AQ) chief Ayman al-Zawahiri's precision-killing with a Hellfire missile on July 31 was a clear demonstration of top-line, over-the-horizon US counter-terrorism capability. Zawahiri's presence in a guest house in Kabul, reportedly owned by interior minister Sirajuddin Haqqani's close aide, has become a subject of intense curiosity, given Sirajuddin's chief patron — the Pakistan deep state. Announcing the killing, US President Joe Biden described Zawahiri as one of the masterminds behind the 9/11 attacks, the bombing of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the USS Cole in 2000. President Biden also stressed that Zawahiri was coordinating AQ branches worldwide and directing attacks against American interests.

Not as charismatic as Osama bin Laden (OBL), Zawahiri remained in his shadows. After OBL's killing in a US Navy Seal operation in Pakistan in 2011, few experts believed that Zawahiri could hold the network together. However, since 2011, the AQ network has grown across the world, especially in Syria, Mali, Somalia, Southeast

Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan, disseminating its puritanical ideology, money and expertise to local militant groups. This has happened despite the huge popularity of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria amongst radical Muslim youth. The ISIS had also set up a physical Caliphate — a long-cherished goal of international jihad espoused by the AQ.

Under Zawahiri, the AQ network seems to have changed its strategic direction and its branches currently operate more like independent insurgencies — such as through the Taliban in Afghanistan, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham in Syria and Al-Shabab in Somalia. The crucial question is whether the AQ, post-Zawahiri, will lose momentum or whether the collective core leadership that seems to have been quietly working post-OBL could provide a leader as well as offer continuity.

The most obvious name being discussed to succeed Zawahiri is that of another Egyptian, Saif al-Adel, who was believed to be in charge of external operations. However, given regular reports of his connections "within" Iran, he may not be the "ideal face" to succeed Zawahiri. Some re-

gional leaders, such as from Al-Shabab, may be acceptable, given the recent series of "successes" of this branch. The oldest branch, the al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which is the key source of chief ideologues of jihad, may be used to prop up a cleric as the next AQ Amir in order to lower the profile for some time while keeping the propaganda around the "martyrdom" of Zawahiri going.

Successive reports of the UN Security Council have documented Zawahiri's presence in the Af-Pak region and shown that the Taliban-AQ links are intact. The drone strike in Kabul, less than a year after the Taliban takeover, demonstrates how the AQ core leadership never left the Af-Pak region, contrary to the assurance given in the Doha Agreement. The Taliban and the US are accusing each other of violating the agreement. But the real question is: Was the Taliban involved in providing intel on Zawahiri for some benefit that would show up in the future, or did intra-Taliban rivalry lead to cooperation against the Haqqani Network? There is a third scenario — of the Pakistan deep state having provided the intel to show the Tal-

iban in a bad light and curry favour with the US, especially in order to deal with the Tehreek Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which has caused much violence against Pakistan forces.

Since the Haqqani Network has been mediating talks between the TTP and the Pakistan army, the strike has surely cast doubts about the safety of the TTP leaders who visit Kabul for meetings. Given the links between the Haqqanis and the Pakistani deep state, it is unlikely that the TTP would continue talks, which in any case have not prevented attacks on the Pakistani forces. The TTP has already started accusing the Pakistan army of providing a base to the US for the drone strike. Thus, much more violence is expected in the Af-Pak region in the coming weeks and months.

The Taliban would now find it much more difficult to call on the US to unfreeze its forex reserves. In addition, the hitherto frenetic diplomacy by the outfit with other nations is bound to slow down. Pakistan is likely to mount a diplomatic offensive to show how the Taliban harbours terrorists and is an unreliable partner for the

West. Pakistan has been projecting the TTP as a partner of the AQ for a long time.

In 2014, the AQ launched the Al Qaeda In Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), the outfit's South Asia branch. The inaugural video carried an old clip of OBL and a message of Zawahiri appointing a relatively unknown Indian radical Asim Umar, who had fled to Pakistan decades ago. In recent times, the group has posted many videos focused on India, especially on Kashmir. Some of these clips have featured Zawahiri. With his elimination, as well as that of Umar and a few "known" Pakistani faces of the AQIS earlier, the propaganda against India is likely to lose momentum for now. However, since the AQIS is an Af-Pak-based group, it may rebuild itself with support from the Pakistan deep state.

With more clarity about the source of intel for the Kabul strike and more details about the operation emerging, there could be a counter-terrorism realignment amongst regional states and global powers. But it's clear that the drone strike announces the "return" of the US to the region, less than a year after the rather "chaotic" withdrawal of its troops.

Why the President of India is also Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces

Manish Tewari

“An anecdote narrated by a colleague in Parliament about how a particular president perceived his role as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces provoked a question: Why did the founding fathers not vest this supreme command in the council of ministers headed by the prime minister, given that they made a conscious choice that India would be a parliamentary democracy, not an executive presidency?

Article 53 of the Constitution states that the executive power of the Union shall be vested in the President of India. Article 53(2) has a rather interesting formulation: "Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provision, the supreme command of the Defence Forces of the Union shall be vested in the President and the exercise thereof shall be regulated by law". The powers of the presidency are, of course, circumscribed by Article 74 which states that the president shall exercise his functions only on the aid and advice of the council of ministers headed by the prime minister.

Ram Madhav writes | Droupadi Murmu, a president

for our time

Interestingly, if one peruses the debates of the Constituent Assembly on draft Article 42 that corresponds to Article 53 of the Constitution, there is absolutely no discussion on vesting the supreme command of the defence forces in the president. It almost seems that the Constitution framers had taken it as a given that the supreme command of the armed forces would be vested in the presidency. It is incredible that such an important aspect, even though the president of India is only a titular head, was not even debated by the Constituent Assembly.

However, any and every constitutional scheme has enough play in the joints to be interpreted in various ways, especially when a constitutional crisis comes to a head or an external emergency manifests. The term "defence forces of the Union" is nowhere defined in the Constitution.

A clue as to why the supreme command came to be vested in the presidency can possibly be found in the articulation of KM Munshi in the Constituent Assembly debates. While speaking on an amendment moved by Professor KT Shah on draft Arti-

cle 42, Munshi argued that "The strongest government and the most elastic executive has been found to be in England and that is because the executive powers vest in the Cabinet supported by a majority of the lower house which has financial powers under the constitution. As a result it is the rule of the majority in the legislature for it supports its leaders in the cabinet which advises the head of the state namely the king or the President. The King or the President is thus placed above the party. He is made really the symbol of the impartial dignity of the Constitution."

However, neither does Dr Ambedkar's opening speech introducing the draft constitution or closing speech on the conclusion of its deliberations mention the aspect of the president being the Supreme Commander of the Defence Forces.

Or were they just being guided by the British practice where the supreme command of the armed forces is vested in the monarch? While designing the Constitution, the framers were both following certain British traditions while simultaneously trying to break with them.

The British constitutional in-

terpretations written by Michel de Montaigne and other scholars were not the only ones that the founding fathers took on board in their grand study of constitutional jurisprudence. The first French Constitution created by the French National assembly in 1791 embodying the principles contained in the Rights of Man and of the Citizen equally animated them. It is another matter that France has had 15 constitutions between then and 1958. Equally, they were inspired by the American Constitution, and more so, the Bill of Rights ratified on December 15, 1791.

In both the American and French constitutional schemes, the supreme command of the armed forces vests in the president. However, both these countries have an executive presidency. Nearer home, there was another country that was born — the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949 — just as the Indian constitutional deliberations were winding down.

China had an interesting institution dating back to 1925 called the Central Military Commission and, fascinatingly, after China assumed its present avatar, the general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party

has been invariably triple-hatted whereby he is also the president of the republic and chairperson of the Central Military Commission, except for a brief while when Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin in the late 1980s and early 2000s held this position singularly.

Interestingly, in Pakistan, Article 243-1A, as amended by the Constitution Eighteenth Amendment Act 2010, states: "Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provisions, the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces shall vest in the President" However, that has not stopped Pakistan from being convulsed by a series of coup d'etats going back to 1958.

It is, therefore, quite evident that rather than any deliberate plan or design to impose civilian control over the armed forces, as conventional wisdom or subsequent mythmaking make it out to be, the President of India ended up becoming the Supreme Commander of the Indian Armed Forces for the simple reason that the members of the Constituent Assembly decided to follow British precedent. A study of the making of the Constitution can throw up some interesting revelations.

Supriya Chaudhuri writes: Who failed West Bengal's students?

Supriya Chaudhuri

In September 2021, K V Mohandas, chairman of the Eleventh Kerala Pay Revision Commission (PRC), took official note of the practice of collecting money from teachers for appointment in state-aided schools and colleges by comparing it to dowry. "Like dowry, demanding money for appointments in aided schools and colleges is considered evil by everyone and still the practice is allowed to continue," he said. While the PRC Report recommended some measures to end this evil, given that teachers' salaries in aided institutions were paid by the government from the public exchequer, there was also an undercurrent of hopelessness about the situation, even sympathy for managements that needed funds for infrastructure and maintenance. Nevertheless, the practice was corrupt and illegal, and it was suggested that handing over recruitment to the Public Service Commission (PSC) or constituting a statutory Kerala Recruitment Board for Private Schools and Colleges might help to end it.

Soon after the publication of the Kerala PRC report, I attended a meeting with members of the Commission for Reforms in the Higher Education System of Kerala, who were looking for pointers from our own experience in West Bengal with special reference to the research and teaching excellence of Jadavpur University, where I

taught for most of my working life. When the discussion touched upon payment for teaching posts in higher education in West Bengal, I said that while influence and politics obviously played a part, I was not aware of money changing hands for appointments under either the state PSC or the College Service Commission (CSC). For school teachers, I admitted, it had long been a different story, despite the existence of a state School Service Commission (SSC).

As it turns out, I could not have been more wrong on the first head. The discovery of over Rs 50 crore in cash and gold jewellery in flats belonging to an associate of West Bengal's former industries minister (and former education minister), Partha Chatterjee, as well as numberless properties allegedly jointly owned by them or their families, has unplugged a flood of disclosures at every level, from the serious to the salacious. The Enforcement Directorate's (ED) investigation of Chatterjee and his associates followed successive high court judgments regarding recruitment scams during his tenure as education minister. From 2016, the appointment of school teachers qualifying the SSC's State Level Selection Test (SLST) had flagrantly violated the merit list, for reasons of nepotism, money or political clout. Second, there were irregularities in the recruitment by SSC of Group D staff in state-aided schools, after the tenure of the original panel of appointees for 13,000 posts had expired. Third, at

least 269 primary school teachers in government-aided schools were ineligible for appointment. The clear implication was that during Chatterjee's term as education minister, a system had been put in place such that all school posts, of teaching and non-teaching staff, were sold for money. Additional Solicitor General Suryaprakash V Raju, appearing for the ED, declared that they were looking for at least Rs 120 crore in the SSC recruitment scam, more than twice the sum they had found in cash.

Moreover, despite the Trinamool Congress Party (TMC)'s panic-stricken distancing of itself from their tainted ex-cabinet minister and former secretary-general, it is obvious that this massive exercise in monetising posts in the education system (and in other services too) was carried out by a vast number of functionaries who set prices and collected the loot. Chatterjee has already said that the money is not his, and this is true in more than one sense — he was allegedly a collector as well as an individual profiteer. In fact, for all the shock and horror about the SSC scam being expressed by the left parties in Bengal, it was they who started the process. Those of us who were in the teaching profession during the Left Front rule in Bengal know how many of our own students were asked to pay substantial sums before they could join as teachers in schools to which they had been appointed through the SSC (set up in 1997). The same

was true of lower-level jobs in government and public-sector industries. All one might say is that the scale of demand was not as high, and so far as I knew, college and university posts, or those of vice-chancellors, were not sold, though most appointments were politically influenced.

Under the TMC, this system appears to have been developed to a point where it could serve to fill, not just party coffers, but the pockets of every greedy profiteer. It was extended into the higher education system, with the minister, as soon as he assumed office, dismissing out of hand a proposal for a centralised online undergraduate admission process. Soon after this, I recall a young second-year student sitting next to me in the bus, busy on his phone working out the rates at which seats in several of Kolkata's colleges were to be sold. When I expressed amazement, he said that with the exception of some leading institutions and "first-list candidates," the lower half of the admission table was decided by payment, with political parties, students' unions, teachers' associations and other functionaries either raking in a handsome profit, or looking the other way. Unsurprisingly, it is now alleged that lakhs were extorted for college appointments and, so the rumour goes, for vice-chancellorships. As one commentator put it, education, like the construction industry, was rapidly passing into the hands of powerful "syndicates" functioning at the ruling party's behest.

Ramban team clinches inter- block district level Kabbadi title

RAMBAN, AUG 04
District Administration, Ramban today organized Inter-Block District-Level Kabbadi Tournament under Sansad Khel Spardha, 2022 here under the aegis of the Union Minister in PMO Dr Jitendra Singh.

The tournament was formally inaugurated by the Chairperson, District Development Council, Ramban, Dr. Shamshad Shan at Government Higher Secondary, Ramban here today.

The President, MC, Ramban, Sunita Sumbria, DDC Councillor, Rakesh Thakur and Additional District Development Commissioner Rajinder Sharma were the guests of honour on the occasion. Chief Education Officer Ramban, Devanand and other officers of district administration also attended the function.

The team Ramban clinched the title in Kabbadi discipline by defeating team Batote in a neck to neck fight in the final match.

The block level winning teams of the district including Batote, Gandhri, Sangaldan, Ramban, Gundi-Dharam, Gool, Khari, Ukhral and Banihal participated in the tournament.

After inaugurating the event, the Chairperson DDC, highlighted the importance of sports in overall develop-



ment of youth and extended gratitude to the District Administration for this unique initiative aimed at identifying the local talent and to nurture them for the national events.

The President Municipal Council and the DDC Councilor also encouraged the students for active participation in sports activities. They asked for organizing such sports activities in the district on regular intervals. The youth of the district has

Commonwealth Games: Two Sri Lankan athletes, one official goes missing

NEW DELHI, AUG 04
Three members of the Sri Lankan touring party disappeared from their respective villages. The Sri Lankan contingent at the Commonwealth Games has asked its athletes and officials to submit their passports following the incident.

Sri Lanka, which is facing a huge economic crisis, had picked a 161-member contingent, including 51 officials, for the Games. The Commonwealth Games Federation and Sri Lanka Cricket have funded the athletes' participation. Sri Lankan team press attache Gobinath Sivarajah confirmed to PTI that a judoka, a wrestler and the judo manager have disappeared.

"We have asked all athletes and officials to submit their passports to our respective venue officials in all the villages after the incident. The police are investi-



gating and the three cannot cross the UK borders. What has happened is really unfortunate," said Sivarajah.

The Sri Lankan judo team has three male and two female players. According to reports, the missing judoka is a female. The judo and wrestling events are taking place at Coventry Arena, a 30-minute drive from Birmingham. Sri Lankan athletes endured an extremely tough time in the

I will compete in decathlon in Asian Games: Tejaswin

NEW DELHI, AUG 04
India's high jumper Tejaswin Shankar on Thursday said he has not been able to perform to his full potential owing to chronic tendonitis and it's now a "certainty" that he will compete in decathlon at next year's Asian Games.

The problem, however, could not come in his way of winning the country its first-ever medal -- a bronze -- in high jump at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham on Wednesday.

"Because with constant tendonitis on my knee, I have not been able to jump as much as I would like to. But I have been able to supplement my high jump training by doing a lot of long jump activities or doing hurdles," the 23-year-old said.

Tejaswin said he wants to compete in decathlon at next year's Asian Games.

"That is a certainty. I want to compete in decathlon at the Asian Games. That is what I am going to do, going forward," Tejaswin said.

Decathlon is a competition in which athletes participate in 10 sporting events -- 100m, long jump, shot put, high jump, 400m, 110m hurdles, discus throw, pole vault, javelin throw and 1500m -- over two days.

"Even if I do not compete at decathlon, I want to continue training in decathlon because it really works for me."

The road to the CWG medal was fraught with obstacles for Tejaswin as the NCAA athlete and student of Kansas University approached the

court after his name didn't feature in the list of athletes included in India's contingent.

Tejaswin won the high jump title in the United States in June this year with a jump of 2.27m and achieved the qualification standard for Commonwealth Games. But he didn't find his name in the list of Indian contingent as he didn't take part in the senior national inter-state athletics championships in India.

He knocked on the Delhi High Court's door, and earned a favourable verdict.

After winning the medal, Tejaswin said that he will be seeking exemption from participating in national events well in advance only if the rule applies to all other athletes.

"If the policy applies to everybody, then everybody has to abide. However, if it is done selectively (to a few athletes), then we have to find an alternative like this time," Tejaswin said.

"Hopefully, it will include everybody. If that is the case, then of course, I will do that. In my case, the problem was that I was competing in the collegiate circuit, and most importantly, I was a student there. You cannot apply for leaves as per your wishes.

"That turned out to be a big problem for me. I always wanted to represent India. And for that to happen, I had to compete at the Nationals. But, at the same time, I had to go to school. Two things cannot happen at the same time. So, I had to cut some corners," he added.

CWG: Pugilist Amit Panghal enters semis; Sindhu, Srikanth win

NEW DELHI, AUG 03
Amit Panghal ensured a fourth medal for India from the boxing ring after winning his flyweight (48-51 kg) quarterfinal against Scotland's Lennon Mulligan at the Commonwealth Games on Thursday.

It was a unanimous verdict in favour of the Indian southpaw. Panghal had won a silver medal during the last edition in Gold Coast.

The bout wasn't of great quality but the 26-year-old India prevailed over his much younger Scottish opponent, tiring him out with a solid defence. He gained points with occasional ferocious counter-attack.

In the first two rounds, Panghal employed a guard down approach to invite Mulligan to go on the offensive but swayed away from his reach with some nimble footwork.

In between he did land a couple of left jabs to rattle the 20-year-old Scot and in the final round unleashed a barrage of 'one-two' combination (a left-jab followed by a right cross).

Mulligan in fact got a standing count and by the end of round two, the writing was clear on the wall that Panghal will earn a second CWG medal.

Nikhat Zareen (50kg), Nitu Ganghas (48kg) and Mohammed Hussamudin (57kg) have also reached the semifinal stage to be assured



of medals in their respective categories.

Olympic bronze medallist Lovlina Borgohain, however, was out-punched by last edition's silver medallist Rosie Eccles of Wales. Leading by a slight margin in the opening two rounds, the 24-year-old Borgohain went down via 2-3 split decision in the light middle weight quarterfinal.

Sindhu, Srikanth breeze into badminton singles pre-quarters

Ace Indian shuttlers P.V. Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth sailed into the pre-quarterfinals of their respective singles events after scoring comfortable victories.

While two-time Olympic medallist Sindhu routed Maldives' Fathimath Nabaaha Abdul Razzaq 21-4 21-11 in the women's singles first round, Srikanth outclassed Daniel Wanagaliya of Uganda 21-9 21-9 in the men's singles event.

Taking the court first, the

last edition's silver medallist Sindhu did not need her 'A' game since the Maldives shuttler was no match to her class.

Fathimath produced some resistance in the second game but Sindhu pulled away from 9-9.

Srikanth was crestfallen after losing his singles match against lower-ranked Tze Yong Ng of Malaysia in the mixed team final but the world number 13 seemed to have taken it in his stride as he comfortably beat his rival.

He used his cross-court angled drop shots to good effect to pocket points.

Most of the points which the Ugandan shuttler managed were from unforced errors of Srikanth.

Hima wins her heat to qualify for 200m semis

Star Indian sprinter Hima Das qualified for the women's 200m semifinals after winning her heat with a timing of 23.42s.

The 22-year-old Hima led the five-woman field from the start with Rhoda Njobvu of Zambia clocking 23.85s to finish second while Jacent Nyamhunge of Uganda finished third with a timing of 24.07.

There are six heats lined up in the women's 200m and the top-16 will qualify for the semifinal.

Hima won heat 2 but Favour Ofili of Nigeria (22.71s in Heat 1) and the formidable Elaine-Thompson-Herah (22.80s in heat 5) had superior timings.

At least six athletes have clocked better time, compared to Hima, en route their semifinal entries.

Meanwhile, in the women's hammer throw event, India's Manju Bala advanced to the final while compatriot Sarita Singh failed to make the cut.

The 33-year-old Bala finished 11th in the qualification round with a best throw of 59.68m in her first attempt.

In the same event, the other Indian athlete Sarita failed to make the final after she finished 13th with her best throw of 57.48.

According to the rules, best 12 performers advance to the final, which will be held on Saturday, August 6.

Canada's Camryn Rogers topped the qualification round with best throw of 74.68m, which is a Commonwealth Games record.

Will cricket get the nod for 2028 LA Olympic Games?

NEW DELHI, AUG 03
The International Cricket Council (ICC) will make a presentation to the Los Angeles Olympics organisers later this month in its bid for the sport to return to the Games after a gap of 128 years, sources told Reuters.

Cricket has been shortlisted for potential inclusion at the 2028 Los Angeles Games along with baseball-softball, flag football, lacrosse, breakdancing, karate, kickboxing, squash and motorsport.

Teams would play Twenty20 cricket -- the sport's shortest international format which has inspired the lucrative IPL and similar franchise-based competitions in other countries.

The host city can include any sport but needs approval of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The governing body is likely to take a final decision at the IOC session in Mumbai next year, said one of the sources which had direct knowledge of the matter.

28 sports feature in the initial programme announced by



the 2028 Games organiser in December.

Cricket has not been played at the Olympics since its maiden appearance in the 1900 Games at Paris, where Britain beat a

team of mostly English expatriates representing France by 158 runs to win gold. Despite initial obstruction from the powerful BCCI and the England and Wales Cricket Board, the game has started to gain entry to multi-sports gatherings around the world. Women's Twenty20 is being played at the ongoing Commonwealth Games in Birmingham and cricket will also part of the delayed Asian Games in Hangzhou next year.

It will also feature in the Africa Games in Ghana and the Southeast Asian Games in Cambodia next year.

Considering cricket's low profile in the United States, many believe it has better chances of making the cut for the 2032 Olympics in Australia.

The ICC, however, is determined to grow the game in the United States -- which is cricket's third largest broadcast market after India and Britain due to the Indian and Pakistani diaspora. It believes the 2028 Olympics would make the perfect showcase.

Taliban claim they unaware of al-Qaeda leader in Afghanistan

NEW DELHI, AUG 04

The Taliban broke its silence Thursday, days after a US drone strike killing al-Qaeda's top leader in Afghanistan's capital, acknowledging his slaying and pledging to launch an investigation.

The killing of Ayman al-Zawahiri on the balcony of a Kabul safehouse Sunday has further strained relations between the Taliban and the West, particularly as it seeks an urgent infusion of cash to handle an economic catastrophe there following the US withdrawal from the country a year ago.

The government and the leadership weren't aware of what is being claimed, nor any trace there, Suhail Shaheen, the head of the group's political office in Doha, Qatar, told The Associated Press in a text message.

That claim, however, directly conflicts with what U.S. officials have said about the strike. They say al-Zawahiri was staying at the home of a top aide to senior Taliban leader Sirajuddin Haqqani. Haqqani is the deputy head of the Taliban, serves as interior minister in its government and heads the Haqqani network, a powerful faction within the movement.

The Taliban had promised in the 2020 Doha Agreement with the US that they would not harbor al-Qaida members or those seeking to attack the U.S.

An investigation is underway now to find out about veracity of the claim. The leadership is in constant meeting in this



regard. Findings will be shared with all, Shaheen added.

The strike early Sunday shook awake Shirpur, once a district of historic buildings that were bulldozed in 2003 to make way for luxury homes for officials in Afghanistan's Western-backed government and international aid organizations. After the US withdrawal in August 2021, senior Taliban moved into some of the abandoned homes there.

The Haqqani network is an Afghan Islamic insurgent group, built around the family of the same name. In the 1980s, it fought Soviet forces and over the past 20 years, it battled U.S.-led NATO troops and the former Afghanistan government. The U.S. government maintains a \$10 million bounty on Sirajuddin Haqqani for attacks on American troops

and Afghan civilians.

But the Haqqanis, from Afghanistan's eastern Khost province, have rivals within the Taliban leadership, mostly from the southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar. Some believe Sirajuddin Haqqani wants more power. Other Taliban figures have opposed the Haqqanis' attacks against civilians in Kabul and elsewhere during the insurgency.

During the first half of 2022, al-Zawahiri increasingly reached out to supporters with video and audio messages, including assurances that al-Qaida can compete with the Islamic State group for leadership of a global movement, a report by the United Nations' Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team said.

Sri Lanka committed to 'one-China' policy: Wickremesinghe after Pelosi's Taiwan visit

NEW DELHI, AUG 04

Sri Lanka is firmly committed to the one-China policy, President Ranil Wickremesinghe reaffirmed on Thursday, a day after US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan despite vociferous protests from Beijing.

Pelosi held talks with Taiwan's top leadership, including President Tsai Ing-wen, on Wednesday and reaffirmed America's ironclad support for the self-ruling island.

Pelosi became the highest-ranking American official in 25 years to visit the island claimed by China, which quickly announced that it would conduct military drills close to Taiwan in retaliation for her presence in Taipei.

"During a meeting with H.E. Qi Zhenhong, China's Ambassador to Sri Lanka, reiterated Sri Lanka's firm commitment to the One China policy as well as to the UN charter principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations," the president of the crisis-hit country said in a tweet on Thursday.

Countries must refrain from provocations which further escalate the current global tensions, Wickremesinghe said during his meeting with Qi on Wednesday.

He also said that "mutual respect and non interference in the internal affairs of countries were important

foundations for peaceful cooperation and non confrontation.

China's foreign ministry has reiterated that there is only one China in the world and Taiwan is an inalienable part of the country's territory.

Sri Lanka, which is facing the worst economic crisis in the history of its independence since 1948, has huge debt to repay to China, whose high cost infrastructure projects are widely blamed for the island nation's bankrupt condition.

The Chinese unwillingness to restructure Sri Lanka's debt has placed obstacles to the IMF bail out package much needed by the debt-ridden country in its hour of crisis.

China has denied that Sri Lanka had been clamped in a Chinese debt trap by funding the high end infrastructure projects on the southern district of Hambantota -- it's sea port and the airport dubbed the world's quietest with hardly any flight movements.

Wickremesinghe's predecessors, the Rajapaksa brothers, borrowed from China to fund the infrastructure in their home district.

Wickremesinghe as the prime minister in 2017 entered a 99 year lease on the industrial park around the port with China drawing sharp criticism from locals.

Taiwan cancels flights as China holds military drills

NEW DELHI, AUG 04

Taiwan cancelled airline flights Thursday as the Chinese navy fired artillery near the island in retaliation for a top American lawmaker's visit, but the impact on shipments of processor chips and other goods needed by global industries was unclear.

China ordered ships and planes to avoid the military drills that encircled the self-ruled island, which the mainland's ruling Communist Party claims as part of its territory. The Hong Kong newspaper The South China Morning Post called the drills an effective Taiwan blockade.

Beijing announced live-fire exercises after US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi arrived Tuesday for a one-day visit, defying warnings from Beijing. It also banned imports of hundreds of Taiwanese food items including fish, fruit and cookies.

The two sides, which split in 1949 after a civil war, have no official ties but one of the world's busiest technology and manufacturing relationships.

On Thursday, at least 40 flights to and from Taiwan were canceled, according to the China Times newspaper. It cited Taoyuan Airport in the capital, Taipei, as saying cancellations were not necessarily related to the military drills.

There was no immediate indication of the possible impact on shipping, which has the potential to jolt



the global economy. Taiwan produces more than half the processor chips used in the smartphones, autos, tablet computers and other electronics.

Any significant disruption would create shockwaves to global industries, said Rajiv Biswas of S&P Global Market Intelligence in an email.

Some flights to the mainland would detour through Hong Kong. Taiwan's transport minister, Wang Kwo-tsai, said Wednesday at a news conference.

Business has grown even as Chinese President Xi Jinping's government stepped up pressure on Taiwan, sending growing numbers of fighter planes and bombers to fly around the island to intimidate its government.

Two-way trade soared 26% last year to \$328.3 billion. Taiwan said chip sales to Chinese factories rose 24.4% to \$104.3 billion.

Fruit, fish and other foods are a small part of Taiwan's exports to China, but the ban hurts areas that are seen as supporters of President Tsai Ing-wen.

Second survey shows Liz Truss ahead of Rishi Sunak in UK PM race

NEW DELHI, AUG 04

A new survey of members of the governing Conservative Party shows Foreign Secretary Liz Truss is firmly ahead of rival Rishi Sunak in the race to replace Boris Johnson as the British Prime Minister.

The survey of Tory members who will be electing a new leader to take charge at 10 Downing Street from September 5 released on Wednesday night by the ConservativeHome website found that 58 per cent of those polled back Truss.

Former Chancellor Sunak was found to have the support of 26 per cent, while 12 per cent were undecided. It is the second poll from Wednesday showing the Cabinet minister widening her lead over the British Indian ex-minister, with an earlier YouGov poll showing Truss was ahead among all age groups, across different parts of the country and among men and women.

"YouGov gives her a 34 point lead which extends, on a forced choice, to a 38 point lead (69 per cent to 31 per cent). Divide our 16 points of don't knows and others evenly between the candidates Truss has a 32 point lead (66 per cent to 34 per cent), the ConservativeHome survey claims.

All in all, Sunak needs a massive game-changer to turn this contest round if our new findings and YouGov's are right. And it's very difficult to see where that could come from, it notes.

The latest findings come as Sunak faced a fresh blow with another former candidate and senior Tory, Sajid Javid, endorsing Truss in the race for her



bold agenda.

The Pakistani-origin former Health Secretary, and also Sunak's former boss in the UK Treasury when he was the Chancellor, writes in The Times' that a refusal to cut taxes meant the UK risks "sleepwalking into a high-tax, low-growth economy" a reference to Sunak's tax strategy.

"Some claim that tax cuts can only come once we have growth. I believe the exact opposite tax cuts are a prerequisite for growth, writes Javid.

"Tax cuts now are essential. There are no risk-free options in government. However, in my view, not cutting taxes carries an even greater risk," he said.

Last month, Javid had launched a leadership bid of his own for the top job on a platform of swift tax cuts but pulled out after he failed to win enough

nominations from Tory MPs to go through to the first round of voting.

It was his resignation from Johnson's Cabinet that came first, followed soon after by Sunak and then several other ministers that forced the outgoing prime minister's hand to announce his resignation and trigger a Tory leadership election. Truss now has the backing of most former candidates, including Chancellor Nadhim Zahawi, Trade Minister Penny Mordaunt and Tory backbencher Tom Tugendhat.

An estimated 180,000 party members started receiving their ballot papers this week and have the option of a postal or online ballot, which must be registered by the evening of September 2. The votes will then be counted by the Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ) and results declared on September 5.

After Taiwan, Pelosi meets political leaders in South Korea

NEW DELHI, AUG 04

US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi met top South Korean political leaders on Thursday, a day after she concluded her high-profile visit to Taiwan by renewing Washington's ironclad commitment to defending democracy on the self-governing island despite vehement protests from China.

Regional tensions are rising following Pelosi's Taiwan trip, with China preparing to launch its largest military maneuvers aimed at Taiwan in more than a quarter of a century in response.

After visiting Taiwan, Pelosi and other members of Congress flew to South Korea a key US ally where about 28,500 American troops are deployed on Wednesday evening, as part of an Asian tour that included stops in Singapore and Malaysia. After South Korea, they will travel to Japan.

On Thursday, Pelosi met South Korean National Assembly Speaker Kim Jin Pyo and other senior members of Parliament for talks on regional security, economic cooperation and climate issues. Before their talks, live TV footage showed Kim and Pelosi bumping elbows and posing for a photo in front of South Korean

and US national flags.

Later in the day, Pelosi planned to visit an inter-Korean border area that is jointly controlled by the American-led UN Command and North Korea, a South Korean official said requesting anonymity because he wasn't authorised to speak to media on the matter.

If that visit occurs, Pelosi would be the highest-level American to go to the Joint Security Area since then-President Donald Trump went there in 2019 for a meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Sitting inside the 4-km (2.5-mile) -wide Demilitarized Zone, a buffer created at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, the JSA is the site of past bloodshed and a venue for numerous talks. US presidents and other top officials have often travelled to the JSA and other border areas to reaffirm their security commitment to South Korea.

Any statement critical of North Korea by Pelosi is certain to draw a furious response from Pyongyang. On Wednesday, the North's Foreign Ministry slammed the United States over her

Taiwan trip, saying that the current situation clearly shows that the impudent interference of the US in internal affairs of other countries. Also on Thursday afternoon, Pelosi will speak by phone with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, who is on a vacation this week, according to Yoon's office. No face-to-face meeting has been arranged between them. Yoon, a conservative, took office in May with a vow to boost South Korea's military alliance with the United States and take a tougher line on North Korean provocations.

Pelosi's Taiwan visit, the first by an incumbent House speaker in 25 years, has infuriated China, which views the island nation as a breakaway province to be annexed by force if necessary. China views visits to Taiwan by foreign officials as recognising its sovereignty.

Today the world faces a choice between democracy and autocracy, Pelosi said in a short speech during a meeting with Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen on Wednesday. America's determination to preserve democracy, here in Taiwan and around the world, remains ironclad.

Post-auction spectrum harmonisation process done; allocation by Aug 12: Telecom Minister

NEW DELHI

Within days of conducting 5G auctions, the government has completed the spectrum 'harmonisation' process, paving the way for players' holdings to be streamlined within a particular band for greater efficiency, Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has said.

The spectrum harmonisation process, critical for 5G services, brings together a bunch of radio wave holdings within a band into one contiguous block with the consensus of all telecom service providers.

Vaishnaw told PTI that the government is on course for the timely allocation of radiowaves bought by players (in the auction) by August 12. The process of approvals from the Committee of Secretaries has also been completed.

"In one single day, we have completed the spectrum harmonisation process, which happens after every auction," the minister said.

The harmonisation of the spectrum leads to greater efficiencies for players, as chunks of radio-wave holdings in one band are brought together or consolidated with the consensus of all players.

"The promise we made that we will allocate spectrum by August 12...we are on time," Vaishnaw said.

A telecom department official, explaining the concept of spectrum harmonisation, drew a parallel with distributed land holdings with gaps being brought together into contiguous holding.

India's biggest ever auction of telecom spectrum that concluded on August 1 (Monday) received a record Rs 1.5 lakh crore of bids, with Mukesh Ambani's Jio cornering nearly half of all the airwaves sold with an Rs 88,078 crore bid.

Richest Indian Gautam Adani's group, whose entry in the auction was billed by some as another flash point in the rivalry with Ambani, paid Rs 212



crore for 400 MHz, or less than one per cent of all spectrum sold, in a band that is not used for offering public telephony services.

Telecom tycoon Sunil Bharti Mittal's Bharti Airtel made a successful bid of Rs 43,084 crore, while Vodafone Idea Ltd bought spectrum for Rs 18,799 crore.

Of the 72,098 MHz of spectrum offered across 10 bands, 51,236 MHz, or 71 per cent, was sold.

After every auction, the separate holdings of an individual player in a band are brought together through the harmonisation process. All the players have to be in agreement for such shifting and consolidation to take place, a process that normally takes months.

"It is a difficult process but we have completed the harmonisation process in one single day. The team has worked very meticulously," Vaishnaw said.

Reliance Jio Infocomm has obtained 24,740 MHz spectrum in 700, 800, 1800, 3300 MHz and 26 GHz. Adani Data Networks Ltd obtained a 400 MHz spectrum in the 26 GHz band, suitable for captive networks.

Bharti Airtel has obtained 19,867.8 MHz in 900, 1800, 2100, 3300 MHz and 26 GHz bands. Vodafone Idea Ltd

bought 6,228 MHz spectrum in 1800, 2100, 2500, 3300 MHz and 26 GHz.

Spectrum refers to the radio frequencies allocated to the mobile industry and other sectors for communication over the airwaves. This includes FM or AM radio broadcasts and even other wireless forms of communication like Bluetooth and Wi-Fi.

Mobile phones also use this radiowaves to transmit voice calls and data. These frequencies come in different bands, supporting specific technologies, as well as governing the speed of transmission. The quantum of spectrum in each band is measured in MHz.

Typically, 5G offers speeds about 10 times faster than 4G, lag-free connectivity, and can enable billions of connected devices to share data in real-time.

In addition to powering ultra-low latency connections, which allow downloading full-length high-quality video or movie to a mobile device in a matter of seconds (even in crowded areas), the fifth Generation or 5G would enable solutions such as e-health, connected vehicles, more-immersive augmented reality and metaverse experiences, life-saving use cases, and advanced mobile cloud gaming, among others.

OPEC+ boosts oil output by slower pace than previous months

NEW DELHI

The OPEC oil cartel and its allies decided Wednesday to boost production in September by a much slower pace than in previous months at a time of high gasoline prices and unstable energy supplies exacerbated by Russia's war in Ukraine.

OPEC, led by Saudi Arabia, and its allies, led by Russia, said they will increase output to 100,000 barrels a day next month after raising it by 648,000 barrels per day in July and August.

The group considered what effects staggering inflation and rising COVID-19 rates may have on global demand for fuel in the fall.

It comes after US President Joe Biden visited Saudi Arabia last month, aiming to improve relations and encourage more oil production from the cartel to draw down high prices at the pump.

While gasoline prices have been falling, they are still high and posing a political problem for him as inflation surges.

No oil production agreement was announced, but Biden said he expected OPEC to take steps to increase production in the coming weeks. Those hopes didn't materialize.

As a result, the US may go looking for other sources of oil, whether it's Venezuela or Iran, said Jacques Rousseau, managing director at Clearview Energy Partners.

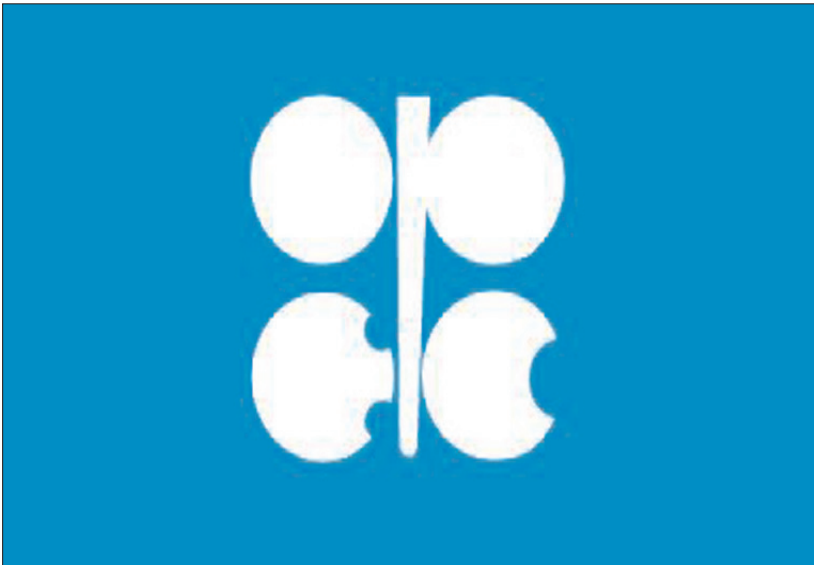
Biden's administration also is encouraging the US oil and gas industry to increase production.

You've just seen the second-quarter results from some of these companies. They are record profits, Amos Hochstein, a senior adviser for energy security at the State Department, said Wednesday on CNBC. "They should be investing those dollars right back into production increases.

Despite the modest increase announced by OPEC+, the administration was trying to highlight that prices are already falling and could fall further with more domestic production.

We're pretty pleased with what we're seeing on prices for oil and gas down from highs, but we know that this is not enough, Hochstein said.

A senior Biden administration official, who insisted on anonymity to discuss private conversations, called the



OPEC+ announcement a step forward. The official said the group has restored all the production cuts it made in 2020 during the depths of the pandemic, when oil prices and demand plummeted.

The group has been gradually adding more oil and gas to the market as economies recovered.

Some OPEC nations, such as Angola and Nigeria, have been producing less than the agreed-upon amount. Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, on the other hand, have the capacity to increase production.

OPEC's decision appears to be an attempt to appease those countries that can't produce more, Rousseau said.

Any time you increase the target, there's countries that can't participate, he added. If you only raise production by 100,000 barrels per day, that's just a small piece for everybody.

As a result, the amount of oil on the market might not keep up with demand, so high oil prices may persist for some time.

While the US was probably hoping for a larger production increase, in terms of overall supply/demand management, OPEC's decision is logical, Noah Barrett, research analyst for energy and utilities at Janus Henderson Investors, said in a note.

There's still a great deal of uncertainty on oil demand in the back half of this year, driven by questions around Chinese demand, and the potential for US or even a global recession.

US proposes to increase refund protections for air travellers

NEW DELHI

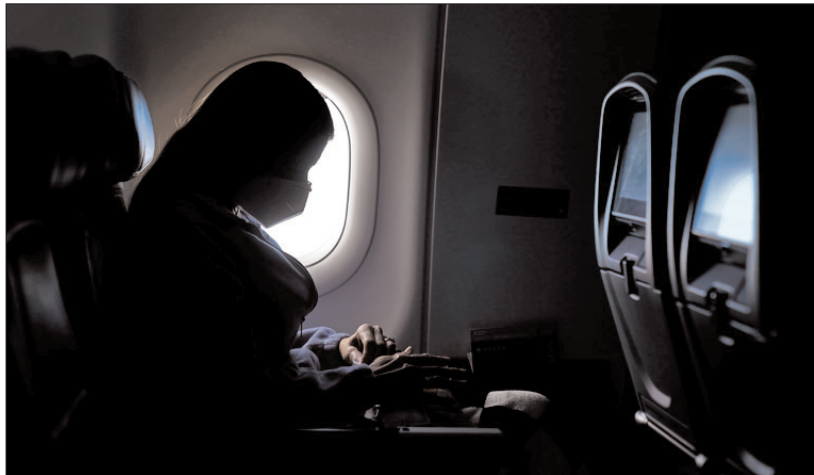
The Transportation Department is proposing to require airlines to offer passengers a refund if their flight schedule is changed significantly or the airline makes major changes to their itinerary.

The proposed rule announced Wednesday would require airlines to give refunds if their departure or arrival time changes by three hours or more for a domestic flight or at least six hours for an international one.

Refunds would also be due if the airline changes the passenger's departure or arrival airport, adds stops in their itinerary, or causes a significant downgrade" in the travel experience by switching to a different type of plane.

The rule would apply even for travellers who buy nonrefundable tickets, which usually cost less and are favoured by many leisure travellers.

The proposal comes after the department was flooded with complaints by



passengers whose flights were cancelled or changed or who were afraid to fly during the early months of the pandemic and who couldn't get refunds.

Airlines prefer to hand out travel vouchers instead of refunds.

The department proposes to require that airlines and ticket agents give

vouchers that don't expire for passengers who are told not to travel during a pandemic for health reasons or because borders are closed.

The proposal faces a public-comment period and likely opposition by airlines. Their trade group, Airlines for America, did not immediately comment.

IRDAI proposes to increase limit of tie-ups between insurers, agents

NEW DELHI

Insurance regulator IRDAI on Wednesday proposed to increase the maximum limit of tie-ups between insurers and intermediaries (agents) as well as marketing firms, with an aim to give policyholders wider access in purchasing covers.

In an exposure draft on insurance intermediaries, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) proposed to increase the maximum limit of tie-ups with insurers for corporate agents from the existing three to nine for each category of insurance.

The draft regulations also propose to increase the maximum limit of tie-ups with insurers for insurance marketing firms from the existing two for each category of insurance to six.

The regulator has sought stakeholders' comments on the exposure draft of IRDAI (Insurance Intermediaries) (Amendment) Regulations, 2022, by August 24.

In another exposure draft related to regulatory sandbox scheme, IRDAI has suggested removing the limited validity period of four years in the regulations.

The regulator had notified the IRDAI (Regulatory Sandbox) Regulations, 2019 with a validity of two years to facil-



itate innovation in products or solutions proposed to be offered by insurance companies and other players for the benefit of policyholders.

Subsequently, it extended the validity period of the regulations for a further period of two years up to July 25, 2023.

Further, the sandbox regulations permit the applicant to experiment the ideas for a period of 6 months which is extendable by another 6 months.

Now, IRDAI suggests increasing the experimental period of the regulatory sandbox from the existing six months to up to 36 months.

The regulatory sandbox allows the regulator, innovators, financial service providers and customers to conduct field tests to collect evidence on the benefits and risks of new financial products. The objective of the regulatory sandbox is to foster responsible innovation in financial services, promote efficiency and bring benefit to consumers.

Comments have been sought by IRDAI on the Exposure Draft Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Regulatory Sandbox) (Amendment) Regulations, 2022, by August 25.

Passenger vehicle retail sales dip 8 pc in July to 2,50,972 units

NEW DELHI

Automobile retail sales in India dropped 8 per cent on an annual basis in July on account of fall in registrations of passenger vehicles, two-wheelers and tractors.

As per data released by the automobile dealers' body FADA on Thursday, the overall automobile retail sales last month stood at 14,36,927 units, as compared with 15,59,106 units in July 2021.

Passenger vehicle retail sales witnessed a dip of 5 per cent at 2,50,972 units last month, as against 2,63,238 units in the year-ago period.

Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) President Vinkesh Gulati noted that though there is a blip in July numbers, the segment continues to see introduction of new models, especially compact SUVs, aiding growth.

"Along with this, a better supply in the coming months will help in bringing down customer anxiety due to the long waiting period," he added.

Similarly, two-wheeler retail sales stood at 10,09,574 units in July, down 11 per cent from 11,33,344 units in July 2021.

"The two-wheeler retail run witnessed poor demand as rural India continues to underperform. This coupled with high inflation, erratic monsoon and high cost of ownership continues to keep bottom of the pyramid customers at bay," Gulati noted.

Tractor sales also remained in the slow lane at 59,573 units last month, down 28



per cent from 82,419 units in the year-ago period.

Three-wheeler and commercial vehicle sales, however, saw positive momentum last month with increase in sales as compared to July 2021.

Three-wheeler sales last month increased by 80 per cent to 50,349 units, as compared to 27,908 units in the year-ago period. Similarly, commercial vehicle sales witnessed an increase of 27 per cent at 66,459 units in July, as against 52,197 units in the same month last year.

"CV retail figures continue to witness good demand as the Government's infrastructure push is helping customers in concluding their purchases. Apart from this, the bus segment also witnessed the beginning of demand recovery as educational institutions and offices are once again back to normal mode," Gulati noted.

On outlook, he stated that the Taiwan-China conflict, if it happens, could lead to massive disruptions in the chip supplies.

"India's services sector PMI (purchasing manager's index) fell to a 4-month low in July to 55.5, showing that growth momentum lost steam as a result of weaker sales growth and inflationary pressure in the previous month. Overall, FADA remains cautiously optimistic due to the above factors as it enters the festival season," Gulati said.

FADA, which represents over 15,000 automobile dealers, said it collected data for July from 1,334 out of 1,409 RTOs across the country.

'Joker' sequel to release in October 2024

NEW DELHI

Joker: Folie a Deux, featuring Joaquin Phoenix as the titular anti-hero, will hit the theatres on October 4, 2024.

According to entertainment site Variety, the follow-up to 2019's dark and gritty blockbuster will be a musical.

Director Todd Phillips had confirmed in June that he was working on the sequel to Joker with Phoenix returning in the lead role. The first film looked at the iconic Batman villain as the character study about a struggling comedian and part-time clown performer Arthur Fleck. Phoenix won the best actor Oscar for his performance.

Plot details of the sequel are under wraps. Phillips is co-writing the screenplay with Scott Silver.



Warner Bros. announced the release date of Joker: Folie a Deux a day after shelving Batgirl, which was in post-production stage.

DDLJ Musical faces flak for casting white actor Austin Colby for the role of Shah Rukh Khan’s Raj; fans express disappointment

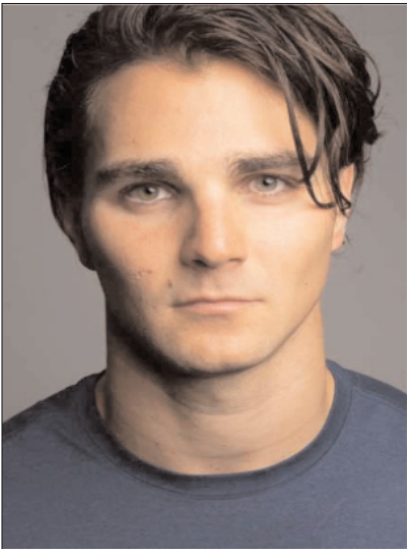
NEW DELHI

Ever since it was announced that producer Aditya Chopra is set to direct Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge again and it will mark his debut as a director on Broadway, fans have been eagerly waiting to see who the cast members are. Come Fall in Love - The DDLJ Musical is being produced by Yash Raj Films. Based on an original story by Chopra, the musical will feature lyrics by Laurence Oliver Award-winner Nell Benjamin (Legally Blonde, Mean Girls), and Vishal Dadlani & Shekhar Ravjiani will serve as composers. Now, they have found their Raj and Simran but also facing flak for casting a white actor for the role of Raj.

DDLJ Musical faces flak for casting white actor Austin Colby for the role of Shah Rukh Khan's Raj; fans express disappointment

DDLJ Musical faces flak for casting white actor Austin Colby for the role of Shah Rukh Khan's Raj; fans express disappointment

Photos: Ananya Panday spotted outside a salon in BandraSatyaprem Ki KathaPhotos: Siddharth Malhotra snapped in BandraPhotos: Rakhi Sawant and her boyfriend Adil Khan snapped in BandraPhotos: Shah Rukh Khan snapped at the airportLigerPhotos: Karan Wahi snapped on the sets of his show Channa MereyaVaani Kapoor



Come Fall in Love - DDLJ Musical has a western twist to it with Raj becoming Rog (Roger Mandel). It will be played by American actor Austin Colby who will step into the shoes of Shah Rukh Khan. However, Kajol's Simran will be played by Indian-American actress Shoba Narayan. Austin shared the news on his Instagram and wrote, "A few months ago, I had never heard of the film Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (DDLJ) or known of its global impact. I am in awe of this beautiful love story, celebrating Bollywood film at it's finest. And now, to have workshopped Come Fall In Love – The DDLJ Musical under

the original director, Aditya Chopra, and trusted with the role of Raj (now Rog) to bring Bollywood to Broadway as a reimaged, inclusive cultural experience will undoubtedly be the greatest honor of my career. I hope I make you proud, @iamsrk."

Estée Lauder India today has announced Bollywood actress and former Miss World, Manushi Chhillar, as the new face of Advanced Night Repair, the brand's No. 1 serum. Debuting this month, Manushi's campaign will be featured on digital and social platforms across India and is her first partnership with a beauty brand.

Kangana Ranaut CLAIMS mastermind Aamir Khan started the boycott Laal Singh Chaddha trend; says 'Hollywood remake would have not worked anyway'

Bollywood actress Kangan Ranaut recently claimed that Mr. perfectionist Aamir Khan has himself started the trend of boycotting his upcoming film Laal Singh Chaddha. The upcoming film is an official Hindi remake of the 1994 Hollywood film Forrest Gump which starred Tom Hanks in the lead role. Currently, fans are calling out Laal Singh Chaddha and want the film to boycott. Also Read - Laal Singh Chaddha star Naga Chaitanya spotted at Sanjay Leela Bhansali office; fans joke that the director should remake DevdasKangana took to her Instagram story and wrote "I think all the negativity around the upcoming release Laal Singh Chaddha is skillfully curated by mastermind Aamir Khan Ji himself. This year, no Hindi films have worked (barring one exception of a comedy sequel) only south films deeply rooted in Indian culture or with local flavour have worked. A Hollywood remake would have not worked anyway." She further added saying, "But now they will call India intolerant, Hindi films need to understand the pulse of audiences it's not about being a Hindu or Muslim. Even af-



ter Aamir Khan ji made Hinduphobic PK or called India intolerant, he gave the biggest hits of his life. Please stop making it about religion or ideology. It takes away from their bad acting and bad films." Also Read - Ahead of Laal Singh Chaddha release, a look at 5 Aamir Khan's films that were Hollywood remakes and their shocking box office collectionskangana-aamirAlso Read - Koffee With Karan 7: Aamir Khan discusses dynamics with ex-

wives Kiran Rao and Reena Dutta apart from s*x lives and fashion; says, 'Hum log hamesha...'Laal Singh Chaddha will release on August 11 and internet users have been boycotting the film using the hashtag - #Boycott-LaalsinghChaddha. Recently, Aamir requested netizens to not boycott his film. He said that he feels sad as a lot of people who are saying to boycott the film believe that he doesn't like India. He even said that it is untrue as he loves his country

a lot.For some time now, few Bollywood films have stopped working. Bhool Bhulaiyya 2, The Kashmir Files, and Gangubai Kathiawadi created a storm at the box office. Talking about Laal Singh Chaddha, Kareena and Aamir have reunited for the film. This is their third collaboration post-Talaash and 3 Idiots. Laal Singh Chaddha is directed by Advait Chauhan and also features Mona Singh and Naga Chaitanya in pivotal roles.

Raj & DK sign multi-year deal with Netflix

NEW DELHI

Director duo Raj Nidimoru and Krishna DK have joined hands with Netflix for a multi-year creative partnership, the streamer announced Thursday.

Under their D2R Films banner, The Family Man directors will develop and produce their upcoming projects for the streaming giant.

Monika Shergill, VP-Content, Netflix India, said, they are excited to partner with the filmmakers, who according to her have an ingenious storytelling style. Raj & DK are one of the most original creative voices in the country. Along with their unique and ingenious storytelling style, they are also a powerhouse studio.

"We are excited to continue our relationship with them for a multi-year creative partnership that will bring superlative entertainment to Netflix members around the world, Shergill said in a statement.

Nidimoru and DK, best known for movies like Go Goa Gone, Stree and Manoj Bajpayee-starrer series The Family Man, said they aim to create unique stories for Netflix.



Netflix is a pioneer in the streaming space backed by its unstinting, passionate support for filmmaking and filmmakers. We are looking forward to creating big, unique stories and challenging ourselves to push the storytelling into exciting and fresh spaces, the directors said.The duo will also be the showrunners and directors of Netflix's upcoming comedy crime thriller series Guns & Gulaabs starring Rajkumar Rao and

Dulquer Salmaan.Inspired by the misfits of the world, the show is set in the 90s. It is a story of love and innocence in a world of crime, a nostalgic tale of all kinds of firsts, from first love to first kill. Details regarding their other upcoming projects for Netflix have been kept under wraps.

Raj & DK also produced last year's acclaimed Telugu film Cinema Bandi, which is currently streaming on Netflix.

Estée Lauder India announces Manushi Chhillar as the new face of Advanced Night Repair serum

NEW DELHI

Estée Lauder India today has announced Bollywood actress and former Miss World, Manushi Chhillar, as the new face of Advanced Night Repair, the brand's No. 1 serum. Debuting this month, Manushi's campaign will be featured on digital and social platforms across India and is her first partnership with a beauty brand.

"We are thrilled to welcome Manushi to the Estée Lauder India family as the new face of Advanced Night Repair," said Rohan Vaziralli, General Manager, Estée Lauder Companies India. "In addition to her passion for all things beauty, we were drawn to Manushi's values and dedication to helping others. She reflects our brand's commitment to women's advancement and knows she will deeply connect with our consumers across India."

"I am a long-standing admirer of the Estée Lauder brand, and especially their Advanced Night Repair serum. Being the face of this iconic product feels wonderful," said Manushi, "I have intro-



duced to the Advanced Night Repair a few years ago and I would definitely call it a skincare must-have."

The campaign will bring Manushi's love for skincare to life, featuring Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Syn-

chronized Multi-Recovery Complex – with the power of 7 serums in 1 that hydrates, reduces fine lines, evens skin tone, strengthens, firms skin gives radiance and has antioxidants, all in a quick-absorbing, fast-penetrating formula.

Brahmastra: Is THIS Mirzapur actor a part of Ranbir Kapoor-Alia Bhatt starrer?

Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt's Brahmastra is inching closer to its release. The Ayan Mukerji film is made into three parts and part one is releasing the next month. Popular names are included in the Brahmastra cast including Shah Rukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Nagarjuna Akkineni and more. And the name of a Mirzapur actor has also been mentioned in the cast list of Brahmastra. Here's another hint, this actor was also a part of Pyaar Ka Punchnama. It's none other than Divyenndu Sharma. However, is he really a part of Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor's Brahmastra? The actor spills the beans. Also Read - Alia Bhatt gets massively trolled for saying that she will work till 100 years; 'Stop copying Kareena Kapoor' takes a dig at Karan Johar being her godfatherBrahmastra is one of the biggest upcoming Bollywood films. It has been the talk of entertainment news for a long time. And naturally, intrigued, Siddharth Kannan asked Divyenndu Sharma about the big reveal. The actor smiled



and said that it was fake. Divyenndu said that he has no idea why his name is on the Wikipedia page in the cast name. He joked about the same saying, "Maybe for the sequel, but not for this one."

Divyendu told Siddharth that there wasn't even a meeting between the makers and him and that he has no clue why his name is in the Brahmastra cast on Wikipedia. He further jested saying that

he hopes his name is not included in the end credits or else people would sympathise with him saying that his role got cut. Check the screenshot of the Wiki page and the video below:

AI helps scientists keep up in Covid-19 mutation race

Artificial intelligence can help predict mutations in Covid-19. Some have achieved a perfect strike rate.

Mutations of Covid-19 are continuing to plague the world. For medical scientists, getting the earliest possible look at when and how the virus changes is critical it gives them a head start in developing the latest and strongest batch of vaccinations and medicines, and the most time to consider which health directives might need to be issued.

When speed and accuracy are vital, machine learning and Artificial Intelligence (AI) come to the fore. AI can analyse data with a pace and precision unmatched by humans. And it's starting to help out in the fights against Covid-19, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), a trio of viral infections that can be fatal.

DNA analysis of viruses has long been used to uncover similarities between diseases, helping draw links that unlock greater knowledge about each one. Covid-19, SARS and MERS share very similar nucleotide sequences, making them prime candidates to cross-reference and study together. Effectively, they're from the same family.

But research conducted without machine learning or AI couldn't make the breakthrough needed to crack the code and understand how Covid-19 might mutate. In trials, researchers studied 30 DNA samples each of Covid-19, MERS and SARS, compared against a primer' of Covid-19. A primer is a DNA sequence used to test whether a DNA sample is positive for certain viruses or bacteria by analysing similarities between the sample and the primer. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing clarified



the distinction between the nucleotide structures of the three viruses, but the results could not definitively differentiate between Covid-19 and the other two viruses.

Adding machine learning to the equation increased the success rate drastically. It allowed researchers to study the distance pattern of each DNA sample, so the precise location of the DNA infected with Covid-19 could be known and predicted. Researchers used four machine-learning methods, each optimised with a different combination of parameter settings. The diversification allowed researchers to focus on the best prediction results for each case study.

The similarity of the DNA structure of Covid-19, MERS and SARS is one of the obstacles in predicting samples that are actually infected with Covid-19. The DNA-alignment method with Covid-19 primary samples resulted in positive values ??in all samples, including both MERS and SARS. But with the assistance of AI, it has become much clearer where the distinctions between the viruses lie. Machine learning could differentiate between the three closely re-

lated viruses in a way DNA testing could not. The prediction results were strong, showing two machine learning optimisation approaches were able to observe changes in DNA alignment patterns and predict shifts with 100 percent accuracy. The two less successful optimisations still produced 98.3 percent accuracy, with errors occurring in the Covid-19 sample data. This shows the DNA composition in Covid-19 samples is still diverse and there is a possibility that mutations will continue to occur.

This data is incredibly helpful for researchers and pharmaceutical companies. The results of this analysis give the clearest indication yet of how Covid-19 will mutate, allowing optimal planning on important resourcing decisions, such as vaccine manufacturing and production of antivirals. As the pandemic rages on, the research community needs to stay on the cutting edge to give the world a fighting chance against the coronavirus. AI in the research process is helping do that.

(360info: By Berlian Al Kindhi, and Mauridhi Hery Purnomo, Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember)

Using smartphones could help improve memory skills

Using digital devices, such as smartphones, could help improve memory skills rather than causing people to become lazy or forgetful, finds a new study led by UCL researchers.

The study showed that digital devices help people to store and remember very important information. This, in turn, frees up their memory to recall additional less important things.

Neuroscientists have previously expressed concerns that the overuse of technology could result in the breakdown of cognitive abilities and cause “digital dementia”.

However, the findings show that using a digital device as external memory not only helps people to remember the information saved into the device, but it also helps them to remember unsaved information too.

To demonstrate this, researchers developed a memory task to be played on a touchscreen digital tablet or computer. The test was undertaken by 158 volunteers aged between 18 and 71.

Participants were shown up to 12 numbered circles on the screen, and had to remember to drag some of these to the left and some to the right. The number of circles that they remembered to drag to the correct side determined their pay at the end of the experiment. One side was designated ‘high value’, meaning that remembering to drag a circle to this side was worth 10 times as much money as remembering to drag a circle to the other ‘low value’ side.

Participants performed this task 16 times. They had to use their own memory to remember on half of the trials and they were allowed to set reminders on the digital device for the other half.

The results found that participants tended to use the digital devices to store the details of the high-value circles. And, when they did so, their memory for those circles was improved by 18%. Their memory for low-value circles was also improved by 27%, even in people who had never set any reminders for low-value circles.



Covid-19: Omicron, sub-lineages dominant variant in India

Omicron and its sub-lineages continue to be the dominant variant in India while some samples of highly infectious BA.2.75 have also been found, Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) has said.

In its July 11 bulletin, which was released Monday, the consortium said the spread and frequency of BA.2.75 sub-variant is being closely monitored in every state.

"Any surge in hospitalization or any disease severity has not been observed during this time-period," it said.

The bulletin said Omicron and its sub-lineages continue to be the dominant variant in India and the sub-lineages BA.2 and BA.2.38 have mostly been found.

"BA.2.75 sub-variant has acquired more mutations in spike protein and other genes of the SARS-CoV-2," it said.

In its July 4 bulletin, which



was also released on Monday, the INSACOG said the number of SARS-CoV-2 infection has registered an increase in India over the last few weeks, with the Omicron sub-variants BA.2 (64.9 per cent) and BA.2.38 (26.4 per cent) being the prevalent sub-lineages.

"A small increase in patients infected with the BA.5 variant has also been observed. However, there is no report of any increased hospitalization or any report of increased disease

severity. COVID appropriate behavior is likely to be followed to reduce any new spread of infection," it said.

The INSACOG, set up under the health ministry in 2020 to study and monitor genome sequencing and virus variation of circulating strains of COVID-19 in India, reports genomic surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 across the country through sequencing of samples from sentinel sites and international passengers arriving in India.

Brain diet for kids: Superfoods to boost memory in children

Want to sharpen your child's memory? Make sure they eat a balanced diet and include these superfoods in their meals.

Healthy children with adequate nutrition are more productive and have a better memory power (Pexels)

Eating the right food not only gives a significant boost to a child's memory but also helps them concentrate better. In their formative years, the little ones have greater energy requirements considering their active lifestyle in school, playground, and jumping around at home. They are also at a stage when their brain is still developing fast and ignoring good nutrition can have long lasting impact on various aspects of their physical and mental health. Eating foods rich in diverse nutrients could help them keep lifestyle diseases at bay and promote better memory, concentration and growth in them. (Also read: Super unhealthy foods you should stop giving



your children)

According to UNICEF, almost 2 in 3 children between six months and two years of age are not fed food that supports their rapidly growing bodies and brains and this puts them at risk of poor brain development, weak learning, low immunity, increased infections and, in many cases, death.

"Nutrition is very important for good health and better brain development. Better nutrition is related to improved infant, child and maternal health, stronger immune systems, safer pregnancy and childbirth, lower risk of lifestyle disorders (such as diabetes and obesity), and

longevity. Healthy children with adequate nutrition are more productive and have a better memory power," says Priscilla Marian, Cloudnine Group of Hospitals, Kalyaninagar, Pune.

Here are some memory boosting super-foods for children suggested by Marian:

Koffee With Karan: Aamir Khan says despite divorce, he and ex-wife Kiran Rao ‘will always be a family’: There’s love

All the green leafy vegetables like spinach, fenugreek leaves, coriander leaves, mustard leaves, moringa leaves, beetroot leaves etc are a rich source of vitamins, antioxidants, minerals and dietary fibre.

World Breastfeeding Week: Diet tips for nursing mothers to prevent monkeypox

World Breastfeeding Week 2022: As monkeypox cases in India are rising, it is important for everyone to keep their immunity high to fight infections and illnesses. Breastfeeding is an effective way to keep your baby's immune system robust as breast milk has antibodies that prevent infections. Nursing mothers too can use nutrition as a shield to protect themselves from monkeypox and other diseases by incorporating a healthy diet in their lifestyle.

Good nutrition is important for both mother and the child while breastfeeding as it improves the quality of breast milk and help the newborn to get all the required nutrients. World Breastfeeding is observed every year from August 1-7 to spread awareness about the benefits of breast milk for a baby.

From adding fresh and seasonal fruits and vegetables to the daily diet, ensuring adequate hydration, focussing on protein-rich food to strengthen organ functions to eating whole grains for fibre, vitamins and minerals, nursing mothers should plan their meals mindfully.



"Taking care of your baby and yourself are the two most important things if you are a nursing mother. Your baby's health and hygiene are directly related to and impacted by a mother's actions. Hence a mother should be following all precautions to prevent any kind of unnecessary risk. Now that the spread of

coronavirus has lessened to a large extent, another disease that is looming large is monkeypox," says Dietitian Natasha Mohan.

Monkeypox a zoonotic viral illness that is transmitted to humans through close contact with an infected person or animal. It can spread through close contact with lesions, body fluids, beddings of a monkeypox patient. The disease is self-limiting and usually lasts for 2-4 weeks depending on severity. The symptoms include headache, fever, backache, muscle aches, exhaustion, and rashes that appear on different body parts.

"Although the transmission rate is quite low for this disease, if you are a nursing mother you must take care of your health. Since your baby receives all its nutrition and food from you, it is essential that as a mother you consume the healthiest foods and follow a healthy diet," says Mohan.

Natasha Mohan suggests some diet tips for new mothers to reduce risk of monkeypox.

PSPS Govt PG College for Women Gandhi Nagar organises District Level Patriotic Song Competition

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

In the run up to the Independence Day Celebrations, a District level Singing Competition was hosted by PSPS Govt PG College for Women, Gandhi Nagar under the aegis of “Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav”.

Twenty-five participants from 19 Colleges of Jammu district participated and recited songs that raised the patriotic fervour among the students. The performances were judged by the jury comprising Prof. Renu Sehgal, Deptt. of Music PSPS Govt P.G College for Women, GandhiNagar , Dr. Seema Sharma, HOD Music GCW Udhampur and Dr. Surekha Rani, HOD Music, GDCW Kathua. Dr. Revika Arora, Convenor, Cultural Committee conducted the proceedings of the competition. Dr. Sujata Slathia, Dean Students Welfare



(Arts) was the chief Guest on the occasion. She welcomed the august gathering and encouraged the students to sing enthusiastically and with patriotic fervour.

Prof Kamlesh Slathia, Dean Student Welfare (Science), Prof. Mamta Gupta, Dean Student Welfare (Commerce) graced the occasion as Guest of Honour. Prof Minu Mahajan, Principal, PSPS Govt. P.G College for Women,

GandhiNagar greeted everyone present for Independence Day celebrations and appreciated the efforts of the students that motivated the youngsters to dedicate themselves in service of the nation. Shartik from Government MAM College bagged the first prize and Ankush Kumar from GDC Bishnah was the first runner up and both the contestants were awarded Rs. 5000 and 3000 respectively.

Prof Mala Bhasin, NSS PO and Dr Revika Arora coordinated the event. Prof Neelam Thapa, Dr Chetna Mahajan, Prof Suman Bala, Dr Javaid Iqbal, Prof Abhinav Sharma, Dr Priyanka Sharma, Prof Rahul Kumar, Prof Kusum, Prof Sheetal and Prof Mamta Kundal acted as members of the organising committee. The faculty members of various colleges were also present on the occasion.

Govt employing e-measures for transparent, accountable governance: DC

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Marking a major step towards ensuring transparency and accountability in the Government institutions, e-office working system was started in the all Subdivisions and tehsils of the Rajouri district, here today.

The system was launched by the Deputy Commissioner, Vikas Kundal in presence of ADC Rajouri, Sachin Dev Singh; ACR, Imran Rashid Kataria; CPO, Mohammad Khurshid; DSEO, Sandeep Sharma and others. The E-Office system is an integrated file and records management system that allows employees to manage content, search for data internally and collaborate. The file system also enables the electronic movement and the tracking of files, and the



archival and retrieval of data. The DDC said that e-office system is a digital workplace solution comprising a suite of products that paves the way for an efficient and open Govt by streamlining workflow for both inter and intra Govt processes and making them paperless.

He added that the e-office system will help to support Governance by ushering in more effective and transparent inter and Intra-Government processes. Underlining the significance of the E Office system, the DDC elaborately highlighted the facilities

available in the system for better services delivery to the citizen. Stating that e-Office has been introduced in the district to enhance transparency, accountability and ensure data security & data integrity, he said that it will also help in promoting innovation by releasing staff energy and time from unproductive procedures. He also said that the system will not only provide full confidentiality of the office files but will also save the officials from the worries of space management. The DC observed that the e-office will make work of the office easier and faster and asked the subdivisional and tehsil level officers to ensure that their offices start working through e platform.

H&H Department realizes fine of Rs. 43000 from erring traders

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

To curb the menace of passing on fake handicrafts in place of the genuine art and craft and to check the implementation of the Jammu & Kashmir Tourist Trade Act 1978, Jammu & Kashmir Handicrafts Quality Control Act, a special inspection drive of Handicrafts dealers operating in the tourist areas of Pahalgam, Chandenwari, Akad, Aru, Narbal, Kunzer, Dhoibwan, Chandiloora, Tangmarg and Gulmarg tourist areas was conducted by the Quality Control Division of Handicrafts & Handloom (H&H) Department.

During the course of inspection the handicraft dealers found violating the norms of the said acts were penalized and an amount of Rs 43000 was realized as fine from the erring dealers.

The dealers were strictly warned to desist from the sale of fake machine made look-alikes of Kashmir art products and advised to affix tags depicting price and composition on each item displayed for sale. They were strictly warned to refrain from any kind of malpractice such as toutting and impersonation, which carries huge penalties under the said acts.

The dealers were also apprised about the benefits of the GI tagging on the notified



Kashmir Crafts, and impact of such tagging in building the brand image of Kashmir Arts products. The certification and authenticity will also help in eradicating the menace of machine made and misbranding of Kashmir art products. The Handicraft dealers and other stake holders are ac-

cordingly advised to play their role in promoting the GI tagging on the notified Kashmir Crafts. Also the inspection team interacted with the visiting tourists who were informed to ensure purchase of only genuine handicraft items especially GI tagged notified

Kashmir Art products from such handicrafts business establishments which are registered with Directorate Of Handicrafts & Handloom. They should also seek from the dealer, cash memos for every purchase and retain /preserve the copy of the same for any future use

District level competitions organised in Jammu under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

District Level Singing, Debates and Easy Writing competitions, under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, were today organized by Chief Education Officer (CEO) Jammu in collaboration with District Administration here at Teacher Bhawan, Gandhi Nagar.

The essay writing competition and debate/declamation competitions were held on the themes of Atam Nirbhar Bharat; Unsung heroes of Indian History; India's achievement in the field of Science and space technology; Digital India; relevance of Gandhian Philosophy in pre/post Independence; India and India's struggle for independence.

The students from all zones of District Jammu participated enthusiastically and graced the function with melodious patriotic songs and other activities. Chief Education Officer Jammu, Suraj Singh Rathore wished good luck to all participants and motivated them to inculcate a habit of increasing their participation in cultural and debate activities. He further stated that competitions were conducted first at school level then at zonal level and today the district level competition has been conducted in all three categories.

Deputy CEO Jammu, Ashok Raina appreciated the efforts put in by the teachers and parents who come from far off places to participate in the function. He remembered the great sacrifices made by the free-



dom fighters and congratulated the Cultural & Education Cell district Jammu, who worked under the special guidance of Cultural & Education Cell, Director School Education Jammu. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Guest, Assistant Commissioner General, Rakesh Dubey congratulated the participants and said that Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav was being celebrated throughout the country to pay homage to the national heroes of pre and Post Independence periods. He appreciated the efforts being put in by the Education department in general and Chief Education Officer, Jammu in particular.

The contestants were judged by different panels of Jury comprising Subhash Singh, Lecturer GHSS Mubarak Mandi, Ravinder Kour, Lect. GHSS Shastri Nagar and Ashok Kumar, Master, GHS Mehran Mandrian for Singing competition; Eera Padha, Lect. SRML GHSS, Renu Bala, Lect. Mubarak Mandi, Kanchan Kumari Sharma, Lect. GHSS Shastri Nagar and Jai Karan, Lect. GGHSS Gandhi Nagar for Easy Writing competition and Sujata, Lect. GGHSS Mubarak Mandi and Shivani Pathania, Lect. HSS R S Pura for debate competition. Lakshay Dalotra of Govt. Hr Sec School

SRML, Jammu, Arush Kalsotra of GHSS, SRML Jammu and Kumkum of GHSS Bahafort clinched the first positions in Singing, Debate and Essay Writing competitions, respectively. They will further compete at provincial level competitions as scheduled by the administration. Anjana Khajuria, GHSS Nowabad presided over the event. The function concluded with the singing of the National Anthem. A large number of students, teachers from different zones of district Jammu besides other officials were present on the occasion.

Services to Govt employees to become hassle free, GAD announces Administrative Management System

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

Prime Minister's flagship programme 'Digital India', the Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in the recent past have implemented various IT-enabled solutions to create a vibrant digital ecosystem for delivering essential services for common people and employees. In the last one year, the General Administration Department (GAD) has successfully implemented online services namely e-Office, online Property Return System (PRS), Vigilance Clearance System (VCS), Employees Monitoring Portal (EPM) and Employees Verification System (EVS).

For facilitation of Government employees and to provide a generic, product based solution for better management of service matters through electronic service record, which includes e-Service Book, Personnel Information System and others, transfers, promotions, vigilance status, PRS etc, the GAD has initiated the process of implementation of 'Administrative Management System' (AMS) for all government employees. A meeting in this regard was held under the chairmanship of Principal Secretary GAD, Manoj Kumar Dwivedi with

experts of Directorate of Information Technology, University of Kashmir. During the meeting, it was observed that 'Administrative Management System' is 'one-stop solution' for addressing issues relating to service records of all Government employees and shall be implemented in a phased manner by all departments. Initially, the online module shall be implemented by the General Administration Department and Health and Medical Education Department. However, in order to implement the system, it is essential to have a clean and error free digital library of all the service

records, which can be uploaded on the online AMS portal. To begin with, Drawing & Disbursing Officers (DDOs) have to authenticate the appointment orders of the Government employees, followed by scanning of their service books, so as to ensure that the transition towards electronic service records carried out in transparent manner. In this regard the circular instructions has been issued by General Administration Department vide No. 27-JK(GAD) of 2022 dated: 04.08.2022 and the exercise is to be completed by the DDOs within 30 days.

'Har Ghar Tiranga' Campaign: Tiranga rally organized at Panchtarni

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, AUG 04

As part of the ongoing 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign, a massive Tiranga Rally was held today at Panchtarni Base Camp enrouteing Shri Amarnath Shrine.

The rally witnessed a participation of about 3000 people and was held at a height of more than 12,000.

The rally exuded an environment of nationalist and patriotic fervour.

The rally was jointly held by civil and security agencies, over 1000 Shri Amarnathji yatis, Sanitation Workers, and other stakeholders to commemorate 75 years of Independence of country to celebrate 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.'

The rally was flagged off and led by Thakur Shri Singh, Camp Director Panchtarni.

The participants hoisted flags on the tents in the camp while the environment was reverberated with slogans like Vande Matram and Bharat Mata ki Jai.

The objective of the rally was to spread awareness re-



garding 'Har Ghar Tiranga' initiative of the Government of India that aims to inspire every Indian to hoist the National Flag at their home and to invoke the feeling of patriotism in the hearts of the citizen and promote awareness about the National Flag. Yatra Officer, SP Surinder

Choudhary, Addl. Camp Directors Sanjay Gupta, Chand Singh, Deepak Kumar, Deputy Commandant BSF Santosh Singh, Nodal Officer Sanitation Jahid Azad, Magistrate Manzoor Ahmed Wani, Maj Vipin COY, 2IC ITBP Rana, Commander 2/11 GR, Deputy Commandant CRPF Ajay Raj,

Cap Khatana CRPF, Deputy Camp Director Daljeet Singh, DyCom BSF Pawan Singh, Cap Khatana BSF, DySP Rajinder, DySP Rishi Singh, Sub Inspector Sunil Verma, SHO Panjtarni Nazir Ahmed, officers from NDRF, SDRF among others were present on the occasion.