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the dreams of the common man, provide new heights of success to people's aspirations and every person needs to be empowered to contribute in developed India, he said.

The Lt Governor congratulated the individuals and organizations from diverse fields honoured on the occasion for their outstanding contribution to the society. "I am extremely happy to see people are working with a new commitment for a brighter future of the nation," he said.

J&K is the land of almost all major religions known to humankind. Respect for all religions, sects and co-existence has enriched cultural heritage. Everyone will have to work together to restore its glorious past and promote virtues of culture, humanity and selfless service, the Lt Governor further added.

He also assured all necessary support by the administration to enable the creativity and dedication of the 5163 youth registered by Relief & Rehabilitation (R&R) Department for self employment.

## Panchayat, municipal elections...

to hold urban local body (ULB) elections in addition to Lok Sabha and assembly polls, while the SEC - headed by a state election commissioner - is mandated to conduct elections to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI).

In a letter to the housing and urban development department last month, the CEO's office said consequent to the appointment of a full-time state election commissioner, the mandate to conduct the municipal electoral processes needs to be transferred from the CEO to the SEC.

"For this, the election authority under the municipal acts needs to be changed from chief electoral officer to the state election commissioner. The constitutional provisions also mandate this," the letter read.

The five-year term of most of the municipalities, including the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) and the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), ended in November last year, while the term of panchayats expired on Tuesday.

The term of the SMC ended on November 5 and the JMC's ended on November 14.

The tenure of block development councils (BDCs) and district development councils (DDCs) is ending in October 2024 and January 2026, respectively.

The last ULB and panchayat elections were held between October and December 2018 after a long delay.

The CEO's office, in its letter, also referred to various petitioners who have objected to the large-scale difference in the electoral base of each seat of the two municipal corporations and demanded a fresh delimitation of all bodies.

"...there is a large difference in the elector bases of different wards wherein there are wards with elector bases in the range of 2,000 to 3,000 on one side and 12,000 to 15,000 on the other extreme. Similar variance is there in most of the municipal councils and committees also. This skew in the representation strength of each ward can be addressed by a fresh delimitation exercise," the letter stated.

## Centre begins CDP...

Jammu and Kashmir had made significant progress with 1,080 e-services being made available, Srinivas said.

"Our training initiative aligns with the evolving governance landscape, focusing on technological advancements that empower citizens, ensure accountability, and bring transparency to daily operations," he said.

Srinivas further discussed the NCGG's efforts in training officers nationally and internationally, emphasising the role of technology in governance and the importance of staying updated for effective governance.

The NCGG, established in 2014 by the central government, has the mandate to train civil servants from India and other countries.

The statement said that over the years, the centre has successfully trained officers from Bangladesh, Kenya, Tanzania, Tunisia, Gambia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Laos, Vietnam, Bhutan, and Myanmar.

## World looks at...

and a democracy that delivers," he added.

"All major rating agencies are of the opinion that India will be among the three largest economies of the world in the next few years," Modi said, adding that it is his guarantee that the country will achieve this.

Today, India has given this assurance to the world that we can set common goals

and achieve our goals. India's commitment to world welfare, India's loyalty, efforts and hard work are making today's world more secure and prosperous, he said.

The priorities and aspirations of 1.4 billion people of India, their trust in human-centric development, our commitment for inclusivity and equitability, are a major basis for world prosperity and world development, he added.

At a time when the world is surrounded by many uncertainties, India has emerged as a new ray of hope for the world, the prime minister said.

"India's priorities are clear. India's priorities are sustainable industry, infrastructure and manufacturing, new age skills, futuristic technology, AI and innovation, green hydrogen, renewable energy, semiconductors and its entire ecosystem," he said.

If there is so much resilience and growth momentum in India's economy in a global situation existing today, then the big reason behind this is our focus on structural reforms in the last decade. These reforms have increased the capacity, capability and competitiveness of India's economy, he said.

India recently celebrated 75 years of its independence, and in the next 25 years it will celebrate 100 years. These 25 years are 'amrit kaal' for India for which a goal of making it a developed country has been set, he said.

The PM credited UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al Nahyan, who attended the summit as the chief guest, for the high growth of India-UAE relations.

The future of 21st century India will become bright with our collective effort. Even during the G20 presidency, India provided a roadmap for a global future, and is taking forward the vision in this edition of VGGSS, he added.

India is continuously strengthening its partnership with I2U2 Group (comprising India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates and the United States) and other multilateral organisations, Modi said.

He said his government has made India's banking system strong through recapitalisation and use of information technology, ended more than 40,000 compliances through the ease of doing business, GST and global supply chain diversion.

"We signed three FTAs so as to make India a more attractive destination for global business. One of the FTA is with the UAE. We have opened many sectors for FDI through automatic routes. Today, India is making record investment in infrastructure," he said.

In 10 years, India's capex has grown five times, and the country is also moving fast in green energy and renewable energy sectors, with three times increase in green energy and twenty times in solar energy capacity.

"In 10 years, cheaper phones and data have brought about a new revolution of digital inclusion. Expansion of optical fibre to every village, and expansion of 5G is changing lives of common India. We are the world's third biggest start-up ecosystem," Modi said.

He said the changes happening in India are increasing the ease of living of citizens and empowering them.

"In the five years of our government, more than 13.5 crore people have come out of poverty and the average income of people has increased along with the participation of female workforce, which is a very good signal for India's future," he said, and called upon the world to join India's growth journey.

The government is working to improve logistics and ease of transportation, with the number of airports grown from 74 to 149, national highway network twice, and metro train network thrice in the last ten years, he said.

"It is a matter of happiness for us to have my brother His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to participate in the event. His presence as a chief guest at the VGGSS indicates an increasingly intimate relationship between us. His faith in India and his support were very warm," he said.

The two countries have signed MoUs for development of food parks, cooperation in renewable energy, and investment in the health sector.

Companies have also agreed to invest multi million dollars in India's port infrastructure, he said. UAE's sovereign wealth fund will begin operation in the GIFT City, and transworld companies are also going to start aircraft and ship leasing activities, he said.

## 2.5 Kg narcotics...

found wrapped inside maize husks and kept hidden in window panels of the car. A case under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act has been registered against the accused, the spokesperson said.

## Zulfikar posted as...

Commissioner/Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department. Consequently, the order stated, Zulfikar Azad has been posted as Superintendent, Central Jail Srinagar. "The salary of the Officer shall be drawn by the Police

Headquarters, J&K, from the overall cadre strength of JKPS, on receipt of monthly attendance certificate from the Prisons Department," it added.

## BSF DG reviews...

about the security situation here. The BSF DG visited various border outposts in Jammu's Akhnoor sector on August 9 last year and exhorted the troops to maintain effective domination to successfully meet the challenges from across the frontier.

## Lack of snow...

both taken on the 6th of Jan. If we don't get snow soon the summer is going to be miserable. Not to mention skiers like me who can't wait to get on the slopes but there's nothing to ski on," Abdullah posted in X.

The former Chief Minister also posted two pictures of himself taken on January 6 of 2022 and 2023 in Gulmarg with plenty of snow everywhere.

"According to local farmers, with very little snowfall even in the higher reaches of Kashmir this winter, the agricultural produce in the valley can be severely affected, while there will also be problems for the residents as they will not get sufficient drinking water.

"The melting of snow at the onset of summer in the higher reaches of Kashmir is the main source of water for our rivers and streams. With no snow on the mountains, people in the plains will suffer. Crops will take a hit as there will be water scarcity for irrigation," Mohammad Akbar Ganai, a farmer from Nowgam, said.

Another X user posted a video of a wildfire sweeping through the Gulmarg golf course -- a phenomenon hitherto unthinkable in the month of January.

"Amidst a prolonged dry spell, a wildfire has swept through a section of Gulmarg Golf Course. The fire service is actively managing the situation, and currently, it is under control," Farhat Naik wrote in his post.

An official of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said there has been a large deficit in winter snowfall in Jammu and Kashmir; Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Ladakh this year and the situation is unlikely to change before Republic Day.

"There is no forecast of any active Western Disturbance or snowfall till January 25. The satellite image from the MeT centre at Leh shows a grim picture of rapid melting of glaciers, which are our priceless natural resource," Sonam Lotus, Director, IMD Leh Centre, said.

According to the IMD's data, December 2023 saw 79-per cent deficit rainfall, while the first 10 days of January this year have also been dry.

If the IMD's forecast holds good, it will put into jeopardy the conduct of the fourth Khelo India National Winter Games, which are scheduled to be held at Gulmarg from February 2.

## Authorities thwart attempts...

The incidents, occurring thrice in the past fortnight, took advantage of poor visibility caused by the foggy weather.

"Three mobiles with sim cards were retrieved after being thrown into the jail premises using rubber balls," said a senior officer.

"This modus operandi, exploiting foggy conditions and poor visibility, has been adopted by the individuals attempting to introduce mobiles into the facility," he added. The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), which guards this high-security jail, has increased the security in and around the premises.

Earlier in October last year, the CISF had taken over the security of Kot Bhalwal Jail in Jammu -- a high-security jail housing over 900 prisoners, including dreaded terrorists of different outfits, both locals as well as foreigners.

## ED summons Farooq...

connection with the federal agency's investigation into alleged irregularities in the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA).

The MP from Srinagar Lok Sabha seat was charge-sheeted by Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the case in 2022.

The case relates to siphoning off the funds of the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association by way of transfer to various personal bank accounts of unrelated parties, including those of JKCA office bearers, and by way of unexplained cash withdrawals from JKCA bank accounts, the ED had said.

The agency's case is based on a 2018 charge-sheet filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against the same accused.

The summons have asked Abdullah, a former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, to deposit at the ED office in Srinagar.

## Vinod raises issues of disabled persons with Kabra



Vinod Sharma, social activist highlighting issues in public Darbar.

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

#### NOWSHERA:

Vinod Sharma, social activist & Sr.Vice president JK Handicapped welfare Association District Rajouri raised many issues of disabled persons with Additional Secretary Shalin Kabra during Public Darbar at Nowshera.

Sharma raised demand for increasing monthly pension from 1000 to 3000 as per Centre Government and UT Norms for disabled persons.

He also apprised officer that Office Building of Social Welfare Department is on rent from so long and not approachable for disabled persons, so

new building should be constructed on Govt Land on priority basis.

He also said that culture programmes and activities should be arranged monthly basis for disabled persons so that their morale can be boosted.

Taking the serious Note Additional Secretary Shalin Kabra asked Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Om Prakash Bhagat that the all the genuine should be fulfilled on priority basis. ADDC Rajouri, District Officer of Social Welfare Department Rajouri, ADC Nowshera, ADC Sunderbani and Other officers were present.

## Narco smuggler nabbed with 8 gms heroin

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

R S PURA: Police on Wednesday nabbed a narco smuggler and recovered 8 grams of heroin from his possession.

As per details, a party of police station RS Pura during routine patrolling under the jurisdiction of police station R.S Pura established a Naka at Banota Road near Sunder Farm and started checking/frisking.

During checking/frisking found that one pedestrian who was on its way from Kotli Shah Doula towards Banota road, on seeing naka party, the said pedestrian turned back and tried to flee from the spot.

The naka party overpowered the said pedestrian and on preliminary questioning, the said pedestrian disclosed his name as Som Nath, son of Des Raj, resident of Rangpur Sidhrey tehsil RS Pura Distt. Jammu. During his personal search a transparent polythene packet containing 8 grams heroine like substance was recovered from his possession. He was arrested and FIR No. 13/2023 under sections 8/21/22 NDPS Act was registered against him at police station R S Pura.

## 50 kgs of polythene seized, Rs 1,500 fine realized

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

R S PURA: Police on Wednesday seized 50 kgs of polythene besides realized Rs 1500 fine.

As per details, while conducting patrolling towards Badyal Brahmana, a team of RS Pura apprehended a person namely Deepak Kumar, son of Pritam Chand, resident of Ward No.5 R.S Pura Tehsil R.S Pura Distt. Jammu carrying illegally two sacks of illegal polythene weighing 50 kg (25 kg each), along with his motorcycle bearing Regd No. JK02CM-6692 and regarding this Pollution Control Department was informed accordingly.

That taking cognizance into the matter the officials from the pollution control board, South Division Jammu led by Arshad Nadeem Malik along with officials from came at police station imposed Rs 1500 fine to the violator, and later on, released the motorcycle and seized the banned illegal polythene bags along with them.



## DC Doda inspects quality of work on newly constructed Khalleni-Goa NH stretch

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Doda, Harvinder Singh, led a comprehensive inspection of the recently constructed highway stretch from Khalleni to Goa (Marmat). The primary objective of the visit was to evaluate the maintenance and quality of the road infrastructure.

The inspection team comprised key officials, including Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Sanjeev Kumar, Manager of the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL), Tehsildar and other revenue officials.

Together, they meticulously examined the road's condition, identifying any maintenance requirements and assessing compliance to construction quality standards.

During the inspection, the



DC Doda, Harvinder Singh inspecting road work.

DC underscored the significance of maintaining the newly constructed highway stretch to guarantee the safety and convenience of commuters. He issued directives to the NHIDCL manager and other relevant authorities to promptly address any identified maintenance issues. Additionally, the revenue officials were tasked with assisting in the resolution of land acquisition matters that might arise during the

maintenance and improvement processes.

The visit not only reaffirmed the commitment of the Deputy Commissioner and his team to ensuring quality infrastructure but also demonstrated their dedication to addressing issues promptly for the welfare of the public. This proactive approach aligns with the goal of providing a reliable and safe transportation network for the community.

## Director AHD interacts with dairy farmers at series of camps across Ramban district

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAMBAN: Director, Animal Husbandry Department, Jammu, Dr Shubhra Sharma presided over a series of Awareness Camps during her 2- day visit to Ramban district.

Speaking at various camps, Dr Shubhra exhorted the farmers to avail the benefit of Integrated Dairy Development Scheme (IDDS) to establish Dairy units to enhance the milk production. She said that JKMPCL will provide the facilities especially for collection of milk, buying subsidized milk vans and opening Milk ATMs in Ramban. She impressed upon the participants to focus on improving the milk output of the district and strengthening the poultry sector by availing the benefits of the farmer friendly schemes as

IDDS, IPDP, Feed and Fodder and HADP.

Responding to the demands of locals, the Director assured that the demand relating to establishment of new Veterinary Centres and availability of medicines would be looked into. At the outset, CAHO, Dr. Suhail apprised Dr Shubhra of achievements and progress of the department registered in various sectors and schemes.

During the Awareness Camps organized at Chief Animal Husbandry Officer (CAHO), office Kowbagh, village Gaam and Chamalwas, where a team led by CAHO, Dr. Suhail Jan Kawoosa comprising Dr. Nadeem Ahmed, Extension Officer, Extension & Publicity Wing, Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Jammu and,

Managing Director, JK Milk Producers' Cooperative Ltd. (JKMPCL) Chirag Bhensadadia sensitized and motivated the farmers about various government sponsored schemes and the subsidized facilities being provided by the Department.

Managing Director, JKMPCL informed that as many as 1,50,000 litre milk is collected from 60,000 persons by the JKMPCL daily and about Rs.8 crore to Rs.9 crore is distributed among them daily across UT of J&K. An amount of Rs.280 crore was paid to these milk producers last year he said and added that JKMPCL bought buffalo milk at the rate of one percent milk fat for Rs.8.6 that is maximum at the rate of Rs. 68 per litre of buffalo milk in J&K which is highest price in

India. At Kowbagh, as many as 25 Pashu Sakshies were given free kits which they will use to record milk production and balanced diet of cattle and bovines in their respective villages for which they were already trained. Many a progressive farmers also shared their experiences as beneficiaries of government sponsored schemes, local issues and demands. Some of them demanded Milk Van and establishment of a Milk ATM in their respective areas.

At village Gaam, the villagers demanded holding of more Awareness Camps in remote hamlets and sanctioning of a Veterinary Centre in Gaam. The villagers were given free Feed Supplements and Devorning Medicines there.

## Agriculture Department Poonch organises Road Show-cum-Millet Mela

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: A Road show cum Millet Mela was organized today by Department of Agriculture Poonch in connection with observance of International Year of Millets with a focus to explore the local potential of Millet cultivation and transforming the agricultural scenario.

The farmers were imparted detailed awareness about the cultivation of millets and its consumption on large scale.

The event was formally flagged off by District Development Commissioner, Yasin M. Choudhary from Sports Stadium Poonch. After passing different parts of the city, the road show culminated at Chief Agriculture Office Complex Poonch where different recipes of millets were served to the farmers.

Chief Agriculture Officer,



DCC Yasin M. Choudhary flagging off road show.

Rakesh Kumar Sharma briefed the participants about the importance of the millets in their daily diet and exhorted the farmers to increase the area under Millet (Bajra, Ragi, Jowar etc.) cultivation. He made a reference to the age old healthy practice of using millets in their diet and having a healthy life style.

He said that the Govt. of India is now focusing on reintroducing health supplements including millets for

promoting a healthy life style among the masses. He also informed that 7.50 Qtls. seed of different millets were provided free of cost to the farmers during kharif-2023 with a focus of creating awareness among the farmers through cluster demonstrations. He further asked the youths to come forward for availing the subsidy for opening of millet restaurants under HADP- Scheme with the objective of increasing millet consumption and including millets in

demand-supply chain.

District Development Commissioner requested all the participants to join hands to promote awareness about Millets leading to increase consumption and cultivation benefitting the farmers. Assistant Soil Conservation Officer, Sham Gupta, District Agriculture Officer (Ext.) Poonch, Munshi Ram, SMS (DL) Ravinder Pal Singh Bali, Sub Divisional Agriculture Officer Poonch, Neeraj Kumar Sharma, Sub Divisional Agriculture Officer Surankote, Naresh Sharma along with staff, District Coordinator JKN-RLM besides large number of farmers and farm-women also participated in the event.

Technical Officer to Chief Agriculture Officer Poonch, Charanjeet Singh Raina conducted the proceeding of the event.