

# Centre bowed to US pressure instead of safeguarding nation's interests: Karra

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, MAR 08

The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) on Saturday staged a protest in Jammu against the recent hike in the price of LPG cylinders and criticised the proposed Indo-US trade deal, alleging that the decisions would adversely affect the common people as well as the country's economy.

In connection with International Women's Day, a rally was organized by J&K Mahila Congress president Shamima Raina and Inderjeet Kour at Model Town, but the rally was later turned into a protest due to the unprecedented hike in the prices of LPG cylinders.

Under the leadership of JKPCC president Tariq Hamid Karra and working president Raman Bhalla, a large number of party workers, including women participated in the rally at Model Town Digiana in the Gangwal area of Jammu.

Carrying placards and banners, the Congress workers raised slogans against the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre and criticised what they described as the government's "surrender" in the Indo-US trade negotiations. The protesters alleged that the continuous rise in the prices of essential commodities, particularly cooking gas, has added to the financial bur-



den on ordinary households.

Addressing the gathering, JKPCC chief Tariq Hamid Karra termed the Indo-US trade deal a "major blow" to the country's economic interests. He said that instead of safeguarding the nation's economic and strategic priorities, the Centre had bowed to pressure from the United States.

Karra said the recent LPG price hike had come soon after promises made to women on the occasion of International Women's Day, calling the decision "cruel" and insensitive to the struggles of ordinary families. He pointed out that many rural households still do not have access to a piped gas supply and rely

entirely on LPG cylinders, forcing them to carefully plan their monthly budgets.

He also expressed concern over the possible implications of the India-US trade agreement for the agriculture and dairy sectors. According to Karra, provisions relating to agricultural and dairy imports could expose farmers and producers in Jammu and Kashmir to competition from cheaper foreign products.

He warned that orchardists and dairy farmers in the Union Territory could be severely affected if safeguards are not put in place. "Our apple growers, walnut producers and small dairy farmers could face serious challenges if

cheap imports enter the market without minimum support guarantees," he said, demanding that the Centre immediately roll back the LPG price hike and present a White Paper on the trade deal in Parliament.

Karra further linked the issue to broader governance concerns in Jammu and Kashmir. He alleged that the region is already grappling with stalled recruitment for thousands of sanctioned government posts, erratic electricity supply in several border tehsils and a reduction in ration quotas under the public distribution system (PDS), which forces many families to purchase food grains from the open market at higher prices.

# Empowering Women through Cyber Awareness at GCW Udhampur

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On the occasion of International Women's Day, a Cyber Awareness Activity was organized at Government College for Women (GCW), Udhampur by the Cyber Club of the college under the guidance of esteemed Principal Dr. Nalini Pathania, with the objective of educating students and faculty about cyber safety, particularly focusing on cyber crimes against women.

The initiative aimed to sensitize participants about the increasing risks in the digital space and to empower them with knowledge to stay safe online.

The students and faculty members were made aware of various forms of cyber crimes targeting women, including online harassment, identity theft, cyber stalking, and misuse of social media platforms.

The speakers Ms. Rachna Bharti, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Applications, Ms. Shiwani Sharma, Lecturer, Department of Computer Applications and Ms. Shibalka, Lecturer, De-



partment of Computer Applications highlighted preventive measures, safe online practices, and the importance of reporting cyber incidents through appropriate channels.

As part of the activity, participants were encouraged to test their knowledge by taking part in an online quiz hosted on the Stay Safe Online portal. The quiz served as an interactive learning tool and helped reinforce key concepts related to cyber security and digital responsibility. The event was successfully conducted with the active involvement of the Cyber Club of

GCW Udhampur including Dr. Preeti Dubey (Convener) and members namely: Ms. Rachna Bharti, Dr. Om Prakash, Ms. Kusha Sharma, Ms. Pawinder Kaur, Mr. Yash Kumar, and Dr. Ajay Sharma, who actively engaged the students and ensured enthusiastic participation throughout the session. The Heads of all departments also actively participated in the initiative and ensured the participation of students from their respective departments, contributing significantly to the success of the program. The Student Council of the college

played a vital role in making the event successful.

In her remarks, Dr. Nalini Pathania, Principal of GCW Udhampur, appreciated the efforts of the Cyber Club for organizing such an informative and meaningful activity. She emphasized the importance of cyber awareness in today's digital era and encouraged students to remain vigilant and responsible while using online platforms.

The program concluded on a positive note with active participation from students and faculty, making the event both informative and impactful.

# Army celebrates International Women's Day

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Indian Army celebrated International Women's Day 2026 in Rajouri by organising a series of empowerment-driven events across Naushera, Rajouri, Mendhar and Poonch districts from 05 to 08 March 2026.

Around 700 women from the south of the Pir Panjal region participated in the celebrations, reflecting the Indian Army's commitment to women's empowerment and nation building. The events began on 05 March 2026 with "Rajouri's Got Talent," which provided a vibrant platform for local women to showcase their abilities in singing, dance, creative expression and art and craft. The programme encouraged confidence and highlighted the creativity and



potential of women from the region.

On 06 March 2026, a social outreach visit was conducted at a girls' orphanage in Rajouri, where essential assistance was provided to the residents. Women officers also delivered a motivational lecture on "Women in the Armed Forces," inspiring young girls to explore leadership opportunities and con-

tribute to the nation. A Light and Sound Show at Dhanidhar Fort paid tribute to the courage and resilience of women in national service. The celebrations concluded on 08 March 2026 at Raina Auditorium with an interactive session featuring accomplished women. A podcast by Sada-E-Pir Panjal Radio Station, a Nukkad Natak on "Beti Bachao, Beti

Padhao," and performances by winners of "Rajouri's Got Talent" added to the event.

Twenty sewing machines were also distributed to support livelihoods for marginalized women. The initiative reflected the Indian Army's continued efforts to promote women's empowerment and strengthen community engagement.

# Natrang stages Hindi play 'Girgit'

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Hindi play 'Girgit' directed by Neeraj Kant featured here today in Natrang's weekly Theatre series 'Sunday Theatre' at Rani Park, Jammu. Based on a Russian short story by Anton Chekhov the play proved to be the hard hitting satire on the present socio-political system. The adaptation of the play was deeply rooted in the soil of Jammu and its dramatic structure made the audience feel as if they are watching their own story. Every time the play is staged, some highly contemporary and situational aspect is added to it which refines its beauty. Natrang has been endeavoring to showcase highly relevant political and social satires and today's play demonstrated to be the shining example of that.

The play Girgit revolves around a Dog and corrupt Police Officer, who changes colours like a chameleon, every time as the situation



changes irrespective of right or wrong. The stage action starts when a Dog bites a pickpocket who approaches the officers to help him to roundup owner but in vain.

A passerby hints that the dog belongs to the local Minister as he saw a similar dog moving around his Bungalow. On getting his clue, the officer starts beating the pickpocket for teasing a respectable dog. The officer claims that a dog of minister cannot bite unless and until forced to do so. While he is beating the pickpocket, another man

from the crowd observes that the local minister cannot keep such dog, as he is known to have pointer-hunting dogs only. On this, dog is thrashed and search continues for the owner of the dog to enable the pickpocket to claim the compensation. The beating of the dog continues until a servant of the minister appears on the scene. At first he refuses to recognize the dog but later identifies him as the minister's brother's dog who has visited from Delhi. Here the dog is escorted back home with full official protocol.

Mihir Gujral as Police Officer portrayed aesthetically the changes of colours of the central character who was equally supported by Aadesh Dhar as his subordinate. Kananpreet Kaur as the senior officer successfully exhibited the complexities of the senior bureaucrats.

Among others who gave impressive performances included Mohd. Yaseen as Kaana (one-eyed), Vishal Sharma as thief, Kushal Bhat as Minister's Servant, Kartik Kumar as Dog, Arjun Sharma, Lovish and Sheetal Sen.

# JKPCC Kissan chief to hold protest ahead of Indo-US trade deal on Mar 9

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In a robust demonstration of farmers' unity, JKPCC Kissan Department Chairman J&K UT Bharat Priye today convened a press conference and workers' meeting in Doda, setting the stage for the statewide protest on March 9 against the Indo-US trade deal. The event drew participation from hundreds of local farmers, party activists, and community representatives, reflecting deep concern over policies perceived to threaten the livelihoods of small and marginal farmers.

Addressing the gathering, Bharat Priye warned that the trade deal could adversely affect the local agricultural economy, compromise farmers' earnings, and potentially make them vulnerable to market exploitation. "Our farmers are the backbone of India's economy and food security. We will not remain silent while external policies jeopardize their livelihood," he asserted. He further stressed the need for informed public discourse



on trade agreements and the importance of safeguarding local agriculture from unfair competition.

The event also saw the active involvement of DCC President Javed Lone and District Kisan Cell President Doda Aqib Dar, who appealed to citizens across the Union Territory to participate in the upcoming protest.

They emphasized the significance of peaceful demonstrations, collective action, and constructive engagement to ensure that farmers' concerns are clearly communicated to policymakers. Organizers provided de-

tailed guidelines for the protest march, encouraging farmers from all districts to actively join and participate in local demonstrations. They also highlighted the importance of documenting protests through photographs and videos to illustrate the breadth of public engagement and solidarity across J&K.

The meeting concluded with a strong reaffirmation of the commitment to farmers' welfare and public awareness campaigns, promising continued advocacy at both the local and territorial levels. Party leaders reiterated that they

would continue to press the government to address farmers' concerns, ensuring that international trade agreements do not undermine the agricultural community's interests.

Bharat Priye also appealed to the media and civil society to amplify the farmers' voice, saying, "It is our collective responsibility to protect the rights and dignity of those who feed the nation." The event ended on a note of unity and determination, with participants vowing to make the March 9 protest a landmark demonstration of farmers' solidarity in J&K.

# AWWA celebrating International Women's Day

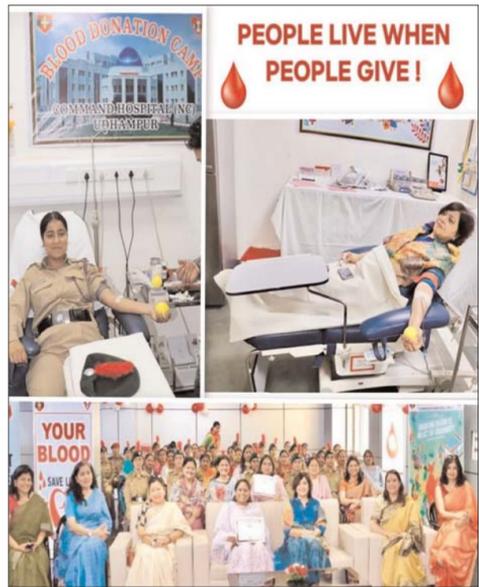
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Army Women's Welfare Association (AWWA), one of the largest registered NGOs in the country, celebrated International Women's Day 2026 with great enthusiasm and vibrant spirit. The occasion was marked by a series of meaningful events organised by Regional AWWA, Northern Command at the Chinar Complex, Udhampur, bringing together members of the Army community in a celebration of empowerment, resilience and unity.

Guided by its enduring motto, 'Asha, Vishwas, Aastha', AWWA continues to empower Army families by promoting professional skills, financial independence and entrepreneurial capabilities.

Through these initiatives, the organisation enables members of the Army community to face life's challenges with confidence, dignity and resilience.

As part of the celebrations, a dynamic series of impactful events were or-



ganised, reflecting the true spirit of empowerment and community bonding. The programme included a Blood Donation Camp aimed at fostering health awareness and social responsibility, a vibrant Cultural Programme showcasing the rich and diverse talents of Army families through captivating dance and musical performances and a special Veer Naris

outing dedicated to honouring and supporting the brave war widows of the Armed Forces.

In addition, a Jungle Trail and Environmental Awareness Activity was conducted to promote sustainability and eco-conscious living.

A lively Hunar Haat further enriched the celebrations by providing women entrepreneurs with a dy-

namic platform to showcase their creativity, handicrafts and artistic talents, highlighting the spirit of self-reliance and innovation.

The celebrations culminated in a grand event held at Chinar Complex, Udhampur with parallel programmes conducted across various stations within the Command Zone. During the event, Mrs Shinei Sharma, Regional President AWWA, presented the prestigious AWWA and Polaris Awards to outstanding AWWA beneficiaries in recognition of their exemplary contributions to the organisation.

In her address, Mrs Sharma encouraged members to actively participate in Nation-Building efforts and engage in initiatives aligned with AWWA's objectives, striving to create a positive and meaningful impact on society and the Nation.

The celebration reaffirmed AWWA's unwavering commitment to empowering women, strengthening families and fostering a resilient, progressive and compassionate community.