



We must protect every youth from falling into the trap of addiction: PM

New Delhi, Aug 2 (GNS): Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today launched 'Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan'. Addressing a massive nationwide video conference, the Prime Minister formally greeted the diverse assembly including over one crore young citizens connected from more than 28,000 locations. Emphasizing the collective weight of the moment, he framed the gathering as a profound national commitment. "Today, all of us countrymen have united for a great and important resolution," remarked Shri Modi.

Highlighting the compre-

hensive nature of the initiative, the Prime Minister explained that the campaign transcends individual well-being, simultaneously serving the broader interests of families, society, and the entire nation. Outlining the core objective behind the 'Drug-Free Youth for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan', he stressed that achieving Viksit Bharat fundamentally requires a physically healthy, mentally robust, and highly confident younger generation completely free from self-destructive habits. "Today, as the nation has set the goal of a Viksit Bharat, it is imperative that the country's



youth remain physically and mentally fit, brimming with self-confidence, and permanently steer clear of destructive habits like drugs," asserted Shri Modi.

Reflecting on the cam-

paign's origins, the Prime Minister expressed deep satisfaction that the initiative initially launched as a pilot project from the sacred land of Kashi the previous year. Highlighting the



unique blend of scientific clarity, spiritual energy, and profound cultural dedication driving the movement, he noted its massive expansion. "Supported by over 125 spiritual organizations

and numerous NGOs under the Kashi Declaration, that welfare-driven idea has now successfully become a National project," observed Shri Modi.

Commending the millions

of youth who took the anti-drug oath, the Prime Minister praised their solemn commitment to maintaining personal sobriety while actively disseminating the message of a drug-free life across their schools, colleges, and communities. Outlining the campaign's ambitious 100-week roadmap, he detailed how every upcoming Sunday will feature dedicated activities spanning art, culture, sports, and meditation to continually engage new participants. "The coming 100 Sundays will absolutely become 100 strong steps in the direction of a completely drug-free India," affirmed Shri Modi.

Addressing the vast online gathering of students, NSS members, and My Bharat volunteers, the Prime Minister expressed immense pride in the profound awareness, sensibility, and serious dedication demonstrated by the nation's youth. Positioning the younger demographic as India's 'Amrit generation', he reminded them that their energy, imagination, and talent are vital for guiding the nation toward its 2047 developmental goals. "For the ultimate future of the country and for your own lives, it is absolutely essential to keep yourselves free from addiction," asserted Shri Modi.

COMMERCIAL COAL MINING Fuelling India's journey towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat



New Delhi, Aug 2 (GNS) Coal meets the larger part of India's energy requirement. It accounts for close to 55 per cent of the country's primary energy needs and fuels more than 70 per cent of the electricity generated. India holds the world's fifth largest coal resource, assessed at about 4,00,715 Million Tonnes (MT), and ranks as the second largest producer and consumer of coal. Around five lakh mine workers produce this coal across more than 350 mines.

Domestic coal production has crossed one billion tonnes for two consecutive years, at 1047.52 MT in FY 2024-25 and 1040.08 MT in FY 2025-26, compared with 609.18 MT in FY 2014-15. A substantial part of this growth has come from captive and commercial blocks, whose share of national production has risen from 10.9 per cent in FY 2021-22 to 20.2 per cent

in FY 2025-26. In 2014, the Supreme Court of India cancelled 204 of the 218 blocks allocated between 1993 and 2012, finding the process arbitrary for want of consistent and objective criteria, and made clear the need for a transparent, auction-based framework.

In response, the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 placed re-allocation on a firm statutory footing, and the first auction tranche was launched in December 2014. Between 2015 and 2020, ten tranches of auction and nine of allotment restored 76 coal mines to productive use. On 18 June 2020, under the vision of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the Aatmanirbhar Bharat mission, commercial coal mining was formally launched, permitting the sale of coal on a competitive basis and extending participation beyond the public sector.

Govt: No Manual Scavengers Found in Fresh Survey

New Delhi, Aug 2 (GNS) The Government of India has reaffirmed its commitment to eliminating manual scavenging and ensuring the safety, dignity and welfare of Sewer and Septic Tank Workers (SSWs) through legislative measures and targeted welfare initiatives. The Government informed the Rajya Sabha that a fresh survey conducted across all districts of the country under the provisions of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013) found no manual scavengers.

Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Shri Ramdas Athawale Shares Details in Written Reply to Shri Derek O' Brien in Rajya Sabha. The House was informed that the National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMESTE) Scheme, launched during 2023-24, aims to ensure the safety and dignity of Sewer and Septic Tank Workers through mechanisation and comprehensive welfare measures. Under the scheme, 89,915 Sewer and Septic Tank Workers have been validated across the country.

Prez Murmu flags off inaugural soldierathon honouring President's bodyguard, Kargil heroes

New Delhi, Aug 2 (GNS) President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday flagged off the inaugural Soldierathon, a first-of-its-kind event organised to celebrate the 253-year legacy of the President's Bodyguard (PBG), at the Forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan. Mizoram Governor General V.K. Singh (Retd.) also attended the event.

The President's Bodyguard is the senior-most regiment of the Indian Armed Forces. The event also serves as a tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of the armed forces while commemorating 27 years



of India's victory in the Kargil War. "The Soldierathon serves as a unique platform to strengthen the bond between civilians and the Armed Forces, guided by the vision of 'Run for Soldiers, Run with Soldiers.' Centred on the theme 'Sup-

porting Real Heroes – the Armed Forces of India,' the event pays tribute to the dedication, courage and sacrifice of our soldiers while encouraging citizens to express their solidarity with them through active participation," the Rash-

trapati Bhavan said in a statement. The President's Bodyguard, raised in 1773, is recognised as the world's only Airborne Cavalry Regiment. It occupies a unique position in the Indian Armed Forces, with its soldiers undergoing specialised training as both paratroopers and tankmen.

Alongside carrying out ceremonial responsibilities, they remain combat-ready and are regularly deployed in some of the country's toughest operational environments, including annual postings at the Siachen Glacier.

Jitendra Singh reviews Ujh Project, calls for speedy implementation

New Delhi, Aug 2 (GNS) Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh reviewed the status and phased implementation roadmap of the Ujh Multipurpose Project (MPP) in Kathua district of Jammu & Kashmir.

The Minister held a detailed meeting with the officials of WAPCOS Ltd., a Government of India undertaking under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, which has been entrusted with the imple-



mentation of the project.

Dr Jitendra Singh emphasised the need for expeditious implementation so that the benefits of this strategically important project reach the people at the earliest. He advised WAPCOS to explore innovative solutions and implementation strategies while

maintaining the highest standards of quality, safety and efficiency.

The Minister was informed that the project is being taken up in a phased manner. Work will commence while acquisition of the remaining land is pursued simultaneously, without waiting for completion of the entire land acquisition process. The implementing agency is also working out the project site and related requirements.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Dr Jitendra Singh said, long-pending national projects are being taken forward with re-

newed urgency. He noted that the Ujh Multipurpose Project, conceived nearly a century ago, had remained in limbo for decades, while the Shahpurkandi project had remained pending for about four decades. The delay in implementation of these projects, he said, resulted in the waters of the Ravi River and its tributaries continuing to flow into Pakistan. The Minister said that even when the Indus Waters Treaty was in force, Ravi, Satluj and Beas were India's three rivers under the Treaty, with Ravi being the major river among them. He noted that the Treaty is now in abeyance.

India's greatest strength lies in its 65% young population: J&K L-G

Srinagar, Aug 2 (GNS): Jammu and Kashmir Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha said on Sunday that India's greatest strength lies in its young population, which accounts for nearly 65 per cent of the total population. L-G Sinha attended the launch of the "Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan" at a UT-Level function organised by the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports and SKUAST-Kashmir.

The 100-week mega campaign was virtually inau-

gurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, marking a nationwide resolve to secure India's future by empowering its youth and eliminating the menace of drugs. Addressing the youth of Jammu and Kashmir, the Lieutenant Governor emphasised that India's greatest strength lies in its young population, with nearly 65 per cent below the age of 35. He also highlighted that 37 crore youth in the 15-29 age group are eager to contribute to nation-building. "The Nasha Mukta Yuva



for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan seeks to energise this demographic, guiding them towards healthy lifestyles and active participa-

tion in development.

He said India's youth must emerge like a cloud of energy, spreading across the horizon of development. The

Lieutenant Governor observed that the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, launched in 2020 by the Prime Minister, is not merely a government programme but a social movement against the drug menace. Its objective is to instil values of self-discipline, positive thinking, and strong determination among citizens.

The Lieutenant Governor noted that over one crore youth are joining the "Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan"

at nearly 10,000 locations nationwide, reflecting the collective responsibility of society to protect young people from drugs. More than 35,000 MY Bharat youth clubs, Nehru Yuva Kendras, schools, colleges, and industry organisations are participating in the 100-week campaign, which connects youth every Sunday across the country. The L-G expressed confidence that this initiative will become a milestone in uprooting drugs from society.

Karnataka All-Party Meet On Cauvery Dispute Underway

CM Shivakumar Seeks United Stand



Bengaluru, Aug 2 (GNS): An all-party meeting on the Cauvery River water dispute, convened by Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, began at the CM's official residence, 'Krishna', in Bengaluru on Sunday, with leaders across party lines participating to discuss the state's strategy on the contentious water-sharing issue. The Congress government will make a final decision on the release of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu after the deliberations.

It may be recalled that the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) recently upheld the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee's (CWRC) order directing Karnataka to release 3,500 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu for 15 days, rejecting the state's appeal.

The meeting, chaired by Shivakumar, was attended by six former Chief Ministers — Veerappa Moily, Siddaramaiah, B.S. Yediyurappa, Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, D.V. Sadananda Gowda and BJP MP Basavaraj Bommai.

Deputy Chief Minister G. Parameshwara, Union Ministers V. Somanna and Shobha Karandlaje, KPCC President B.K. Hariprasad, State Ministers Ramalinga Reddy, K.J. George, Krishna Byre Gowda and M.B. Patil, Karnataka's Special Representative in New Delhi T.B. Jayachandra, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashoka, Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, Advocate General Shashikiran Shetty and several senior officials and legislators were also present.

Putin firmly spells out Russia’s red lines

No breakthrough in Alaska, but the silver lining is that Washington–Moscow ties haven’t broken down

C Uday Bhaskar

The much-awaited Alaska summit between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin, held in Anchorage on August 15, ended without a concrete peace agreement or a tentative ceasefire regarding the war in Ukraine. It has been described as ‘inconclusive,’ despite the assertive pre-summit claims by Trump, who had warned of “severe consequences” if Putin did not agree to his ceasefire deal.

The summit was rich in optics. The Russian President was given a red-carpet welcome by his US host and the Putin plane was escorted by US fighters — a special ceremonial honour extended to select allies and close partners. For a leader who till recently was denigrated as a pariah for his invasion of Ukraine and deemed to be ‘isolated’, the Alaska summit is a personal vindication for President Putin. In the media interaction where both leaders made brief remarks, it was evident that Putin was the more assured of the two and firm in outlining Moscow’s red lines, even while being courteous.

What is instructive is that while there was no dramatic breakthrough over the Ukraine issue — the slender silver lining is that there was no breakdown either in the troubled and complex US-



Russia relationship. A reset of Washington–Moscow ties may be on the cards, with significant implications for India and China.

The US–Russia rapprochement is important in the larger global strategic context, given that these two nations have more than 90 per cent of the world’s nuclear weapon arsenal and had held their previous summit-level meeting in June 2021 (between then US President Joe Biden and Putin). Since then, bilateral relations have soured over Ukraine and other issues. This discord has resulted in serial suspension of/withdrawal from previous agreements, thereby diluting the sanctity of WMD (weapons of mass destruction) treaties and related protocols.

While there was no explicit reference to WMD issues, both leaders de-

scribed the nearly three-hour meeting in Alaska as ‘productive’ and claimed that progress was made on unspecified issues. However, no binding commitments were announced, with Trump emphasising that “there’s no deal until there’s a deal.” He added that a few key issues, including one major sticking point (will Ukraine have to cede territory?), remained unresolved. Putin indicated that an ‘agreement’ was reached to “pave the path toward peace in Ukraine” but provided no details. He reiterated Russia’s stance that ‘root causes’ like NATO expansion had to be addressed. The major change unveiled in Alaska is that a ceasefire has been replaced by a quest for peace with Kyiv in the loop. An encouraging signal is that Ukraine President

Volodymyr Zelenskyi will travel to Washington today to arrive at a consensual modus vivendi and seek a ‘lasting peace’ that will bring closure to a long and costly war.

The Russia–Ukraine war, which began in late February, 2022, continues to take a heavy toll on human lives and infrastructure in both nations. During this period, over a million Russian troops have been killed or injured and Ukraine’s figure is about half a million. Trump made a reference to the death toll in this war and reiterated his resolve to enable a ‘deal’ that would bring relief to the millions affected by the hostilities.

On the day the summit was held, Ukrainian military strikes hit the Syzran oil refinery in Russia’s Samara region and the Olya port in Astrakhan. Officials claimed

that Russia had fired a ballistic missile into the Dnipropetrovsk region in eastern Ukraine, killing one person and wounding others, while a drone damaged civilian infrastructure and caused a fire in the Sumy region in the northeast. In Moscow, the defence ministry said Russian troops took control of the settlement of Oleksandrihrad in the Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine. The outcome of the Alaska summit has considerable significance for Delhi, since Trump had imposed an additional tariff on India for its oil imports from Russia, alleging that the revenue thus generated was helping Moscow wage its war against Ukraine. Delhi has sought to highlight that it has been saddled with harsh tariffs even though it is not the only country importing energy supplies from Russia. China is the largest importer but this has not cut much ice with Trump.

If a peace agreement can help stop the war in Ukraine, the rationale for penalising India would no longer exist and this would be a major relief for Delhi. India has welcomed the progress made in Alaska. While the US President has hinted that the secondary sanctions will not be pursued for now, Trump’s track record for feckless inconsistency and sly ambiguity has to be factored in.

A moment of pride

There is just a thin line that separates jingoism from patriotism. On all occasions, I can tell one from the other but Independence Day is an exception. Whenever I see our Tiranga flying proudly atop public buildings or displayed on home balconies, watch a little urchin selling it at a traffic crossing or stuck on vegetables or fruits at wayside stalls, I feel a swelling of pride. The same happens each time I hear the National Anthem sung (even if often off-key). From early childhood, it is such a vital part of our public display of pride in our country that no amount of indifference from cynical friends can smother it.

When it brings so many memories to those of us who were born after Independence, can you imagine what it meant to the generation that participated in the freedom struggle? My mum-in-law was gifted a superb Banarasi tissue sari by her husband (who hid it from her until the actual day) to wear to the Raj Bhavan in Lucknow (where they lived then) that evening. She would tell me how Mrs Sarojini Naidu — then Governor of UP — gave such an emotional speech that everyone had tears in their eyes as they greeted each other. Fifty years later, when she had moved with us to Delhi, she wanted to join the crowds in the India Gate roundabout to see the lights go up on Raisina Hill when North and South Blocks and Rashtrapati Bhavan were lit up in a dramatic second. A collective ‘Ahhh!’ went up from the hundreds who had gathered there to see this spectacle and I could feel tears prick the back of my eyes as I witnessed their joyful pride.

Sadly, we have lost that innocent pride over the successive decades after 1947. Today, children sit in a bored way as they are dragged to Red Fort to shout ‘Jai Hind!’ at the end of the PM’s speech. Many invitees look ready to die in their stiff, formal clothes and the chaos of locating your driver at the end of this torture is another story. Come now to the evening reception by the President at Rashtrapati Bhavan and re-live the torture of the morning as you drink your tea and battle the hordes for a bite at the buffet tables. Celebration is the last thing that comes to mind to describe the occasion given the sweaty weather of August. I wonder what insane logic was behind the choice of the unkindest month in our calendar for our leaders to declare this as our country’s Independence Day.

And yet, despite all the sweat and heat that is a necessary part of our Independence Day, we all feel compelled to attend the unfurling of the flag or at least see it telecast live from the Red Fort. And no matter how many times one has heard ‘Sare Jahan Se Achcha’, or ‘Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon’, it moves one each time. Cynical opinions on how degraded our political leaders are now or how the dignity of every national institution has been stripped, cannot dim our pride in our Independence Day.

Let us now come to the Alaskan date between Trump and Putin and hope that some good comes out of it. Most political commentators are not very hopeful and poor Trump looks further away from being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. With yet another war resisting his ‘peace’ proposals, there is no saying what this crazy leader may do. Slap India with more sanctions perhaps? Invite Asif Munir to take over the command of the American troops? He is regarded as almost a cartoon figure and the memes he has inspired could fill a huge book. Seriously though, he is mentally unstable and completely unfit to lead his country, leave alone the rest of the world. Let us pray that the Americans will do us all a favour by declaring him unfit to be President of their country and impeach him.

Come now to the impact of climate change on our planet. This year, Europe has witnessed higher temperatures than India. Wildfires have devastated huge tracts of southern Europe while even England’s balmy temperatures have suddenly shot up. Floods have devastated our own country and one watches with horror as little trickles have turned into furious roaring rivers as they sweep villages before one can count 10. As for our city roads and the plight of commuters, what can one say? How can the city’s municipal authorities be unprepared each time? Predictably, each party blames the previous government for corrupt siphoning of funds meant for cleaning drains and sewage lines. No one, in short, is to blame but our karma.

As for the demolition of slums and illegal colonies, why choose the monsoon to strip the poor of the roof (plastic sheet actually) over their heads now? Yet, given the heat of summer, the freezing weather in winter, public ire is bound to rise no matter which season the clean-up efforts are made. Similarly, everyone agrees that electoral rolls need revision yet when such an exercise is undertaken, every political party plays its own games to discredit the efforts. Some don’t believe the Election Commission, others the Supreme Court, while our worthy parliamentarians prefer dharnas outside its precincts rather than debates inside.

Could UN get a woman chief

ON July 30, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) took the first step in the selection process for the 10th UN Secretary-General (SG). Following the tradition that began in 1981, the council held the first round of informal ‘straw polls’ to gauge the viability of each of the current seven candidates -- Michelle Bachelet Jeria, Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, Rafael Mariano Grossi, Rebeca Grynspan Mayufis, Olara Otunnu, Carolyn Rodrigues Birkett and Macky Sall.

Straw polls take place behind closed doors and without any record being kept, wherein all 15 UNSC members express their choice on a white ballot for each of the candidates with three options: encouraged, discouraged and no opinion expressed. No official results are announced, with the presidency expected to shred the ballots at the end of each straw poll. Informally, the outcome of the July 30 straw poll showed four Latin-American candidates — Rebecca Mayufis (with 10 ‘encourage’ votes), Carolyn Birkett (9), Rafael Grossi (7) and Michelle Bachelet (6) — as the frontrunners. Costa Rica-nominated Rebecca Mayufis got only one ‘discourage’ vote. In the next rounds of straw polls, backroom talks and deals with the candidates could change the stance of the UNSC members on their preferences, especially the opinions yet to be formed. The UNSG selection process to find the successor to the ninth UNSG, Antonio Guterres, was triggered by the November 25, 2025 joint letter of the presidents of the General Assembly (GA) and the SC. The chief administrative officer of the world organisation is selected as per Article 97 of the UN Charter. It requires the UNGA to appoint the UNSG “upon the recommendation” of the UNSC. Though not mandatory, as per the recent UN practice, this time, it is Latin America’s turn. Five of the seven SG candidates are from this region.

Spelling out the appointment process, the UNGA resolution 79 (327) of September 5, 2025, emphasised to “strongly consider nominating women as candidates.” Thus, after 80 years, the UN may get the first woman secretary-general to take up the job on January 1, 2027. With 193 sovereign member states, the head of the UN is required to possess the “highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity” for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The UNSG heads the UN Secretariat that comprises staff at offices located in Bonn, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and New York, apart from the regional offices and resident missions in almost all UN member states. The reduced UN budget of \$3.24 billion will fund 11,594 positions in 2026 (13,809 positions in 2025). So, the UN faces a “race to bankruptcy” in view of the record arrears of \$1.6 billion (2025-end) as well as overall arrears exceeding \$6.5 billion across the regular budget, peacekeeping and two international tribunals. By September 2025, only 136 member states had paid their assessments in full. Several contributors, including the US, China, Russia and Mexico, were yet to pay their dues. Article 97 of the UN Charter says that “The Secretary-General shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council.” Traditionally, the selection process for the UNSG was opaque, mysterious and mainly controlled by the five UNSC permanent members. Now, the UNGA has asserted its role, as reflected in the November 25, 2025 joint letter. The UNGA resolution 79/327 provides a detailed guideline to bring about transparency in the matter and has called for “enhanced coordination”, “strengthened transparency and interaction” between the UNGA and the UNSC in the “selection and appointment of the Secretary-General.”

The 10th UNSG selection process coincides with the UN Charter attaining 81 years on June 26. The mammoth UN enterprise comprises over 100 bodies and organisations, including 30 agencies, funds, commissions and programmes. The UN has been considered “irreplaceable” to addressing the wellbeing of two billion people (out of eight billion) who live in conflict zones as well as securing the planet’s future.

As head of the world organisation and diplomat par excellence, the UNSG plays the role of an elder statesman, a whistle-blower, trouble-shooter and messenger of peace. “The people of the world are looking to us - and succeeding generations will look back on us. Let them find us on the side of the United Nations Charter...and on the right side of history,” Antonio Guterres has said.

The 10th SG will follow the nine illustrious predecessors: Antonio Guterres, Portugal (2017-2026); Ban Ki-moon, Republic of Korea (2007-2016); Kofi Annan, Ghana (1997-2006); Boutros Boutros Ghali, Egypt (1992-1996); Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Peru (1982-1991); Kurt Waldheim, Austria (1972-1981); U Thant, Burma (1961-1971); Dag Hammarskjöld, Sweden (1953-61); Trygve Lie, Norway (1946-1952).

Inequality is stifling the manufacturing sector

To become a manufacturing powerhouse, our companies must go down the value chain and produce for the mass market

Aunindyo Chakravarty

The other day, while leafing through my daughter’s 10th-standard economics textbook, I found an oft-repeated generalisation about modern economies. The book said that countries that are less developed depend heavily on agriculture and mining. Countries that are developing have a well-developed factory sector. Finally, economies that are already developed — like the USA or the UK — have an oversized service sector.

Where does India fit in this scheme? We are the fastest growing big economy in the world, but our factories aren’t doing too well. In the past 11 years, since Narendra Modi became Prime Minister, our economy has grown at an average rate of 6.1 per cent. But we have to account for the Covid period here. Our output fell during the lockdown year and it took another six months for our economy to recover to where it was right before Covid hit us. If we adjust for that lost time, it would be fair to say that our economy has grown at 7.1 per cent per year during the Modi years.

What about the manufacturing sector? In terms of gross value added, it has marginally lagged behind the GDP, growing at 6.9 per cent. But if we look at the actual output growth — the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) gives us a better picture here — then factory output



has grown at just 3.7 per cent per year. Do note that in both cases, I am adjusting for the 1.5 years of Covid-induced loss in output.

Even this hides the true picture of how India’s factories have been languishing. Most of this growth has been driven by the infrastructure sector, which grew at 6 per cent per annum (adjusted for the Covid years). This was almost entirely driven by government spending and not independent private investment or household consumption.

One way to measure whether India’s corporates have been investing more in manufacturing is to check the growth in the production of capital goods — products that are used to manufacture more products, such as machines, equipment, commercial vehicles, etc.

The output of capital goods, adjusted for the Covid time, has grown at a measly 1.7 per cent per year between 2013-14 and 2024-25. This number would have been even smaller had the production of ships and railway equipment not grown at a very fast pace. What about goods for consumers like you and me? Consumer goods output has grown at just 2.7 per cent per year — again adjusted for the 1.5-year production loss during the Covid period. Within this, consumer non-durables — things like packaged milk, soaps, hair-oil and medicines — have grown at an annual pace of 3.6 per cent. Consumer durables — ranging from passenger cars to plastic bottles — grew at just 1.6 per cent per year, barely beating the annual average

growth rate of our population. Why is there this great divergence between the rate of growth of value added in our factories and the growth of actual output? The most likely reason for this is our stark income and wealth inequality. The World Inequality Lab estimates that the richest 0.5 per cent of the Indians earn about 17.5 per cent of the total private income. That is equal to what the poorest 55 per cent earn. The inequality is even more stark if we look at the share of wealth. The richest 0.5 per cent of Indians own roughly 36.5 per cent of the total net personal wealth in the country. This is the same as the total personal wealth of the bottom 91 per cent!

Compare the numbers: Seven million Indians at the top earn the same as 770

million at the bottom. And these seven million richest Indians own the same personal wealth, in total, as 1.3 billion Indians!

That is why Indian companies have no interest in expanding the absolute number of the goods they produce. Their only interest is in increasing productivity and moving up the value chain since the only people who can buy manufactured goods in India are those at the very top. So, value added by the factory sector is growing —because our factories cater to the affluent — but the total output growth is creeping at a petty pace.

It is not as if this value added in manufacturing is growing at a scorching pace, either. As pointed out earlier, it is still lagging behind the overall growth rate of our economy.

J&K Govt, CBC & Karmayogi Bharat Sign MoU to Strengthen Civil Service Capacity Building

New Delhi, Aug 2 (GNS): In a major stride towards strengthening the capacity-building framework for civil servants in Jammu & Kashmir, the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, the Capacity Building Commission (CBC), and Karmayogi Bharat signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on August 5, 2025, in Srinagar. The MoU aims to institutionalize Mission Karmayogi across J&K by facilitating structured, role-based, and continuous learning for government officials through the iGOT Karmayogi platform. The initiative will help build future-ready, and citizen-centric civil service ecosystem in the region.

Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary, Government of Jammu & Kashmir, reiterated the government's commitment to enhancing governance through capacity building. He emphasized the vital role of the General Administration Department (GAD) and



the Institute of Management, Public Administration and Rural Development (IMPARD) in leading the implementation efforts and expediting the onboarding of officials across departments onto the iGOT Karmayogi platform.

The MoU signing was attended by senior dignitaries including Dr. Alka Mittal, Member (Administration), CBC; Shri M Raju, Secretary,

General Administration Department, J&K; Smt. Rehana Batul, Director General, IMPARD; Smt. V. Lalithalakshmi, CEO, Karmayogi Bharat; Shri S P Roy, Joint Secretary, CBC; Shri Rakesh Verma, Chief Executive Officer, Karmayogi Bharat.

As part of the engagement, an orientation session was attended by Additional Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries of various depart-

ments at IMPARD. The session was conducted by Smt. Navneet Kaur, Director, CBC, and Shri Rakesh Verma, COO, Karmayogi Bharat, who outlined the core objectives of Mission Karmayogi, with a focus on digital learning, need-based skilling, and the transition to a competency-driven public administration system. Rakesh Verma, COO of Karmayogi Bharat, delivered a live demonstration of

the iGOT Karmayogi platform, highlighting its modular and self-paced learning design. He noted that over 1.26 crore learners across India have already benefited from the platform's flexible and contextual learning modules. A key outcome of the event was the Government of J&K's affirmation to begin onboarding officials from different departments and launch their curated

learning journeys on iGOT Karmayogi. The administration also expressed interest in implementing customized blended learning programs tailored to their unique developmental priorities. This MoU marks the beginning of a collaborative institutional effort to build a dynamic, digitally empowered, and continuously evolving public workforce aligned with the vision of Mission Karmayogi.

Parliament Passes Two Landmark Maritime Bills in Single Day, a First for Shipping Ministry

New Delhi, Aug 2 (GNS): In a historic development, Parliament on Wednesday passed two landmark maritime bills a first for the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) paving the way for a modern, efficient and globally aligned maritime policy framework in India. The Lok Sabha cleared the 'Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025', aimed at streamlining maritime governance with a modern and internationally compliant approach. Meanwhile, the Rajya Sabha passed the 'Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2025', replacing a century-old colonial-era law with updated legislation designed to promote ease of doing business and make India's shipping sector future-ready.

Speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW), Shri Sarbananda Sonowal said, "Today is a historic day for all of us at the Ministry. The parliament passed two important legislations — the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025 and the Carriage of Goods Sea Bill, 2025 — effectively endorsing PM Shri Narendra Modi ji's vision to modernise India's maritime sector, both policy wise and action wise. Today, with the passage of the bills, the Modi government's push for India's modern shipping gets double endorsement from the Parliament."

The Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025 a progressive, future-ready legislation that replaces the outdated Merchant Shipping Act of 1958. The Bill marks a significant step towards aligning India's maritime legal framework with global standards and strengthening the country's position as a trusted maritime trade hub.

Introducing the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025 in the Lok Sabha, the Union Minister, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal said, "This Bill represents a decisive step towards positioning India as a global leader in maritime trade and governance. It is

a progressive and advanced legislation, up to date with international maritime conventions and informed by the best practices of leading maritime nations."

The Bill is part of a series of major legal reforms undertaken over the past 11 years under the leadership of PM Shri Narendra Modi, aimed at enabling robust growth in the shipping and maritime sectors. These reforms have significantly enhanced efficiency, transparency, and global competitiveness. Highlighting the need for an updated framework, the Minister noted that the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 had become bulky, fragmented, and outdated with 561 sections, failing to address contemporary maritime challenges or fully implement India's obligations under several key International Maritime Organization (IMO) conventions.

"The Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025, with 16 Parts and 325 clauses, modernises India's maritime legal framework by aligning with international conventions, enhancing safety at sea, improving emergency response, and ensuring environmental protection.

It reduces compliance burdens, promotes Indian tonnage, and prioritises seafarer welfare and ship safety. The Bill aims to make India a globally respected maritime jurisdiction and unlock sustainable growth, investment, and innovation in the sector," Shri Sarbananda Sonowal further said.

On the other hand, in Rajya Sabha, the Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2025, was passed that repealed a century-old Indian Carriage of Goods by Sea Act, 1925. The new legislation is part of the government's broader effort to modernise India's legal framework by eliminating outdated colonial-era laws and aligning with global best practices to improve ease of doing business.

The bill adopts the Hague-Visby Rules, a globally accepted maritime standard

Giriraj Singh: Measure Carbon Impact at Every Stage of Textile Production

New Delhi, Aug 17 (UNI) Union Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh today officially launched the book titled "Carbon Footprint Assessment in the Indian Handloom Sector: Methods and Case Studies", jointly prepared by Office of Development Commissioner for Handlooms, Ministry of Textiles and Department of Textiles & Fibre Engineering, IIT, Delhi. This landmark document strengthens the Government of India's commitment to environmental conscious handloom production and sustainable development by providing clear, practical methodologies to measure and reduce the carbon footprint of the handloom industry—a vital socio-economic sector and a symbol of India's rich cultural heritage.

The Handloom Sector is an integral part of the rural and semi-rural livelihood engaging over 35 lakh persons. The sector engages over 25 lakh female weavers

and allied workers which makes it an important source of economic empowerment of women. Handloom weaving constitutes one of the richest and most vibrant aspects of the Indian cultural heritage. The sector has advantage of being less capital intensive, minimal use of power, being eco-friendly, flexibility of small production, openness to innovations and adaptability to market requirements. The uniqueness and its capability to produce small batch size and being eco-friendly, handloom products are in high demand in the international and the domestic market. This book focuses on the vibrant and intricate Indian handloom and its significant role in sustainable fashion and mindful consumption.

The book comprises of simple steps to measure Carbon Footprint through real-world case studies across India, including products viz. cotton bedsheets, floor mats, Ikat sarees, Banarasi

sarees, and other iconic handloom items. It also includes methodologies for low-cost data collection and emission measurement methods designed specifically for the handloom sector to enhance eco-friendly production.

This report/book was prepared through research collaboration between Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms and Textile and Fibre Engineering department, IIT Delhi. The work involved extensive consultations and close collaboration with experts from the Indian Institute of Handloom Technology, Weavers Service Centres, grassroots weaver groups, Greenstitch Private Limited, and key government agencies. The book integrates global climate reporting standards while adapting them to India's unique operational context, thereby empowering the sector to achieve sustainable growth.

The Ministry urges all stakeholders, media repre-

sentatives, and members of the public to explore and apply the findings of this landmark report—an important milestone on the journey toward a greener, more resilient Indian textile industry.

Speaking on the occasion, Giriraj Singh said the handloom sector has always represented India's tradition of sustainability, and the new publication will help artisans and stakeholders adopt globally accepted environmental practices without compromising their traditional methods of production. He stressed that sustainability and competitiveness must go hand in hand for the sector's long-term growth.

The Minister noted that increasing global demand for environmentally responsible products presents a significant opportunity for Indian handloom exports. By enabling accurate carbon footprint assessment, the book will help producers improve market access.

Railways Tighten Catering with Cluster Contracts, Stricter Monitoring

New Delhi, Aug 2 (GNS): With the objective of bringing about improvement in quality and hygiene of food in trains, Ministry of Railways issued instructions vide Commercial Circular No.24 of 2023. It is envisaged to award contracts for clusters of trains in place of an individual train. Emphasis has been placed on infrastructure development and fixing end-to-end accountability of food production and services onboard.

IRCTC formed route-wise clusters of trains along with identified locations for commissioning of Base Kitchens for supply of meals in trains under the framework of extant policy guidelines. Contracts of clusters of trains have been awarded by IRCTC through a transparent process to the highest bidders, as per the terms and conditions stipulated in the tender documents. Robust monitoring systems and compliance measures have been put in place by IRCTC to ensure compliance of tender conditions by the contractors and prevent any unethical practices or unfair advantages to any contractor.

A total of 24 bidders participated in the tenders for clusters of trains floated by IRCTC, out of which 20 entities have been awarded contracts by IRCTC. No contract was awarded by IRCTC in contradiction of the tender conditions. The details of Letters of Award (LOA), issued to multiple service providers, are published on the website of IRCTC. None of the successful bidders has got 80% of the Cluster A contracts awarded till date.

Receipt of representations, suggestions, grievances, complaints etc. from stakeholders, elected representatives, catering associations, individuals etc. by Railways at various levels is a continuous and dynamic process. These concerns are examined on merits and necessary action is taken accordingly. In 2024-25, Rs. 13.2 Crores of penalties were imposed on complaints received by

IRCTC. Further, complaints are continuously monitored on RailMadad Portal.

On an average, 16.5 lakh meals are served per day on the Indian Railways' network. It is the endeavour of Indian Railways to ensure smooth and uninterrupted services of such a large volume of meals to passengers. Necessary measures are accordingly put in place from time to time to improve overall services to passengers.

To ensure upgradation in services, various provisions have been made in the Circular which inter-alia include instructions regarding qualification and training of staff to be deployed for managing catering services. It has been mandated to deploy Hotel management graduates to supervise and monitor these services. Accordingly, Degree/Diploma Hospitality Monitors are engaged by IRCTC/contractors: 819 are deployed in multiple kitchens for monitoring the kitchen operations and 876 are deployed in trains for monitoring on-board catering services.

This information was provided by the Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha today. The Minister informed that the Railways has also strengthened food safety protocols through regular inspections, surprise checks, and third-party audits of base kitchens and onboard catering services. Contractors are required to adhere to prescribed hygiene standards, while food samples are tested periodically to ensure quality and safety for passengers.

He said passenger feedback plays a key role in improving catering services. Complaints and suggestions received through the RailMadad portal, helplines, social media platforms, and direct feedback mechanisms are reviewed promptly.

MSDE Organises Workshop on the National Scheme for ITI Upgradation with State Government officials at Kaushal Bhawan, Delhi

New Delhi, Aug 17 (UNI) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) organised a day-long workshop with senior officers from the State Governments of Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar at Kaushal Bhawan, New Delhi. Theme for the day long workshop was "National Scheme for ITI Upgradation". The workshop was also attended by senior officers from MSDE, DGT, NCVET and NITI Aayog. Distinguished representatives from the World Bank and ADB also participated in the Workshop.

Rajit Punhani, Secretary, MSDE reiterated the Government's commitment to roll out the Scheme at the earliest. He also emphasized the need for pro-active participation from all the States to realise the vision of the Scheme which reflects the overall intent of the government to create a framework

for government owned, industry managed skilling institutions operated through a new institutional structure. He further stated that there is a need for the state governments to identify suitable ITI clusters that can be developed under the hub-and-spoke model, and to proactively engage with potential Anchor Industry Partners (AIPs).

Ms. Trishaljit Sethi, Special Secretary/Director General (Training) elaborated upon the broad contours of the Scheme. She also stressed upon the criticality of identifying the potential industry partners for the success of the Scheme.

Mrs. Archana Mayaram, Economic Advisor, MSDE outlined the main objectives of the workshop and explained the overall structure and the way forward of the day long Workshop. Detailed presentations were made by the DGT on the broad contours of the

Scheme and draft guidelines of the Scheme were also discussed to obtain feedback of the state governments on the same. Detailed presentations were also made on the roles and functions of NCVET, aligning entrepreneurship with the National Scheme for ITI upgradation, Draft National Policy for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Skilling & AI. The workshop also provided a platform to discuss the integration of education and vocation as envisioned in NEP 2020.

Representatives from the state governments made detailed presentations on their existing skilling and entrepreneurship ecosystems. They highlighted key challenges and outlined areas where support from the Ministry would be essential for strengthening implementation. Senior Officers from MSDE and the DGT acknowledged the concerns raised and assured

the States of continued guidance and handholding to address any issues to enable an effective rollout of the Scheme on a pilot basis. The National Scheme for ITI upgradation was approved in May 2025, following the announcement made in the Union Budget 2024-25. This Scheme envisages upgradation of 1000 Govt. ITIs in a hub & spoke model as stated, industry-managed skilling institutions. 200 ITIs will function as hub institutions and 800 as spokes. A hub ITI will on an average have 4 spoke ITIs with all upgraded ITIs equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure, machinery and equipment.

The workshop concluded with a shared commitment to advance the skilling and entrepreneurship ecosystem across States, with MSDE reaffirming its role in facilitating convergence, capacity building, and guidance to meet the goal of driving excellence in

Govt. owned ITIs envisioned in the new Scheme. The proposed scheme aims to transform Industrial Training Institutes into modern, industry-responsive centres of excellence by strengthening infrastructure, updating curricula, and promoting outcome-based training aligned with emerging industry requirements. The initiative seeks to improve the employability of youth while addressing evolving workforce demands across key sectors.

Officials highlighted that the hub-and-spoke model will facilitate resource sharing, faculty development, advanced training facilities, and closer collaboration between industry and institutions. Hub ITIs will provide technical support, mentorship, and specialized training to the connected spoke ITIs, ensuring uniform quality standards and better access to modern technologies. The workshop

also emphasized the importance of integrating digital technologies, artificial intelligence, automation, and other Industry 4.0 components into vocational education. Participants discussed strategies to equip trainees with future-ready skills that align with the country's economic growth and technological transformation.

Representatives from international development partners, including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), shared global best practices in vocational education and skill development. They reaffirmed their support for strengthening India's skilling ecosystem through technical assistance, institutional capacity building, and knowledge sharing. State government officials stressed the need for greater flexibility in implementing the scheme to accommodate regional industrial priorities.

Bhatti invites US-based NRIs to invest in Telangana, unveils vision for \$3 trillion economy

Hyderabad, Aug 2 (GNS) Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Sunday invited Telugu NRIs in the United States to invest in the state, outlining the government's vision of transforming Telangana into a USD 3 trillion economy by 2047 through sustained investment, infrastructure expansion and welfare-led development. Addressing representatives of the Indian Overseas Congress (IOC) during his visit to the US, Bhatti said the state government is implementing the "Telangana Rising 2047" vision, with the goal of making Telangana a USD 1 trillion economy within the next five years before scaling it to USD 3 trillion by 2047.

He said the proposed 'Bharat Future City' at Mucherla, being developed on Net-Zero and pollution-free standards, would emerge as the state's fourth major urban centre after Hyderabad, Secunderabad



and Cyberabad. Inviting the diaspora to become partners in Telangana's growth story, he said the state is positioning itself as a global investment destination while balancing economic development with social welfare. Highlighting reforms in education and skill development, he said the government has established the Young India Skills University, is modernising Industrial

Training Institutes (ITIs) into digital skill centres in partnership with the Tata Group, and is setting up integrated residential schools in every Assembly constituency. He also highlighted the breakfast scheme for 27 lakh government school students and the extension of the mid-day meal scheme to Intermediate students.

The Deputy Chief Minister said the HYDRAA system

has been introduced to curb encroachments on lakes and government lands, while the Musi Riverfront Project aims to restore the river and transform it into a tourism and commercial destination. Criticising the previous BRS government, Bhatti alleged that Telangana was pushed into a debt trap during its decade-long rule. He said the present government restored financial discipline, ensured

government employees receive salaries on the first of every month, and introduced Rs 1.20 crore free accident insurance for employees.

He said the government is implementing the Six Guarantees, including free bus travel for women, Rs 500 LPG cylinders, free electricity and enhanced Arogyasri coverage, to improve the lives of people. He added that Telangana's per capita income has reached Rs 4.18 lakh, supported by infrastructure projects such as the Regional Ring Road and Metro Rail Phase-II, along with increasing global investments. Calling upon Telugu NRIs and entrepreneurs in the United States to invest in Telangana, Bhatti urged them to actively participate in the state's development. State Minister Jupally Krishna Rao, Government Whip Addanki Dayakar, several MLAs, Congress leaders and Indian Overseas Congress representatives attended the meeting.

Over 800 booked for drunken driving in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, Aug 2 (GNS) Hyderabad and Cyberabad Traffic Police booked a total of 818 motorists for drunken driving during special enforcement drives conducted over the weekend, reiterating a zero-tolerance policy against the offence.

According to separate press releases issued on Sunday, Hyderabad Traffic Police booked 485 motorists during a two-day drive conducted on July 31 and August 1. Those caught included 381 two-wheeler riders, 45 three-wheeler drivers and 59 four-wheeler drivers. Most offenders registered Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) levels between 51 and 100 mg/100 ml, while eight motorists recorded BAC levels above 300 mg/100 ml. Meanwhile, Cyberabad Traffic Police apprehended 333 offenders, including 269 two-wheeler riders, 11 three-wheeler drivers, 51

Cyberabad weekend crackdown



four-wheeler drivers and two heavy vehicle drivers. Of them, 21 motorists recorded BAC levels between 301 and 550 mg/100 ml. All offenders will be produced before the court.

The Cyberabad Police warned that anyone causing a fatal accident while driving under the influence of alcohol would be booked under Section 105 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita,

2023 (Culpable Homicide Not Amounting to Murder), which carries a maximum punishment of 10 years' imprisonment along with a fine. Police also said that during the last week (July 27 to August 1), courts disposed of 232 drunken driving cases, awarding fine and jail in three cases, fine and social service in six cases, and fine only in the remaining 223 cases.

Nizamabad Police Commissioner participates in 675th urs of Hazrat Shah Jalal Bukhari (RA)

Falaknuma News Correspondent M.A.Samad Bodhan, Aug 2 Nizamabad Police Commissioner P. Sai Chaitanya, participated in the 675th Urs celebrations of Hazrat Shah Jalal Bukhari (RA) at the historic dargah in Bodhan town on Saturday.

On the occasion, the Police Commissioner offered a traditional chadar at the shrine, showered rose petals, and paid his respects to the revered saint. He also joined the special prayers conducted as part of the annual Urs celebrations.

Addressing the gathering, Commissioner Sai Chaitanya prayed for the well-being, good health, and prosperity of the people. He expressed hope that peace, communal harmony, unity, and brotherhood would continue to flourish across society. The Dargah management accorded a warm welcome to the Police Commissioner and



expressed gratitude for his participation in the religious celebrations. Among those present were Bodhan ACP Srinivas, Bodhan SHO Venkat Naray-

ana, Municipal Vice Chairman Meer Ilyas Ali, Dargah Secretary Mukhtadar, religious scholars, committee members, and several devotees.

CPI fights for people's rights, not for power: Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao

Hyderabad, Aug 2 (GNS) Communist Party of India (CPI) Telangana State Secretary and MLA Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao on Sunday asserted that the Communist Party of India (CPI) is committed to resolving people's issues rather than capturing political power, and called on party cadres to intensify struggles for

public welfare. Addressing the CPI Medchal-Malkajgiri District Council meeting at Makhdoom Bhavan, he said the party has always fought to safeguard the rights of the people, irrespective of whether it is in power. He alleged that unemployment, rising prices, privatisation of education and

healthcare, the weakening of public sector undertakings and anti-worker and anti-farmer policies have increased the hardships of common people. Kunamneni urged party leaders and workers to make the CPI's campaign tours, scheduled from August 6 to 14, a success across all constituencies and divisions.

Anupama Subedar Becomes Inner Wheel District 315 Chairperson

Falaknuma News Correspondent M.A.Samad Bodhan, Aug 2

Nizamabad received a moment of pride as eminent Inner Wheel leader Anupama Subedar was officially installed as the District Chairperson of Inner Wheel District 315 at the District Assembly and Installation Ceremony held at Taj Hotel, Hyderabad. The event marked the beginning of a new chapter in the district's journey of social service and women-led community initiatives.

The installation ceremony was attended by distinguished Inner Wheel leaders, office bearers, and delegates from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Representatives of 35 Inner Wheel Clubs, including 22 Club Presidents and around 190 Executive Committee members, participated in the programme, demonstrating the strong network and collective spirit of the organization.



The newly elected district leadership team also assumed office during the ceremony. Padma Sharma took charge as Convener, while Rama Devi and Uma Rani were installed as Co-Conveners. Lakshmi and Madhavi Latha also assumed responsibilities as Presidents of their respective clubs.

Speaking after assuming office, Anupama Subedar said that the confidence placed in her by the members would inspire her to lead the district with dedi-

cation, integrity, and a spirit of service. She stressed that Inner Wheel is not merely an organization but a movement committed to bringing meaningful change in society through compassion and collective action.

She announced that the district would give priority to programmes promoting women's leadership, girl child education, preventive healthcare, environmental sustainability, community welfare, and humanitarian outreach. She urged every

club and every member to actively participate in service projects so that the benefits of Inner Wheel activities reach the maximum number of people.

Members of the Nizamabad Inner Wheel Club, including President Sulakshana, Secretary Prasanna, PDC Sailaja, Swarupa Reddy, Soundarya, Premlata, Sumati Naidu, Lehar Agarwal, Subhashini, Dr. Aruna, Indira, and several other members attended the function and congratulated Anupama

Subedar on her elevation to the prestigious district-level post. The installation ceremony concluded with a renewed pledge to uphold the Inner Wheel motto of friendship and dedicated service. Members expressed confidence that under Anupama Subedar's leadership, District 315 would scale new heights through impactful social initiatives, stronger community engagement, and innovative service projects benefiting women, children, and society at large.

Ooru Panduga Celebrations Reinforce Spirit of Unity; Mayor Uma Rani Participates in Festivities

Falaknuma News Correspondent M.A.Samad Bodhan, Aug 2

The vibrant spirit of tradition, devotion, and communal harmony came alive in Nizamabad as the Sarva Samaj Committee organized the annual Ooru Panduga celebrations with great enthusiasm and grandeur. The festival witnessed the participation of people from all walks of life, symbolizing the city's rich cultural heritage and unity. City Mayor Smt. Kooragayala Uma Rani Ra-



mesh attended the celebrations as the Chief Guest and offered special prayers for the peace, prosperity, and well-being of the people. She later interacted with committee members and devotees, extending her greetings

on the festive occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the Mayor said that Ooru Panduga has evolved into a festival of social harmony, where people from different religions, castes, and communities come together to

celebrate shared cultural values. She remarked that such festivals strengthen the bonds of friendship and brotherhood while preserving the traditions that have been passed down through generations.

Highlighting the importance of cultural preservation, she said that rapid urban development should always go hand in hand with the protection of traditional festivals and local heritage. She added that festivals like Ooru Panduga help instill

cultural values among the younger generation and encourage active public participation in preserving the city's unique identity.

The celebrations featured colourful cultural performances, traditional rituals, and devotional programmes, attracting a large gathering of residents and visitors. The festive atmosphere reflected the collective spirit of the people and the successful efforts of the Sarva Samaj Committee in organizing the event.



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KIMS Cuddles organises breastfeeding awareness walkathon to mark World Breastfeeding Week

Hyderabad, Aug 2 (GNS) KIMS Cuddles, Kondapur, on Sunday organised a breastfeeding awareness walkathon as part of World Breastfeeding Week, highlighting that breastfeeding is a shared responsibility of families, healthcare professionals and society, and describing breast milk as a baby's first investment in lifelong health.

The walkathon saw par-

ticipation from obstetricians, neonatologists, paediatricians, nurses, lactation consultants, hospital staff, expectant mothers and parents, who stressed the importance of creating a supportive environment to help mothers exclusively breastfeed their infants.

As part of the week-long campaign, the hospital is conducting antenatal counselling sessions, dem-

onstrations on breastfeeding techniques, continuing medical education (CME) programmes, quizzes, myth-busting discussions and skit competitions to promote breastfeeding awareness.

The campaign also reinforces the recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, followed by complementary feeding while continuing breastfeeding for two years or beyond.

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