

Goan chef behind meals served on Kargil Vijay Diwas, cooks for free as homage to martyrs

DRASS (Ladakh), Aug 6:

Goa's Sarita Chavan, who turned to cooking to make ends meet after her husband's death, is the chef behind the delicious meals served on Kargil Vijay Diwas, a service she offers for free to pay homage to the martyrs.



Chavan travelled from Goa to Drass with her eight-member team for the annual event in remembrance of the martyrs at the war memorial.

From pastries and pan pizzas to Dalgona coffee for breakfast and a lavish north Indian spread for lunch with phirni as the sweet dish, Chavan cooked for over 1,000 people who attended the various events to mark the occasion on July 26.

However, the journey hasn't been an easy ride, she said.

"I came to Goa in 1980 after my marriage. I started reading cookbooks as my husband would motivate me to cook until I could perfect the dish. In 1994, after my husband quit his job and was later bedridden due to illness, I was forced to take up cooking to earn for the family," Chavan said.

However, she didn't start cooking from the outset and sold readymade masala paste door-to-door in Margao, Panjim and Vasco.

"A few years later, when my husband passed away, I began preparing tiffins for neighbours. Soon, my tiffin meals rose in popularity and I started getting bulk orders from companies for packed lunches for their

employees and, later, for catering at big events," she added. However, the lack of a professional degree was an impediment for Chavan's confidence to dream big.

"It hasn't been easy. I always had this apprehension whenever I wanted to expand that I don't have a professional degree, why would someone hire me? When I visited Kargil for a personal trip, I went to the war memorial and that is when the idea struck me. I reached out to Army officials to give me a chance to cook for the guests on Vijay Diwas," she said.

Chavan added, "Initially, they weren't sure. So they asked me to cook for some small events. When I successfully executed those, I got a chance to cook for the main day last year and I plan to continue it every year," she added.

While Chavan was offered payment for her services, she refused to accept it, saying it would be huge disservice to the soldiers who laid down their lives during the war.

"I was offered to at least cover the travel costs for the team from Goa to Kargil. I said no. It will be a huge disservice to our martyrs. Their families come here every year and they still break down. The least I can do is provide them some comfort with a good meal," she added.

On July 26, 1999, the Indian Army announced the successful culmination of Operation Vijay - a fierce counter-assault launched to push back Pakistani forces -- declaring victory after a nearly three-month battle at the icy heights of Kargil, including locations such as Tololing and Tiger Hill.

The war saw the Indian Armed Forces fight in the most challenging terrains amid harsh weather conditions in the Drass, Kargil and the Batalik sectors.

Kargil Vijay Diwas marks India's victory over Pakistan. (PTI)

Pay no heed to fake news on inter-community clashes: SSP

Excelsior Correspondent

POONCH, Aug 6: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Poonch, Vinay Kumar in response to recent incidents has issued a strong appeal to the general public to pay no heed to various fake news reports and misleading messages being circulated on social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook regarding alleged clashes between different communities.

The SSP urged the citizens to report any suspicious activities or instances of misinforma-

tion to the nearest police station or through designated helpline numbers.

"In this connection, public of the district is requested not to pay any heed towards these fake WhatsApp posts without proper verification and remain vigilant," he continued.

The District Police Chief informed that Cyber Cell and its Social Media Analysing Team is working on such fake profiles to identify miscreants behind such activities.

He assured strict legal action, as warranted under the law, against mischief mongers.

9th annual conference of IAOHNS concludes

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 6: The 9th annual conference of IAOHNS under the aegis of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspeciality Hospital, Katra concluded at Convention Centre, here today.

It had started earlier with pre-conference workshop on 3rd August wherein live surgeries were conducted by the world renowned ENT surgeon Dr Satish Jain from Jaipur, hands on workshop for junior and senior ENT residents, live sessions on Vertigo and Sleep Apnoea. On 4th August, the conference was formally inaugurated by Bhopinder Kumar, Administrative Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department, Jammu and Kashmir.

Dr Jitendra Singh (MoS in PMO) graced the conference by his presence on August 5. He welcomed all the delegates and dignitaries for taking out time to attend this conference. The Conference concluded today with excellent Resident quiz by Dr Satish Jain and valedictory function where various awards and prizes were distributed.

It was the first time that a national conference of this magnitude on ENT and head and neck surgery was held in Jammu and was attended by more than 650 delegates, which has been the highest attendance till date and it was all due to the efforts of Dr Sunil Kotwal (organizing chairman), Dr Rohan Gupta (organizing secretary), Dr IP Singh (treasurer) and their dedicated team.



A scene from the play 'Papa Jab Bachhe They' staged at Jammu on Sunday.

Natrang stages Hindi play 'Papa Jab Bachhe They'

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 6: Theatre group 'Natrang' here today staged new Hindi play 'Papa Jab Bachhe They' which was based on a short story of Russian writer and poet Alexander Raskin 'When Daddy Was A Little Boy'.

The play was adapted and directed by Neeraj Kant. Publicity of the play was designed by Vanshika Pandoh.

The play begins where a daughter is seen narrating the story of her father and the actors acting out, in which a child is asked what he wants to be when he grows up. The answer is that he wants to become a watchman. One day while eating ice cream in the market, the idea of becoming an ice cream seller comes in child's mind. Then another day the idea of becoming a shunting man at the railway station comes and the next day the child wants to become a pilot and then the idea of becoming an actor comes while watching a film, the next day he wants to become a shep-

herd. Everyone laughs at him after listening to his changing thoughts. But the idea of becoming a dog makes him sit down by the side of his pet dog to learn how to scratch the ear with his foot. Then on being asked by a soldier, he tells that he is learning to be a dog because he has been living as a human for a long and now wants to become a dog.

When asked by the soldier whether he knows what a human is, he says no. After not getting any answer from the soldier, he understands that he cannot change his mind everyday and also realises that the first thing he wants to be is a human being. Natrang young artists who performed in the play were Sanket Bhagat, Abir Beri, Advik Sharma, Mehak Chib, Sanchi Dutta, Sonali Sharma and Priyal Gupta.

Lights of the play were designed and executed by Neeraj Kant, music by Chirag Anand, presentations by Brijesh Avtar Sharma and the show was coordinated by Mohd. Yaseen.

Scores of leaders, people from Khour join Cong Party

Excelsior Correspondent

AKHNOOR, Aug 6: Scores of leaders and people from Khour area today joined Congress Party in presence of District Congress Committee president for Jammu Rural, Hari Singh Chib today.

The meeting of Block Congress Committee Khour was held at Pallanwala town of Tehsil Khour. It was held under the leadership of senior Congress leader Satish Sharma and was presided over by DCC Jammu chief Hari Singh Chib. A large number of Congress workers from Chhamb Constituency participated in the meeting to discuss the working of the party.

During the meeting scores of people joined Congress party in presence of District president Jammu Rural, Chib. Amongst those who joined were Ex-Sarpanch Pallanwala Swarn Singh Bhaui, Retd Capt. Sham Singh, Retd Capt. Sohan Singh, Retd Postmaster Sukhdev Singh, Naib Sarpanch Dayal Singh, Retd. Havaladar Jagdev Singh Bhaui, Subash Sharma, KS Bhaui and many others.

Speaking on the occasion Hari Singh Chib said that under BJP's rule since last 9 years people of Jammu and Kashmir have gained not a single good thing. All they have to face is loss, from special status to statehood

and from jobs to industries, the only thing we got is betrayal in the hands of BJP. He said that BJP has left no stone unturned to make lives of the people miserable. He said that Smart Metres are new addition to BJP's attack on common people.

Satish Sharma said that people are fed up of BJP's rule. He said that BJP is trying to put India into dictatorial rule but it is only Supreme Court that is protecting the democracy from being killed by this fascist regime. He thanked the Supreme Court for staying the conviction order of

Rahul Gandhi. He further added that people have to unite to fight for their rights whether it is issue of separate ALC or unemployment. He said that people have now made their minds to throw away the draconian BJP out of power and again bring back Congress into the power.

District vice president Prabhoo Singh said that the sky rocketing inflation has disturbed the budget of the common man and even the basic necessities like vegetables and groceries have become out of budget. He said that BJP is only working for interests of crony capitalist friends of Prime Minister and problems of common masses are of no concern to them.

Several prominent people also spoke on the occasion.

Par panel suggests steps to encourage women to join CAPFs

NEW DELHI, Aug 6:

Highlighting the low representation of women in the Central Armed Police Forces, a parliamentary committee has asked the Union home ministry to take steps to encourage them to join the services, besides recommending a reservation for transgenders.

In its latest report, the panel said a policy may be explored for women officers to be given soft postings and not subject them to extremely strenuous working conditions.

The Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice, headed by BJP MP Sushil Kumar Modi, said the representation of women personnel in the CAPFs and Assam Rifles is 3.76 per cent as on September 30, 2022.

"The Committee advocates that all necessary steps should be taken by MHA (Ministry of Home Affairs) to encourage women to join forces to the maximum possible extent. A major constraint that prevents women from joining forces is

the difficult terrains and conditions in which they might have to work," it said in its 131st report on the "Review of Functioning of Recruitment Organisations of Government of India".

So, a policy for women officers to be given soft postings and not subjecting them to extremely strenuous and difficult working conditions may be explored, unless required in extreme circumstances like war or armed rebellion, and that too when there is an absolute shortage of males who can be deployed by the forces, the report added.

"The Committee also recommends that some sort of reservation may also be given to trans-genders. Steps may be taken to recruit transgenders as well so that they can be integrated well with mainstream society in near future," it said.

On the "imperative issue" of the minimal percentage of women in central forces, the panel said, "As on today, only 3.65 per cent of vacancies for women have been filled till now." (PTI)

Shastri meets Union Minister, demands renaming SKUAST-J

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 6: Shri Kailakh Jyotish Avim Vedic Sanathan Trust president, Mahant Rohit Shastri here today met Shobha Karandlaje, Union MoS for Agriculture and submitted to her a memorandum of demands.

Shastri informed the Union MoS about the legendary Shri Bawa Jitto Ji who sacrificed his life for justice to farmers from the landlords.

He requested for renaming Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agriculture and Technology- Jammu after Bawa Jitto Ji.

"It is further submitted that these both universities situated at Jammu and Srinagar should be upgraded and taken under the direct control of Ministry of

Agriculture and both these varieties be upgraded to Central University level under the direct control of Government of India," he maintained adding that this shall be a great step for the promotion and welfare of

farmers of Jammu and Kashmir and will be a great tribute for the sacrifice of Shri Bawa Jitto Ji.

Trust members Uttam Chand Sharma and Naresh Sharma were also present on the occasion.

J&K set to have world class railway stations: Dr Manyal

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 6: Jammu and Kashmir BJP general secretary and former Minister, Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, in a statement today said that the laying of the foundation stone for transforming three existing railway stations under 'Amrit Bharat Stations' scheme is yet another milestone in the transport sector of this UT under the Narendra Modi Government.

He expressed gratitude to PM, Narendra Modi for including Jammu Tawi, Badgam and Udhampur railway stations to be redeveloped and make them world class with an investment of Rs. 294 crore.

Dr Manyal said that the mega projects will redevelop three railway stations, along with more than 500 other stations in the country, which itself speaks to the fact that for the first time there is a Government at the Centre under which Jammu and Kashmir is getting equal share and opportunities in every sector. It is highly appreciable and reflective of the approach of the Union Government to take all together in a march towards develop-

ment, progress, and prosperity.

On completion of the work to redevelop three railway stations, these will be equipped with the provision of amenities like a roof plaza, shopping zone, food court, kids play area, segregated entry and exit gates, multi level parking, lift escalators, executive lounge, waiting area, travelator, and divyangyan friendly facilities, which will make them the centres of socio-economic activities in the region, Dr. Manyal said.

He said that Kashmir, being a famous tourist destination, attracts a large number of people from across the country, and similarly, Jammu too witnesses a heavy rush of religious pilgrims and tourists. So these redeveloped railway stations in both regions of the UT will provide the visiting people with world class modern facilities for journey and halt, thus making their stay here memorable.

The BJP leader expressed hope that the UT will continue to get its due share in various projects of development in the future and that the union Government under PM Modi will continue to shower blessings on the UT and its people.



Shiv Sena leaders posing for a group photograph during a joining programme at Jammu on Sunday.

Remain ready for elections: Gupta to Shiv Sena leaders

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 6: Shiv Sena J&K president, Ashwani Gupta here today asked his party leaders to remain ready for the elections which will contest with full enthusiasm.

He was addressing the youths who joined Shiv Sena in a programme organised at Bohri wherein many social and political activists joined Shiv Sena.

Welcoming the new entrants into the party, Gupta urged them to work for betterment of the society and take the teachings of Bala Saheb Thackeray to every individual.

Apart from the joining programme, responsibilities were given to some leaders for smooth functioning of the party.

Youth president, Ajay Dhar asked the party cadre to reach every nook and corner of J&K and bring issues of the public to the notice of administration so that same can be resolved.

Rakesh Kak, State general secretary; Sanjay Bhat, State secretary and Prabhari Kashmir; Lokesh Pandita, Youth vice president; Manmohan Singh, Youth general secretary and Rakesh Bhat, media incharge were also present on the occasion.

Tearful adieu to soldiers martyred in J&K

AHMEDABAD, Aug 6:

A large number of people, including political leaders, gathered to pay tribute to martyred Indian Army jawan Mahipalsinh Vala, whose body was brought to his hometown in Gujarat's Ahmedabad on Sunday from Jammu and Kashmir.

Vala was one of the three Army personnel martyred in an encounter with militants in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district on Friday evening.

The soldier's mortal remains arrived at Ahmedabad airport from Srinagar in a military aircraft and was transported to his native Viratnagar in Odhava area, where the ceremonial guard of honour and last rites were conducted with full military honours.

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel paid tribute to Vala along with other leaders.

"Grateful salute to the immortal martyr who made the supreme sacrifice to protect the country and countrymen," Patel tweeted.

A large number of people gathered to pay homage and join the funeral procession. The martyred soldier was to become a father in a few days, and his wife and other members of the family were inconsolable.

Meanwhile, slogans of 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' rent the air in Babul Jat's village here on Sunday as his inconsolable family and proud villagers bid farewell to the Army soldier who martyred in an encounter with terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir.

Jat, 38, was accorded a guard of honour by the Army and the Rajasthan Police. His two sons Vishal (18) and Vishesh (14) lit the pyre.

Rajasthan Food and Civil Supplies Minister Pratap Singh Khachariyawas, BJP national spokesperson Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore and Shahpura MLA Alok Beniwal were among those who paid tributes to the slain soldier.

Army, police and administration officials also attended his last rites. (PTI)



Artists posing with representatives of Pir Panchal and other dignitaries during a cultural event at Panchari in Udhampur district.

Pir Panchal organises cultural programme at Panchari

Excelsior Correspondent

UDHAMPUR, Aug 6: A mesmerizing cultural event was organised by Pir Panchal -a Cultural Educational, Social Environmental and Sports Organisation at Panchari village in Udhampur district today.

About 35 artists from the entire belt of 50 kms radius performed in the programme.

Tehsildar Panchari, Vipan Kumar was the chief guest , Principal GHSS, Panchari, Arunesh Kumar, Sarpanch Panchari, Kuldeep Sharma, Sarpanch, Pawan Singh and Avtar Jyotshi a scholar of Shastras were the guests of honour.

Hundreds of local youth among men, women and children participated in this mega event.

Speaking on the occasion Ramesh Hangloo president Pir Panchal highlighted the role of people of hilly terrains for keeping the culture and the roots of civilisation alive. He said "Today we are celebrating victory day of our Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir as the road connectivity, quality of education and environment concerns besides development policies of the Government are reaching to the last person of the UT particularly in the Panchari area".

Chief guest, Tehsildar Panchari, Vipan Kumar besides appreciating the Pir Panchal for conducting this great event at far

off place and involving youth in this programme named as connectivity from Village to Globe said 'Meri Mitti, Mera Desh' programme of the Government of India is on a momentous path in this hilly region. He appealed to all specially to youth to be vigilant for drug abuses and work for drug free nation. He said this area is still free from the drug menace but we all should channelize the youth power towards nation building besides cultural and civilisational concepts.

Principal, HSS Panchari, Arunesh Kumar said the discipline among the youngsters in this era is essential for peace and development. He highlighted the role of Pir Panchal in linking the youth to their roots by holding such programs in different parts of UT.

Kuldeep Sharma, Sarpanch complimented Pir Panchal for choosing his Panchayat for this programme and extended full support to all such organisations working in culture environmental educational and social fields . Pawan Singh Sarpanch also spoke on the occasion besides Avtar Jotshi gave suggestions for transforming the cultural values among the youngsters.

Vijay Koul general secretary, Pir Panchal presented vote of thanks and Girdari Lal renowned flutist managed the stage. Trophies were given to participants on the occasion.

41 bovines seized, 7 smugglers nabbed

Excelsior Correspondent

POONCH, Aug 6: Tightening noose around the bovine smuggling District Police Poonch rescued 41 bovines from the clutches of bovine smugglers in one day and arrested seven accused in this connection.

Official sources said that on the directions of SSP Poonch, Vinay Sharma and Additional SP Poonch, Mushim Ahmed, the teams headed by DySP Surankot Hamid Ali and SHO Police Station Surankot, Rajesh Thapa and IC PP Behramgala Rajat Nanawat, during naka checking at different locations last night intercepted various bovine smugglers .

During checking a police team intercepted Tata Mobile vehicle bearing registration number JK 21B- 7167 loaded with 3 bovines, driven by Saif Din, son of Qamar Din, resident of Chandak in Tehsil Haveli, Poonch; Tata Mobile bearing registration No JK 19-8370 loaded with 4 bovines driven by

Ghulam Nabi, son of Raj Mohd from RS Pura Jammu. The police also stopped a bovine smuggler namely Mohd Shafiq, son of Mohd Latif , resident of Shahdara Sharief in Thanna Mandi who was trying to smuggle eight bovines on foot.

Another bovine smuggler namely- Khadam Hussain, son of Bader Din, resident of Chandimarh who was trying to smuggle six bovines on foot; bovine smuggler namely Abdul Rashed, son of Abdul Aziz from Bunikath who was trying to smuggle four bovines by foot; bovine smuggler Mohd Farooq, son of Mohd Shafi from Sailan, trying to smuggle eight bovines by foot; bovine smuggler Abass Ahmed, son of Mohd Sharif from Rajadhani near Thanna Mandi trying to smuggle 8 bovines on-foot.

They all were going towards Kashmir. A total 41 bovine animals in all vehicles and moving on-foot were rescued. They failed to produce any permission. On this seven FIRs u/s 188 IPC/11 PCA Act stand registered.

Youth detained under PSA

Excelsior Correspondent

POONCH, Aug 6: In the interest to maintain public order as well as saving the local youth from drug menace, the district administration detained a youth under Public Safety Act.

He has been identified as Javed Ahmed, son of Abdul Ghani, resident of Samote, in Tehsil Surankote of district Poonch. He has been booked and detained under Public Safety Act (PIT NDPS).

"The detenu is a habitual

criminal and involved in a number of narcotics activities. Besides he is a desperate/notorious character who indulge in deviating youth and other younger generation from right-ous path and his criminal activities, posing a great threat to the life and liberty of the people. As such keeping in view to prevent him from committing any further criminal acts which can prove fatal and are prejudicial to maintain public order the subject is slapped with Public Safety Act (PIT NDPS)," the police said.