

## !! Continuations from Page 1 !! J&K working for...

providing opportunities and opening up new avenues in diverse sectors. "I strongly believe that socio-economic goals of development and empowerment of youth should be made through public-private partnerships. It can provide us an extensive network of skilling and entrepreneurship projects and we can take these facilities to the grassroots levels.

In 2020 I had initiated public-private partnership projects. Even today, we are also creating an enabling policy environment in which youth's concerns can be reflected, and redressed in a speedy manner," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted his resolve to develop a robust ecosystem where the Sikh community members, especially the youth have access to opportunities and make meaningful contribution to the society.

"Our youth from Sikh community represent the very pivot around which socio-economic growth and transformation of the society takes a new shape and to ensure this we are working with dedication for mainstreaming of Sikh youth into the development process," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He further asked the Youth to follow the footsteps of their great ancestors and make the entire Sikh community and the nation proud.

The Lieutenant Governor said, "Indian Army is capable and is giving a befitting reply. J&K Police and Security forces are working in coordination and they have been instructed to crush terrorism and its ecosystem". He said this during his interaction with media persons.

Ajit Singh, Chairman, All Jammu Kashmir Sikh Coordination Committee; presidents of District Gurdwara Parbandhak Committees, heads of various sikh organisations, players, coaches and youth in large number were present.

Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, Jammu University, senior officials of Police and civil administration were also present on the occasion.

## HIGHLIGHTS...

PPP can provide us an extensive network of skilling and entrepreneurship projects and we can take these facilities to the grassroots levels

In 2020 I had initiated PPP projects. Even today, we are also creating an enabling policy environment in which youth's concerns can be reflected, and redressed in speedy manner.

Lauds the All J&K Sikh Coordination Committee for empowering Sikh community and preserving its rich heritage while fostering a sense of pride and responsibility towards the society and the nation among its youth.

## BoDs of SC...

Planning, Development and Monitoring Department; Tribal Affairs Department; and Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Department shall be the directors of the corporation; representative of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India; Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, representative of the National Schedule Caste Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi; representative of the National Schedule Tribal Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi; representative of National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi; representative of National Safai Karamchairs Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi; representative of the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi; representative of the National Minorities Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi shall be the nominee directors of the corporation and Managing Director; J&K SC, ST, BC Corporation shall be director/member secretary of the corporation.

## Govt constitutes panel...

of the Finance, Housing & Urban Development, and General Administration Departments, along with the Administrative Secretary of the concerned department and Commissioners of Srinagar and Jammu Municipal Corporations as members.

The committee has been empowered to co-opt additional members as needed and is expected to submit its report at the earliest.

The committee will recommend measures for resolving issues hindering the devolution process in accordance with the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act. It will suggest strategies to financially optimize the devolution of functions, functionaries, and funds within the UT of Jammu & Kashmir. The Housing & Urban Development Department will provide secretarial support to the committee. The move aligns with the government's commitment to strengthening local governance and ensuring efficient administration at the municipal level. The order was issued by Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, M. Raju.

## NAKSHA will come...

flying of drones, launch of Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) booklet, Video and flyer on NAKSHA Programme, flagging of WDC Yatra, screening of WDC video and playing of Watershed Anthem.

The NAKSHA program aims to create and update land records in urban areas to ensure accurate and reliable documentation of land ownership. This initiative will empower citizens, improve ease of living, enhance urban planning, and reduce land-related disputes. The IT-based system for property record administration will foster transparency, efficiency and support sustainable development.

The Survey of India is the technical partner for NAKSHA programme which is responsible for conducting aerial surveys and providing orthorectified imagery, through third party vendors, to state and Union Territory governments. The end-to-end web-GIS platform will be developed by the Madhya Pradesh State Electronic Development Corporation (MPSEDC) and storage facilities will be provided by the National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICSI).

States and Union Territory governments are scheduled to conduct field surveys and ground truthing using the orthorectified imagery, ultimately leading to the final publication of urban and semi-urban land records.

The NAKSHA pilot program is expected to cost approximately Rs 194 crore, fully funded by the Government of India.

The same programme is being organised in four selected ULBs of J&K UT including Bishnah in Jammu, Katra in Reasi, Awantipora in Pulwama and Pattan in Baramulla districts at Green View Resort, Bishnah; Auditorium Spiritual Growth Centre, Katra; Lal Ded Auditorium IUST, Awantipora and Auditorium Hall Government Degree College, Pattan respectively.

## Deaths of 2...

My thoughts and prayers are with their families during this difficult time. My office is in touch with the local MLA and the concerned officers have been asked to investigate the cause of these deaths," Abdullah wrote on X.

Station House Officer of Billawar Police Station, Jitender Singh, said police had already registered a murder case in the incident and further investigations are on to bring the culprits to book.

He said a terror angle in the case cannot be ruled out.

Last year, several parts of Kathua, including Billawar, witnessed terror activities including an attack on an army patrol that left five soldiers dead.

## Army fully capable...

army personnel was injured in a landmine explosion last week.

Indian Army's retaliatory action also resulted in "heavy casualties" on the Pakistani side.

Ceasefire violation along the borders in J-K is rare ever since India and Pakistan renewed the ceasefire agreement on February 25, 2021.

The Lt Governor said police and other security agencies are working in a close synergy and they have been given clear directions to wipe out terrorism and end this ecosystem. "There will be no pause in anti-terrorism operations as the top priority is to maintain peace and tranquillity in J-K," he said.

## Justice Tashi Rabstan...

the region. He stated that this is a momentous occasion that will significantly improve the accessibility of justice for the people of Akhnoor.

"With the establishment of this court, we are taking a crucial step ensuring that the legal needs of our citizens are met efficiently and fairly," he added.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Administrative Judge for District Jammu, in his address, emphasized that the new Court building will play a vital role in expediting the delivery of justice, especially for the people residing in the Akhnoor area and surrounding towns.

Yash Paul Bourney, Pr. District & Sessions Judge, Jammu, in his welcome address, expressed optimism regarding the positive impact this new facility will create in terms of reducing delays in case processing.

Rajesh Gupta, Chief Engineer PWD (R&B) Jammu gave brief account of the project report.

President, Bar Association, Akhnoor lauded the proactive role of the High Court especially the Chief Justice in ensuring the completion of the project within the time line.

Thereafter Chief Justice of High Court and Ladakh and Administrative Judge for District Jammu presented memento to the contractor, Jalbir Singh for his continuous and tireless efforts and distributed blankets to other labourers as a token of

appreciation of their hardwork.

Arushi Shukla, Munsiff Akhnoor conducted the proceedings of the programme. Shahzad Azeem, Registrar General, M.K. Sharma, Principal Secretary to the Chief Justice, Preet Simran Grover, Chief Judicial Magistrate Jammu, Smriti Sharma, Secretary District Legal Services Authority Jammu, Mukhtar Ahmed, SDM Akhnoor, Satish Sharma, SDM Khour, Naresh Kumar, Tehsildar Akhnoor & local officers from Civil and Police Administration and officers from PWD (R&B), Jammu, Members of the Bar and local citizens were also present on the occasion.

## Gyanesh Kumar appointed...

Home Minister Amit Shah was the third member of the selection panel. Kumar is a 1988-batch Kerala Cadre IAS officer. After completing his B.Tech in Civil Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur, he studied Business Finance in ICAFI, India and Environmental Economics in HMD, Harvard University, US.

He has worked in the government of Kerala as the assistant collector of Ernakulam, sub-collector of Adoor, managing director of the Kerala State Development Corporation for SC/ST, municipal commissioner of the Corporation of Cochin, besides holding other posts.

As a secretary to the government of Kerala, Kumar handled diverse departments, such as finance resources, fast-track projects and the public works department.

In central government, he has rich experience of working as the joint secretary in the Ministry of Defence, joint secretary and additional secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, secretary in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and secretary in the Ministry of Cooperation. He superannuated on January 31, 2024.

## Dy CM reviews development landscape of Baramulla

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

BARAMULLA: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, on Monday chaired a meeting at Baramulla held to review the developmental landscape of the District with emphasis on assessing progress on ongoing projects, addressing challenges in implementation and ensuring timely execution of key initiatives across the various sectors.

Present in the meeting were Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Elections, Javed Ahmad Dar, MLA Uri, Sajad Ahmad, MLA Wagoora-Kreeri, Irfan Hafeez Lone, MLA Sopore, Irshad Ahmad Kar, MLA Pattan, Javid Riyaz Bedar, MLA Tangmarg, Farooq Ahmad Shah (who joined virtually), District Development Commissioner, Minga Sherpa, Heads of Departments and sectoral officers.

The Deputy Chief Minister conducted a comprehensive review of projects being executed by Public Works (PWD), Health, RDD, Education, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry departments besides Jal Jeevan Mission, KPDCL and other key departments.

Legislators from the concerned constituencies projected their grievances and demands including issues related to mining in Uri sub-division, development of Parihaspora, Pattan, as a heritage village, expediting work on drainage work in Sopore, macadamization of roads in Wagoora-Kreeri and other development related issues.

While addressing the concerns raised by the Legislators, the Deputy Chief Minister issued directions to the concerned officers to expedite the work on ongoing projects to ensure timely completion.

The Deputy Chief Minister underscored the need for strong collaboration between elected legislators and the officers, urging them to work in close coordination to fulfill aspirations of the people and transform the district into a thriving economic hub.

Earlier, the DC apprised the Deputy Chief Minister regarding development scenario of the district and highlighted various long pending demands. These included establishment of mini secretariat in Sopore, Tangmarg, Baramulla and Uri; Multi Level Parking in Sopore and Baramulla; additional hospital and upgradation of GMC Baramulla, availability of specially skilled doctors; Gulmarg road upgradation; provision for eco-tourism in places like Mund Daji, Kitar Daji, Shrunz Pall; boundary wall and road upgradation around SKAUST Wadoora, upgradation of sewage network in towns besides upgradation of stadium with installation of flood lights.

While addressing these demands, the Deputy Chief Minister sought updates from the respective departmental heads on the issues raised and instructed them to prioritize the necessary work and ensure its completion within a set timeframe, avoiding any unnecessary delays.

He asserted that the Legislators represent the voice of the people and it is important for the officers to address their issues timely. He directed the officers to treat these issues with the highest priority and ensure their swift resolution without any delays. Reiterating the government's commitment towards fast tracking development and improving public infrastructure in Baramulla, the Deputy Chief Minister assured that all genuine demands and grievances would be addressed at the earliest. He asked all stakeholders to maintain a result-orientated approach and work towards making Baramulla a model district in terms of governance, infrastructure, and public services. Speaking on the occasion, Javed Ahmad Dar emphasized the importance of transparency in all developmental works. He directed the officers to take strict action against those displaying a lenient approach or engaging in unethical practices. Later, the Deputy Chief Minister launched the Sheep Husbandry Wall Calendar and distributed Ayush Cards, marriage assistance sanction letters, subsidy release letters under PM-NREGA and distributed education assistance amounting to Rs. 4.05 crore as education assistance for 9507 beneficiaries.

## 7-day training on Scientific Beekeeping concludes

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The seven-day training program on Scientific Beekeeping organized by the Apiculture Development Scheme, Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Department Jammu, under the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM) ended on Monday here at the Conference Hall of Directorate of Agriculture Krishi Bhawan Jammu with the felicitation of 50 attendee farmers and beekeepers drawn from across the Jammu Division.

The program, held from February 10 to February 16, 2025, was designed to raise awareness and enhance the skills of prospective beekeepers. Participants received training in bee hive operations and colony management at the DCTC, Apiculture Development Scheme Jammu. They were imparted hands-on experience and practical insights into beekeeping.

The event was presided over by Director Agriculture Jammu, S. Arvinder Singh Reen, who felicitated the beekeepers. He presented them with Tool Kits, bee flora saplings, and certificates of participation, acknowledging their commitment to advancing scientific beekeeping practices.

The Director assured the beekeepers that the department would extend support in the marketing and branding of honey products. He encouraged beekeepers to work in clusters or form Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to strengthen the marketing and sales of honey. He also pledged the department's technical and financial assistance, particularly to support the migration of bee colonies and optimize honey production.

The Director highlighted the economic potential of various hive products such as royal jelly, bee venom, propolis and pollen, which could provide valuable additional sources of income for beekeepers. Deputy Director (Central) Jammu and Liaison Officer for the Apiculture Development Scheme, Dr. Ashwani Sharma, also addressed the gathering, focusing on the migration challenges faced by beekeepers. He emphasized the need for creating a green corridor to ensure that bees do not suffer during migration. Dr. Sharma urged Director Agriculture to consider this initiative to facilitate smoother and healthier migration of bee colonies, thereby supporting beekeepers' mobility without harming their colonies.

The session also included an interactive feedback segment led by Assistant Entomologist Rajesh Verma, during which participants shared their positive experiences and satisfaction with the quality and relevance of the training. The beekeepers expressed appreciation for the comprehensive lectures and practical training that equipped them with essential skills to improve their beekeeping practices. The proceedings of the program were conducted by the team of the Apiculture Development Scheme Jammu.

## J&KLDBDC Commission visits Srinagar

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Jammu & Kashmir Local Bodies Dedicated Backward Classes (&KLDBDC) Commission on Monday visited District Headquarter Srinagar as a part of their outreach and met the stakeholders from different Panchayats and surrounding blocks of Districts Srinagar, Budgam and Ganderbal to assess the implications of backwardness among OBC's in direct elections to the local bodies.

The Commission was apprised by the delegations about the problems faced by the OBC community in getting representation in the local bodies and the circumstances that prevent them in getting elected to the rural local bodies.

The delegations expressed their concern about the absence of comprehensive census of OBC classes so far and stressed that the OBC classes survey should be done in light of more castes that have been included in 2024.

The Commission gave a patient hearing to the views and grievances of the delegations and, assured to accord consideration to their concerns.

## Earthquake jolts Delhi-NCR

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Strong tremors were felt in the national capital and adjoining regions as an earthquake of 4.0 magnitude struck the region early on Monday.

There were no immediate reports of any damage or injuries.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged people in the region to stay calm and follow safety precautions while keeping alert for possible aftershocks.

Modi said in a post on X, "Tremors were felt in Delhi and nearby areas. Urging everyone to stay calm and follow safety precautions, staying alert for possible aftershocks. Authorities are keeping a close watch on the situation."

The epicentre of the quake was in the Jheel Park area of Dhaula Kuan and there were some reports of people hearing a loud sound as the ground shook.

The National Center for Seismology said the earthquake struck at a focal depth of five kilometres at 5:36 am.

Shallow earthquakes, originating five or 10 kilometres below the surface, tend to cause more damage than those originating deep below the surface.

The Jheel Park region has been experiencing smaller, low-magnitude quakes once every two to three years. It recorded an earthquake of 3.3 magnitude in 2015, an official said.

In a post on X, the Delhi Police said, "We hope you all are safe, Delhi!"

It also urged citizens to call on the emergency 112 helpline for emergencies.

The strong tremors triggered by the earthquake prompted residents of several high-rise buildings in Delhi, Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad to rush out of their homes.

A woman in her 50s who was out on a morning walk in E Block of Noida Sector 20 said, "Hum log bahar park me walk kar rahe the toh pata nahin chala. Lekin kafi tej tha. Log bahar aa gaye. (We were walking in the park, so we didn't feel it strongly. But it was quite strong. People came rushing out!)."

Visuals from PTI Videos showed people waiting outside their homes across Delhi-NCR, fearful of any aftershock.

Naresh Kumar, a resident of West Delhi, said this was the first time that he had experienced such a strong tremor.

Ratanlal Sharma, who was waiting at New Delhi railway station for a train to Prayagraj, said he was at the platform when he felt a sudden jolt. "It felt like a train suddenly came to a screeching halt," he said.

A resident of a high-rise in Ghaziabad said the tremors were so strong that everyone rushed downstairs in panic.

AAP leader Atishi said on X, "A strong earthquake just hit Delhi. I pray to God that everyone is safe."

Resharing her post, AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal said he prayed for everyone's safety.

"Massive tremors were felt 10 minutes back in Delhi, woke us up from sleep. I hope and pray everyone is safe and sound," AICC national spokesperson Ragini Nayak said in a post on X.

Delhi is located about 250 kilometres from the seismically-active Himalayan collision zone and experiences shaking frequently from far- and near-field earthquakes.

The national capital is placed in Seismic Zone IV in the seismic zoning map of India, the second highest in the country.

A 3.5-magnitude quake on April 12, 2020 and a 3.4-magnitude one on May 10, 2020, in northeast Delhi and a 4.4-magnitude earthquake on May 29, 2020, near Rohtak (about 50 kilometres west of Delhi), followed by more than a dozen aftershocks, sparked panic in the densely populated habitat.

Haryana also reported minor earthquakes in 2022-23.

## 1.35 Cr devotees take holy dip in Sangam on Monday

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

MAHAKUMBH NAGAR (UP): The spiritual fervour at the Maha Kumbh remains unwavering as more than 1.35 crore devotees took a holy dip in the sacred waters of the Sangam by 8 pm on Monday.

According to figures released by the Mela administration, the total number of devotees who have bathed in the Maha Kumbh since January 13 has surpassed 54.31 crore.

Alongside common devotees, several political leaders and dignitaries also participated in the sacred ritual on Monday.

Among them were Union Minister for Labour and Employment Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of State SP Singh Baghel and West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose.

"So far, 53 crore people have bathed here. This grand event is happening by the grace of the almighty," Mandaviya said.

Baghel also shared his experience, saying, "I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to take a holy dip at the Maha Kumbh. This is a divine blessing and a significant moment in life." He later participated in the prasad distribution programme organised by ISKCON and the Adani Group.

West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose called the Maha Kumbh "the finest example of India's glorious culture and traditions."

He said, "It is a matter of pride for all Indians that the world's largest gathering of people is voluntarily taking part in this sacred ritual."

Rohan Jaitley, son of late finance minister Arun Jaitley and president of the Delhi Cricket Association, also took a dip in the Sangam with his wife. Speaking about the experience, he said, "I feel blessed and fortunate to witness the divine atmosphere of the Maha Kumbh. Despite the massive turnout, the local administration has managed everything efficiently and exceptionally well."

Former Indian cricketer RP Singh, who also bathed at the Sangam, said, "This is my second Kumbh. I feel incredibly lucky to be here again. It is unimaginable how such a massive gathering of 50 crore people is being managed so smoothly."

Nara Lokesh, Andhra Pradesh's Minister for Human Resource Development, along with his family, also participated in the sacred ritual.

## DM Jammu directs mandatory CCTVs installation

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: District Magistrate Sachin Kumar Vaishya on Monday issued an order for mandatory installation of CCTV cameras at key establishments across Jammu to enhance public security. The directive, issued under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, seeks to improve surveillance through technology.

The order applies to banking and financial institutions, business establishments and public spaces with high foot traffic. These include banks, ATMs, jewellery shops, petrol pumps, shopping malls, restaurants, hotels, cinemas, liquor shops, educational institutions, places of worship, transportation hubs, hospitals, offices etc.

Establishments and market associations have been asked to install CCTV cameras within two weeks, covering entry and exit points up to 40 meters. The systems are required to operate continuously with power backup, maintaining a resolution of at least 1920x1080 and store footage for 30 days.

The CCTV footage must be provided to law enforcement agencies when requested and any suspicious activity observed should be reported to the local Station House Officers (SHO). The SHOs will compile a list of non-compliant establishments for submission through SSP Jammu.

The order takes effect on February 17, 2025, for an initial period of eight weeks, with the possibility of extensions or modifications. Non-compliance will be subject to legal action under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023.

## Govt may raise deposit insurance beyond Rs 5 lakh

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The government is "actively considering" raising the deposit insurance limit beyond the current Rs 5 lakh, reported PTI, citing a senior finance ministry official on Monday.

This announcement comes just days after the New India Co-operative Bank scam was exposed.

M Nagaraju, Secretary of the Department of Financial Services, confirmed that discussions are underway in this regard.

"The point about increasing insurance... that is under active consideration. As and when the government approves, we will notify it," Nagaraju told reporters at a press conference attended by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

However, he refrained from commenting on the New India Co-operative Bank crisis, stating that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is handling the matter.

Deposit insurance covers bank customers when a lender collapses. The Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC)-which collects premiums from banks- has historically paid out claims, especially for cooperative banks.

In 2020, after the PMC Bank scam, the deposit insurance limit was increased from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.

Meanwhile, Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth assured that cooperative banks operate under strict RBI regulations and that the sector remains strong.

"A crisis at one entity should not lead anybody to cast doubts on the overall sector," he said, adding that it is the regulator's responsibility to act against fraudulent banks. According to reports, 90 per cent of New India Co-operative Bank's 130,000 depositors will have their entire money covered under the DICGC insurance scheme.

The scam came to light after a physical inspection revealed that Rs 122 crore in cash recorded in the bank's books was missing.