

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

CJP Protest Day 11: Wangchuk's Sugar Level Drops; Dipke Slams BJP's 'Virus' Jab, Flags Paper Leak

NEW DELHI, JUN 30: The protest by the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) at Jantar Mantar in Delhi entered its eleventh day on Tuesday, with activist Sonam Wangchuk's blood sugar level dropping during the third day of his hunger strike and CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke raising concerns over his health while intensifying attacks on the government over examination irregularities and its response to the agitation.

A health update shared by the organisers said that Wangchuk's blood pressure was recorded at 117/60, oxygen saturation at 96 and pulse rate at 92. His blood sugar level was 66, below the normal range, they said.

"There is extreme heat here. Staying without food in such conditions is difficult. We are taking care of his health," the doctor who examined Wangchuk said.

CJP spokesperson Ashutosh Ranka said that Wangchuk's health condition should be taken seriously and warned that Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan would be responsible if anything happened to him.

Reacting to BJP president Nitin Nabin's remarks comparing those at the protest to a "virus", Dipke questioned the language used against those demonstrating.

He pointed out that while the education minister had allegedly labelled protesters as "terrorists" and the BJP president likened them to a "virus", the demonstrators were merely raising issues concerning students and accountability.

"We are not a virus. We are the vaccine against the virus Dharmendra Pradhan," he said.

Dipke also addressed the issue of a leak in the Rajasthan Paramedical Council examination papers, alleging



a history of failures in the examination system. He claimed the paper was leaked from a college in Jaipur, and in recent months, several examinations had encountered irregularities.

"Do not think this is only about the NEET paper leak. If you do not raise your voice today, tomorrow your paper can also be leaked, and your job can also be at risk," he cautioned, urging students and parents not to deter young people from participating in the protest out of fear. He encouraged students to join the movement, emphasising that the issue affects everyone connected to education.

Regarding restrictions on entry to Jantar Mantar, Dipke noted that core team members and supporters were stopped near the protest venue, but clarified that entry was denied to some due to a lack of identity cards. He questioned whether an ordinary citizen required an ID card to access Jantar Mantar.

Previously, Dipke alleged heavy police deployment at the protest site, claiming that farmer leaders and student activists were being pre-

vented from attending. He remarked that several farmer leaders were placed under house arrest, questioning why similar measures were not taken against those involved in paper leaks.

"I wish such pressure had been created on the paper mafia. These students would not have lost their lives," he said.

He also claimed that police were not acting against those responsible for violence while protesters were facing restrictions.

"People who broke someone's head are not being arrested, but there is so much focus on stopping those coming here," he said.

Dipke alleged that police presence at the venue was aimed at restricting arrangements for protesters rather than maintaining security.

He affirmed that the movement would continue despite the limitations. "We are going to stay here. One person is risking his life; what else do you expect us to do?" he said. Attacking the government over its response, Dipke said the responsibility for the situation rested with Pradhan and also

targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alleging that the government was focused on political activities instead of addressing the concerns raised by students. Politics

He said the prime minister was busy with political matters, including 'breaking parties', buying MPs and travelling abroad, and "gifting Melody chocolate", which prompted cheers from the crowd.

He also held Pradhan accountable for student suicides, asserting that the minister should have resigned after the first incident.

"More than 20 students have lost their lives. The blood of these students is on Pradhan's hands," he said, adding that Pradhan should speak to the families of students who died.

The protest by CJP began on June 20 over alleged irregularities in the examination system, including NEET. Dipke has said the agitation will not remain limited to education-related issues and that other accountability issues, including electoral matters such as Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, will also be raised. (Agencies)

WASHINGTON, JUN 30: Emerging technologies will define the next phase of India-US cooperation, India's Ambassador to the US Vinay Mohan Kwatra said here, listing out biotechnology, artificial intelligence and semiconductors as priority sectors.

Addressing the USISPF Leadership Summit here, Kwatra said India has positioned itself as a preferred destination for companies seeking to diversify production and supply chains beyond traditional manufacturing hubs.

He said India has stepped up investments in strategic sectors including semiconductors, electronics, artificial intelligence, clean energy and defence manufacturing, strengthening its role in global value chains.

Kwatra said that India, currently a USD 4.3 trillion economy, was on course to



become a USD seven trillion economy by the end of the decade, around USD 14 trillion by the middle of the 2030s and between USD 25 trillion and USD 30 trillion by 2047.

He described India as an "indispensable anchor" of global economic growth and stability at a time of mounting geopolitical uncertainty

and supply chain disruptions. According to Kwatra, India's economic transformation has placed it at the centre of the evolving global order, making it a trusted growth engine and strategic partner for both advanced and emerging economies.

that has meant domestically for us in India under the leadership of Prime Minister

since 2014, has been a series of economically transformative measures on the ground, which have resulted in our consistently high growth of seven plus per cent, which is uniquely driven by domestic demand," he said.

Kwatra said India's economic rise is increasingly intertwined with global prosperity, making international partnerships more important than ever.

Referring to the government's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, he said it is not an inward-looking policy but one aimed at creating globally competitive manufacturing and resilient supply chains.

"The prime minister has propounded... a mixture of self-reliance and self-sufficiency, but an ecosystem which has positive externalities, which is not insular in nature," Kwatra said. (Agencies)

'Developed India' vision depends on prosperous villages: Shivraj Chouhan

NEW DELHI, JUN 30: Union Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday said the dream of a developed India cannot be achieved unless villages become prosperous and self-reliant, as he held deliberations with the rural development ministers of 29 states and Union territories at the Rashtriya Gramin Vikas Sammelan.

Addressing the second day of the two-day conference, titled "Gramodaya Se Rashtrodaya", at the Pusa Campus here, Chouhan said villages are not merely clusters of soil, fields and village squares but they represent India's strength, consciousness and the country's soul.

The conference reviewed the implementation and progress of major rural-development schemes and discussed strategies to realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Developed Villages-Developed India (Viksit Gram-Viksit Bharat)", according to an official statement.

"National progress is impossible without the progress of rural India," Chouhan said, stressing that villages have a central role in the country's development journey.

The conference saw the participation of senior officials and policymakers from 29 states and Union territories. Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma and other state representatives attended the meeting.

Chouhan said the vision of a developed India can only be fulfilled when villages become economically self-reliant, employment-oriented and equipped with quality infrastructure and essential public services.

He announced that the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission



(Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) scheme will be implemented across the country from July 1, replacing the existing Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

An interim approval of Rs 95,682 crore has already been granted for the implementation of the new programme, the minister said, urging the states to complete procedural formalities without delay for a smooth rollout.

The "Lakhpati Didi Dashboard" was launched at the conference and the digital platform -- "SHE LEAPS (Self Help Entrepreneur - Livelihoods and Enterprise Application for Prosperity and Sustainability)" -- was inaugurated for women associated with self-help groups. Chouhan said the target of creating Lakhpati Didis has been increased from three crore to six crore women and a roadmap has been prepared for bank linkage worth Rs 10 lakh crore over the next five years.

Reviewing the implementation of rural-development programmes, he asked the states to ensure a timely release of their financial share to prevent delays in projects and payments.

He also stressed the need to fill vacant posts related to rural development at the ear-

liest and said frequent transfers of officers affect continuity and accountability. Officials handling key responsibilities should ordinarily remain at the same posting for two to three years, Chouhan said.

He also called for wider awareness campaigns about government schemes, stronger social audits and greater use of artificial intelligence-based monitoring systems to improve transparency and efficiency.

During the review of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and Deendayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana, Chouhan said while several states have shown good performance, others need to accelerate implementation.

He laid emphasis on providing land to landless beneficiaries eligible under the rural-housing scheme and resolving pending housing cases.

Referring to initiatives undertaken by states, such as Jharkhand, Bihar, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, including multi-channel marketing models, community-based enterprises and household livelihood credit schemes, Chouhan said successful practices would be documented and shared with other states.

He also assured the states that the Ministry of Rural Development would work with the Union Cabinet and the Ministry of Finance to bring suitable amendments, wherever required, if existing rules or procedures create practical difficulties.

Expressing concern over the possibility of below-normal rainfall, Chouhan urged 14 states to remain vigilant and prepare for any adverse situation.

He directed the states to strengthen water-conservation structures and make preparations to generate additional employment opportunities in rural areas if required.

Calling for Centre-state partnerships, Chouhan said this is not a time for competition but for collaboration.

The Centre should focus on policy formulation, states on implementation, panchayats on grassroots leadership and citizens on participation in the development process, he said. The conference concluded with the felicitation of the winners of logo-design, quiz and digital-content competitions organised under the VB-G RAM G initiative. Several publications on new ideas, innovative models and emerging approaches in rural development were also released during the event. (PTI)

Sarvottam Yudh Seva Medal for Lt Gen Ghai, Air Marshal Bharti of Op Sindoor; PVSM to Navy chief

NEW DELHI, JUN 30: Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth, the country's next Chief of the Army Staff, Navy Chief Adm Krishna Swaminathan as well as Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai and Air Marshal Narmadesh Kumar Bharti, who both played key roles during the Operation Sindoor last year, were on Monday honoured with prestigious military decorations for their distinguished service of exceptional order.

President Droupadi Murmu conferred 105 distinguished service decorations to the personnel of the defence forces and the Indian Coast Guard during the Defence Investiture Ceremony 2026 (Phase-II) hosted at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here.

"These decorations -- seven Sarvottam Yudh Seva Medals, 30 Param Vishisht Seva Medals, 12 Uttam Yudh Seva Medals and 56 Ati Vishisht Seva Medals -- have been given to the personnel for their distinguished service of exceptional order," the defence ministry said.

It also shared the names of the awardees in a list, mentioning different categories of military decorations.

Sarvottam Yudh Seva Medal recognises the distinguished service of the most exceptional order during war, conflict or hostilities.

Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, Commander, Army's Northern Command; Lt Gen Ghai, who served as the Army's Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) during Operation



Sindoor; Deputy Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Bharti, who served as the IAF's Director General of Air Operations during the operation in May 2025, IAF's Vice Chief Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor, and former Vice Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Narmadeshwar Tiwari (retd) have been conferred the Sarvottam Yudh Seva Medal.

Lt Gen Ghai and Air Marshal Bharti were also the Army's and IAF's faces during the tri-Service briefing conducted here on Operation Sindoor last year.

Lt Gen Ghai was recently appointed as the Military Adviser to the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS). Operation Sindoor was conducted to avenge the

deadly Pahalgam terror attack on April 22 last year.

India launched Operation Sindoor early on May 7 last year and decimated multiple terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir (PoK).

Pakistan also launched offensives against India, and all subsequent counter-offensives by India were also carried out under Operation Sindoor.

The military conflict between the two nuclear-armed neighbours halted after they reached an understanding on the evening of May 10.

Murmu on Monday also conferred Param Vishisht Seva Medals to Navy Chief Admiral Swaminathan; Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, Vice Admiral

Sanjay Vatsayan; and Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (CISC), Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit, among other officers, serving and retired.

Admiral Swaminathan assumed charge as the 27th Chief of the Naval Staff of the Indian Navy on May 31.

In the Uttam Yudh Seva Medal category, the awardees include Lt Gen Seth and Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti, among others.

The government on June 13 had announced the appointment of Lt Gen Seth, presently serving as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff, as the next Chief of the Army Staff with effect from the afternoon of June 30. He will succeed Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi. (PTI)

Mayawati says embezzlement of donations 'serious', cautions against politicising issue

LUCKNOW, JUNE 30: BSP chief Mayawati on Tuesday described the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya as "extremely serious and worrying", while cautioning against politicising the issue.

In a post on X, the former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister said, "The media reports appearing every day regarding the theft, embezzlement and misappropriation of offerings at the Shri Ram Temple in Ayodhya are extremely serious and worrying. Such people should not be spared under any circumstances, but it is also not right to politicise this issue."

She further said, "At the same time, to ensure that no complaints arise in future regarding the offerings made by devotees at the temple, it would be appropriate to adopt the system followed by other renowned and famous temples in the country for maintaining accounts of donations and offerings, and resolve this matter at the earliest."

"Criminalisation of politics, the politicisation of crime, the politicisation of religion and the blind religiousisation of politics should all be avoided. This would be proper and in keeping with the Constitution.

This is the BSP's advice to political

parties in the interest of the nation and the people, and at the same time an appeal to the people of the country," she said in the post. Politics Her post comes amid ongoing probes by Ayodhya Police and a State Government-formed Special Investigation Team into the theft of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

So far, eight people linked with counting the donation cash have been arrested and sent in judicial custody in connection with the case, even as clamour rose for action against high-rank officials involved in the temple management. (PTI)