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### My election proof...

who was born in a Santhal family, said she grew up in a small tribal village where even getting primary education was a dream and went on to become the first person in the village to enrol for college education.

"It is a matter of great satisfaction for me that those who have been deprived for centuries and those who have been denied the benefits of development, those poor, downtrodden, backwards and tribals are seeing their reflection in me," she said.

Murmu said her election as president has the blessings of the poor of the country and reflected the dreams and potential of crores of women and daughters of the country.

She paid tribute to India's freedom fighters, and said the country will have to move quickly on the twin tracks of sabka prayas' (everyone's effort) and sabka kartavya' (everyone's duty) to fulfil their expectations.

Noting that she was the first president to be born after Independence, Murmu said it was her good fortune that she has assumed the position at a time when the country is celebrating "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav" to mark the 75th anniversary of its freedom.

"In our country full of diversities, we are engaged in the making of 'Ek Bharat - Shreshtha Bharat' by adopting many languages, religions, sects, food habits, lifestyles and customs.

She highlighted the role of India's ancient traditions in dovetailing growth and environment preservation.

"I was born in that tribal tradition which has lived in harmony with nature for thousands of years. I have realized the importance of forests and water bodies in my life," Murmu, who also worked as a teacher decades ago, said.

"We take necessary resources from nature and serve nature with equal reverence. This sensitivity has become a global imperative today."

Murmu, who started public life as a councillor and was former Jharkhand governor, said she wanted to reassure all Indians, particularly the youth and women, that their interests will be supreme for her as president.

The Prime Minister described Murmu assuming the office of President as a watershed moment.

"In her address after taking oath, President Droupadi Murmu Ji gave a message of hope and compassion. She emphasised on India's accomplishments and presented a futuristic vision of the path ahead at a time when India is marking Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav," Modi said.

"The entire nation watched with pride as Smt. Droupadi Murmu Ji took oath as the President of India. Her assuming the Presidency is a watershed moment for India especially for the poor, marginalised and downtrodden. I wish her the very best for a fruitful Presidential tenure," he added.

Congress leader and Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot was also fulsome in his praise.

"We participated in her oath-taking ceremony. Her views were nice. Every word in her speech had a meaning. I am very impressed," the opposition leader told reporters.

The day, which started with outgoing president Kovind and Murmu arriving in a procession from the Rashtrapati Bhavan to the Parliament Building, was edged with ceremony and celebration.

After the short ceremony, Murmu and Kovind were escorted out of the Central Hall amid the roll of drums and blowing of trumpets.

There was a national salute by the President's Bodyguard at Gate No 5 of Parliament. The new president and her predecessor left in a ceremonial procession back to the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Keeping with the occasion, caparisoned horses, and men in white lined the route from Parliament up Raisina Hill to the British era presidential palace as the presidential convoy made its way.

As monsoon clouds framed the dome of the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the new commander in chief of the armed forces inspected a tri-services guard of honour in the forecourt.

Former president Kovind and his family, who move to a bungalow in Lutyens Delhi, were given a formal send-off by the Prime Minister and other dignitaries as well as the Rashtrapati Bhavan staff.

Catapulted into the presidential spotlight, the unassuming Murmu is believed to be deeply spiritual and a keen practitioner of the meditation techniques of the Brahma Kumaris, a movement she embraced after she lost her husband, two sons, mother and brother in the just six years between 2009-2015.

Her daughter Itishree works in a bank in Odisha.

Her first steps in politics were taken in Rairangpur where she was elected as BJP councillor in the Rairangpur Notified Area Council in 1997. She rose to being a minister in Odisha's BJD-BJP coalition government from 2000 to 2004. In 2015, she was appointed governor of Jharkhand and stayed in the post till 2021.

In tribute to her remarkable journey through personal tragedies and triumphs, there was music and dance in several places, including Ranchi, Chikmagalur and Bhubaneswar.

### Takes oath as...

of Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Union ministers, governors, Congress president Sonia Gandhi and a host of dignitaries.

Former President Pratibha Patil, and Chief Ministers Naveen Patnaik, Eknath Shinde, Jairam Thakur, Yogi Adityanath and N Biren Singh were among the dignitaries present.

Dressed in a white saree with green and red border, Murmu took the oath of office in the name of God in Hindi to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and the law".

Murmu was given a 21-gun salute after which she signed the oath register amid a thunderous applause and thumping of desks.

The oath-taking ceremony was marked by pomp and grandeur, and began with the arrival of outgoing President Ram Nath Kovind and Murmu in a procession from the Rashtrapati Bhavan to the Parliament Building.

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After a national salute by the President's Bodyguard at Gate No 5 of the Parliament, the new President and her predecessor left in a ceremonial procession to the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

At the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the new President inspected the tri-services guard of honour.

### 383 new COVID...

reported, the officials said.

There are 3,379 active cases of the disease in the Union territory at present, while the number of recoveries has reached 4,52,416, they said.

Meanwhile, Ladakh has reported 19 fresh cases of COVID-19, raising its tally to 28,769, officials said.

All the cases were reported from Leh district, they said.

So far, 228 people have succumbed to COVID-19 in Ladakh. Of these, 168 deaths were reported from Leh and 60 from Kargil, the officials said.

They said the number of active COVID-19 cases has gone up to 134 in Ladakh - 128 in Leh and six in Kargil.

While 292 samples were tested in Ladakh, 217 sample reports in Leh and 54 in Kargil were found to be negative, they said.

Six people were discharged from hospital in Leh, they said, adding the total number of recoveries stands at 28,407.

### Nine cops among...

a police team, along with State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) personnel, rushed to the spot and launched a rescue operation in the area, the officials said.

Due to rains in the higher reaches, the water level swollen in the river in which 12 persons, including four women, got trapped, they said.

Police, along with an SDRF team, rescued 12 persons, including women, from sudden flood in Ujh river, Kathua Senior Superintendent of Police Ramesh Kotwal said.

He also appealed to locals not to visit Ujh river in view of rainy season.

In another such incident, nine policemen were trapped when flash floods entered a police post in Chakan-da-bagh area on the Line of Control in Poonch district, the officials said.

The floods were caused due to the cloudburst and policemen took shelter on rooftop of police post, they said.

Police teams rushed to the area and rescued the cops from flooded police post, they said. At least three trucks got damaged due to shooting stones near Bufliyaz area on the Mughal Road, they said, adding that there was no casualty in the incident.

### 3,000 youth participate...

numerous hindrances, he said.

Tejasvi Surya said on Vijay Divas Tiranga Yatra "This march from Lal Chowk to Kargil is a symbol of the integrity of our country, it is a symbol of the unity of our country, it is a symbol of the self-respect of over billion Indians and it is a symbol of the feeling 'Bharat is one' in its true sense. Today when I see the whole of India from Lal Chowk, Srinagar I can see the shores of Kanyakumari from the holy land of

Rishi Kashyap who might be showering his blessings on our PM Narendra Modi for integrating Kashmir with Bharat in the true sense.

I also remember the umpteenth time the great warriors of Hindustan defeated foreign invaders from Pakistan in Kargil. I salute the great martyrs of Kargil and remember the iron will determination of Bharatratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee who made this glorious victory possible. I also remember captain Vikram Batra and his iconic words "Yeh Dil Maange More" resonates in my mind. On behalf of lakhs of BJYM karyakartas, I pay homage to capt Batra and all the martyrs who sacrificed their lives to protect the honor of the Tiranga," Tejasvi Surya said.

The Yatra will conclude on 26th July 2022 where the participants will pay homage to the fallen soldiers at the Kargil War Memorial and also it will unfurl 75 meter long Indian National Flag to mark Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The closing ceremony will be held in Kargil City. Kargil war hero Gen VK Singh, Union MoS Civil Aviation, will grace the occasion as the Chief Guest.

It has been registered as a historic and the largest political event in Kashmir since the Abrogation of Article 370 and thereby the absolute constitutional integration of Jammu & Kashmir under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

This event communicates to the entire nation calling for unity and oneness while at the same time celebrating the valour of the Indian Army.

Tomorrow, on 26 July, BJYM will organize Prabhat Pheris across all districts with



Tiranga Yatra. The closing ceremony will also be live streamed across all BJP offices.

### Ex-minister & BJP..

received injuries. On receiving the information, police reached the spot and shifted the injured to hospital. The driver of the truck namely Arun Kumar, resident of Mera Madriyan was arrested and truck was seized. A case for rash and negligent driving was registered against him.

### Muftis, Abdullahs robbed...

BJP J&K general secretary and in charge J&K affairs Sunil Sharma along with other members also attended the event.

### Jr Asstt, Orderly...

he added. The official further said that on receipt of complaint, which prima facie disclosed commission of offences under section 7 of PC Act 1988 (as amended in 2018), FIR No 21/2022 was registered at Police Station ACB Baramulla and investigation started. "A trap team led by DySP rank officer and independent witnesses was constituted, which caught accused official Khalida Tugoo red handed, while demanding and accepting bribe from complainant on behalf of main accused Mushtaq Ahmad Mir. Later, both of them, found involved in demanding and accepting bribe from complainant, were arrested and searches were also conducted at residences of both accused," he said, adding that further investigations are going on.

### LG calls for...

are part of the government's efforts to bring ease, transparency and convenience in public service delivery," observed Sinha.

He also inaugurated Digi-Mela in districts which will generate awareness about digital solutions and new technologies.

The Lt Governor said that the Digital J&K week programme will showcase citizen centric IT initiatives that have helped in bringing about greater transparency in governance & ease of living for citizens.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor also launched 'Digi Dost' program aimed at developing a strong network of digitally empowered young volunteers at District, Block and Panchayat level who can work as the brand ambassadors for Digital J&K and Digital India to achieve maximum mobilization and awareness on digital services. 'Digi Dost' volunteers will also assist in digital service delivery, data collection, training, spreading information regarding Digital India campaign and make the people aware about cyber hygiene and cybercrimes.

He also asked the District Administrations to implement the goals of Digital J&K week in collaboration with civil society and PRIs.

Highlighting the digital reforms introduced to realize the vision of Digital J&K, the Lt Governor said that in the last two years, under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, dedicated efforts have been made to create an enabling environment for digital inclusion and promoting digital literacy to bridge the gap between government programs and citizens requirements.

J&K, through Innovation, Implementation and Inclusion is setting unprecedented benchmarks in digital initiatives and leading by example in Prime Minister's Digital India campaign, the Lt Governor observed.

We are number one in the ranking of UTs in e-governance. Host of initiatives like E-office, BEAMS, Awam ki Awaaaz, MyGov, e-Unnat, Digilocker, Aapki Zameen Aapki Nigrani have brought transparency & accountability in governance and made transformational changes in the lives of people, the Lt Governor said.

Our aim is to make all government services easily accessible to the people without human interface. Today, details of every penny spent in J&K are in the public domain. As many as 209 government services have been integrated with the Rapid Assessment System for real time feedback of citizens. Our recent assessment of citizens feedback shows 85% approval rating for the citizen centric services, added the Lt Governor.

Citing a recent report of the central government, the Lt Governor highlighted that J&K UT e-transactions clocked 22.48 crore since 1st January 2022. Digital Transactions crossed the 22 lakh mark last month from J&K Bank. J&K is among top three states/UTs with 52% score in Internet penetration. We are performing better than many states/UTs with 72% male & 43.3% women internet users, he further added.

The Lt Governor congratulated the Information Technology Department and people of J&K on the launch of Digital Jammu & Kashmir week to be observed from 25th-31st July.

J Satyanarayana, former Secretary Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeITY), while addressing the gathering virtually gave valuable insights for making J&K a top performer in the digital services system.

He laid emphasis on the data management policies and adopting Public Private Partnerships for digital transformation.

Sanjay Gaden, Principal Consultant (Head-SeMT)-NISG, on the occasion explained in detail the roadmap for achieving the goal of making the Union Territory a truly digitally empowered region. He laid down various ways and methods by which various digital services of the J&K Government could make the life of common people easy and prosperous.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K, also spoke on the occasion.

Prerna Puri, Commissioner/Secretary to Government, Information Technology Department highlighted the goals of the Digital week and spoke about various e-initiatives implemented by the IT Department of J&K UT administration.

Abhishek Sharma, CEO JaKeGA, presented the vote of thanks.

Earlier, the Lt Governor flagged off Digi Yatra and inspected the stalls put up by various departments of UT administration for providing information and awareness on the digital services and their process being extended by them.

A video presentation displaying various digi-services & their benefits was also shown on the occasion.

The occasion also witnessed the release of an e-compendium of IT initiatives, besides the launching of Digilocker integration in domicile certificate and 'Tagline & Logo' competition on MyGov by the Lt Governor.

Junaid Azim Mattu, Mayor SMC; Aftab Malik, DDC Chairman Srinagar; R K Goyal, Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department; Vivek Bhardwaj, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department; Administrative Secretaries; besides Deputy Commissioners, senior officials, and large number of people from across the UT were present on the occasion.

### Govt jobs in...

union territory. He said if there are wrongdoings in providing government jobs, the cases will go to the CBI for investigation.

"They (culprits) will be given exemplary punishment. So, jobs will be given solely on the basis of merit," he added.

The Chief Secretary said there was a wrong perception that there were no jobs in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Let me tell you that Jammu and Kashmir government has given highest number of civilian jobs in its history last year. Jobs are there but they are not on the market (for sale)," he said.

### Nexus between Mining...

former MLC, who few months back, in a press conference alleged that a big Mafia is behind illegal mining with active involvement of some officers, the Geology & Mining Department is mired over crucial issue and in place of taking some concrete measures to put a check on illegal practice, prefers to do some patch-work just as a formality.

It is really surprising that how these anti-social elements, without any fear of law, are carrying out such illegal and anti-nature activities, quite under the nose of the administration without any fear in nexus with the mining department.

There is of course some political patronage or support behind this menace, as without that it is not possible to ruin the natural resources continuously without any check. STATE TIMES is in possession of a letter written by one Sahil Choudhary, a Lease Holder, addressed to the Director, Geology & Mining Department Jammu, wherein specifically mentioning names of 16 stone-crushers located in Bajalta area of district Jammu, he has alleged that the units are indulged in illegal mining. He has categorically mentioned that without having any permission or lease, the units are extracting minor minerals since long from nearby water-bodies, especially during night hours and has sought necessary action against them as per law.

As per letter, the stone-crushers which are carrying out illegal mining included Harman Stone Crusher, Public Stone Crusher, Khatana Stone Crusher, Northern Stone Crusher, TRB Stone Crusher, Surya Stone Crusher, Motel Stone Crusher, Tawi Stone Crusher, Friends Stone Crusher, Radhey Krishna Stone Crusher, Sharma Stone Crusher, Jupiter Stone Crusher, Taj Stone Crusher, Charnan Stone Crusher, TBA Stone Crusher and Chadak Stone Crusher, operational in various areas of Jammu.

Now, the million-dollar question is will the department take any cognizance over the complaint and initiate steps to investigate the matter for booking these units, if allegations are found true or will continue its deep slumber, with the letter resting in one of its files?

From general public to the lease holders in Jammu, all are against the mining mafia and the Mining Department Jammu is probably watching it blindly. Besides numerous complaints of illegal mining are coming from many quarters but till date no action has been taken against any mafia.

After the continuous complaints and the silence of the mining department, many questions are being raised on the J&amp