

'Agnipath' scheme a stepping stone for youngsters: Air Marshal

Govind Sharma

JAMMU, June 15: Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Command, Air Marshal Sreekumar Prabhakaran today said that the newly launched "Agnipath" scheme for the recruitment of soldiers into the armed forces is a stepping stone for the youngsters to be better citizens and will also help the three services in the long run. However, the officer stated that it is pre-

the country and will provide an opportunity to the youth tuned with the contemporary technological trends. The Commander informed that the enrolment for Agniveers will be based on 'All India All Class' basis and the eligible age will be from 17.5 to 21 years. Agniveers will meet the medical eligibility conditions laid down for enrolment in the armed forces as applicable to respective categories/trades, he added.

criteria including performance during their four-year engagement period. With respect to the monetary benefits, the officer informed that the Agniveers will be provided with the attractive financial package for four years. He further informed that on completion of the engagement period of four years, Agniveers will be paid one time 'Seva Nidhi' package of approximately Rs 11.71 lakh which shall comprise their contribution including accrued interest thereon and matching contribution from the Government equal to the accumulated amount of their contribution including interest. Responding to a question about criticism from different quarters including opposition parties and ex-servicemen to the new scheme, Prabhakaran said everybody has a right to make his or her own comments. "When there is some change, there is always going to be some hiccups. The Agniphath scheme has not come out suddenly out of blue but there was a lot of discussion at the senior officers' level from IAF, Navy and Army for about two years. The Government supported the idea," he said, adding "in any scheme, there lies pros and cons so we have considered all that but we feel it is overall a wonderful scheme which will help the services in the long run."



AOC-in-Chief Western Command Air Marshal Sreekumar Prabhakaran addressing a press conference at Air Force Station, Jammu.

ture to say whether the scheme will stop radicalization of the youth in Jammu and Kashmir or not.

The Air Marshal was addressing a press conference at Air Force Station, Jammu during which he threw light on the features of 'Agniphath' scheme. When asked whether the 'Agniphath' scheme will help overcome radicalization of youth in Kashmir, he said "whether it will stop radicalization or not I cannot answer now till the scheme is implemented."

"Only time will tell us about that but I am quite sure that if a youngster who has, as you said, got brainwashed (into terrorism), joins the services under the scheme and stays with us for four years, I am sure he will be a different person and probably more of an Indian than a radical as you brought out," the Commander said.

In a question whether there will be a special recruitment drive in J&K under the Scheme, he said the Scheme is an open scheme for all the three services across the country. "We would like every youth from all parts of the country to apply for the scheme which is open, transparent and provides equal opportunity to all," he said, adding this will be the only scheme for the entry into the armed forces of the country as it will be difficult to manage two different schemes for the services.

Asked about his message for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir, the Western Air Commander said it is a great opportunity which the youth are getting so they should apply, try and join any of the three services for four years. He said 'Agniphath' scheme is a transformative reform in the armed forces recruitment process which will not only a youthful profiling of the armed forces but also provide a platform for the youth to don the military uniform and become confident and disciplined citizens.

"The Agniveers will be imparted military skills and experience that will instill discipline, leadership qualities and patriotism among the Agniveers apart from military skills and experience," he said, adding, this scheme will bring about a transformational shift towards a more tech savvy armed force in

Prabhakaran also informed the media that the Agniveers will be offered an opportunity to apply for permanent enrolment in the Armed Forces as 25% of each specific batch of Agniveers will be enrolled in regular cadre of the Armed Forces for which applications will be considered in a centralized manner based on objective

'National Herald settled issue, no scam'

Modi Govt hell bent upon to harass Gandhi family: PCC

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 15: The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee today strongly condemned the continued harassment of Rahul Gandhi by the ED and the police action on the top leadership at the Congress headquarters, 24- Akbar Road, New Delhi and termed it as totally

clear vendetta of Modi Govt against Congress leadership and no illegality has been done by the Congress, rather it has discharged its duty to clear the old liabilities of the National Herald newspaper, including around Rs 67 crores as pending wages of journalists and other employees of the newspaper and rest as dues of the various offices of

from 2002 to 2011, to get it out of financial crisis. This loan was paid in around 100 installments not one go. Out of this Rs 67 crores was paid as pending wages of journalists and other liabilities of the newspaper, rest Govt dues of power, water etc.

The National Herald was not in a position to repay such huge loan, so the entire loan was converted to equity. Since political parties cannot take equity in any company, so Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and other senior Congress leaders became trustees in "Young India not for profit Trust" and 99% shares were transferred to this trust. Since "Young India Trust" was "not for profit trust" none of those managing its affairs, cannot take any benefit or profit out of it. "Neither they can be owner of any property of National Herald, no one has earned/taken any pecuniary benefit, nor can take any such benefit. Then where is scam/illegality or crime," they questioned.

Congress shown the entire transactions in its balance sheets and it is duly audited. This entire process is in accordance with settled norms of laws of the land and there is no illegality. Modi Govt wants to harass and malign Congress leadership through ED, they said.

Meanwhile, Cong today held protest demonstration against the harassment to Rahul Gandhi by the ED officials. Led by Raman Bhalla, working president of the PCC the Cong workers and leaders raised slogans against the Modi Govt, alleging political vendetta against top Congress leadership.

Bodies of youth recovered from Chenab

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 15: Body of two youth, who drowned while taking bath yesterday, were recovered from river Chenab, while search for one another continues.

As per police sources, three minor boys were taking bath when they accidentally drowned in the river Chenab in Malpur area yesterday.

On getting information, police team rushed to the spot and started operation to fish out the bodies of the boys with the help of locals and personnel of J&KUTDRF.

On day 2 of the search operation by police, J&KUTDRF and NDRF personnel today, body of youth two youth identified as Munish Kumar (18), son of Mohinder Lal of Malpur and Lavish (17), son of Rashpal Chand of Bairi Shapti Thathi were recovered. Locals also assisted in the search operation.

Bodies of both the youth were handed over to family members after completing legal formalities.

The search operation continued to fish out the body of one more youth identified as Ansh (13), son of Bishambar Dass of Malpur.

Cognizance already stands taken up by Kanachack Police.

Guru Hargobind's birth anniversary celebrated with religious fervour

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR/ JAMMU, June 15: The birth anniversary of Guru Hargobind Ji, also known as Prakash Parv, was commemorated today with religious fervour, enthusiasm and gaiety across the Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chatti Padshahi gurdwara in Rainawari area of Srinagar hosted the main religious ceremony on the birth anniversary of the sixth Sikh Guru, while devotees thronged other gurdwaras for prayers as well.

Manpreet Singh, a devotee, said that Shabadh Kirtans and langars were held at Chatti Padshahi and other gurdwaras around the Valley. In addition to prayers, Singh said the religious leaders shed insight on Guru Hargobindji's teachings.

The devotees said that the sixth Guru had visited several parts of the Valley and that the day was very important to them. They said that several gurdwaras have been built in the Valley to honour the sixth Sikh Guru, who, at a very young age, continued the Guru Nanak's mission.

"He has accomplished a number of notable feats throughout his life. He fought nearly four wars against the oppressive regimes of the period and won each one. He travelled around Kashmir and several gurdwaras were built by him," a devotee said.

Similar celebrations were also held in Gurdwaras in various areas, including Tral, Rangreth, Pattan, Awantipora, and Baramulla. Jammu and Kashmir

great Guru. Mahant Manjit Singh while concluding the function expressed gratitude to the Sangat and advised the young generation to be Amritdhari, fol-



Devotees paying obeisance at Chatti Padshahi Gurdwara in Srinagar on the Birth anniversary of Guru Hargobind Ji. -Excelsior/Shakeel

Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, greeted the people on the eve of Prakash Parv of Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji.

Expressing his good wishes on the auspicious occasion, the Lt Governor said Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji was the embodiment of compassion, bravery, sacrifice and universal brotherhood. The auspicious occasion of 'Prakash Parv' would serve to instil in the people a sense of sacrifice and brotherhood. The Lt Governor added that his profound message of leading an honest, truthful, and virtuous life continues to guide and inspire humanity.

Meanwhile, the Parkash Parv of sixth Guru Hargobind Singh Ji was celebrated at Gurdwara Digiana Ashram Jammu under the supervision of Mahant Manjit Singh Ji from Dera Nangali Sahib, Poonch.

Ragi Jathas recited the Shabad Gurvani and Parcharaks explained the preachings of

low the teachings of great Guru and keep distance from all the wicked and bad things particularly drugs and become good citizens.

Those who participated the meeting were Sudarshan Singh Wazir, Chairman Sikh United Front, Mohinder Singh chief organizer BKNSS, Darbinder Singh president Shiromani Akali Dal J&K, Rajinder Singh general secretary SAD, Raja Singh DGPC Member and others.

Meanwhile, under the chairmanship of Sahil Mahajan BIP Sanskriti Cell and SHO Kriti Sharma, a Langar was organized Swarn Singh on the occasion of Prakash Parv at Shahidi Chowk, Jammu.

Special community lunch, called Guru Ka Langar was organised and served to the general public. The Langar and sweet water Shabeel was served by guest of honour SHO Kriti Sharma among passerby public/pedestrians.



Principal Secretary to LG Nitishwar Kumar during a visit to Nunwan Base Camp at Anantnag on Wednesday.

Nitishwar inspects Amarnathji Yatra arrangements at Nunwan

Excelsior Correspondent

ANANTNAG, June 15: Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor today visited Nunwan Base Camp to take stock of Shri Amarnathji Yatra arrangements.

The Principal Secretary, accompanied by Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole, and HoDs of Health and Tourism Department, inspected Nunwan base camp and took stock of pitching of tents, security deployment, sanitation facilities, electricity and drinking water supply. He also inspected the arrangements at frisking point Sarbal.

The Principal Secretary, who is

ADGP takes stock of security arrangements at Railway Station, entire AOR of GRP Jammu

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 15: Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Railways J&K Sunil Kumar today paid a visit to GRP Jammu.

During his visit, he was accompanied by SSP GRP Jammu Mohammad Arif Rishu. ADGP took stock of the security arrangements at Railway Station Jammu and in the entire AOR of GRP Jammu.

ADGP also held a meeting of officers of GRP Jammu in the office chamber of SSP GRP Jammu which was attended by all the officers of GRP Jammu including SHOs and Incharge Police Posts of GRP Jammu.

SSP GRP Jammu briefed ADGP regarding the security preparedness in connection with forthcoming Amarnath Yatra 2022.

ADGP briefed the officers present to maintain the heightened alertness 24x7 to ensure the peaceful travel of yatis in trains and their brief halts at various Railway Stations in the AOR of GRP Jammu.

He emphasized on foolproof security arrangements at all the places especially at Railway Station Jammu including the contingency plan to repulse any terrorist act.

He briefed officers to deal with yatis and all passengers with humbleness and be available round the clock for any assistance to yatis and other passengers.

Later, ADGP held meeting

also the CEO of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, held a meeting with the camp directors of various camps on the Pahalgam axis. He was informed that preparations are going on as per plan.

The Principal Secretary directed the camp directors to maintain a close synergy with officials from various departments and regularly review the arrangements at their camps to ensure all facilities are in place before the commencement of the Yatra.

Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Dr Piyush Singla; SSP Anantnag, Ashish Mishra, senior officials from various line departments among others were present on the occasion.



Abhijeet Jasrotia BIP Spokesperson called on Lt Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhavan on Wednesday.

Former Minister, BIP Spokesperson & JK NYC Employees call on LG

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, June 15: A delegation of JK NYC Employees Association led by former Minister, Sunil Sharma; and Abhijeet Jasrotia, BIP Spokesperson and Head Policy Research, today called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhavan.

The members of JK NYC delegation apprised the Lt Governor about their concerning issues and formulation of a policy for them.

Meanwhile, Abhijeet Jasrotia, BIP Spokesperson and Head Policy Research, also met the Lt Governor and discussed with him various issues pertaining to welfare of the people of the UT.

Jasrotia expressed his grati-

tude towards the Lt Governor for the dynamic and reformative policies for the people of J&K. He said that UT is witnessing a new era of development and complimented the administration for implementing a progressive industrial policy and initiative of CLU which will maximize investments and generate ample opportunities for local youth in coming times.

The Lt Governor while interacting with the members of the delegation assured them of appropriate redressal of their genuine grievances on merit. He further observed that UT Government is working continuously for ensuring equitable development of all regions with welfare benefits percolating to all sections of society.

CS launches 'JK Mobile Seva' initiative

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 15: The Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, today launched the 'Mobile Seva' services in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, with an aim to mainstream mobile governance for delivery of public services.

The launch of m-seva marks an important milestone in the mobile-governance in Jammu & Kashmir. The m-seva platform will be used to reach out to citizens and promote proactive citizen engagements by leveraging the mobile penetration in population, especially in remote areas. The informative SMS texts will be sent in English, Hindi and Urdu languages.

This initiative will use a single-SMS gateway (JKGOVT) to communicate with citizens instead of extending similar services through different departments with different IDs. "This will benefit citizens to keep a track of Government-to-Citizen (G2C) communications, and receive timely updates in a transparent manner", Dr. Mehta observed.

The Chief Secretary mentioned that the 'Mobile Seva' is a nationwide initiative under

mobile governance that aims to enable all government departments and agencies to provide services through various mobile channels such as short message service (SMS), integrated voice response system (IVRS), Geo fencing, and other mobile applications.

Further, the Chief Secretary directed all departments to use m-seva platform for disseminating information on their respective welfare and developmental schemes to enhance coverage and encourage participatory governance through direct government-citizen contact.

It was informed that the IT Department will act as the nodal Department and will continue to add new departmental services towards achieving saturation in a time-bound manner.

Principal Secretary, General Administration Department, Administrative Secretary, Information Technology Department, Administrative Secretary Public Grievances Department, CEO JaKeGA, besides officials from JaKeGA, SeMT, and Information Technology Department were present on the occasion.

Sea change in Critical Care in Kashmir hospitals leads to dip in referrals

Irfan Trambo

SRINAGAR, June 15: The Critical Care across Kashmir hospitals has witnessed a sea change over some time with the availability of the necessary support system in the hospitals while the authorities are mulling to strengthen the same in days to come with special focus on the paediatrics.

Currently, as per details available with Excelsior, there are around 1204 Oxygen Supported Beds across Kashmir, 82 Intensive Care Units, and over 100 High Flow Devices while the Oxygen generation capacity has also been increased to 20900 Liters Per Minute (LPM).

While the authorities were already looking to declutter the tertiary care hospitals and ensure the necessary healthcare set up in the peripheries, officials said that with the increased infrastructure in the Critical Care across Kashmir, there has been a substantial dip in the patient referral from peripheries to the tertiary healthcare facilities.

The figures concerning the admissions and referrals from the hospitals suggest that in the month of May this year, 2230 patients were admitted to the emergency rooms across Kashmir hospitals, out of which 24 patients died, 409 were referred while the rest were treated locally.

Further, in the High-Density Units (HDU), Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU), and Intensity Care Units (ICU) across Kashmir

nearly 85 patients were admitted out of which only 9 were referred to tertiary care hospitals, and 3 deaths were reported.

Also, with regard to the admissions in NICU and PICU, nearly 233 patients were admitted across Kashmir while out of the total, only 53 patients were referred to tertiary hospitals.

"We have noted a decrease in the referrals and that has been because of the specialized and well-equipped facilities put in place across Kashmir hospital even as the health department is eyeing to strengthen and upgrade the same in days to come while as we will be setting up more specialized units in all the districts," Nodal Officer, Dr Shabir Siddiqui told Excelsior.

He further said that in days to come, Paediatric Intensive Care Units and Oxygen Supported Paediatric beds including all high-end equipment are being established under ECRP-2 in all district hospitals of the Kashmir division.

The officials said that the authorities have already been working towards improving the Critical Care set up in Kashmir, the absence of which, earlier, was resulting in undue and necessary referrals from peripheries hospitals in Kashmir, burdening the tertiary care hospitals. "Working in coordination with the National Health Mission, we have taken up the work and will ensure that the necessary infrastructure is aimed at further improving the Critical Care across Kashmir in next some time."

Div Com inspects ongoing works of Tawi River Front project

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 15: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar today inspected the progress of ongoing

engineers apprised the Div Com about the work completed so far besides future work plan.

It was informed that the suf-



Div Com Jammu inspecting ongoing works of Tawi River Front project.

ing works on Tawi River Front View project being executed by Jammu Smart City Limited (JSCL) under Smart City Mission of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

The Div Com was accompanied by Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) & CEO JSCL, Rahul Yadav; consultants; site engineers besides other concerned officials.

During the visit, the concerned

manpower has been deputed for expeditious work on the project while the work is going on in double shifts.

It was informed that work on machinery mobilization, grating, centre making, topographic survey benchmarks has been completed while work on construction of Diaphragms is in progress.

The Divisional Commissioner took a round of

various spots and inspected the work.

He directed concerned officials to clear all the bottleneck if any and expedite the pace of works for timely completion of the prestigious project.

He also instructed them to ensure quality parameters of each work.

Pertinently, the JSCL is developing Tawi River front on the lines of the Sabarmati river-front in Gujarat. The project is aimed to enhance the aesthetic value of the River Tawi by enhancing natural purifying capabilities, as well as promoting environmental and urban infrastructure sustainability.

The 7 KM long river front is proposed to be completed in 2 phases. The first phase starts from 4th bridge to Main Tawi Bridge and phase 2 from Main Tawi Bridge to Gujjar Nagar Bridge. Pathways would be constructed on both the sides (banks) of the river to provide easy access to the public.

Initially work on 2.7 km from Bhagwati Nagar Brrage to Vikram Chowk Bridge has been taken up under the phase I.