

2 Indian to be honoured posthumously on International Peacekeepers Day

UNITED NATIONS, MAY 28: Two Indian peacekeepers will be honoured posthumously by the United Nations for their ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty on the International Day of UN Peacekeepers.

Lance Havildar Harbhan Singh, who served with the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), and Naib Subedar Sujit Kumar Pradhan, who was deployed with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), will be posthumously honoured by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres with the prestigious Dag Hammarskjöld Medal for their sacrifice in the line of duty.

Additionally, Guterres will present the 2025 Military Gender Advocate of the Year award to Major Abhilasha Barak of India, who serves on the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), honouring her outreach efforts with women and girls during her deployment in the West Asian nation.

The world commemorates the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers annually on May 29, paying homage to the fallen Blue Helmets who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in UN peacekeeping missions across the world.

The UN Headquarters in New York will observe the Day on June 5, when the Secretary-General will lay a wreath to honour the men and women who served in UN peacekeeping and lost their lives in the cause of peace, the UN said in a statement.

Guterres will then preside over a solemn ceremony at which the Dag Ham-



marskjöld Medal will be awarded posthumously to 68 military, police and civilian peacekeepers, who paid the ultimate price in the line of duty, including 59 who died last year.

India is the second largest contributor of uniformed personnel to UN Peacekeeping.

It currently contributes more than 4,200 military and police personnel – including 155 women – to UN peace operations in Abyei, the Central African Republic, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, the Middle East, Somalia, South Sudan and Western Sahara.

Nearly 180 Indian peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty, the highest number by far from any troop-contributing country.

Barak will be the third recipient of the prestigious award from India, after Major Suman Gawani and Major Radhika Sen were honoured for their commendable work while serving in UN Peacekeeping missions.

Barak is serving with the Indian Battalion as the Commander of the Female Engagement Team (FET) in UNIFIL. She is also the first woman combat helicopter pilot of the Indian Army.

Gawani, who had served with the UN Mission in South Sudan, was honoured with the 2019 United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award. Sen, who served with MONUSCO, received the 2023 award.

The UN General Assembly had established the International Day of UN Peacekeepers in 2002 and selected May 29 for the annual commemoration since it was the day in 1948 when the Security Council established the first UN peacekeeping operation, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation in the Middle East.

Currently, over 50,000 civilian, military and police peacekeepers serve under the UN flag in peacekeeping missions across some of the world's most complex environments, where "conflicts are increasingly fragmented, protracted, and shaped by emerging threats, including the misuse of digital tools and the spread of harmful information", the UN said.

A total of 118 countries currently contribute uniformed personnel to 11 peacekeeping missions.

In his message for the day, Guterres honoured the peacekeepers past and present and reaffirmed "our

shared responsibility to respect and strengthen their work." He paid tribute to the nearly 4,500 peacekeepers who have lost their lives since 1948, including 59 last year.

"No one should die serving the cause of peace. Attacks on peacekeepers are grave violations of international humanitarian law, and Member States must uphold their obligations to ensure the safety and security of UN personnel at all times," Guterres said.

He added that "in an era of rising tensions, peacekeeping is a proven and cost-effective way to restore stability and hope. But it requires steady political backing and reliable financial support."

The theme for this year's Day of UN Peacekeepers is 'Invest in Peace'.

"At a time when UN Peacekeeping operations face reduced resources, the theme underscores that peacekeeping remains one of the most effective tools the international community has to respond to conflict – supporting political solutions, preventing escalation, protecting civilians, monitoring ceasefires, enabling humanitarian assistance, clearing landmines, and more," the UN said.

"At a time of rising conflict and shrinking resources, United Nations peacekeepers continue to protect civilians, prevent violence from escalating, and keep hope alive in some of the world's most difficult environments. Investing in peacekeeping means investing in stability, prevention and the possibility of peace itself," Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix said. (PTI)

Jugal holds Public Darbar at Chamb

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 28

Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha Jammu along with Former MLA Rajeev Sharma, Dr. Krishan Bhagat, Ex-VC DDC Suraj Singh, Bhushan Bral and Senior Leaders of BJP today held a Public Darbar in the Chamb Constituency and listened to the problems and grievances of the people.

During the Public Darbar, locals raised issues related to Roads, PHE, PMGSY, PDD, Revenue Department, and Rural Development. Member of Parliament patiently heard the concerns of the public and assured them that their genuine demands would be taken up with the concerned authorities and that best possible efforts would be made to fulfil their demands at the earliest.

Jugal Kishore Sharma also apprised the public about the ongoing and upcoming developmental works being carried out in the constituency for the



welfare and betterment of the people. He said that Jammu to Akhnoor - 4 Lane was the burning demand of the people and the project was approved now in completion phase. He also addressed that demand for upgradation of Jourian to Khour upto Pallanwala road is raised soon get fulfilled. He highlighted the good deeds and welfare initiatives undertaken under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji for the development of the nation and up-

liftment of every section of society.

Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Khour Sunil Sharma, Tehsildar, BDO, BMO, Xen PHE, Aee PWD and other officials from various departments were also present on the occasion and addressed several grievances raised by the people during the interaction.

The Public Darbar witnessed active participation from local residents and public representatives, who appreciated the initiative of reaching out directly to the

people and resolving their issues at their doorstep.

District President BJP Kuldeep Magotra, Mandal Presidents Geeta Rajput, Ankush Choudhary, Bodhraj, Senior Leaders of BJP Manmohan Singh, Pardeep Choudhary, Pathan Singh, Suresh Kumar, Ghasita Singh, Jagan Nath, Sukhdev Singh Laali, Sonu Slathia, Renu Rajput, Ajay Kumar, Sikander Singh, Romi Khajuria, Ex-Sarpanches & Panches and others were also present at the occasion.

SMVDU organises 4-day Skill Development Training Programme

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 28

The School of Mechanical Engineering in collaboration with Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC) successfully completed a four-day Skill Development Training Programme on "Automation and Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) Implementation" by professional team of M/s Opsight AI Private Ltd at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University. The workshop aimed to provide industrial skills to B.Tech. and M.Tech. students to enhance their technical knowledge and practical skills in industrial automation and Industry 4.0 technologies. Program activity (soft component) is financed by fund from PM-USA under Grants to strengthen University scheme.

The programme was organized by Prof. Balbir Singh, Dean Academics Affairs with program co-coor-



dinator, Dr. Yatheshth Anand (HoD, Mech. Engg.), Dr. Amit Sinha, Dr. Sanjay Mohan (EDC Coordinator), Dr. Varun Dutta and Mr. Karan Vohra. The Head of the Department appreciated the initiative and emphasized the importance of skill-based learning for future industrial applications. The Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Ku-

mar motivated the students to actively participate in such industry-oriented programmes and encouraged them to continuously upgrade their technical skills to meet modern industrial requirements. During the workshop, students received hands-on training on PLC programming, industrial sensors, automation systems, and IIoT imple-

mentation through expert lectures and practical sessions. Industry experts also demonstrated real-time industrial applications and smart manufacturing techniques used in modern industries. The sessions helped students understand the importance of automation in improving productivity, efficiency, and industrial safety.

Nepal's member of parliament summits Everest

KATHMANDU, MAY 28: A Nepali lawmaker belonging to the ruling Rastriya Swatantra Party has scaled Mount Everest, carrying the logo of the Federal Parliament.

Mingma David Sherpa, a mountaineer and a member of the House of Representatives, reached the highest peak in the world at 5:40 AM on Wednesday, as per his social media post. Sherpa reached Mt Sagarmatha or Mount Everest, the highest peak on Earth, on the ninth day of his expedition, his post said.

Sherpa said that he climbed the peak with the slogan "From Parliament to Peak".

He extended gratitude to all his supporters, including the Parliament Speaker, Dol Prasad Aryal, for their support in his expedition to Everest. Sherpa was elected to the Parliament during the March 5 general election.



'12 Golden Years of Modi Govt'

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 28

Senior BJP leader Adv. Devraj Sharma on Wednesday launched a poster campaign highlighting the achievements of the Narendra Modi-led government over the last 12 years, describing the period as "Swarnim 12 Varsh" of development, governance and national transformation. The campaign, themed "Mazboot Netritva, Mazboot Bharat", showcases major policy initiatives and achievements across multiple sectors under the vision of "Viksit Bharat, Samridh Bharat." The poster also carries the slogan "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas", emphasizing inclusive growth and collective national progress.

Through the infographic-style campaign, Adv. Devraj Sharma highlighted 12 key focus areas that, according to him, reflect the government's commitment towards building a stronger, self-reliant and developed

India. Among the major achievements mentioned in the poster are India emerging as the world's fifth-largest economy under the theme "Mazboot Arthyvavastha", and rapid expansion of roads, railways, airports and modern public infrastructure under "Vishwastariya Infrastructure."

The campaign also underlined the success of initiatives such as Make in India, promotion of startups and strengthening of MSMEs under the "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" mission. Highlighting welfare measures, the poster referred to flagship schemes including Ujjwala Yojana, Ayushman Bharat, rural housing, sanitation, electrification and tap water connections, describing them as part of the government's "Jan Kalyan Ki Guarantee."

Special emphasis was laid on farmers' welfare through schemes such as PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi, improved irrigation facilities and enhanced crop production under the theme "Kisan Hit

Sarvopari." The campaign further highlighted the expansion of educational institutions including IITs, IIMs and universities, along with skill development initiatives aimed at empowering youth. On national security, the poster stressed strong action against terrorism and modernization of the armed forces under "Surakshit aur Sashakt Bharat."

Digital transformation initiatives including Jan Dhan accounts, Aadhaar integration, UPI and digital payments were also showcased as milestones achieved under the "Digital India" mission to ensure transparency and efficient governance. The poster additionally highlighted women empowerment initiatives such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, promotion of women entrepreneurship and leadership opportunities. Environmental protection and sustainable development initiatives including Swachh Bharat Mission, Green India campaigns and promotion of so-

lar energy were also featured prominently.

Referring to India's growing international stature, the campaign mentioned the country's successful G20 Presidency, stronger diplomatic ties and enhanced global recognition under the theme "Vaishvik Netritva." The final segment of the campaign focused on "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat", highlighting cultural unity, national pride and the collective resolve to transform India into a developed nation.

The poster campaign concludes with the slogan "Modi Hai Toh Mumkin Hai", reinforcing the BJP's message of strong leadership and development-oriented governance. Speaking on the occasion, Adv. Devraj Sharma said the initiative aims to inform the public about the government's achievements across sectors and strengthen awareness regarding the vision of a self-reliant and prosperous India through collective participation and sustained development efforts.

Fire rips through dormitory at girl's school in Kenya, killing at least 16 students

GILGIL (KENYA), MAY 28: A fire ripped through a dormitory in a girls' boarding school in central Kenya on Thursday, killing at least 16 students, a government official said, in the latest such incident to afflict the East African nation.

Education Minister Julius Ogamba said Thursday that 79 others were injured at the Utumishi Girls School, which has more than 800 students in the Gilgil area of central Kenya.

The cause has not yet been established. Ogamba said authorities would investigate whether the school's fire safety manual had been adhered to.

Police said they were leading the rescue and emergency response efforts at the school, which is located about 120 kilometres from the capital, Nairobi.

The government-owned secondary school is managed and sponsored by the Kenya Police Service. Many of the students are daughters of police officers.

The victims have not yet been identified. One person at the



scene, Wambui Nderitu, arrived to check on her cousin, who is a student at the school. She said she heard that the matron opened one of two dormitory doors "without alerting the children to exit." "The second door remained closed, and even though my cousin escaped with a leg injury, we've been told many children are injured and some died," Nderitu said. The Kenya Red Cross said several students were evacuated and are receiving treatment in various hospitals. The group said it de-

ployed "tracing and psychosocial support teams to support affected students and families."

Kenya's deadliest school fire in recent history occurred in 2001 when 67 students died in a dormitory fire in Machakos County.

In 2024, 21 students burned to death in a school fire in central Kenya. President William Ruto declared three days of mourning.

In 2017, 10 students died in a school fire in Nairobi. A student was charged with murder. (AP)

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