

# National Chairman Environment BVP calls upon each citizen to plant at least 10 plants during Monsoon season

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Dev Raj Sharma, National Chairman (Environment), Bharat Vikas Parishad (BVP), has emphasized the importance of planting trees to put a check on the fast deteriorating environment of Planet Earth and has called upon each citizen, especially youth, to plant at least 10 plants during the current Monsoon season.

He was speaking at the launch of its Plantation Drive for the Monsoon Season by Taushi Branch of BVP at Paloura Talab, Jammu on the occasion of Foundation Day of BVP celebrated on 10th of July every year.

Sharma appraised the gathering, comprising prominent citizens, besides members of the Taushi Branch, about the objectives of BVP, a non-political, Social Service organization set up by Dr Suraj Prakash in July 1963 at New Delhi, which



Dev Raj Sharma, National Chairman (Environment) BVP planting a sapling.

aimed at the physical, economic and moral development of the inhabi-

tants of the country.

He said that a vibrant natural Environment was an essential prerequisite for the balanced progress of the entire humanity.

While giving a brief overview of the challenges in terms of deforestation, air pollution, plastic pollution and land degradation etc., resulting in global warming, climate change and water scarcity, being faced by mankind, he further underlined the need to tackle these issues on urgent basis.

Earlier, welcoming the participants, Ajay Khajuria JKAS (Retd), President of Taushi Branch of BVP assured that the plantation activity initiated with the cooperation of citizens will be carried forward, and reaffirmed the commitment of the branch to plant as many trees as possible in such areas where the inhabitants undertake to look after the plants for at least a period of one

year.

He thanked the citizens especially Advocate Hari Chand Jalmeria and Raman Kant Manhas for their interest and ready response in extending a helping hand in taking forward the initiative of the branch.

While appreciating the objectives of the BVP, in protecting the Environment, Jalmeria underlined the dire need for making concerted efforts in this regard by all concerned, especially in the more vulnerable Kandi areas. Besides a number of prominent residents, which included Sewa Dass, Adtl. Director General Geological Survey of India (Retd.), the members of the Taushi branch who participated in the activity included Er Jagmohan Sharma (Secretary), Chander Mohan Sharma (Sanskar Pramukh), Col. (Retd) Man Singh Jamwal, Balwant Singh, and Vinod Kumar (Joint Secretary).

# Samvedna Society distributes Ayushman Bharat Health, ABHA Cards

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Keshav Chopra, Chairman of Samvedna Society, on Thursday organized a programme to distribute Ayushman Bharat Health Cards and ABHA Cards to beneficiaries.

During the event, Keshav emphasized the positive impact of these initiatives on improving healthcare accessibility for the needy. He highlighted that the Government of Jammu and Kashmir UT is continuously enhancing healthcare facilities, making quality treatment more accessible across the country.

He likened the Ayushman Bharat card to an ATM that consistently provides the benefit of free treatment annually. Similarly, the ABHA ID card was described as a comprehensive tool for managing



Chairman Samvedna Society, Keshav Chopra handing over ABHA card to a beneficiary.

healthcare needs efficiently. Beneficiaries at the event expressed their gratitude towards Samvedna Society for bringing these essential healthcare benefits directly to them.

Among those present at the

event were Anju, Vikas Kumar, Varun Nishant, General Manager Gourav Kumar, Ritesh Peer, Sourav Gupta, Manoj Tandon, Sushil Gupta, Abhishek Gupta, Harish Gosain, Parshotam Lal, and others.

# Irregularities at Ban Toll Plaza: Hotel Association president calls on Div Com

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Hotel & Restaurant Association Katra (HRAK) President Rakesh Wazir met Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar and highlighted several concerns regarding the operations at Ban Toll Plaza and related issues.

Wazir pointed out that Ban Toll Plaza has become a center for irregularities, where local passes that were previously issued as per guidelines are now being denied arbitrarily by the Toll Plaza contractor.

Despite established protocols and previous orders from authorities, the toll contractor is not adhering to the guidelines for issuing local passes, causing inconvenience to locals, he said adding that local passes within a 20 km radius,

including areas around Katra, have been issued for more than 8 years based on the guidelines provided by Deputy Commissioners to NHAI.

Wazir emphasized that neither the locations of these areas nor the Toll Plaza itself have changed, questioning why the issuance of local passes is now being disrupted.

Wazir stressed that the authority to designate areas eligible for local passes lies with the department of Revenue, and Deputy Commissioners have been tasked with this responsibility by NHAI.

Despite previous interventions by the Divisional Commissioner to resolve the issue, the problem persists, with the Toll Contractor allegedly overcharging locals and creat-

ing unnecessary obstacles.

Wazir also brought up concerns regarding the Tarakot Marg, which would bypass Katra. He mentioned that the Railways have raised objections about its alignment passing through their land. He urged that the construction of Tarakot Marg should proceed in a manner that addresses these concerns and avoids any contentious issues.

Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar assured Wazir that the matter concerning local passes would be resolved promptly. He also promised to consider sympathetically all other issues raised by Wazir, indicating a willingness to address the broader concerns regarding Toll Plaza operations and the Tarakot Marg project.

# Kavinder highlights profound impact of Sanatan Dharma on Indian Culture and Values

## Meets Jagadguru Shankaracharya Swami Sadanand Saraswati

STATE TIMES NEWS

LONAVALA: In a grand event held at the Mahalakshmi Mata Shaktipeeth, former Deputy Chief Minister and senior B-JP leader, Kavinder Gupta, emphasized the enduring importance of Sanatan Dharma in contemporary society.

He highlighted the role of Sanatan Dharma in fostering spiritual values, cultural unity, and ethical conduct among individuals.

The former Deputy Chief Minister was speaking during the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of Shrimahalakshmi Shaktipeeth in Lonavala on Thursday.

The fifth day of ceremony was marked by Vedic rituals and cultural performances, drawing devotees from across the country and abroad. The day's proceedings began with Vedic chants and the recitation of the



Former Dy CM, Kavinder Gupta speaking at a programme.

Panch Atharvashirsha by Vedic scholars, creating a spiritually charged atmosphere. Acharya Rajendra Shukla conducted the Ganapatyadi Devata and Mandal Puja with the main hosts, Rajendra Sagarmal Ghurvalewala and Kusum Rajendra Ghurvalewala, overseeing the Annadhyas ceremo-

ny for the deities to be installed. Addressing the gathering, Kavinder Gupta spoke about the profound impact of Sanatan Dharma on Indian culture and values. He lauded the efforts of the Ghurvalewala

family for their dedication to preserving and promoting these timelessness traditions. "Sanatan Dharma is not just a religion but a way of life that guides us towards righteousness and harmony," he remarked. He highlighted how such ceremonies reinforce communal unity and spiritual well-being.

Later, Kavinder Gupta also met with Jagadguru Shankaracharya Swami Sadanand Saraswati Ji and sought his blessings. He emphasized the importance of spiritual guidance in governance and community development, reflecting on the Shankaracharya's wisdom as integral to his leadership approach in Jammu and Kashmir. The event witnessed significant participation from

notable personalities, including Rakesh Gaurav Ghurvalewala, Subhash Goel, and many other distinguished guests. The cultural evening on July 9, featuring a Mata ki Chowki by Rajesh Mishra and his troupe, added to the devotional fervor. The ceremony concluded with a grand Aarti and Pushpanjali, attended by a large number of devotees.

The presence of Anant Shri Vibhushit Jagadguru Shankaracharya Swami Sadanand Saraswati Ji, along with other esteemed spiritual leaders like Mahamandaleshwar Agnitharthadhipati Sri Ramakrishna Maharaj and Mahamandaleshwar Swami Sanvidanand, further elevated the sanctity of the occasion.

# Rekha meets JMC Commissioner, demands relief for general public

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) District President Jammu South Rekha Mahajan led a delegation to meet Rahul Yadav, Commissioner of Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), in town hall Jammu to highlight the pressing issues faced by the general public in Jammu South.

She urged the commissioner to take immediate action to provide relief to the citizens. Rekha Mahajan, accompanied by State Secretary and Prabhari Jammu South Ayodhya Gupta, District Secretary Rohin Chandan, Neeraj Dewan, Treasurer Rajesh Gupta, Mandal Presidents Vijay Sharma, Bharat Bhushan, Neeraj Puri, and Ranjit Singh, Pardeep Sharma, Rachit Khosla, and



BJP District President Jammu South Rekha Mahajan led delegation calling on Rahul Yadav, JMC Commissioner.

Ajay Partap, were present on the occasion.

During the meeting, various issues, demands, and problems being faced by inhabitants of the Jammu South related to sanitation, ongoing construction, desilting of lanes and nallahs, proper functioning of street lights, and other allied works

of Jammu were discussed in detail. Rekha Mahajan brought to light various issues affecting the public, including inadequate waste management in Jammu South, poor road conditions, insufficient public amenities, healthcare infrastructure, street lights, and other related issues. She demanded

prompt action to address these grievances, ensuring the effective delivery of municipal services. JMC Commissioner patiently listened to the grievances and assured Rekha Mahajan that the JMC would prioritize these issues and work towards finding solutions. Rekha Mahajan emphasized

the need for swift action, stressing that the public has been suffering for far too long. Ayodhya Gupta reiterated the BJP's commitment to advocating for the welfare of the people and ensuring their well-being. Notably, the meeting demonstrates the BJP's commitment to engaging with the administration and advocating for the welfare of the people. He reiterated the party's dedication to ensuring the well-being of the citizens and resolving their grievances.

Mandal Presidents of Jammu South raised different issues in their areas concerning the common masses.

JMC Commissioner Rahul Yadav heard the different demands raised during the meeting and assured that all issues would be addressed in a phased manner.

# KDP Wing of DPAP demands rehabilitation of Kashmiri displaced Hindus in Valley

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a joint statement issued by the KDP Wing of Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) through its leadership including President Sanjay Dhar, Chairman Piaray Lal Pandita, General Secretary Raj Kumar Tielu, and Youth President Naveen Gosani, several demands and concerns regarding the resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced Kashmiri Hindus have been highlighted.

The leaders have criticized successive governments for their failure to implement a concrete policy for the resettlement of displaced Kashmiri Hindus back to their birthplaces in the Valley. They accuse political leaders of using the issue of displacement as a mere tool during elections without delivering on their promises.

Expressing serious concerns, the leaders have emphasized

that the assurances made by political leaders since 2014, including those reiterated during the 2024 election campaigns, have been hollow and disappointing to the displaced community. They have appealed to the present Government of India to understand the deep frustration of the displaced Kashmiri Hindu community, who despite being the original inhabitants and stakeholders of Kashmiriyat, are forced to visit their birthplaces as tourists rather than residents. The leaders have called for the formulation of a one-time return policy for Kashmiri displaced people to the Valley, to be discussed and implemented in the next Parliament session in consultation with the real sufferers and stakeholders languishing in camps. Additionally, they demand the early restoration of statehood to Jammu &

Kashmir, along with the conduct of long-awaited Assembly elections to establish a public government that can inspire confidence among the masses. The leaders have rejected the reservation of two seats in the State Legislature on a nomination basis and instead propose that two political seats in the Valley be specifically reserved for Kashmiri displaced people through regular election processes, ensuring true representation for their community.

Furthermore, they have urged both the Government of India and the Union Territory government to focus on creating employment opportunities for displaced Kashmiri Hindu youth, including special recruitment into three police battalions with relaxed norms, aiming to attract youth back to serve their own community and revive their lost cultural connections.

# Miss Universe Jammu & Kashmir makes its debut on August 10



State Director for Miss Universe Jammu & Kashmir, Sana Dua talking to reporters.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The prestigious Miss Universe pageant is making its debut in Jammu & Kashmir, a landmark event that celebrates the legacy of iconic winners such as Sushmita Sen, Lara Dutta, and Harnaaz Sandhu. This historic event is organized by Sana Dua, former Miss India and the first and only Miss India from J&K.

Sana Dua, renowned for her extraordinary work through the years has taken up the mantle of State Director for Miss Universe Jammu & Kashmir. The grand event will take

place on August 10th, 2024, at Vivanta Jammu City Centre. Participants from across the region will gather to compete, and one extraordinary woman will earn the opportunity to represent Jammu & Kashmir at Miss Universe India. This year's pageant is particularly inclusive, allowing married, single, divorced, and separated women over 18, with no upper age limit, to participate.

Miss Universe India Director, Nikhil Anand, who joined the pre-launch event, expressed his enthusiasm for the initiative. "The Miss Universe

J&K pageant is a significant step towards inclusivity and representation. I am thrilled to see the talent and potential that this region has to offer."

Having trained over 10,000 women and launched numerous careers in the modelling and beauty pageant industries, Sana Dua is a pivotal figure in bringing this transformative event to the state.

Her students have joined talent agencies both nationally and internationally, with many representing India on global stages. Image and Beyond by Sana Dua, one of the top grooming platforms for women in Northern India, is the official grooming partner for the pageant.

Vivanta Jammu City Centre, the official venue partner, hosted the pre-launch event where Nikhil Anand and Sana Dua kicked off registrations and announced the final event date. The hotel is proud to support this initiative that aims to uplift and showcase the incredible talent of Jammu & Kashmir's women.

# NC pays tributes to Madr-e-Meharban on her 24th Death Anniversary



NC leaders paying tributes to Madr-e-Meharban Begum Akbar Jehan Abdullah.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference on Thursday paid tributes to Madr-e-Meharban Begum Akbar Jehan Abdullah on her 24th death anniversary during a programme held at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan, Jammu.

On the occasion, Ajay Sadhotra, Additional General Secretary and former minister J&K National Conference, Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President, and Sheikh Bashir Ahmed, Provincial Secretary Jammu, Babu Rampaul Central Zone President and former minister along with party leaders and workers, paid glowing tributes to Madr-e-Meharban.

Today's programme was

organized by Bimla Luthra, State Vice President of the JKNC Women Wing and former MLA, to commemorate the death anniversary of Madr-e-Meharban. Earlier G.H Malik organized Quran Khawani on this occasion.

A two-minute silence was observed as a mark of respect to the memory of Madr-e-Meharban. Sadhotra criticized the current government for its failure to empower women in Jammu and Kashmir. He called for immediate and effective action to address the issues faced by women, highlighting their continued struggles and the need for genuine support and empowerment.

Rattan Lal Gupta recalled

the role of Madr-e-Meharban as a conscience-keeper of the party during the political struggle of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly after the arrest of Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah.

Gupta strongly condemned the high hindrances of the JP company's employees who attacked Chairperson Kishwar Pooja Thakur while she was heading the population of land losers to resolve their issues with the company.

Bimla Luthra recalled the contribution of Begum Sahiba to women's emancipation and empowerment and said the best tribute to her would be to concentrate on improving the status of women and ensuring their dignity at all costs.

# Counter strategy against militancy must be revisited to eliminate existing threat: SSP

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Col S.S Pathania, President Sainik Samaj Party (SSP), J&K UT expressed his pain and anguish on the martyrdom of five bravehearts and offered deep condolences to the bereaved family members.

Pakistan, in pursuit of its proxy war, fully supported by China has succeeded in shifting the epicenter of militancy from Kashmir to Jammu region, Col S.S Pathania said adding that starting from twin districts of Poonch and Rajouri about 3 years back Pakistan has extended its influence and operations in Reasi, Udhampur, Doda, Kishtwar and Kathua districts and constantly attack the Indian army and Police forces. Frequencies of militant's clearly indicates various chinks in the armourer of our counter strategy, which must be revisited both at UT and centre level with the sole aim of wiping out militancy from both the region, Col S.S Pathania said.

So far, he said, our approach has been only reactive and we must change it to a proactive stance, giving a stern message, followed by actions to OGWS, sleeper cells and sympathisers with in and outside government. LOC and IB has to be strengthened by wire obstacle and surveillance equipment, giving special emphasis on var-



ious rivers and nallahs, which have been traditional routes of infiltration, he said. Considering the sensitivity of JKUT and increasing militants activities, he said, appointment of an army general with two military advisors i.e one each in Jammu and Kashmir, will pay great dividends to tackle the double whammy of narco as well normal terrorism. Pathania further stated that DCs and SSPs of each district must be dovetailed in our fight against the militancy with a fair degree of accountability at SHO and Police Post level. Additional intelligence agencies and security forces must be inducted, if any audit suggests that. Battle of militancy can't be won if people don't support security forces, as they serve as eyes and ears for security forces as human intelligence. VDCs too needs to be equipped and trained properly and can serve as a great force multiplier, to thwart the evil design of ISI and Pakistan, said Col S.S Pathania.