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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:

- Severe and continuous headache
- Joint and muscle pain
- Persistent vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Diarrhoea
- Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool, urine or vomit
- Redness

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

Focus on breaking cycle of violence, dismantling terror ecosystem in J&K: Northern Army Commander

J1NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCT 26

The Northern Army Commander, Lieutenant General M.V. Suchindra Kumar, Friday said that the Army is focusing on "breaking the cycle of violence and dismantling the terror ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir" while the army was also empowering youth and women as well.

He also said that recruitment in militancy rank is in single digits while 720 terrorists were neutralized by security forces in last 5 years, which frustrates adversary.

"In the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, our efforts are concentrating on breaking the cycle of violence and dismantling the terror ecosystem, empowering youth and women, facilitating education, promoting sports and reviving the rich historical and cultural legacy. The core of this strategy is to strengthen the relationship amongst the citizens and the soldiers while encouraging nationalist and mainstream narratives, particularly amongst the youth," Lt Gen Kumar said at Northern

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Baramulla attack cowardly, aimed at disrupting peace, stability in Kashmir: Army

J1NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 25

The army Friday said that the attack on its column at Bothapathri, Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district was a "cowardly" attempt aimed at disrupting peace and stability in Kashmir.

Defence spokesman in Srinagar in a statement to news agency, said that Pakistani terrorists, with a view to disrupt peace and stability in Kashmir, cowardly targeted an Army column in general area Butapathri, Baramulla which was ferrying soldiers and local porters.

"On being fired upon, the alert troops swiftly and resolutely retaliated the fire, forcing the terrorists to retreat leaving behind a weapon and rucksack and escaped into dense foliage, exploiting a nala and fading light. Regrettably, two brave soldiers, one from Anantnag district and other from Sirsa

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GANGANGEER ATTACK

Security forces intensify operations as death toll rises to five



J1NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 25

In the wake of a deadly terror attack on army personnel in the Botapathri area of Baramulla district, security forces have launched a major operation,

deploying drones and helicopters to track down the attackers.

According to the news agency, the incident, which took place late Thursday evening, claimed the lives of two soldiers and two porters

initially, with another soldier succumbing to injuries on Friday afternoon, raising the death toll to five.

An official said that terrorists ambushed an army vehicle in Botapathri, leading to the deaths of soldiers Jeevan Singh and Kaiser Ahmed Shah, along with civilian porters Mush-taq Ahmed Chaudhary of Nowshera and Manzoor Ahmed Mir of Boniyar. The fifth casualty, a soldier who had been critically injured, passed away while receiving treatment.

Meanwhile, in response to the attack, security forces intensified

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War certain if attacks don't stop: Dr Farooq

J1NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 25

National Conference (NC) president Dr Farooq Abdullah on Monday Friday said that a war was certain in case the terrorism continues in Jammu and Kashmir. He also reacted to the demands of Darbar Move restoration and asked to wait and watch till the assembly commences in Jammu and Kashmir.

Talking to the reporters, Dr Farooq Abdullah as per the news agency said that those running the terrorism are expecting that Kashmir will unite with Pakistan, but the people here have decided in 1947 that they will not side with Pakistan.



He also said that those dreaming of uniting Kashmir with Pakistan are only bringing destruction here, if it continues, the war is certain, which will destroy everything, adding that they should look at what is happening in Ukraine, Palestine and other places.

He has also said that there is a need to find ways for bonhomie to end bloodshed in Kashmir, adding that

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'Botapathri-Gulmarg terror attack'

'Bacha Kaisa Hain?': Slain porter's last words to his family haunt Boniyar village

Why should someone be killed for striving to earn a livelihood, family asks, demands justice

J1NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 25

A wave of grief and despair swept over Nowshera, a small village in Baramulla's Boniyar, following the tragic death of Mushtaq Ahmed Chaudhary, a 27-year-old porter killed in the terror attack near Botapathri, Gulmarg recently.

The violence left a young child fatherless, an ailing father without his caregiver and a wife with

shattered dreams – all left grappling with a tragic and uncertain future.

Mushtaq, the sole breadwinner for his family, according to the news agency, was one of the five individuals, including three army personnel, who lost their lives in the attack. His loss has left his family in deep mourning, questioning the senseless violence that robbed them of their only support.

In his last phone call,

made around 1 pm on the day of the attack, Mushtaq asked his wife, "Bacha kaisa hain?" inquiring about their only child, a three-year-old son. "He called to check on our son and then said he would call back. But his phone went dead. It never rang again," his wife, struggling to contain her tears, shared.

Mushtaq's sudden death has left a devastating void for his

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LG lays wreath, pays homage to slain porters, soldiers



J1NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 25

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha laid wreath and paid homage to Rfn

Jeevan Singh, Rfn Kaiser Ahmad Shah, and Defence Porters Mushtaq Ahmad Chowdhary and Zahoor Ahmad Mir, who laid

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Terror attack fails to deter tourists from visiting Gulmarg hill resort

J1NEWS SERVICE
GULMARG, OCT 25

Undeterred by the terror attack that claimed the lives of two Army porters and two soldiers merely six kilometres from this famous hill resort, tourists flocked the

picturesque town of Gulmarg on Friday, even as a massive operation to hunt down the attackers was underway.

On Thursday evening, terrorists ambushed an Army vehicle in the Bota Pathri area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district when it was headed



for the Nagin post in the Affar-wat range. Another porter and a soldier were injured.

A day later, the famous ski resort, however, witnessed an uninterrupted influx of visitors. A resident of Tripura visiting the Valley for the first time, Ujjwal said he did not

feel any threat to his safety as police personnel and the administration are there to protect them.

He added that the warmth of Kashmir and its people is so special that travellers feel safe here.

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LG attends Opera on Lal Ded "Lal Ba Drayas", conceptualised by Vandana Daftari, at KU

J1NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 25

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Friday attended Opera on Lal Ded "Lal Ba Drayas", conceptualized by Vandana Daftari, Regional Director, The Art of Living, at Convocation Complex, University of Kashmir.

In his address, the Lt Governor lauded the efforts of Art of Living foundation, J&K Academy of Art Culture & Languages and Kashmir University to honor the life and teachings of great saint-poet. He said the Opera is an affirmation of the timeless



values taught by revered Lal Ded that continue to shape our society.

Recalling the invaluable contributions and profound impact of Lal Ded, in enriching spiritual and

cultural heritage of Kashmir and shaping the society, the Lt Governor said the message of Lal Ded is as relevant today as it was in her time, inspiring us to rise above religious and

societal divides and find strength in the shared experience of being human:

"Lal Ded's influence stretches far beyond the boundaries of time. Her life and teachings resonate as deeply today as they did in the 14th century. Her spiritual wisdom and poetic brilliance awakened an entire society to new possibilities," he said.

He urged the people to draw inspiration from the life of the revered mystic poet and imbibe wisdom from her teachings.

Lal Ded's story teaches us that no matter

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Ukraine, West Asia conflicts a matter of concern, India ready to contribute towards peace: PM Modi

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 25

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia are a matter of concern for both India and Germany, and New Delhi stands ready to make every possible contribution towards the restoration of peace.

In his address, during the visit of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, PM Modi said that India has always maintained that war cannot solve any problem at all.

He said that in this period of global tension,



conflict, and uncertainty, the strategic partnership between India and Germany has emerged as a strong anchor.

"The India-German partnership is not a transactional relationship; but a

transformational partnership between two capable and strong democracies—a partnership that is contributing to building a stable, secure, and sustainable future for the global community and humanity.

"We both agree on ensuring freedom of navigation and adherence to the rule of law in accordance with international laws in the Indo-Pacific region.

"We also agree that the Global Forums created in the twentieth century are not capable of addressing challenges of the twenty-first century. There is a need for reforms in various multilateral institutions, including the UN Security Council.

"India and Germany will continue to actively cooperate in this direction," the PM added.

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LG Manoj Sinha inspects key development projects in Srinagar

J1NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 25

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha conducted an inspection of several major infrastructure projects in Srinagar on Friday. During his visit, Lt Gov-

ernor, as per the news agency, was accompanied by other officials as he reviewed the progress and assessed the arrangements to ensure timely completion.

He was accompanied by senior officials, includ-



ing the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir V K Bidhuri, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Bilal Mohiud-din, Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) Dr Owais Ahmad, among others.

Speaking on the occa-

sion, the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, said the Qamarwari Cement Bridge project is expected to be ready by December this year. "While fully mechanized operations may

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CBI arrests revenue official in bribery case in Kathua

J1NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 25

The Central Bureau of Investigation has arrested a revenue official in Kathua district for demanding and accepting bribe of Rs 10,000. According to a statement, issued to news agency, a case was

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DIPR presents Cultural program to spread awareness on Dengue prevention



JJ NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCTOBER 25

A Cultural programme and painting competition on "Dengue" awareness was organized today by the Cultural Unit Department of Information and Public Relations Jammu at Government High school

Sagoon Jammu.

Artists of the Cultural Wing of Information Department Jammu presented Folk songs, theme songs and patriotic songs. Students of the school create paintings to spread awareness on Dengue prevention. Sonali, Harshita and Akshay got first,

second and third positions in the painting competition.

Chief guest and Incharge Headmaster of the school Virendra Sharma shared her views on the topic and appreciated the Cultural Unit of Department of Information and Public Relations for organizing such a meaningful program to aware the future of the nation.

Among others, staff members of the school, officials of the Information Department and a large number of audience witnessed the program.

The whole programme was conducted under the guidance of Joint Director Information Jammu, Atul Gupta and supervision of Cultural Officer Mukesh Kumar Sharma.

MP Baramulla-PC chairs review meetings in Pattan & Uri

Focuses on key development initiatives, interacts with staff & students of DPS Baramulla

JJ NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 25

The Member Parliament (MP) Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency (PC), Er. Abdul Rashid today chaired a comprehensive review meetings for Pattan and Uri Subdivisions, emphasizing key infrastructure, Healthcare and Public utility projects.

The meetings, attended by senior officers from various departments and engineering wings, addressed urgent local needs and aimed to expedite ongoing development efforts. In Pattan Subdivision, the MP led the meeting alongside the SDM and senior officials. He highlighted the need for a dedicated trauma hospital in Pattan, urging the government to expedite its establishment and keep it separate from Community Health Centre (CHC), for which he demanded



upgradation to Sub District Hospital.

Additionally, he advocated for the construction of a town hall in Pattan, the connection of Pattan town to the new bypass and improvements to the Hanjiweera to Magam road with upgraded drainage systems. He also discussed the beautification and widening of Pattan town,

aligning with requests from local traders to enhance the town's infrastructure.

Er Rashid further addressed the pressing issues of drinking water shortages with Jal Shakti department officials. They assured him that the majority of water supply projects would be completed within the current

financial year, providing much-needed relief to residents across the Pattan constituency.

Later, in Uri Subdivision, Er Rashid chaired a review meeting with senior officers and engineering departments. He directed the Rural Development Department (RDD) to identify land in four locations within the Subdivision to establish playgrounds for youth. He also sanctioned Rs. 3 lakhs from MPLAD funds for a library for students and civil service aspirants and requested that RDD to add a sanitary complex to this facility.

Power infrastructure needs were also a key focus, with Er Rashid advocating for upgrades

to receiving stations and an increase in Boniyar's transformer capacity from 6.3 MVA to 10 MVA.

To address environmental concerns in Niloosa and nearby areas affected by limestone mining, the MP instructed the District Mineral Officer to ask mining leaseholders to improve road conditions and control pollution in the area.

Er Rashid further directed the Roads & Buildings Department (R&B) to complete the Degree College Boniyar complex within two months, facilitating timely access to educational resources for local students. Concluding the visit, Er Rashid interacted with Management, Staff and students of Delhi Public School Baramulla. He praised the institution's commitment to education, noting its significant role in fostering academic excellence in the area.

Secretary J&K PSP visits boys Pahari hostel Anantnag



JJ NEWS SERVICE
ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 25

Secretary, J&K Advisory Board for Development of Pahari Speaking People, Sapna Kotwal, today conducted an extensive tour of Anantnag to review functioning of BoysPahari Hostel. During the tour, the Secretary expressed satisfaction over working of the hostel saying that all such facilities are being regularly monitored to ensure that these vital entities serve the best to the inmates there. She further asked the hostel management to do not compromise on qual-

ity of services including food and sanitation being extended to the inmates.

She noted that the students were not only intellectually capable but also well-versed in basic education, benefiting from a healthy and conducive environment. She encouraged adoption of innovative methods to make the students more dynamic.

The Secretary had an exclusive interaction with the students and staffs of the hostel who expressed gratitude to the government for the facilities being provided by the J&K PSP Board to them.

She said that the J&K

PSP is committed to fulfill demands of the staff working in these hostels and assured that their issues will be taken up with the administrative department for redressal on priority basis.

The Secretary distributed blankets among the students of the hostel.

The hostel staff provided a detailed insight into the hostel's functioning and other aspects. They informed that the students here are receiving healthy nutrition and have easy access to various recreational facilities being provided by the J&K PSP Board.

DDC Anantnag visits District Library, reviews its functioning



JJ NEWS SERVICE
ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 25

The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Anantnag, SF Hamid today visited the district library to review its functioning.

During the visit, the DDC took a holistic review of the functioning of the library. He interacted with the students and readers at the library and took feedback from them. He directed that facilities to improve the user experience at the library shall be enhanced. Among his

directions were expanding the book collection, enhancing internet access, increasing digital resources, and creating more inviting study spaces. He also appreciated and gave inputs to students studying for various competitive examinations.

The visit was aimed to reach out to the youth of the district ensuring that the government gives vital support for their development. The DC was accompanied by senior officers of the district administration.

Medicos imparted Training under IHIP-IDSP

JJ NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCTOBER 25

A one-day training program was organized today by the State Surveillance Unit of the Integrated Disease Surveillance Program (IDSP), under the aegis of the Directorate of Health Services Jammu, here at Gandhinagar Hospital.

The training was specifically designed for Medical Officers and doctors from Medical Colleges, with the objective of enhancing disease surveillance and improving the accuracy and timeliness of disease reporting across the IDSP network. Through this initiative, the Directorate of Health Services Jammu sought to strengthen the state's capacity to monitor and respond to public health challenges effectively.

The training was inaugurated by Director Health Services Jammu, Dr. Rakesh Magotra.

In his inaugural address, Dr. Magotra underscored the critical role of real-time disease surveillance in improving public health outcomes. He commended the IDSP team for their persistent efforts to bolster disease monitoring systems, particularly at the grassroots level, where timely detection and reporting are essential for effective response and containment.

Medical Superintendent of Gandhinagar Hospital, Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar addressed the participants, stressing the relevance and importance of the training in equipping health professionals with vital knowledge and skills. His remarks emphasized how each participant plays an essential role in building a resilient health infrastructure capable of



preemptively addressing public health risks.

The welcome address was delivered by Dr. Harjeet Rai, State Surveillance Officer (IDSP) Jammu Division, who outlined the program's objectives and anticipated outcomes. Dr. Rai emphasized the broader goals of the IDSP and highlighted how this training aligns with the larger mission of public health surveillance. He explained that the training was structured to equip participants—Medical Officers and doctors from Medical Colleges, representing every district in the Jammu Division—with the necessary tools and methodologies for effective disease surveillance and reporting.

The training sessions covered a broad spectrum of topics, beginning with foundational principles of disease surveillance, basic epidemiology, and outbreak investigation. An in-depth overview of laboratory protocols under the IDSP network was provided ensuring participants understood the technical aspects of disease identification and reporting. Notably, a special focus was placed on the recently introduced Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP) component under IDSP, which includes a commu-

nity reporting feature to enable real-time monitoring. This community-driven reporting approach is intended to engage and empower local communities in identifying and reporting potential outbreaks, thereby improving the speed and reach of surveillance efforts.

To ensure practical understanding, participants received hands-on training with the IHIP platform, equipping them with the skills to navigate the system and report cases accurately and promptly. This segment of the training aimed to help participants feel confident in using the platform and to foster a seamless flow of information within the IDSP network.

The program featured a panel of esteemed resource persons: Dr. Bhawna Langer, Associate Professor of Preventive and Social Medicine at Government Medical College, Jammu; Dr. Shehnaaz Chowdhary, Medical Officer, Epidemiology; Dr. Prem Lata, Medical Officer, Epidemiology; Dr. Simran Nag, State Epidemiologist, IDSP Jammu and Ajay, State Microbiologist. Each expert provided insights based on their respective fields, delivering in-depth knowledge and sharing experiences that enriched the training.

Initiate solid fight against menace of drug abuse across J&K to save our future generations: Sakeena Masood



JJ NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 25

Minister of Social Welfare, Education, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Masood, today called upon the officers to initiate a solid fight against the menace of drug abuse across Jammu and Kashmir in order to save our future generations.

The Minister made these remarks while chairing the introductory meeting of Social Welfare Department (SWD) to review its performance and functioning.

During the meeting, Sakeena Masood impressed upon the officers to work in collaboration with other departments as well as law enforcement agencies in order to eradicate this evil from the society. She also called upon the offi-

cers to initiate the process of establishing drug de-addiction centres in every district and sub-district hospital so that the victims of this peril can be saved and counselled properly.

While reviewing the performance of different schemes of the department, the Minister underscored that this department forms the core of welfare of common masses as well as the backward class communities. She advised them to work with sincerity so that these schemes are implemented properly and due benefits reach to deserving beneficiaries.

While reviewing the functioning of One Stop Centres (OSCs), Anganwadi Centres, Nari Adalats and other aspects of SWD, Sakeena Masood directed the Commissioner Secretary SWD to create maxi-

mum awareness among the women folk about the assistance being provided at OSCs. She asked the Commissioner Secretary to use traditional media like Radio and TV for creating awareness as these mediums have maximum reach.

Regarding Anganwadi Centres, the Minister directed the officers to bring more transparency and accountability in process of providing nutrition to beneficiaries of these centres.

Remarkably, during the meeting, Sakeena Masood directed the Commissioner Secretary to look into the feasibility of increasing the Marriage Assistance from existing Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 75,000.

While reviewing the human resource position of the SWD, the Minister directed the officers to fill

up all the vacant posts on fast track basis and refer posts to the recruiting agencies on regular basis. She also asked them to conduct regular DPCs so that employees on promoted on their due dates.

The meeting among others was attended by Commissioner Secretary, SWD, Sheetal Nanda, Director General Women and Child Development, Secretary in SWD, MD Women's Development Corporation, Director Social Welfare Kashmir, Mission Director ICDS, Mission Director Vatsalya/Shakti, Commissioner Rehabilitation Council, Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, MD SC,ST Corporation, Secretary Advisory Board for OBC/SC/Pahari speaking people and other concerned officers.

Power Shutdown

JJ NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 25

The office of Chief Engineer, Distribution, KPDCI informed that in order to carry out branch cutting of trees coming in the corridor of the line and preventive maintenance of its bays at Grid Sub Station Zainakote, the shutdown of 220 KV Wagoora-Zainakote Circuit I shall be observed from 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM on 28 October, 2024.

Also, the shutdown of 220 KV Wagoora-Zainakote Circuit II shall be observed from 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM on 29 October, 2024.

Shutdown for 33 KV Budgam-Watrihail, Budgam-Kremshore, Budgam-Ichgam Line stands cancelled

JJ NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 25

The office of Chief Engineer, Distribution, KPDCI informed that the shutdown of 33 KV Budgam-Watrihail, Budgam-Kremshore, Budgam-Ichgam Line scheduled on 27.10.2024 and 28.10.2024, stands cancelled by Superintending Engineer, O&M KPDCI Circle-2nd Srinagar vide, till next re-scheduled date is communicated from the concerned Division.

Public lecture on Skill Education delivered at GDC Khansahib

JJ NEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, OCTOBER 25

The Skill Development Cell of Govt. Degree College (GDC) Khansahib organized an extension lecture on the significance of skill education in today's fast-evolving world. The event aimed to equip students with the necessary skills to enhance their employability and adapt to the demands of the modern economy. The college

faculty and about 100 students attended the event.

The session commenced with an address by Dr. M Mushtaq, Coordinator Skill Development Cell of the college, who emphasized the critical role of skill education in navigating the challenges of a rapidly evolving job market. He laid emphasis on skill education alongside the traditional courses. Dr. Niyaz Ahmad Naikoo from the Department of Biotech-

nology, Govt. Degree College Pulwama, delivered the keynote lecture. Dr. Naikoo provided a comprehensive overview of the various skill courses being offered under the Skill India Mission across different sectors. He underscored the growing demand for specialized skills in industries and the critical need for students to integrate these skills into their educational journey to meet future career goals.

IADVL J&K Branch & GMC Srinagar host Aesthetics Workshop



JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 25

The Indian Association of Dermatologists, Venereologists, and Leprologists (IADVL) Jammu and Kashmir Branch, in collaboration with Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar today organized a comprehensive workshop on 'Excellence in Aesthetic Injectables.'

The workshop featured national and local faculty, with Prof. Iffat Hassan, Principal/Dean GMC Srinagar, as the Patron, and Dr. Yasmeen Jabeen, HOD Dermatology, Venereology & Leprosy and President IADVL J&K, as the organizing chairperson.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Dr.Iffat Hassan said that this workshop demonstrates GMC Srinagar's commitment to promoting excellence in

dermatology.

SIG Aesthetics coordinator Dr Rajat Kandhari, Covener Dr Rashmi Sharma, Dr Sonali Langar, Dr Nishita Ranka, Dr Imran Majid and Dr Syed Mubashir deliberated on various topics.

The sessions were chaired by HODs of Dermatology from different medical institutions like SKIMS Medical College, Prof. Dr Seema Qayoom; GMC Baramulla, Dr Parvaiz Anwar; GMC Anantnag, Dr Ummer Yaseen; GMC Handwara, Dr Samia Aleem and senior dermatologists of the valley Prof. Dr. Sheikh Manzoor, Dr Dilshad Khan along with dermatologists from Directorate of Health Services Dr Shazia Shah, Dr Shabudin Bukhari and Dr Mohuidin etc.

The workshop included insightful lectures on

the latest techniques and best practices in aesthetic injections, covering toxins and fillers, with a focus on safety, efficacy, and patient satisfaction.

Participants then engaged in a hands-on workshop, practicing their skills under the guidance of experienced faculty in over 15 patients.

This pioneering workshop in J&K aimed to enhance dermatologists' knowledge and skills in aesthetic injections, ensuring patients receive top-notch care without complications.

60 participants were benefited from expert guidance while as 15 patients received treatments during hands-on sessions. It was the first of its kind workshop in J&K with focus on safety, efficacy, and patient satisfaction.

DC Budgam reviews Arrangements for Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-Din at Char-e- Sharief

JI NEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, OCTOBER 25

A meeting to review the arrangements for the annual Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (RA) was conducted here today under chairmanship of District Development Commissioner (DDC) Budgam, Akshay Labroo.

During the meeting, the DDC took the department-wise review of arrangements and directed the concerned to ensure that all the arrangements including installation of street lights, cleanliness of the Shrine premises and surroundings, installation of additional mobile toilet facilities and proper sanitation are ensured well before the commencement of the week-long Urs.

The DDC directed PHE and PDD departments to ensure uninterrupted water and electricity supply to the town and vicinity areas during the Urs days.

The EO of Municipality Charar-e-Sharief was directed to maintain proper sanitation and cleanliness and regular lifting of garbage from the



Shrine area. He was directed to install dustbins for dumping of waste. He was also instructed for installation of street lights, illumination of the shrine.

It was decided in the meeting that DySP Traffic and ARTO Budgam shall formulate a foolproof Traffic Management Plan to provide to-and-fro transport facilities for the devotees.

They were also instructed to arrange additional parking arrangements for vehicles to control traffic congestion. While as Health department was directed to ensure requisite medical facilities

especially wheel chairs to specially-abled devotees during the Urs days.

The DDC directed all the concerned officers for ensuring comprehensive public facilitation and advance arrangements for Urs sharief.

The meeting was attended by ASP Budgam Raghav S, ADC Budgam Mehraj ud din Shah, SDM Charar i Sharief, SDPO Charar i Sharief, ARTO and representative of FCS&CA, Tehsildar Charar i Sharief, Auqaf Officer of JK Waqf Board, Representative of ziyarat sharief and district heads of various line departments.

DC Baramulla visits families of Martyred Porters, extends condolences & financial support



JI NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 25

On the directions of Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa accompanied by Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Uri, Javaid Ahmad, today paid a visit to the families of two porters who were killed in a brutal attack at Bota Pathri, Gulmarg, on the evening of October 24th, 2024.

During the visit to Nowshera Boniyar, the residence of slain porter Chaudhary Mushtaq Ahmad, the DC met with the bereaved family and extended condolences. He assured them of support from the administration during this difficult time.

Meanwhile, the DC also visited Barnate Boniyar, the home of Zahoor

Ahmad Mir, the slain porter, where they paid their respects and offered heartfelt condolences to the grieving family, acknowledging the service and sacrifice of the deceased. The visit was met with strong communal support, with a large gathering of locals joining the hands to pay tribute to the memory of the deceased and express solidarity with their families.

During the visit, the DC presented compensation cheques of Rs. 6 lac to each family, aiming to provide immediate relief to support them through this period of loss.

He further emphasized the district administration's commitment to standing with the families in this time of grief, pledging continued support to ensure they have access to necessary resources as they move forward.

DRSC discusses execution of Road Safety Plan in Kishtwar District

JI NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, OCTOBER 25

Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar (Chairman DRSC, RTA & RAVF), Rajesh Kumar Shavan today chaired a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC).

The Committee reviewed the execution of road safety plan, including the implementation of the Road Safety Act, identification of black spots, erection of crash barriers, installation of road signage, speeding up of insurance claims and regulation of speed limit, besides generation of awareness through Road Safety Clubs in schools and colleges.

The ARTO was directed to maintain radar surveillance and share data on new commercial vehicles, followed by private vehicles entering the district. The DC emphasized random checking of driving licenses, close monitoring of driving institutes, 100% camera installation in commercial vehicles and regular fitness checks of vehicles.

Reviewing progress on identification and rectification of black spots, the DC directed stakeholder departments, including NHIDCL and BRO to take corrective measures at all black spots, install crash barriers, provide road signage, and implement traffic regulation measures, especially in accident-prone areas.

He further asked all



stakeholders, including the Police, Health Department, MVD, and Highways authorities (R&B, PMGSY, NHIDCL, BRO-GREF, and Project Sampark), to update and upload accident-related data and photographs on the Integrated Road Accident Database (IRAD) Portal. This initiative will aid in analyzing the causes of road crashes and devising safety interventions to reduce such accidents in the district.

Further, stress was laid on holding awareness campaigns, including loudspeaker announcements, in all townships of the district, including district headquarters, subdivisions, and tehsil levels, to promote road safety awareness among drivers.

Additionally, DC Kishtwar emphasized the need to conduct special medical camps for accident victims as a supportive measure by the District Administration.

The SSP also sought a strict check on rash and drunken driving, assuring that police will provide

full assistance to the ARTO for strengthening surveillance. He also raised concern of parents allowing minors to use Scooty/MotorCycles in the town.

The DC also took updates from the Health Department on the functioning of the 108/102 ambulance helpline, including details on all drivers, and stressed the importance of GPS tracking for ambulances.

He placed particular emphasis on anti-drug assessment kits, the prevention of vehicle overloading, verification of "Mumkin Scheme" vehicle beneficiaries, and directed authorities to improve road conditions across the district to prevent future accidents.

The meeting was attended by SSP Kishtwar Abdul Qayoom-JKPS, ADC Kishtwar Pawan Kotwal, ACR Kishtwar Idrees Lone, ARTO Kishtwar, BMO, Dy. CEO, Ex En PMGSY Rajesh Sharma, and representatives from IRAD, concerned departments, NHIDCL, and BRO etc.

DDC reviews progress of JJM Projects in Samba District



JI NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, OCTOBER 25

District Development Commissioner Samba, Rajesh Sharma conducted a comprehensive review of ongoing Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) projects across District Samba, urging swift action to expedite progress. The meeting evaluated key project components, including tubewell drilling, procurement and installation of electro-mechanical equipment, construction of Overhead Tanks (OHTs), and the setup of filtration plants, with a focus on ensuring clean and reliable water access for all. DDC empha-

sized the need for prompt completion of critical tasks, such as tubewell drilling, OHT construction, and pipe-laying activities. He underscored that timely project execution is vital to meet the district's water access goals, directing contractors to accelerate their efforts. Notably, of the 130 JJM schemes planned for Samba, 73 have already reached completion, while an additional 33 schemes—with completion rates ranging from 51% to 99%—are on track for completion by the end of November 2024.

The DDC addressed on-site challenges involving National Highways

Authority of India (NHAI) crossings, Army land crossings, and the allocation of OHT sites, instructing departments to resolve these issues on an urgent basis. He further directed the immediate Har Ghar Jal (HGJ) certification of villages marked as 100% covered on the portal, ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Champa Devi, SE Hydraulic Circle Jammu, XEN PHE Division, civil and mechanical AEEs, representatives from the third-party Quality Control Monitoring Agency, and contractors.

NDRF hosts disaster awareness program at Seri Bazar Park Bholderwah

JI NEWS SERVICE
BHADERWAH, OCTOBER 25

In an effort to bolster disaster preparedness, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) organized an awareness program here today at Seri Bazar Park Bholderwah.

The NDRF team presented demonstrations on essential rescue techniques, first aid administration, and emergency response strategies,

emphasizing practical skills that can be used during disasters. These hands-on demonstrations were aimed at educating the public on swift, effective responses that could save lives in times of crisis.

Community members, including seniors and youth, actively engaged with the NDRF team to gain a better understanding of disaster manage-



ment principles. The program encouraged preparedness at the local level, aiming to enhance the overall resilience of the Bhaderwah community against potential natural and man-made disasters.

The event was hosted by the Senior Citizen Association, with

notable community members Mast Nath Yogi, Abdul Hafeez Khateeb, Shabir Ahmed Ganai, and Munshi Ram playing key roles in bringing the program to the community.

The Senior Citizen Association and NDRF highlighted the importance of such awareness initiatives, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening public safety and preparedness through community engagement.

GDC Marheen takes out "No Crackers, Green and Clean Diwali" awareness rally

JI NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, OCTOBER 25

The NSS unit of Government Degree College (GDC), Marheen, under the patronage of Principal Prof. (Dr.) Anupama Gupta, on Friday took out a rally to promote the theme "No Crackers, Green and Clean Diwali".

The idea was to encourage an eco-friendly Diwali celebration and spread awareness among local communities.

The rally was flagged off by the Principal of the college, who addressed the enthusiastic NSS volunteers, urging them to carry forward the message of a green and clean Diwali to their communities.

A large number of NSS volunteers participated in the rally, starting from the college premises and proceeding to the NSS-adopted village. Along the way, volunteers chanted slogans promoting a green and pollution-free Diwali, educating residents on the benefits of celebrating without crackers.

The rally concluded with the volunteers taking a pledge to spread this message throughout their communities.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

Focus on breaking...

Command Headquarters, during his median media briefing since assuming the charge of Army Commander, as per news agency.

He added that through integrated military and social outreach efforts, the Indian army is contributing to the broader process of Nation-building.

Gagangeer/ Gulmarg Attack

Speaking about the recent surge in terrorist attacks including one at Gagangeer, Ganderbal that left seven labourers including a doctor dead and the fresh attack on army convoy at Baramulla's Gulmarg in which three soldiers and two porters were killed, the GoC-in-C said that the matter was discussed during Unified Headquarters meeting in Srinagar on Thursday, where a strategy was formulated.

The GOC-in-C further stated that the Army is reassessing strategies in light of suspected cross-border support for the attackers. He stated that while specific operational details couldn't be shared, the Army is adjusting its strategies to address emerging threats.

"I would not like to share details of an ongoing operation but what I can inform you is that we took stock of the new challenges, the modus operandi of the terrorists, the support they are likely to be getting from across the border and we are making a strategy to tackle this," he said.

Jammu region

Referring to the security situation in the Jammu region, the army commander said that various agencies are undertaking operations to achieve the desired outcomes.

"This region which is starting from Kathua and Samba along the border and then Poonch and Rajouri besides hinterland areas of Reasi Kishtwar and Doda... was largely peaceful for the past ten to 15 years. There is a huge challenge along the International Border and Line of Control. There is nearly 210 kilometres of International Border and about same in LoC," he said adding, "Army and other agencies making sure that anti-infiltration grid along the Line of Control is strengthened with due focus on counter-terrorism operations in the hinterland which certainly created an environment of peace and development in the Union Territory.

"The adversary is frustrated due to our successes. Their aim is to push terrorists across, but we have foiled infiltration attempts. Their goal is to instil fear among the population, but we will not allow it," he stated.

Calibrated action on terrorism

The army commander said security forces have been able to neutralise 720 terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir over the past five years.

"Security forces have been able to neutralise 720 ultras in Jammu and Kashmir over the past five years. As far as residual terrorists are concerned, multiple agencies keep updating figures. They are varying between 120 to 130. Now, the recruitment figures are in single digits and are at its lowest," the general officer said and adding, "anti-infiltration grid along the Line of Control and focused counter-terrorism operations in the hinterland have managed to create an environment of peace and development in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir."

Without naming Pakistan, the Officer said. "Adversary is frustrated due to our successes and their aim is to push terrorists across, but we have foiled infiltration attempts. Their goal is to instil fear among the population, but we will not allow it."

Synergy Stakeholders

Lt Gen M V Suchindra Kumar emphasized the importance of the synergy between the Indian Army, civil administration, Central Armed Police Forces, Police, and Intelligence Agencies in achieving a peaceful and secure environment in Jammu and Kashmir.

He also mentioned the Army's commitment to the principle of 'Service Before Self' and its role as a key facilitator in Nation Building through various activities such as border security, counter-terrorism operations, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and aid to civil authorities.

"In addition to our role in internal & external security of the nation, we are also focusing on carrying out development activities in the region. He noted that the synergy between the Army, civil administration, Central Armed Police Forces, police and intelligence agencies has yielded substantial benefits.

"Village Defence Groups (VDGs) have ensured the security of remote areas for decades. The VDG setup is being strengthened, with over 600 VDGs being established and 10,000 modern weapons provided to them. They are also being trained," he said, adding "Army also provides training to Jammu and Kashmir officials and officers".

Youth and Women empowerment

The Officer said that Indian Army is making efforts to empower youth and women, enhance education, promote sports, and revive the rich historical and cultural legacy.

"Empowering youth and women, facilitating education, promoting sports and reviving the rich historical and cultural legacy is one of core focus of army in Jammu and Kashmir. This strategy is to strengthen the relationship amongst the citizens and the soldiers while encouraging nationalist and mainstream narratives, particularly amongst the youth," Lt Gen Kumar said.

He also said that through integrated military and social outreach efforts, the Indian army is contributing to the broader process of Nation-building.

"These initiatives have not only fostered greater community engagement but also supported the successful execution of kinetic operations in the region. Through integrated military & social outreach efforts, we are contributing to the broader process of Nation-building," he said.

Operation Sadbhavana Projects are being undertaken to execute development activities in border / remote areas of the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. We are providing quality education to a large number of students from the Union Territories in the Army Goodwill Schools. Students are also being sponsored to study outside the Union Territories through the Jammu & Kashmir Special

Scholarship Scheme and Army Public School residential School programs which are being conducted by us," he said.

On Indian China

About India, and China reaching an agreement on border patrolling, Lt Gen Kumar said that the consensus achieved includes patrolling and grazing to traditional areas.

"To put it very briefly, India and China have been involved in talks both at the diplomatic and military levels to resolve differences in balance areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Pursuant to the talks, broad consensus has been achieved to restore the ground situation based on principles of equal and mutual security. The consensus achieved includes patrolling and grazing to traditional areas," he added.

Disengagement of troops of India and China has started at two friction points in Demchok and Depsang Plains in the Eastern Ladakh sector, defence officials said.

On October 21, India announced that it reached an agreement with China on patrolling along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh ending the over four-year-long military standoff.

The border standoff between India and China began in eastern Ladakh along the LAC in 2020, sparked by Chinese military actions. This incident led to prolonged tensions between the two nations, significantly straining their relations.

The General Officer said that Indian and Chinese diplomatic and military negotiators have been in close contact with each other in a variety of forums. He said as a result of these discussions, agreement has been arrived at on patrolling arrangements along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China border areas, leading to disengagement and a resolution of the issues that had arisen in these areas in 2020. KNO

Baramulla attack...

District, succumbed to the injuries sustained during exchange of fire, thereby making the supreme sacrifice," the statement said, adding that "Army salutes the bravery of Rifleman Kaiser Ahmad Shah and Rifleman Jeevan Singh, who despite being hit responded and forced the terrorists to flee, before laying down their lives in this cowardly terrorist attack."

The defence spokesman said that actions by these brave soldiers prevented the terrorists from causing any further damage and demonstrated unwavering courage and commitment to safeguard the National Security and counter inimical agenda of Pakistan abetting terrorism in Kashmir. "Their selfless act is a testament to the Indian Army's resolve to safeguard our Nation and the Citizens," he said.

The defence spokesman further said that alongside the brave soldiers, two Kashmiri porters Zahoor Ahmad Mir resident of Boniyar Tehsil and Mushtaq Ahmad Choudhary resident of Uri Tehsil also made the ultimate sacrifice, while serving the Nation. "It is evident that Pakistani terrorists are, deliberately and unregretfully, targeting Kashmiri locals to evoke the fear and terror in Valley, which is progressing towards peace and stability. The only ideology these terrorists espouse is of The Reign of Terror in Valley," the spokesman said.

He said that Army pays tributes to these brave soldiers and porters, who laid down their lives while serving the Nation and extend heartfelt condolences to their families. "Indian Army remains committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all our citizens and will resolutely achieve its efforts to combat terrorism and promote harmony in Kashmir Valley. The sacrifices of these brave Kashmiris and Indian Army Soldiers will inspire the future generations to stand against the perpetrators of terror," the spokesman said.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha laid wreath and paid homage to Rfn Jeevan Singh, Rfn Kaiser Ahmad Shah, and Defence Porters Mushtaq Ahmad Chowdary and Zahoor Ahmad Mir, who laid down their lives for the nation.

The Lieutenant Governor posted on X: "Paid homage to the brave soldiers and Defence Porters who made the supreme sacrifice in the service to the nation in Butapathri Sector on October 24, 2024. India will never forget their selfless service & their supreme sacrifice. We stand in solidarity with the bereaved families".

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also wrote on X that "Very unfortunate news about the attack on the army vehicles in the Boota Pathri area of North Kashmir which has resulted in some casualties & injuries. This recent spate of attacks in Kashmir is a matter of serious concern. I condemn this attack in the strongest possible terms & send my condolences to the loved ones of the people who lost their lives. I also pray that the injured make a complete & swift recovery."

PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti also stated on X that "shocked & deeply saddened by the militant attack on an army convoy in Baramulla in which a civilian porter has been killed. Condemn it unequivocally & pray for the swift recovery of the injured soldiers.". KNO

Ukraine, West...

India and Germany are part of the G4 nations along with Japan and Brazil, who back each other's bids for permanent seats on the UNSC.

PM Modi welcomed the "Focus on India" strategy released last week by Germany.

PM Modi said he is pleased that the two sides are taking many new and important initiatives to expand and elevate the partnership. "We are moving from a whole-of-government approach to a whole-of-nation approach."

"Industries from both countries are connecting innovators and young talent. Democratizing technology is our shared commitment," the PM said, adding that the Roadmap on Innovation and Technology is being released which will further strengthen the cooperation in areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Semiconductors, and Clean Energy.

He said their participation in the Asia-Pacific Con-

ference of German Business, and the CEOs Forum will strengthen their cooperation even further.

"Our efforts to diversify and de-risk our economies will gain momentum, helping to create secure, reliable, and trusted supply value chains."

In line with their commitment to climate action, the two sides have created a platform for global investment in renewable energy, and the released the Green Hydrogen Roadmap.

PM Modi said that the two sides have decided to work together in skills development and vocational education, and an agreement has been signed between IIT Chennai and Dresden University, which will allow Indian students to take advantage of a Dual Degree program.

"India's young talent is contributing to the progress and prosperity of Germany. We welcome the "Skilled Labour Strategy" released by Germany for India. I am confident that our young talent pool will get better opportunities to contribute to Germany's development. I congratulate Chancellor Scholz for his faith in the capacity and capability of Indian talent," he said.

PM Modi said the German Chancellor's India visit has given new momentum, energy, and enthusiasm to the bilateral partnership. "I can confidently say that our partnership has clarity, and the future is bright."

The two sides also inked a number of agreements: Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters, Agreement on the Exchange and Mutual Protection of Classified Information, Indo-German Green Hydrogen Roadmap, Roadmap on Innovation and technology, Joint Declaration of Intent in the Field of Employment and Labour, Joint Declaration of Intent for Joint Cooperation in Research and Development on Advanced Materials, MoU on Cooperation in the field of Skill Development and Vocational Education and Training, Joint Declaration of Intent on the Indo-German Green Urban Mobility Partnership for All.

LG Manoj Sinha...

face challenges during winter, the bridge will be open for local traffic upon completion," he said.

Pertinently, the LG took stock of developmental projects like Noor Jehan Qamarwari Bridge, Jhelum Riverfront Development along the right bank from JK Arts Emporium to Amira Kadal, and the Srinagar Square at Lal Chowk. KNO

CBI arrests revenue...

registered by CBI on Wednesday against an accused Patwari on allegations that he demanded a bribe of Rs 10,000 from a complainant for attestation of mutation in respect of land purchased by the complainant.

The statement reads that the CBI laid a trap and caught accused Patwari red handed while demanding and accepting the bribe from the complainant.

"Accused was produced before a Court on Thursday, which remanded him to judicial custody for 12 days. CBI also conducted searches at the residential premises of accused," it reads. KNO

Gulmarg Attack: Security...

search operations across the area, utilizing drones, helicopters, and increasing naka checkpoints, particularly in Tangmarg, the gateway to the tourist hub of Gulmarg.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha expressed his condolences and commitment to a strong response, stating, "Operation in progress. Sacrifice of our martyrs will not go in vain. Condolences to their families. Praying for speedy recovery of injured." He added that he has spoken with top army officials and directed swift action to neutralize the terrorists.

In solidarity, the Indian Army's Chinar Corps also paid tribute, posting on social media: "All ranks of the Chinar Corps salute the supreme sacrifices of the bravehearts, who laid down their lives in the line of duty." The Chinar Corps extended their condolences and pledged support for the bereaved families. KNO

Gulmarg Attack: LG lays...

down their lives for the nation.

The Lieutenant Governor posted on X: "Paid homage to the brave soldiers and Defence Porters who made the supreme sacrifice in the service to the nation in Butapathri Sector on October 24, 2024. India will never forget their selfless service & their supreme sacrifice. We stand in solidarity with the bereaved families".. KNO

'Bacha Kaisa Hain?'

young family. He leaves behind his wife, a toddler son and a father who is suffering from kidney ailments and is bed-bound. "Our father is ailing, confined to bed, and now this tragedy has shattered us," shared Mushtaq's brother, who lives separately but rushed to be with the family after hearing the news.

"Why must innocent labourers, who are only trying to make a living, be targeted? Are we no longer safe just because we go out to work?" he said. "We want justice for Mushtaq. Authorities should see our condition and understand the pain of families like ours who suffer from such tragedies."

Why should someone be killed for trying to earn a living, asked another family member.

In Nowshera, a village located around 18 kilometres away from the district headquarters Baramulla, the slain porter's friends and neighbours remember him as a hardworking young man who took on the role of porter to support his family.

"His financial condition was never good," shared Sheikh Muneeb, a neighbour. "He was the only breadwinner, struggling to provide for his ailing father and young son. He had just received a 20-day salary."

Meanwhile, the villagers expressed a hope that authorities will take steps to ensure the safety of civilians and prevent such tragedies from recurring. "These incidents should not happen. We want justice for Mushtaq and hope such tragedies, which devastate

families, do not repeat in the future," grieving villagers said. KNO

LG attends Opera...

how great the adversity, inner strength, faith, and courage can turn even the toughest challenges into opportunities for growth and enlightenment. Her teachings guide us along a path of truth, urging us to embark on a journey of inner exploration, cleansing the soul, and seeking purity in every action, he observed.

"In a society where women's voices were often silenced, Lal Ded's voice rang out, powerful and clear, and that voice still echoes through the centuries," the Lt Governor said.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor called upon the youth to connect with cultural roots and preserve the teachings of great figures like Lal Ded.

"You are the future of this land, the torchbearers of its rich traditions and values. Lal Ded's teachings will guide you at every step, showing you that there is nothing greater than truth, honesty, and patience," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Opera's mesmerizing performance weaves together music, dance, and spirituality, showcasing Lal Ded's timeless teachings on oneness, love, compassion, and self-realization.

Prof. Nilofer Khan, Vice Chancellor, Kashmir University; Suresh Kumar Gupta, Principal Secretary, Culture Department; Vandana Daftari, Regional Director, Art of Living; Pandit Krishan Langoo, noted music Director, faculty members of University and large number of art lovers and students were present. KNO

Terror attack fails...

"I have come here with my wife and seven-year-old son. We heard about some terror attack yesterday but we did not feel any threat. Even in Tripura, we have had militancy. If something has to happen, it will happen. "We cannot stop living because of fear. Yesterday, my mother called and asked me to take precautions but I said everything was fine. The police and administration are there to take care of things," Ujjwal said.

He added that when he asked their driver if it was safe, the man responded, "I will take care of your safety."

Referring to the October 20 terror attack on a campsite of workers of an infrastructure project in Ganderbal district that left a local doctor and six workers dead, Ujjwal said it was the day they reached Kashmir on vacation.

"The day we reached here, something similar had happened in some other area but the people here are so nice. They make us feel so comfortable. I think that is what makes this place so special," he said.

Despite Thursday's attack, local tourism remains steady.

Sudesh Kumar, a taxi driver from Jammu, said he has been visiting Kashmir for 23 years and does not feel intimidated by the situation in the Valley.

"I live in Katra and I have been coming here for 23 years now. I first confirmed it with a few people in Gulmarg and they gave a green signal. I arrived here with a Bengali group around 11 am. There is so much security here.

"There is no need to worry. I am happy tourists are visiting Kashmir. Even the people of Kashmir are happy. It is good for all of us," Kumar said, adding that business is going on and it will not stop.

"If not a terrorist attack, I might die in a road accident. So, why die every day? A terrorist has the trigger, he does not see who is on the opposite side. Be it a Hindu or a Muslim, his job is to spread terror.

"I have an EMI of Rs 60,000, how will I survive if I do not work? There are so many like me who have liabilities. I have faith in God and whatever is his will, I will accept that," he said.

Security forces on Friday morning pressed helicopters aerial surveillance around the scene of the terror attack, while a massive counter-insurgency operation in the area along the Line of Control (LoC) is underway.

There was also a temporary shutdown of the Gondola cable car project in Gulmarg but it was restored. The shutdown, according to officials, was a precautionary measure to ensure the safety of tourists and staff.

However, local shopkeepers have a different tale to tell, fearing that the deadly attack is going to have an impact on their businesses before the situation returns to normal in a few weeks.

"This attack will have an impact on our businesses for a few days. Right now, Gulmarg is trending on every platform on social media, although Bota Pathri is at some distance from here," a local tea seller said.

"Tourists are roaming freely and enjoying the beautiful scenery but it is not how Gulmarg looks like on a normal day. We are dependent on it. Many of the tourists have already cancelled plans and that is worrisome," he added. (Agencies)

War certain if...

attacks like yesterday will continue to happen in Kashmir till a proper solution is found.

"We know where it comes from. Such incidents are happening for the last 30 years. We are not going to be part of Pakistan then why is it doing so," he said, adding that the country should look into its own issues and must not make J&K weaker in terms of economy.

He appealed to find a solution to end the innocent killings and find a way for bonhomie as well. He also paid tributes to the soldiers and porters killed in Gulmarg attack and apologised to their families for the losses.

Two porters and two soldiers were killed in a terror attack in Botapathri area of Gulmarg area on Thursday evening. KNO

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No:433-Sig-T-29-24-25 Closing Date/Time: 18.11.2024, 15:00
Date:- 25.10.2024

Sr. DSTE/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders on <https://www.ireps.gov.in> against Tender Notice no. 433-Sig-T-29-24-25 Closing Date/Time 18.11.2024, 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through online payment modes available on IREPS Portal like Net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.

NIT HEADER:

Contract Type	Works		
Name of Work	(i) Indoor works for Electronic Interlocking (Distributed type with 1 RH) in c/w provision of BPCL siding at Suchipind on Jalandhar city-Pathankot section. (ii) Outdoor works for Electronic Interlocking. (Distributed type with one RH) in c/w provision of BPCL siding at Suchipind on Jalandhar city-Pathankot section.		
Tender Closing Date, Time	18.11.2024 15:00	Date Time of Uploading Tender	24.10.2024 18:08
Advertised Value (Rs.)	(i) 3,03,51,452.27 (ii) 3,58,59,383.96	Bidding Start Date as per IREPS	04.11.2024
Earnest Money (Rs.)	(i) 3,01,800.00 (ii) 3,29,300.00	Period of Completion	12 Months

3316/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

**Office of the Principal,
Government Degree College, Jindrah
Jindrah, District - Jammu. Tehsil - Dansal. J&K-181224**

**Email id: gdcjindrah@gmail.com Mobile No.: 9419356459
Website: www.gdejindrah.in**

INVITATION FOR THE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

Subject: "Expression of Interest" for the empanelment of reputed Book Publishers/Suppliers/vendors for supply of Books to Govt. Degree College Jindrah.

The Principal of Govt. Degree College (Jindrah) J&K(UT) invites "Expression of Interest" for empanelment of reputed Book Publishers/ Suppliers/ Vendors/ across UT/National level for the procurement/ Supply of books to this College for the Financial Year 2024-2025. Interested firms having requisite experience and fulfilling the criteria thereof as mentioned in "EOI" notification available at college website(www.gdejindrah.in) are requested to apply and submit their "EOI" with relevant supporting documents as required, to this office within seven working days from the publication of this notice through post or by hand duly addressed to Principal, Govt. Degree College Jindrah, Pin 181224, on all working days.

**DIP/J-6118/24
Date: 24-10-24**

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MECHANICAL IRRIGATION CONSTRUCTION
DIVISION JAMMU**
Phone:- 01912573370; email:xenmicdijmu@gmail.com

CORRIGENDUM

Subject:- Repairs/Replacement of parts/cable in the various rooms in the premises of Chief Engineer Office (I&FC) Jammu for proper electrification.

Reference:- This office e-N.I.T. No.: MICD/J/35 dated:- 18-10-2024.

Due to Error in the Creation of Tender the above mentioned e N.I.T No. MICD/J/35 dated: 18/10/24 due on 04-11-2024 stands cancelled.

**-Sd/
Executive Engineer
Mech. Irri. Construction Division
Jammu**

No:- MICD/J/1078-80
Dated:- 24-10-2024

**DIP/J-6217/24
Date: 25-10-24**

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PMGSY
DIVISION UDHAMPUR-I UDHAMPUR**
e-mail: xenpmgsyudhampur@gmail.com).

**Sh. Harminder Singh Contractor
R/o Vill. Jindrah, Tehsil and District Jammu,
A/p Housing Colony Udhampur,
District Udhampur**

FINAL NOTICE

No. PMGSY/Div/Udh-1/2407-11 Dated. 21/10/2024

Sub: Construction of 20.0 mtr span Deck Type Steel Plarte Girder Motorable Bridge at RD 2+175 road "MRL05-Govt. Girls High School Jaganoo to SC Mohalla Bassain Via Loat and Pad Devta", Package No. JK14-3011B1, under PMGSY-III, Block Jaganoo, District Udhampur.

**Ref:- 1. This office letter No. PMGSY/Div./Udh-1/1665-69 Dated:-08-08-2024
2. This office letter No. PMGSY/Div./Udh-1/1009-1013 Dated:-27-06-2024**

Sir

In reference to the subject cited above, the Construction of 20.0 mtr span Deck Type Steel Plate Girder Motorable Bridge at RD 2+175 road "MRL05-Govt. Girls High School Jaganoo to SC Mohalla Bassain Via Loat and Pad Devta" was allotted to you vide Superintending Engineer, PMGSY Circle Reasi vide Allotment No. SE/PMGSY/R/4847-55 Dated: 30-01-2024 with a completion period of 09 months. As reported by the Assistant Executive Engineer, PMGSY Sub Division Chenani that inspite the number of requests made to you to start the work after establishment of field laboratory at site but till date you have not started the said work at site and also not provided Mix Design of different grades of concrete work which will be used in the bridge work execution to this office. It is pertinent to mention here that the field laboratory also not established by you at site which is pre requisite condition before the start of any work which clearly shown that you are not interested for execution of this bridge work, as higher authorities are pressing very hard for early completion of PMGSY-III Bridges.

So, you are hereby finally directed to start the execution of above said bridge work within weeks time positively after establishing of field lab at site immediately and also provide the Mix Design of M-25, M-30 and M-40 grade concrete which will be used in the bridge work as per approved Mix Design otherwise the termination of the said contract shall be submitted to the higher authorities as per the clause of Standard Bidding Document.

"Matter be treated as Most Urgent".

**Sd/
(Er. Yash Paul)
Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Udhampur-I,
Udhampur**

**DIP/J-6108/24
Date: 24-10-24**

**Office of the Executive Engineer, Electric
Division (JPDCL) Udhampur**
Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited(JPDCL),Jammu
Power Development Department
Email: xenmreudh@gmail.com Tel No. 0199278040 FaxNo. 0199278040

Notice Inviting Tender

e-NIT No: ED/UDH/27 of 2024-25

• **INVITATION:-**

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, the Executive Engineer (Distribution), Electric Division, JPDCL Udhampur, hereinafter referred as 'Employer', invites online e-bids from reputed Companies or Class 'A' registered Electrical Contractors for **Survey, Supply, Transportation, Carriage, Erection, Testing and Commissioning for Boundary Wall Fencing Pathways Entry Gate Borewell Beautification and Provision of Solar Panels Electrification at Mand Udhampur on turnkey basis.**

Bidders are advised to study the Bidding Document carefully. Submission of e-Bid against this SBD shall be deemed to have been done after careful/conscious study and examination of the procedures, terms and conditions of the Standard Bidding Document with full understanding of its implications.

• The tender document is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested Bidders may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below:

A	Tender Document Sale/Download Start Date	24.10.2024; 4:00 PM
B	Tender Document Sale/Download End Date	14.11.2024; 03:00 PM
C	e-Bid submission (start) date & time	24.10.2024; 04:00 PM
D	e-Bid submission (end) date & time	14.11.2024; 03:00 PM
E	Submission of Hard Copy of Tender Fee & EMD Instrument (End) date & time	14.11.2024; 04:30 PM
F	Commercial and Technical Bid opening date & time	16.11.2024; 03:00 PM
G	Online financial e-Bid opening date & time (Only of the technically qualified Bidders)	Will be communicated to the Technically Qualifying Bidders.
H	Venue of opening of techno-commercial Bids	Soft Copy Electronically & Hard copy in the Office of the Executive Engineer, (Distribution), JPDCL Udhampur.
I	Tender Value	Rs 12.26 Lakhs
J	Cost of e-Bid document	Rs. 1000/- (Non-Refundable)
K	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs. 24600 /-

• The Bidders need to submit the proof/cost of e-Bid document as stated in the above table through Demand Draft from any Nationalized/Scheduled bank in favour of Executive Engineer, Electric Division, **JPDCL Udhampur**, payable at Udhampur. The original demand draft shall be submitted in a separate envelope to the Office of the Executive Engineer, Electric Division, **JPDCL Udhampur** and should reach **at least one day before opening** of commercial and technical e-Bid. The scanned copy of the Demand Draft must be uploaded along with the e-Bids.

• Bidders must quote for all the particulars of the item in the Technical Bid and in the price schedule/BOQ of financial bid. The bids of Bidders who will not quote for all the particulars for any item in technical and financial bids shall be liable to be rejected at the discretion of the Employer keeping in view the interest of the JPDCL.

• All the e-Bids must be accompanied by the scanned copy of EMD in the form of CDR/FDR/Bank Guarantee only from any Nationalized/Scheduled bank only pledged to Executive Engineer, Electric Division, **JPDCL Udhampur**, with the payable at Udhampur. No Interest shall be payable on Earnest Money deposited with the Department.

• Hard Copy of original instrument of EMD shall be submitted to the office of the Executive Engineer, Electric Division, **JPDCL Udhampur**, at least one day before opening of commercial and technical e-Bid.

• The date and time of opening of Financial-Bids shall be notified on Web Site <http://jktenders.gov.in>. This is conveyed to the technically qualified Bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial-bids shall be opened accordingly online on the same Web Site.

• The e-Bids will be electronically opened in the presence of Bidder's representatives, who choose to attend at the venue, date and time mentioned in the above table. An authority letter of Bidder's/OEM representative will be required to be produced.

• The JPDCL reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-Bids/ the e-Bid process without assigning any reason thereof if any major lapse/deviation is found. The decision of the JPDCL, will be final and binding.

• In the event of date specified for e-Bids opening being declared a holiday for JPDCL office then the due date for opening of e-Bids shall be the following working day at the appointed time and place.



• All the required documents excluding Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded by the e-Bidders electronically in the PDF format, whereas Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded electronically in the same BOQ sheet provided with the SBD.

• To participate in e-bidding process, Bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000, to participate in online bidding.

Hard Copy/ORIGINAL INSTRUMENT of EMD & Cost of Tender Document must be delivered to the Office of the Executive Engineer, Electric Division, **JPDCL Udhampur** in sealed cover at least one day before the scheduled date of opening of the commercial and technical e-Bids. The sealed cover shall be super scribed as "COST OF TENDER DOCUMENTS & EMD INSTRUMENT AGAINST e-NIT NO: ED/UDH/ 27 of 2024-25 Dated: 24-10-2024".

**Sd/
Executive Engineer
Electric Division JPDCL
Udhampur**

No: -ED/UDH/ 4341-47
Dated: -24-10-2024
DIP/J-2489-P/24
Date: 25-10-24

 **Department of Wildlife Protection
Office of the Additional Director Jambu Zoo
Nagrota, Jammu**
Email: wlwjambuzoo@gmail.com 

**SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE
E-TENDERING**

Tender Notice : e-NIT No.:- 28/WLW/JZ of 2024-25 dated: 24-10-2024

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Jammu & Kashmir UT, e-tenders are invited from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K UT Govt. /Central Govt. Organizations for the following works:

Name of work	Adv. Cost (₹. in lacs)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Class of Contractor	Cost of Tender Document (in Rs.)	Time of completion	Receiving /Opening Authority
Construction of 3 Nos. of Green Tunnel of Iron Frame with Mesh at Jambu Zoo.	43.65	87,000	A & B	1000	03 months	Tender opening committee

The e-NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities, (B.O.Q), set of Terms & Conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental Website:- <http://jktenders.gov.in>

Position of funds: CAPEX 2024-25

Position of AA : Accorded.

Position of TS : Accorded.

Publishing Date	24-10-2024
Download Start Date	24-10-2024
Bid Submission Start Date	24-10-2024
Pre-bid meeting	28-10-2024
Bid submission End Date	04-11-2024 up to 04:00 PM
Date of opening of Technical Bid	05-11-2024 at 12:00 PM (In the Office of Regional Wildlife Warden, Jammu, Manda Hills, Jammu)
Date of opening of Financial (online)	06-11-2024 at 03:00 PM (In the Office of Regional Wildlife Warden, Jammu, Manda Hills, Jammu)

Bid documents can be seen at and download from the website: - <https://jktenders.gov.in>. Bid documents contain qualifying criteria for bidder, specifications, bill of quantities, conditions and other details.

**Additional Director
Jambu Zoo.**

**DIP/J-6206/24
Date: 25-10-24**

EDITORIAL

Stalled promise of DDRCs in J&K

In March 2023, the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment announced an ambitious initiative to establish District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) in all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir. According to certain media reports, the initiative was designed to provide critical rehabilitative support to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), aiming to ensure that they receive necessary services and assistance. However, over a year and a half later, not a single new centre has materialized, leaving many to wonder about the efficacy of this initiative and the impact of bureaucratic delays on the lives of the most vulnerable members of society. The absence of DDRCs is not just a procedural setback; it translates to a significant denial of rights and opportunities for PwDs. These centres are intended to facilitate essential services such as disability certification, issuance of Unique Disability Identity Cards (UDID), and access to assistive devices. They also aim to provide vocational training and employment opportunities, empowering individuals to lead independent lives. In the absence of these facilities, countless individuals are deprived of vital support systems designed to enhance their quality of life. The proposals for these centres have been forwarded to the Union Ministry but are still awaiting approval. This bureaucratic bottleneck raises serious questions about the commitment to disability rights and the effective implementation of welfare schemes. If even the officers responsible for the rollout lack clarity on the reasons for the delays, it reflects poorly on the governance and planning processes that should prioritize the needs of marginalized communities. The intended impact of DDRCs is significant. They are meant to provide comprehensive support that includes the identification and assessment of disabilities, the provision of assistive devices, and the facilitation of employment through vocational training. Each DDRC would operate under the guidance of a District Management Team, which would include representatives from various sectors to ensure a coordinated and holistic approach. Yet, without established centres, the promise of such support remains unfulfilled. The ramifications of this delay extend beyond individual PwDs; they reflect a broader societal failure to recognize and act on the needs of a vulnerable population. Each day without these centres is a day when individuals with disabilities are deprived of dignity, opportunity, and the chance to participate fully in society. The Social Welfare Department must take immediate action to follow up with the Union Ministry and ensure that the proposals for DDRCs are expedited. It is imperative to establish at least a few centres in the most underserved districts as a starting point. The success of any rehabilitation initiative lies in its timely implementation and accessibility, which cannot be overstated. In a region like Jammu and Kashmir, where geographical and social challenges abound, the establishment of these centres could serve as a lifeline for many. The government must recognize that the benefits of such initiatives far outweigh the bureaucratic hurdles that seem to be stalling their implementation. Ultimately, the establishment of DDRCs in Jammu and Kashmir is not just a matter of policy; it is a moral imperative. The government must act swiftly to honor its commitments and ensure that the rights of Persons with Disabilities are not merely theoretical but actively realized in the lives of those who need it most. The time for action is now; the lives of many depend on it.

BRICS Summit: The India-China Tango

KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The BRICS summit in the historic city of Kazan, in Russia this week, was an important attempt to reset the balance of power between India and the member countries. It was another opportunity for the Indian Prime Minister to meet President Putin in a relatively short time interval. The highlight of the visit was a bilateral meeting between PM Modi and Chinese President Xi, specially, after it was signalled that the Indo-Chinese troops would follow a structured disengagement process, on the borders.

The Indo-China relations had hit the lowest since the military escalation by China

and there have been no bilateral conversations since. While China maintained claims to parts of the Indian territory, even through military interventions, it wanted to engage with India on social and economic terms. India maintained that any further engagement with China would be based on an effective structured military de-escalation at the borders. The BRICS summit in Kazan was a sort of showcase meant for the Western countries regarding a parallel world order being in good health. China continues to view the India bilateral relationship through the US-India prism.

On the eve of the bilateral meeting between PM Modi

and President Xi, a Chinese state-owned Global Times published an editorial that read "In recent years, the US has intensified its efforts to court India while applying pressure on China. China has maintained its position without wavering, remaining undeterred by the strengthening US-India cooperation. India has also observed that as US-India defence ties deepen, both countries claim to share "values," but in reality, the US only wants to use India to exhaust China while being unwilling to provide India with guarantees. On the contrary, it may push India to the front line of confronting China." At the same time, the long-standing border standoff with China

has added extra defence burdens for India; policies aimed at "decoupling" from China's economy have not prevented trade data between China and India from continuously rising. All these changes indicate that cooperation, rather than confrontation, aligns with the common interests of both countries and their peoples.

The BRICS summit served as an important reminder for India and China that both countries need to find peaceful resolutions to their mutual concerns while finding new partnership opportunities. The summit also showcased Russian President Putin's prowess in attracting several important global leaders to his country, even

as he is increasingly isolated by the Western Bloc. India has been actively engaging with every stakeholder in the Russian-Ukraine war.

There have been several high-level engagements between top officials of all of these countries involved in the war zone. India has restrained itself from offering a peaceful solution to the Russian-Ukraine war, unlike the other BRICS member countries such as China and Brazil. In Kazan during the bilateral meeting with President Putin, PM Modi mentioned "We have remained in regular contact regarding the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. As I have stated before, we believe that the resolution

of issues should be achieved through peaceful means only. We fully support the earliest possible restoration of peace and stability." Elaborating on India's efforts towards peace efforts Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said "starting from the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow in July this year and subsequently his visit to Kyiv in August this year and his engagement with the leadership of both countries must be seen as India's efforts to foster peace." The outcomes of the US presidential election in the next few weeks would further hasten a new global order.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

Cyber security: Time for India to be cyber-wise

ABHILASH PURUSHOTHAMAN

Celebrated annually for over two decades now, the world now observes October as "Cybersecurity Awareness Month". Initiated by the US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) in 2004, it aims to promote cybersecurity awareness and encourage both public and private sectors to take proactive steps in securing their digital landscapes.

In its 21st year, Cybersecurity Awareness Month remains focused on fostering collaboration between governments, industries and the public to enhance awareness about cyber threats, promote safe online behaviour, and equip organisations with the necessary tools to combat emerging digital risks. This month-long campaign is not just a reminder to stay vigilant but a call to action – a time for every nation to bolster its defences against the ever-evolving cyber threat landscape.

India: A Prime Target for Cybercriminals as India's digital economy continues its rapid expansion, the country has become an attractive target for cybercriminals looking to exploit vulnerabilities. According to Rubrik Zero Labs research, 75 per cent of Indian organisations reported they experienced an increase in ransomware attacks in the past year, with 96 per cent of these reported incidents specifically targeting backups – 74 per cent of which were at least partially successful.

The report further revealed that: 69 per cent

of Indian IT and security leaders identified SaaS platforms as the most common targets for cyberattacks in 2023. 98 per cent of these leaders experienced a loss of sensitive information due to cyber incidents. 55 per cent of companies reported paying a ransom because of data extortion threats.

53 per cent confirmed that malicious actors successfully damaged their backup and recovery options. These figures are alarming, to say the least, positioning India among the top three most targeted countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Since September 2022, ransomware attacks in India have surged by a staggering 195 per cent. This increase is not just in volume but also in sophistication, as attackers adapt their strategies to evade detection and increase their chances of success.

The Rising Cost of Data Breaches in India The financial implications of these attacks are becoming more severe. According to recent studies, the average cost of a data breach in India now stands at a staggering Rs 19.5 crore – an all-time high.

Since 2020, the financial impact of these breaches has soared by 39 per cent, reflecting the increasing complexity and disruptive nature of modern cyber threats. Critical infrastructure industries such as healthcare, financial services, and energy have been hit the hardest, with breach costs in these sectors ranking among the highest globally. However, the financial ramifications are just one part of the equation.



The reputational damage caused by data breaches can have long-lasting effects on customer trust and business sustainability. In today's digital world, data is the new currency, and its protection should be a top priority for every organisation. Unfortunately, the reactive approach of defending against threats is no longer sufficient. As cybercriminals continue to evolve and become more sophisticated, businesses must shift their focus to building a proactive and resilient cybersecurity posture.

Understanding Cyber Resilience:

The Key to a Safer Digital Future To effectively combat the growing threat landscape, organisations need to embrace the concept of cyber resilience. Cyber resilience goes beyond traditional cybersecurity measures, emphasising not only the defence against attacks but also the ability to recover quickly and continue operations in the face of an incident. This approach is vital

in a world where threats are not only becoming more frequent but also more damaging. Cyber resilience is no longer just a technical requirement but a strategic imperative. Cyber threats are constantly evolving, making it crucial for businesses to understand and implement effective strategies for cyber resilience. Its importance in the modern digital landscape has been accentuated due to the evolving threat landscape and common cyber threats.

Building a Strong Cyber Posture

Creating a resilient organisation starts with developing a robust cyber posture. This involves conducting comprehensive risk assessments, defining clear frameworks, and implementing methodologies to identify strengths and weaknesses within the digital ecosystem. Understanding the role of risk assessment is critical in developing a strong cyber posture. Organisations must evaluate their existing security measures,

identify potential vulnerabilities, and develop a strategic roadmap to address these gaps.

A resilient cyber posture is not just about deploying advanced technologies; it's about integrating cybersecurity into every aspect of the organisation's operations and culture. Employee training and awareness programmes are essential to instil a mindset that prioritises security across all levels of the organisation. Building a culture of security is pivotal, as it helps transform cybersecurity from a mere compliance requirement into a core business priority.

The Role of Regulatory Measures In response to the rising threat landscape, regulatory bodies like the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have stepped up their efforts to strengthen the nation's cyber resilience.

The RBI has issued comprehensive guidelines on Cyber Resilience, requiring financial organisations to implement robust governance frameworks for identifying, assessing, monitoring, and managing

cyber risks.

These regulations also mandate the adoption of baseline security measures to ensure system resiliency and secure digital transactions. The RBI's guidelines are designed to address the unique challenges faced by the financial sector, which remains one of the most targeted industries globally. Financial institutions are now required to migrate to the latest security standards, deploy advanced monitoring systems, and establish strong incident response protocols to safeguard customer data and ensure business continuity.

Learning from Real-World Cyber Resilience Examples

Governments and companies need to learn from real-world examples to understand the impact of cyber resilience strategies.

The consequences of cyberattacks on organisations are well documented, and businesses can gain insights from real-world examples of successful and unsuccessful cyber resilience.

One of the key lessons from these examples is the need to focus on the outcome. Cyber resilience is not just about preventing an attack; it's about minimising the impact and ensuring that the organisation can bounce back quickly. We don't just want people to be aware; we want people to be resilient and become, along with their organisation, harder targets for cybercriminals. Resilient is the new black!

(The writer is vice president, Asia Rubrik; views are personal)

Art therapy: A creative solution to rising mental health challenges among youth

MADHURI SAGALE

Mental health concerns among children and teenagers have become more common than ever before. As per a National Mental Health Survey (2015-2016) conducted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, it is estimated that 10 per cent to 20 per cent of children and adolescents in India will be prone to suffer from mental challenges by 2030, with many going undiagnosed and untreated. Although mental health concerns have gained a lot of attention over the past couple of years, it is unfortunate that many youngsters are still unable to access the care that they require. Mental health experts cite examples of how instead of attempting to engage in unique therapy formats, most conversations tend to remain on the surface leading many children

to miss out on required assistance. Up until a few decades back, the methods for addressing mental health issues were traditional and limited. Interventions such as art therapy were occasionally employed but were not commonly recognised as a formal tool. Today art therapy is a widely practiced therapy attracting many professionals who want to heal and help others using self-expression.

Children and adolescents are generally known to show initial apprehensions when it comes to choosing special therapy methods, as stigma related to mental disorders leads to non-compliance with these approaches. Additionally, some traditional programmes may not appeal to younger generations, resulting in a loss of interest.

On the other hand, creative treatment methods, like art therapy, have dis-

tinct advantages since they encourage them to actively engage in the healing process. For children and adolescents, art can be a non-verbal and compassionate way of shaping emotions, and this is especially effective for those who have trouble verbalising their emotions. Findings from UNSW highlight the effectiveness of art therapy in helping young people develop and manage emotional pain, allowing for artistic self-expression when it is most needed.

The process of making art increases psychological health by encouraging emotion regulation and self-reflection. This provides children with a way to address their emotions creatively and naturally.

Bringing Art Therapy to School and Beyond: Getting art-based interventions included as part of the school curriculum can have a big impact. The creation of special art therapy



programs in schools where they are incorporated into the existing health framework can be an excellent way to enhance their sense of worth, pride, and accomplishment. This also aids in improving problem-solving skills and

social interaction and communication, particularly for those who have anxiety and coping issues leading to a positive impact on overall well-being and educational performance.

Furthermore, according to the National Mental

Health Survey (2015-2016), 7.3 per cent of teenagers aged 13 to 17 years suffer from psychiatric disorders, which range between 29.4 per cent and 5.84 per cent in urban and rural settings respectively. This disparity can also be asso-

ciated with urban lifestyle issues where parents experience much stress due to extreme jobs and long hours taken at work, leaving less quality time to be spent with kids. Additionally, many urban parents are not aware of the mental health issue or consider it as a stigma to be discussed. Artistic and creative involvement also tends to enhance the mental health of families. Strong awareness can enable parents to look for signs of distress in their children and appropriately address their needs. The level of resilience among families increases and creates new bonds by raising levels of strength.

By highlighting awareness of mental health and creativity involvement for both, urban families can have an enhanced social context to create a huge difference regarding the wellbeing of adolescents' mental health.

Towards a brighter future: There are numerous benefits of including art-based therapies in children's and teenagers' mental health care.

These therapies provide a unique method of addressing mental health concerns, facilitating emotional expression, and enhancing therapeutic participation. Policymakers, mental health providers, and schools must therefore be encouraged to include art therapy as a regular practice in classrooms. This work will eventually lead to strong mental health care among future adults. Such efforts are prone to promote resilience, creativity, and emotional well-being in the next generation, paving the way for a brighter, more supportive environment for all children and teens.

(The writer is head of ARTS, Orchids, The International School; views are personal)

Govt committed to strengthen India's healthcare system, ensuring access to all: Nadda

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 25

The Union government is committed to strengthening India's healthcare system, while also ensuring equal access to all, said JP Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare on Friday.

He said this while addressing the 53rd Foundation Day and Convocation of the University College of Medical Sciences (UCMS), a constituent medical institution of the University of Delhi, at the national capital.

The Union Health Minister said that healthcare professionals make crucial contributions to soci-



ety. He urged the graduate students to approach their work with compassion, integrity, and dedication, and to shoulder more responsibilities as they embark on their professional careers.

"The government is

committed to strengthening India's healthcare system and ensuring that medical services are accessible to all," Nadda said. Reaching out to the students, he stated, "Your efforts should be focused on shaping our national

vision of 'Viksit Bharat.'

Highlighting the government's commitment to boosting the healthcare sector, he noted that the government spends between 30-35 lakh for every MBBS student.

Nadda reiterated the changes made in the National Health Policy by the Union Government in 2017. The reforms, he said, led to a shift in healthcare to a holistic approach from only curative healthcare. The holistic approach also caters to preventive, integrative care.

He also emphasised the recent achievements made in the healthcare sector including the establishment of 22 AIIMS, new

medical and nursing colleges, increase in MBBS and MD seats by over 100 per cent, among others.

In addition, the Minister said that the government is "going to fulfil" the promise of adding "75,000 medical seats in the next five years".

In his address to the nation on Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi promised to create 75,000 more medical seats in the next five years, from the current over one lakh in the country.

The addition will make the healthcare system more effective and help reduce foreign dependence on medical education.

S. Korean drugmaker Celltrion to buy back its shares for 4th time in 2024

AGENCIES
SEOUL, OCT 25

South Korean biopharmaceutical firm Celltrion on Friday said it will spend around 100 billion won (\$72.3 million) to buy back its shares for the fourth time this year in a bid to increase its shareholders' value. According to the company, the buyback of a total of 537,924 shares will begin next week, Yonhap news agency reported.

It will mark the fourth share buyback by Celltrion this year, following such moves in March, April, and June.

The combined worth of the company's share buyback this year is expected to surpass 330 billion won. Celltrion said it has made such a decision to boost its shareholders' value.

The company noted its corporate value remains underrated despite recent milestones, such as increasing sales of its flagship products in the global market, and the launch of new medical treatments, including the autoimmune disease treatment Zymfentra in the United States.

The drugmaker also bought back its shares worth 1.27 trillion won last

year and cancelled 700 billion won worth of shares earlier this year.

Shares in Celltrion were trading at 187,100 won at 11:30 a.m., up 0.65 per cent from the previous session's close.

Meanwhile, Celltrion's second-quarter net profit in August plunged 48 per cent from a year earlier due to costs following a merger with its sales and marketing affiliate last year.

Its net profit came to 78.5 billion won (\$57.1 million), compared with 150.9 billion won a year ago, the company said in a regulatory filing.

Do not ignore your health, work with compassion: President Murmu to doctors

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 25

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday urged doctors to not ignore their health and to work with compassion and sensitivity.

She said this while addressing the second convocation of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Raipur today.

"On many occasions, you will be working in a stressful environment. Take care of your health and don't ignore it. To increase trust and betterment of patients, it is important for you to be healthy and look healthy," Murmu said.

She noted that the government is enhancing access to health care for all citizens of the country.

"In the last decade, several steps have been taken to provide Universal



Health coverage. Affordable and quality medicines are available to the people through Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP). In the last ten years, there has been an increase in the number of seats in medical colleges for MBBS and PG. New AIIMS has also been established," the President said.

Further, Murmu also stressed the need for modern technologies in the medical sector for the welfare of people living in remote areas of the country, citing the impact of such advancements on

human lives.

"We have been passing through such an era wherein modern technologies greatly impact the life of humans rapidly. For the welfare of people living in remote areas, such technologies can be used," she said.

Murmu noted that medical professionals have immense responsibilities to deliver as their decisions are linked to saving lives.

She added that medical professionals will play a decisive role in realising the dream of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

65 PC INDIAN DOCTORS CALL FOR SAFER TOBACCO ALTERNATIVES TO SAVE LIVES: STUDY

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 25

Amidst India's escalating tobacco epidemic, where four out of 10 households grapple with smoking addiction, a new report on Friday revealed that 65 per cent of healthcare professionals in the country call for safer novel tobacco alternatives to save lives.

The report from the Doctors Against Addiction (DAAD) survey, in collaboration with Saizen Global Insights and Consulting, revealed a pivotal shift in the perspectives of healthcare professionals with 65 per cent of doctors supporting integrating safer cessation alternatives, such as nicotine replacement therapies and heat-not-burn products, into smoking cessation efforts.

They emphasised the need for further efficacy research of these alterna-



tives.

The finding marks a significant moment in India's ongoing battle against tobacco addiction, which contributes to over 930,000 deaths annually -- equating to more than 2,500 lives lost every day due to smoking-related diseases.

"Tobacco addiction is India's most pressing public health challenge. To combat this, we must

prioritise scientifically permitted alternatives for tobacco cessation. As healthcare professionals, guiding patients toward safer options is crucial to saving lives and mitigating tobacco's devastating impact," said Dr Mohsin Wali, Padma Shri Awardee and Senior Consultant at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital.

"India's tobacco crisis is a national emergency, requiring immediate inter-

vention. While innovative cessation technologies have potential, concerns remain over the lack of structured support for transitioning to novel safer alternatives. Urgent statutory recommendations of scientifically-proven cessation solutions," added Dr Manish Sharma, Chief Coordinator of DAAD.

In the survey involving 300 healthcare professionals, over 70 per cent of doctors cited addiction severity and low motivation, and 60 per cent pointed to a lack of cessation resources as key barriers to quitting.

It revealed that smoking cessation in India is hindered by inadequate follow-up care and poor implementation of evidence-based methods. Only 7.4 per cent of healthcare providers consistently offer cessation advice, and just 56.4 per cent arrange

follow-up consultations, highlighting significant gaps.

"Tobacco addiction needs multifaceted solutions. The rise of safer novel alternative products for cessation provides an opportunity to rethink our strategies.

By integrating these cessation strategies and enhancing public knowledge about this, and around digital platforms and resources, we can drastically improve our intervention outcomes," Dr Pawan Gupta, Senior Consultant in Pulmonary Medicine at BLK-MAX Super Specialty Hospital, New Delhi.

The findings highlight a critical need for policy reform, increased public awareness, the integration of modern technologies, and safer novel alternatives to support those struggling with addiction.

80 MN PEOPLE GLOBALLY EXPERIENCE GAMBLING DISORDERS, ADOLESCENTS MOST AFFECTED: LANCET

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 25

With the advent of the digital revolution that ushered in a huge market for online casino and sports betting market, an estimated 80 million people globally experience gambling disorder or problematic gambling, with adolescents being the most affected, according to research published in The Lancet Public Health Commission on Friday.

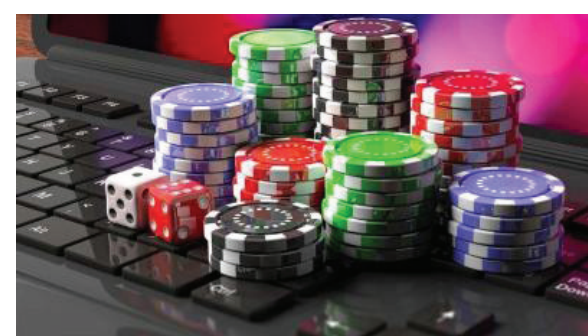
The Commission noted that children and adolescents are routinely exposed to advertising of gambling products in "unprecedented ways" and are the most affected. It is because children and adolescents remain par-

ticularly vulnerable "to the allure of easy money and the game-like designs of online gambling"

They called for stronger global regulatory controls to reduce the impact of commercial gambling on worldwide health and wellbeing.

An international team of researchers conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis and found that approximately 448.7 million adults worldwide experience any risk gambling, where individuals experience at least one behavioural symptom or adverse personal, social, or health consequence of gambling.

Of these, an estimated 80 million adults experience gambling disorder or



problematic gambling.

Further, gambling using online casinos or slot products was found to lead to gambling disorders in 15.8 per cent of adults and 26.4 per cent of adolescents. Gambling using sports betting products affected 8.9 per cent of adults and 16.3 per cent of adolescents.

Professor Heather

Wardle, Co-Chair of the Commission from the University of Glasgow said unlike the traditional Las Vegas casino or a lottery ticket, "anyone with a mobile phone now has access to what is essentially a casino in their pocket, 24 hours a day".

Wardle said that "large technology companies are deploying a variety of tech-

niques to get more people to engage more frequently that can pose substantial health risks".

"Highly sophisticated marketing and technology make it easier to start, and harder to stop gambling.

If we delay, gambling and gambling harms will become even more widely embedded as a global phenomenon and much harder to tackle," she added.

While commercial gambling is known to be associated with financial losses and the risk of financial ruin, it is also associated with physical and mental health problems, relationship and family breakdown, heightened risk of suicide

and domestic violence, increased crime against property and people, and loss of employment, the researchers said.

Dr Kristiana Siste, Commissioner of the Universitas Indonesia called on policymakers to "take action to protect children from the harms of gambling".

She noted that the risks of developing gambling disorders later in life due to early exposure to gambling increases are clearly evident.

The Commission urged policymakers to treat gambling as a public health issue, just as alcohol and tobacco, and to bring in policy to preserve the next generation from gambling-related harms.

CSIR-NGRI joins Fit India Movement, promotes health and fitness

AGENCIES
HYDERABAD, OCT 25

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research - National Geophysical Research Institute (CSIR-NGRI) joined the Fit India Movement on Friday, aligning with the national initiative to promote health and fitness among citizens.

Dr Prakash Kumar, Director of CSIR-NGRI, led the institute's staff in taking the Fit India pledge, setting a positive tone for a health-focused culture. Following the pledge, the institute's Staff Club organized a fitness run, with over 150 senior scientists, officials, and other colleagues

enthusiastically participating.

"A healthy and fit workforce is essential for achieving our scientific goals," said Dr. Prakash Kumar. "By joining the Fit India Movement, CSIR-NGRI reaffirms its commitment to fostering a culture of health and well-being among our employees."

CSIR-NGRI has consistently prioritized employee health and fitness. The institute offers state-of-the-art sports facilities, including a shuttle court, volleyball ground, table tennis, carrom, and chess boards, to encourage regular physical activity and a healthy lifestyle among its staff.

Oasis Fertility launches new brand campaign: "In the Good Hands of Science"

AGENCIES
HYDERABAD, OCT 25

Oasis Fertility, a leading provider of reproductive medicine with 31 centers across India, has unveiled its latest brand campaign, titled "In the Good Hands of Science."

The campaign will be promoted through traditional and digital media platforms, including television, print, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram.

According to a hospital statement, the creative concept features babies narrating their parents' journey at Oasis Fertility, highlighting the assurance

of success even before their birth.

Over the past 15 years, Oasis Fertility has introduced CAPA In Vitro Maturation (IVM) to India—an innovative, drug-free IVF option particularly beneficial for patients with PCOS or PCOD. The clinic also offers advanced treatments such as Preimplantation Genetic Testing for Aneuploidies (PGT-A), Endometrial Receptivity Analysis (ERA), Magnetic-Activated Cell Sorting (MACS), and Microsurgical Testicular Sperm Extraction (Micro TESE). These services aim to increase the likelihood of deliver-

ing healthy, biological children, especially for couples with chromosomal abnormalities.

As part of its ongoing initiatives, Oasis Fertility has also announced a Scholarship Program that will award up to Rs 50,000 to 10 talented children born through IVF. These scholarships will support their aspirations in fields like academics, sports, arts, music, filmmaking, or social service. The winners will be recognized at a prestigious event in Hyderabad this November.

Pushkaraj Shenai, Chief Executive Officer of Oasis Fertility, remarked, "Our

new brand communication seeks to raise awareness about the unique advantages of IVF and other treatments offered at Oasis, while also helping to normalize open discussions about infertility.

The campaign is a simple yet meaningful effort to convey the benefits of being 'in the good hands of science' even before birth. Additionally, we are excited to introduce the Scholarship Program for young achievers born through IVF, which serves as our way of giving back to society and fostering the next generation", he added.

UK to ban disposable vapes from next year to crack down on teen use

AGENCIES
LONDON, OCT 24

Britain will ban single-use vapes from next year, a government minister said on Thursday, seeking to crack down on the environmental harm and rising usage levels among children.

Health authorities have raised concerns about the use of vapes among young adults, with their colourful designs and fruity flavours making them stand out on grocery store shelves.

According to a 2024 survey by health charity ASH, about one in five children aged 11-17 said they had tried vaping.

It is illegal to sell nicotine-containing e-cigarettes to anyone under the age of 18 or for adults to buy them on behalf of under-18s.

The plan to ban disposable vapes was initially set out by the previous Conservative government in January but was not implemented before the July election, which was

won by the Labour Party. Labour's culture minister said that the number of children vaping had tripled in the last three years, and that disposable vapes were causing a lot of problems for the environment.

"We have been increasingly concerned," she told Sky News.

"We hope (this) will help to break this cycle where children are getting into the habit of vaping at younger and younger ages."

The government's

Department For Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (Defra) did not immediately respond to a Reuters' request for details on the measure. Media reports said the ban was due to come into force in June.

A separate study by ASH this year said vapes were the most popular aid to quitting among tobacco smokers, with nearly 3 million people in Britain having quit smoking with a vape in the last 5 years.

PM Modi to inaugurate development projects worth Rs 4,800 crore in Gujarat on Oct 28

AGENCIES

GANDHINAGAR, OCT 25

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate and lay foundation stone for development projects worth over Rs 4,800 crore in Gujarat's Amreli district on October 28.

These initiatives encompass nearly 1,600 projects across the districts of Amreli, Jamnagar, Morbi, Devbhumi Dwarka, Junagadh, Porbandar, Kutch, and Botad, underscoring a push for infrastructure and water supply improvements.

The projects include Rs 705 crore worth of water supply initiatives under the Gujarat Water Supply Department.



Among them is the Bharat Mata Sarovar, a newly built reservoir on the Gagadio River in Amreli, constructed at the cost of Rs 35 crore, which PM Modi will inaugurate.

The Prime Minister will also lay the foundation for 1,000 water recharge initiatives, including pit, borewell, and well recharge systems valued at Rs 20 crore, alongside

inaugurating 590 completed water projects.

In transportation, PM Modi will inaugurate and initiate NHAI projects valued at over Rs 2,800 crore, boosting highway connectivity in Gujarat. Additionally, he will inaugurate the Bhuj-Naliya gauge conversion project in the Railways sector, valued at Rs 1,094 crore, to enhance rail connectivity in the region.

On October 28, PM Modi will launch several water supply projects totaling Rs 705 crore. Key components include the Navdato-Chavand bulk pipeline for Botad district, which will support the daily water supply needs of around 67 lakh people

across 1,298 villages and 36 cities in Botad, Amreli, Junagadh, Rajkot, and Porbandar. This project will deliver an additional 28 crore liters of water daily to the region.

The Prime Minister will also inaugurate one of the highlighted projects, the Bharat Mata Sarovar, constructed at the cost of Rs 35 crore through a public-private partnership with the Dholakia Foundation. Located near Het Ki Haveli in Dudhala, Lathi, the reservoir has been expanded to store an additional 2 crore liters of water. Enhanced by deepening and strengthening measures, this reservoir now holds a capacity of 4.5 crore liters.

Loan limit under PM Mudra Yojana raised to Rs 20 lakh from Rs 10 lakh

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, OCT 25

The limit of Mudra loans under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) has been enhanced from the current Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh in keeping with the announcement by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Union Budget 2024-25, a statement said on Friday.

A new 'Tarun Plus' category has been created under the Mudra Scheme to offer loans above Rs 10 lakh and up to Rs 20 lakh and would be available to the entrepreneurs who have availed and successfully repaid previous loans under the Tarun category.

The Department

of Financial Services, whose mandate covers the functioning of banks and financial institutions, said in a post on X, "Great news for small business owners! The guarantee coverage for #PMMY loans up to Rs 20 lakh will now fall under the Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU). Supporting dreams, one step at a time."

Sharing details of the enhanced loan limit, a notification issued by Joint Secretary Prashant Kumar Goyal, said, "The Fund shall cover micro loans up to the specified limit (currently Rs 20 lakh) extended by Member Lending Institution(s) to an eligible borrower, provided that the lend-

ing institution applies for guarantee cover in respect of such loans so sanctioned within such time period and as per procedures prescribed by the fund for the purpose."

"Further, Overdraft loan amount of Rs 10,000 sanctioned under PMJDY accounts shall also be eligible to be covered under Credit Guarantee Fund. It may be noted that micro loans under PMMY inclusive of overdraft under PMJDY, sanctioned since April 8, 2015 would qualify for guarantee cover under the scheme," it said. The statement said the increase in loan limit aims to further the overall objective of the Mudra Scheme, which is funding the unfunded.

Need friends and allies just like India and Germany, says Chancellor Scholz after meeting PM Modi

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, OCT 25

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on Friday hailed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations with India - a key strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific - emphasising that his government wants to continue the success story, especially after the adoption of a key policy document 'Focus on India' by his Cabinet, last week.

"In this world we need friends and allies - just like India and Germany," Scholz posted on X after holding talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his Lok Kalyan Marg residence in New Delhi.

He was responding to PM Modi's post, welcoming the German Chancellor to his residence.

"Glad to be meeting him and discussing a diverse range of issues that will add momentum to the India-Germany friendship. Our nations have a strong track record of developmental cooperation and we look forward to building on this in the times to come," wrote Prime Minister Modi.



Both leaders later inaugurated and addressed the 18th Asia Pacific Conference of German Business (APK 2024) and also held the 7th Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC) at the Hyderabad House under the motto 'Growing Together with Innovation, Mobility and Sustainability'.

Just before Chancellor Scholz's India visit, the German Cabinet had adopted the policy document 'Focus on India' on October 16, which will examine the further devel-

opment of bilateral relations with India.

"As the fifth largest economy in the world, India already plays a key role in global efforts to protect our climate, biodiversity and achieve the sustainability goals of Agenda 2030. In a region where the principles of the UN Charter, international law and the rules-based international order have come under pressure, India plays a stabilizing role. India also plays a central role for Germany as a country of origin for

well-trained specialists," stated the German Foreign Ministry.

As India-Germany celebrate the 25th anniversary of their strategic partnership next year, Berlin wants to take its relations with New Delhi to a new level, the initial steps to which were agreed upon at the IGC consultations on Friday.

Both leaders also discussed enhanced security and defence cooperation during their meeting.

The German Chancellor will travel to Goa on Saturday where the German naval frigate 'Baden-Wuerttemberg' and combat support ship 'Frankfurt am Main' are making a scheduled port call as part of Germany's Indo-Pacific deployment.

"The geopolitical lines of conflict in the Indo-Pacific and the region's high economic dynamism will have a significant impact on the international order of the 21st century. It is therefore necessary to expand the partnership with India in the area of security and defence policy," said the German Foreign Office.

India saved pilferages worth \$40 bn in last 8 years with DBT schemes: FM Sitharaman

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, OCT 25

India saved pilferages worth \$40 billion in the last eight years with the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) schemes of the government, according to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Speaking at the Wharton Business School, University of Pennsylvania, during her US visit this week, the minister said over 51 ministries and departments in the central government now use various DBT schemes.

More than \$450 billion have been transferred cumulatively in the last eight years via the unique government scheme to date, she informed.

"As finance minister, I need to stop the pilferage. I need to make sure every taxpayer's rupee is spent properly, accounted properly. I can't have pilferages taking over," she told the gathering.

Through Aadhaar-linked DBT, launched in 2013, cash benefits from various welfare schemes are directly transferred into beneficiaries' bank accounts, reducing the need for multiple documents and eliminating duplicate or fake beneficiaries.

As part of the PM-KISAN scheme, the world's largest DBT scheme, more than Rs 3.04 lakh crore has already been disbursed into accounts of more than 11 crore farm-



ers across the nation and with the release of the 17th installment, the total amount transferred to the beneficiaries since the inception of the scheme will cross Rs 3.24 lakh crore.

This initiative is one of the world's largest DBT schemes which leverages digital platforms for transparent enrollment and transfer of welfare funds to farmers.

PM-KISAN has ended reliance on moneylenders and fostered sustainable farming practices.

By eliminating intermediaries, the scheme ensures equitable support reaches all farmers, marking a significant step towards agricultural empowerment and financial inclusion.

Also, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) further pro-

motes financial inclusion, opening over 523 million bank accounts, bringing marginalised sections into the formal financial system.

According to the government, this Aadhaar-driven approach has not only empowered people but also led to significant savings for the public exchequer by cleansing scheme databases, removing millions of fake, non-existent, and ineligible beneficiaries across multiple government ministries and departments.

For example, Aadhaar-driven DBT has led to the elimination of over 4.15 crore fake LPG connections and 5.03 crore duplicate ration cards, streamlining the distribution of essential services like cooking gas and food subsidies.

India must close gender gap in workforce to reach \$30 trn economy by 2047: Study

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, OCT 24

India must close the gender gap by integrating 145 million 'missing' women into the workforce by 2047 to reach its ambitious \$30 trillion GDP target by 2047, according to a new report.

The report by Magic Bus India Foundation, an NGO working in the education and skilling space, in collaboration with Bain & Company, a management consulting firm, showed India must double the female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) from its current 35 per cent-40 per cent to

70 per cent by 2047.

Despite favourable socio-economic conditions, including a positive demographic dividend and supportive policies, India's workforce is projected to add only 110 million women to its workforce by 2047, reaching an FLFPR of 45 per cent, that is, 255 million women. This leaves a staggering gap of 145 million 'missing women' who need to be integrated into the workforce to meet the country's economic goals. This initiative is critical not only for economic growth but also for achieving gender equality in the job market. These are

among the findings from this latest joint report.

"Empowering women is more than a moral choice; it is also an economic lifeline. To meet our \$30 trillion GDP target by 2047, we must address the challenge of increasing female labour force participation to 70 per cent, which means bringing 400 million women into the workforce," said Jayant Rastogi, Global CEO, Magic Bus India Foundation.

"India's growth story is unlikely to play out fully without enhanced women's participation in the labour force, yet their participation remains far below its potential.

Whether it's empowering rural women through an ecologically embedded entrepreneurship ecosystem (E4) model that solves for skill building, mentorship, market linkages, and access to capital, or, enabling professional readiness, growth, and resilience (PROGRES) for urban women through tailored skills training, flexible work environment and childcare support, India can unlock \$14 trillion in economic value from women alone, making a significant impact on India's journey to becoming a \$30 trillion economy by 2047," added co-author Navneet Chahal, Partner

at Bain & Company.

Furthermore, the report highlights that approximately 70 per cent of the women out of the workforce by 2047 are expected to reside in rural areas, where limited job opportunities and unstable work environments reduce workforce participation.

On the other hand, urban women face challenges such as job-skill mismatches, undervaluation of domestic work compared to market jobs, and wage disparities.

The report also noted that aspirational homemakers (about 86 million), high-potential youth (about 37 million)

home-based and nano entrepreneurs (about 39 million), casual labour, including gig workers (about 26 million) -- are key segments for immediate action to close the gender participation gap.

The report calls for a cohesive and collective effort from the government, private sector, nonprofits, and investors to create the necessary infrastructure, policies, and funding to support women's integration into the workforce. It advocates for gender-inclusive policies, financial literacy programmes, and improved market access for women entrepreneurs.

But there's only one Political leader who saw the power of tech, harnessed it to benefit even the furthest citizen and reimagined governance - That is PM @narendramodi with real vision, real commitment and real hard work. #Inspiring," he added.

Earlier, Jensen Huang, Founder, President and CEO of graphics chip giant Nvidia, had also praised PM Modi, saying

NDA confident of victory on all nine bypoll seats: UP Dy CM Maurya

AGENCIES

LUCKNOW, OCT 25

Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister, Keshav Prasad Maurya, on Friday expressed confidence over the bypoll results and said that the NDA will win nine seats in the forthcoming election.

Talking to IANS, Deputy CM Maurya also congratulated his candidates in advance.

"I am fully confident that NDA candidates will win the elections with a huge margin on nine Assembly seats and reach the Assembly. I also want to congratulate all the candidates on my behalf," he

added.

Taking a dig at the Samajwadi Party (SP), the Deputy CM said, the SP's hooliganism and deception in the name of Pichde, Dalits, Alp-sankhyak (PDA) will not work out this time.

"Nepotism, casteism, and riotism have been in their history. That's why people have rejected them. They had momentary success in the Lok Sabha elections. It was like a wall of sand, now it has collapsed. BJP's historic win in the Haryana Assembly elections has proved that the BJP is the present and the future," he stated.

MP bypolls: BJP, Congress candidates file nomination papers with 'show of strength'

AGENCIES

BHOPAL, OCT 25

BJP candidate Ramniwas Rawat, and Congress nominee Rajkumar Patel, filed their nomination papers on Thursday from the Budhni Assembly constituency in Madhya Pradesh for the November 13 by-elections.

Nomination papers were filed with a show of strength from the ruling BJP and opposition Congress and in the presence of top leaders from the state units of both parties.

Following the nomination, leaders from both parties levelled allegations at each other and sought public support for the upcoming Assembly by-elections. The BJP organized a massive roadshow in Vijaypur in support of Ramniwas Rawat. The party's top leadership in the state -- Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, state party chief V. D. Sharma, and Assembly Speaker Narendra Singh Tomar-- joined Rawat during his nomination and roadshow.

Rawat, who is currently

the state Forest Minister, has won the Vijaypur Assembly seat six times between 1990 and 2023 on the Congress symbol.

He quit the Congress and the Assembly and joined the BJP during the 2024 Lok Sabha election, which necessitated the bypoll.

Addressing the party workers in Vijaypur, CM Yadav asserted that BJP's wave is continuing in Madhya Pradesh, and Ramniwas Rawat would emerge victorious.

"Under the BJP govern-

ment, Madhya Pradesh is witnessing all-around growth and people of Vijaypur will support development," CM Yadav said.

Similarly, several senior Congress leaders led by state party chief Jitu Patwari joined the party's candidate Rajkumar Patel for his nomination in the Budhni Assembly seat in Sehore district.

Congress Rajya Sabha MP Vivek Tankha, party MLA Ajay Singh, and many other leaders accompanied Patel.

PM Modi has woken world to his vision of transforming governance: Rajeev Chandrasekhar

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, OCT 25

Former Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar has praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying that he (PM Modi) has woken the world to his vision of transforming governance.

"PM @narendramodi ji launched @DigitalIndia in 2015 - and since then has woken the

world to his vision of Transforming Governance with Tech #DPI, with so many nations following the same path & strategy of adopting Digitalisation & DPI," Rajeev Chandrasekhar wrote on X.

"And way back in 2018, much before the world became aware of #AI, he had @nvidia's #JensenHuang speak to cabinet abt power of AI. Tech world has many stars.

But there's only one Political leader who saw the power of tech, harnessed it to benefit even the furthest citizen and reimagined governance - That is PM @narendramodi with real vision, real commitment and real hard work. #Inspiring," he added.

Earlier, Jensen Huang, Founder, President and CEO of graphics chip giant Nvidia, had also praised PM Modi, saying

that he (PM Modi) is an incredible student who seeks to democratise AI in India.

After attending the CEOs' roundtable here with PM Modi in the presence of fellow tech leaders, Huang said AI is a new industry, offering several manufacturing opportunities and he is looking forward to "partnering with India in a very deep way to make that possible".

US acts as global arbiter of democratic legitimacy, but its election system won't pass muster in many countries

AGENCIES
NEW YORK, OCT 25

The US takes on the mantle of global arbiter of democratic legitimacy, but its own chaotic electoral system won't pass muster in many countries, including India, due to its shortcomings ranging from disparate procedures to using different voting machines.

The root of the problem is that even though there is some basic national legislation, most election rules and procedures are set by states, and sometimes by local entities, because there is no equivalent of the Election Commission of India.

There isn't even a national Model Code of Conduct for elections.

The problems start with the US Federal Election Commission, which is tasked with enforcing federal campaign finance laws, but not with conducting the elections, which is left to the states.

Therefore, election procedures, even the most mundane like voter identification, and penalties for violating election laws and regulations vary by states.

Unlike in India where there is a 48-hour quiet period before election day, in the US the din of campaigning can continue right through the election

day.

Take voter identification, which in most countries would be considered fundamental to ensuring election integrity.

In 14 states, including large ones like California and New York, voters are not required to produce identification to vote, and in some others, just an electricity, phone, or water bill will suffice.

California has gone a step further passing a law that would make asking for voter identification illegal, although that law would come into force only after the current elections.

Democrats oppose requiring identification to vote claiming it discriminates against minorities and the poor who would face difficulties in getting IDs because among other things, they lack transportation to go to offices for them, although the poor have to have identification to get subsidised or free food.

Some states with strict voter ID rules, however, give out free voter IDs - like India does.

States follow different timetables for the elections, although the official election day across the country is the first Tuesday in November - this year, the 5th.

Pennsylvania began



early in-person voting on September 16, allowing voters to vote at the local boards of elections, but in other states like New York, it begins on Saturday.

As of Thursday evening, nearly 31 million voters - about 16 per cent of the total electorate of 186.5 million - had voted either in person or through absentee ballots, which can be posted or dropped off at local election offices.

States also have different rules on who can get postal ballots and how they are collected.

Because of the danger of "vote harvesting" - party activists or sympathisers collecting postal ballots from voters and marking them up before depositing them - some states have imposed limitations

-- like Florida limiting the number of ballots a person can collect to two, while others have no restrictions.

Who can vote is itself a matter of controversy.

Criminals serving their sentences can vote from their prisons in Maine and Vermont, but in some others, they can only vote after they complete their sentences, while in some like Florida, those convicted of murder and serious sexual crimes are barred even after they complete their sentences.

There is a move to give voting rights to non-citizens and although it hasn't yet made headway at federal and state levels, Washington and some places in Maryland and Vermont allow non-citizens to vote

in local elections.

New York City passed a law giving non-citizens voting rights, but a judge declared it unconstitutional.

The US follows the electoral college system under which the President is elected not directly by voters, but indirectly through the electoral college made up of 538 people for whom the citizens vote.

(The members of the electoral college are committed to candidates and on the ballots it is the name of the candidate that will appear.)

How the electoral college votes are distributed depends on the states: Nebraska and Maine split them up in proportion to the votes polled by the candidates, but the others

transfer all the votes to the party getting the majority.

The US doesn't have a common voting machine, and even within a state, the machines could vary by jurisdiction.

In New York state, the city and some counties use machines from a company called Election Systems & Software, while others deploy machines from Dominion Voting Systems, a company founded in Canada and has headquarters in Toronto and Denver.

The systems in most states use paper ballots that are inserted by voters into the voting machines, which read and count them.

In a controversy involving the system, a judge in Georgia blocked an order by the state election board to require the number of paper ballots to be counted manually before the results are certified.

There are differences in how recounts are conducted. In at least some places in Pennsylvania, the representatives of the candidates have to stand behind a barrier, away from the table where the counting is done.

The biggest surprise is in how election results are announced. Without an effective national election commission, it is the Asso-

ciated Press news agency that first announces the election results by having its staff and temporary workers - said to total about 5,000 on election day - collect vote counting data and call the winner.

The official announcements are delayed to varying degrees, again because of the rules for certifying the results can go down to the local levels and then to the state levels.

Another factor is the different procedures followed for counting postal, absentee, and early ballots that can hold up the announcements of results even by the AP or other media in tight contests where a few hundred or thousand votes can make a difference.

In 2020, the election was held on November 3, but it took four more days for the AP and other media to declare Joe Biden the winner when the results from Pennsylvania could finally be tallied taking him over the 270 electoral college vote-mark, even as results from some other states were pending.

Differences between systems come into play in the internal elections held by parties to nominate their presidential candidates.

Some follow the primary system of registered

party members casting secret ballots.

Others adopt the caucus system where party members gather in person at a place and time and line up according to their preferences to get counted.

That does away with secrecy in voting and forces attendance at a given time, rather than letting party members vote at their convenience.

The one area where the Federal Election Commission is effective is in imposing uniform rules for campaign contributions for national elections.

Contributions made in cash by individuals are limited to \$100 and anonymous contributions cannot exceed \$50.

Otherwise, an individual can only donate directly to a candidate \$3,300, and there are also limits on contributions to political action and other committees, and by those bodies to candidates.

Sometimes these are undercut by the use of "straw donors" - a person giving money to others to donate to a candidate as if it is their own contribution. The so-called Super PACs (Political Action Committees) leap through the biggest loophole in the system to help the election of their preferred candidates.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to meet PM Modi today

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 25

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday at the PM's official residence, Lok Kalyan Marg, ahead of their participation in the 18th Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business.

At 11 A.M. PM Modi and the German Chancellor will inaugurate the Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business 2024.

The event, which gathers around 650 business leaders and CEOs from Germany, India, and other nations, aims to bol-

ster trade and investment relations between Germany and the Indo-Pacific region.

After that, there will be a joint plenary session for all participants in government consultations chaired by the heads of government.

"Both leaders will hold bilateral talks to discuss enhanced security and Defence cooperation, greater opportunities for mobility of talent, deeper economic cooperation, Green and Sustainable Development Partnership and collaboration in the area of emerging and strategic technologies. Discussions will also focus



on important regional and global developments," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) detailed, earlier this week.

The German Chancellor will then travel to Goa on Saturday where the German naval frigate

'Baden-Wuerttemberg' and combat support ship 'Frankfurt am Main' are making a scheduled port call as part of Germany's Indo-Pacific deployment.

"India and Germany have had a strategic partnership since 2000. Over the years, this partnership has deepened and diversified across various sectors. The two countries are celebrating 50 years of Science and Technology collaboration this year. As we enter the 25th year of strategic partnership, the visit of Chancellor Scholz will pave the way for further strengthening of our bilateral ties," the MEA stated.

During his 2023 visits, Scholz was quite impressed by India as a high-tech nation with great expertise in digitalisation and software development.

"We want to and must take advantage of the potential that exists here, which, among other things, will help us to boost the resilience of our own economy," he said following his business meetings in Bengaluru.

He has also emphasised Germany's great interest in collaborating with India in other economic sectors such as renewable energies, wind power, solar energy, and biomass.

BRICS leaders commit to building democratic, multipolar world order: Putin

AGENCIES
MOSCOW, OCT 25

BRICS countries are committed to fostering a more democratic and multipolar world order based on international law and the UN Charter," he said.

Putin also said that the BRICS group is open to all who share its values, with members dedicated to finding joint solutions free from external pressure or narrow approaches, Xinhua news agency reported.

The bloc does not operate in a closed format, he stressed at the press conference.

states to building a more democratic, inclusive, and multipolar world order based on international law and the UN Charter," he said.

Putin also said that the BRICS group is open to all who share its values, with members dedicated to finding joint solutions free from external pressure or narrow approaches, Xinhua news agency reported.

The bloc does not operate in a closed format, he stressed at the press conference.

The Russian President confirmed that BRICS

leaders have agreed on the list of BRICS partner countries.

"Some countries that have participated in these events have submitted their proposals and requests for full-fledged participation in the work of the BRICS association," Putin added.

He said that BRICS nations haven't developed and are not developing any alternatives to SWIFT, adding however that the issue remains important, and member countries are moving towards the use of national currencies.

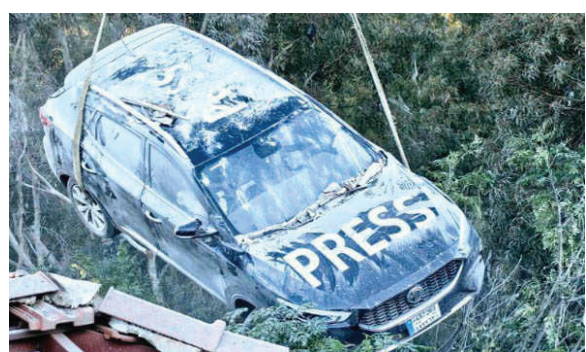
ISRAELI DRONE STRIKE KILLS 3 JOURNALISTS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON

AGENCIES
BEIRUT, OCT 25

An Israeli drone strike killed three Lebanese journalists and injured three more early Friday in southeast Lebanon, according to Lebanese medical and military sources.

The anonymous military sources told Xinhua that an Israeli drone fired two air-to-ground missiles targeting a small hotel where the journalists resided on the western edge of the town of Hasbaya, located on the eastern bank of the Hasbani River in southeast Lebanon.

"Elements from the Civil Defense and the Lebanese Red Cross worked to remove the rubble and transfer the bodies of three dead and three injured to Hasbaya Governmental Hospital," the sources added. At the targeted hotel, a Xinhua correspondent observed that the Israeli strike destroyed four apartments in the hotel and caused extensive damage to five neighboring apartments. Seven cars belonging to journalists were also destroyed.



"We were sleeping when we heard the sound of a drone flying over the hotel. Within a moment, it fired its first missile at one of the apartments, followed by a second missile at neighboring apartments," Mohammad Farhat, a correspondent at al-Jadeed TV, told Xinhua.

"The apartments were destroyed, and rubble fell on the sleeping journalists. I narrowly escaped death after the ceiling of the room fell on my bed, and I got up from the rubble without being hurt," he added.

"We were 18 journalists who had moved to this hotel in Hasbaya three weeks ago, coming from the town of Marjeyoun, where we were covering

the events from there," he said. "We moved to Hasbaya after an Israeli raid cut off the international road linking the Hasbaya area to the Marjeyoun area, as the Israeli raid created a large hole that closed the road in both directions," he added. Hotel owner Anwar Abu Ghaida told Xinhua that the targeted hotel is located in the Wadi al-Hasbani area, a tourist zone with dozens of restaurants, cafes, and chalets.

"There are no military sites or manifestations in this area or its surroundings at all. The aim of the raid, as it seems, is to intimidate journalists, keep them away from the border area, and prevent them from covering

and following up on the mutual military operations between Hezbollah and the Israeli army," he said. "We worked to transfer the three bodies of the journalists and the three wounded to Hasbaya Hospital, and we also worked to collect the remains of a journalist who was thrown a distance of about 15 meters away from the room in which he was sleeping by the missile explosion," a source in the Lebanese Red Cross told Xinhua.

Medical sources in Hasbaya Governmental Hospital told Xinhua that the three journalists killed were Ghassan Najjar and Mohammad Reda from the news outlet Al-Mayadeen and Wissam Qassem from Al-Manar TV, and the three journalists wounded were Zakaria Fadel, Hassan Hattit and Ali Shaib. Since the beginning of the conflict in southern Lebanon, Israeli shelling has killed multiple journalists, including Issam Abdallah, Farah Omar, Rabih Al-Maamari, Hadi Al-Sayed, Kamel Karaki, and so on.

Kenyan President encourages more private investment in geothermal energy exploration

AGENCIES
NAIROBI, OCT 25

Kenyan President William Ruto urged private investors to fully explore the country's geothermal energy potential, noting that only 10 per cent of it has been investigated.

Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony for the 35 megawatt (MW) Orpwer 22 geothermal power plant in Menengai, Nakuru County, northwest Kenya, Ruto highlighted the untapped opportunities within the sector, Xinhua news agency reported.

"So far, we have tapped only 950 MW, a small fraction of our geothermal potential of nearly 10,000 MW, leaving immense opportunities still untapped," he said.

The Kenyan leader reiterated the government's commitment to lowering electricity costs to boost economic efficiency and industrial competitiveness.

Ruto emphasised that the government's strategy for achieving universal access to clean, affordable, and reliable energy is progressing well, with geothermal power being a central component.

The Kenyan leader said that his government is working with the private sector to harness Kenya's geothermal potential, which he said will enhance the realization of the country's goal of achieving a 100 per cent clean energy grid by 2030.



Ruto said geothermal energy would help decarbonize the national grid and advance Kenya's progress toward net-zero emissions. "As a global leader in this space, Kenya continues to demonstrate how every nation can achieve sustained, rapid, and transformative growth while remaining true to climate action commitments," he said.

Chinese firm Kaishan Group invested 12 billion shillings (about \$93 million) in the plant, which Ruto said shows the confidence foreign investors from private sectors have in the nation.

Immigration sustains Finland's population growth

AGENCIES
HELSINKI, OCT 25

Current immigration levels will keep Finland's population growing until 2070, according to the latest population forecast by Statistics Finland.

However, the number of children and working-age individuals will decline after mid-century, contributing to an ageing population, Xinhua news agency reported.

Finland's population is expected to reach 6.5 million by 2070, but the number of children under 15 will drop from 832,000 to 700,000. The working-age population, currently around 3.46 million, will peak at 3.84 million in the 2050s before declining.

Markus Rapo, senior statistician at Statistics Finland, noted that high immigration is key to this growth, but it will not stop the rising demographic support ratio. This measures the ratio of non-working individuals to workers and currently stands at 62. However, the ratio is set to increase to 72 by 2070 as the elderly population grows.

'ITU-WTSA 2024' establishes India as key player in telecommunications industry

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 25

Through the use of technology, India has taken a great leap forward not only in terms of bridging the digital divide but also ensuring gender inclusion, the government has stressed.

As the International Telecommunications Union-World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (ITU-WTSA 2024) concluded in the national capital, Union Minister of Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia said the country has played a pivotal role in shaping the future of global telecommunications.

Through its proactive engagement, India has successfully proposed groundbreaking Resolu-



tions and contributed to the modification of existing ones, receiving widespread endorsement from member nations, the minister told the gathering.

"This WTSA-24 gathering has proven that when we collaborate with a common purpose, tech-

nology becomes a beacon of equity and progress. The path ahead is filled with challenges, yet it offers ample opportunities as a catalyst for positive change," said the minister. "India is ready to play its part in this shared jour-

ney and we will champion international collaboration and actively contribute to the development of global standards," he added.

Doreen Bogdan-Martin, ITU Secretary-General, said "let us keep Prime Minister Narendra Modi's words in mind as we transform WTSA outcomes into action - by keeping the principles of security, dignity and equity at the centre of our efforts".

"Let's continue this journey towards one shared digital future. One that is technically strong and built on a solid foundation of standards. One that is ethically sound, with innovation and inclusion at its very core," she mentioned.

Key proposals by India at the global event included a new resolution on

enhancing the standardization activities on Digital Public Infrastructure and a new resolution on standardization activities of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector on AI technologies in support of telecommunications/ Information & Communication Technology (ICT).

Additionally, India has also contributed significantly to the revision of approximately 25 existing resolutions.

The 10-day event witnessed record-breaking milestones, establishing India as a substantial player in the telecommunications industry. The 'ITU-WTSA 2024' witnessed a historic turnout of 3,700 delegates from over 160 countries, marking the highest participation ever for a WTSA assembly.

OpenAI plans to launch new powerful AI model 'Orion' by December: Report

AGENCIES
SAN FRANCISCO, OCT 25



ChatGPT maker OpenAI is reportedly planning to launch its next AI model called 'Orion' in December this year which is potentially up to 100 times more powerful than GPT-4.

According to a report in The Verge, unlike the release of OpenAI's last two models - GPT-4o and o1 - Orion won't initially be released widely through ChatGPT. The report mentioned, citing sources, that the Sam Altman-run AI company is planning to grant access to companies first, in order to help them build their own products and features. OpenAI or its CEO Altman were yet to react to the report.

According to the report, Microsoft is "preparing to host Orion on Azure as early as November". Microsoft also declined to com-

ment. "The company's goal is to combine its LLMs over time to create an even more capable model that could eventually be called artificial general intelligence, or AGI," the report mentioned.

The release of Orion comes as OpenAI, which has secured a historic \$6.6 billion funding at a \$157 billion valuation, is restructuring itself as a for-profit entity.

Last month, three top executives - including Chief Technical Officer Mira

Murati - left the ChatGPT developer. Of the 13 people who helped found OpenAI in 2015, only three now remain at the company.

According to reports, Murati is raising money from venture capitalists to finance her own AI startup.

The new funding in OpenAI was led by previous investor Thrive Capital. The VC firm invested around \$1.3 billion. Microsoft reportedly invested a little less than \$1 billion, while Nvidia pledged \$100 million and SoftBank reportedly put in \$500 million.

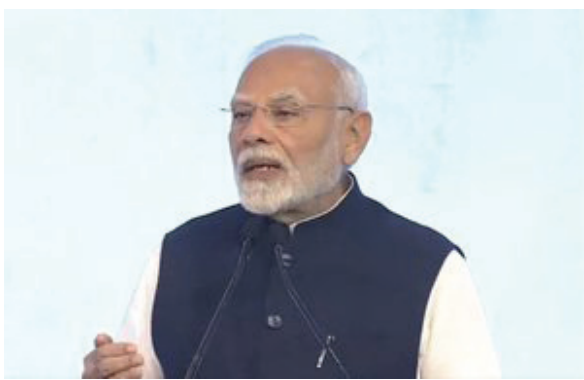
Time is ripe to join India's growth story: PM Modi tells German biz delegation

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 25

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said this is the right time to join India's growth story, as German Chancellor Olaf Scholz met the Prime Minister in the national capital with a business delegation.

Addressing the 18th Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business 2024, PM Modi said the time is ripe for foreign investors to participate in India's growth story, and join the 'Make in India' initiative and 'Make for the World'. "This is the right time to join India's growth story as the country is becoming a global trade and manufacturing hub," PM Modi said, adding that the country stands on strong pillars of democracy, demography, demand, and data.

Germany has expressed



that India's skilled manpower is amazing as the European nation has decided to increase visas for the skilled Indian workforce from 20,000 to 90,000.

Scholz arrived in Delhi late on Thursday as part of his three-day official visit to India.

The German Chancellor said he wanted to deepen defence ties with India and bring the two countries'

militaries closer. "Our overall message is clear, we need more co-operation, not less. At our inter-governmental consultations with India, we also want to deepen cooperation in defence and agree to bring our militaries together," he said.

The German Chancellor will travel to Goa on Saturday, where the German naval frigate 'Baden-Wuerttemberg'

and combat support ship 'Frankfurt am Main' are making a scheduled port call as part of Germany's Indo-Pacific deployment.

Earlier in the day, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal emphasised understanding and respecting mutual sensitivities to fast-track India-EU free trade agreement (FTA) talks.

Addressing the Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business, the minister stated that "extraneous" issues like labour and climate change should be discussed at international forums.

"A trade deal could be concluded swiftly if sensitivities were respected on both sides," Goyal told the Asia-Pacific conference of German business in the Indian capital, attended by German Economy Minister Robert Habeck.

Central govt employees to get additional compassionate pension after 80

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 25

Central government pensioners aged 80 and older will qualify for an additional pension called compassionate allowance, according to a recent notification from the Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW), under the Ministry of Personnel, PG and Pensions.

DoPPW has also issued new guidelines for central government civil service retirees aged 80 to access these supplementary benefits. The guidelines are aimed at simplifying the process for distributing these additional allowances.

As per the provisions of Sub Rule 6 of Rule 44 of CCS(Pension) Rules 2021 [erstwhile Rule 49(2-A) of CCS(Pension) Rules 1972], after completion of eighty



years of age or above by a retired government servant, in addition to a pension or a compassionate allowance admissible under the rules.

Accordingly, senior citizens aged 80 to 85 are eligible for 20 per cent of basic pension/compassionate allowance, while those from 85 to 90 years of age will receive 30 per cent. The elderly from 90 to 95 years of age will qualify for 40 per cent of the basic pension/compas-

sionate allowance, and those between 95 and 100 years will get 50 per cent. Super seniors living 100 years or more will be eligible for 100 per cent of basic pension/compassionate allowance.

"For example, a pensioner born on August 20, 1942 shall be eligible for additional pension at the rate of twenty per cent of the basic pension with effect from August 1, 2022. A pensioner born on August 1, 1942 shall

also be eligible for additional pension at the rate of twenty per cent of the basic pension with effect from August 1, 2022," the notification read

Further, the DoPPW notification stated that the additional pension or compassionate allowance would be effective from the first day of the month when the pensioner reaches the designated age.

This additional pension payment is designed to assist pensioners in managing the rising cost of living often associated with ageing.

To ensure that all eligible pensioners receive their rightful benefits without delay, the DoPPW has also instructed all departments and banks involved in pension disbursement to disseminate information regarding changes, the notification said.

South Korea warns of downside risks to exports, growth amid weak GDP data

AGENCIES
SEOUL, OCT 25

Finance Minister Choi Sang-mok has warned of growing uncertainties regarding exports and downside risks to economic growth and vowed to respond with extra vigilance, his office said on Friday.

Choi made the remarks during a meeting with reporters in Washington, D.C., on Thursday (U.S. time) after the Bank of Korea (BOK) data showed that the gross domestic product expanded 0.1 per

cent on-quarter in the July-September period, lower than market expectations.

"Downside risks regarding the prospect for this year's economic growth have grown," he was quoted as saying.

Choi, who is double-hatted as deputy prime minister, also hinted at a possible reduction to the government's growth forecast for the year, noting the government may revise its growth outlook when it reviews its economic policies in December, reports Yonhap news agency.

The government earlier



expected the economy to grow 2.6 per cent in 2024, while the BOK presented a 2.4 per cent expansion.

Regardless of the fourth-quarter data, however, this year's growth is expected to be still higher than the potential growth rate of 2 per cent, Choi insisted. As for exports, the minister pointed to growing uncertainties and said the government will respond "with extra vigilance."

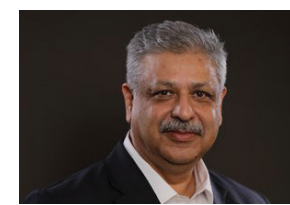
Meanwhile, Sang-mok called for close market monitoring amid growing uncertainties at home

and abroad as South Korea reported weaker-than-expected economic growth in the third quarter, his office said.

Choi made the remarks during a meeting with officials of his ministry, after the Bank of Korea data showed that gross domestic product expanded 0.1 per cent on-quarter in the July-September period, lower than market expectations. On a yearly basis, the economy grew 1.5 per cent in the third quarter, slowing from 2.3 per cent growth in the second quarter.

Essar Group appoints Manu Kapoor as Group Chief of Public Policy and Corporate Affairs

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, OCT 25



Essar Group on Friday announced the appointment of Manu Kapoor as its Group Chief of Public Policy and Corporate Affairs.

Kapoor brings over three decades of specialised experience working with corporations, governments, public sector agencies, and industry groups. He is an established leader with a successful career of managing corporations' reputations and brands across the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia, Russia, CIS, Eastern Europe, Baltics & Asia. He

carries an in-depth knowledge of the geo-political landscape across the globe.

Commenting on his appointment Prashant Ruia, Director, Essar Capital, said: "We are delighted to welcome Manu Kapoor to the Essar family. As Group Chief of Public Policy and Corporate Affairs, Manu will be responsible for building and maintaining strategic relationships with

key stakeholders, including businesses, government bodies, regulators, media, and policymakers. These are exciting times for Essar, and we look forward to his valuable contributions in driving our company."

"Essar is strengthening its global presence in energy transition, green steel, digitisation, technology, and innovation. It's an incredible opportunity to collaborate with industry experts and contribute to the economic growth of India while making a global impact. I look forward to being part of Essar's ongoing success," Kapoor said.

Air India Express continues to expand its domestic India network

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, OCT 25

Air India Express has announced the addition of two new stations - Jammu and Sri Vijaya Puram (Port Blair) - marking another milestone in the airline's rapidly growing domestic network.

Starting December 01, 2024, Jammu will be connected with direct flights to Delhi and Srinagar, according to a media statement here on Friday.

On the same day, Air India Express will start



direct flights from Sri Vijaya Puram (Port Blair) to Bengaluru and Kolkata. Bookings are now open on the airline's award-winning website, airindia-express.com, mobile app, and other major booking

channels. Commenting on the introduction of these new additions, Aloke Singh, Managing Director, Air India Express, said, "We are delighted to announce the expansion

of our domestic network to Jammu and the Andaman Islands this holiday season.

AIX continues to scale up its presence in the domestic India market, on the back of a rapidly growing fleet. We have recently added stations and capacity in the north-east and south, and now offer a compelling pan-India domestic product, besides our large, short haul international, living up to our mission of being new India's Smart Connector."

Priyanka Gandhi invests Rs 2.24 cr in Franklin India Flexi Cap, fund has ACC Ltd in its portfolio

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, OCT 25

Senior Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who is making her poll debut, has large investments in mutual fund (MF) schemes and holds 13,200 units of Franklin India Flexi Cap Fund, valued at around Rs 2.24 crore, as per her election affidavit submitted for the Lok Sabha by-election in Kerala's Wayanad.

As per the fact sheet of Franklin India Flexi Cap Fund dated September 30, her portfolio includes stocks like

ACC Ltd (a subsidiary of Ambuja Cements), HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bharat Electronics, Hindustan Aeronautics, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Kalyan Jewellers, Tech Mahindra, and HCL Technologies.

According to the website of Franklin India, the fund has invested 24.79 per cent of its total capital in banking, 10.92 per cent in IT, 6.51 per cent in telecom services, 4.78 per cent in cement and cement products, 4.48 per cent in construction, 4.3 per cent in

automobile, 4.21 per cent in petroleum products, 4.01 per cent in consumer durables, and the rest is invested in other sectors.

The Congress candidate from Wayanad has also invested in other mutual fund schemes. These include Axis Growth Opportunities Fund, Axis Bluechip Fund, HDFC Small Cap Fund, and ICICI Prudential India Opportunities Fund, in which Rs 7.87 lakh, Rs 8.36 lakh, Rs 8.84 lakh and Rs 7.71 lakh have been invested, respectively (as of September 30). Priyanka Gandhi

has also invested in the stock market and her portfolio includes a total of 18 companies, out of which six are PSU stocks. The value of the total stock portfolio of the Congress leader is Rs 65.72 lakh (as of October 18). Out of the total, Rs 19.08 lakh is invested in government stocks. She holds 1,000 shares of IRCON International Ltd and their value is Rs 2.21 lakh and holds 2,000 shares of National Aluminium and 1,000 shares of NMDC, valued at Rs 4.64 lakh and Rs 2.31 lakh, respectively.

Stalin credits athletes for making TN a sports powerhouse as Chennai crowned overall Champions

AGENCIES

CHENNAI, OCT 25

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has credited the athletes and the sports persons for their incredible achievement that ensure that the state draw the global attention.

Presenting the winners, runners-up and second runners-up trophies to Chennai, which had won a record more than 100 medals, Chengalpattu and Coimbatore, respectively in the closing ceremony of the CM's Trophy held over two weeks across the State in the presence of Deputy CM Udhayanidhi Stalin, he said the mega state games came to an end with a memorable high.

A total of Rs 37 crore was distributed as prize money to the medal winners of the CM Trophy 2024, at a grand event held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium on Thursday evening.

Addressing the athletes, Mr Stalin said, "TN has become one of the front-runners among states in promoting sports in India and I congratulate all the



winners. The CM Trophy tournament spread over various disciplines is to unearth hidden talent and the TN government will do everything to support athletes to shine on the national and world stage."

The Chief Minister also spoke about the importance of participation in sports and said he was looking forward to a much bigger turnout next year and promised all help for the sportspersons, while highlighting the efforts taken by the state government with the Deputy CM at the helm holding

the sports development portfolio, by organising various international tournaments, including Chess Olympiad, International surfing, ATP Tennis events, Asian Hockey, that put TN on the global map.

Mr Udhayanidhi also congratulated the toppers and advised better luck next time for those who could not finish in the podium.

Earlier, table toppers Chennai and second placed Chengalpattu signed off their campaign with a gold medal each on the final day as the Games

will be remembered for the spirited performance by Cerebral Palsy athletes, Olympians and Paralympians facing off with upcoming stars and a festival feeling of sports that hooked one and all over the last 21 days. Chennai expectedly topped the standing, winning 105 gold, 80 silver and 69 gold with only third placed Coimbatore joining them in crossing the 100 medals mark.

Chengalpattu took the second spot in the medals tally due to their superior gold medal count at 31 along with 26 silver and

36 bronze medals. Coimbatore ended with 23 gold, 40 silver and 39 bronze medals.

Salem was the biggest mover on the medals tally from the last edition as they jumped to fourth spot from 19th in 2023, winning 21 gold, 12 silver and 23 bronze. Dindigul was the other big mover as they jumped from 17th spot to 6th with 16 gold, 7 silver and 11 bronze.

The 2024 CM Trophy is one of the largest grassroots initiatives and this edition has attracted over 33,000 participants from 38 districts and competed across five categories—school, college students, public, government employees and differently-abled persons—in 36 sports disciplines.

Prior to the state meet, district level competitions were held across the state in which over 11 lakh players participated.

This was the first time that all the 38 participating districts found a spot on the medals tally with Nilgiris taking the last spot thanks to a bronze medal winning performance by A

Nafila in school girls' chess competition.

More importantly, all 38 districts managed to win at least one gold medal in the Games. But more than the medals, it was the passion and spirit of cerebral palsy athletes that mesmerised the spectators as they competed in football and athletics competitions. This year also saw the addition of track cycling, para shot put, handball, chess, fencing, judo, gymnastics and squash to the Games program along with Esports as a demo sport, that attracted over 5000 competitors in 8 categories.

The district and regional level competitions saw a 42% increase in participation while the CM Trophy overall saw an increase of 72% in total registrations. However, the most important take away from the Games was the abundance of talent that was on display from across the state and the government would now chalk out a forward path for the school and college athletes through SDAT scholarships and CM Champions Foundation.

2nd Test: NZ swell lead to 301 against India at stumps

AGENCIES

PUNE, OCT 25

Tom Latham played a fine captain's knock of 86 as New Zealand ended day two's play at 198/5 in 53 overs and lead India by 301 runs in the second Test at MCA Stadium on Friday.

After taking a 103-run first-innings lead, Latham was enterprising in his stay at the crease on a pitch assisting spinners and hit ten boundaries in his vital 133-ball knock of 86.

Tom Blundell has also looked solid in his unbeaten 30, after putting a stand of 60 runs with Latham for the fifth wicket.

Onus will be on him and Glenn Phillips (nine not out) to bat India out of the match, and try to force a result on Saturday. For India, Washington Sundar again emerged to be the pick of bowlers with 4-56, while Ravichandran Ashwin took a wicket and rest of bowlers couldn't step up to stop New Zealand's charge.

The final session began with Sundar's arm ball

sneaking under Rachin Ravindra's bat and hitting top of off-stump. While Latham got his fifty, after being dropped on 49 by Rishabh Pant, Daryl Mitchell got going with a sweep and down the ground boundaries.

But in a bid to hit a big shot off Washington's slower ball, Mitchell holed out to long-on. From there, Latham and Blundell picked the lengths easily, especially against Ravindra Jadeja, to get boundaries mostly through the off-side.

But Washington struck to take his fourth wicket and 11th of the game by trapping Latham lbw on the sweep.

Blundell and Phillips hanged around to ensure New Zealand ended a day full of complete domination on a high.

Brief Scores: New Zealand 259 and 198/5 in 53 overs (Tom Latham 86, Tom Blundell 30 not out; Washington Sundar 4-56) lead India 156 in 45.3 overs (Ravindra Jadeja 38, Yashasvi Jaiswal 30; Mitchell Santner 7-53, Glenn Phillips 2-26) by 188 runs

ISL 2024-25: Mohammedan SC, Hyderabad FC search for spark and firepower in pursuance of important points

AGENCIES

KOLKATA, OCT 25

The Indian Super League (ISL) 2024-25 Saturday doubleheader will cap off with a captivating contest between Hyderabad FC and Mohammedan SC. This is a clash where both sides are vehemently searching for a spark after showing occasional positive signs in the first few matches of the season.

As the campaign intensifies in the coming weeks, it is vital that they start getting three points under their belt in order to set up well for the gruelling, action-packed calendar coming their way. Mohammedan SC and Hyderabad FC are placed 10th and 11th in the ISL standings respectively as of now.

This will be the first meeting in the ISL between these two teams.



Hyderabad FC have won twice in the 12 times that they have faced a new opponent in the competition for the first time.

Mohammedan SC head coach Andrey Chernyshov explained that they need to undertake every match with utmost sincerity and seriousness. He wants his team to put up a show for the fans of the club tomorrow and live up to the

legacy of their club.

"We need to understand that this is a serious team. We need to play without pressure. The result may not be as important for us. But, we are a big club and there are traditions and we are together and we have to show that. We have to take it as a serious match and we need to play like before, give what we have," Chernyshov said.

AGENCIES

DHAKA, OCT 25

Temba Bavuma has been ruled out of the second Test against Bangladesh as he continues to recover from an elbow injury. Aiden Markram will continue to lead the side in the series in Bavuma's absence, with the latter aiming to be fit for the home Test series against Sri Lanka next month.

Bavuma injured his elbow in an ODI against Ireland earlier this month after falling awkwardly to complete a run. He retired hurt on 35 in the match and did not return to the field. It is the same elbow which got hurt during the T20I tour of India in 2022.

"We just feel medically he's not going to be ready for the second Test. We will tone down the (rehabilitation) programme so that he can be ready for



the Sri Lankan series," South Africa's Test coach Shukri Conrad said.

With Bavuma not taking any further part in the series, it is still uncertain whether he will stay with the squad in Dhaka or fly

back home to continue his rehabilitation and prepare for the Sri Lanka series.

South Africa's domestic first-class season kicks off on Wednesday, giving Bavuma the opportunity to play in up to three

matches before the first Test against Sri Lanka at Kingsmead on November 27.

"I'd like him to stay (in Bangladesh), and I've communicated that with him. But I also know that he's got a young family. But yes, I'd like him to stay. He still plays a valuable role. It's still his team. We'll see how it unfolds," Conrad said.

Matthew Breetzke, who made his debut in the first Test against Bangladesh in Bavuma's absence, is likely to retain his No. 6 spot in the second Test unless visitors opt for an extra all-rounder or bowler in the playing 11. In that case, Senuran Muthusamy would be a possible replacement who can also bowl left-arm spin. South Africa won the opening match by seven wickets to lead the two-match series 1-0 and boost

Real Madrid and Barca go into 'first Clasico' of the season after big midweek wins

AGENCIES

MADRID, OCT 25

All eyes will be on Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu Stadium on Saturday night when the home side plays bitter rivals FC Barcelona for the first time this season.

As usual, the game takes place with the big two occupying the top two places in La Liga, with Barcelona three points clear of Real Madrid after winning nine of their opening ten matches to the season and drawing the other.

Both teams are also in an optimum moment of

form, with Barcelona's impressive 4-1 win at home to Bayern Munich on Wednesday night, highlighting their positive start under Hansi Flick.

Real Madrid left more doubts on Tuesday as they trailed 2-0 at halftime to Borussia Dortmund, but their second-half fight-back in a 5-2 win showed their firepower in attack, with Vinicius Jr netting an impressive hat-trick.

There are moments when Carlo Ancelotti's side looks to lack motivation, especially early in games, but their ability to spring to life and then tear

rivals apart is what makes them feared, and a packed Bernabeu with a 'Clasico' atmosphere should mean motivation is one thing that isn't lacking.

Ancelotti has some injury problems ahead of the game, with Rodrygo suffering a hamstring injury against Dortmund, while Thibaut Courtois had a recurrence of the groin problem that sidelined him ahead of the last international break and will also miss out, along with Brahim Diaz, David Alaba and Dani Carvajal.

Andriy Lunin will replace Courtois in goal,

while Barca also have second choice goalkeeper Inaki Pena between the posts due to Marc Andre Ter Stegen's long-term knee problem.

Although Ronald Araujo and Andreas Christensen are still out for Barcelona, Spain midfielder Gavi is slowly working his way back to full fitness, and after brief appearances against Sevilla and Bayern, he will probably play at least some part in Saturday's game.

As for tactics, Ancelotti has already indicated that he is more interested in seeing his forwards

score goals than pressure high up the field, so Real Madrid are likely to invite Barca to take the game to them.

Flick has so far played a high defensive line, which does give rivals the chance to play the ball between the defense and the goalkeeper, but that could be inviting disaster against a team containing Mbappe and Vinicius.

It will be interesting to see if Barca defend slightly deeper, as they did at times in midweek, or whether they are willing to take the risk of being caught on the break.

Sikkim complete 10-team line-up for Rajmata Jijabai Trophy final round

AGENCIES

AGARTALA, OCT 25

Sikkim qualified for the Senior Women's National Football Championship for the Rajmata Jijabai Trophy from Group G after an emphatic 7-0 triumph over Chandigarh at the Umakanta Mini Stadium here.

Sikkim finished with an all-win record in the four-team group scoring 17 goals and without conceding any. Against Chandigarh, they led 4-0

at half time.

While Samjana Rai and Suju Hangma Limboo scored two goals each, Ongden Lepcha, Simran Gurung and Priya Chettri were the other scorers on Thursday.

In the other match of Group G, Gujarat beat Tripura 3-0 to finish with six points. Misabanu Sindhi (penalty), Khushbu Saroj (penalty) and Mausami Urang (own goal) were the scorers.

With this, the quali-

fication rounds of the Rajmata Jijabai Trophy came to an end. The eight group winners will join last year's champions Manipur and runners-up Haryana in the final rounds to be played from December 1.

The following are the group winners: Tamil Nadu (Group A), West Bengal (Group B), Railways (Group C), Maharashtra (Group D), Punjab (Group E), Odisha (Group F), Sikkim (Group G) and Jharkhand (Group H).

Muhammad Waseem steps down as UAE ODI captain, hands reins to Rahul Chopra

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, OCT 25

Muhammad Waseem has stepped down as captain of the UAE men's ODI cricket team, aiming to focus solely on his batting. After leading UAE for 26 matches from 2023 to 2024. Wicketkeeper-batter Rahul Chopra to shoulder the captain's responsibility of the team.

Chopra, with just seven ODIs under his belt, will debut as captain in the upcoming ICC Cricket World Cup (CWC) League 2 games in Oman, where

UAE will face off against the hosts and the Netherlands in early November.

"I have decided to step down as captain to concentrate on my batting in the ODI format. My best wishes are with the new captain, I will be giving him my full support," UAE Cricket posted on 'X'.

Waseem, a key figure in UAE cricket, took over the captaincy from CP Rizwan in March 2023 during the 2019-23 CWC League 2. His captaincy tenure saw the team go through challenging times, winning only

seven of 26 ODIs.

However, in those victories, Waseem shone brightly, averaging an impressive 64.28, including a century (119) against Papua New Guinea and three half-centuries. Unfortunately, his batting average dropped to 21.10 in the 19 losses, closer to his overall ODI career average of 25.44. Waseem's decision comes as UAE struggles to find their footing in the ongoing 2024-27 edition of the CWC League 2. They're currently positioned at the bottom of the table, having won only one

of their seven matches, with a recent eight-wicket loss to Namibia marking Waseem's final game as captain.

While Waseem steps back from the ODI captaincy, he remains a crucial player for UAE's T20I team. His form was evident in the recent tri-series in Namibia, where he topped the tournament's scoring charts with 159 runs across four innings. His contributions helped UAE clinch the series, securing three wins out of four matches to finish ahead of Namibia and the USA.

Sultan of Johor Cup: India hold New Zealand to a thrilling 3-3 draw

AGENCIES

JOHOR BAHRU, OCT 25

Indian junior men's hockey team held their nerves to end their round-robin stage with a thrilling 3-3 draw against New Zealand at the ongoing Sultan of Johor Cup on Friday. Gurjot Singh (6'), Rohit (17') and Talem Priyobarta (60') put their names on the scoresheet while Jonty Elmes (17', 32', 45') scored a hat-trick of goals for New Zealand with his powerful dragflicks.

While India continue to



start with a fine goal from Gurjot Singh in the 6th minute. Gurjot's timeliness was impressive as his first shot on goal, assisted by Sukhvinder, bounced straight back after the goalkeeper made the save.

India got off to a strong

In his second attempt, he skillfully lofted the ball to the roof of the net to earn India an important 1-0 lead.

In the 8th minute, India had a chance to extend their lead with two back-to-back PCs but the New Zealand goalie was outstanding in his efforts to save. In the following minutes, New Zealand created an attacking formation that helped them make a successful foray into the striking circle, but Rosan Kujur was sharp in his defence to keep them from scoring.

DC reviews implementation of NTEP in Erstwhile Doda District

J1 NEWS SERVICE
DODA, OCTOBER 25

Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh, who is also Chairman of the District TB Control Society, presided over a key review meeting to discuss extension of the contracts of staff working under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Program (NTEP).

The primary agenda was to consider extending these contracts up to March 31, 2025, for the erstwhile District Doda, aligning with the program's objectives for the year 2024-25.

Senior health officials including the Chief Medical Officers of Doda and Kishtwar, the Medical Superintendent of GMC Doda, the District Immunization Officer Doda, and District TB Officers from Doda, Kishtwar,



and Ramban attended the meeting. Additional attendees included Block Medical Officers, Dr. Ahamir Azad (TB Consultant), and Dr. Suresh Kotwal, a Pulmonologist and Community Medicine Professor at GMC Doda. These stakeholders contributed essential insights into staffing needs, resource allocation, and monitoring for effective TB control across the district.

The DC emphasized the importance of sustained efforts to eradicate tuber-

culosis, directing officers to process the contractual extensions according to NTEP guidelines. He highlighted the need for coordinated district-wide initiatives, particularly enhancing staffing and resources to support the program. Detailed discussions reviewed TB testing rates, laboratory infrastructure, and TB management success rates across the region, with officials presenting an overview of the current TB status, challenges, and progress made under NTEP.

In conclusion, all officers were instructed to expedite the necessary documentation for a smooth extension process. DC Doda encouraged continuous monitoring of the program's progress, focusing on overcoming challenges and achieving the district's TB eradication targets.

Chairperson DDC Kishtwar reviews status of services delivery, developmental activities in rural areas

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, OCTOBER 25

To resolve the pressing public issues, Chairperson District Development Council (DDC) Kishtwar Pooja Thakur today chaired a meeting with key officials from the District Administration here in the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex, Kishtwar.

The session began with the introduction of newly posted officers, followed by a welcoming address from ADDC Ghulam Rasool, who encouraged collaborative efforts among departments.

Chairperson Pooja Thakur emphasized the importance of inter-departmental cooperation to ensure timely, doorstep service delivery to the people. She directed the ACD to re-examine the tendering process for MGNREGA to assess its operational effectiveness, noting that tendering



norms should not impede development, particularly with the working season restricted by impending winter conditions.

The DDC Chairperson urged neutrality in public service delivery, instructing the Education Department to ensure teachers are assigned to their respective postings, with a compliance report due within a week. Additionally, she discussed crop insurance and beneficiary mapping with the Agriculture Department, stressing the need for swift establishment of the district's saffron park, and pledged full support for the project's success.

During the meeting, the

Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) highlighted a staff shortage that has impacted project implementation. Chairperson Thakur also inquired about progress on the Jarr Road under the PMGSY initiative and called for prompt compensation for affected landowners. DDC Member Palmar raised concerns over the Khattan Road in Palmar, prompting the Chairperson to request acceleration of the project. Furthermore, Tehsildar Kishtwar was instructed to provide regular updates on muck dumping along highways, and the R&B Paddar Department was directed to expedite compensation for landowners affected by

works in Nagseni under the RR plan. DDC Chairperson instructed executing agencies to prepare Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for link roads, assuring them of full support for timely project execution.

The Chairperson also brought forward pressing public issues, including the status of water reservoirs, the Kundal to Gulabgarh Water Supply Scheme, and ongoing water supply projects under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). She urged officials to expedite NOC issuance for the Lopara Water Kuhl and the Lopara WSS of Dachhan, to ensure timely project completion and mitigate Kishtwar Man-

dal's water scarcity. A detailed discussion was held on various issues, with multiple directives issued for swift redressal.

In her closing remarks, DDC Chairperson called upon the officers to remain proactive in addressing public concerns, encouraging a dedicated approach to meet the district's development goals and support the community's expectations.

Present at the meeting were Ghulam Rasool, Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDCC), Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of District Council, PO ICDS/CEO KDA Rishi Sharma, ACD Kishtwar, Phulail Singh, CPO Kishtwar, Shah Nawaz Bali, DSWO Zubair Ahmed DIO Kishtwar Kuldeep Kumar, ALC Mamta Sudershan, Tehsildar Kishtwar, XEN's, CHO Kishtwar Sajid Mustafa, BDOs along with other district and sectoral Officers.

DC Kupwara presides over CBTP on implementation of Project YUVA

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, OCTOBER 25

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan on Friday presided over a day-long capacity building training program (CBTP) under the ambitious Project YUVA (Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan) at meeting Hall of DC Office Kupwara.

Project Yuva is aimed at enhancing the skills of District and Sectoral level Officers of line departments for its effective implementation. The training programme was organized by the District Employment & Counselling Centre Kupwara in collaboration with District Administration Kupwara to equip the Officers with the necessary knowledge and expertise to successfully execute Project YUVA's objectives.

ADDCC Kupwara, Gulzar



Ahmed Bhat, Deputy Director Employment Kupwara, Arshid Qadir and other officers from line departments attended the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that Project YUVA aims to bring together various government schemes under one umbrella. The capacity building will enable Youth to navigate and benefit from government schemes and resources while fostering a more efficient and converged support

system. She lauded the initiative and assured full support and cooperation from the District Administration to ensure the successful execution of Project YUVA. She emphasized the importance of such capacity-building programs in achieving the desired results.

Ayushi urged the participants to make the capacity building programme more constructive and provide the feedback. The training session

saw the participation of District and Sectoral level Officers from different line departments.

During the training programme, Resource Persons (Experts) gave an insightful overview of the program, outlining its significance and long-term benefits.

While experts provided an in-depth briefing on the project's goals, strategies, and expected outcomes, offering a detailed roadmap for its implementation. Experts said that project Yuva will be AI-based, and it could leverage AI tools to enhance accessibility, personalize learning and streamline access to government schemes.

This event marked a significant step toward empowering officers of line departments to contribute effectively to the goals of Project YUVA.

GDC Ramban hosts study tour for students to SKUAST Jammu

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, OCTOBER 25

Institution Innovation Council (IIC) of Government Degree College Ramban organized a one day study tour for students to the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST) Jammu.

The study tour was organised under the overall supervision of Prof. Principal of the college Archana Kaul and in collaboration with Jammu and Kashmir Science Technology and Innovation Council (JKSTIC) Udhampur and coordinated by Shruti Khanna (District Coordinator from JKSTIC, Udhampur) and Dr. Rabinder Singh Sudan (Coordinator, Campus visit committee from SKUAST-Jammu).

During the visit, senior Faculty Dr. Rabinder Singh



briefed the students about varied activities and academic programmes of the University and motivated them to become future agripreneurs.

Later the students visited Mushroom and Apiculture units of the University. They learnt about different types of medicinal mushrooms, their round the year cultivation and nutritional importance. Dr. Moni Gupta (Faculty Department of Basic Sciences) gave a detailed presentation about the benefits of mushroom consumption and the biochemical com-

pounds present in them.

The students also explored the Department of Sericulture where Dr. Kamlesh Bali (Director of Sericulture Division) highlighted the importance of this industry in rural development and the benefits of beekeeping as a source of income generation. The students also visited the Institute of Biotechnology where they explored the recent advancement in tissue culture technique. A brainstorming study tour for the students with exposure to the latest advancements in entrepreneurship opportunities, the event witnessed 30 students accompanied by the faculty members - including Prof. Jawaid Sarver, Prof. Neetu Sharma, Prof. Ram Prakash, Dr. Anuj Gupta and Romika Devi.

DLC approves change of land use cases

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, OCTOBER 25

The District Level Committee (DLC) on change of Land use met here today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary to examine the pleas received. After a thorough review of 15 cases, the DLC found 6 cases fit for approval in the light of documents and compliance with land conversion rules. The DLC also rejected 1 case, sent back 3 cases for further review, and asked applicants to fulfill all required NOCs in other remaining cases. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh Charak, ACR, S. Harpal Singh, DFO Batote Abinav Ramotra, DFO Ramban Hitender Singh Chandel, Executive Engineers Jal Shakti Rajiv Gai, Executive Engineers PDD Tassaduq Hussain, CHO Anil Gorika, CAO Ram Gopal Sharma, CEO MC Ramban, Sudarshan Jamwal and other concerned officers.

Sainik Cooperative Public High School Tikri celebrates first annual day

J1 NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 25

Sainik Cooperative Public High School, Chanas Tikri, celebrated its first annual day function with great enthusiasm and joy.

The event revolved around the theme "Echoes of the Past, Vision of the Future," which was creatively expressed through a variety of musical and dance performances.

Special Secretary Cooperative Department, Purnima Mittal graced the occasion as the chief guest and inaugurated the function in presence of District Information Officer Rajinder Dagra, Deputy Registrar Cooperative Society Nishtha Nayyar,

Dr Hans Raj Sharma, founder member, members of the school management committee, staff and students. The program commenced with the flag hoisting ceremony, followed by the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, invoking divine blessings. Students enthralled the audience with theme-based cultural performances, including vibrant folk dances from various Indian states and a thought-provoking skit titled "Old Generation



vs. New Generation Lifestyle."

While addressing the gathering, the Special Secretary Cooperative Department praised the students for their confidence and commended the school for providing a platform that nurtures young talent. She also appreciated the efforts of the staff and the entire cooperative society for organizing such a remarkable event.

Baldev Chand Anthal, presented the annual report for the academic session 2023-24, highlight-

ing the school's achievements and milestones. The school management honored the toppers of the academic session 2023-24 for their outstanding performance.

The event concluded with a prize distribution ceremony, where stational who excelled in cultural performances were felicitated.

The vote of thanks was delivered by the school Principal, Vandana Gupta, expressing gratitude to all the guests and participants for making the event a grand success.

Subsidy worth Rs 49 lakh credited into account of 57 solar roof beneficiaries

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 25

In a major fillip to Roof-Top Solar Plants installation under the premier PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana in Kashmir Division, the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MN&RE) has released Central subsidy to the tune of Rs.48.73 lakh in favour of 57 domestic consumers, within a week's time of the commissioning of their plants by KPDCL Technical Teams.

Central subsidy of another 71 beneficiaries has already been redeemed by MN&RE and shall be released directly into their accounts in DBT mode.

In a press statement issued here today, a KPDCL spokesman stated that the beneficiaries of Central subsidy under PM Surya Ghar Yojana, are also entitled to the additional UT share of subsidy of Rs.9,000/- for capacity ceiling up to 3 kWp solar plants and the same shall be released soon.

The KPDCL spokesman reiterated that the subsidy of those consumers is released in real time whose document-



ation is complete in all respects on the National PM Surya Ghar Portal. Urging domestic consumers of Kashmir Division to lap up the scheme which is heavily subsidised up to 60%, the spokesman stated that 1105 consumers have already selected their empanelled vendors and are in various stages of procurement of solar plant equipment and equipment arrivals. "169 rooftops have so far been installed with capacity of 671.37 kW, indicating installation of higher capacity plants of 4 kWp on an average".

KPDCL is expecting another round of Central subsidy release to the tune of Rs.61.77 lakh for

72 beneficiaries whose claims stand already redeemed.

The spokesman exuded confidence that with 1105 vendors already booked by consumers, installed capacity is expected to reach 3.5 MWs over the next two months, which shall highly reduce the demand on Grid supply.

Highlighting the need for sustainable renewable energy, the KPDCL spokesman advised the interested consumers to reach out to KPDCL for facilitation in online operations and commissioning of their plants as also filling in their credentials correctly with respect to Consumer Name, ID and bank details.

DLSA Kathua spreads awareness about Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act



J1 NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, OCTOBER 25

A legal awareness program on the "Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013," was organized under the guidance and leadership of the Chairman, District Legal Services Authority, Kathua Jatinder Singh Jamwal (Principal District and Sessions) Judge, Kathua). The program was conducted by Secretary District Legal Services Authority Kamiya Singh Andotra and attended by female staff members of District Court Complex and PLVs of DLSA Kathua.

The Secretary, while deliberating on the Act, stated that sexual harassment at workplace is gender discrimination which violates fundamental rights to equality and life guaranteed under

the Indian Constitution. It not only affects aggrieved women's social and economic growth but also causes her to go through physical and emotional suffering.

"First step with regard to addressing this issue was taken up by the Hon'ble Supreme Court while issuing Vishakha guidelines which led to the enactment of the PoSH Act. Since "prevention is better than cure" the Act casts an obligation on employers to create gender sensitization workplaces and remove underlying factors that contribute towards creating a hostile working environment against women and the constitution of the Internal Committee to deal with such matters. Since the law makes the proceedings confidential, women employees were encouraged to stand up against any such unwelcome express or implied behaviour" she added.