

**DENGUE WARNING SIGNS**

Many people with dengue can be cared for at home with adequate rest and hydration. But, if you experience any warning signs, go immediately to the nearest medical center.

Watch out for dengue warning signs!

A drop in body temperature accompanied by any of the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Joint and muscle pain
- Diarrhea
- Present vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Disorientation
- Severe pain (joint, muscle, bone or eye)
- Redness

If you have any of these symptoms, go to the nearest medical center IMMEDIATELY.

# JINDRAH IMAGES

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## Transformative initiative aimed at revolutionising India's infrastructure: PM Modi on GatiShakti

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan has emerged as a transformative initiative aimed at revolutionising India's infrastructure and is driving faster and more efficient development across sectors.

PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (PMGS-NMP) was launched on October 13, 2021 for providing multi-modal connectivity infrastructure to various economic zones.

PM GatiShakti is a transformative approach for economic growth



and sustainable development which is driven by seven engines - railway, roads, ports, waterways, airports, mass transport and logistics infrastructure.

In a post on X, Modi said, "PM GatiShakti National Master Plan has emerged as a transformative initiative aimed at revolutionizing India's infrastructure. It has

significantly enhanced multimodal connectivity, driving faster and more efficient development across sectors."

The seamless integration of various stakeholders has led to boosting logistics, reducing delays and creating new opportunities for several people, Modi said.

"Thanks to GatiShakti, India is adding speed to fulfil our vision of a Viksit Bharat. It will encourage progress, entrepreneurship and innovation," the prime minister said.

Modi tagged Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal's post in which he had

lauded the GatiShakti initiative on completion of three years.

"Today marks 3 years since the launch of the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan for Multi-modal Connectivity by PM Narendra Modi ji. By streamlining logistics and advancing connectivity, this path-breaking initiative ensures faster and more efficient project implementation," Goyal said.

It continues to play a pivotal role in developing a modern, interconnected infrastructure network, strengthening the vision of building a Viksit Bharat, he said.

## Ready to share experience with CM designate Omar in running 'half-state' like J&K: Kejriwal

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, OCT 13

AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday congratulated National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah for winning the assembly elections and said that he should consult him in case he faces any problem in running a "half-state" like Jammu and Kashmir.

"Omar Abdullah is going to take over as the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir in the next few days. I congratulate him for being the chief minister of the INDIA alliance. We will fully support him in running a successful government and hope Jammu and Kashmir treads the path of development under his leadership," Kejriwal said.

"Delhi is called a half-state because the chief minister had limited powers. Now they (BJP) have also turned J&K into a half state which means an



elected government has minimum powers whereas the lieutenant governor has more powers. I want to tell Omar that if he faces any hardship in his work, consult me because I have run the government in Delhi for 10 years," added the former Delhi chief minister.

Kejriwal, who has run into troubles with the BJP-led Central government many times during his rule, was in Doda to thank

the people for electing his party representative Mehraj Malik as the first member of the legislative assembly in Jammu and Kashmir.

Malik defeated BJP's Ganjay Singh Rana by over 4,538 votes besides former ministers Khalid Najib Suharwardy of the National Conference (NC) and Abdul Majid Wani of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party from

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## President Murmu leaves on visit to Algeria, Mauritania, Malawi



Murmu @rashtrapatibhvn emplanes for a 3 country State visit to Algeria, Mauritania and Malawi.

This will be the first-ever visit by an Indian Head of State to these nations."

President Murmu's visit to Algeria from Oct 13-15 is at the invitation of President Abdelmadjid Tebboune. During the visit, President Murmu will hold bilateral talks with her counterpart. Several Algerian dignitaries including President of the Council of Nation (Upper House of the Algerian Parliament) and President of National People's Assembly (Lower House of the Algerian Parliament) are expected to call on her. President will address the India-Algeria Economic Forum and the Sidi Abdellah Science and Technology Pole University. She will also inaugurate the India Corner at Hamma Garden

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## J&K Assembly Polls : At least 13 new MLAs from political families



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, OCT 13

At least 13 newly elected MLAs in Jammu and Kashmir come from political families whose members have won or contested elections in the past, with the National Conference accounting for the maximum number of such legislators.

The National Conference, which has emerged as the single largest party

in the assembly elections, is said to form the Government and had fought the polls in an alliance with the Congress.

Chief Minister designate Omar Abdullah is a third generation legislator from the Abdullah clan. His father Farooq Abdullah and grandfather Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah have both been MLAs and the chief ministers of Jammu and Kashmir as well.

Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) president Tariq Hameed Karra comes from an influential political family of Srinagar. Although his grandfather Ghulam Mohiuddin Karra was never an MLA, he held considerable influence in the National Conference till he parted ways with Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah in 1954 to form his own party - Political

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AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday left on a three-nation state visit to Algeria, Mauritania and Malawi, in a first-ever presidential visit from India to these countries in Africa.

The MEA spokesperson in a post on X said: "Deepening India-Africa special ties. President Droupadi

## Magnitude 4.3 earthquake hits J&K Doda

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
DODA, OCT 13

A 4.3 magnitude earthquake hit Chenab valley with an epicenter in Gundoh area of district Doda this morning.

The earthquake shook the entire region around 6.14 am but the time period was short.

"We don't often feel such moderate earthquakes at our home but today it woke us all up. The tremor didn't allow anyone to come out of their homes," a resident of Doda town said.

For the past few years Chenab valley has been witnessing frequent earthquakes and experts believed that such moderate earthquakes release pressure and the chances of any big earthquake become less. As per the early reports no loss of life or property was reported from anywhere.

## Man held for stabbing cousin to death following altercation over parking vehicles

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, OCT 13

Police arrested a man for allegedly stabbing his cousin to death following an altercation over parking space here on Sunday.

Zareef Ahmad Mir allegedly stabbed his cousin, Amir Razak Mir, during an argument over parking vehicles near their shops in the city's Parimpora area, a police spokesperson said.

Police have taken cognisance of the incident and arrested the accused, he added.

The victim was declared dead on arrival at the Shri Maharaja Hari Singh Hospital (SMHS) Hospital, the police spokesperson said, adding that an FIR under section 103 (punishment for murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) has been registered at the Parimpora police station.

"The accused has been arrested and the weapon of offence seized," he said.

## 2 minors die in Kulgam road accident

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, OCT 13

Two minor children died after they were allegedly hit by a dumper in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district on Sunday, officials said.

Traffic Police officials said the accident occurred at around 0855 hours near Damhal Hanjipora, where a dumper vehicle allegedly hit the two children, injuring the both critically.

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## BJP to hold MLAs meeting to elect leader of opposition in J&K Assembly

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, OCT 13

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is set to hold its legislative party next week to choose the leader of opposition in the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

Sources told news agency that the BJP is expected to hold its legislative party meeting next week to elect their legislature party leader, who would also be leader of opposition in the House. Sources disclosed that Sunil Kumar

Sharma (MLA Padder Nagseni) and Devinder Rana (MLA Nagrota) are frontrunners for the coveted position.

The BJP is set to get the coveted post of the leader given their strength in the House. Among opposition par-

ties, BJP has 29 MLAs, PDP three MLAs and Peoples Conference one MLA.

Meanwhile, the BJP has appointed senior leaders Tarun Chugh and Prahlad Joshi as observers for BJP's legislative party meeting.

## More health packages focused on elderly care likely to be added to AB-PMJAY

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

The National Health Authority, the implementing agency for the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), is assessing the need to add more health packages catering to the elderly as the government is set to roll out the health coverage for all aged 70 years and above.

The expanded scheme, which will benefit an estimated six crore citizens in about 4.5 crore households, is likely to be launched by the end of this month, official sources said.

"The committee which decides on health-benefit packages under the

scheme is deliberating on the need for adding more health packages, which exclusively tend to geriatric care, as the number of such beneficiaries will go up with the launch of the scheme," an official source said.

The scheme presently offers a comprehensive coverage that includes 1,949 medical procedures across 27 medical specialties, such as general medicine, surgery, oncology and cardiology.

Hospital services, including drugs (covering 15 days' medication post-discharge), diagnostics (up to three days before admission), food and lodging, are provided at no cost to the beneficiaries.

"The admissions neces-

sitated due to certain mental-health conditions, such as Alzheimer's and dementia, are also covered under the current scheme," the source said.

Be it the poor, middle class, upper-middle class or rich, every individual aged 70 years or above is eligible to receive the Ayushman card and free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh at any of the AB-PMJAY-empowered hospital once the expanded scheme is launched.

Till September 1, a total of 29,648 hospitals, including 12,696 private ones, were empowered under the scheme, which is currently being implemented in 33 states and Union territories, except for Delhi, Odisha and West Bengal.

Anyone aged 70 or above according to the person's Aadhaar card will be eligible for applying under the scheme, another official source said. It is an application-based scheme and people will need to register on the PMJAY portal or the Ayushman app, the sources said.

"Those already having the Ayushman card will be needed to apply again for a new card and complete their eKYC again," the source said.

Senior citizens aged 70 years and above and belonging to families already covered under AB-PMJAY will get an additional top-up cover of up to Rs 5 lakh per year for themselves, which they do

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## Rahul raises questions on Agnipath scheme, asks why life of one soldier is not same as another

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

After the death of two Agniveers in Nashik during training, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Sunday demanded answers from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on why the life of one soldier is more valuable than the other.

He asked why the families of the two soldiers, who died as 'Agniveers' would not get the same pension and benefits as other martyred soldiers and said that he would keep fighting against this "injustice".

"The death of two Agniveers - Gohil Vishwaraj Singh and Saifat Sheet - during training in



Nashik is very tragic. My deepest condolences to their families.

"This incident once again raises serious questions on the Agniveer scheme, which the BJP government has failed to answer. Will the families of Gohil and Saifat receive timely compensation after their martyrdom?" he asked.

The Congress leader said the Agniveer scheme is an "injustice" to the army and an "insult

"to the martyrdom of our brave soldiers.

"The prime minister and the defence minister should answer why the life of one soldier is more valuable than that of another soldier," Gandhi said.

"Let's stand together against this injustice. Join our 'Jai Jawan' movement today to remove the BJP government's 'Agniveer' scheme and secure the future of the country's youth and army," he said.

Agniveers Gohil and Saifat died during a field firing exercise in Maharashtra's Nashik district.

Several people paid their last respects to Agniveer Vishvarajsinh Gohil, whose mortal remains were received at his native Anchvad village in Gujarat's Rajkot district.



## Natrang presents "Reed-Rahit" at Sunday Theatre series

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, OCT 13

Natrang presented a well-designed performance of "Reed-Rahit", a play based on Russian writer Anton Chekhov's "Nincompoo" adapted in Hindi by Satyendra Sharat here today at its Studio Theatre in Sunday Theatre Series. The play was directed by Neeraj Kant. The play is an inspiration for all those who do not have courage to stand for their rights.

The play opens in the house of one landlord who wanted to settle down his account with Mohan, the instructor of his children who also works as domestic help, he has not been paid the salary for the last two months. In the play the Landlord tries to teach



a lesson of self-respect and dignity of labor to Mohan. In this context, he created a drama in reality and he started debating on the amount to be paid to Mohan, he tells him that he has to pay him Rs.1,100/- only, after ridiculously forged deductions, against the expected and promised amount of

Rs.8,000/-. Very gullible by the nature, Mohan just sits there, without saying a word in support of his genuine payment he accepts the money with gratitude. Aggravated by such kind of nincompoo/spine less behavior of Mohan, landlord bursts into an indignant rage and tells him that he should

speaking up for his rights and shall not allow anyone to exploit him, if we remain silent, no one will come to our support, thus we have to speak boldly and fight righteously for our rights. At the end, the landlord pays him Rs.8,000/-, putting an end to his human experiment in humiliation. Thus, a lesson was given to all those who are too submissive to stand for themselves and allow other to take benefit of the same.

Natrang actors who acted in the play included Aadesh Dhar, Mihir Gujral and Vandana Thakur. Lights and music of the play were operated by Neeraj Kant. Brijesh Avatar Sharma presented the show before the audience and the show was coordinated by Mohd. Yaseen.

## Alumni Meet 2024: NIT Srinagar unites over 100 Alumni for growth and collaboration

JNEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, OCT 13

The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar hosted the prestigious Global Alumni Meet 2024, on 11th and 12th October 2024 drawing together a diverse group of 100+ alumni from across the globe especially participants from Europe, Asia, and various regions of India, including UT's of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

The event was presided over by Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman, with Prof. Sheikh Nazir Ahmad, Dean of Alumni Affairs, as the moderator, and it was coordinated by Dr. Dinesh Kumar Rajendran, Coordinator of the Alumni Cell, was a resounding success. The 2 day alumni saw participation from the Deans and Heads of Departments across the institute, as well as alumni spanning various industries and sectors.

Throughout the day, discussions focused on fostering research collaborations, expanding internship and placement opportunities, building endorsement funds, and setting ambitious future goals to propel the institute and its students forward.



In his opening address, Prof. Atikur Rehman underscored the importance of sustained alumni engagement and highlighted the role alumni play in strengthening the institution's global standing.

He applauded the achievements of NIT Srinagar's alumni from building 3000 plus alumni connections within 6 months of time, emphasizing how their continued success reflects the institute's mission to nurture world-class leaders.

Dean of Alumni Affairs, Prof. Sheikh Nazir Ahmad steered the discussions, facilitating an open exchange of ideas and initiatives that could bolster the institute's impact on a broader scale.

Topics of particular interest included forging partnerships in cutting-edge research fields, lever-

aging alumni networks for internships, and collaborating on strategies to enhance placement rates for current students.

Alumni from Mumbai, representing finance, media, and technology sectors, discussed avenues for mentorship and placement opportunities for NIT Srinagar students.

The Delhi contingent, comprising entrepreneurs and policymakers, emphasized the potential for collaborative research initiatives with national institutions and corporations.

Alumni from Agra shared their insights on industry partnerships, while those from Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh discussed region-specific challenges and solutions, particularly in sustainable development and infrastructure projects.

Coordinator of the

two-day global event, Dr. Dinesh Kumar Rajendran outlined the Alumni Cell's vision to strengthen alumni ties through networking events, mentorship programs, and increased access to resources for student advancement.

He stressed the importance of building a robust alumni network to drive future initiatives and support the institute's academic and research endeavors.

The Global Alumni Meet 2024 reaffirmed NIT Srinagar's commitment to fostering a vibrant and supportive alumni community.

The event concluded with a shared commitment to realizing the institute's goals and enhancing its legacy as a center for academic excellence and innovation, with many memories to cherish.

## J&K Mountaineer Embarks on Prestigious Pre-Everest Expedition to Ama Dablam Peak

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, OCT 13

Rajesh Mukhi, a seasoned mountaineer of Mountaineering Association of J&K left today for Nepal to undertake a very prestigious pre-Everest expedition to Ama Dablam peak (6826m) in Nepal. Rajesh would join a multi-national team of a reputed mountaineering company M/s Pioneer Adventure Ltd, Nepal which has been hired for this expedition. The company would take care of all the logistics and technical support during the expedition.

It is pertinent to mention here that for the last two years Mountaineering Association of J&K, on its own, has undertaken a very ambitious project of preparing its mountaineers for major mountaineering expeditions and finally to put at least one mountaineer at the top of Mount Everest, the highest peak of the world, in 2025.



Accordingly, to familiarize themselves with the vagaries of nature faced during major mountaineering expeditions our mountaineers have trekked to the base camp of Mount Everest, Mount

Cho Oyu, an 8000m peak and submitted some other peaks in the Everest region.

However, keeping in view the high cost of participation in a Pre Everest expedition which amounts

to Rs. 7 lakh per person and the prohibitive cost of Rs.40 lakh per person for participation in an Everest expedition the Association decided to depute only one mountaineer Mr. Rajesh Mukhi, a senior mountaineer, for the Pre Everest expedition to Ama Dablam peak (6826m) in October, 2024 and the Everest expedition in April-May, 2025.

It may also be noted that Rajesh Mukhi is a highly trained mountaineer who has to his credit the scaling of Winson peak, the highest peak of Antarctica, the frozen continent; Island peak in the Everest region besides some other formidable peaks. Meanwhile, Zorawar Singh Jamwal and Shawetica Khajuria, President and General Secretary of Mountaineering Association of J&K along with members of District Mountaineering Associations of J&K have wished good luck to Rajesh Mukhi for the success of the expedition.

## Principal Secretary, Culture and Education inaugurates 3-Day International Art Exhibition at Kala Kendra

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, OCT 13

Suresh Kumar Gupta, Principal Secretary for Culture and Education, today inaugurated a three-day International Art Exhibition cum Workshop titled "Valley City" at the GR Santosh Gallery, Kala Kendra. The event, organized by Kala Kendra Society in collaboration with Art Express Gujarat, saw participation from dignitaries, artists, and art lovers from across the globe.

Welcoming the guests, Dr. Javid Rahi, Secretary of Kala Kendra Society, highlighted that the exhibition features 150 artworks by 90 artists representing all states and union territories of India. The exhibition's key attraction includes contributions from artists hailing from 10 different countries, including Egypt, Venezuela, Argentina, Peru, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Taiwan, Nepal, and Poland.



In his address, Principal Secretary Suresh Kumar Gupta stressed that the event serves not just as an exhibition but also as a dynamic platform for interaction between local artists and 40 visual art experts from across India. He underscored the importance of art in education, noting that the workshop sessions would explore how visual arts foster cultural understanding and empathy. Encouraging local youth, he announced that the workshop is open free of charge for art stu-

dents from Jammu and Kashmir, providing them with a unique learning opportunity. Gupta further assured that Kala Kendra will be developed into a vibrant hub of art and appreciated the artists' contributions to the exhibition.

Yudvir Sethi, Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), who was the special guest on the occasion, highlighted the rare opportunity the event provides for local artists to interact with their peers from across the country.

He reiterated his commitment to developing Kala Kendra, located within his constituency, into an institution that showcases the rich Dogra heritage and the diverse culture of Jammu and Kashmir. He assured full support to the artist community.

Former Minister Priya Sethi, who also visited the exhibition, commended the artists for their exceptional work. She stressed that regular activities are required to channelise the local talent in Art.

Dr. Babita Hada, curator of the exhibition and representative of Art Express Gujarat, mentioned that 50 artists from across India are participating in this unique event. The event also saw speeches from prominent artists K K Gandhi, Richa Gupta, and Raj Kumar Chouhan, who shared their insights and praised the initiative.

The 'Valley City' art exhibition cum workshop will continue for the next two days.

## Vikram urges Omar Abdullah to Include MLAs of Jammu Region in Govt Cabinet

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, OCT 12

Vikram Singh Bhadwal, General Secretary (Organisation) of Lok Janshakti Party (Ramvilas), J&K, today called upon Omar Abdullah to ensure representation for Jammu-based MLAs in the Government Cabinet. He emphasized the need for equal representation, particularly for those MLAs who have supported the formation of the government in Jammu and Kashmir. Addressing the media, Singh stated, "The aspirations of the people of the Jammu region must be honored



by inducting their representatives into the Council of Ministers. It is imperative for the National Conference to recognize the contributions of Jammu-based Independent MLAs won from Jammu region including Satish Sharma

from Akhnoor, Payare Lal Sharma from Inderwal, Ch Mohammad Akram from Surankote, Th Rameshwar Singh from Bani, and provide them with an opportunity to serve in the Cabinet, ensuring a balanced representation across the regions."

Vikram Singh further highlighted the importance of restoring statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, a demand that resonates with the people across the Union Territory. He appealed to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take necessary steps to restore the erstwhile state's status, stating that

this move would bolster the political, social, and economic landscape of J&K.

"Restoring statehood is not just a matter of status but a step towards empowering the people of Jammu and Kashmir. It is time to honor the commitment made to the people of the region," Singh added.

The Lok Jan Shakti Party (Ramvilas) has consistently advocated for the rights and development of the people of J&K, and Vikram Singh reiterated the party's commitment to ensuring equal representation and justice for all sections of society.

## Centre for Molecular Biology at Central University of Jammu Launch Monthly Wall Magazine

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, OCT 14

In a significant step towards promoting creativity and scientific discourse, students of the Centre for Molecular Biology at the Central University of Jammu (CUJ) have inaugurated a monthly wall magazine. The launch event was graced by the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sanjeev Jain, who emphasized the importance of sharing scientific developments and fostering innovation within the academic community.

Prof. Jain encouraged



both students and faculty to actively participate in this initiative, which aims to showcase the talents and research efforts of the Centre. He highlighted that the wall magazine will serve as a dynamic

platform for disseminating knowledge and creativity.

Prof. Yashwant Singh, Registrar, CUJ was also present on the occasion and commended the students and faculty for their

dedication to advancing the Centre's mission. He praised their collaborative efforts in enhancing the academic environment and contributing to the growth of scientific inquiry at the University.

Dr. Narendra K. Bairwa, Director of the Centre for Molecular Biology, expressed gratitude towards the Vice Chancellor and Registrar for their unwavering support of scientific activities. He noted that this initiative not only highlights the creative capabilities of the students but also fosters a vibrant community of learning and innovation.

## Col Mahan inaugurates key infrastructure projects in Bani

JNEWS SERVICE  
BANI (KATHUA), OCT 13

In a landmark event, Col Mahan Singh (Retd), DDC Chairman Kathua, was the Chief Guest at the inauguration ceremony of 75 infrastructure projects, which were e-inaugurated by Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh from Sikkim. The ceremony was organized in collaboration with 69 RCC and witnessed enthusiastic participation from local residents, GREF staff, media personnel, and other invitees.

The highlight of the event included the e-inauguration of four major projects worth over Rs. 200 crore, all falling under the Bani Sub-Division. These projects are poised



to significantly enhance connectivity in the region and included Road from KM 70 to KM 89, Maghar to Bani; Bridge over Sewa near Bani; Bridge over Lowang Nallah and road stretch from KM 89 to KM 93 on Bani-Baherwah Road. As the engraved stone commemorating the inauguration was unveiled, cheers erupted from the crowd, marking

the significance of these projects as a lifeline for the remote region.

Col Mahan Singh expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Modi Government and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh for their commitment to completing these vital infrastructure projects in record time. He emphasized that the ongoing widening of the Bani to Chat-

tergala Borderroads Road will be completed by July 2025, providing all-weather connectivity between Kathua and Doda districts. Additionally, he shared that the much-anticipated 4-lane PMDP Bharatmala project between Kathua and Doda via the Chattergala Tunnel is expected to commence in 2025, as assured by Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari during his recent visit to Mahanpur in Kathua.

The event was a significant milestone for the Bani region, as these infrastructure developments are expected to boost economic growth and improve accessibility in this strategically important area.



## NC leaders felicitate Sunil Verma on formation of NC Govt in J&K

J I NEWS SERVICE  
UDHAMPUR, OCT 13

National Conference (NC) leaders and party workers today gathered at the party office in Udhampur to felicitate Sunil Verma, District President JKNC Udhampur East, on the formation of the NC Government in Jammu and Kashmir. The event was marked by enthusiasm and unity, reflecting the party's commitment to bringing about positive change in the region.

During the programme, NC leaders expressed their anguish over the misuse of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), distribution of cash and liquor, and the use of government machinery by the BJP in Udhampur East Constituency during the recent



Assembly polls. They condemned these tactics, calling for stricter measures to ensure fair elections in the future.

Addressing the gathering, Sunil Verma thanked the party workers for their support and reaffirmed his commitment to stand by the party cadre. He assured that under the

NC Government, there would be a strong focus on equitable development across all regions of Jammu and Kashmir. "The aim of National Conference is to ensure that every citizen, irrespective of their background, benefits from the progress and development initiatives that the NC Government will implement.

The Party will be dedicated to the welfare of the people, and I assure you that no one will be left behind," he stated.

The programme concluded with a pledge by the NC cadre to work tirelessly towards strengthening the party's presence in Udhampur and beyond, reinforcing the message of unity and development across the Union Territory.

Prominent among those who were present included Sr. Gurmeet Singh Josh, Amarnath, Ch. Abdul Rasheed, Akash Verma, Mohan Lal Sharma, Charan Das Bhagat, Om Parkash, Manmohan Verma, Thakar Das, Haji Noor Mohd, Om Parkash Bhagat, Capt. Angrej Singh, Sr. Surinder Singh, Mouni Devi, Razia Akhtar, Ch. Mirza, Janayat Khan & others.

## Ramgarh sees infrastructural boost with new blacktopped road

J I NEWS SERVICE  
RAMGARH, OCT 13

Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, MLA Ramgarh and former Minister of Health and Medical Education J&K, along with Sarbjit Singh Johal, DDC Ramgarh-B, inaugurated a blacktopped road from Village Karalia to the cremation ground. The project, costing Rs 17 lakhs, addresses a long-standing demand from the community. The ceremony was attended by key local leaders, including Sarbjit Singh Johal, Shiv Kumar Choudhary, Block President Ramghar, Naib Sar-



panch Sunil Choudhary, Hazara Singh, Lamberdar Darshan Singh, Balbinder, Rohit Choudhary, and Balkar Singh and others. This development highlights Dr. Manyal's commitment to improv-

ing living conditions in Ramgarh, showcasing his track record of delivering on promises, as evidenced by his recent electoral success.

Road is expected to enhance connectivity,

improve access to essential services, and stimulate economic growth in the region, reflecting the collaborative efforts of local authorities and community leaders in advancing Ramgarh's progress.

## Ex-JURSEA president urges LG to order probe in violating the rules and regulations in JU

J I NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, OCT 13

"Lieutenant Governor has been making several statements on making J&K Corruption free and exposing various scams. But why is he silent on irregularities being committed in Jammu University? If he is really serious then he should immediately order the inquiry and cancel the recruitment process of administrative posts," Former JURSEA President Dr Vikas Sharma urged the Lieutenant Governor.

Addressing a meeting here today, Dr. Sharma said, "The whole process of recruitment is dubious as the Vice Chancellor, Prof Umesh Rai is misusing his position to benefit some of his blue-eyed, violating the rules and regulations."

The core of the controversy revolves around what Dr. Sharma described as the illegitimacy of some



candidates shortlisted for these positions. "There are candidates with questionable qualifications, including those with fraudulent PhD degrees, as highlighted in the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report. This process seems engineered to favor individuals tied to a political faction," he alleged.

Additionally, Dr. Sharma highlighted a violation of university norms, stating that certain candidates are directly involved in the recruitment process, which he emphasized is against the established rules. "Those who are candidates for the top

posts are directly involved in the recruitment process which is a mockery of the system but the Vice Chancellor is a mute spectator as if he is willingly a party to this wrong-doing," he stated.

Dr. Sharma demanded that JU should make the names of screening committee member's public who made the ineligible candidates as eligible. "The candidates who are ineligible were made eligible by the screening committee members for the interview. And, it is a matter of investigation as to how they did so. Screening Committee members

shall also be brought under the purview of inquiry," he stated.

Dr. Sharma demanded that the video of interview should be released forthwith so that all could know about the people who attended the interview, both internal as well as external candidates.

He also highlighted an instance from the past wherein a person without having any academic credentials was directly appointed as Professor just because he had high level connections.

He further demanded that all the selections made by JU during the two and half year tenure of VC Umesh Rai as several allegations have been levelled by the candidates against the selections and LG Manoj Sinha should not waste time in ordering inquiry to unravel the frauds and restoring confidence of people in this institution.

## J&K Gujjar-Bakerwal coordination committee alleges constitutional violations in recent elections

J I NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, OCT 13

All Jammu & Kashmir Gujjar-Bakerwal Co-ordination Committee held a Press Conference here in Jammu in which the Members of the Organization has claimed that the recent held Elections in Jammu & Kashmir is in violation of the constitutional provisions. The Chairman Mohammad Anwar Chowdhary Advocate of the Organization claimed that in nine reserved ST Constituencies i.e. (Surankote Constituency 88, Mendhar Constituency 90, Budhal Constituency 86, Thanamandi Constituency 87, Rajouri Constituency 85, Gulabgarh Constituency 56, Kangan Constituency 17, Kokarnag Constituency 42, and Gurez Constituency 16) which were reserved only for Scheduled Tribe people who were declared Scheduled Tribe in 1991.

He claimed that these above nine constituencies were reserved on the Delimitation Commission's recommendation made in 2022 according to the last census held in 2011. He further said that some other people were declared ST in the year 2024 and no political reservation was recommended for them as the earlier political reservation was according to the census of 2011. After the

Abrogation of Article 370 of constitution, the Central laws were made applicable to the UT of Jammu and Kashmir and consequently a Commission was constituted for Delimitation of Constituencies headed by Retired Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai. This Commission reserved 9 Assembly Seats for Scheduled Tribe according to the census of 2011. Later on, in the year of 2024 some more communities were granted Scheduled Tribe Status and according to the notification and the decision of the Govt. they were provided 10% separate reservation from the earlier Scheduled Tribes. The leaders of Gujjar Community claimed that since there has been no new census after 2011 as such no political reservation was given to the people who were declared ST in 2024. But when the Elections were announced by the Govt. in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, the organizations of Gujjars had apprised the Govt. of India and Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir that newly declared ST people having no political reservation cannot contest the elections on the Assembly Seats which were already reserved for ST candidates according to their population of census 2011. They said that Chief Electoral Officer of Jammu

& Kashmir and concerned District Election Officers committed a great blunder by accepting the Election Forms of the people who had no entitlement to contest on the above reserved Constituencies. On this issue the Gujjar Leaders have raised a banner of revolt and demanded that since the Elections on the above seats have been held in violation of the constitutional provisions and basic laws. The Elections on the above Constituencies are vitiated from the stage of filling of nomination papers which has struck at the very roots of the Elections, as the nomination papers of non-eligible Candidates were accepted by the District Election Officers. The Gujjar Leaders have submitted a Memorandum to the Lieutenant Governor of J&K Sh. Manoj Sinha and copies of the same have been forwarded to Ministries of Home, ST SCs & Chief Election Commission of India and Chief Electoral Officers of Jammu & Kashmir. In their Memorandum the Gujjar of Jammu and Kashmir have implored upon the Hon'ble LG of Jammu and Kashmir not to notify and administer Oath to the So-called Elected Members from the Following ST reserved Constituencies:-

1. Surankote Constituency 88, 2. Mendhar Constituency 90, 3. Budhal Constituency 86, 4. Thanamandi Constituency 87, 5. Rajouri Constituency 85, 6. Gulabgarh Constituency 56, 7. Kangan Constituency 17, 8. Kokarnag Constituency 42, 9. Gurez Constituency 16.

90, 3. Budhal Constituency 86, 4. Thanamandi Constituency 87, 5. Rajouri Constituency 85, 6. Gulabgarh Constituency 56, 7. Kangan Constituency 17, 8. Kokarnag Constituency 42, 9. Gurez Constituency 16.

### UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (M) G.W.D. DIVISION JAMMU

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

E -NIT NO GWD/77 OF 2024-25 DATED 11.10.2024

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor UT of J&K, the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mech. Ground Water Drilling Division Jammu invites tenders by e-tendering mode from reputed and registered firms for below mentioned works:-

Name of the Work	Name of the Division	Cost of Tender Document/Tender Fee(In Rs)	Qty.	Estimated cost (value of work) (In Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Validity of Rates
Re-development and Stabilization of 200mm dia. mini tubewell at Near Pumping Station Nomain Sarna under District Capex Budget 2024-25 (UT Component) in District Reasi	Jal Shakti Mech. Ground Water Drilling Division Jammu	500.00 (Non-Refundable) Deposited in Govt. treasury through e-challan under the receipt head 0215 in favour of the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Mech. GWD Div. Jammu payable at Jammu mentioning name of work	01 No.	Rs. 1.50 lacs	@2% of the contract value in shape of Fresh CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer PHE (M) GWD Division	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025

- Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 11.10.2024 to 19.10.2024
- The pre bid meeting if desired, shall be held in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (M) G.W.D. Division Jammu on 14.10.2024 at (1300) hrs.
- The Bids shall be uploaded on the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 14.10.2024 (1400 hrs) to 19.10.2024 (1800 hrs.)
- The complete bidding process shall be online and scanned copies of the following documents will have to be uploaded before due date:-
  - Scanned copy of treasury e-Challan/receipt for Rs. 500.00 against the cost of tender document under the receipt Head 0215 in favour of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (M) Ground Water Drilling Division Jammu indicating name of work to be executed. It may be noted that the receipt of the e-challan should be of the date after the issuance of publication of the e-tender. (ii) Scanned copy of EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR @2% of the contract value pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, PHE (M) Ground Water Drilling Division Jammu. It may be noted that the EMD should be of the date after the issuance of publication of the e-tender (iii) Scanned Copies of tender documents, terms and conditions duly signed and stamped (each page) by bidder. (iv) Scanned copy of GST Registration from competent authority (v) Scanned copy of PAN Card. (vi) Scanned copy of Valid Registration of Water Well Drillers issued by Chief Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Department Jammu for the year 2024-25. In case the bidder is not able to furnish the Registration with the cover 1st of this bid document, he can produce the same before the opening of cover 2nd of this bid document.
- The Technical Bids of the tender document received shall be opened online in the office of Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (M) GWD Division Jammu on 21.10.2024 at 1400 hrs. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids shall be opened on the next working day during the office hours.
- The Cover - II i.e. Financial Bids of the firms who qualify in Cover - I shall also be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mech. Ground Water Drilling Division Jammu during office hours or some other working day convenient to tender opening authority.
- Other details can be seen inside the detailed tender document.
- Account Head: District Capex Budget 2024-25 (UT Component)
- AAA No. 60-DDCR of 2024 Dated 14.08.2024.
- Accord of T.S. No. 293 of 08/2024 Dated 16.08.2024

No GWD/3569-71  
Dated: 11.10.2024

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
Jal Shakti (M) GWD Division  
Jammu

DIP/J-5441/24  
Date: 12-10-24

### Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir

#### Office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical & Hospital Division Udhampur (E-mail- xenmdudh@gmail.com)

##### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor, of Jammu & Kashmir (UT) e-tenders are invited in two cover system, from reputed and registered firms for the job mentioned below:-

S.NO.	Description of work	N.I.T No	Estimated/ Approved Cost (in Lacs)	Earnest Money/ Performance Security	Cost of tender documents	Time of completion	Eligibility Criteria of Bidder	Tender Receiving Authority
01	General Repairs with replacement of defective parts of DRR No. 177 "Strong"	E-NIT No. MHDU/TS/ 40 of 2024-25 Dt:- 09/10/2024 Due on:- 18/10/2024	0.2775 (Lacs)	<b>Earnest Money</b> 2% of estimated amount, amounting to Rs. 555/- only shall be submitted by all Participating Bidder in the shape of CDR/FDR/TDR/BG. <b>Performance Security</b> 5% of the contract value shall be submitted by the lowest Bidder before the allotment of work order in the shape of CDR/FDR/TDR/BG.	Rs. 200/- (Fixed Amount) in the shape of challan through J&K Govt. Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date and also indicating the name of work duly credited to MH-0059(PWD) Misc. Revenue and uploading a copy of treasury challan/receipt on e-tendering portal OR the bidder may deposit tender fee in shape of e-challan through Account No. 002801020000009, J&K Bank, Udhampur, of Executive Engineer Mechanical Division Udhampur	10 (ten days)	Registered/ Reputed Mechanical firms having sufficient experiences for the similar nature work	Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospital division Udhampur

Position of Funds:- (Available)  
Position of AA/Tech. Sanction:- (Accorded)

The e-NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, terms & conditions, Bill of Quantities can be seen / downloaded from the J&K govt. website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in)

No: MHDU/TS/ 1638  
Dated:- 09/10/2024

DIP/J-5483/24  
Date: 12-10-24

-sd-  
(Er. Daljeet Singh)  
Executive Engineer  
Mechanical & Hospital Division  
Udhampur



## 'Blot on democracy', says Wangchuk after several detained outside Ladakh Bhawan

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

Delhi Police on Sunday detained several people from outside the Ladakh Bhawan where climate activist Sonam Wangchuk is leading an indefinite hunger strike since October 6 to press for their demand to include Ladakh in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

According to one of the protesters, the detainees have been taken to the Mandir Marg police station. Earlier police said that Sonam Wangchuk was among those detained, but later the New Delhi DCP clarified that the climate activist was not among the detainees.

"We have detained some students from outside the Ladakh Bhawan. Sonam Wangchuk is not among them," Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Devesh Mahla said.

Meanwhile, Wangchuk said in a video message that the Delhi Police detained several of their supporters, as he questioned why Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) which prohibits unauthorised gatherings is permanently enforced in New Delhi.

"Many people came here today to observe a silent protest. It is really sad that they were detained by Delhi Police.



It is sad because in world's largest democracy, we can't even hold a silent protest," Wangchuk said in the message.

"We have been told that Section 163 has been enforced... It is sad that the mother of democracy has such a restriction imposed all through the year. This section is usually enforced temporarily only where there is a chance of law and order getting disrupted," Wangchuk added.

"This is a blot on our democracy, and courts should also take cognisance of it... How can such sections be imposed permanently," he asked.

The Ramon Magsaysay awardee climate activist also shared videos of people being detained on Instagram.

Stating that the protesters did not have the permission to sit outside the Ladakh Bhawan where Section 163 of BNSS is in place, a senior police officer said, "They have filed an application to hold protest at the Jantar Mantar. Their application is under consideration. They are not allowed to protest at any other site. We have detained a few people, who will be released soon."

Wangchuk and his supporters who marched to Delhi from Leh were detained by Delhi Police at the Singhu border on September 30 before being released on October 2.

The group is demanding a meeting with the top leadership, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to press for their

demands.

The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution includes provisions for the administration of tribal areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram in northeast India. It also establishes autonomous councils that have legislative, judicial, executive and financial powers to independently govern these areas.

The march to Delhi was organised by the Leh Apex Body which along with the Kargil Democratic Alliance has been spearheading an agitation for the last four years seeking statehood for Ladakh, its inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, a public service commission for Ladakh, and separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil districts.

## Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurates India's first Demonstration Facility for Biopolymers in Pune

JINNEWSERVICE  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

Making yet another stride towards making India a global leader in economy and a frontline player in ensuring greener and cleaner planet, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Minister of State (I/C) for Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh today inaugurated India's first Demonstration Facility for Biopolymers in at Jejuri in Pune from New Delhi today. The facility has been built by Praj Industries.

Addressing the audience, Dr Jitendra Singh said, "This 'First-of-its-kind Demonstration Facility for Biopolymers in India' is a pioneering effort in developing indigenously integrated technology for the production of Polylactic Acid (PLA) bioplastic. This marks a pivotal development for India's commitment to sustainable solutions. This demonstrates India's resolve to transition from fossil-based plastics to eco-friendly alternatives, crucial for addressing the global plastic pollution crisis."

Speaking about India's advancement in the field of science and technology, he said, "India has emerged as a highly alluring destination on a global scale, propelled by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visionary endeavor



to establish the country as "Atmanirbhar". Our Bioeconomy has grown more than \$150 billion in 2023, and is expected to achieve \$300 billion by 2030."

The emphasis on Green Growth in the Union Budget (2023-2024); Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision to make India a 'Net Zero' carbon economy and 'Lifestyle for the Environment (LIFE)' launched by the PM in October 2022. This will also enable dual goals of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Make-in India' with a foundational focus on biosafety, ethics and inclusive growth. He emphasised that the Union has approved the BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment) Policy of DBT. The BioE3 Policy is an important step for-

ward towards sustainable growth in the backdrop of climate change, depleting non-renewable resources and unsustainable waste generation.

Dr Jitendra Singh further said, "India now ranks 12th in the world in biotech and 3rd in Asia-Pacific. We are the largest vaccine manufacturer and the 3rd largest Startup ecosystem," adding, the Biotech ecosystem in the country is emerging at a rapid pace with the setting up of 95 bio incubators and increasing numbers of Biotech Startups. The Biotech Startups have experienced remarkable growth, increasing from just about 50 in 2014 to over 8,500 in 2023. The rise of Biotech Startups is pivotal for our future economy. These efforts place India at the forefront of the global bioplastics movement, show-

ing the world how biotechnology can contribute to a cleaner, more sustainable future.

Speaking about the partnerships between industry, academia, and government, he said, it is crucial for translating innovative ideas into real-world solutions and fostering innovation through research and development. This facility symbolises a new chapter for India's bioeconomy. It showcases our ability to lead in technological innovation and offers a sustainable pathway to reducing Environmental impact. He concluded by saying, "It is time for broader synergy among all professions to achieve the 'Amrit Kaal' goals over the next 25 years for advancements in the biotechnology sector which underscores India's potential as a global player in the field."

## Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh interacts with students from J&K on Bharat Darshan tour

JINNEWSERVICE  
JAMMU, OCT 13

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Minister of State (I/C) for Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh today hosted a luncheon interaction with students from Jammu & Kashmir. These children are in Delhi under Bharat Darshan programme of Government of India, which is being conducted by the Jammu and Kashmir Police.

Dr Jitendra Singh was impressed with their inquisitiveness, observation skills, IQ level and advised them to imbibe



new technologies, learn about new StartUp avenues and get acquainted with new developments in different segments of society, especially science and technology, biochemistry, artificial intelligence and space technology. He urged students to use their smartphones to attain information and knowledge.

He spoke about different schemes of the Government of India, including Pradhanmantri Vish-

wakarma Yojana, which would help them in acquiring and enhancing the skill of their forefathers.

The Minister informed them about women-run self help groups in J&K who are working on doubling apple yield and increasing the shelf life of these. He also informed about the Purple Revolution benefitting the youth of J&K who not only grow lavender but also distill perfume and oil out of it thereby earning hand-

somely. Dr Jitendra Singh asked children to request their teachers to reach them with new perspectives and incorporate new ideas in their teachings. He also requested J&K Police officers, part of the troupe, to organise such workshops for the teachers that would be beneficial for the students. There were around 70 students along with seven officials of the J&K Police. Around half of them are from the families of those who were killed in action. These students first went to Bengaluru where they visited among others Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum, Bengaluru. The tour began on October 09, 2024. They are travelling by air and will fly back tomorrow.

JINNEWSERVICE  
MUMBAI, OCT 13

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray on Sunday made it clear that his party will face upcoming state assembly election independently and not in alliance with either of two blocs. Addressing the party workers here, he claimed that MNS will be the party in power after the election.

"Voters of Maharashtra should trust in MNS, we will show them a better Maharashtra. It is my sincere desire to create a Maharashtra that the world will be jealous of," Thackeray said and urged people of the state to give the reins of the state in his hands.



The MNS chief made this clarification because his party had extended support to the ruling Mahayuti in the Lok Sabha election, so it was predicted that MNS would go with the grand alliance in upcoming assembly election as well.

But, after he announced that his party would con-

test on more than 200 out of 288 assembly constituencies in the state and started announcing names of the party candidates, all eyes are on him and political observers are paying close attention to his role.

However, while clarifying his party's position in the functionaries' meeting today, Raj Thackeray

announced that MNS will contest assembly election independently and not in alliance with Mahayuti or Maha Vikas Aghadi.

Talking on Maratha reservation issue, he noted that the Maratha community will not get reservation and explained that if reservation is given to one community in one state, other communities in other states in the country will also rise up in arms.

He claimed that no party can fulfil the demand for reservation.

Speaking further, Thackeray also claimed that this issue will not come up again after assembly election and indicated that when the elections will be held next time, then this issue will again be raked up, he added.

## FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

### Ready to share...

the Doda assembly segment to become the first member of the AAP to register a win in Jammu and Kashmir.

"AAP is formally supporting the Omar-led government and I hope his government will give Mehraj responsibility so that he can not only work for Doda but provide his services to the people of J&K," said Kejriwal.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader said that Mehraj had not won in the name of religion but raised the basic issues like education, health and roads.

"AAP wants development of Doda and Jammu and Kashmir...We are not in the race to become MPs, MLAs, CM or prime minister for the sake of it but we are in the long struggle against the system and want to introduce a different type of politics in the country to improve the living standards of the people," he said.

Thanking the people for voting Mehraj, Kejriwal said his party's historic win will change the situation and the history of Jammu and Kashmir in the next 10 years.

"You have not only sowed the seed of the AAP but a different kind of politics. AAP is not a party but the name of a new ideology, new type of politics. AAP sets up schools to educate the children of the poor, transform government hospitals and provide free electricity to the people," he said.

### J&K Assembly Polls: At least...

Conference. The JKPCC chief has been an MLA in the past. He was elected to the Lok Sabha from Srinagar constituency in 2014 but resigned to protest the civilian killings during the summer unrest of 2016 in the valley.

However, the man expected to have a bright political future among the second generation politicians is Salman Sagar, who has been elected to the assembly from the Hazratbal seat.

Salman Sagar's father, Ali Mohammad Sagar, will be sitting in the front row of the treasury benches in the assembly having won a record seventh straight term as an MLA - twice from erstwhile Batamaloos seat and five times from Khanyar segment.

A key player in tribal politics of Kashmir, Mian Altaf Ahmad - who is currently the Lok Sabha member from Anantnag-Rajouri constituency - has been replaced as the MLA from Kangan by his son Mian Mehar Ali. The 67-year-old Lok Sabha member would have been vying for a sixth straight term if he was not elected to the Lok Sabha earlier this year.

Another relative of Mian Altaf Ahmad has been elected to the assembly this time. His brother-in-law Zafar Ali Khatana was elected from the Kokernag assembly segment, which has been reserved for the Scheduled Tribe candidates following the delimitation exercise in 2022.

Hilal Akbar Lone, the son of former assembly speaker Mohammad Akbar Lone, has been elected from the Sonawari seat. The senior Lone was a member from the Sonawari seat three times from 2002 to 2018.

National Conference chief spokesman Tanvir Sadiq, who was elected from Zadibal assembly segment, is the son of former MLA Sadiq Ali while party's MLA from Uri Sajjad Shafi is the son of former Education Minister Mohammad Shafi Uri.

Irshad Rasool Kar, who won on the National Conference ticket from Sopore assembly segment, is the son of veteran Congress leader and former JKPCC chief Ghulam Rasool Kar.

The MLA from Srigufwara-Bijbehara Bashir Ahmad Veeri is the son of former Minister Abdul Gani Shah Veeri while MLA Lal Chowk Sheikh Ahsan Ahmad is the son of former MLC Sheikh Ghulam Qadir Pardesi.

Outside the National Conference (NC)-Congress alliance, PDP MLA Rafeeq Ahmad Naik, who won from the Tral segment, is the son of former speaker and National Conference leader Ali Mohammad Naik and MLA Langate Khurshed Ahmad Sheikh is the brother of Lok Sabha member from Baramulla, Sheikh Abdul Rashid alias Engineer Rashid.

### President Murmu leaves...

at Jardin d'essai. India and Algeria share cordial relations with cooperation in several fields including strategic areas like oil and gas, defence, and space cooperation. The visit is expected to further enhance bilateral ties between the two countries.

She will later proceed to Mauritania and finally to Malawi.

### 2 minors die in...

The duo was taken to Sub-District Hospital DH Pora, where doctors declared them dead on arrival.

The deceased were identified as 12-year-old Mantaha Aijaz, daughter of Aijaz Ahmad Wani, resident of DH Pora, and a 3-year-old Amman Aijaz, son of Aijaz Ahmad Hella, resident of Yaroo.

The driver along with the vehicle have run away after committing the crime, they said, and added that police have launched a manhunt to trace the accused.

Meanwhile, police have taken cognisance of the acci-

dent, they added.

### More health packages...

not have to share with other family members below the age of 70 years.

Senior citizens aged 70 years and above who are under private health insurance policies or the Employees' State Insurance scheme will also be eligible to avail benefits under the scheme, officials had said earlier.

However, those already availing benefits of other public health-insurance schemes, such as the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS), Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) and Ayushman Central Armed Police Force (CAPF), may either choose their existing scheme or opt for AB-PMJAY.

The scheme has covered 7.37 crore hospital admissions, including 49 per cent women beneficiaries. The public has benefitted to the extent of over Rs 1 lakh crore under the scheme, the health ministry had said earlier.

The AB-PMJAY scheme has witnessed continuous expansion of the beneficiary base, it had said, adding that initially, 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable families comprising the bottom 40 per cent of India's population were covered under the scheme.

In January 2022, the Union Government revised the beneficiary base from 10.74 crore to 12 crore families, considering India's decadal population growth of 11.7 per cent over the 2011 population.

The scheme was further expanded to cover 37 lakh ASHAs, AWWs and AWHs working across the country and their families for free healthcare benefits.



## Spiritual leader shares insights on Guru-disciple union and power of prayer

**JINNEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, OCT 13

Today, Sadguru of Sahib Bandagi Shri Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj, while delighting the congregation with the nectar of his discourses in Rakhbandhu, said that the Guru merges into the disciple. How does he merge? Sahib is saying that when I was there, the Guru was not there, now the Guru is there, I am not there. The path of love is very narrow. Two cannot merge in it. If the Guru is very far away, then do your meditation. He will come riding on the horse of words. Like when the ghost comes, the body is his, but he does the same work that the ghost makes him do. In this way, the Guru merges.



God. You see that when America killed Osama Bin Laden, they first caught his voice. Wherever he spoke, they were getting to know. Where he was killed, there was no TV. There was no mobile there either. Still, they got to know. Vasudev Krishna had imparted the knowledge of Gita to Arjun in Kurukshetra, they are still in the universe. Scientists are trying to find those words. They have

claimed that they will find the original words of Vasudev Krishna, which came out of his mouth. Some even claimed that they have identified them, but could not give proof. Because they did not have the original voice of Vasudev Krishna to match. The word that comes out of your mouth travels in the universe. Like we put a drop of water, it reaches seven seas at the

same time. Similarly, the word that comes out of your mouth reaches the universe at the same time. Because the rays of microscopic water are connected to each other. Similarly, your voice reaches the universe at the same time.

How did man come to believe that the prayers we are saying are reaching God. Every person prays to God in times of trouble. The death will go to the person whose number you have called. Guru is sitting across seven seas, this Surati will reach there in a moment. It does not take much time for Surati to go away. Secondly, after Naam you are under surveillance. You keep praying. You have faith. Then no one can harm you. That power joins you. It takes care of you every moment. The power of Naam will slowly take you there.

## Indian army organized Dussehra celebration across southern Pir Panjal region at Poonch, Rajouri & Reasi

**JINNEWS SERVICE**  
POONCH, RAJOURI&REASI, OCT 13

The Indian Army recently celebrated Dussehra at multiple locations in Poonch, Rajouri and Reasi districts in the southern PirPanjal region, showcasing its commitment to fostering community ties and promoting cultural heritage. This multi-site celebration engaged various local communities, enhancing the Indian Army presence and support throughout the region. At each location, festivities commenced with traditional rituals honouring the festival's significance, symbolizing the victory of good over evil. Local residents participated enthusiastically, bringing families and friends together to join in the celebrations. The atmosphere was filled with traditional



music and dance performances, highlighting the rich cultural diversity of the area. These events provided a platform for local artists to showcase their talents, promoting pride in their heritage. The Indian Army also conducted awareness programs focused on health, safety, and community welfare, demonstrating their commitment to the holistic development of the region. These initia-

tives were well-received, addressing the needs and concerns of local residents while reinforcing the army's role as a supportive presence. By celebrating Dussehra at multiple locations, the Indian Army emphasized the importance of tradition and its dedication to community engagement and building trust. This approach fosters a sense of unity and resilience among the people, pro-

moting peace and stability in a region that has faced its share of challenges. The Dussehra celebrations across the southern Pir Panjal region reflected the Indian Army efforts to integrate into the community, cultivating a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect. The success of these events underscores the significance of cultural exchange in strengthening bonds and promoting harmony in the region.

## Indian army conducts lecture on Physical fitness at Hatiyan Rajouri



**JINNEWS SERVICE**  
RAJOURI-13 OCT 2024

Indian Army conducted a lecture on Importance of physical fitness on 13 Oct 2024 at Government High School, Hatiyan District Rajouri (J&K) with an aim to raise awareness about importance of physical fitness for youth and local populace. The lecture was attended by students in positive spirit. The representative of the Indian Army discussed about the importance of Physical Fitness and emphasized

that exercise is important for everyone including young & old. The Government of India's 'FIT INDIA INITIATIVE' is an initiative which intends to boost overall health of population by Primary Physical Fitness. Thus, children, adolescents and adults of all ages need regular physical activity. The lecture was successful in instilling confidence and competitive spirit amongst the populace of Government High School, Hatiyan District Rajouri (J&K).

## IAF's Vayu Veer Vijeta Car rally leaves Jammu amidst grand fanfare for Chandigarh and Dehradun



**JINNEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, OCT 13

Continuing its spell on thousands of spectators IAF UWM Vayu veer vijeta car rally was flagged off by AOC Jammu, Air Commodore Sagar Singh Rawat, VM today morning.

A Pooja was conducted before flagging off the vehicles. Thereafter the team visited Balidan Stumbh War Memorial

and wreath was laid by Wg Cdr Vijay Prakash Bhatt, team leader.

Rally is fast speeding to Chandigarh and arrive in Dehradun on 14th Oct afternoon to be welcomed by Uttarakhand Science and Technology Council in Jhajhra for a reception and a brief interaction with scientists on Science and Tech role in National defence led by its Director General Prof ( Dr

Durgesh Pant. A special feature is that students from northeast, particularly from Arunachal Pradesh where rally will reach finally, will welcome rally in their traditional tribal attire. On 15 th October the rally will lay wreath at Unknown Soldier's statue at Uttarakhand War Memorial Shaurya Sthal in presence of state's top dignitaries.

## Ayurvedic medical camp organized by crossed swords division



**JINNEWS SERVICE**  
AKHNOOR, OCT 13

An Ayurvedic Medical Camp organized by Crossed Swords Division Gunners for the regiments and families of Akhnoor Military Station was a well-executed and highly beneficial initiative. The camp offered a range of medical services, including general check-ups, specialized consultations, and diagnostics, catering effectively to the health needs of both soldiers and their families.

With the participation of 12 dedicated doctors, the camp covered a wide range of medical specialties. Notably, the inclusion of an Ayurvedic doctor and an eye specialist added significant value, offering holistic and specialized treatments that catered to the diverse needs of the attendees.

The professionalism and dedication of the medical staff were commendable, ensuring a smooth and efficient process. Their empathetic

approach made attendees feel comfortable and well-cared for. In addition, the camp's focus on health awareness and preventive care education was a valuable aspect, helping to promote long-term health and wellness within the community.

Overall, the camp was a resounding success and a testament to the commitment of Crossed Swords Division towards the health and welfare of the military personnel and their families at Akhnoor Military Station.

## Bike lifter arrested, stolen motorcycle recovered by R.S Pura Police Station, Jammu



**JINNEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, OCT 13

In a swift and effective action, R.S Pura Police Station successfully apprehended a bike lifter and recovered a stolen motorcycle. On 08.10.2024, Deepak Kumar, a resident of Ward No. 11, R.S Pura, filed a written complaint, stating that his motorcycle, bearing R.C No. JK02BW/2546, was stolen from outside his house on 12.09.2024 at around 18:30 hrs.

Acting promptly on this information, FIR

No. 221/2024 U/S 303(2) BNS was registered at R.S Pura Police Station, and a special team was formed to investigate the matter.

With the help of intelligence gathered from local sources and technical surveillance, the police apprehended the accused, Mushtaq Ali, S/o Rashid Ali, R/o Old Agra Chak, R.S Pura.

Upon sustained interrogation, Mushtaq Ali admitted to the crime, and based on his disclosure, the stolen motorcycle was recovered.

The swift resolution of the case underscores the dedication and vigilance of the Jammu Police in ensuring justice and maintaining public order.

Further investigation is ongoing to identify any possible accomplices or related activities. Jammu Police remains committed to ensuring the safety and security of the public by cracking down on criminal activities in the region.

## 3rd dogra regiment celebrates 124th raising day in Jammu



**JINNEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, OCT 13

The veterans of the 3rd Battalion The Dogra Regiment came together to celebrate the 124th Raising Day of the paltan at Sun City Palace, Miran Sahib, Jammu. Brig Prahlad Singh (Retd), 31st Commanding Officer of the battalion graced the occasion as the chief guest. The present Commanding Officer of the paltan also graced the occasion with his presence. The program commenced with paying tribute to the martyrs in a solemn ceremony followed by warm welcome to all attendees by Subedar Major Swaran Kumar Bal (Retd).

Captain Hari Ram Sahib narrated the rich history of the battalion covering the journey of the paltan from its inception in 1900 till date. The 3rd Dogra Regiment was raised in Jalandhar on 12 October 1900 and boasts a 124 year old history full of valour and courage, with significant contributions in various conflicts including World War I, 1965 war and 1971 war. The battalion has

distinguished privilege of receiving 13 Battle Honours pre independence and 02 Battle Honours post independence. The battalion is also proud recipient of two theatre honours. Brig Prahlad Singh (Retd) extended warm greetings to all the officers and soldiers of the battalion. The present Commanding Officer also congratulated all serving and retired officers/JCOs and soldiers and their families on this occasion.

Numerous dignitaries, including Capt Madan Lal, Capt Satpal Saroj, Capt Prem Parkash, Capt Kabhi Raj, Capt Mohan Lal, Capt Davel Ram, Capt Sat Pal, Capt Gopal Dass, Capt KL Sharma, Capt Baj Singh, Capt Joginder Salaria, Sub Sarvjeet, Sub Maj Kamal, Sub Maj Rakesh Khajuria, Sub Swaran Chib, Sub Mukhtiyar Singh, Sub Narinder Singh, Sub Pawan Kumar, Hav Harbans Lal (Sarpanch), Hav Ved Parkash, Hav Ajay Chib, Hav Pushpinder Kumar, Hav Vinod Saini, and many other distinguished individuals graced the occasion with their presence.

## Bovine smuggling bid foiled, 17 bovines rescued, 01 vehicle seized by JKP in Sub-division Nagrota.



**JINNEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, OCT 13

Jammu police tightening its noose against bovine smugglers under operation Kamdhenu Police team of Police Station Jhajjar Kotli has foiled one bovine smuggling attempt in which 17 bovines were rescued from a vehicle bearing registration number No. JK13E/4142 at Naka Sukear. The driver of the vehicle fled away from the spot after leaving behind the vehicle on the road.

\*17 bovines were rescued and vehicle seized. In this regard, a case FIR No. 229/2024 U/S 223/BNS 11 PCA Act has been registered in Police Station Jhajjar Kotli

Further investigation is underway. General public have appreciated the continuous and strict actions of police against Bovine smugglers.

## 3 drug peddlers arrested, 50 grams of heroin (Chitta) recovered by Police Station Miran Sahib, Jammu



**JINNEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, OCT 13

Continuing its drive under Operation Sanjevani against drug trafficking and substances abuse, Miran Sahib Police achieved success by recovering 50 grams of heroin, from 03 drug peddlers in the area under the jurisdiction of PS Miran Sahib.

A Police team of PS Miran Sahib led by SHO PS Miran Sahib while on routine patrolling, established a naka below Fly over Ring Road Kotli Main Fateh in the jurisdiction of PS Miran Sahib and rounded up 03 suspected persons who were coming

on a Motorcycle bearing registration No. JK02DG-7767, later identified as 1. Mohd. Mushtaq@ Channi S/o Mohd. Butta R/o Village Kothey Sheikh Miran Sahib, 2. Shubham Sharma S/o Pawan Kumar R/o Kashmiri Basti Brij Nagar and 3. Vishal Kataria S/o Subash Chander R/o Village Gazian Tehsil R.S.Pura.

During search, approx. 50 grams of heroin, got recovered from their possession. In this regard, case FIR No. 101/2024 U/S 8/21/22/29/60 NDPS Act stands registered at PS Miran Sahib and accused got arrested.

Further, investigation of the case is going on. Jammu Police is working intensively to uproot the chains of drug supply in the region and thorough questioning of the accused persons is going on to know the origin of the drugs supply chain.

Jammu Police is striving hard and taking every possible step to make people especially youth aware to eradicate drug menace.

We request people of the area to come forward and share information about drug peddling or consumption on 100 with Police for the cause. Your identity will be kept confidential.



## EDITORIAL

## A sore loser or a party in crisis?

The recent assembly election defeats in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir have laid bare the challenges facing the Congress party. With a mere six seats in J&K—only one of which is in the Hindu-dominated Jammu region—the party's inability to build on its earlier parliamentary successes signals a troubling trend. Instead of embracing the democratic process and acknowledging the electorate's decision, Congress appears to be descending into a vortex of blame and infighting, demonstrating signs of a sore loser rather than a party ready to engage constructively with its challenges. In a move that reflects more of arrogance than sound strategy, Congress has publicly accused the incumbent BJP-led government of manipulating electronic voting machines (EVMs) in Haryana, even filing a complaint with the Election Commission. This unprecedented action not only undermines the party's credibility but also distracts from the real issues at hand. Such behavior smacks of desperation, diverting attention from the need for serious self-reflection and reform. In J&K, the internal rifts have become increasingly pronounced. Grassroots leaders are voicing their frustrations, accusing the J&K Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) leadership of prioritizing personal and monetary gains over party interests. Allegations of corruption and financial irregularities, particularly related to funds allocated for the Bharat Jodo Yatra, have surfaced, further tarnishing the party's image. This internal strife is not just a footnote; it is likely a significant factor in the Congress's lackluster performance. Fortunately, a hint of pragmatism has emerged. The party has moderated its accusations against EVMs, now stating that it will hold off on claims until it can gather substantial evidence. Yet, this concession does little to address the underlying issues that led to its electoral decline. Instead of confronting the infighting that has plagued its campaign, Congress seems content to let its divisions fester. The absence of key leaders like Bhupinder Hooda and Kumari Selja from critical discussions following the election results underscores the toxic factionalism that continues to undermine the party's unity. Rahul Gandhi's distancing from accountability also raises concerns. By attributing the party's losses to the self-interest of local leaders, he not only deflects responsibility but also misses a crucial opportunity for introspection. While it is true that local ambitions can derail collective goals, addressing these issues with genuine engagement is vital for healing the party's wounds. Without a concerted effort to realign around common objectives, Congress risks deepening its fractures and losing further ground as a political force. For Congress to reclaim its relevance, both in Haryana and on the national stage, it must undergo a radical transformation. This includes fostering genuine dialogue within its ranks, rebuilding trust among its leaders, and prioritizing the needs and voices of grassroots workers. The time for blame games and factional infighting must end; what is required now is a collective commitment to revitalize the party and re-engage with the electorate. In a democratic landscape that demands robust opposition, the Congress must rise to the occasion, not only to hold the government accountable but also to renew its own commitment to the principles of governance and service. The future of the party depends on its ability to learn from its failures, address its internal challenges, and emerge as a unified front capable of representing the diverse interests of the people it seeks to serve.

## 'Fourth transformation' of Mexico embraces inclusivity

NILANTHA ILANGAMUWA

Claudia Sheinbaum's swearing-in on October 1 as Mexico's first female President marks a transformative moment not only for gender equality but also within the broader historical trajectory shaped by violence, revolution and the ongoing pursuit of justice. In a nation long burdened by colonial legacies and systemic inequality, her presidency signals a paradigm shift towards more inclusive and human-centred governance. Declaring a "fourth transformation," Sheinbaum's leadership reflects the weight of Mexico's tumultuous history and the lives lost in its struggles. Her rise to power disrupts the deeply entrenched male-dominated political sphere, accentuating the resilience of women fighting for representation in a country plagued by gender-based violence and femicide.

Historically, Mexico has undergone significant transformations marked by bloodshed and resistance. The country's struggle for independence from Spanish colonial rule in the early 19th century was fuelled by revolutionary fervour and the desire for self-determination. Statesmen like Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos emerged as symbols of resistance, galvanising the population against colonial oppression. The violent conflicts that followed laid the groundwork for a nation striving for autonomy, albeit at a considerable human cost. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the divide between church and state catalysed further revolutions and conflicts. The Liberal Reform, led by figures such as Benito Juárez, sought to dismantle the power of the Catholic Church and establish a secular state.

This period was marked by violence and civil strife, as conservative factions resisted these changes. The Mexican Revolution of 1910 further exemplified the nation's tumultuous journey, with leaders like Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa rallying for agrarian reform and social justice. The revolution, while transformative, came at a heavy price, resulting in the loss of countless lives and widespread suffering. The bloodshed that characterised these early transformations stands in stark contrast to Shein-



baum's vision for the fourth transformation, which she advocates as a path of non-violence and reconciliation. She seeks to distance her administration from the militarised approach that has defined previous efforts to combat crime and violence.

In her inaugural speech, she emphasised that "we must turn the page on the cycles of violence that have plagued our country." By framing her presidency as a continuation of a peaceful and humanistic governance model, she aims to redefine Mexico's political structure.

The economic model embraced by Sheinbaum's administration marks a significant departure from the neoliberal policies that have dominated Mexico for decades. The neoliberal framework, characterised by deregulation, resource exploitation, privatisation, and an emphasis on unethical free-market principles, has often exacerbated social inequalities and marginalised vulnerable populations. In contrast, Sheinbaum's "Mexican Humanist" approach seeks to prioritise social welfare, equity, and sustainable development.

This shift is not merely a matter of policy but rep-

resents a broader socio-political transformation in the way governance is conceived. Sheinbaum advocates for a model that empowers communities and fosters inclusivity, stating, "We must build a Mexico where no one is left behind." This vision reflects a recognition that systemic issues require collective solutions and that the voices of marginalised communities must be heard in the decision-making processes that affect their lives.

Yet, while Sheinbaum's approach has garnered support from many, it also faces criticism and scepticism from those who question the feasibility of her proposed reforms. Critics argue that the structural challenges posed by organised crime and entrenched political corruption may undermine her efforts to implement meaningful change. The harsh realities of violence and inequality persist, and many Mexicans remain wary of promises that may be difficult to fulfil in the face of overwhelming opposition. The historical backdrop of Mexico's political volatility illuminates the formidable challenges in achieving authentic progress, as the legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and systemic

oppression remain deeply ingrained.

The ongoing struggles for justice and equality have come at a profound cost, with the violence woven into Mexico's history continuing to influence the present and complicate future paths.

The Zapatista movement, which arose in the 1990s in response to neoliberal policies and the marginalisation of Indigenous communities, stands as a powerful testament to the fight for social justice. Led by Subcomandante Marcos, the Zapatistas championed self-determination, autonomy, and the acknowledgement of Indigenous rights, challenging dominant political narratives and inspiring a new generation of activists, including Sheinbaum. Yet, their movement also reveals the challenges inherent in revolutionary politics; while their promise of non-violence and social justice aligns with Sheinbaum's vision, navigating the realities of power and governance often demands difficult compromises. The pressing challenge remains: how to dismantle deeply rooted systems of inequality and violence without mirroring the oppressive methods of the past. Shein-

baum's fourth transformation for Mexico calls for a reevaluation of economic policies and a fundamental shift in political culture, emphasising transparency, accountability, and democratic principles that prioritise the needs of the many.

She stresses the importance of restoring faith in institutions and rebuilding the nation's social fabric. However, the ongoing issues of alleged corruption and political machinations, exacerbated by her predecessor López Obrador's concentration of power and undermining of democratic institutions, raise concerns about the sustainability of her reforms. In the context of Claudia Sheinbaum's presidency, the enduring legacy of CIA covert operations and foreign interventions looms large. Historically, the United States has intervened in Latin America to safeguard its interests, often undermining democratic governance and social justice.

The repercussions of these interventions have fostered a deep-seated distrust and scepticism toward foreign influence in Mexico's internal affairs. As Sheinbaum endeavours to establish a nation committed to human rights

and social justice, she must grapple with the pervasive effects of these historical injustices and the Western media narratives that distort the actual picture of Mexican society. In terms of international relations, Sheinbaum vehemently opposes foreign intervention, particularly regarding the US blockade against Cuba, which harms ordinary citizens rather than the government.

She advocates for cooperation rather than militarisation in addressing drug-related violence, emphasising that the drug market is intricately linked to US consumer demand. As she aptly stated, "We must honour our past, learn from our struggles, and build a future that reflects the aspirations of all Mexicans." Yet, the pursuit of a more just and equitable Mexico demands collective action, engagement from diverse communities, and a steadfast commitment to dismantling systemic barriers, as Sheinbaum seeks to embody the hopes of a nation shaped by resilience and struggle. However, the structural challenges, as Enrique Dussel, an Argentine-Mexican philosopher, explained in his writings, continue to haunt Mexico, posing real threats to the stability of political leadership. He emphasises the need for integrating diverse cultural perspectives and fostering dialogue from the Global South, as seen in his concept of transmodernity.

Dussel also highlights the coloniality of power, illustrating how historical injustices persist in contemporary governance, perpetuating inequality. Furthermore, his ethics of the Other calls for recognising the experiences of marginalised individuals as central to any discourse on justice. Additionally, the aporia of borders illustrates the contradictions communities face at national edges, such as the Mexico-US border, where ideals of freedom and security often clash. Addressing these issues demands a nuanced approach that acknowledges the voices of those usually left unheard, which presents a significant challenge for the historic administration of Dr Sheinbaum.

(The writer is a journalist and author. Views expressed are personal)

## A Tribute to Lt. Rattan Tata Business giant, Tycoon &amp; Philanthropist

O.N.KOUL

The passing away of Rattan Tata, the great industrial leader and philanthropist is an irreparable loss to Indian economy, society and the country at large. His death has created a big void which is difficult to fill. Rattan Tata will be remembered for his valuable and outstanding contributions to India's economic and social development. He was the tallest leader of corporate social responsibility and had given much importance to business's responsibility towards society. Rattan Tata was a doyen of industry and a tall philanthropist and his towering socio-economic contribution and honesty and integrity will continue to inspire Indian industrialists and economic leaders. He was in fact an institution in himself and his death is a very big loss to the country and with his death an era has come to end. Rattan Tata has played commendable role in transforming Indian economy and society. Rattan Tata was the son of Naval Tata, who was adopted by Raranji Tata, son of Jamshedji Tata, the

founder of the Tata Group. He graduated from Cornell University collage of Architecture with a bachelor's degree in architecture. He joined the Tata Group in 1961 starting on the shop floor of Tata Steel. He was born on 28 December 1937 in Bombay, British India - present day Mumbai & passed away on October 9, 2024 at the age of 86 years after a brief illness at Mumbai. His death is mourned by the Industrial circles, political leaders, the government and the society at large. He was an Indian businessman who became chairman -1991-2012 & 2016-17 of the Tata Group, a Mumbai-based conglomerate. He was widely admired not only for his stewardship of the one of the country's largest conglomerates but also for his personal ethics and philanthropic activities. Tata was regarded as a visionary leader, and his legacy is one of compassion and innovation that transcends the confines of the corporate realm to impact millions of ordinary lives. In his lifetime he received two of India's highest civilian honors - the Padma Vibhushan 2008 & the

Padma Bhushan 2000. Rattan Tata was a member of a prominent family of Indian industrialists and philanthropists, credited with pioneering much of country's industrial establishments and practices. His grandfather Jamshedji Tata founded the Tata Group in 1968 - the businesses under this umbrella, including Tata Steel, played a key nation building role when India achieved independence from British rule in 1947. The Tata Group was later expanded by Ratan Tata's uncle J.R.D Tata, who founded prominent subsidiaries such as Tata Consultancy services, Tata Motors, and Tata Salt. Among the pioneering achievements of the Tata Group were the establishment of the iconic Taj Mahal Palace Hotel [1903, Mumbai], India's first hotel with electricity, and the founding of Air India -1932 as well as the country's first indigenous cosmetics brand, Lakme-1952. Rattan Tata became chairman of Tata Sons at a crucial period of India's growth story - the liberalization of its economy. His ascent was impeded by the stiff resistance from existing senior leadership

. He consolidated power by implementing a retirement age policy, changing reporting structure, and terminating certain executives. Tata aggressively sought to expand the conglomerate, and increasingly focused on globalizing its businesses. In 2002 the group acquired London-based Tetley Tea for dollar 431.3 million, and in 2004 it purchased the truck-manufacturing operations of south Korea's Daewoo Motor's for dollar 102 million. Tata Steel completed the biggest corporate takeover by an Indian company when it acquired the giant Anglo-Dutch steel manufacturer Corus for dollar 11.3 billion in 2007. The following year Tata oversaw Tata Motor's purchase of the elite British car brands Jaguar and Land Rover from the Ford Motor company. The dollar 2.3 billion deal marked the largest -ever acquisition by an Indian automotive firm. In December 2012 Tata retired as Chairman of the Tata Group. He briefly served as interim chairman beginning in October 2016 following the ouster of his successor, Cyrus Mistry. Tata returned to retirement in January 2017

when Natarajan Chandrasekaran was appointed chairman of the Tata Group. Rattan Tata left a legacy of philanthropy. Tata belonged to the Indian community known as the Parsis, followers of the Zoroastrian faith and well known for their public service work. He was greatly admired for his philanthropic interests, which included supporting research and improvement in the field of education, medicine, and rural development. He established and enhanced hospitals and research centers that helped advance cancer care. He was also committed to reducing social and economic inequality. In 2004 the Tata Group announced plans to build India's first indigenous semiconductor manufacturing facility in the state of Assam, which generated employment for more than 25,000 local residents. Donations by the Tata Group and the related philanthropic collective called Tata Trusts have led to the establishment of a variety of institutions and scholarships in U.S Universities. These include a biological and physical sciences research facility at the University

of California, San Diego, and an executive center at Harvard Business School - both are named Tata Hall. An endowment to Cornell University provides financial aid to students from India. A donation from Tata Consultancy Services to Carnegie Mellon University funds research into cognitive systems and autonomous vehicles. The Tata Center of Technology and Design at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology works on providing solutions to challenges faced by communities that have limited access to electricity, low income, and poor literacy. Tata was known for his love of animal, dogs in particular. Tata advocated for animal welfare all his life. During his life, Tata invested in over 30 start-ups, primarily in a personal capacity, with some through his investment company. Rattan Tata was a supporter of education, medicine and rural development and considered a leading philanthropist in India. Tata supported University of New South Wales Faculty of Engineering to develop capacitive deionization to provide improved water for challenged

areas. In short Rattan N Tata was among India's respected and loved industrialists, who took Tata Group to new heights and touched the fabric of the nation through his contributions across different areas including philanthropy. One of the most internationally well-known Indian business leaders, Rattan Tata was known for his humility and compassion while also his vision, business acumen, integrity and ethical leadership. The passing of Rattan Tata, Chairman Emeritus of Tata Sons, has left significant leadership gap at Tata Trusts. In fact his passing left Indian economy and philanthropy orphaned. It will take many years to fill the void created by his death. It is no exaggeration to say that Rattan Tata was a half business magnate and half saint. May God send many such industrial and social giants so that India will continue its economic and social development. Rattan Tata's philosophy will continue to inspire the corporate world as well as society. May his soul rest in peace.

The author is a columnist, social and KP activist.



# Climate change to have severe impact on health emergency services globally: Study

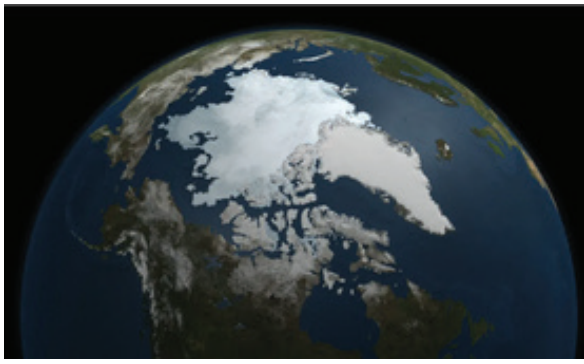
AGENCIES  
COPENHAGEN, OCT 13

Climate change is likely to have a severe impact on health emergency services around the world, international experts in emergency medicine warned on Sunday.

Despite this, few countries have assessed the scale of the impact or have a plan to deal with it, said researchers at a special session at the European Emergency Medicine Congress.

Luis Garcia Castrillo, a professor in emergency medicine at the Hospital Marques de Valdecilla, Santander, Spain, described how he and colleagues had asked 42 focus groups in 36 countries to complete a survey on climate change awareness and preparedness.

"On a scale of zero to 9, they rated the severity of the impact of climate



change on health systems and specifically on emergency care, both now and in the future, at an average of 7," Castrillo said. "This is a high figure, especially as some regions, such as northern Europe, consider it to be less of a problem than do other countries, such as Australia.

The focus groups considered that the impact of climate change on emergency medical services would be similar or even higher than on global health systems.

However, only 21 per cent of the focus group members reported that assessments of the effect of climate change on emergency medical services had been carried out, and only 38 per cent reported any measures had been taken to prepare for the impact of climate change," the team noted in the research to be published in the European Journal of Emergency Medicine.

Out of all the focus group respondents, 62 per cent said their govern-

ments or policy makers had made no assessment of the impact of climate change on emergency services, 9 per cent said they didn't know, 55 per cent said nothing had been done to prepare for the impact of climate change, and 10 per cent didn't know.

"It is surprising how awareness is lacking in so many countries, as well as among emergency medicine societies. Some countries do not seem to be concerned at all. Yet this is going to affect rich and poor countries alike," said Castrillo.

Dr Roberta Petrino, director of the Emergency Department at Ente Ospedaliero Cantonale, Lugano, Switzerland, said that one interesting finding is that the need to implement actions to mitigate climate change is considered important everywhere.

"In particular, our survey showed the need to strengthen emergency medicine services and education programmes for medical students and emergency medicine doctors, as well as research," she mentioned.

Across all the focus group responses, the top three major risks were pollution, flooding and heatwaves. Three minor risks were cold spells, wildfires and vector-borne diseases, such as malaria.

"As we head towards the end of a year that has seen records broken for the planet's hottest days, action cannot come quickly enough.

Climate change is having an impact on all countries, rich and poor, regardless of geographical region. The world faces a climate change emergency, and our medical services face an emergency too," the authors noted.

# 1st sign of Alzheimer's in women linked to quality of good cholesterol: Study

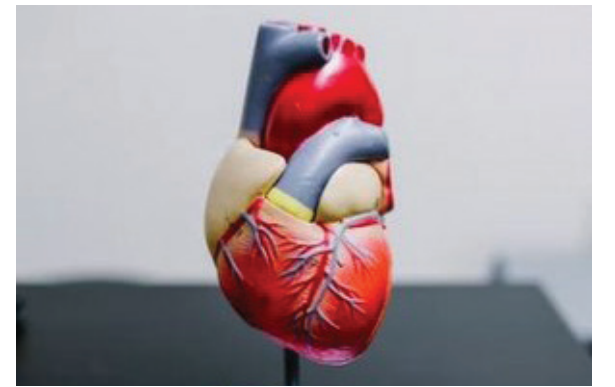
AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

Higher levels of good cholesterol (HDL-C) have been shown to correlate with heightened risk for Alzheimer's disease and, a new study has revealed that it depends on the quality, rather than quantity, of the total cholesterol carried by HDL particles circulating in a woman's blood.

The study, published in the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism, explained that once women reach the menopause transition, it's a matter of the quality, rather than quantity.

The researchers from University of Pittsburgh in the US found that, over time, the number of larger HDL particles in the women's bodies increased. These larger particles, unfortunately, did not function as well as their smaller counterparts.

"We were able to show



that as early as midlife, women who have more of the smaller-sized particles and those whose particles' concentrations of phospholipids increased over the menopause transition are more likely to experience better episodic memory later in life," said Samar R. El Khoudary, professor of epidemiology at Pitt Public Health.

The loss of working memory is the first sign of Alzheimer's disease. HDL particles vary in their size, composition and level of functioning.

During the study, the researchers conducted repeated assessments of participants' cognitive function from 2000 to 2016 and compared these data to changes in the women's HDL particles, composition and function as they aged.

The research team has previously shown that health behaviours work to improve the quality of HDL particles, for example by adding more of the phospholipid-rich particles in the bloodstream.

# 9th case of African swine fever confirmed in South Korea, India vigilant

AGENCIES  
SEOUL/NEW DELHI, OCT 13

South Korea has confirmed its ninth case of African swine fever (ASF) of the year, officials said on Sunday, as India remains vigilant about the outbreak of the disease.

The latest ASF case was found at a pig farm in Hwacheon, some 88 kilometers northeast of Seoul in Gangwon Province. More than 3,500 pigs at the farm will be slaughtered, according to the farm ministry.

The previous case was detected at a local pig farm in late August.

Authorities are investigating the affected farm and have implemented emergency quarantine measures to prevent ASF from spreading to nearby pig farms. Disinfection operations will be conducted at 233 pig farms in Hwacheon, and neighbor-



ing cities and counties, the ministry said.

The ministry noted that the culling due to the outbreak at the Hwacheon farm accounts for only 0.03 percent of the country's total pig population, indicating a minimal impact on the local pork market.

ASF does not affect humans but is deadly to pigs. There is currently no vaccine or cure for the disease.

The government here

has ramped up disinfection efforts and inspections. The Central Disaster Management Headquarters convened an emergency meeting to review and implement preventive measures, particularly critical with Chuseok approaching in two weeks.

In India, over 12,200 pigs were killed and over 21,000 pigs culled as the outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) continued in Mizoram. Mizoram Animal Husbandry and Veterinary

(AHV) Department officials said due to the outbreak of ASF, a large number of farmers across the state incurred huge losses.

AHV Department officials said that though the ratio of pig deaths due to ASF and culling has reduced in the past few weeks, the outbreak of the infectious disease continues unabated in many districts.

The ASF, which, however, does not affect humans, is a highly infectious disease among pigs and poses a severe threat with a very high mortality rate.

Since 2021, the ASF outbreak caused huge losses to the farmers and government farms, the AHV officials said, adding that this year's first ASF case was reported on February 9 in Leithum village in Champhai district, which shares unfenced borders with Myanmar.

# STUDY SHOWS HOW STRESS WORSENS COLORECTAL CANCER

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

While stress is known to significantly contribute to the onset of various health issues, a new study on Sunday showed how stress can worsen colorectal cancer (CRC).

A team of Chinese researchers showed that chronic stress disrupts the balance of gut microbiota, which then hastens the progression of CRC.

By eliminating some gut bacteria and inducing stress, they found a particular bacterial species as a potential therapeutic target.

The team from West China Hospital, Sichuan University of China, used an antibiotic cocktail -- vancomycin, ampicillin, neomycin, and metronidazole -- to eradicate gut microbiota. It was followed by faecal micro-



biota transplantation to find whether gut microbiota was necessary for chronic stress to fasten the progression of colorectal cancer.

The results showed that while chronic stress increased tumour growth, it also decreased beneficial gut bacteria, particularly the Lactobacillus genus, -- essential for a healthy immune response against cancer.

"Stress-related CRC progression can be attributed

tumour immunity -- and CRC progression the researchers supplemented mice with Lactobacillus during chronic stress and observed reduced tumour formation.

"Through faecal analysis, we found that Lactobacillus plantarum (L. plantarum) specifically regulated bile acid metabolism and enhanced the function of CD8+ T cells. This indicates how Lactobacillus may enhance anti-tumour immunity," Li said.

The research showed potential for Lactobacillus-based therapies in treating patients, particularly those affected by chronic stress.

"Restoring beneficial bacteria in the gut, such as Lactobacillus, could strengthen the body's natural defences against colorectal cancer," concluded Li.

# Why deep-fried, baked, grilled foods are driving diabetes in India

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

Deep fried, baked, grilled ultra-processed foods -- found in every nook and corner of India -- that have become the staple in a majority of homes in recent years, are a direct reason for the ever-surgeing cases of diabetes in the country, said experts on Sunday.

India is home to a staggering 101 million individuals afflicted by diabetes. The recent ICMR-NIN Dietary Guidelines for Indians reveals that more than 10 per cent of 5-19-year-olds are pre-diabetic.

A new study, published in the International Journal of Food Sciences and

Nutrition, shows that the deep fried, baked, and grilled ultra-processed foods are rich in advanced glycation end products (AGE) which lead to inflammation and contribute to several diseases including diabetes.

"When we fry or grill foods it leads to oxidative stress which is a promoter of inflammation. Chronic inflammation in the body is linked to diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and even some forms of cancer. Ultra-processed foods and those foods which are high in trans fats are harmful to health," diabetologist Dr. V Mohan from Madras Diabetes Research Foundation (MDRF) in Chen-

nai, told IANS. Mohan and team led the study on AGEs in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

According to the study, AGE-rich foods include red meat, fried foods, french fries, fried chicken, bacon, biscuits, bakery products, butter, margarine, and sugary foods.

On the other hand, fruits and vegetables, broccoli, legumes, oats, dairy, eggs, fish, and tree nuts like almonds, walnuts, cashews, etc, come under the low-age food category.

"Our study showed that foods which are high in dietary ages were linked to type 2 diabetes and inflam-

mation. Foods which were low in dietary AGEs were protective against diabetes," Mohan said.

AGEs are formed through a non-enzymatic

process called glycation, where sugar molecules bind to proteins or fats. This process can lead to the formation of compounds that cause harmful reactions in the body, particularly inflammation.

"Fried food means that we are having excess saturated fat and calories, so it will naturally not be good for us," Dr. Ambrish Mithal, Chairman & Head - Endocrinology & Diabetes, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Saket, who was not part of the study, told IANS.

"Much of the food in India that is deep fried, especially street food, is of reheated oil. Reheated oil is very rich in trans fats -- a big factor

for increasing the risk of heart disease, some types of cancers," he added. Then what about grilled or baked food? Mithal said intuitively, one would think grilled food is healthy, but it's actually not. "Although it isn't fried, it exposes food to high temperatures which gives rise to the production of certain toxic aromatic carbons in the food, which can be carcinogenic," the doctor said while noting that baked food is also not necessarily healthy because most baked food is carbohydrate-rich. These foods that are fuelling the obesity rate are one of the major causes of diabetes in the



country, Mohan told IANS, while urging the government to promote healthy eating habits.

Further, the MDRF study showed that "excess carbohydrate intake in the form of white rice or refined wheat is a direct driver of the diabetes epidemic," said Mohan.

Apart from this, stress, lack of sleep, and air pollution are other contributing factors.

"Government policy should therefore be directed towards encouraging the cultivation and promotion of foods which are low with dietary AGE's, especially fruits with low glycemic index and green leafy vegetables," the doctor said.

# Delaying knee arthritis treatment can damage spine, warn health experts

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

Delay in proper knee treatment, timely detection and ignoring knee arthritis symptoms can worsen the condition of knees and additionally damage the spine affecting the quality of life, health experts said on Saturday on the occasion of the World Arthritis Day.

Knee arthritis, particularly osteoarthritis, is a



degenerative joint condition that primarily affects adults. It causes pain, stiff-

ness, and reduced mobility in the knees, often making everyday activities

difficult.

However, according to experts, the repercussions of untreated or poorly managed knee arthritis extend far beyond the knee joint. Dr L. Tomar from Max Hospital said that in more than 70 per cent cases, osteoarthritis is the commonest reason for knee arthritis.

Osteoarthritis causes more progressive damage to the medial (inner) joint compartment cartilage

leading to reduction in the gap between the two bones.

Patients with advanced knee arthritis are often seen to have spinal deformity because when patients continue to walk with a bow leg deformity it put more pressure on lumber spine leading to its damage, such cases can be corrected with minimally invasive total knee replacement surgery, said Dr Tomar.

# Scientists find new brain target for anxiety disorders

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

Mental illnesses, such as anxiety disorders, autism and schizophrenia are among the leading health disorders worldwide. Scientists now report a new brain target for potential future treatment of anxiety disorders.

Scientists at Université de Montreal and its affiliated Montreal Clinical Research Institute (IRCM) have uncovered unique

roles for a protein complex in the function of brain cell connectivity, as well as in specific cognitive behaviours.

The new findings, published in The EMBO Journal, could provide valuable therapeutic insights, say researchers led by Hideto Takahashi in collaboration with Steven Connor's team at York University and Masanori Tachikawa's team at Japan's Tokushima University.

The junctions between two brain cells (neurons)

are called synapses, which are essential for neuronal signal transmission and brain functions.

Defects in excitatory synapses, which activate signal transmission to target neurons, and those in synaptic molecules predispose to many mental illnesses.

Although defects in synapse organisation are linked to many neuropsychiatric conditions, the mechanisms responsible for this organisation were poorly understood.



# Significantly enhanced multimodal connectivity: PM Modi on 3 years of GatiShakti scheme

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

On completion of the three years of the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that the scheme has emerged as a transformative initiative aimed at revolutionising India's infrastructure.

In a post on social media platform X, PM Modi said that the scheme has also significantly enhanced multimodal connectivity, driving faster and more efficient development across sectors.

"The seamless integration of various stakeholders has led to boosting logistics, reducing delays and creating new opportunities for several people," PM Modi's post read.

Lauding the "path-breaking initiative", Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said the scheme ensures faster and more efficient project implementation by streamlining logistics and advancing connectivity.

"The scheme continues to play a pivotal role in developing a modern, interconnected infrastruc-



ture network, strengthening the vision of building a Viksit Bharat," the Union Minister's post on X read.

On Saturday, Union Minister Goyal said that the

scheme has cut the cost of logistics and enabled better service delivery.

The Union Minister said the scheme has successfully laid the groundwork

for seamless, multi-modal connectivity, accelerated economic growth and redefined how India plans and executes large-scale infrastructure projects.

A beta version of this portal has already been created for 28 aspirational districts, and user accounts were provided to these districts on September 18.

On Saturday, the government informed that the scheme achieved a milestone of assessing 208 big-ticket infrastructure projects worth Rs 15.39 lakh crore of various ministries.

The PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan (NMP) has onboarded 44 Central Ministries and 36 states/UTs, and 1,614 data layers have also been integrated.

According to the Ministry of Finance, a District Master Plan (DMP) portal is being developed to extend PM Gati Shakti to the district level.

All 36 states/UTs have developed the PM Gati Shakti State Master Plan (SMP) portals. Over 533 projects have been mapped by states/UTs on the PM Gati Shakti portal.

Assam: BJP gets 16,000 new members; CM Sarma confident of achieving 100 per cent target soon

AGENCIES  
GUWAHATI, OCT 13

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has lauded the efforts of the state unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as on the sidelines of the Vijaya Dashami celebrations, around 16,000 people joined the party on Sunday.

Taking to his X handle, CM Sarma wrote: "The @BJP4Assam #SadasyataAbhiyaan continues unabated. On Dashami, we enrolled almost 16,000 members taking the total membership in the state to 58.72 lakh. Very soon we

will attain 100 per cent of our membership target."

The BJP in Assam at the beginning of the membership drive aimed to get 60 lakh members for the party.

With more than 58 lakh people already enrolled, Assam tops the list in the membership drive for the BJP in the country.

"Festive fever has gripped the entire state with the commencement of Durga Puja celebration. As Goddess Durga is worshipped in every nook and corner of Assam, the majority of people are busy with the festival.

## RG Kar case: FAIMA calls to shut elective services across nation from tomorrow

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

The Federation of All India Medical Association has called for a nationwide "shutdown of elective services" on October 14 (Monday) in support of doctors in West Bengal, seeking justice for the young medic who was raped and murdered at R. G. Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

This comes after the Indian Medical Association (IMA), earlier in the day, announced a 24-hour nationwide hunger strike on October 15, even as the fast-unto-death agitation by junior doctors in Kol-

kata entered the ninth day, with three hospitalised.

The doctors' body called for the shutdown in an open letter addressed to all National Medical Associations, State Resident Doctors' Associations (RDAs), and Resident Doctors' Associations (RDAs) from various State Medical Colleges and Institutes of National Importance (INIS).

The letter noted that since August 9, FAIMA has "stood united in demand for justice for our colleague Abhaya, and for the fundamental right to a safe and secure working environment for all healthcare professionals across

our nation".

Even after "penning countless letters to ministers and bureaucrats", in the last two months, they continue to face "the same harrowing realities", with "voices ignored, safety compromised, and appeals dismissed", it said.

The letter said: "No satisfactory action has been seen" since their last letter to the Chief Minister of West Bengal that gave "an ultimatum for escalation" of strike if their demands were not met. This is "compelling us to request all RDAs and medical associations across the country to join us in our call for a shutdown of elective ser-

vices across the country, beginning from October 14".

"We have been cornered, left with no alternative but to take a stand - not just for ourselves, but for the sanctity of the medical profession and the safety of all healthcare workers. We cannot afford to lose another colleague to violence or neglect. The government's apathy has left us with no other choice," it added.

The letter, however, "requested all RDAs and associations to keep emergency facilities open 24x7, since patients who need our urgent service must not suffer".

## Baba Siddique murder: Shooters claim Lawrence Bishnoi gang link, say sources

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI, OCT 13

The two suspects arrested in the killing of NCP leader and former Maharashtra Minister Baba Siddique have claimed they belong to the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, sources have said.

However, this was yet to be verified by the police.

Sources said that the Mumbai Police were also investigating the possible involvement of the gang.

Baba Siddique, 66, a prominent Muslim face from the Ajit Pawar faction of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) was shot dead in Bandra on Saturday night near his son's office.



associates. On April 14, two shooters fired five rounds outside Salman Khan's Galaxy Apartment in Bandra. Mumbai Police in a charge sheet said the jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi had links with shooters.

The shooting was carried out by three men. Two men - Gurnail Baljit Singh, 23, from Haryana and Dharamraj Kashyap, 19, from Uttar Pradesh - were arrested while the third fled.

The two arrested suspects claimed during interrogation that they had been conducting a recce of the shooting spot in Bandra East for nearly a

month, said sources. The three accused arrived there in an auto rickshaw and waited for a while before firing.

Sources also said that the police were probing the case from two angles - one involving the Bishnoi gang and another related to a slum rehabilitation case.

Further details and official confirmation were awaited.

Sources also said that Siddique had never reported any threat from the Bishnoi gang.

Lawrence Bishnoi, who faces dozens of criminal cases, is currently lodged in a jail in Gujarat.

## Baba Siddique killing: Fadnavis targets Pawar for demanding his resignation

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI, OCT 13

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday slammed NCP SP chief Sharad Pawar over his statement seeking his (Fadnavis) resignation by owning the responsibility of the targeted killing of NCP leader Baba Siddique.

"I think he (Sharad Pawar) only wants power. Even after such a serious incident, there is a lust for power in his eyes while we are only concerned about Maharashtra. We want to look at Maharashtra, we want to develop Maharashtra. Progress is to be achieved and Maharash-

tra is to be kept safe. They want to look at the power only and talk," said Fadnavis, who also is the state's Home Minister.

Earlier, Sharad Pawar said that there is a need not only to investigate the killing of Baba Siddique but also to accept the responsibility and step down from the positions of those in power.

He had not mentioned any name but had targeted the state Home Minister.

"The state's collapsed law and order situation is a cause for concern. The firing of former state minister Baba Siddique in Mumbai, the financial capital of the country, is regrettable. If the state

Home Minister and the rulers are going to push the cart of the state so mildly, it can be an alarm bell for the common people.

There is a need not only to investigate this but also to accept responsibility and step down from the positions of those in power," said Sharad Pawar.

The Deputy Chief Minister added that the behaviour of Pawar is quite shocking and painful. "Two accused in this case have been arrested and the police have gathered some threads. The police are also investigating thoroughly and they will give a proper update about the case to the media soon," he said,

## Farmers squat on railway tracks, national highways in Punjab over 'tardy' paddy procurement

AGENCIES  
CHANDIGARH, OCT 13

Farmers on Sunday squatted on railway tracks and national highways at several places in Punjab as part of a protest called by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha over the "tardy" procurement of paddy.

Also, strikes by millers and 'arhtiyas' (commission agents) added to the woes of farmers, who were heading to Haryana from the state's border to sell paddy as the procurement system was well-organised there.

The farmers raised slogans against the AAP government for delay in paddy

procurement and warned of intensifying protests if purchases don't speed up. Owing to the disruption of train and road networks, passengers experienced inconvenience.

The protest was held from 12 noon till 3 p.m.

The farmers also blocked the Jammu-Amritsar National Highway for three hours at several places. In Jalandhar, the farmers blocked the national highway near Dhanowali Gate, blocking the Jalandhar-Ludhiana highway. The protesters blocked the highway on both sides disrupting the traffic en route to Ludhiana, Ambala and Delhi.

Besides, the traffic going to other states like Jammu via Pathankot was also disrupted.

Responding to the protest, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Punjab said: "The root of all issues lies with the Central government."

AAP spokesperson Neel Garg noted the Food Corporation of India (FCI) was "deliberately" not emptying the godowns, leading to challenges in storage.

Garg acknowledged the farmers' right to protest but emphasised that the situation has arisen due to the Centre's policies and its "neglect" of Punjab.

He pointed out that Punjab has contributed

to the central foodgrain reserves for many years, yet the FCI has not emptied the warehouses, causing losses to the rice millers. This has led to a halt in the buying of new paddy.

He said the Chief Minister and other ministers spoke to Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who assured a solution, but progress has been slow.

"While some special trains were being run for lifting paddy by the Union government, the process remains sluggish," he said.

He urged farmers' organisations not to stop the trains, as their act could give the "Central

government an excuse for the slow pace of lifting".

He called on the Union government to resolve the issue promptly so that the warehouses could be cleared and all 185 lakh metric tonnes of paddy could be stored.

Contrary to AAP's assertions, Punjab BJP vice-president Fateh Jung Singh Bajwa said the Centre has already disbursed funds to the state for the purchase of paddy.

"If the Bhagwant Mann government of Punjab is not able to purchase and lift the crops smoothly, then the fault lies with the state government and not the Centre," he said.

## BJP mocks Chidambaram's article, says 'no one is interested in his knowledge'

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

BJP national spokesperson Shahnawaz Hussain on Sunday took a swipe at Congress Rajya Sabha MP P. Chidambaram, suggesting that the Congress leader should keep his insights to his party as "no one else is interested" in them.

Chidambaram had written an article in a leading daily, highlighting the "mistakes" and "lessons" learned during elections.

Reacting to the piece, Hussain said, "It is obvious that P. Chidambaram, a Congress leader, will make statements in favour of Congress."

"If he is such a popular



leader, he should have campaigned extensively in Haryana and worked hard," he told IANS.

Mocking the Congress veteran, the BJP national spokesperson said Chidambaram does nothing but sit in his drawing room and practice law.

"No one is interested in his knowledge, so he should share it with his own party. He should

point out the mistakes to Rahul Gandhi," he said.

In his article, Chidambaram emphasised the importance of adapting to changing times for political success, warning that elections can be lost if lessons are not learned.

He also compared the elections to a football match and said that either a party can win or lose it, emphasising the impor-

ance of maintaining the number of wins and reflecting on the decision if the number is less than the elections lost.

Hussain also took a dig at the Congress leadership, noting that the party has been calling for a change in leadership due to Rahul Gandhi's repeated electoral defeats.

"Now that Rahul Gandhi is repeatedly losing, everyone in Congress is demanding a new captain. However, those afflicted with a dynastic mindset just mention another family member's name," he said. "This is Congress' habit - they can't think beyond their family," the BJP national spokesperson further quipped.

## Congress seeks resignation of HM Shah, Maha CM for Baba Siddique's murder

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

Condemning the shocking murder of Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Baba Siddique, the Congress on Sunday sought the resignation of Home Minister Amit Shah, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his deputies - Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar.

Siddique, a former Maharashtra minister, was shot dead at Bandra in Mumbai outside his son (Congress MLA) Zeeshan Siddique's office, sending shockwaves among the political fraternity and across the nation.

Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here on Sunday, Congress spokesperson Ragini Nayak and Rajya Sabha MP from Maharashtra Imran Pratapgarhi blamed the Maharashtra government for deteriorat-



ing law and order in the state, adding that nobody was feeling safe there.

They pointed out that Baba Siddique was a senior leader of the NCP and very close to Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.

"If someone like him can meet such a fate, what would be the plight of a common man?" Nayak wondered.

She said that not only should Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and state Home Minister Devendra Fadnavis resign, but the Union Home Minister must also tender his res-

ignation. "Double engine government demands double responsibility," she remarked.

Pratapgarhi said that the Congress wants to set up an impartial committee to probe the murder and bring the guilty to justice.

Meanwhile, a Mumbai court remanded one of the two prime accused in the killing of Baba Siddique to police custody till October 21 and the other for a medical test to determine his actual age status.

While Gurnail Baljit Singh, 23, of Haryana, has been given police custody for a week, the other accused - reportedly a minor from Uttar Pradesh, has been sent for an ossification test to determine his true age, said a lawyer.

Both have been charged with shooting Siddique, a former Maharashtra Minister, near his son and Congress MLA Zeeshan Siddique's office in Nirmal Nagar, Bandra, on Saturday evening, sending shockwaves in political circles.

They were presented before the Esplanade Court Magistrate S.C. Tayde on Sunday afternoon.

A Mumbai Police officer said that they are questioning the two arrested accused, while 15 police teams are on the lookout for the third accused - Shiva Kumar. The police are collaborating with the departments (police) in other states.



# President Murmu embarks on historic visit to Algeria, Mauritania, and Malawi

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday departed for her official state visit to Algeria, Mauritania, and Malawi, in the first-ever visit by an Indian head of state to the three African nations.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated that President Murmu will arrive in Algeria on October 13, staying until October 15, at the invitation of Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune. The visit is expected to

bolster the already cordial relations between India and Algeria, particularly in strategic sectors such as oil and gas, defence, and space cooperation.

During the visit, the two Presidents will hold bilateral talks, while several Algerian dignitaries, including the Presidents of the Council of Nation (the upper house of the Algerian Parliament) and the National People's Assembly (the lower house), are expected to call on her.

The President will address the India-Algeria

Economic Forum and the Sidi Abdellah Science and Technology Pole University. She will also inaugurate the India Corner at Hamma Garden at Jardin d'essai.

From the North African country, the Indian President will travel to neighbouring Mauritania, which holds the Presidency of the African Union, on October 16.

During the visit, President Murmu will hold talks with her Mauritanian counterpart, Mohamed Ould Cheikh El Ghazouani. Prime

Minister Mokhtar Ould Djay and Foreign Minister Mohamed Salem Ould Marzouk are expected to call on her.

President Murmu will interact with the members of the Indian community. The visit will provide further impetus to India-Mauritania bilateral relations, the MEA said.

From Mauritania, at the invitation of the President of Malawi, Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, President Murmu will visit the East African country from October 17-19.

During the visit, Presi-

dent Murmu will hold meetings with Malawi's leadership, interact with key trade and industry leaders and the Indian diaspora, and visit places of cultural and historical significance.

The visit reaffirms India's strong commitment to further strengthen its existing friendly and cordial relations with Malawi, the MEA said, adding the President's three-nation trip "is reflective of India's deep desire to strengthen its partnership with countries in Africa".

# Iran to support Lebanon with 'all its strength': Parliament Speaker

AGENCIES  
BEIRUT, OCT 13

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said that his country will always support Lebanon with "all its strength."

"Iran will always support with all its strength the decisions made by the Lebanese government, people, and the Islamic Resistance," he said at a press conference on Saturday following his meeting in Beirut with his Lebanese counterpart Nabih Berri, Xinhua news agency reported.

He added that Iran is ready to offer support for Lebanese displaced and

war-affected people under the supervision of the government and to launch a humanitarian air bridge to facilitate this support.

Qalibaf also expressed condolences over the death of Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah.

The Iranian parliament chief arrived in Lebanon earlier in the day to convey a message of support to the country.

After his arrival, Qalibaf visited al-Noueiri, a densely populated area of central Beirut, which was hit by heavy Israeli airstrikes on Thursday, with at least 22 people killed and 117 others injured.

He also met with Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati, stressing that the Lebanese government's priorities at this stage are to work on a ceasefire, stop the Israeli aggression, and preserve the security of Lebanon and the safety of its people.

He also emphasised "Lebanon's commitment to implementing the UN Security Council Resolution 1701," calling on Lebanon to strengthen the army's presence in the south and to make the necessary contacts with concerned countries and the United Nations to pressure Israel to implement the resolution fully.

# Egypt's Suez Canal cuts transit, mooring fees for Red Sea yachts

AGENCIES  
CAIRO, OCT 13

Egypt's Suez Canal Authority (SCA) announced a 20-50 per cent reduction in transit and mooring fees for yachts in the Red Sea, effective on November 1.

"The move is part of the SCA's flexible marketing policies to encourage yacht tourism and develop marine tourism in the Red Sea region by providing facilities and incentives for yachts crossing the canal," the SCA said in a statement.

According to the statement, Yachts with a tonnage of 300 and below travelling from the north to the Red Sea will receive a 20 per cent discount on transit fees for the return journey, on the condition that they re-cross the Suez Canal from the Red



Sea to the Mediterranean within a maximum of 60 days from their initial trips, Xinhua news agency reported.

It added that yachts staying at the Ismailia yacht marina for more than 90 days will be granted a 20 per cent discount on transit fees for the journey during which the stor-

age occurred.

Yachts that arrive on time for transit and mooring at a yacht marina in Port Said or Suez to complete transit procedures will receive a 50 per cent discount on mooring fees, provided that they do not stay overnight or use any services such as electricity and water.

SCA Chairman Osama Rabie said Sunday that revenues of the Suez Canal dropped by 60 per cent, and the number of ships passing through the waterway decreased by 49 per cent since the beginning of 2024.

Rabie said that "the current situation and unprecedented challenges in the Red Sea region" pushed shippers to seek alternative navigation routes away from the Suez Canal.

Shortly after the outbreak of the Gaza conflict last October, Yemen's Houthi group has repeatedly attacked ships in the Red Sea that it asserts have links to Israel, allegedly to support Palestinians in their conflict with Israelis.

The Suez Canal is a crucial source of foreign currency for Egypt, a country still grappling with economic woes.

# Chemical leaks from US air base in Japan fuel public concern

AGENCIES  
TOKYO, OCT 13

Repeated reports of chemical leaks linked with US military bases in Japan have fueled public concern over their potential health risks, prompting calls for a thorough investigation.

In the latest case, around 47,000 litres of water contaminated with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) overflowed from the US Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo during heavy rainfall in August, Xinhua reported.

Tokyo metropolitan officials received the report on October 3 from the US military through Japan's Ministry of Defense,



expressing "regret" over the delayed information disclosure as the incident could fuel distrust among residents living near the base. "If the government doesn't have a system in place to inspect the base, such incidents will only happen again," comment-

ed one Japanese netizen on the news.

PFAS encompasses over 10,000 synthetic chemicals, including perfluorooctanesulfonic acid and perfluorooctanoic acids, used in products like non-stick cookware and water-resistant clothing.

In its first health assessment of the substances in June, Japan's food safety panel concluded that the effects of PFAS on birth-weight loss and reduced immunity are "undeniable", even though "evidence is limited" regarding the potential of PFAS to cause cancer.

While the extent of health effects caused by PFAS is still not fully understood, a citizens' group in 2022 conducted blood tests on 650 residents of the Tama region where the Yokota Air Base is located, and among them, 55 individuals exceeded overseas standards considered indicative of health risks in terms of PFAS concentration.

# 13 killed, 36 injured by Israeli airstrikes across Lebanon

AGENCIES  
BEIRUT, OCT 13

Thirteen people were killed and 36 others wounded in Israeli airstrikes on different areas of Lebanon, Lebanese media and sources said.

According to the National News Agency (NNA), an Israeli airstrike targeted a three-story residential building in the town of Barja in the Chouf district in Mount Lebanon, killing four people, wounding 14 others, and destroying the building while causing heavy damage to neighbouring buildings, Xinhua news agency reported.

The casualties were transported to the Siblin



governmental hospital, the NNA said.

Another Israeli airstrike targeted a building in the village of Maaysra in Mount Lebanon, killing five people and wounding 14 others, according to the NNA.

The Israeli air force also

launched a raid on Deir Billa, a municipality in the Batroun district in the North governorate, killing four people and wounding three others, the NNA said.

Meanwhile, Lebanese military and civil defence sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, told

Xinhua that Israeli warplanes raided the centre of the commercial market in southern Nabatieh city Saturday evening, wounding five people and destroying more than 30 shops.

The military sources added that the Israeli warplanes carried out a series of airstrikes on several towns and villages in the Baalbek region in eastern Lebanon, causing infrastructural damage.

For its part, Hezbollah said in separate statements that they targeted Israeli sites with rockets, including the Homa base in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, Ma'ale Golan barracks, and a gathering of Israeli soldiers in Karen

Naftali.

Since September 23, the Israeli army has been conducting an intensive air attack on Lebanon in an escalation with Hezbollah, which has been exchanging fire with the Israeli army across the Lebanese-Israeli border since October 8, 2023.

A report released by the Disaster Risk Management Unit at the Lebanese Council of Ministers said on Saturday that the total number of people killed in Lebanon since the beginning of Israeli attacks on the country reached 2,255, while 10,524 others were injured. About 1.2 million people were displaced to seek safety, it said.

# Will guarantee quality of medical school education despite admissions hike: S. Korea

AGENCIES  
SEOUL, OCT 13

Education Minister of South Korea Lee Ju-ho on Sunday said that the government will guarantee the quality of medical school education, addressing concerns that the admissions quota hike may compromise standards.

Earlier this year, the government decided to raise the number of medical school seats by around 1,500 for 2025 as part of its plan to increase the number of students by around 2,000 per year over the next five years to address

the shortage of doctors, Yonhap reported.

The plan has led to a majority of trainee doctors leaving their workplaces in the form of a mass resignation since February. Doctors have demanded the government withdraw the plan altogether and discuss the matter from scratch.

In an interview with Yonhap News Agency last Friday, Lee said the government "must ensure that the quality of education will not deteriorate" in the wake of the medical school quota hike.

Lee said the govern-

ment has secured enough funds and faculty support to cope with the hike in the number of medical students.

Earlier this month, the education ministry said it would temporarily allow medical students to take a leave of absence on the condition they return to school next year.

The decision follows Seoul National University's move late last month to approve leave of absence requests submitted en masse in protest of the government's medical reform plans, which include increasing the medical school admissions quota.

# Nobel laureate Han Kang's books fly off shelves with over 500,000 copies sold

AGENCIES  
SEOUL, OCT 13

More than 500,000 copies of novels and short stories written by Nobel Prize laureate Han Kang have been sold at two major online bookstores in South Korea since her winning four days ago, the bookstore operators said on Sunday.

According to Kyobo Book Centre and Yes24, about 530,000 copies of Kang's books had been sold as of 2 p.m. on Sunday, since the announcement of her win as the first South Korean to receive the Nobel Prize in literature last Thursday, Yonhap news agency reported.

Kyobo sold about 260,000 copies between Thursday and this afternoon, and Yes24 sold 270,000 copies from Thursday until 2 p.m. on Sunday. Kang's poetry and novels swept the top 11 spots in the real-time bestseller rankings at both Kyobo and Yes24, with most of her books now being sold through pre-orders. A bookstore official said the supply shortage is expected to ease as more stock will arrive over the



weekend and by early this week.

Her 2014 novel, "Human Acts," followed by the award-winning "The Vegetarian" and her most recent work, "We Do Not Part," were the top three on the sales list, the report said.

Kang won the Nobel Prize in literature on Thursday, becoming the first South Korean to win the big international award and blazing the trail for Korean literature's global recognition.

Born in Gwangju in 1970, Kang made her literary debut in 1993 when five of her poems including "Winter of Seoul" were published

by the Korean magazine "Literature and Society", while her first short story "The Scarlet Anchor", which came out a year later, won a literary contest.

In 1995, she published her first book, "Love in Yeosu", a collection of stories, but it was "The Vegetarian" (originally published in Korean in 2007), about Yeong-hye, who rebels against her family and friends by eschewing meat, which brought her literary renown.

The work also won the Man Booker International Prize in 2016, making Kang its first South Korean recipient.

# Venezuela detains 4 US citizens in alleged plot against Prez Maduro

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

In an alleged assassination bid, Venezuelan authorities have detained at least four US citizens, along with two Spaniards and a Czech national.

These detentions are linked to claims by the Venezuelan government that the foreign nationals were involved in a CIA and Spanish intelligence plot to overthrow President Nicolas Maduro. Both the US and Spanish governments have, however, firmly denied the accusations.

Venezuela's Interior Minister, Diosdado Cabello, has alleged that the detained individuals were part of a unit tasked with assassinating Maduro. As per his claims, the group was motivated by a \$15 million reward offered by the US for information leading to Maduro's arrest or conviction.

According to Cabello, the plot involved Wilbert Castaneda, an active US Navy SEAL, and a shipment of US-made firearms seized by Venezuelan authorities.

White House spokesperson John



Kirby confirmed that Wilbert Castaneda, identified by Venezuela as the ringleader, is indeed an active US Navy member but his visit to Venezuela was for "personal travel," as reported by CNN.

Meanwhile, media reports suggest that Castaneda is a dual US-Mexican citizen.

Although difficult to independ-

ently verify Venezuela's claims, critics argue that Maduro may be reviving old tactics to gain leverage in ongoing diplomatic tensions.

In recent years, Maduro has repeatedly accused the US of meddling in Venezuelan affairs, including a 2018 assassination attempt involving a drone and multiple alleged coup attempts.



# Over 30 countries to explore \$117 billion untapped export potential for India

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI, OCT 13

Highlighting the \$117 billion untapped export potential for India, more than 30 countries are set to participate in the fifth edition of 'World Trade Expo' in the financial capital from October 17-18.

India has untapped export potential with the participating countries in sectors such as textiles, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, automobiles and components, machineries, etc. The US offers the maximum untapped export opportunity worth \$46 billion in sectors such as gems and jewellery, pharmaceuticals, automobiles and components and machineries.



Diamond, agro-chemicals such as insecticides, iron and steel, jewellery and motor vehicles are some of the commodities with the highest export potential in most of these participating countries, according to the World Trade Center Mumbai and All India Association of Industries (AIAD), the organisers of the event.

The event will showcase more than 30 countries and regions.

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri is expected to be the Chief Guest at a dedicated session on 'Green and Renewable Energy' at the event.

Ambassadors and trade missions from the par-

ticipating countries and regions will showcase trade, investment, tourism, education and technology exchange potential in their countries.

The event will host developed and developing countries from Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia. These countries collectively account for 28 per cent of India's total merchandise trade, 35 per cent of its merchandise exports, and 24 per cent of its imports.

In FY24, India recorded a trade deficit of over \$10 billion with them. They are the key suppliers of ores and minerals, semi-conductors, other electronic spare parts, coal, and agro-commodities such as edible oils, which underscores their signifi-

cance in India's energy, mineral and food security.

India has signed free trade agreements with many of these countries such as Malaysia, Sri Lanka, South Korea and Mauritius. Other participating countries such as Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand are part of the 10-member ASEAN countries, with which India has a trade agreement.

Dr Vijay Kalantri, Chairman, WTC Mumbai and President of AIAD, said that alongside trade and investment, "the Expo will also discuss collaboration with the participating countries in emerging areas such as green energy, gender equality, skill development, climate-smart technologies, capacity building of MSMEs and startups".

# 32 Indian startups raise \$135 million in funding this week

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 12

At least 32 domestic startups secured nearly \$135 million in funding this week, which saw four growth-stage deals and 22 early-stage deals in a significant jump of over 45 per cent from last week.

Deeptech startups emerged as leader this week as Industrial robotics maker Haber raised Rs 317.2 crore (approximately \$38 million) in its Series C round, led by Creagis with participation from Accel India and BEENEXT Capital.

Software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform Spry Therapeutics raised \$15 million led by Flourish Ventures, Together Fund and Fidelity's Eight Roads

and F-prime Capital.

Cross-border speciality chemical manufacturing platform Mstack raised \$40 million in its Series A funding round co-led by Lightspeed and Alpha-wave along with a debt from HSBC Innovation Banking.

Mstack is now planning to make inroads into agrochemicals and pharmaceuticals. With the fresh proceeds, the firm will also hire talents across functions including R&D.

Meanwhile, digital adoption platform (DAP) Whatfix introduced a \$58 million liquidity programme for its employees and investors, marking the company's fourth buyback of employee stock options (ESOPs).

This week, Bengaluru-

based startups led with 11 deals followed by Delhi-NCR, Mumbai and Pune.

Last week, 21 startups in India raised nearly \$93 million in funding across 16 deals, which included four growth-stage deals and 12 early-stage fundings. It was a big drop from nearly \$461 million raised by 29 domestic startups in the previous week, which included 10 growth-stage deals.

In the third quarter (July-September), domestic startups raised more than \$4 billion, including several transactions over \$300 million and \$200 million, along with pre-IPO rounds. This included 85 growth and late-stage deals worth \$3.3 billion, along with 207 early-stage deals worth \$754.26 million.

# India, US working together to expand strategic technology partnership: Minister

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

India and the US are working together to expand the strategic technology partnership and connect scientists from both the countries to collaborate on emerging technologies such as AI and smart connected cities, the government has said.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said this while presenting the Indo-US Endowment awards to 17 winning teams, to work together primarily to develop AI-enabled tech and quantum technologies. Speaking at the US-India Science and Technology Endowment Fund (USISTEF) award function here, attended by US Ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti, Dr Singh said as a part of the US-India initiative on Critical and Emerg-



ing Technology (iCET), new implementing agreements have been executed between the science agencies to expand international collaboration in a range of areas to build a robust innovation ecosystem.

"The DST-National Science Foundation joint call in the areas of computer and information science

and engineering, cyber-physical systems and secure and trustworthy cyberspace has resulted in the award of 11 high pitch proposals," the minister informed. India and the US are at the pivotal point with the technologies shaping up for the future like artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing,

blockchain, green energy and quantum computing, getting ready to make one of the biggest technology transformations of the century.

In the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government "is creating an enabling innovation ecosystem with recent reforms like design linked incentives for semiconductors, PLI schemes for automobiles, drone policy and removing barriers through initiatives like faceless assessment," said Dr Singh. From 350 startups in 2014, the number swelled to over 1,40,000 startups. India is also home to over 110 unicorns where 23 of them emerged only last year, which is a sign of India's rapid upward ride on the STI (science, technology and innovation) ladder, the minister informed.

# Hyundai, Kia eye record EV sales of 1 lakh units in US this year

AGENCIES  
SEOUL, OCT 13

Hyundai Motor and its affiliate Kia are expected to see their combined sales of electric vehicles (EVs) surpass 100,000 units this month, according to the companies' data on Sunday.

Hyundai and Kia sold a combined 91,348 units of EVs through September this year, up 30.3 percent from the same period last year, according to the companies.

Hyundai's EV sales rose 4.5 per cent on-year to 48,297 units in the January-September period, while Kia saw its sales soar 80.3 per cent to 43,051 units, reports Yonhap news agency.

Market watchers say combined EV sales of the two carmakers will likely



hit 100,000 units in October and reach 120,000 units for the whole of this year.

Kia has also completed building Hyundai Motor Group's first manufacturing facility dedicated solely to electric vehicles, which boasts an annual capacity of producing 150,000 units.

The automaker invested 401.6 billion won

(\$304.2 million) in the 60,000 square-meter facility, completely rebuilding it on an existing plant site to facilitate the company's next-generation vehicle production.

Mass production of the EV3, the brand's compact all-electric SUV, began in the first half of this year. In the first half of 2025, Kia plans to introduce the EV4, the brand's upcoming

mid-sized electric sedan.

Meanwhile, Hyundai Motor's sales fell 3.7 per cent last month from a year earlier on weak overseas demand. Hyundai Motor sold 343,824 vehicles in September, down from 357,133 units a year earlier.

Domestic sales rose 3.5 per cent to 55,805 units from 53,911 during the cited period, while overseas sales declined 5 per cent to 288,019 from 303,222.

Hyundai said it will flexibly respond to changes in global markets by adjusting production and sales systems depending on local conditions. From January to September, its sales declined 1.6 percent to 3,075,861 autos from 3,127,036 during the same period last year.

# PM Gati Shakti scheme cut logistics cost, enabled better service delivery: Piyush Goyal

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

The PM Gati Shakti initiative has heralded a paradigm shift in how India plans and implements big-ticket infrastructure projects, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Saturday.

In his remarks on the occasion of the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan (NMP) for multi-modal connectivity, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 13, 2021, completing three

years, the minister said the scheme has reduced logistics costs and enabled better service delivery.

"By integrating data from multiple Ministries and States, we have created a more efficient, transparent, and outcome-driven system. The impact is visible in faster project execution, lower logistics costs, and better services reaching every corner of the country," he said the minister.

According to Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT),

Amardeep Singh Bhatia, the NMP has accelerated the infrastructure planning and development process, leveraging geospatial technology and the government approach.

"During the last three years, more than 44 Central ministries and 36 states and UTs have been onboarded, their data layers have been integrated and are provided with their own geospatial planning portal," Bhatia added.

The PM Gati Shakti scheme has successfully laid the groundwork for

seamless, multi-modal connectivity, and accelerated economic growth. It has redefined how India plans and executes large-scale infrastructure projects.

"Extending the PM Gati Shakti initiative to the social sector ministries, the focus is on increasing the usage of the PM Gati Shakti scheme for social development, identifying social gaps (schools, hospitals, anganwadis), using, and developing applications and planning tools for capturing data," the Ministry of Commerce

and Industry said.

Minister Goyal further stated that this has enabled better infrastructure planning in essential areas such as primary healthcare, education, postal services, and tribal development, ensuring that even remote and underserved areas are part of India's infrastructure growth story.

All 36 states/UTs have developed the PM Gati Shakti State Master Plan (SMP) portals. Over 533 projects have been mapped by states/UTs on the PM Gati Shakti portal.

# Zypp Electric's losses surge 2.2 times to Rs 91 crore in FY24

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

Tech-enabled electric vehicle (EV) company Zypp Electric saw its losses increase 2.2 times to Rs 91 crore in FY24, up from Rs 40 crore in the previous fiscal.

The EV-as-a-service platform saw its EBITDA margin stood at 19.47 per cent in negative, as per its FY24 financials.

Zypp Electric's total expenditure went up 2.6 times to Rs 394 crore in FY24, compared to Rs 152 crore in FY23.

The EV firm reported operational revenue at Rs 293 crore in the last fiscal, up from Rs 109 crore in FY23. Total revenue crossed Rs 300 crore during the fiscal year.

Founded in 2017, Zypp Electric claims to have around 22,000 active vehicles in its fleet. Income from vehicle rentals and delivery services was the primary revenue source for the EV firm in FY24.

In May this year, Zypp Electric raised \$15 million to expand the company's fleet from 21,000 to

2,00,000 electric scooters and domestic operations to 15 cities across the country by 2026. The round was led by Japanese major ENEOS, along with participation from existing investors 9unicorns, IAN fund and venture catalysts, among others.

In FY23-24, Zypp Electric registered a revenue of Rs 325 crore and recently launched operations in Mumbai and Hyderabad. The company has done more than 50 million shipment deliveries via electric vehicles from January 2023 to March 2024.

# Market Outlook: Q2 results, FIIs and CPI data key factors for next week

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI, OCT 13

The market outlook for next week will be guided by the major domestic and global economic data such as India WPI Inflation (YoY) (Sep), India CPI (YoY) (Sep), India Bank Loan Growth and Deposit Growth, Indian companies Q2 results and major updates from the US, China and Japan.

The second quarter results season has started. This week will feature numerous earnings reports that could lead to stock- and sector-specific

movements. Besides, fluctuations in crude oil price, movement of the dollar index and activities of foreign institutional investors (FIIs) can also affect market movements.

The past week saw a period of consolidation following a steep decline from all-time highs in the Nifty and Sensex. The week began with a dip, but the markets recovered from their lower levels.

While foreign institutional investors (FIIs) continued selling, the pace moderated somewhat. FIIs sold approxi-

mately Rs 28,000 crore, but domestic institutional investors (DIIs) offset this with purchases exceeding Rs 31,000 crore.

Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investmart said: "On a technical basis, the Nifty has formed a near-term bottom around the 24,750 level. It needs to surpass resistance levels at 25,330 and 25,500 to regain momentum.

A move below 24,750 could trigger additional selling pressure towards 24,440 and 24,100."

Palka Arora Chopra, Director of Master Capital

Services said, "Bank Nifty continues to trade within a parallel channel and remains above the weekly 21 EMA, indicating a positive trend. Despite facing pressure at higher levels, the index managed to close above the channel. Support was currently at 50,600 with a potential fall towards 50,000 if breached.

Resistance is noted at 51,700 and a breakout above this level could lead to 52,200. The market is likely to remain sideways in the coming week, suggesting a buy-on-dips strategy."

# USISPF's 'India Leadership Summit 2024' to deepen economic, tech ties

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

In a bid to enhance bilateral trade, supply chains, semiconductor investment, AI and next-gen technologies, the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) is set to host its annual 'India Leadership Summit 2024' in the national capital on Monday (October 14).

The summit follows on the heels of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's successful recent visit to the US for the Quad Leaders' Summit and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The day-long summit

also aims to bolster defence ties, promote clean energy and secure a free and open Indo-Pacific.

"This is India's century and I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead as we work closely with Indian leaders to build a shared and prosperous future for both nations," said John Chambers, Chairman of USISPF.

The summit offers a vital platform to strengthen the dynamic strategic partnership between Washington and New Delhi.

According to a USISPF statement, the summit will feature sessions with

prominent leaders including Union Ministers Piyush Goyal, Dharmendra Pradhan and Jyotiraditya Scindia, among other key officials.

"This summit provides a unique platform for industry and government leaders from both countries to come together for meaningful dialogue.

Our aim is to deepen economic ties and explore collaborative solutions that will strengthen the strategic partnership between Washington and New Delhi," said Mukesh Aghi, President and CEO of USISPF.

The summit will delve into strategies for fortifying India's manufacturing economy, as Washington and New Delhi collaborate on rebuilding and realigning global supply chains.

"The partnership between the United States and India has never been stronger. As two of the world's leading democracies, we have the unique opportunity to co-create the next generation of technologies and fortify our bilateral ties across critical sectors such as digital transformation, clean energy, and defence," said Chambers.



# Women's T20 WC: Renuka, Deepti restrict Australia to 151/8 in crucial encounter

AGENCIES  
SHARJAH, OCT 13

Renuka Singh and Deepti Sharma scalped two wickets each to restrict Australia to 151/8 in a must-win clash in the Women's T20 World Cup at Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Sunday.

India suffered a setback before the start of play as Asha Sobhana suffered a knee injury during the warm-up on the sidelines of the toss. Radha Yadav replaced her in the playing 11 after Australia's captain agreed to match referee's request for a late change.

The other change in India's side was Pooja Vastrakar, who replaced S. Sanjana while Australia were without their regular captain Alyssa Healy (injured) and Tayla Vlaeminck (ruled out), who were replaced by Grace

Harris and Darcie Brown. Opting to bat first, Australia did not get the desired start in the powerplay as Renuka Singh, Shreyanka Patil and Pooja Vastrakar bowled tight lengths on slow and low Sharjah wicket.

Grace Harris started Australia's scoring with a four towards point off Renuka on the second ball of the innings. Harmanpreet introduced Shreyanka in the second over and the move worked as bowled four dot balls to Beth Mooney while giving just two runs.

In the next over, Mooney, who was under pressure, tried to flex her arms but only found Radha towards the backward point. On the next ball, Renuka trapped Georgia Wareham in front of the wickets to clinch her second scalp on suc-



cessive balls. Stand-in captain Tahlia McGrath joined Grace in the middle.

Pooja bowled the fourth over of the innings and gave six runs off it before Renuka returned for her third over in the powerplay.

In the final over of the field restriction, Grace struck Shreyanka for four on the first ball but the all-rounder finished well with just seven off it. Australia were 37/2 after 6 overs.

Arundhati Reddy came into attack for the seventh over and kept the pressure on Australian batters. However, Tahlia and Grace hit fours off Pooja in the next over to accumulate 10 from it.

Deepti Sharma started with a tight over to restrict Australia to 65/2 at the halfway mark. Meanwhile, Tahlia became the fastest Australian women's player to complete 1000 T20I runs. He completed

the feat in 37 innings, one short of Meg Lanning.

In the 11th over, Renuka returned to attack and completed her quota of four overs with figures of 2-24. The Australia duo stitched a 62-run crucial partnership for the third wicket before Radha broke the stand.

Harmanpreet Kaur dropped Tahlia for 31 off Radha at extra-cover in the 12th over before she finally got her out two balls later in the same over. Ellyse Perry came in to bat at No. 5 as Australia were 80/3 after 12 overs.

Grace switched gears in the 13th over and hit two fours off Arundhati to add 11 from the over. Deepti finally gave some respite to India as she removed Grace for 40 in the 14th over. Ashleigh Gardner had a very short stint in the middle as Pooja sent

her back to the pavilion in the 15th over.

Phoebe Litchfield and Ellyse kept the scoreboard ticking in the final overs. Ellyse took charge on her shoulders and struck Shreyanka for a four and six on consecutive balls to add 14 from the 16th over. With Litchfield and Ellyse in the middle, Australia added 17 runs in the next two overs before Deepti removed the latter for 32 off 23 including two fours and a six in the penultimate over.

Australia lost two more wickets in the final over bowled by Shreyanka before Litchfield finished the innings with a six to post 151/8 in 20 overs.

Brief scores: Australia 151/8 in 20 overs (Grace Harris 40, Tahlia McGrath 32, Ellyse Perry 32; Renuka Singh 2-24, Deepti Sharma 2-28) against India.

## After stunning ton in Hyderabad, Samson lauds Indian team management for role clarity

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

After smashing a stunning 111 off 47 in a batting masterclass to give India a 3-0 T20I series victory over Bangladesh, India wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson lauded the team management for giving him the desired role clarity in advance. At the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad, Samson smashed 11 fours and eight sixes at a strike rate of 236.17 to become the first Indian wicketkeeper-batter to hit a hundred in men's T20Is for India. Samson, who had a lean run before the century in Hyderabad, including bagging two ducks in Sri Lanka, now holds the record for second fastest T20I century by an Indian batter after Rohit Sharma.

"When you are playing for the country and you fail in a couple of games,

you know pressure is there. To be honest, pressure was there. I wanted to perform. I wanted to show what I was capable of. The captain (Suryakumar Yadav) and the coach (Gautam Gambhir) kept telling me, 'We know what type of talent you have, and we back you, no matter what'.

"Not only in words but also in action. I was a bit doubtful after a couple of ducks in Sri Lanka if I would get a chance in the next series. But they backed me in this series. The leadership group - Surya, Gautam bhai and (assistant coach) Abhishek Nayar - told me three weeks before this series that I would be opening the innings.

"That gave me time for proper preparation. I went to the RR (Rajasthan Royals) academy and faced lots and lots of new-ball bowlers.

## India clinches double podium as Iran tops AEF Cup CSIY-B overall standings

AGENCIES  
BANGALORE, OCT 13

India celebrated a double podium finish in the overall standings at the AEF Cup CSIY-B, held at Surge Stable in Bangalore. Indian riders Surya Aditya and Avik Bhatia secured the silver and bronze medals, respectively while Iran's Yazdan Mollaafzal took the top spot, displaying consistency and precision across both rounds.

Surya Aditya, who had earlier secured the silver medal in Round 1 on Saturday, maintained his strong form to claim the overall silver in the competition. Meanwhile, the 16-year-old Avik Bhatia made an outstanding comeback after finishing 8th in Round 1 by grabbing silver in Round 2. His impressive performance in Round 2 helped him secure the bronze in the overall standings. Avik completed a clean jumping run in 86.43 seconds, which was faster than



Iran's Yazdan Mollaafzal, but penalties incurred for touching obstacles during the jump-off affected his final placement.

On Day 2, Avik initially led the jumping event but it was Yazdan Mollaafzal who ultimately claimed the gold medal with a flawless, penalty-free performance in the jump-off, clocking in at 60.32 seconds. Cambodian rider Menglong Rinda completed the podium in Round 2, finishing the course in 79.58 seconds with 4 penalty points.

The final overall standings saw Surya Aditya and

Avik Bhatia secure second and third place, respectively, marking a proud achievement for India.

"This double podium finish is great news for Indian equestrians. Both Surya Aditya and Avik Bhatia demonstrated exceptional determination and skill while competing against top international and experienced riders. Their achievements reflect the promising future of Indian equestrian sports, and we are confident that they will continue to excel with bold and technically sound performances," said Colonel Jaiveer Singh, Sec-

retary of the Equestrian Federation of India.

Out of the 12 riders who began the competition, 11 participated in Round 2 as Kuwait's Madhy A A H Alkhamis withdrew from the event. Riders from Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and Chinese Taipei - Muhammad Khan Niazi, Taisiya Lokteva, and Asato Amami - were eliminated over the two days for not completing their respective rounds.

Hong Kong's Fabiola Chong and Thailand's Papungkorn Pabbannam placed fifth and sixth, respectively, with Myanmar's Kyaw Wana Aung and Malaysia's Muhammad Nazirul Amsyar following closely behind in the overall rankings.

The AEF Cup CSIY-B, returning to India after 14 years, featured top riders from 11 nations showcasing their skills at Bengaluru's state-of-the-art Surge Stable from October 11 to 13.

## Washington Sundar bags 'Fielder of the Series' medal ahead of Hardik Pandya

AGENCIES  
HYDERABAD, OCT 13

India all-rounder Washington Sundar pipped Hardik Pandya and Riyan Parag to win the "Impact Fielder of the Series" award following Bangladesh's whitewash with a massive 133-run win at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium on Saturday.

After a spectacular maiden T20I century by Sanju Samson (111 off 47 balls) and captain Suryakumar Yadav's scintillating 75 took India to a record-breaking 297/6, their highest-ever total in T20Is, leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi and other bowlers chipped in to ensure Bangladesh were restricted to 164/7 as India complete the 3-0 series sweep.

Fielding coach T Dilip nominated Pandya, Parag and Sundar for the best fielder medal. Sundar was adjudged winner for his promising fielding efforts throughout the series and



Jitesh Sharma handed him the winner's medal.

"Someone whose precision on the boundary line to judge those catches... saving those five runs in Delhi. Also, he's been exceptional when it comes to anticipation and cutting those angles in

the field. This time I have seen a different Washington Sundar," the fielding coach said, "When intent meets energy, the eagerness to convert every ball into opportunity increases and I thought we're phenomenal in that aspect, especially in the series. Whether we're cutting angles or the unique challenges every ground possesses, our adaptability and anticipation were exceptional. Well done to everyone. This kind of aggressive approach is something that matters to us."

group, saying, "Someone who has been very proactive, I would say, in this series, he was like a Formula 1 car in top gear."

Dilip further praised Parag saying, "When it comes to cutting angles and saving runs, he makes catches look so simple. I love the way he feels bad when he couldn't take that one per cent chance. Hats off to your composure at which you took those catches." Reflecting on the series win, the fielding coach said, "When intent meets energy, the eagerness to convert every ball into opportunity increases and I thought we're phenomenal in that aspect, especially in the series. Whether we're cutting angles or the unique challenges every ground possesses, our adaptability and anticipation were exceptional. Well done to everyone. This kind of aggressive approach is something that matters to us."

## HIL Player Auction: Harmanpreet, Abhishek, Hardik shine on Day 1

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

The Hockey India League (HIL) player auction 2024/25 got underway in thrilling fashion, with all eight franchises spending heavily to acquire Indian men's team core players. Gurjant Singh (Rs 19 lakh) was the first buy while star drag-flicker and Indian captain Harmanpreet Singh (Rs 78 lakh) emerged as the costliest buy in the first half. Both players were acquired by Soorma Hockey Club, owned by JSW Sports.

Abhishek became the second-most expensive buy, acquired by Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers for Rs 72 lakh while Hardik Singh went to UP Rudras for Rs 70 lakh. Other notable buys from the first lot included Amit Rohidas (for Rs 48 lakh to Tamil Nadu Dragons), Jugraj Singh (for Rs 48 lakh to Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers), and Sumit (for Rs 46 lakh to Hyderabad Toofans).

Meanwhile, among the overseas goalkeepers, Ireland's David Harte was the top buy, with Tamil Nadu Dragons winning the bid for Rs 32 lakh. Germany's Jean-Paul Danneberg (for Rs 27 lakh to Hyderabad Toofans), the Netherlands' Pirmin Blaak (for Rs 25 lakh to Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers), and Belgium's Vincent Vanasch (for Rs 23 lakh to Soorma Hockey Club) were also acquired. Indian goalkeepers Suraj Karkera was acquired for Rs 22 lakh by Team Gonasika, and Pawan for Rs 15 lakh by Delhi SG Pipers.

Full List of players sold so far on Hockey India League Auction Day 1:

Gurjant Singh (Soorma Hockey Club, 19 lakh), Mandeep Singh (Team Gonasika, 25 lakh), Manpreet Singh (Team



Gonasika, 42 lakh), Sukhjeet Singh (Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers, 42 lakh), Amit Rohidas (Tamil Nadu Dragons, 48 lakh), Nilakanta Sharma (Hyderabad Toofans, 34 lakh), Sanjay (Kalinga Lancers, 38 lakh), Lalit Kumar Upadhyay (UP Rudras, 28 lakh), Vivek Sagar Prasad (Soorma Hockey Club, 40 lakh), Hardik Singh (UP Rudras, 70 lakh), Harmanpreet Singh (Soorma Hockey Club, 78 lakh), Sumit (Hyderabad Toofans, 46 lakh), Abhishek (Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers, 72 lakh), Jugraj Singh (Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers, 48 lakh), Krishan B Pathak (Kalinga Lancers, 32 lakh), Shamsher Singh (Delhi SG Pipers, 42 lakh), Jarmanpreet Singh (Delhi SG Pipers, 40 lakh), Rajkumar Pal (Delhi SG Pipers, 40 lakh), David Harte (Tamil Nadu Dragons, 32 lakh), Jean-Paul Danneberg (Hyderabad Toofans, 27 lakh), Oliver Payne (Team Gonasika, 15 lakh), Pirmin Blaak (Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers, 25 lakh), Tomàs Santiago (Delhi SG Pipers, 10 lakh), Vincent Vanasch (Soorma Hockey Club, 23 lakh), Suraj Karkera (Team Gonasika, 22 lakh), and Pawan (Delhi SG Pipers, 15 lakh).

## ISSF president hails India's role in growth of sport shooting

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, OCT 13

The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) president Luciano Rossi has hailed India's increasing contribution to the development and growing popularity of shooting around the world. Rossi was addressing members of the media during a press conference, ahead of the ISSF World Cup Final Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun in New Delhi, competitions for which begin here at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range from October 15.

Present alongside was Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo, president of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI).

"I would like to congratulate India for their stellar performance at the recently concluded Junior World Championship in Peru. I would also like to inform that we at ISSF will support India's application to host the Junior World Cup in 2025 and other future international events as and when we are approached by NRAI. India continues to be a significant force in the world of shooting not only with its talented athletes but also through its commitment to expanding the sport's infrastructure



and reach," said the ISSF president.

"Hosting big ticket events like the World Cup Final is testament to the efforts put in by everyone involved in the sport. The country's achievements at the Olympics and other international events have inspired upcoming shooters and its investment in developing grassroots programs and world-class facilities is setting an example for others to follow. It is not a surprise that India is a regular stop today in the international ISSF calendar."

Also sharing his thoughts was Singh Deo, who said, "India's growing stature in shooting, has been a result of a focused and collaborative effort by all stakeholders who are creating a strong ecosystem, from grassroots programs to elite training facilities. Hosting events

like the ISSF World Cup Final demonstrates India's ability to elevate shooting sport globally.

We are committed to bringing world events on a regular basis, not only to help boost the confidence of the Indian team, but also help upcoming generations be inspired by watching their favourite stars in live action in front of them."

There are four finals lined up on each of the three competition days in this traditional ISSF season-ending showdown between the best in the world. Due to host country norms, a minimum of two Indian shooters will be in action in each of the 12 individual Olympic events on the roster.

"Shooting sport has been witnessing a huge rise in popularity and passion amongst the youth, women and specially-

abled athletes in the country which can be gauged by the laurels which have been achieved at the Olympics, Paralympics and continental championships. We wish all the participants the very best and immensely thank the ISSF and the government of India for all their support in hosting and organising the ISSF World Cup Final in New Delhi!"

"We're excited to be in India for the ISSF World Cup Final, one of the most dedicated shooting sport nations in the world," said Luciano Rossi. "After a successful season for our athletes and a wonderful Olympic Games in Paris, this is the perfect opportunity for all to finish the season on a high, he added.

The ISSF president also underscored India's remarkable rise as a powerhouse in sport shooting, both in terms of athlete success and the country's contributions to promoting the sport.

Three events, the men's 10m Air Pistol, the men's Trap and the women's 25m Pistol will in fact see all three Paris medallists in the event compete for the top prize of 5000 euros. All defending champions in each of the 12 events from the previous year in Doha will also be there to defend their titles.

The world's top six ath-



## Int'l Day for Disaster Risk Reduction Observed in Uri



JI NEWS SERVICE  
BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 13

An informative program was organized at the Government Degree College Uri to mark the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction. The event, presided over by Sub-Divisional Magistrate Uri, Javid Ahmad Rather, aimed at raising awareness about disaster risks, reduction strategies, and mitigation efforts in the region.

The program was attended by a wide array of participants, including government officials, students, civil society members, lumberdars, chowkidars, personnel from the Fire and Emergency Department, volunteers from the State Disaster Response Force

(SDRF), and Civil Defence. Their participation highlighted the importance of collective responsibility in disaster preparedness.

In his address, Sub Divisional Magistrate, Uri emphasized the need for proactive measures in disaster risk management and the critical role of education in building resilient communities. He announced that similar awareness programs would be conducted across educational institutions to further engage students in disaster preparedness efforts.

Expert speakers shed light on various aspects of disaster risk and management, with a special focus on the region's vulnerability to both natural and man-made disasters. They highlighted the sig-

nificance of preemptive measures, early warning systems, and community-level readiness to minimize damage and loss of life during disasters.

The event also included a practical demonstration, where participants were guided through rescue techniques and disaster response strategies. A table-top exercise further illustrated the importance of coordinated response efforts in crisis situations.

The program was widely appreciated for its focus on community safety and for providing practical insights into disaster management. Participants left the event better informed and prepared to tackle potential disasters in their respective roles.

## Principal Secretary inaugurates 3 day International Art Exhibition at Kala Kendra



JI NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, OCTOBER 13

Principal Secretary Culture and School Education, Suresh Kumar Gupta, today inaugurated a three day International Art Exhibition cum Workshop titled 'Valley City' at the GR Santosh Gallery, Kala Kendra.

The event, organized by Kala Kendra Society in collaboration with Art Express Gujarat, witnessed participation from dignitaries, artists and art lovers from across the globe.

In his address, Principal Secretary Suresh Kumar Gupta stressed that the event serves not just as an exhibition but also as a dynamic platform for interaction between local artists and 40 visual art experts from across

India. He underscored the importance of art in education, noting that the workshop sessions would explore how visual arts foster cultural understanding and empathy.

Encouraging local youth, he announced that the workshop is open free of charge for art students from Jammu and Kashmir, providing them with a unique learning opportunity. Gupta further assured that Kala Kendra will be developed into a vibrant hub of art and appreciated the artists' contributions to the exhibition.

Yudvir Sethi and Priya Sethi, also spoke on the occasion.

Dr. Babita Hada, curator of the exhibition and representative of Art Express Gujarat, mentioned that 50 artists from across

India are participating in this unique event.

The event also saw speeches from prominent artists like K K Gandhi, Richa Gupta, and Raj Kumar Chouhan, who shared their insights and praised the initiative.

The 'Valley City' art exhibition cum workshop will continue for the next two days.

Earlier, Dr. Javaid Rahi, Secretary Kala Kendra Society, highlighted that the exhibition is featuring 150 artworks by 90 artists representing all states and union territories of India. The exhibition's key attraction included contributions from artists hailing from 10 different countries, including Egypt, Venezuela, Argentina, Peru, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Taiwan, Nepal, and Poland.

## 3 day workshop 'Valley Urocon 2/2024' concludes at Srinagar

### 31 critical interventional procedures conducted by National, international, Local Health Experts during the workshop

JI NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 13

The three day workshop 'Valley Urocon 2/2024' organised by Department of Urology and Renal Transplant Centre, Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar concluded today with resolve to involve latest technology and more patient oriented commitment.

The workshop showcasing GMC Srinagar's leadership in advancing urological care and education in the region, was a major success wherein 31 critical interventional procedures were conducted by National, international and local health experts.

The three day workshop focussed on advanced minimally invasive and endo-urological techniques for addressing complex urological conditions. Expert faculty from premier institutions like AIIMS, AINU, PGI, and SMS Jaipur guided the event, during which 31 challenging urological procedures were successfully performed using state-of-the-art methods.

The Valley Urocon 2/2024 also served as an exceptional platform for both theoretical learning and practical experience, enabling participants to deepen their understanding of the latest developments in urology. The hands-on nature of the workshop ensured that attendees could refine their skills and stay abreast of best practices in the field.

The workshop was attended by reputed luminaries including Prof Amlesh Seth, Prof Rajeev Kumar, Dr Rishi Nayyar from AIIMS, Prof PN Dogra AIIMS, Prof Anoop Kumar from Safdar Jung Hospital, Prof Ganesh



Gopal Krishna from CME Vellore, Prof Mallika C Arjuna, Dr Syed Gouse AINU Hyderabad, Prof Rajeev Sood VC Baba Farid University Punjab, Prof Shailesh Raina from Jaslok hospital, Prof Lalit Shah President USI, Prof Kander parikh, Dr Abhishek Singh from Ahmedabad, Prof Shivam, Prof Amilal bhat from SMS Jaipur, Prof Swapon sood from Jallander, Prof Ashok Sharma, Prof Anil Alliance from Rajasthan, Prof S K Paul from Delhi, Prof Sudhir Rawal Rajeev Gandhi from Delhi, Prof Baldev Singh Allok Punjab Prof SP Yadav Meerut, Prof Anil Varbeshy, Dr

Ashish saini and Dr Sanjay Pandey from Mumbai.

The three day workshop was also attended by Prof Muneer Khan, Prof Saleem Wani, Prof Arif Hamid, Prof Elias sharma, Dr Rahul gupta, Dr Naveed khan, Dr Javeed Magray, Dr Yasir Qadri, Dr Tanveer Iqbal and Prof Syed Sajjad Nazir, all leaders in the field of Urology from Jammu and Kashmir.

The three day workshop brought together health experts from across the country to deliberate on various issues in the field and to discuss various developments in the field besides sharing thoughts, experiences, best prac-

tices and success stories.

The inaugural function was graced by Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, who praised GMC Srinagar and its Urology department for organising UROCON 2/2024, a conference of international standard and impressed upon the participants for use of latest technology in the field and upgradation of skills.

He also called for organising such programs regularly as they provide a stage for experience exchange, interaction and knowledge enhancement.

Principal / Dean GMC Srinagar and Chief patron

of the conference, Dr. Iffat Hassan complimented the Department of Urology for its commitment towards delivering cutting-edge technology and advanced care to patients. She underscored GMC Srinagar's dedication for remaining at the forefront of medical innovation for the benefit of local population.

HOD Urology GMC Srinagar and Patron UROCON 2- 2024, Dr. Syed Sajjad Nazir, expressed pride in the successful execution of the workshop, highlighting that this was the first time such a high volume of cases had been performed using advanced minimally invasive techniques.

He emphasized the critical role of incorporating advanced technology in improving patient outcomes and elevating the standard of care. He expressed gratitude to Principal GMC for tremendous logistic support provided for the conference. He also appreciated the role of Administrator Associated Hospitals Mohammad Ashraf Hakak during conduct of workshop.

Dean Research AIIMS New Delhi, Prof Dr Koushal Verma, in his address, complimented GMC Srinagar for organising such a conference.

The major procedures done during the workshop included Lap Radical cystectomy with extra corporeal ileal conduit, lap partial Nephrectomy, Lap Radical Nephrectomy, Lap Ureteric rein plantation, RIRS, Sacral Neuro modulation, PCNL, Holey, Tholep, Rezum, Lap Pyeloplasties, Hypospadias and urethral stricture repair.

Former HOD Urology SKIMS, Prof Baldev Singh Wazir was awarded life time achievement award during the conference.

## DC Poonch inspects progress of work on Buzliaz Mandi Phagla Road

JI NEWS SERVICE  
POONCH, OCTOBER 13

Deputy Commissioner, Vikas Kundal today inspected the progress of work on Buzliaz Mandi Phagla road in Poonch.

Executive Engineer PMGSY gave a detailed overview of the work in execution of the project. The Deputy Commissioner was apprised that maximum work on 63 km road has been done and rest will be completed within stipulated time frame.

The Deputy Commissioner instructed that the project should be executed strictly in accordance with the specified guide-



lines upholding highest standards of engineering.

The DC asked the PMGSY authorities to

complete the work at a faster pace so that general public can avail benefit of developmental activities and increase road connectivity to the far flung areas of the district. He further directed for regular monitoring of the project's progress with particular emphasis on the quality of work.

Executive Engineer PMGSY, along with other officials, accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the inspection.

## Regularization of Bastis/Colonies should be first priority of Coalition Govt: Tony

JI NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, OCTOBER 13

Taranjit Singh Tony, DDC Member Suchetgarh and senior Congress leader, has strongly advocated for the immediate regularization of bastis and colonies in Jammu and Kashmir.

In a statement issued here today, the senior Congress leader asserted that the first priority of the upcoming coalition government led by Omar Abdullah, would be the upcoming Chief Minister, should be to address the long-standing issue of irregular colonies like Kullian, Chatha, Valmiki Basti, Bahu Fort, Bathindi, and

several others, which have been subjected to harassment under the current administration.

He criticized the selective demolition policy adopted by the LG administration, which he described as a case of "pick and choose" where certain establishments, including those belonging to BJP leaders, were spared, while others were unfairly targeted like MG Hector Showroom. He cited an instance where bulldozers were brought to halt after it was revealed that a BJP leader owned certain properties in the same locality.

"The LG adminis-



tration's actions have harassed the residents of these colonies by demolishing their houses and business establishments, even though the land legally belongs to others. Departments like the JDA, Municipality, and Forest Department have forcibly taken over people's land,

ignoring clear revenue records showing rightful ownership," Tony said.

Highlighting the fear instilled in the people by the LG administration, Tony revealed that residents have been threatened with further demolitions if they seek legal recourse. "The administration has been intimidating people, warning them not to approach the courts, or their entire neighborhoods would be bulldozed. This is a grave injustice, and the government must act as a guardian, resolving the issue based on the merit of law," he added.

Tony reiterated his commitment to fighting for the

rights of the people and ensuring that their homes and livelihoods are protected from unjust actions. He called on the coalition government to address these critical issues as soon as it comes to power.

The senior Congress leader urged Omar Abdullah and the incoming government to regularize these colonies without delay and put an end to the harassment of local residents. He also called for an immediate inquiry into the land ownership cases, asserting that the titles should be honored, and the administration must stop using force against innocent people.