

'Predator' drone deal to bring countries to India's doorstep: Ex Defence Secy

NEW DELHI, June 25:

Describing the defence agreements signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's US visit as "historic", former Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar said several countries using 'Predator' drones are likely to come to India for maintenance and overhauling.

India and the US inked a USD3 billion deal for 31 High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) UAVs, of which the Navy will get 15 SeaGuardian drones, while the Army and the Indian Air Force will get eight each of the land version - SkyGuardian.

A joint statement by the two countries affirmed that these cutting-edge drones would be assembled in India, significantly augmenting the intelligence, surveillance, and target acquisition capabilities of the Indian armed forces.

"When the US sells such advanced equipment, they never agree to any manufacturing outside the country. But in this particular case, it has said that the Predator drones will be assembled here and a full MRO hub for these drones will be set up as well," Kumar said. A full Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) means throughout the entire life cycle

of these drones, their maintenance will be done in India, he added.

Emphasizing the significance of the General Atomics MQ-9B High-Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) UAVs, Kumar said countries such as the UK, France, Italy, Japan, Australia and Spain operate the MQ-9 system.

"Since Predators are a platform which other countries are also using, we can expect that in the future, some of the Predators from other countries will come for maintenance, repair and overhaul to India," he said.

On an MoU between General Electric and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the GE414 fighter jet engines, the former secretary said the production of aero engines has been an area of deficiency for India and this agreement will prove to be a significant milestone towards the country's goal of developing its own jet engines.

"As regards the GE414 engines being manufactured in India with large-scale value addition, I think this is a historic moment. Aero-engine is one area where India has had a deficiency in the past and this is a major landmark in our journey to create our own aero engines and I think this is therefore, truly historic," Kumar said. (PTI)

V P Singh's birthday celebrated, retirees honoured

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 25: The 91st birthday of Vishwanath Pratap Singh (7th Prime Minister of India) was celebrated jointly by Three Vishwakarma Library and All India Backward Classes Federation (AIBCF) at New Plot, here today.

Prof Kalidas (AIBCF) and KK

which was opposed by both Congress and other parties but Supreme Court of India upheld his decision in 1993.

Retirees who were honoured include Satish Dhevan (AE Prasar Bharti), Brij Salgotra (Joint Director Education), Mahesh Pangotra (PNB Manager), GR Dafara (AEE PWD), Hem Raj Gandhi (SO Education), Avtar

Verma (DGM BSNL), Balwant Kataria (AGM BSNL), Vikramjeet Malpotra (AEE PWD), Bimal Kishore (Master), Kuldeep Angotra (Navy Commando), Ashok Salgotra (SO Post), Krishan Lal

from Sunderbani, Mohd Shabir Dhoib, Kuldeep Raj

(Master), Kewal Fotra (Canara Bank Manager), Vijay Prajapati (PDD), Manga Ram Prajapati (AEE PWD), Madan Baldotra (Assistant Registrar).

Special guests KK Chalotra and Prof Kalidas described the event as an effort to energize the retired but important section of society. They said that remembering V P Singh is necessary in view of the big role played by him as he sacrificed his chair for the backward section of society.

On the occasion, Veena Chalotra was nominated as vice chairman of the Library. The organizing team included Om Parkash Kataria, Diviyansh Dhiman, Aman Verma, Nandita Krotra and Janvi Krotra.



A retiree being honoured by the guests during a function organized to celebrate birthday of 7th PM of India, V P Singh.

Chalotra (CEO Local Bodies) were guests of honour on the occasion. In addition to remembering VP Singh, many retirees of OBC category were also honored for their distinguished services.

Ramesh Angotra (convener) threw light on the life history of V P Singh while FC Satia (AIBCF president) and Raj Kumar Chalotra (vice president, Vishwakarma Sabha) said that V P Singh was Prime Minister of India in the period (1989-1990). He was not only a politician but also very good painter and poet.

Kataria elaborated that V P Singh was the pioneer who implemented Mandal Commission Report for grant of 27% Reservation to OBCs in 1990

Modi Govt liberal in granting new projects for J&K : Dr. Manyal

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 25: Dr. Devinder Manyal, Jammu and Kashmir BJP general secretary and former Minister, highlighted the projects inaugurated, including the Central Forensic Science laboratory, 41 water supply schemes under the Jal Jeevan Mission for Ramban and Kishtwar, a multi-storey parking facility at Doda Bus Stand, a Bone and Joint Hospital at Bakshi Nagar, a Grid Station, and the upgradation of the road from Dogra Chowk to KC Chowk.

Dr. Manyal stated that the Union Government has been very generous in granting mega development projects and extending various welfare schemes to Jammu and Kashmir, with the objective of achieving overall development and improving the socio-economic status of the weaker sections of society.

He said during his visit to the city of temples, Union Home Minister Amit Shah laid the foundation stone of a central forensic science laboratory in Samba and inaugurated several development projects in Jammu. These additions to the long list of projects and schemes bestowed upon Jammu and Kashmir by the Union Government reflect Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment to accelerating progress and prosperity in the Union Territory.

Narendra Modi Government has flooded Jammu and Kashmir with numerous projects that were once mere dreams for its citizens. Prestigious educational institutions such as IIM and IIT, healthcare institutions like AIIMS, and the introduction of the Ayushman Golden health card, along with the construction, extension, and upgradation of different modes of connectivity and travel,

hydropower projects, and the grant of citizenship rights, as well as the formulation of schemes for the honourable and dignified lives of women, the poor, and marginalized classes, have all been provided by the Modi Government.

Dr. Manyal stated that over the past nine years, a record number of projects and social security schemes have set Jammu and Kashmir on the path of real development and welfare. The ground situation has changed today, and this region, which was neglected for decades by successive non-BJP Governments at the Centre and the Kashmir-centric dispensations in the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, is rapidly progressing towards peace, progress, and prosperity.

Youth found dead under mysterious circumstances

Excelsior Correspondent

KATHUA, June 25: A youth was found dead in mysterious circumstances inside Sulabh Shochaliya at Shaheedi Chowk Kathua.

Police said a local person found him lying unconscious and informed the police. A police team reached on spot and shifted him to GMC Kathua. But the doctors declared him as brought dead.

The deceased was identified as Romesh Kumar resident of W No 6, Kathua. Some used syringes were also found near him and it was assumed that he was taking drugs. The body was handed over to family after completing the legal formalities. It is mentioned here that numbers of youth already lost their lives due to drug addiction. The Punjab based drug suppliers are active in the area and numbers of them were arrested by police with large quantity of drugs like chitta.



BJP leaders during door-to-door campaign in Jammu on Sunday.

Yudhvir highlights BJP Govt's achievements

Modi Govt transformed India into self-reliant country: Jugal Kishore

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 25: The Member Parliament, Jammu - Poonch Lok Sabha constituency, Jugal Kishore Sharma today conducted door-to-door campaign at Jammu East constituency as a part of ongoing Maha Jan Sampark Abhiyan, a nationwide campaign to celebrate the successful nine years of the Modi Government at the Centre.

During the door-to-door campaign, the Member Parliament along with Yudhvir Sethi J&K BJP vice president and other party workers interacted with the residents of Jammu East constituency and discussed the key achievements of the Modi Government.

The MP also listened to the concerns of the people and assured them that the Government is committed to the overall development of the nation and will leave no stone unturned to ensure that every citizen benefits from its policies and schemes.

Jugal emphasized that the Modi Government's efforts towards transforming India into a self-reliant country has been incredible. He urged the people to continue their support to the BJP Government and pledged to work towards strengthening the party's base in the region.

He also stressed upon party workers to educate people about the successes and achievements of the Prime Minister during the last nine years.

Yudhvir Sethi, J&K BJP vice president, in his address, said, "The Modi Government's achievements over the last nine years are a testament to the BJP's vision and leadership. We are committed to maintaining the momentum and working together to make India stronger than ever before."

Sethi added "BJP's Maha Jan Sampark Abhiyan aims to reach out to millions of people across India and take the Modi Government's achievements to the masses. The party leadership and workers are determined to continue working tirelessly towards achieving their vision of a stronger, more prosperous India."

Councillor Anil Masoom, said, PM Modi has removed all the hurdles and paved way for the development, peace, prosperity and progress of J&K in the last nine years and the work is still on making it imperative to highlight all this in an ostentatious manner to convince one and all to support the party for pacing up the progress of the region and allowing the Modi Government to start working full throttle.

Billawaria kick starts construction of lane, drain in Ward 45

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 25: Continuing the campaign to provide better development as well as basic facilities to the people, Deputy Mayor Jammu, Baldev Singh Billawaria today started the work of lane and drain at Ravidass Mandir Lane, Ward 45 Digianna.

This work will be executed under the supervision of Jammu

ner and strict quality control measures will be implemented to ensure that the construction meets the required standards and good quality of work. Billawaria said that after the demise of BJP corporator, Raj Rani, the local people should not consider themselves helpless.

The Deputy Mayor said that in the last four years, JMC has expended a good amount for the development process of Ward 45.



Deputy Mayor, Baldev Singh Billawaria kick starting construction of lane and drain in Ward 45 Digianna on Sunday.

Municipal Corporation (JMC). Speaking on the occasion, Baldev Singh Billawaria said that this was a long pending demand of the people and now the demand has been fulfilled. He said that this lane linked with the other lanes of the Ward and with the construction of this lane, people will get relief during the rainy season. Deputy Mayor, said an amount of Rs. 70 lakh has been earmarked for the improvement and progress of the Ward. The funds can be utilized for various development projects such as infrastructure improvements, public amenities, community initiatives, or any other developmental activities aimed at enhancing the living conditions and facilities in Ward.

The Deputy Mayor said that the development works will be completed in a time-bound manner.

This significant investment has enabled to undertake a range of crucial development initiatives that have transformed the Ward.

He said some of the key development works that have been completed in Ward No 45 over the last four years included the construction of new roads, installation of street lights, the provision of improved waste management services, and the establishment of community facilities, such as parks and playgrounds.

Later, Baldev listened to the demand of the residents regarding reconstruction of the damaged pulli near Ravidass Mandir Community Hall. He assured them that the construction of a new pulli will be taken up in the hand and necessary instructions will be issued to the Engineering Department for preparing an estimate.

Yashpal Nirmal to get 'Pt. Harprasad Pathak Smriti Bal Sahitya Shree Samman'

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 25: Eminent children's litterateur of Dogri language, Yashpal Nirmal has been selected for Pt. Harprasad Pathak Smriti Bal Sahitya Shree Samman for the year 2022 by Pt. Harprasad Pathak Bal Sahitya Smiti and Tulasi Sahitya Evm Sanskriti Academy, Mathura.

This was announced by Dinesh Pathak Shashi, representative of both these institutions. He informed that a programme in this regard will be organized on September 24, 2023 (Sunday) at auditorium of Shri Amarnath Girls Degree

College, Mathura. Yashpal Nirmal was born on April 15, 1977 in Garhi Bishna village of Jourian in J&K.

He has knowledge of Dogri, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu and English languages. He is doing translation work in many languages.

Nirmal started his writing in the year 1993 and translation in 1994 by translating Shrimad Bhagwat Purana into Dogri language. So far, his more than 65 books have been published on various subjects in Hindi, Dogri and English languages. For his incomparable contribution, he has received many honours and awards which also include translation award of Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi for the year 2014 on the play Mian Deedo.



Yashpal Nirmal.

Students suffer as GHSS Nandna lacks staff

Excelsior Correspondent

DODA, June 25: Students of Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Nandna of Education Zone Thathri here have expressed resentment that their school is facing shortage of teachers and non-teaching staff.

and even with District Administration by parents of the students and public representatives but none took a cognizance of the issue.

Non-availability of teaching staff in the school is badly affecting education of the students. When contacted Chief



GHSS Nandna in district Doda. -Excelsior/Rafi Choudhary.

The School is being run by a staff of about 11 members while 43 posts of teaching and non-teaching staff are sanctioned and 32 posts are lying vacant since long.

There are about 250 students in the School and maximum of them belong to poor families.

Locals of the area told the Excelsior that most of the posts of Masters and Lecturers were lying vacant in the School for a long.

They said that the matter was taken up with the concerned CEO

Education Officer (CEO) Doda, Parshotam Singh informed that there is lack of teaching staff in GHSS Nandna and efforts are on to solve the problem.

"We are waiting for ATD (Annual Transfer Drive) of teachers after which it is expected that GHSS Nandna may also get some teachers which may solve the problem to a large extent," he maintained.

The locals have threatened protest if proper staff is not restored to the school soon.



BJP president Ravinder Raina along former ministers Sham Lal Sharma and Dr DK Manyal and others releasing video song 'Sher Dogre'. -Excelsior/Rakesh

Ravinder Raina launches Jasrotia's Dogri song 'Sher Dogre'

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 25: Video album of Dogri song 'Sher Dogre', composed and sung by prominent singer Happy Jasrotia was released today during an impressive gathering of prominent persons, artists and literary personalities, here at Press Club.

J&K BJP president Ravinder Raina along with former Ministers Sham Lal Sharma, Dr D K Manyal, Padamshri Mohan Singh Slathia and Zorawar Singh Jamwal released the video album. Video song 'Sher Dogre' highlights Dogra valour, culture, traditions, history of the Dogra community and has been dedicated to Maharaja Hari Singh.

The song throws light on the life history of Dogra martyrs Brig Rajinder Singh, General Zorawar Singh and others besides highlighting the great reforms initiated by the Dogra rulers.

The song has been written by Happy Jasrotia and Gustakh Dogra. The music has been given by Sahil Nath while K K Malhotra is the video director and editor. The song is available on Happy Jasrotia youtube channel.

Speaking on the occasion, Ravinder Raina said that more and more people should come forward for highlighting the great achievements and patriotism of the Dogra community.

Sham Lal Sharma and D K Manyal said that songs like 'Sher Dogre' should reach every family across the region and be sung prominently in every family function to apprise our next generation about the valour of Dogra community and their rich traditions. Mohan Singh Slathia said that such initiatives require support of the family as well as the community.

Chairman, Team Jammu Zorawar Singh Jamwal stressed the need to effectively project the Dogra culture, Dogri language and Dogra history through collective efforts of artists, litterateur, educationists and others.

Prominent among others present on the occasion, included renowned singer Sonali Dogra, Nirbhay Slathia, Rashpal Verma, CCBL chairman Parveen Sharma, Hardeep Mankotia, Sumant Singh Jamwal, Dr Gopal Parthasarathi, R V S Jasrotia, Y S Jasrotia, Shreyan, Sharang and Sahil.



Rahul Sahai (Chairman, PHDCCI Jammu) receiving a memento from the management of International Daily Rising School in Jammu.

Star Kid India 2023 audition held at Intl Daily Rising School

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 25: Jammu audition for Star Kid India 2023, presented by INARA Productions was held in International Daily Rising School, here today.

The prestigious audition, held in collaboration with International Daily Rising School in Jammu, marks a significant milestone in promoting the unique talents of Jammu's children. PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry supported the Jammu audition.

Star Kid India 2023, a Pan India show, aims to provide a platform for exceptionally talented children from all over the country. This audition promises to showcase exceptional young talent from diverse backgrounds and regions, celebrating the spirit of India's young stars.

Rahul Sahai, Chairman of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was the chief guest for the event while Baldev Singh Billawaria (Deputy Mayor of Jammu) and Raman Verma from Westside also graced the occasion as guests. Together, they

witnessed the incredible talent that Jammu has to offer.

Speaking on the occasion, Rahul Sahai said that it is really good to see young students utilizing their time in extra-curricular activities and learning to win and loose as both are very important in life. He extended Chamber's full support to the management in future endeavours too.

The panel of jury members comprised industry experts with vast experience and knowledge in the entertainment industry. Their expertise ensured a fair and thorough evaluation of the participants, selecting the best among them to move forward in the competition.



DDC Chairman Kathua during the inauguration of Cultural Mela at Bani on Sunday.

Col Mahan inaugurates Pahari Cultural Mela in Bani

Excelsior Correspondent

KATHUA, June 25: The three-day-long Chhij and Pahari Cultural Mela was inaugurated by DDC Chairman, Col (ret'd) Mahan Singh at Bani today.

The event was attended by a large number of dignitaries, including District Judge, Simrit Sharma, DDC Member, Reeta Thakur, Mela Ram, Naresh Sharma Tehsildar Bani, Darshan Singh Naib Tehsildar Bani, Sarpanch Bani Rakesh Gupta, and thousands of locals, cultural artists, Pahlwans, shopkeepers, etc.

Upon his arrival in Bani, Col Mahan Singh was accorded a warm welcome by local residents and members of Pahari Cultural Munch and Chhij Committee Bani. He was presented with a traditional Pagri and proceeded in a procession to the local Goddess Kali Mata Temple to pay obeisance and seek blessings for the peaceful conduct of the annual historic event.

The DDC Chairman visited stalls laid by local shopkeepers and outsiders, met with artists, including those who had come from Himachal and Punjab, and

administered an oath on the theme of "Say no to drug, yes to life" to participants.

Speaking on the occasion, Col Mahan Singh congratulated the participants, Organizing Committee team, and artists, and appreciated their collective zeal to make this historic event a grand success. He emphasized the promotion and transformation of culture from one generation to another as a crucial aspect of society's progress. He asserted that cultural growth and economic progress, strategic and defense superiority, and Atmanirbharta must go hand in hand, until the country achieves the status of "Vishwa Guru" by 2047 as envisaged by PM Narendra Modi.

The DDC Chairman also highlighted various developmental projects coming up in the Bani region, including tourist infrastructure and FDI, and emphasized united efforts and partnerships amongst Government machinery, public representatives, and the public to achieve sustainable development goals and the gross well-being of society.

On the occasion, the DDC Chairman distributed appreciation letters and trophies to artists and achievers.

Yuva Rajput Sabha organizes coronation of new president

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 25: Core Committee of Yuva Rajput Sabha (YRS) today organized a coronation function of new president of YRS Vikram Singh Vicky.

The function was attended by members of Rajput community with its Chief Patron Rajinder Singh, Chairman Raghubir Singh, Rajveer Singh, Rajan Singh, Surinder Singh and prominent dignitaries, including Balwan Singh (Ex MLA) R S Chib (Ex-Minister), Shiv Dev Singh (Ex-MLA), Maj

He also demanded early restoration of Dogra heritage in Mubarak Mandi complex and said the slow pace of work has become matter of concern for all Jammuites.

While Speaking on the occasion, Chief Patron Rajinder Singh demanded restoration of the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir, which was founded by one Dogra ruler with countless sacrifices by Dogra warriors.

Those who were present on the occasion, included Yashwant Singh, Rajesh Singh, Ranjeet



Vikram Singh being installed as president of Yuva Rajput Sabha during coronation function at Jammu on Sunday.

Gen Govardhan Singh, Zarowar Singh, Suraj Singh (DDC Member Khour), Narinder Singh Bhu, (President Bhu Biradari), Raka Charak and several others.

Newly appointed Yuva Rajput Sabha President Vikram Singh extended gratitude to the Core Committee and Sabha members for reposing faith in his leadership and resolved to work with dedication for the welfare and upliftment of the Biradari.

Vikram Singh lashed out at previous NC Governments for allegedly trying to crush the Dogra entity and said that Land to Tillers Act was one of the deceives in the history of J&K. He demanded special recruitment packages for Dogra youth in the Army, Police and other para military forces. He urged youth to remain united and vigilant against evils of the society and fight for their genuine rights.

Ch Gharu Ram asks DPAP cadre to highlight achievements of Azad as CM

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 25: A meeting of all the office bearers of Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) Central Zone Jammu, was held here today under the chairmanship of Choudhary Gharu Ram, Zonal President DPAP Central Zone Jammu and former minister.

Choudhary Gharu Ram appealed to the attending office bearers and worker's of the party to strive hard at the gross root level to strengthen the party as elections for Urban Local Body and Panchayat are round the corner in the coming days.

He asked the party cadre to strengthen the hands of Ghulam Nabi Azad for formation of next Government in Jammu and Kashmir and highlight the achievements and development works

undertaken by Ghulam Nabi Azad during his tenure as Chief Minister of the State. "Azad Sahib's period from 2005 to 2008 is still considered as best period in respect of infrastructure development in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Others, who spoke on the occasion, included Vinod Mishra, Anita Thakur, Hira Lal Abrol, Khushid Ahmed Bhat, Maheshwar Singh Manhas, Santosh Majotra, Aaradhana Andotra, Sunita Arora, Ashok Khajuria, Satpal Mandi, Col Som Nath, Suraj Prakash Sharma, Ch Mahinder Singh, Heena Bhatti, Bhrijeshwar Singh, Raghuveer Singh, S Balbir Singh Aji, Ashok Bhagat, Rajinder Singh, Anoop Khajuria, S Kiran Singh, Ratan Lal, Mahinder Singh, Yudhvir Singh, Ch Swarn Singh (Kathua), Neeraj Choudhary, Vikrant Choudhary and Rohit Sharma.