

GGF honours Brig Pankaj Chib on eve of Independence Day

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Gandhi Global Family (GGF), headed by S P Varma, honoured Army veteran Brig (retd) Pankaj Chib, Director, Sainik Welfare Department, J&K, along with his organisation and serving personnel, on the eve of the 80th Independence Day, in recognition of their outstanding contribution, dedicated service and commitment to the nation.

The programme was organised as part of the annual feature of Gandhi Global Family, under which the organisation honours members of the armed forces and uniformed services for their exceptional contribution, sacrifices, patriotism and dedicated service to the nation. GGF has been observing this annual tradition as a mark of respect and gratitude towards those who have devoted their lives to safeguarding the country and serving society.

On the occasion, GGF General Secretary Malik Noor-ul-Amin, Adviser Shri Kiran Wattal, Coordi-



nator Shri Bhupinder Singh, Mustaq Ali, Azad Ali and other members were present along with the GGF President.

The GGF leadership expressed its heartfelt appreciation and profound respect for Brig. Pankaj Chib and all veterans and serving personnel for their exemplary service, discipline, courage and patriotism. It was emphasised that the sacrifices and contribution of the

armed forces and uniformed services remain a source of inspiration for the entire nation.

The GGF president said that the annual felicitation programme is a humble initiative to acknowledge and salute the brave men and women in uniform who have made outstanding contributions to the nation, both in times of peace and during challenging circumstances.

The GGF leadership re-

iterated its commitment to continuing this annual tradition of honouring the armed forces, veterans and other dedicated personnel who have rendered distinguished service to the nation.

The programme concluded with a renewed pledge to uphold the values of national unity, patriotism, peace and service to humanity, which remain the core ideals of Gandhi Global Family.

DC Reasi reviews Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra arrangements

REASI, JULY 21: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek today chaired a meeting to review and finalise

arrangements for the smooth, safe and hassle-free conduct of the Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026 in the district.

The meeting was attended by ADC Rakesh Kumar, ACR Nitin Verma, Addl. SP Iftikhar Ahmed, ACD, CMO, Executive En-

gineer JPDCL and other concerned officers, besides representatives of the Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra Management Committee.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on security, medical facilities, water supply, road maintenance, sanitation, power supply, mobile toilet facilities and coordination with the Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra Management Committee to ensure adequate facilities for pilgrims visiting the holy shrine.

The Police Department was directed to put in place foolproof security arrangements along the route. The Chief Medical Officer, Reasi was directed to deploy trained medical staff, including a doctor, pharmacist and nursing orderly, along with essential medicines and adequate oxygen cylinders to meet any medical emergency during the Yatra.

Reviewing basic amenities, the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti was directed to ensure adequate and uninterrupted water supply at Shiv Shakti Ashram, Kothian throughout the Yatra period. The concerned PWD authorities were asked to ensure proper maintenance of roads leading towards the shrine and address any issues on priority to facilitate smooth and safe movement of pilgrims.

The Executive Engineer, JPDCL was directed to ensure uninterrupted power supply during the Yatra period. The Executive Officer, Municipal Council Reasi was directed to ensure proper cleanliness and sanitation at identified locations by deploying adequate sanitation staff. He was also asked to provide mobile toilet facilities at Shiv Shakti Ashram, Kothian during the Yatra days.

The meeting also emphasised close coordination among all stakeholders and with the Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra Management Committee for effective management of the pilgrimage. The Tehsildar Pouni and Manager, Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board, Ransoo were directed to make necessary arrangements for the formal welcome of Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatris at Ransoo and facilitate their hassle-free darshan at the holy Shri Shiv Khori Cave.

CM distributes prizes to winners of Insta Reel, photography

CM Omar felicitates winners of competitions organized by Floriculture Department

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Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today felicitated 12 winners of various competitions organised during the Tulip Show and Badamwari Spring Festival, recognising their creativity, artistic talent and innovative use of digital media in promoting J&K's iconic spring gardens and floral heritage.

The winners, who included a large number of students, particularly from Government Schools, were presented cash prizes and certificates of participation by the Chief Minister at a felicitation ceremony held here.

The awards covered three categories—painting, Instagram reels and photography—with winners securing the first, second and third positions in each category. In the painting competitions, Farhan Ali Bhat, Soleha Tanveer and Roja Fayaz secured the first, second and third positions respectively in the Tulip Festival 2026 competition, while Ahmreen Bashir, Mir Maryam Zaffar and Han-zala Shafiq bagged the top three positions in the Badamwari Almond Festival 2026 painting competition. In the Instagram Reel Competition organised in connection with the Tulip Show 2026, Salman Ahmad Wani, Shazeeb Iqbal and Ayush Anand secured the first, second and third positions respectively. In the photography competition, Umair Wani, Saba Reshi and Sharafat Khan emerged winners, securing the first, second



and third positions respectively.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that the objective of these competitions was not only to encourage artistic and creative talent among students and young people but also to garner greater public attention to J&K's major floral attractions through contemporary platforms.

The Chief Minister highlighted the main floral events in the annual floriculture calendar while appreciating that Badamwari, Tulip Garden and newly added Chrysanthemum festival witnessed great public participation and that these events get further visibility and attention through competitions in painting, photography and social media

content creation.

He said the competitions provided an opportunity to recognise both traditional artistic expression and modern technology. He commended students from various schools for having won the prizes today and expressed the hope that more students will participate in these competitions next year.

The Chief Minister observed that while the painting competitions provide a platform for young artists to capture the beauty of the gardens on canvas, the photography and Instagram Reel competitions help showcase these destinations to a much wider audience through social media.

He emphasized that such initiatives help combine creativity, technology

and tourism promotion, while nurturing young talent and creating greater awareness about J&K's distinctive floral attractions.

Later, the Chief Minister also inspected the award-winning paintings and went through the photographs and Instagram reels submitted by the participants, appreciating the creativity and talent reflected in the entries.

Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Commissioner Secretary Floriculture, Parks & Gardens Zubair Ahmed, Director Floriculture Kashmir Mathora Masoom, officers and officials of the Floriculture Department, awardees, participants and media persons were present on the occasion.

Haryali Teej celebrated at Lok Bhawan

Nari Shakti foundation of strong society: Kavinder

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SHIMLA, AUG 14

On the eve of Haryali Teej, which was celebrated at Lok Bhawan here today under 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha initiative, Governor Kavinder Gupta termed 'Nari Shakti' as the foundation of a strong society.

For the first time, the traditional festival of Haryali Teej was celebrated at Lok Bhawan's Durbar Hall, with grandeur and cultural fervour, marking a significant initiative to promote India's rich cultural heritage under the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat.

The celebration was organised on the initiative of governor's wife Bindu Gupta.

Women artists presented vibrant cultural performances, showcasing the richness of India's folk traditions and the spirit of Haryali Teej. Women from civil society also participated in the celebrations, adding to the vibrancy of the festivity.

Gupta also joined the celebrations and interacted with the participating women and guests.

Speaking on the occasion, he extended his warm greetings to the people of Himachal Pradesh on Haryali Teej and appreciated the initiative of Bindu Gupta for organising the festival at Lok Bhawan.

He congratulated all those associated with the event for making it a meaningful and vibrant celebration of India's cultural heritage.

"Haryali Teej is not merely a festival but a reflection of India's rich cul-



tural traditions, family values, devotion and deep respect for nature. Symbolising the sacred union of Almighty Shiva and Mata Parvati, the festival conveys timeless values of love, faith, commitment and harmony in family life," he said.

Referring to the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said India's journey towards development must remain rooted in its rich cultural heritage and traditions.

"Festivals and folk traditions are an important part of the country's civilisational identity and help connect younger generation with their cultural roots. Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative provides an important platform for strengthening cultural bonds, mutual understanding and national unity by celebrating the diversity of India," he said.

The governor said Himachal Pradesh, with its rich Dev Sanskriti, folk traditions, fairs and festivals, has a special responsibility to preserve and promote its

cultural heritage.

He also called for greater awareness towards environmental protection, saying the spirit of Haryali Teej should inspire people to protect forests, conserve water and safeguard the green wealth of Himachal Pradesh.

"Haryali Teej is also a celebration of Nari Shakti, reflecting the important place accorded to women in Indian civilisation and traditions. Women have always been regarded as embodiment of strength, compassion, creativity and resilience," he said.

He emphasised the need to create an environment where women and girls are empowered to realise their full potential and participate equally in the nation's development.

"A strong and developed society cannot be built without the active participation and empowerment of women," he said.

The governor expressed hope that Haryali Teej celebration would become a meaningful tradition in the years to come and serve as a

platform for celebrating cultural heritage, women's empowerment and social harmony.

Bindu Gupta thanked all the participating women, artists, guests and officials for their enthusiastic participation and contribution towards making the first-ever Haryali Teej celebration at Lok Bhawan a memorable and meaningful occasion. She expressed hope that the celebration would evolve into a cherished annual tradition, promoting India's rich cultural heritage, women's empowerment, social harmony and environmental consciousness. On the occasion, Gupta and his wife presented saplings to participating women and guests as part of the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" campaign. They wished everyone happiness, peace, prosperity and well-being on the auspicious occasion of Haryali Teej.

The celebrations concluded with a tree plantation programme, reinforcing the message of environmental conserva-