

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
- Severe stomach pain
- Redness on the face
- Small red spots on the skin
- Stomach pain
- Stomach pain or vomiting
- Stomach pain or vomiting
- Stomach pain or vomiting

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

JINDRAH IMAGES

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CM Omar Abdullah reviews functioning of Housing & Urban Development initiatives

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 29

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today conducted a comprehensive review of the Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD) here at Civil Secretariat.

The review meeting aimed at evaluating the department's progress, identifying challenges, and setting priorities for urban development projects.

The meeting was attended by Advisor to Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to CM Dheeraj Gupta, Commissioner Secretary H&UDD Mandeep Kaur, Divisional Commissioners of both Kashmir and Jammu Divisions, and Commissioners of Srinagar and Jammu Municipal Corporations, among others.



The review meeting commenced with a detailed presentation by Commissioner Secretary Mandeep Kaur, who outlined the functioning of H&UDD and its affiliated organizations.

Discussions spanned across central funding for various schemes and departmental needs besides the key issues including policy gaps, outdated master plans and

overlapping mandates of development authorities. Also, the meeting highlighted the concerns about rationalizing human resources and ensuring the long-term viability of Smart City initiatives.

During the meeting, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah emphasized the importance of strengthening town planning efforts to address urban growth

effectively.

"The effectiveness of our town planning will determine the future livability of our cities," the chief minister remarked while stressing that urban planning must be resilient to meet the needs of the growing population.

During the meeting, several discussions also focused on organization-specific issues, policy

reform initiatives, and updates on projects implemented by Jammu Smart City Limited and Srinagar Smart City Limited.

The Chief Minister reviewed detailed project proposals and their current status, urging prompt action and accountability to drive visible progress.

Regarding the e-bus project under

3 terrorists killed in Akhnoor after attack on Army vehicle

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCT 29

A day after an attack on an Indian Army vehicle, two remaining terrorists were killed in Akhnoor area of Jammu taking the total number of slain terrorists to three, Officials said Tuesday.

As per news agency, "All Three Hardcore Terrorists Eliminated Post Intense Firefight. After round the clock surveillance throughout the night, an intense firefight unfolded today morning resulting in a significant victory for our forces. Relentless operations and tactical excellence has led to the elimination of three



terrorists. The operation also saw the successful recovery of war-like stores, marking a critical step in maintaining security in the region." This was confirmed by the army's Nagrota based 16 Corps.

One terrorist was killed yesterday as the army and other forces tightened the

cordon layers to ensure remaining terrorists don't flee. "With the first light of the day, two more terrorists were killed. It is being ascertained whether the group was part of freshly infiltrated one or they had travelled from other areas of Jammu to Akhnoor,"

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J&K State Election Commission issues Revised Revision Schedule for Panchayat Electoral Roll 2025

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCTOBER 29

The State Election Commission, J&K, today issued the Revised Revision Schedule regarding updation of Panchayat Electoral Roll-2025.

According to a document issued by the State Election Commissioner,

B R Sharma in this regard, the publication of Draft Panchayat Electoral Roll in Form PER-1 will be issued on 11.11.2024 (Monday), filing of claims and objections for additions/deletions/corrections/transposition on 11.11.2024 Monday to 09.12.2024 Monday, while special camps will be held at the

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Five-day inaugural session of J&K Assembly to be stormy

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 29

The five-day inaugural session of Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly, beginning on November 4, is expected to be stormy with a divided opposition set to corner the National Conference-led government on a host of issues including the promises made in the ruling party's manifesto.

The first session of Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly will begin on November 4 with the election of the Speaker at 10:30 AM. As already reported, NC's veteran leader and former Finance Minister Abdul Rahim Rather is set to become the Speaker as the ruling combine enjoys support of 55 members in the House.

The Bharatiya Janata Party, which has 29 members in the House, is unlikely to contest for post of the Speaker given that the ruling party is

likely to concede Deputy Speaker's post to it.

After the conclusion of election of the Speaker, the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will address the House on the same day at 11: 30 AM. The LG's address will set the tone for discussions in the House.

As per provisional calendar issued by the Legislative Assembly, a copy of which is in possession of news agency, obituary references for former MLAs who passed away since the last session of the erstwhile assembly will be read out in the House on November 5.

On November 6 and 7, there will be a discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the LG's address.

The discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the LG's address would continue on November 8 when the ruling combine would give its reply to address the opposition's concerns.

During the session, the opposition parties

are likely to corner the ruling National Conference party on a number of issues, especially the commitments made in their election manifesto.

All eyes would be on whether the National Conference-led government would bring a resolution against the scrapping of Article 370 and the downgrading of J&K to a Union Territory.

In its election manifesto, the NC promised that the Jammu and Kashmir assembly, in its first list of business after elections, will pass a resolution against the Union Government's decision to strip the region of its statehood and special status.

It also promised the restoration of Article 370 and Jammu and Kashmir's statehood as well as implementation of the autonomy resolution passed by the erstwhile assembly in 2000.

Free 200 units of electricity, relief from

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

26 nursing students among 30 injured in Udhampur accident

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCT 29

At least 30 persons, including 26 nursing students were injured after a passenger vehicle met with an accident in Farna Magjote area of Udhampur district on Tuesday, officials said. An official told news agency that the bus lost control due to overspeeding and fell into a roadside ditch. He said that 30 people, including 26 nursing students were injured, who have been shifted to GMC Udhampur. The official said that two among the injured are said to be critical. Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai said that soon after getting the information a rescue operation was launched and all injured were evacuated to GMC Udhampur.

Terror associate arrested in Pulwama, 10 live grenades recovered: Police

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 29

Jammu and Kashmir Police in Pulwama on Tuesday said to have arrested a terror associate along with 10 grenades. A police spokesman in a statement issued to the news agency said that on 29th October, based on inputs about an imminent terror attack in Pulwama town, a joint naka of Pulwama SOG, 55RR and CRPF 182Bn, was laid in the evening hours at the Circular road, Pulwama. During the checking, police said that one person namely Danish Bashir, son of Bashir Ahmad of Dangerpora, Pulwama, who was travelling on his Scooty, was asked to stop at the circular road and search was made. Upon checking, police said that 10 live grenades and 05 batteries were found to be in his possession which were carefully wrapped and kept in the under seat of the two wheeler.

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Army used technology, Artificial Intelligence to pin down terrorists in Akhnoor: GoC 10 Infantry

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCT 29

Major General Sameer Shrivastava, General Officer Commanding, 10 Infantry Division Tuesday said that security forces used unmanned vehicles, artificial intelligence (AI) and dozens of modern technology driven gadgets in the counter-terror operation, which led to clean operation at Akhnoor. Three terrorists have been killed during the operation.

The GoC also applauded the local population's support from Akhnoor and its adjoining areas, which assisted armed



forces initially in locating and zero-in terrorists, who on Monday attacked an army ambulance.

As per news agency, while addressing a press conference, the GoC said that the army has done a commendable job by eliminating three hard core terrorists without any

collateral damage. "We have used unmanned vehicles, artificial intelligence that gave us a quick and successful result. We neutralized three terrorists in a clean operation, which is the most neat operation in recent times".

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Appointment of Advocate General in J&K faces delays amid consultations

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCT 29

The process of appointing a new Advocate General for the Jammu and Kashmir remains in progress, with consultations underway between key stakeholders to finalize a suitable candidate.

The post has remained vacant since October 18, following the resignation of senior advocate DC Raina, who served with distinction for over a decade. While temporary delays in such appointments are not uncommon, officials are optimistic that the matter will be resolved soon.

The Advocate General holds a pivotal role, repre-

senting the administration in legal matters before the High Court.

Traditionally, governments aligned their legal teams with their administrative priorities, ensuring that legal strategies reflected policy objectives. However, since Jammu and Kashmir's reorganization into a Union Territory in 2019, the Lieutenant Governor's office has taken on greater responsibilities in appointing the Advocate General under the provisions of the J&K Reorganization Act.

Sources familiar with the process told news agency that consultations are ongoing to find a candidate acceptable to all parties. Both the adminis-

tration, led by the Lieutenant Governor, and political leaders, including those from the National Conference, are working towards a balanced solution that reflects the need for an experienced legal hand to handle the region's evolving legal landscape.

While several names are being discussed informally, officials have emphasized that the focus remains on appointing someone with expertise, neutrality, and the ability to navigate legal complexities without political overtones. Some candidates in consideration have extensive experience in constitutional and public law, ensuring that the eventual selection will bring com-

petence and stability to the administration's legal affairs.

Officials remain confident that a consensus will be reached soon, with an announcement expected in the coming days. The aim, they say, is to ensure the appointment strengthens Jammu and Kashmir's legal apparatus, reflecting both continuity and professionalism.

With both the Lieutenant Governor's office and political leaders committed to finding common ground, the focus remains on ensuring the selection process aligns with the region's broader legal and administrative needs. The appointment of the

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CM Omar flags off 'Run for Unity' from SKICC to celebrate National Unity Day

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 29

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today flagged off the 'Run for Unity' from the back lanes of the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Center (SKICC) here, marking the celebration of National Unity Day.

This day honors the birth anniversary of independent India's first Home Minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

The event was attended by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Principal Secretary Home, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, and various civil and police



officials. The 'Run for Unity' attracted a diverse crowd, with participation from civil administration, police, CRPF, and a significant number of local youth, including both men and women.

Speaking at the event, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah highlighted that the 'Run for Unity' symbolizes the spirit of unity, a value deeply cherished by the people of Kashmir.

Prior to flagging off the run, the Chief Minister administered a unity pledge to the gathered participants. The run concluded at the scenic Botanical Gardens in Chashma Shahi.

District Administration Srinagar Holds Comprehensive Meeting to Finalize Five-Year District Irrigation Plan

J I NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 30

In order to finalize the Five-Year District Irrigation Plan for Srinagar, a comprehensive meeting was today held under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat at here at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex.

This initiative is part of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) scheme aimed at enhancing irrigation infrastructure and ensuring optimal utilization of water resources in Agriculture sector across the District.

The meeting was among others attended by the Chief Planning Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Divisional Forest Officers for Urban and Social Forestry, Executive Engineers from Irrigation



and Flood Control and Groundwater Division, and the District Soil Conservation Officer, among other district-level Officers.

During the discussions, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need to expand cultivable land under assured irrigation, increase on-farm water use efficiency, and promote precision irrigation techniques.

He stressed the importance of implementing the "more crop per drop" approach to enhance water conservation and

boost agricultural productivity.

The Chief Agriculture Officer Srinagar presented a detailed PowerPoint on the current status and projected advancements in the irrigation infrastructure under PMKSY. The presentation highlighted strategies to bridge gaps in irrigation facilities and improve water management to support local farming communities.

The meeting ended with directives for all Departments to work collaboratively in fulfilling the objectives of PMKSY and to ensure timely and effective execution of the Five-Year District Irrigation Plan. This plan is expected to make a significant impact on the agricultural landscape of Srinagar by increasing productivity and ensuring sustainable water use in the coming years.

Directorate of Ayush J&K celebrates 9th Ayurveda Day with Great fervor

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCTOBER 29

To celebrate 9th Ayurveda Day, Directorate of Ayush J&K on Tuesday organized Dhanvantari Jayna in the premises of Dhanvantari Kunj at Govt. Ayurvedic Hospital Jammu.

An impressive program was organized at Brigadier Rajinder Singh Auditorium University of Jammu wherein Prime Minister's address from All India Institute of Ayurveda was telecasted live from New Delhi.

The program was attended by more than 600 Ayurveda professionals from across the UT of Jammu Kashmir. The Prime Minister dedicated many health schemes and programs to the public on Dhanvantari Jayanti. The Prime Minister emphasized that time is opportunity that Classical clinical texts of Ayurveda be made more evidence-based to make it a global science



of wellness.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar was the chief guest at the event organized at University of Jammu by the Directorate of Ayush J&K.

In his address, the Divisional Commissioner congratulated the Ayurveda fraternity on Dhanvantari Jayanti and reiterated the role which Ayurveda can play in achieving the holistic well being of countrymen. He also emphasized that emerging health threats due to

antimicrobial resistance and climate change can be reduced by integrating Ayurveda in the mainstream health care delivery system. He also highlighted that Ayurveda is not a health care system but an Indian way of life, our cultural heritage and it is our prime responsibility to preserve and promote it. He further said that through research based approaches we must also conserve Dogra legacy of Ayurveda and Dogra Ayurvedic Treatises

and showcase the same.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Mohan Singh, Director Ayush J&K highlighted that Ayurveda is considered as the Mother of all health science. He also informed the public that 9th Ayurveda Day is being celebrated in more than 150 countries across the globe with the theme of Ayurveda Innovations for Global Health. "Ayurveda's strengths, especially in promotion of Wellness tourism, Entrepreneurship opportunities in Ayurveda, new Therapeutic Modalities for combating emerging illnesses require to be promoted," he added. He said that the Ayurveda fraternity needs to be more creative and innovative to globalize Ayurveda, while emphasizing on inculcat-

ing a scientific temperament to make Ayurveda a research based healthcare option. "Ayurveda can be promoted as an evidence based personalized health science," he said and highlighted the role of digital technology in the promotion of strengths of Ayurveda and its acceptance as the mainstream system of medicine. He also appreciated Ayurveda Medical officers and paramedical staff for the various achievements of the Directorate of Ayush J&K. Dr. Suresh Kumar Sharma, Deputy Director Ayush Jammu, Dr. Rakesh Kumar Raina, Assistant Director Ayurveda, Dr. Vandana Dogra Medical Superintendent Govt. Ayurvedic Hospital, Dr. Aruna Bhat Deputy Medical Superintendent GAH, Dr. BR Dubb, Authorized Officer Homoeopathic Board were also present in the program along with Medical Officers from various districts.

9th National Ayurveda Day-2024 -Dhanwantri Jayanti celebrated at Town Hall Doda

J I NEWS SERVICE
DODA, OCTOBER 29

District AYUSH Office, in collaboration with District Administration Doda, celebrated 9th National Ayurveda Day (Dhanwantri Jayanti) with traditional zeal gaiety by organizing a scintillating event here today in the Town Hall.

The event was attended by Ayurveda practitioners, experts and enthusiasts who came together to promote the ancient Indian healing system.

Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh inaugurated the programme and free Ayurvedic Medical Camp in the presence of SSP Mohammad Aslam. The lamp lighting ceremony was followed by an informative session on the benefits of Ayurveda. The celebration also included yoga and meditation sessions, highlighting the importance of a balanced lifestyle for overall well-



being.

Renowned Ayurveda practitioners and scholars shared their knowledge and insights on the holistic approach to health and wellness aligning with this year's National Ayurveda Day theme "Ayurveda for innovation and Global health".

In his address, the District Development Commissioner emphasized the significance of Ayurveda in the treatment of lifestyle disorders and chronic diseases. He advised people to opt for Ayurveda treatment considering the crucial role it is going to play

in the healthcare system in coming times.

Attendees at the event were given free consultations and demonstrations of Ayurvedic treatments. IEC and Herbal medicine stalls were put up in the town Hall for the awareness of the people.

The programme was attended by District Program Officer Paramjeet Singh, CMO Dr. Omkar Bhagat, District Ayush Officer Dr. Ajay Tikoo, Retired officers and officials of the department, PRIs, local people, and Officials of District Ayush Department Doda.

Div Com Jammu reviews exam arrangements for selection of Constables

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCTOBER 29

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar today convened a meeting to review the preparations for OMR based exam being conducted by J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB) to fill constable posts in three categories. The posts to be filled are Armed, IRP, Executive, SDRF falling under one category and Telecommunication and Photographer being two other categories.

The meeting was attended by Chairperson JKSSB Indu Kanwal Chib, SP Headquarter Jammu and other concerned officers, while Deputy Commissioners along with SSPs of Jammu division districts participated in through video conferencing.

The meeting discussed measures to be taken at different levels to ensure



fair and smooth conduct of the exams.

While giving details, the Chairperson JKSSB informed that the Board has initiated the process for conducting OMR based examination for selection against Constable Posts in Home Department. It was further informed that more than 5 lakh candidates from across J&K have applied and more than 3 lakh applicants are expected to appear in Jammu division.

The Div Com directed DCs to identify centres

keeping in view the huge number of applicants appearing in the exam.

The tentative exam dates have been fixed as December 1, 2024 for category one, Dec 8 for category 2 and Dec 22, 2024 for category three.

He stressed on putting in all possible measures for foolproof security, maintenance of law and order, provision of logistic support for successful conduct of examinations.

The SSPs were directed to deploy an adequate number of men and

women police personnel for frisking and other arrangements at each centre.

The Div Com also directed DCs concerned to make available adequate arrangements of uninterrupted power supply, water supply and other amenities in the examination centres during the examinations and ensure that the candidates are not put to any discomfort.

The Div Com directed DCs to nominate observers/magistrates for each centre.

GDC Vijaypur organises Essay Writing competition, Symposium to observe Vigilance Awareness Week

J I NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, OCTOBER 29

NSS Unit (KHIDMAT) of Government Degree College Vijaypur, in collaboration with Cyber Jagrookta Cell of the college, organized Essay writing competition event on the theme "Culture of Integrity for Nation's Prosperity" to celebrate Vigilance Awareness Week 2024. In the essay writing competition, Krish Gupta of B.Com sem V secured 1st position, while Shariya Sharma of B.Com. sem. V bagged second position and Tanvi Saini and Shriya Langeh both of B.Com. sem. V shared third position.

The events were coordinated by Prof. Poonam Kundan, Co-Convenor Cyber Jagrookta Committee and Dr. Naseem Chowdhary, NSS PO and co-coordinated by Dr. Radhika Rasyal, Lecturer, Department of History and Prof. Madhu Bala, Lecturer, Department of Geography.

Distt. Admin Bandipora observes Rashtriya Ekta Diwas with Unity Pledge Ceremony



J I NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 29

In commemoration of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day), the District Administration Bandipora today organized a Unity Pledge ceremony at the Mini Secretariat, Bandipora.

This day, celebrated annually across India, honors the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the architect of national unity and integrity. The Unity Pledge was administered by Addition-

al Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Zaffar Husson Shawl in the presence of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri.

Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Mohammad Ashraf Bhatt, Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Shabir Ahmad Wani, Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Irfan Bahadur, District Information Officer (DIO) Aadil Manzoor, and officers and officials from various departments across

the district also took part in the pledge ceremony, reiterating their commitment to the unity and integrity of the nation.

Addressing the participants, the DC emphasized the importance of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas in fostering a sense of unity and collective responsibility toward the country's progress. He urged everyone to work towards promoting harmony and inclusive development in society, embodying the spirit and vision of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

DC Srinagar chairs Meeting to drive Revival and Preservation of Srinagar's Architectural, Cultural Heritage

J I NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 29

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting here to discuss strategies for the revival, restoration, and maintenance of Srinagar's architecture and heritage.

The meeting was attended by Additional Secretary for Art, Culture, and Language, Chief Planning Officer, Deputy Director of Archives, Archaeology & Museums Kashmir, Deputy Director of Libraries Kashmir, District Informatics Officer, Accounts Officer, and Mohammad Saleem Beigh from the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH).

At the outset, Deputy Commissioner highlighted the significant cultural value of Srinagar's architectural heritage, underscoring the critical need to preserve these historical assets as symbols of the District's identity and legacy.

He noted that protecting Srinagar's architectural heritage is essential for cultural continuity, tourism promotion, and enhancing educational



opportunities within the district.

The meeting held a detailed discussions on defining specific modalities and establishing collaborative frameworks for effective implementation of heritage revival and restoration practices.

Action points were outlined, covering both short-term and long-term initiatives focused on preserving historical structures, monuments, and manuscripts.

Progress on digitization efforts was also reviewed, with updates provided on initiatives to safeguard fragile manuscripts and archival materials.

These efforts aim to protect valuable historical documents from degradation while increasing their accessibility and sustainability for academic and

cultural research.

The digitization project will allow residents and visitors alike to explore Srinagar's rich historical legacy through digital platforms.

Dr. Bilal emphasized the importance of public access to these archives and encouraged initiatives to enhance cultural awareness among the district's residents and visitors. He directed all departments involved to expedite efforts and collaborate closely to ensure the smooth progression of the heritage preservation project.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to protect and revitalize Srinagar's historical assets, ensuring they are preserved for future generations to appreciate and learn from.

Group of Ramban farmers leave for exposure tour to Bhaderwah



J I NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, OCTOBER 29

A group of 25 farmers drawn from different parts of Ramban District left for an exposure tour organized under the Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADDP).

The delegation headed to the Regional Horticulture Research Sub Station and Krishi Vikas Kendra in Bhaderwah, Doda to gain hands-on experience with advanced horticulture techniques. Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh Charak, officially flagged off the tour in the presence of Chief Horticulture Officer Anil Kumar Gorka.

Before departure, the CHO briefed the orchardists on the importance of the program, encouraging them to observe and adopt modern apple high-

density plantation techniques and management practices. He also emphasized on learning protected cultivation techniques, which can offer better crop yields. The orchardists will have opportunity to visit local orchards where they will observe innovative technologies that can help elevate their own horticultural practices and ultimately improve their socio-economic well-being.

To ensure a comprehensive learning experience, District Level Subject Matter Specialist Sandeep Sharma has been tasked with coordinating the visit. He will facilitate lectures and field visits to equip the farmers with up-to-date techniques and practical knowledge, which they can apply to their own orchards for increased productivity.

3rd Convocation Day held at ITI Shopian

JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 29

The 3rd Annual Convocation day was on Tuesday celebrated at Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Shopian. The event brought together students, parents, faculty and esteemed guests to celebrate the accomplishments of talented technicians. The Convocation Day event featured a series of highlights, including a welcome address by Superintendent ITI Shopian, who congratulated the pass-out trainees and encouraged them to pursue their dreams with determination and enthusiasm. He further highlighted that the ITI Shopian has the distinction of securing first position in the All India Trade test in horticulture trade.

The ceremony was attended by Sayeem Rafiq Wani District Officer JKEDI and Aishaq Ayub, Counselling Officer District



Employment Department Shopian whose insightful address inspired technicians about entrepreneurship as career option as they embarked on their professional journeys.

On the occasion, diplomas and certificates were distributed among 200 pass out students who acquired skills in ten trades at ITI Shopian. Each student was recognized for dedication, hard work, and achievements during their time at the institute.

The program also included heart-warming success stories and testimonials from some of the

pass outs, highlighting the transformative impact of their training at ITI Shopian. These stories served as a source of inspiration to their peers and underlined the institute's commitment to empowering individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary for success in their chosen careers.

Cultural performances, showcasing the diverse talents of students, added a vibrant celebratory atmosphere to the event. These performances underscored the importance of nurturing not only technical skills but also creativity and self-expression.

NCORD meeting

DC reviews enforcement of Drug control measures in Samba District



JI NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, OCTOBER 29

To address the pressing issue of drug abuse, Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma on Tuesday convened a district-level meeting under the Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) framework to fortify preventive and enforcement strategies in Samba District. The significant meeting united key stakeholders across multiple sectors to review and amplify the district's efforts in combating drug-related challenges.

Emphasizing the significant role of educational institutions, the DC directed the Chief Educa-

tion Officer (CEO) to organize a series of seminars and special lectures across schools and colleges to educate students about the dangers of substance abuse.

Sharma underscored that the students and parents must be actively engaged, promoting a community-wide commitment to a drug-free lifestyle.

Law enforcement agencies were instructed to intensify their vigilance through random inspections in public areas. DC Samba emphasized the need for a zero-tolerance approach, urging swift and decisive action against drug-related activities.

During the meeting, various departments briefed the Deputy Commissioner on ongoing initiatives aimed at drug prevention, including community outreach programs, awareness campaigns, and efforts to tackle both the supply and demand aspects of the drug problem. He encouraged departments to work in synergy, strengthening the district's approach to curbing this societal menace. The NCORD meeting was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police Samba, Sh. Vinay Kumar; Additional Deputy Commissioner Samba, Jagdish Singh; ACR; SDMs; and other district officers.

DC reviews status of ongoing Developmental Projects in Rajouri

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, OCTOBER 29

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma on Tuesday chaired an inter-departmental meeting here in Dak Bungalow to assess developmental progress and address obstacles affecting project execution across the district. The meeting aimed at accelerating the pace of ongoing works, resolving bottlenecks, and enhancing inter-departmental coordination to ensure timely project completion.

DC Sharma emphasized the need to expedite development projects in all subdivisions, especially major initiatives such as the Ayush building in Thanamandi, the GMC building, chain-link fencing in Nowshera, bridges in Darhal, Boys' Hostel in Sunderbani, Girls' Hostel in Budhal, and the Ekalavya Model School in Kotranka. He highlighted the urgency of completing these facilities to strengthen infrastructure and meet the social development needs of the district.

He also instructed the Executive Engineer of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) to visit Draman, Draj A, Chambi Trar, and Kotranka to evaluate the progress of ongoing water schemes. Emphasizing the need to ensure basic amenities,

DC Sharma directed all relevant agencies to prioritize groundwater facilities, approach roads, and water connections under JJM, specifically prioritizing JNV Kotranka, schools, and government institutions under this scheme.

In addition, DC Sharma instructed the Divisional Forest Officers (DFO) of Rajouri and Nowshera to strengthen enforcement against timber smuggling. Recognizing recent wildlife incidents, he also directed authorities to issue safety alerts in Budhal areas experiencing an increase in bear attacks, urging residents to remain vigilant and exercise caution.



AYUSH Department Celebrates 9th Ayurveda Day at District Kishtwar



JI NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, OCTOBER 29

The AYUSH Department Kishtwar celebrated the 9th Ayurveda Day, also known as Dhanwantri Jayanti, with great enthusiasm and community involvement.

The annual event is held on Dhanteras to pay tribute to Lord Dhanwantri, revered as the God of Ayurveda and to honour the traditional practices of India's ancient health system.

The event began with a welcoming address by Dr. Tariq, Nodal Officer of AYUSH, followed by the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by the chief guest of the Deputy Commissioner, Rajesh Kumar Shavan.

The DC emphasized the role of Ayurveda in

modern healthcare and encouraged participants to integrate Ayurvedic principles into their daily lives. He highlighted Ayurveda's significance as an ancient science rooted in India that has now extended its influence globally. Ayurveda emphasizes disease prevention by addressing root causes, promoting a return to this traditional approach to health and well-being. He urged the community to adopt these practices for a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

The celebration aimed to raise awareness about Ayurveda's holistic health benefits and foster a deeper understanding of preventive healthcare methods rooted in this traditional system.

The event included

insightful lectures on Ayurveda by Dr. Monika, Dr. Junaid Iqbal, and others.

The program concluded with the commitment to ensure active participation in the week-long series of AYUSH camps continued across various schools, colleges, and districts to spread awareness.

The Department of AYUSH expressed gratitude for the community's participation and pledged to continue promoting Ayurveda across the region.

Dr. Atul Gupta delivered the vote of thanks at the end of the occasion.

This celebration in Kishtwar is part of a nationwide effort to revive and mainstream Ayurveda as a sustainable approach to healthcare.

DIC Kulgam organizes Awareness programme for students at Govt. Polytechnic College Kulgam

JI NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM, OCTOBER 29

The District Industries Centre (DIC) Kulgam today organized an awareness programme for students at Govt. Polytechnic College Kulgam.

General Manager District Industries Centre (DIC) Kulgam, Dr. Bashir Ahmad Lone, Principal Govt. Polytechnic College Kulgam, IPOs and other resource persons were present in the awareness session.

The General Manager spoke about industrialization and its importance and sensitized the participants about the different schemes and incentives of the Industries and Commerce Department.

He also sensitized the participants about prevailing drug menace and urged them to stay away from such activities and be focused to achieve their goals.

Principal Polytechnic College Kulgam, Altaf



Gowhar also delivered a speech and motivated young technically equipped students towards innovation and entrepreneurship.

During the programme, detailed sessions regarding brief overview and benefits

under PMEGP, NCSS, MSME, PM Vishwakarma and Land Allotment were discussed.

The programme ended with a questions/ answer session and witnessed a threadbare discussion between the participants and speakers.

Run for Unity held in Jammu to mark National Unity Day



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCTOBER 29

The "Run for Unity" was organised here today, starting from Gulshan Ground and ending at Hari Singh Park, to mark National Unity Day. The event saw wide participation from citizens, officials and students, all promoting the theme of unity.

DDC Chairman Jammu Bharat Bhushan was pres-

ent as the chief guest along with MLA Suchetgarh Gharu Ram as the special guest.

The event also saw the presence of ADGP Anand Jain, Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar, DC Jammu Sachin Kumar Vaishya, SSP Joginder Singh and ADC Ansuya Jamwal. ADDC Sher Singh administered the unity pledge.

The run was flagged off

by the dignitaries from Gulshan Ground, which culminated at the Hari Singh Park.

The event also brought together district officers, NCC cadets, and a large number of school students. Artists from the Department of Information and Public Relations presented patriotic songs, sharing messages of unity that resonated with the audience.

DLSA Kulgam, Social Welfare Department organize Awareness programme regarding Sexual Harassment



JI NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM, OCTOBER 29

In compliance to the Plan of Action formulated by JKLSA, the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Kulgam in collaboration with Social Welfare Department today organized an awareness programme regarding Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) 2013 also known as PoSH ac at Conference Hall (Mini Secretariat) Kulgam.

The programme was organized under the chairpersonship of Pr. District and Session Judge Kulgam, Aijaz Ahmad Khan and under the guidance of Secretary DLSA Kulgam, Muzamil Ahmad Wani.

Nazia Hasan, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Kulgam; President Bar Association Kulgam, M Shafi Bhat; Deputy-LADC, Roshan Aara; Assistant LADC, staff of DLSA, Panel Lawyers, PLVs, Tehsil Social Welfare Officers, Coordinator-District Hub for Empowerment of Women, Administrator One Stop Centre (OSC)

Kulgam, Superintendent-PAREESHA Kulgam, Gender Specialist Dist. Hub for Empowerment of Women, Students of GDC Kulgam and GGHS Kulgam, members of Juvenile Justice Board and members of Child Welfare Committee Kulgam.

The resource persons for the programme spoke on various provisions of PoSH Act and deliberated on issues faced by women working in different fields. They stressed on the report mechanism of the women employees and said that minor issues lead to bigger problems and violence related to women.

Secretary DLSA Kulgam focused on student audience and working employees and said that steps need to be taken for preventing marginalized sections of society, and women empowerment requires basic supervision at a developing stage also so that they do not face any bigger issues and continue to strive towards development and prosperity.

He said that a duty is cast on our shoulders to take steps for awareness of the target audience so that they come forward and report to proper authorities.

Later in the question answer session, Secretary DLSA Kulgam answered various queries of the students and panel Lawyers.

ADDC Shopian presides over Felicitation Ceremony of District Level toppers of Kala Utsav

JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 29

The Department of Education, Shopian today organised a felicitation function at Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School, Shopian in order to appreciate the contribution of district level toppers of Kala Utsav.

Kala Utsav is an annual event organized by the Ministry of Education to promote and celebrate artistic talent among students from schools across the country.

Part of the SAMAGRA SHIKSHA initiative, Kala Utsav encourages students in secondary and higher secondary schools to engage in arts, including visual arts, music, dance, theater and traditional crafts.

The event provides a platform for students to showcase their cultural heritage, creative skills, and artistic talents. It usually involves regional and national-level competitions, with winners recognized at the national level.

In the district, more than 3000 students participated in the Kala Utsav across four educational zones of the district. 20 best performing students of the district were rewarded in the function today.

The aim is to foster an appreciation for the diverse cultural traditions of India and encourage creativity as an integral part of education, said ADDC, Dr Nasir Ahmad Lone on the occasion.

He also advised students on a wide range of issues including the importance of parental guidance, vital role of teachers in the educational trajectory of a student.

Earlier, CEO Shopian, M Shabir interacted with students and commended their achievements in the competition.

Awareness program on career in banking held at GCW Udhampur

JI NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 29

Career Counselling and Guidance Cell Government College for Women Udhampur, in collaboration with Canara Bank, organized an awareness programme on career in banking and financial products.

Babita Kumari and Shivani Gupta Banking associate were the key resource persons.

They gave a detailed presentation about

the financial products available with banks. The officials also offered the facility of zero balance account opening in Canara Bank which would help the students gain speedy financial inclusion. Earlier, Dr. Ajay Kumar Shamra HoD Mathematics presented the formal welcome address and gave a brief description about the various activities undertaken by the Career Counseling Cell GCW Udhampur.

DC Kulgam flags-off 'Run for Unity' from Mini Secretariat



JJ NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM, OCTOBER 29

The Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan along with Sr. Superintendent of Police Kulgam, Sahil Sarangal today flagged-off 'Run for Unity' from Mini Secretariat Kulgam to commemorate Rashtriya Ekta Diwas.

The 'Run for Unity' embodied the spirit of unity and togetherness that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel so passionately advocated.

The event was organized by District Administration in collaboration

with Youth Services and Sports, Education Department and District Police.

General public including students, local residents and officers/officials participated in the said event. The event successfully promoted messages of Unity, National Integration and the spirit of togetherness.

On the occasion, the DC administered Rashtriya Ekta Diwas Pledge to the participants. Further Parade/March Past was held by District Police Kulgam at DPL Kulgam.

The programme was attended by ACR, ACD and other Civil/Police Officers.

Distt. Admin flags-off 'Run for Unity' on National Unity Day at Kupwara, Handwara

JJ NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, OCTOBER 29

The District Administration Kupwara on Tuesday organised 'Run for Unity' and unity pledge administering ceremony at Kupwara and Handwara to observe the 'National Unity Day.'

The 'Run for Unity', aimed at commemorating the birth anniversary of the visionary leader Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, commenced from DC Office Kupwara and concluded at Govt. Boys Higher Secondary School Kupwara embodying the spirit of unity and togetherness that Sardar Patel passionately advocated.

The event saw participation from a diverse array of individuals, officers of District Administration including SSP Kupwara, ADDC Kupwara, ADC Kupwara, ASP Kupwara, ACR, CPO Kupwara, DYSSO and Dy. CEO, Govt employees, students, local residents, and other dignitaries.

This gathering highlighted the importance of community involvement in promoting national values.

At Government Higher secondary School Kupwara, ADC Kupwara, M Roul

Rehman administered the unity pledge to the participants.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the ADC underscored the significance of observing the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas. He said the day not only commemorates the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, but also re-affirms the inherent strength and resilience of the nation.

Meanwhile, to commemorate 'Rashtriya Ekta Diwas,' Handwara Police in collaboration with Sub District Administration Handwara today organized 'Run for Unity' events at Handwara.

The 'Run for Unity' was flagged-off from Chotipora to Environment Hall Handwara by Additional Deputy Commissioner, (ADC), Handwara, Aziz Ahmad Rather & Sr. Superintendent of Police PD Handwara, Mir Ifroz.

The run culminated at Environmental Hall Handwara in which more than 200 participants including students from different schools of Sub Division, civil society members, security forces personnel participated with full zeal and enthusiasm.

Rashtriya Ekta Diwas: DC leads 'Run for Unity' at Shopian

JJ NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 29

In prelude to the National Unity Day, which is being celebrated on October, 31 every year in honour of the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, a Run for Unity was today held jointly by District Administration and District Police.

The run saw an overwhelming response from the public and officials

who converged at Amusement Park Padpawan to take part in the Mini Marathon, which was flagged-off by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar.

From Padwapan, the Unity Run traversed the historic Mughal Road, along the Rambaira and culminated at the Helipad Shopian, where DC addressed the gathering.

The event is dedicated

to promote national unity and reaffirm commitment to national integrity and social harmony, and it reminds us of the valuable sacrifices made by the people for the integration of the country, DC said on the occasion.

ADD, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone, ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, Additional SP, Tehsildar, Shopian and all district and sectoral officers and police were present.

IIM Jammu Hosts Army Public School, Udhampur for an Insightful Campus Tour and Career Guidance

JJ NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCT 27

The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu under the leadership of Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu welcomed a group of enthusiastic students from Army Public School (APS), Udhampur, for an enriching academic campus tour on October 28, 2024. This visit was part of IIM Jammu's ongoing community engagement efforts, aiming to inspire and motivate students by offering a first-hand experience of higher education and career opportunities at a premier management institute. The initiative sought to ignite curiosity and aspirations in the young students, encouraging them toward higher education and leadership. Led by their teachers Ms. Sonika Rajput, Shri Rakesh Sharma, 22 students from the Commerce Stream of Class XII (Commerce Stream) toured the IIM Jammu campus, which included visits to state-of-the-art facilities such as the Nalanda Library, smart classrooms, Mandapam Auditorium, Kautilya MDP block, Executive Education Classrooms, Upcoming Amphitheatre, cafeteria and various collaborative spaces. The students had the unique opportunity to interact with IIM Jammu's fraternity who shared valuable insights into the diverse career options available in management and related fields. The students were also shown the Campus AV of IIM Jammu, pro-



viding them with an in-depth understanding of the institute's journey, growth, and academic offerings. Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director of IIM Jammu, emphasized the institute's commitment to fostering a learning environment that extends beyond its own students to benefit the broader community. He expressed delight in hosting the students from APS Udhampur and highlighted the importance of such visits in helping young minds realize their potential and empowering them to make informed academic and professional decisions. He reiterated IIM Jammu's dedication to providing platforms that promote learning, growth, and leadership. As part of the visit, the students participated in a career counselling session organized by the PR Office, where they were provided with detailed information on the various programs offered at IIM Jammu, including the enrolment process for IIMs. The interactive session allowed the students to ask questions about career paths and

gain insights into higher education in fields such as management, finance, and entrepreneurship. The event concluded with a lively Q&A session, where experts addressed the students' queries, leaving them inspired and more confident about their future academic endeavours. This exposure was designed to encourage students to pursue their academic goals with ambition and dedication.

The students and accompanying teachers expressed their heartfelt appreciation for the warm welcome and the enriching experience at IIM Jammu. The visit provided valuable exposure to the world of management education and underscored its relevance to the students' future career aspirations.

IIM Jammu remains committed to promoting educational outreach and excellence in the region, in line with its mission of nurturing future leaders and change-makers. The visit was coordinated by the Public Relations office at IIM Jammu.

Pledge Ceremony to mark Rashtriya Ekta Diwas held at ZPHQ Jammu

JJ NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCT 29

A pledge ceremony to mark the observance of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day) was conducted at the Zonal Police Headquarters, Jammu. The ceremony marked a significant step towards upholding the unity and integrity of India.

Vishal Manhas, SP, S.O. to ADGP Jammu, administered the pledge in which all officers and personnel solemnly vowed to work towards strengthening national integration and promoting communal harmony. During the ceremony, all participants pledged to work towards a harmonious and prosperous nation.

Rashtriya Ekta Diwas is observed annually to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Iron Man of India. The police department is actively participating in the week-long observance through various activities, including seminars, workshops, and awareness campaigns.

The police department is committed to maintaining law and order and ensuring the security of the nation. By organizing such events, the department aims to foster a sense of national pride and patriotism among its personnel and the public.

The ceremony was attended by Sh. Sajad Ahmed Bhat, Chief Prosecutor Officer, ZPHQ Jammu; Sh. Raman Joshi, PRO to ADGP Jammu; Sh. Mukesh Sharma, AO ZPHQ Jammu; Sh. J.S. Slathia, DySP, Pvt. Secy to ADGP Jammu; Sh. Himanshu Gupta, Sr. Prosecuting Officer, ZPHQ Jammu; S. Narinder Singh, DySP, ADO ZPHQ Jammu; and all officers/officials posted at ZPHQ Jammu.

HDFC Bank advises customers to be cautious against digital arrest fraud

JJ NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCT 29

HDFC Bank, India's largest private sector bank, advises customers to be cautious against digital arrest fraud with an aim to increase awareness about such fraud.

In a digital arrest scam, fraudsters target individuals or businesses, posing as law enforcement or government officials. Victims are threatened with a digital arrest warrant for alleged tax evasion, regulatory violations or financial misconduct. The fraudsters ask for payment in the form of 'settlement fee' or 'penalty' to withdraw the digital arrest warrant. Once the payment is made, the fraudsters disappear, leaving no trace of their identity. The victims are left with a monetary loss and sometimes an identity

theft, due to the personal details shared with the fraudsters.

Cautioning on this fraud, Mr. Manish Agrawal, Senior Executive Vice President - Credit Intelligence and Control - HDFC Bank, said, "Fraudsters are directly targeting the emotions of the customers. When someone receives a call or message from fraudsters claiming to be law enforcement officers, always confirm their identity by independently contacting the government / law enforcement officials via proper channel. Staying vigilant and being aware of such fraudulent practices plays a very important role in avoiding falling prey to such scams."

Real government officials or law enforcement agency will never ask for payment or banking details. Scammers often

create a sense of emergency to make you act quickly without thinking. Do not share sensitive information such as KYC details, bank details like - user ID password, card details, CVV, OTPs or PIN number, with anyone. Always verify the officer's identity by independently contacting the government official or law enforcement agency.

Look for errors in documents and avoid clicking on suspicious links. Report such suspected fraudulent communication on Department of Telecommunication's Chakshu Portal - www.sancharsaathi.gov.in immediately.

The month of October is observed as the National Cyber Security Awareness Month (NCSAM) globally and in India, with an objective to spread awareness on

cyber security among people. This year, the campaign theme is "Cyber Surakshit Bharat" (#SatarkNagrik) which emphasises the importance of being vigilant against online frauds and following secure banking practices.

In the event that a person becomes the victim of any online fraud, they should immediately report the unauthorised transactions to the Bank in order to get the payment channel blocked, i.e., cards/UPI/net banking to safeguard against future losses. Customers should also file a complaint by calling 1930 helpline number started by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) as well as submit a complaint on the National Cyber-crime Reporting Portal at (<https://www.cybercrime.gov.in>).

FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

CM Omar Abdullah...

FAME-II and the PM e-bus Sewa scheme, he directed an increase in e-bus frequency on city routes and instructed that the routes be expanded to include key hospitals. "Citizens need reliable and accessible transport options. Connecting e-buses to hospitals and high-demand areas is essential for a responsive urban transport network," he stated.

The meeting also included reviews of major urban development schemes such as CITIIS 2.0, AMRUT 2.0, PMAY (Urban), the National Urban Livelihood Mission, and the National Clean Air Programme. Abdullah encouraged the department to address bottlenecks in project implementation. "Efficient execution of these programs can transform our cities into cleaner, more sustainable spaces for all residents," he said.

The Chief Minister reaffirmed his government's commitment to a holistic and sustainable urban development approach, aiming for enhanced quality of life for all urban residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

3 terrorists killed in...

the officials said.

In the operation, the Army's expert dog Phantom was also killed in action. Officials said that Belgian Malinois breed male dog Phantom was born on 25 May, 2020 and commissioned in the army from August 2022 mainly for assault and reconnaissance duties.

The Indian Army has paid their tribute to the martyred dog, acknowledging its exceptional bravery and dedication. The Indian Army has expressed its condolences and praised the dog's loyalty and dedication. Meanwhile, the incident highlighted the crucial role that service animals play in the Indian Army's operations. Despite the risks, these animals continue to serve with unwavering loyalty and dedication.

Earlier, security forces launched a massive cordon

and search operation in Asaan, Battal areas of Akhnoor following the terrorists attack on an army ambulance yesterday morning.

Security forces have sealed all potential exit points, while additional reinforcements have been mobilized to ensure no escape routes are left open for the terrorists believed to be a group of recently infiltrated ultras.

National Security Guards (NSG) commandos also reached the Assan Mandir of Battle area of Akhnoor to assist the army and Jammu police, which are leading the operation. The Army has pressed a helicopter, drones and other technology gadgets to support ground forces.

In a first, Russian made Boyevaya Mashina Pekhoty commonly known as BMP-II, the infantry combat vehicle also known as 'Sarath' also deployed in Akhnoor to support the cordon and search operation.

Intelligence sources said this fresh infiltration from LoC this morning because the border is just 2 km from the encounter site. Additional Director General of Police Jammu, Anand Jain, and Shiv Kumar, DIG, Jammu-Samba-Kathua Range also visited the encounter site with army officers and reviewed ongoing operations.

In the past one week, at least 12 people, including two soldiers were killed in separate incidents of terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir.

On October 23, unidentified assailants fired on a group of labourers that included both locals and non-locals in J&K's Ganderbal. Two labourers died on the spot, and four others and the doctor succumbed to their injuries subsequently.

On October 25, two soldiers of the 18 Rashtriya Rifles and two porters were killed in a terrorist attack on a military truck carrying supplies near the Nagin area of Botapathri in Kashmir's Gulmarg.

An high alert was already sounded for Jammu's border districts, including Jammu, Kathua, Samba, Poonch, and Rajouri after recent terror attacks in Ganderbal and Baramulla.

J&K State Election ...

Polling Booth Locations on 16.11.2024 (Saturday), 17.11.2024 (Sunday), 23.11.2024 (Saturday), 24.11.2024 (Sunday), 30.11.2024 (Saturday) and 01.12.2024 (Sunday). The Panchayat Election Booth Officials (PEBO i.e. VLW/MPWIGRS) along with Assembly BLOs shall remain available at these Polling Booth Locations with the requisite forms and panchayat roll for guidance of the electors.

Similarly, disposal of claims and objections will be done on 23.12.2024 (Monday) by the ERO while publication of final Panchayat Electoral Roll -2024 will be done on 06.01.2025 (Monday).

Five-day inaugural...

power and water crisis, transfer of hydro-electric power projects to Jammu and Kashmir and providing 12 LPG cylinders to the economically weaker sections each year for free are among the other promises made by the party in its election document.

Terror associate...

Cognizance of the said recovery has been taken and a case under FIR number 224/2024 under section 18, 39 UAPA, 3/ Explosives Act, and the said suspect was arrested, police said, adding that further investigation into this matter is going on and more arrests are likely to take place.

Army used technology...

He, however, quickly added that Indian Army's four-year-old sniffer dog Phantom was killed in action during counter-terror operations. According to officials, the

canine sustained fatal bullet injuries while trying to protect the troops from terrorists' assault.

"We lost one Army Dog - he was ahead when we were doing search operations, and terrorists fired upon the Dog. It's due to his sacrifice, many lives could be saved" the GOC said.

He further added that besides technology, the army also used specialized armed vehicles of its armed wing.

"After this operation, such information was spreading that the Army had used BMP - we had used that kind of vehicle because the area was tough - with a gradient of 30 degrees and dense forest - we used those vehicles after locating terrorists to reach there," the senior Army official added.

The security forces eliminated three terrorists after they had fired at an ambulance in the army's convoy in J&K's Akhnoor sector on Monday.

"When these people (terrorists) were detected, we received information from the village and hence our reaction was quick. Their purpose for which they had come wasn't fulfilled and hence they opened fire at our convoy, Major General Shrivastava said.

"The way terrorists were armed, we believe that they were here for a big purpose. Terrorist organisations had also posted that they were planning to do something big. Hence, we were prepared, and all the organisations including intelligence agencies were working in coordination," he added. The GOC said that for the first time US made M-4 carbine was recovered from slain terrorists in Akhnoor area. "M-4 has been recovered earlier in other parts of the Jammu.

Appointment of Advocate...

next Advocate General will play a crucial role in supporting the administration through key legal challenges while maintaining the confidence of all stakeholders.

Baramulla observes Rashtriya Ekta Diwas with a mega 'Run for Unity' Rally

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 29

Hundreds of citizens in Baramulla, including students, government officers, officials, and senior citizens, gathered and participated in a mega rally organized by the District Administration under the theme 'Run For Unity'.

The event was organized in celebration of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, a prominent leader and the architect of a unified India. The rally commenced from Janbaz Pora Baramulla and witnessed enthusiastic participation with participants carrying placards and banners depicting messages of national unity and patriotism. It proceeded



through the main highway connecting Baramulla and Kupwara and culminated at Bipin Rawat Stadium, with participants chanting slogans that echoed the ideals of togetherness and strength through unity.

Speaking at the event, the DC expressed his appreciation for the participants' enthusiasm, especially the youth, who serve as the torchbearers of Sardar Patel's vision of a united India. The DC

further said that Rashtriya Ekta Diwas is not only a celebration of one of our nation's greatest leaders, but it is also a reminder for all of us to strengthen the bonds of unity and harmony. Later, the DC distributed certificates and medals among the winners of the 'Run for Unity' race, in recognition of their hard work, perseverance, and dedication to the spirit of unity that the event embodied.

ADC conducts surprise inspection of Govt Offices in sub-division Handwara

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, OCTOBER 29

The Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Handwara, Aziz Ahmad Rather today conducted a surprise inspection of few Government offices in sub-division Handwara to evaluate the institution's working, punctuality of staff and check the compliance of government guidelines.

During the surprise inspection, the ADC visited Tehsil Social Welfare Office Handwara, ICDS Office Handwara and others to assess the service delivery and punctuality of the officials.



Speaking on the occasion, he said that the surprise inspection aimed to assess employee attendance and operational efficiency to ensure accountability and uphold high standards of public service.

During the inspection, the ADC reviewed biometric attendance records, engaged with staff members, and evaluated work-

place conditions to promote a culture of responsibility and enhance the overall effectiveness of government offices.

On the occasion, ADC emphasized maintaining punctuality and a productive work environment for delivering quality services, reinforcing the importance of transparency and dedication within the offices. He said that no laxity will be allowed in the maintenance of proper discipline and punctuality in government offices, in the interest of the greater common good and efficient public service delivery.

Rana exhorts HODs to closely monitor execution of development projects in districts

J1 NEWS SERVICE
MENDHAR, OCTOBER 29

Minister for Jal Shakti, Tribal Affairs, Forests, Ecology & Environment, Javed Ahmad Rana, today chaired a meeting of district administration of Poonch during his extensive visit to the region.

Present in the meeting were Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and (HoFF), Biswajit Kumar Singh, Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal, MD JJM, G N Itoo, Director RDD Jammu, Mumtaz Ali, CE's, SSP Poonch, Mumtaz Ahmed and other senior district officers. The Minister, while reviewing development scenario of the district, said that we have a collective responsibility towards welfare and development of the people. All stakeholders have to work towards achieving this goal while involving the community at the local level, he asserted.

Javed Rana impressed upon the officers to maintain the highest level of transparency and accountability in implementation of development schemes. He emphasised the significance of continuous monitoring of develop-



ment projects for ensuring timely completion while maintaining all quality parameters in execution of these works.

The Minister instructed the officials to work diligently and ensure timely completion of various vital projects like Exchange Mohr to Mohalla Bakerwalan and Soyian Katha to Zinda Peer roads besides 100 bedded Girls Hostels at Balakote and Mendhar.

Javed Rana asked the PDD officials to complete smart metering at the earliest and announced creation of mechanical wing in the district. He also asked for ensuring implementation of forest right act in letter and spirit besides disposing of land claims swiftly.

The Minister said that the Omar led Government believes in establishing a

transparent and accountable governance for the people and ensuring equitable development of all regions of the UT.

"Collaborative efforts are required at all levels to move ahead in achieving the set goals, the Minister asserted while highlighting the crucial role of DDC in interdepartmental coordination and convergence at district level to accomplish timely execution of developmental projects.

Meanwhile, the Minister inaugurated Girls Hostel at Government Degree College, Mendhar established under Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan which aims at providing strategic funding to eligible Higher Educational Institutions. The Hostel has been completed at a cost of Rs.2.5 crore.

DLSA Gbl launches awareness campaign to promote NALSA's toll-free helpline number 15100



J1 NEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, OCTOBER 29

In accordance with the directions of National Legal Services Authority and J&K Legal Services Authority, and under the guidance of Abdul Nasir, Chairman District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Ganderbal, the Secretary DLSA Ganderbal, Sheikh Babar Hus-

sain today launched an awareness campaign for NALSA's toll-free legal aid helpline number 15100 in District Ganderbal.

The initiative aims to provide accessible and equitable justice to all citizens, particularly marginalized and vulnerable sections of society through NALSA Helpline 15100.

Secretary DLSA Ganderbal highlighted the key features of NALSA Helpline toll free number 15100. He said, Call 15100 without incurring any charges, access legal aid anytime, anywhere in any language through NALSA Helpline 15100. This initiative will bridge the gap between citizens and the legal system, providing free legal assistance, advice, and guidance to needy persons at the earliest without visiting any

office. He apprised that the NALSA Helpline 15100 offered Legal advice and guidance, awareness on legal rights and entitlements, referral to local legal services authorities and panel lawyers and moreover guidance on mediation and conciliation. He also apprised that every person can call for any legal aid assistance through NALSA Helpline 15100.

Secretary DLSA Ganderbal launched the campaign by fixing banners of NALSA helpline 15100 (toll free) at different places within the District particularly at Front Office DLSA Ganderbal and Subsidiary Jail Dignibal Ganderbal. In addition the PLVs (Adhikar Mitras) of District Ganderbal also participated in the campaign by fixing banners of NALSA helpline toll free number 15100 at various public places, including hospitals, Tehsil offices, police stations, schools, and legal aid clinics etc.

GDC Marh hosts Orientation cum Induction Programme for 1st Semester students

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCTOBER 29

Deeksharambh Committee of Government Degree College Marh, in collaboration with IQAC and Student Presidium organized a two day "Deeksharambh/orientation cum Induction Programme" for 1st Semester students of session 2024-25. Induction programme was inaugurated by the College Principal Prof. Rakesh Kumar Koul by lighting the lamp in presence of all faculty members amid recitation of Saraswati Vandana and Sanskrit Shlokas by Mr Kewal.

The programme aimed to welcome and acquaint fresher students with the college's resources, faculty and different academic offerings. Principal of the college extended a warm welcome to the new students of UG NEP 1st Semester.

He encouraged the students to work hard and motivated them to achieve their goals in life.

Earlier, Prof. Madhavi Prasher Convener Deeksharambh welcomed the fresher students and informed them about Deeksharambh.

Prof. Imtiaz Shahid, Convener IQAC, briefed the students about the significance of IQAC in the life of a student. Dr. Balwinder Saini from the Department of Chemistry acquainted the students about the attributes and salient features of National Education Policy-2020 vis-à-vis revised course structure, holistic and multidisciplinary approach, Digi locker, credits, JUCC portal mapping etc.

A Slide show highlighting achievements and activities of different departments of the college was also screened for the fresher.

GCE Jammu celebrates Diwali with children at Muskan Centre



J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCTOBER 29

The NSS unit and Women Development Cell of Government College of Education (GCE), Jammu on Tuesday celebrated Diwali with the children at the Muskan Centre, spreading joy and creating awareness about eco-friendly celebrations.

The initiative aimed to foster inclusivity while emphasizing that Diwali, the festival of lights, should be celebrated without contributing to environmental pollution.

Dr. Jyoti Parihar, the principal of the college, inaugurated the event, expressing her gratitude towards everyone involved in making the celebration special for

the children. The NSS Program Officer, Professor Sarita Dogra, along with other faculty members—Dr. Shubhra Jamwal, Professor Kiran Thapa, Professor Roopa Kumari, Professor Deepali, and Professor Ambica—actively participated in the celebrations. The volunteers of the NSS unit adorned the centre with vibrant rangoli patterns and traditional diyas, creating a festive and warm ambience. A cultural program followed, featuring music, dance, and interactive sessions with the children, ensuring their joyful participation. The volunteers also distributed eatables to the children, adding to the festive spirit and making the event even more memorable.

Distt. Admin Ganderbal organizes 'Run for Unity' to commemorate National Unity Day



J1 NEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, OCTOBER 29

In a spirited observance of National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas), the District Administration Ganderbal today organized the 'Run for Unity' event, attracting participants from all walks of life.

The run, symbolizing the importance of unity, commenced from Qamaria Ground and concluded at the Mini Secretariat Ganderbal which was led by Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shyambir, SSP Ganderbal, Wasim Qadri along with the Addition-

al District Development Commissioner, Mushtaq Ahmad Simmani, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Gulzar Ahmad besides other District and Sectoral Officers.

On the occasion, the DC led the administration of the Rashtriya Ekta pledge, reaffirming the district's commitment to promoting peace, unity, and the values upheld by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Participants, who included students, local youth, government officials, and members of civil society, pledged to uphold the spirit of unity and integ-

egrity of the nation. Addressing the participants, the DC praised the enthusiasm of the participants and highlighted the essential role each citizen plays in fostering national integrity. Through events like 'Run for Unity,' the district reaffirms its dedication to promoting harmony, solidarity, and an inclusive society, he added.

The District Administration expressed gratitude to all participants and supporters of the event for their active involvement and commitment to the cause of unity.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI HYDRAULIC DIVISION KISHTWAR

TENDER NOTICE

e-NIT No. EE/HYD/K/52 of 2024-25 Dated: 28/10/2024

e-Tenders are invited on behalf of Lt. Governor UT of J&K from approved and eligible contractors registered with UT of J&K Govt. for the following works of Jal Shakti Hydraulic Division Kishtwar.

S.No.	Name of Work	Name of Division	Advt. Cost Rs. In laacs	Cost of Document (in Rs.)	Account Head for Treasury Challan	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Time allowed for completion	Date & Time of opening of Tender	Class of Contractor
01	MAINTANANCE REPAIR/ RESTORATION OF DAMAGES EMERGENT/ URGENT NATURE OF WORKS IN PANCHAYAT UPPER PALMAR UNDER M and R (REPAIRMENT OF GSR TELMEL and MEERNA)	Jal Shakti Hydraulic Division Kishtwar.	1.995	600/-	0215	3990/-	30 Days	As Per detail given below	A,B,C,D
02	MAINTANANCE REPAIR/ RESTORATION OF DAMAGES EMERGENT/ URGENT NATURE OF WORKS MINOR EXTENSION OF VARIOUS WATER SUPPLY SCHEMES IN ATHOLI AND ITS ADJACENT AREAS UNDER M and R.	Jal Shakti Hydraulic Division Kishtwar.	1.00	600/-	0215	2000/-	30 Days		A,B,C,D

- Date of Publishing 28-10-2024.
- The Bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 05:00P.M on 28-10-2024 to 04-11-2024 (1400Hrs).
- The Bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 05:00P.M on 28-10-2024 to 04-11-2024 up to 1400Hrs. The bids received will be opened at 16:00 Hrs on 04-11-2024 on line.
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- As per the instruction of the Principal Secretary to Government Finance Department J&K Srinagar vide his No: - O.M No. A/24(2017)-651 Dated: - 07-06-2018 regarding furnishing of hard copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the bidder who is declared as L1 after opening of financial bids.
- The cost of tenders should be collected by introducing e-challan or simply uploading a copy of necessary treasury challan/receipt.
- Similarly, instead of insisting on actual Call Deposit Receipt, a copy of same duly pledged to the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Hydraulic Division Kishtwar should be uploaded by the tenderers. However, before allotting the work or issuing the supply order, the CDR should be obtained and kept on record.

No: -HYD/K/e-NIT/2024-25/5478-97

Date: -28-10-2024

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti Hydraulic Division,
Kishtwar.

DIP/J-6337/24
Date: 30-10-24

EDITORIAL

Crisis within Congress far from over

The recent Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir have unveiled troubling rifts within the Congress party, raising serious questions about leadership accountability and strategic decision-making. Allegations of sidelining deserving young leaders in favor of weak candidates have sparked a firestorm of discontent among party members, casting a shadow over the party's credibility and future prospects. According to multiple media reports, young Congress leaders expressed their frustrations through social media, claiming that senior party figures deliberately fielded less competent candidates in certain constituencies, ostensibly to pave the way for BJP victories. This assertion, if proven true, not only undermines the democratic principles that Congress espouses but also reflects a troubling willingness among established leaders to compromise the party's integrity for perceived political gain. The situation is further exacerbated by claims that some candidates were selected due to financial motivations rather than merit or community engagement. This alleged transactional approach to candidate selection raises ethical concerns and diminishes trust among the very grassroots workers who form the backbone of the party. When candidates are chosen based on convenience rather than capability, it becomes increasingly difficult to mobilize support and inspire confidence among voters. Additionally, the strategic missteps during seat-sharing negotiations with the National Conference have not gone unnoticed. Reports indicate that the Congress party surrendered several seats in the Jammu region where it historically had a stronghold, potentially compromising its ability to contest effectively against the BJP. Such decisions, perceived as short-sighted, further alienate young leaders who are eager to bring fresh perspectives and innovative strategies to the party. In response to these challenges, the Congress has initiated a fact-finding mission led by senior leader Ravinder Sharma. While this step is commendable, it must translate into actionable insights that prioritize accountability and transparency within the party. Grassroots engagement is crucial, but so is the need to listen to the voices of young leaders who represent the future of the Congress party. Their frustrations reflect a broader yearning for reform and a return to core values that prioritize democratic representation and effective leadership. The party's historical legacy as a secular and democratic force in the region rests heavily on its ability to adapt and respond to the aspirations of its constituents. There is still hope among party workers that with corrective measures, Congress can reclaim its position as a formidable opponent to the BJP. However, this can only be achieved through a commitment to nurturing young talent, ensuring merit-based candidate selection, and fostering an inclusive environment where diverse voices are heard and valued. The recent Assembly elections serve as a crucial juncture for the Congress party. It is imperative that senior leaders heed the concerns of their young counterparts and adopt a more transparent, democratic approach to leadership. By doing so, they can not only mend the rifts within the party but also reinforce their relevance in the evolving political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir. The road ahead is fraught with challenges, but it is also laden with opportunities for renewal and growth—if only the party chooses to embrace them.

The web of conspiracy theories and the US election

SANTHOSH MATHEW

In every era, conspiracy theories have captivated the public imagination, creating a whirlwind of suspicions, accusations, and intrigue. Today, with the American presidential election in the rearview mirror, the air is thick with conspiracy theories, some rooted in historical patterns and others fueled by recent global events.

From ancient prophecies to modern speculations, these narratives show how deeply conspiratorial thinking is woven into society, even influencing one of the most powerful democracies in the world. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a wave of theories dominated headlines, each offering a different perspective on the virus's origin and spread. For example, when former U.S. President Donald Trump labelled COVID-19 the "Wuhan virus," he fanned the flames of speculation that the virus was the result of Chinese bioengineering. Simultaneously, however, a counter-narrative gained traction, suggesting that the virus was an American creation, designed and disseminated as part of an alleged biological warfare program.

Even within the conspiracy community, viewpoints diverged: was COVID-19 a lab-born pathogen or a consequence of environmental manipulation? A particularly unique theory even claimed the virus spread through the electromagnetic signals of 5G towers, resulting in people burning down cell towers in the United Kingdom. The COVID-19 narrative was far from alone in raising eyebrows. Conspir-



acy theorists link current fears to past events—from the HIV/AIDS epidemic to natural disasters. Some hold that HIV was an engineered product of the U.S. military's biological weapons division, first tested on prisoners in the 1970s before it spread outside government control.

Others go back further in history, believing that HIV stemmed from scientific mutations, a theory allegedly supported by Russian virologists who argue that HIV was a modified form of the VISNA virus, created in a laboratory setting. Nobel laureate Wangari Maathai also claimed in 2004 that AIDS was no accident, attributing its origin to American laboratories.

Natural disasters, too, have not escaped the lens of conspiratorial imagination. In the wake of the catastrophic 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, rumours spread that U.S. military tests were to blame. The claim was that sophisticated nuclear weapons testing off the coast of Indonesia could manipulate the weather and disrupt

seismic activity. Alongside such theories, another narrative has taken shape, labelled the "Thucydides Trap"—a concept rooted in the belief that rising powers, such as China, often seek to destabilize dominant powers, exemplified by the release of COVID-19 as an alleged bio-weapon against the United States. Conversely, some assert that COVID-19 was a means for the U.S. to undermine China, spurring a dramatic escalation of mutual suspicion. Even the 9/11 attacks are rich ground for conspiracy theories. There are over four million articles online dissecting and speculating on every aspect of the attack, including claims of prior U.S. knowledge and deliberate inaction. Such theories propose that the tragedy served as a pretext for increased American military involvement in the Middle East, bolstering the economic interests of defence industries.

In such an environment, it is hardly surprising that suspicion surrounds recent American presidential elections. Elec-

tion season in the United States has always been a prime opportunity for conspiracy theories, with the latest election being no exception. In this context, Nostradamus, the French astrologer and reputed seer of the 16th century reappears in the collective imagination. Nostradamus is often cited as having "predicted" world events, from the rise of Hitler to the terror of 9/11. As American political dynamics shift, believers interpret Nostradamus' cryptic prophecies to suit contemporary issues, citing his supposed foresight about Trump's ascension and even a second term. Such theories proliferate because they tap into pre-existing beliefs, adding layers of mystery to the already intricate political landscape. One particularly respected figure in the American election-prediction community is historian Allan Lichtman. Dubbed the "Election Nostradamus," Lichtman has accurately forecasted the outcomes of multiple presidential elections over the past few decades.

Although Lichtman's predictions are based on a well-formulated system, his track record and the nickname he's acquired seem to lend credence to the idea that prophecy and foresight have a place even in the most rational domains. Lichtman's projections of a Democratic victory fueled hope among Biden and Harris supporters, while some conspiracy theorists proposed that the "powers that be" were covertly steering the election outcome to align with Lichtman's track record. In the age of social media and instantaneous communication, conspiracy theories spread rapidly.

The adage, "A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes," aptly describes how quickly misinformation can take hold. The rise of the internet has only amplified this effect, granting conspiracy theories a global platform.

Notably, the Flat Earth Society has found new life online, continuing to challenge the scientifically accepted fact that the Earth is round. The society's followers persist in their belief, interpreting satellite imagery and NASA's findings as government propaganda.

Similarly, speculation surrounds the historic 1969 moon landing. Despite NASA's documentation and evidence, sceptics argue that the moon landing was an elaborate hoax staged to one-up the Soviet Union in the Cold War space race. Believers insist that the televised moonwalks were filmed on Earth, attributing the iconic image of Neil Armstrong to American propaganda efforts.

The moon landing con-

trovery may be one of the most persistent conspiracy theories, as it continues to captivate audiences more than 50 years later.

As much as conspiracy theories focus on the United States, they are not exclusive to any single nation. Still, America's global influence and extensive media presence make it especially susceptible to scrutiny. Government mistrust underpins many of these theories, exemplified by the Roman historian Tacitus, who posited that the actions of untrustworthy rulers breed public suspicion.

According to Tacitus, regimes that lose the faith of their citizens tend to fuel the fires of conspiracy, using public confusion as a tool to maintain control. In the current political climate, where truth is elusive and media narratives frequently conflict, conspiracy theories are likely to thrive. They emerge not only from a need to question authority but also from an inherent fascination with the unknown.

For every piece of verified information, there is a counter-theory that rejects it, and conspiracy theories transform historical and current events into captivating narratives for believers and sceptics alike.

As American democracy continues to face these claims, it's clear that conspiracy theories are not going away any time soon. Rather, they will evolve, adapting to each new event and generation with the same intensity that has fueled them for centuries.

(The writer is an associate professor; views are personal)

Merge yourself in light of lights

RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJJI

The biggest and the brightest of all the festivals celebrated across India as well as the whole world is about to arrive and fill our lives with joy and happiness. Yes! We all know that's none other than "Diwali" or as we say "Deepawali" in India.

Such is the magic of this festival that throughout the 4-day celebrations, illuminates the whole nation with its brilliance, and dazzles all with its joy. Though each of the four days during Diwali is

separated by a different tradition, what remains true and constant is the celebration of life, its enjoyment and goodness. We all know that as per the Hindu calendar,

Diwali is celebrated on the darkest night of the month of Kartik. That is why it is also considered an occasion of victory of light over darkness or good over evil. Kartik month is the 8th lunar month of the Hindu calendar.

This month is considered the holiest of all the months in the Hindu calendar. Kartik Snaan (Bath) is given a lot of importance by Hindus wherein it is

customary for people to go to the holy rivers or oceans because it is a general belief that your sins or bad karmas are washed away or forgiven when you perform this ritual, but all these are only symbolic. However, Kartik means change or transformation from the old to the new.

It is the last festival in the year that is celebrated as the conquest of the virtues over the vices by 'bathing in the ocean of knowledge' i.e. 'Gyaan Ganga' to cleanse the soul of all the impurities accumulated in the dark ages. It is thus a unique process to change a man (Nar) from

ordinary to an elevated perfect man or deity called "Narayan".

Going by history, the festival of Diwali can be traced back to ancient India, when it was probably an important harvest festival. However, various legends are pointing to the origin of Diwali or 'Deepawali.' Some believe it to be the celebration of the marriage of Shri Lakshmi with Lord Vishnu. Whereas in Bengal the festival is dedicated to the worship of Mother Kali, the goddess of strength.

Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed God, the symbol of auspiciousness

and wisdom, is also worshipped in most Hindu homes today. In Jainism, Deepawali has an added significance to the great event of Lord Mahavira attaining the eternal bliss of nirvana.

Diwali also commemorates the return of Lord Rama along with Sita Ji and Lakshman Ji from his fourteen-year-long exile and vanquishing the demon-king Ravana. In joyous celebration of the return of their king, the people of Ayodhya, the Capital of Lord Rama, illuminated the kingdom with earthen diyas (oil lamps) and burst crackers.

Each day of Diwali has its tale, legend and myth to tell, but one should not forget the fact that behind each of these legends, myths and stories lies the significance of the victory of good over evil; and it is with each Deepawali and the lights that illuminate our homes and hearts, that this simple truth finds new reason and hope. So, this Diwali, merge yourself into the light of lights who is Supreme of all and enlighten yourself from within.

(The writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist; views are personal)

Bootstrapped startups: The resilient path to sustainable growth

HIMA BINDU KOTA

Entrepreneurship is a dream journey for many young minds full of innovative ideas and pioneering thoughts. And many times, they are left to fend for themselves. Before the world believes in their ideas, entrepreneurs have to believe in themselves and their ideas first. For their entrepreneurial ventures to see the light of the day, entrepreneurs, therefore, first turn towards themselves and become their investors. This idea is known as bootstrapping, which is the process of developing a business with limited resources, without the financial and managerial support of an investor, more particularly an angel investor. So, in this case, the entrepreneur starts his business with little or no money, all the while ploughing back the funds generated by customer-

driven business into the operations to achieve growth. A bootstrapped startup is characterized by full control of the founder over the business without the pressures of outside investors.

This provides the founder with elbow room to be flexible and agile in decision-making. The challenge to sustain the startup brings out creativity and resourcefulness in problem-solving. Combined with lean operations and focus on revenue generation, the founder manages to survive and thrive which leads to high founder satisfaction, self-reliance and long-term sustainable growth.

Although it is difficult to dampen the spirit of entrepreneurship, the statistics sure leave us disheartened. According to an article in Harvard Business Review by Prof. Tom Eisenmann, nearly 63 per cent of startups never end

up with a positive return. By another metric, only 15 per cent of startups ever see through their first round of funding. So, in situations where the survival of startups is difficult, being bootstrapped can make it even harder. While bootstrapping provides entrepreneurs with increased financial independence and control, there can be several disadvantages. Liquidity crunch is one of the major disadvantages of a bootstrapped enterprise. A steady flow of funds is essential for any operation and all the more important for a startup.

A bootstrapped company has to generate enough profits to cover the daily operational expenses and more often than not, because of lack of financial cushion, it is difficult to withstand sudden economic crises, disruptions, and market downturns. Secondly, it is difficult for bootstrapped companies



to attract and hire talented employees with limited budgets. Additionally, in such situations, founders end up multi-tasking even though they may lack specialized skills in some of the key function areas of a business, like production, sales and marketing, new business development, and daily operations, which may affect long-

term growth prospects.

So, are bootstrapped companies less valuable than funded companies? This is a quintessential question. Well, to answer this, let's try to see what is value. For starters, a company is valuable if, irrespective of its size, can develop a product or service and generate revenue.

By doing so, over some

time, the revenue base starts helping the company to grow organically and lo behold, it manages to cross the 'valley of death'. So, a company that can grow with its revenues and survive and sustain on a long-term basis is far more valuable than a funded company that can show growth metrics only on the backing of funding

received, which may be short-lived, if it is unable to generate revenue-backed growth quickly. Therefore, in a start-up world where 9 out of 10 startups fail, bootstrapped startups have a greater chance of survival as they are 55 per cent more likely to establish positive cash flows within the first three years of operations and generate a sustainable revenue stream.

This makes their failure rate 47 per cent lower than VC-funded startups. What one cannot ignore is the fact the value of a bootstrapped startup also comes from the intangible qualities of the founder like determination, passion, grit, resourcefulness and agility. These qualities are the mainstay of any bootstrapped startup that navigates it through the uncertain world of entrepreneurship. They are like the secret ingredients for the success of a boot-

strapped startup - a battle between the wit and creativity of a founder versus the deep pockets of a VC. By focusing on customer acquisition and revenue generation, bootstrapped startups demonstrate their qualities of innovation, resourcefulness, flexibility and agility, in navigating the uncertain world of entrepreneurship. By keeping themselves lean and using cost-effective strategies, bootstrapped startups facilitate higher profit margins that in turn lead to long-term sustainable growth.

In a startup world that is fixated with high growth fancy ideas and flamboyant entrepreneurs, bootstrapped startups stand out as beacons of efficiency, proving that sometimes slow and steady truly does win the race.

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

PM Modi launches health projects worth Rs 12,850 crore on Ayurveda Day

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday launched, inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for multiple projects related to the health sector worth around Rs 12,850 crore at All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in the national capital as part of the celebration of Dhanvantari Jayanti and 9th Ayurveda Day.

PM Modi said the "amalgamation of knowledge of Ayurveda with Modern medicine" has brought a new chapter in the health sector in the last 10 years.

"India is looking at the health sector as holistic health," PM Modi said while outlining the five pillars of health policy -- preventive healthcare, early detection of ailments, free and low-cost treatment and medicines, availability of doctors in small towns and lastly expansion of technology in health services. The healthcare projects worth Rs 12,850 crore include four centres of excellence under the Ayush Health Scheme, expansion of health services with the use of drones, helicopter service in AIIMS-Rishikesh, new

infrastructure in AIIMS-New Delhi and AIIMS-Bilaspur, expansion of services in five other AIIMS in the country, establishment of medical colleges, 'bhoomi puja' of nursing colleges and other projects related to the health sector.

Inaugurating pharma units, the PM said, "These would play a key role in the manufacturing of advanced medicine and high-quality stents and implants and further India's growth."

On the flagship Ayushman Bharat Yojana scheme, he noted that "about four crore poor people in the country have benefited by getting treated without having to pay a single rupee." He added that the scheme has now been expanded to cover healthcare expenses of elderly above 70 years of age, which will also reduce a family's out-of-pocket expenditure for healthcare.

"Every elderly person above 70 years of age in the country will get free treatment in the hospital by an Ayushman Vaya Vandana Card," PM Modi said, stating that "the card was universal and there was no restriction on income, be it poor or middle class or



upper class".

Further, the Prime Minister also mentioned the launch of more than 14,000 PM Jan Aushadhi Kendras across the country where medicines are available at an 80 per cent discount -- a significant reduction in the cost of treatment for both poor and middle-class families.

"The poor and middle class have managed to save Rs 30,000 crore due to availability of cheap medicines," he informed, adding that the "prices of devices like stents and knee implants have also been reduced, which prevented a loss of more than Rs 80,000 crores by the common citizens".

He also mentioned the free dialysis scheme and Mission Indradhanush

campaign to prevent fatal diseases and save the lives of pregnant women and newborn babies.

The PM said that more than "two lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs have been established across the country to facilitate early diagnosis and treatment".

He noted that the e-Sanjeevani scheme has helped over 30 crore people with free online doctor consultations.

PM Modi also announced the launch of the U-win platform which will provide India with a technologically advanced interface in the health sector, while highlighting the unprecedented progress made in India's healthcare sector over the past decade.

The Prime Minister also

inaugurated several hospitals in Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh; laid the foundation stone for new medical colleges in Narsapur and Bommasandra in Karnataka, Pithampur in Madhya Pradesh, Achitapuram in Andhra Pradesh, and Faridabad in Haryana.

"The increasing number of hospitals reflects a proportional rise in medical seats," the PM said, informing that nearly one lakh new MBBS and MD seats have been added over the past 10 years, and also reiterated the commitment to announcing another 75,000 seats in the next five years.

While noting that 7.5 lakh registered AYUSH practitioners are already contributing to the nation's healthcare, the PM stressed increasing the number further. He also highlighted the growing demand for medical and wellness tourism in India.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister also announced the launch of the Prakriti Parikshan Abhiyan aimed at designing ideal lifestyles and risk analysis for individuals using Ayurveda principles. He emphasised that this initiative can rede-

fine the healthcare sector globally and provide a new perspective for the entire world.

He also underscored the importance of validating traditional herbs like Ashwagandha, turmeric, and black pepper through high-impact scientific studies.

"Lab validation of our traditional healthcare systems will not only increase the value of these herbs but also create a significant market," he remarked, pointing to the rising demand for Ashwagandha, which is projected to reach \$2.5 billion by the end of this decade.

The PM said that Ayush is transforming not only the health sector but also the economy.

"The AYUSH manufacturing sector has grown from \$3 billion in 2014 to nearly \$24 billion today, an 8-fold increase in just 10 years," the PM said, adding over 900 Ayush startups are now operational in India, creating new opportunities for the youth.

The Prime Minister said that AYUSH products are being exported to 150 countries, benefiting Indian farmers by turning local herbs and superfoods into global commodities.

Indian scientists develop method to create hydrogels to boost drug delivery

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

Researchers from Bose Institute, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in Kolkata, have developed a new way to create hydrogels using tiny protein fragments of just five amino acids from the SARS-CoV-1 virus.

The novel method may help improve targeted drug delivery and reduce side effects. Hydrogels are known to be suitable for drug delivery because of their swelling behaviour, mechanical strength, and biocompatibility.

While short peptide-based hydrogels have great potential for a wide range of applications, it is very challenging to control the gelation of these systems.

A team of researchers at the Department of Chemical Sciences in Bose Institute, led by Professor Anirban Bhunia, explored the inherent self-assembling properties of the SARS-CoV-E protein. Their study unravelled a new way to create useful gel materials.

The team also collaborated with scientists from the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, US, and the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Kolkata.

Their findings, published in the prestigious journal Small (Wiley), showed that gels made up of pentapeptides with unique properties can be developed by rearranging just five amino acids of the SARS-CoV-1 virus.

The team found that some of them gel when heated, others at room temperature.

"This unique discovery could lead to significant medical advancements like customisable hydrogels that can improve targeted drug delivery enhancing treatment efficacy while reducing side effects," said the team.

Further, the materials can revolutionise tissue engineering, potentially aiding in organ regeneration.

These gels might also advance wound healing treatments and enable more accurate disease modelling for research, the team said.

Here's how Apple developed hearing health features on its AirPods Pro

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

Apple's newly launched hearing health features on its AirPods Pro aims to minimise exposure to loud environmental noise and track even moderate hearing loss, the company said on Tuesday.

The world's first innovative and end-to-end hearing health experience was created at its Audio Lab -- in Cupertino, California -- where all Apple products with speakers or microphones are designed, measured, tuned, and validated.

The new features, which aim to address the hearing concerns of all persons, were tested by acoustic engineers in the

Lab's anechoic chambers which completely absorb reflective sounds and isolate external noise.

The new hearing feature is currently available as a free software update and provides Hearing Protection and tracking of hearing with an at-home Hearing Test. One can also receive assistance for perceived mild to moderate hearing loss using AirPods Pro which acts as a clinical-grade Hearing Aid, the company said.

"Every person's hearing is different, so we created an innovative, end-to-end hearing health experience that addresses this variability in a way that's both simple to use and adaptable to a wide range of needs. That's especially

important because hearing loss affects people of all ages with different levels of tech-savviness," said Sumbul Desai, Apple's vice president of Health.

The Audio Lab consists of a longwave anechoic chamber and a Fantasia Lab.

The longwave anechoic chamber, with a custom-built loudspeaker and microphone, enables accurate sound measurements without any noise or vibration disturbances. It also can measure how sound interacts with the human body.

The Fantasia Lab is a tightly controlled, evenly distributed sound field. It uses a spherical array of 50 loudspeakers to simulate hundreds of real-world

sound scenes like a shopping mall, a busy street, or travel on an aeroplane.

To develop the latest hearing aid feature, Apple conducted a study including participants with a wide range of hearing levels to complete a speech-in-noise test.

The participants had to hear and accurately repeat the words of a single speaker while sitting in the middle of the space while a complex sound scene, like a noisy restaurant, played.

The engineers also worked with audiologists in the Lab's three clinical-grade audiometric booths to conduct thousands of clinical-grade audiometry tests and software-based hearing tests.

Apollo Hosp enhances 4.5-hour stroke treatment with Advanced Stroke Care

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, OCT 29 (UNI)

On World Stroke Day 2024, Apollo Hospitals Chennai reaffirms its commitment to addressing the growing burden of stroke in India, where cases have surged alarmingly from 1.25 million in 2021 to approximately 1.8 million in 2023 (according to ISA). Apollo Hospitals remains dedicated to enhancing awareness, early intervention, and comprehensive stroke care to improve patient outcomes and quality of life. Timely intervention within the first 4.5 hours, known as the 'golden hour' is critical in minimizing stroke-related disability and improving

patient outcomes. The hospitals leverages state-of-the-art robotic technology, AI-enhanced diagnostic tools, and a multidisciplinary team of experts to treat stroke patients quickly and effectively, a release from Apollo said.

In patients with large vessel blockage thrombectomy may be useful upto 24 hrs after stroke onset. This comprehensive approach provides patients with the best chance of recovery, reducing complications and enhancing their quality of life. Apollo's Stroke Network offers a comprehensive, patient-centered approach to stroke care, ensuring that every

patient receives timely and precise treatment. The network comprises an integrated chain of hospitals equipped with 24/7 emergency services, AI-enhanced diagnostic facilities, and advanced imaging techniques, such as CT and MRI perfusion studies, to support fast and accurate diagnosis and to choose the ideal treatment such as Thrombolysis and Thrombectomy. A specialized team, including neurologists, neurosurgeons, neuro intervention specialists, and critical care intensivists, collaborates to deliver tailored, multidisciplinary care. The network also provides robust neuro rehabilita-

tion services designed to aid in long-term recovery and improve patients' quality of life post-stroke, addressing both physical and emotional needs to support comprehensive healing.

Dr. Srinivasan Paramasivam, said a stroke can have devastating impact, not only for patients but for their families as well. "At Apollo, we understand the urgency and precision needed in stroke care. Our multidisciplinary team is equipped with advanced technology to provide immediate, life-saving treatment. By focusing on early intervention, we are committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for our patients."

WHY WOMEN ARE MORE AT RISK OF STROKES THAN MEN

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

Hormonal changes caused due to pregnancy, or the use of oral contraceptives, and the longer life expectancy are some of the reasons that explain the higher incidences of strokes among women than men, said experts on World Stroke Day on Tuesday.

Stroke is a major cause of disability and death for all people worldwide. But, it is the third leading

cause of death in women and kills more females than males, according to the American Stroke Association.

Dr. Atul Prasad, Principal Director & HOD, Neurology, BLK - MAX Super Speciality Hospital, told IANS that longer life expectancy, hormonal factors that are influenced by pregnancy and childbirth, oral contraceptives, and menopause.

Hypertension and heart diseases like atrial fibrillation, an irregular heart

rhythm, together with pollution are other major risk factors.

"Women with a history of migraine with aura have an increased risk for stroke, especially along with factors such as smoking or oral contraceptives. Another is preeclampsia -- a complication of pregnancy -- which doubles the risk of stroke after the fact but is rarely considered," Dr. Sumit Singh, Chief-Neurology, Artemis Hospitals

The experts noted that



women also often have atypical or less-recognised stroke symptoms, such as fatigue, general weakness,

confusion or disorientation, nausea, or vomiting, which contributes to late diagnosis and treatment.

"Common symptoms such as slurred speech, sudden weakness, and facial drooping are established in both genders; however, the symptoms in women are more disguised in dizziness, fatigue, nausea, and even hiccups. Such uncommon symptoms often delay judgement or misdiagnosis and are critical in worsening the outcome," Singh said.

While the treatment and prevention of ischemic stroke are generally similar for men and women,

post-stroke rehabilitation programmes for women need to be more gender specific.

"Outcomes are worse, and depression and cognitive decline occur more frequently, with longer times to recover in women compared to men. Thus, stroke recovery must be approached more holistically with mental health support, social integration, and individualised physical rehabilitation," the doctor said.

The core strategies for

preventing ischemic stroke -- controlling blood pressure, managing cholesterol, avoiding smoking, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle -- are the same for both men and women.

However, Prasad stressed the need for women to regularly monitor for stroke risk if they are taking birth control pills, or undergoing Hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Women with a history of preeclampsia also need long-term follow-up.

Study finds placenta's hidden role in maternal anxiety, depression

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

In groundbreaking research, a team of Australian researchers has identified the placenta's unexpected influence on maternal mental health. The finding may potentially revolutionise the understanding of pregnancy-related anxiety and depression and help develop a treatment for the conditions.

Scientists at the Mater Research Institute-University of Queensland identified 13 distinct glucocorticoid receptor isoforms in the placenta, with one particular variant showing a surprising response to maternal stress.

"We have discovered that the placenta has 13 different isoforms of the glucocorticoid receptor, with one isoform expressed in the presence

of maternal stress, anxiety, and depression that activates an inflammatory response in the placenta in the presence of high cortisol concentrations," said Professor Vicki Clifton in a Genomic Press Interview published in Brain Medicine on Tuesday.

The research challenges conventional understanding of stress responses during pregnancy. While most glucocorticoid recep-

tors typically suppress inflammation, this newly identified variant appears to enhance it. This potentially explains the complex relationship between stress and inflammation in pregnant women.

Professor Clifton's research has unveiled crucial differences between male and female foetuses, mediated through sex-specific placental functions.

"Presently, we do not

consider the sex of the foetus in obstetrics," she said. "I would like to see sex-specific medicine for pregnancy complications, for the care of preterm neonates, and for the care of newborns."

The research suggests that maternal physiology can vary depending on the sex of the foetus. This opens up new possibilities for personalised interventions in pregnancy care.

Standard of acute stroke care in India needs to improve: Experts

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, OCT 28

Despite recent advances in neurovascular intervention, India tends to fall short of the standard of care in acute stroke, experts said here on Monday.

"The bulk of the global stroke burden is contributed by lower and lower

middle-income countries, which account for around 85 percent of stroke mortality and poststroke disability worldwide and India is not an exception. "The mean age of patients suffering from stroke in India is around 55 to 60 years which is nearly 10 years less compared to the Western population resulting in an

increased burden of post-stroke disability," Deep Das, Interventional Neurologist of Calcutta Medical Research Institute (CMRI) said at an event on the eve of World Stroke Day.

Though previously experts held that stroke has to do with a certain age, now age is not a bar for stroke attacks, said Das.

India and China complete disengagement process in Eastern Ladakh

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, OCT 29

The disengagement process between India and China on the line of actual control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh was completed on Tuesday after which the two armies started verification of positions and dismantling of infrastructure by each other, defence sources said.

The sources added that the dismantling of temporary structures in Depsang plains and Demchok is almost complete and a certain amount of verification has already taken place on both sides. The verification process is being done physically as well as using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

Troops on both sides have been withdrawn to



be stationed at depth in the rear locations as part of the disengagement process.

The patrolling, which will be undertaken to points hitherto inaccessible since April 2020, will be done by small parties of troops numbering around

10 to 15 soldiers.

India and China have been locked in a military standoff along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh following Chinese incursions over four and half years ago.

Last week, four days after India announced that an agreement on

patrolling in the Depsang Plains and Demchok had been reached with China, Beijing affirmed the same, saying that "the Chinese and Indian frontier troops are engaged in relevant work, which is going smoothly at the moment".

Sources in the Army said that following the completion of the verification process, the coordinated patrolling will begin within the next two days. Prior information will be given by both sides so that there is no danger of a face-off.

In Depsang plains, Indian troops will now be able to patrol beyond the 'bottleneck' area as the Chinese had been preventing Indian troops from accessing the patrolling points that lay beyond.

In Demchok, Indian troops should now be able to get to the patrolling points at Track Junction and Charding Nullah.

However, the large number of Indian troops rushed to Ladakh after the stand-off in 2020 will continue to remain in place till a wider consensus on the border patrolling mechanism is reached with the Chinese.

"There are no plans to move back by any troops from Ladakh in the near future till an atmosphere of mutual trust and verification is established," defence sources said.

A similar arrangement is also being worked out in Arunachal Pradesh where a stand-off broke out in Yangtse, Asaphila and Subansiri Valleys, sources said.

PM Modi virtually distributed 51000 jobs to youth: Lalan Singh

AGENCIES

PATNA, OCT 29

Union Minister Rajeev Ranjan Singh, also known as Lalan Singh claimed on Tuesday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's virtual distributed appointment letters to 51,000 youth across the country.

He said that among these, 217 appointees hail from Bihar.

Singh emphasised a broad approach to employment generation beyond traditional government jobs, advocating for the creation of diverse job opportunities.

"Employment is not just limited to government jobs but encompasses the development of opportunities across sectors to maximise employment," Singh stated.



He highlighted sectors like startups, MSMEs, and infrastructure development as key areas for job creation.

Singh also spoke about government initiatives to equip youth with job-ready skills through Kaushal Vikas Centres (Skill Development Centres).

These centres are designed to help young people gain skills that can secure employment both domestically and internationally.

At the job fair in Patna,

Lalan Singh shared Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of empowering youth to drive India toward becoming an Atmanirbhar (self-reliant) and developed nation.

Singh highlighted that PM Modi's initiatives aim to channel the potential of India's youth into meaningful employment across diverse sectors.

He praised both PM Modi and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for prioritising action over rhetoric, emphasizing that Bihar's "double-engine government" has delivered significant employment opportunities.

"The Bihar government's recent recruitment of 2.25 lakh teachers and additional hiring in the police force are examples of this commitment," Singh said.

MUDA scam: ED continues raids on CM Siddaramaiah's close confidants in Mysuru

AGENCIES

MYSURU (KARNATAKA), OCT 29

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), probing the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) scam, continued its raid on the second consecutive day at the residence and offices of Rakesh Papan, a close confidant of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, said officials here on Tuesday.

The raid and inspection were underway at the residence of the former Zilla Parishad member in the Hinkal locality of Mysuru. The officers are looking for crucial documents in connection with the 50:50 ratio allotments from the MUDA at his residence.

Fresh raids were conducted on builder Jayaram's office and residence located in Mysuru. The sleuths raided MMG Construction Company located in the Kuvempunagar locality and residence in the Srirampura locality.

According to sources,

Jayaram is charged with playing a big role in allotting sites in a 50:50 ratio, which has been challenged as being against the law. Jayaram maintained close rapport with the MUDA officials and got several sites allotted to him.

The ED sleuths have gathered information regarding their alleged role during the two-day raids conducted in the office of the MUDA recently.

On Monday, the Enforcement Directorate conducted raids at the residences of former MUDA Commissioners D.B. Natesh and G.T. Dinesh Kumar. A team of five ED officials conducted the search at the residence of Natesh located at the 10th Cross of Malleshwaram locality in Bengaluru. Natesh was present at the house during the raids.

The sleuths also raided the Deepika Royal apartment of Dinesh Kumar in Banaswadi locality of Bengaluru.

Rozgar Mela: PM Modi distributes over 51,000 appointment letters to youth

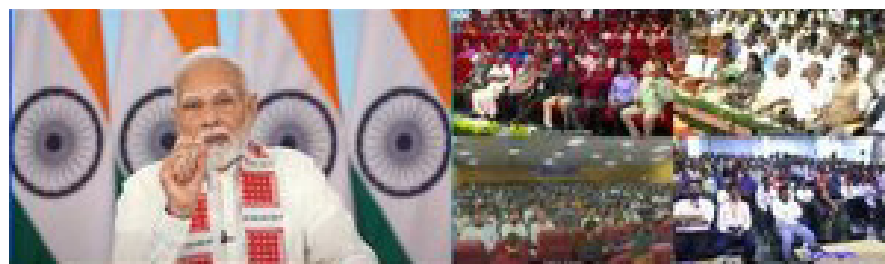
AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, OCT 29

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday distributed over 51,000 appointment letters to newly appointed young recruits in government departments and organisations via video conferencing, marking a significant step towards youth employment.

Extending his Diwali greetings, PM Modi noted, "This year's Diwali is particularly special. You might wonder why. After 500 years, Lord Shri Ram is now seated in his grand temple in Ayodhya, making this the first Diwali celebrated since his installation. Many generations have awaited this moment, and countless people have sacrificed and endured hardships for it. We are all fortunate to witness such a special Diwali."

PM Modi expressed his best wishes to the new recruits, stating, "On this auspicious day, 51,000 appointment letters for government jobs are being distributed. The process of providing permanent government jobs to lakhs of



youth in India continues. Lakhs of youth in BJP and NDA-ruled states have also received appointment letters."

Focusing on Haryana, PM Modi added, "With the formation of a new government, 26 lakh youth in Haryana have been given the gift of employment, and they are happy. Our government stands out because it provides jobs without 'kharchi' and 'parch' (without bribes and influence). I extend special congratulations to the youth who have received appointment letters in Haryana."

The Prime Minister highlighted the extensive infrastructure development underway in the country, with projects ranging from expressways to fibre lines, schools, and colleges.

"These projects are aimed not only at improving infrastructure but also at reducing logistics costs and creating employment opportunities," he said.

Recalling his recent visit to Vadodara, PM Modi shared, "Yesterday, I inaugurated a factory that manufactures aircraft for the defence sector. This factory will directly employ thousands, with further opportunities generated as small factories emerge to produce spare parts. MSMEs will contribute to this sector, creating a cascade of employment."

Discussing the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, the Prime Minister emphasised that it's more than just a scheme for free electricity.

"In the last six months, 1.5 crore customers have registered, with 9,000

vendors helping with installations, and over 5 lakh homes now equipped with solar panels. We plan to establish 800 solar villages across the country, creating thousands of jobs," he noted.

He highlighted the Khadi industry's growth, saying, "The sale of Khadi has risen by 400 per cent compared to the UPA government."

This reflects the industry's positive impact on artisans, weavers, and traders, boosting both employment and economic development."

PM Modi also celebrated the success of the Lakhpati Didi scheme, which provides employment opportunities to rural women through self-help groups (SHGs).

"In the last decade, 10 crore women have joined

SHGs, generating income through various jobs. Our aim is to make 3 crore women Lakhpati Didis. Already, 1.25 crore women have achieved this status," he said.

Attributing India's economic growth to strong planning and intention and contrasting it with the past, the Prime Minister said, "Today, India is on its way to becoming the third-largest economy. The previous governments lacked 'neeti' and 'neeyat' (planning and intention), which held back our progress."

PM Modi stressed the importance of technology, noting how past governments' reluctance toward technological advancement led to missed employment opportunities. "From the space sector to semiconductors, electronics to electric vehicles, we are moving forward in every new technology."

Speaking about the Skill India Mission, he said, "The youth are being trained in skill development centres. The Pradhan Mantri Internship scheme provides paid internships in the country's top 500

companies, with interns receiving Rs 5,000 per month. Our goal is to offer internship opportunities to one crore youth in the next five years."

PM Modi also highlighted India's migration agreements with countries like Germany, which has increased work visas for skilled Indian youth from 20,000 to 90,000 per year.

"India has signed employment-related agreements with 21 countries, including Gulf nations, Japan, Australia, and the UK. Thirty thousand Indians can now obtain two-year visas to work or study in the UK, while 3,000 students annually gain opportunities in Australia," he mentioned.

Rozgar Melas, which aims to streamline the hiring process for both job seekers and employers, underlines the Prime Minister's commitment to prioritising employment. With these efforts, Rozgar Melas are empowering the youth by providing meaningful opportunities to contribute to nation-building.

Our expertise can help India achieve 500 GW renewable energy goal by 2030: Pedro Sanchez

AGENCIES

MUMBAI, OCT 29

Spain is a world leader in clean energy and our expertise can help India reach its goal of 500 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030, Spanish President Pedro Sanchez said on Tuesday.

Addressing the 'CII Spain India Business Summit' in the financial capital, Sanchez said the potential for a stronger relationship between India and the European Union (including Spain) is enormous.

"One of the largest economies in the world, Spain has invested \$4.2 billion in India this century. We look forward to advancing negotiations on a European Union-India free trade agreement. This will help our markets grow in size and diversity," he told the gathering, adding that "our expertise can help India reach its goal of 500 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030".

Stressing that the country is committed to partnering with India to boost its energy security and green transition, Sanchez said by combining Spanish innovation with India's



potential, "we can make a big impact on the global economy and the environment".

Spain's advanced railway systems, subway networks, and transport solutions can greatly benefit India's infrastructure projects, he added.

On Monday, both countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of rail transport that is expected to boost collaboration in the planning, deployment, operation and maintenance of high-speed and conventional railways.

Praising the huge strides made by India in the infrastructure sector, the Spanish President said their advanced railway systems, subway networks, and transport solutions can greatly benefit India's infrastructure projects.

Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream is to make India carbon neutral by 2070.

"Whether it's fossil fuel or energy, green energy and green mobility are now priorities. There is great potential for wind

and solar power. I am pleased that many technologies are available in Spain that have great potential in India. Joint ventures can reduce costs and increase competitiveness in the global market," the minister told the gathering at the event.

Sanchez is the first Spanish President to undertake an official trip to India in the last 18 years.

Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII said Spain is very experienced in urban infrastructure, high-speed rail networks, transport systems, and smart mobility.

"We look forward to new partnerships with Spain to boost our infrastructure development. We've also discussed collaboration opportunities in artificial intelligence, defence, and green technologies. Both countries are committed to joint ventures and co-development in defence to enhance capabilities and strategic autonomy," he mentioned.

In renewable energy, India is embracing cleaner fuels like wind and solar power. Spain's expertise in this area could help us in our energy transition, said Banerjee.

'Our lands attached to Waqf board', claims K'taka's Yadgir farmers

AGENCIES

YADGIR, OCT 29

Amid the charges of 15,000 acres of farmers land in Karnataka's Vijayapura district taken away by the Waqf board, more than 20 farmers from the Yadgir district on Tuesday claimed that their agricultural lands are now claimed by the Waqf board.

The farmers urged the immediate intervention of the government to resolve the issue. Most of the farmers came to know about their lands claimed by the Waqf following the rejection by the Railway Department to provide them compensation. The Railway Department had acquired their land for the Wadi-Gadag railway lane.

When the farmers claimed compensation, the Railway Department rejected their demands and informed them that their land has been claimed by the Waqf.

The lands were acquired by the railways in 2020. However, more than 20 farmers from the village alleged that they were never issued notices or intimated regarding the



claims of the Waqf board.

One of the owners whose land has been shown as the Waqf property stated that he had not been given notice by the Revenue Department or the Waqf board. However, the documents reveal that their land was shown as the Waqf property four years ago. Another landowner said that his three acres of land were acquired by the Railways.

"I wanted to buy the agricultural land in the compensation money. Now, I have lost even the land which we tilled and earned our livelihood. The government should come to our help," he said.

Another farmer said that the Waqf board and authorities are resorting

to highhandedness. "We also questioned about the inclusion of our 1.18 acres of farmland, which is ancestral property, to the Waqf board. The Waqf board has planned to take away the compensation. We are facing 'dadagiri'," he said.

The farmers of Uppin Betageri village in Dharwad district are also facing similar issues regarding land ownership. "It has come to light that many farmers' lands were registered in the name of the Waqf board a few years ago, said another farmer.

The farmers who inherited the property are now aghast after seeing the records which claim that their land falls under the Waqf property in the

"Other Rights and Liabilities" section of Record of Rights (I-E column).

In Survey Number 20 of Uppin Betageri village, 3 acres and 13 guntas of land jointly held by farmers Marabasappa and Shreesha are being shown as the Waqf property. Similarly a half a dozen farmers are concerned over their land ownership being shown as Waqf property without their knowledge.

The farmers have submitted a written appeal along with supporting documents to the Tehsildar and Dharwad District Waqf authorities, but none have been able to resolve the issue. The farmers are made to shuttle between the tehsildar's office and the Waqf board.

Accurate, timely statistics crucial for addressing escalating disaster shocks: UNECA

AGENCIES
ADDIS ABABA, OCT 29

High-quality disaster-related statistics are urgently needed as the African continent and the world at large are increasingly confronted with climate change-induced and other disasters, a senior official of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has said.

The statement was made by Oliver Chinganya, director of the African Center for Statistics at the UNECA, on Monday while addressing the opening session of the Fourth Global Expert Forum for Producers and Users of Disaster-Related Statistics, which is held from October 28 to November 1 at the UN Conference Center



in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, as reported by Xinhua news agency.

"Our world faces an increasing frequency and intensity of disasters, exacerbated by climate change, urbanisation, and other socio-economic factors. These events not only claim lives but also disrupt communities, economies, and the fabric of our societies," he said.

He emphasised that amid the worsening intensity of natural and man-made calamities in Africa and elsewhere across the globe, quality disaster-related statistics are crucial for effectively responding to and addressing both current and future shocks. "The role of accurate, timely, and relevant disaster-related statistics has never been more critical.

It is through these statistics that we can understand the scale of impacts, guide effective responses, and develop robust policies that enhance our resilience," Chinganya said.

The five-day gathering, jointly organised by the UNECA, African Union and other UN agencies, underscored the importance of reliable data for effective decision-making, response

planning and resilience-building efforts.

"We need to work together to strengthen the data ecosystem for disaster risk management and toward building a safer, more resilient world," Chinganya told the participants, who are drawn from government agencies, academia, civil society, the private sector, and international organisations.

Noting that there is often a disconnect between data producers and the users, including policymakers and researchers, the UNECA said establishing a platform where producers and users can collaborate on improving the quality and accessibility of disaster-related statistics is essential.

INDIA SENDS 30 TONNES OF ESSENTIAL MEDICAL SUPPLIES TO PALESTINE

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

India sent 30 tonnes of humanitarian aid to Palestine on Tuesday, continuing its support to the war-affected region. This is the second shipment carrying medical supplies, essential life-saving drugs, and anti-cancer medications for the people of Palestine.

"India's support to the people of Palestine continues. Extending humanitarian assistance to the people of Palestine, India sends 30 tonnes of medical supplies comprising essential life-saving and anti-cancer drugs to Palestine," according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), which announced the consign-

ment on X.

On October 22, India had already dispatched the first shipment to Palestine via the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

This initial batch also included 30 tonnes of medicines and food items, including a range of essential medical supplies, surgical items, dental products, general medical items, and high-energy biscuits.

In a similar humanitarian initiative, India sent a shipment of 11 tonnes of medical supplies to Lebanon on October 18, with a total of 33 tonnes of aid planned in response to the escalating conflict in southern Lebanon.

India had pledged to

continue supporting the embattled UN agency helping Palestinians, which is facing a financial crisis even as its needs have risen because of the Hamas-Israeli conflict.

India's support for the Palestinian cause is an integral part of the nation's foreign policy. In 1974, India became the first non-Arab state to recognise the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

In 1988, India became one of the first countries to recognise the Palestinian State. In 1996, India opened its Representative Office in Gaza, which was later shifted to Ramallah in 2003.

Palestinian death toll in Gaza surpassed 43,000: Health authorities

AGENCIES
GAZA, OCT 29

The Palestinian death toll from ongoing Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip has surpassed 43,000.

During the past 48 hours, 96 people were killed and 277 others were hurt in attacks by the Israeli military, bringing the total death toll to 43,020 and injuries to 101,110 since the Palestinian-Israeli conflict broke out in early October 2023, the health authorities said in a statement on Monday.

A number of victims were still under the rubble, and ambulance and civil defence teams were unable to reach them, the statement said.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said in a state-



ment on Monday that its troops continued targeted raids in Gaza, killing armed militants and dismantling their infrastructure, Xinhua news agency reported.

Earlier in the day, the IDF claimed that it apprehended about 100 militants during an operation in Kamal Adwan Hospital in Jabalia of Gaza.

The IDF said the operation was carried out following Intelligence infor-

mation indicating that "terrorists had embedded themselves inside the hospital," and aimed to "thwart terrorist activities and apprehend terrorists."

Meanwhile, Hussam Abu Safiya, director of the hospital, urged on social media platform X to protect the hospital and its patients and staff from further Israeli attacks, noting that 31 hospital staffers had been either taken or arrested.

US ELECTION: POLL AGGREGATOR SHOWS TRUMP TO WIN IF SWING STATE POLLS HOLD

AGENCIES
NEW YORK, OCT 29

If the RealClear Polling's (RCP) aggregation of polls in the seven swing states translates into votes at the voting booth, it sees Republican Candidate Donald Trump heading to the White House with a majority in the electoral college.

RCP has Trump having a slender lead in all the seven swing states that sets him on the path to victory with 312 electoral college votes to Vice President Kamala Harris' 226.

The winner needs 270 votes for a majority in the 538-member electoral college.

However, all this comes with a big caveat: The

polling data is within the margin of error and there is no certainty that it will hold on November 5.

Therefore, suspense clouds the verdict in the election only a week away.

More straightforward, FiveThirtyEight, an ABC-affiliated electoral and political statistics analysis website, has the two candidates tied in all the seven swing states.

Nationally, RCP's aggregation has Trump up by only 0.1 per cent in the popular votes.

Trump won the 2016 election with 306 electoral college votes, although Democrat Hillary Clinton got 2.87 million more votes, but secured only 232 electoral votes.

Candidates pour vast resources into the swing states because they matter more than the national popular votes because the US presidential election is based on the electoral college where voters pick 538 electors distributed according to the population of the states. The electors, in turn, elect the president.

In all but two small states, whoever gets the majority of votes in the state claims all the state's electoral college votes.

They get their enormous power in determining the winner because, unlike most states where one of the two parties has almost unshakeable

domination, neither has a hold on these seven states which could go either way.

Without the swing states' total of 104 electoral votes taken into account, Trump leads in the electoral college with 219 to 215, but well short of the 270 needed for a win, according to RCP.

As of Monday, RCP, the respected collator of polling data, had these aggregations in the swing states:

Arizona with 11 electoral college votes: Trump leads 1.5 per cent

Georgia with 16 electoral votes: Trump up by 2.3 per cent

Michigan with 15 electoral votes: Trump leads by 0.1

Nevada with 6 elector-

al votes: Trump leads by 0.7 per cent

North Carolina with 16 electoral votes: Trump ahead by 0.8 per cent

Wisconsin with 10 electoral votes: Trump leads by 0.3 per cent

Although RCP's aggregation shows Trump with a 0.1 per cent lead in national polls, in six of them from last week that went into its calculation, Harris was ahead by 1 per cent in two, CBS and Rasmussen, and Trump by 3 per cent in Wall Street Journal's, and both were tied in the rest clouding the overall picture.

An ABC poll released on Sunday, which did not figure in the RCP matrix, gave Harris a 2 per cent lead.

Pakistan's Lahore remains world's most polluted city with an AQI of 708

AGENCIES
LAHORE, OCT 29

Pakistan's Lahore continues to remain the world's most polluted city with the Air Quality Index (AQI) peaking to 708 on Monday night, prompting medical experts and the provincial government to issue guidelines for the citizens, asking them to stay indoors or not move out without wearing masks.

Local media reported that the AQI touched 708 at 11 pm Monday with PM 2.5 concentration being 431µg/m³, 86.2 times more than the WHO annual air quality guideline value.

The lowest AQI in the city was 246 that was reported between 4-5 pm on Monday.



"The AQI at CERP (Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan) office in Gulberg was shocking 953, followed by 810 at Pakistan Engineering Services Ltd and 784 at Syed Maratab Ali Road," reported Pakistan's leading daily Dawn on Tuesday.

The smog has also affected the nearby cities of Kasur, Sheikhupura, Muridke and Gujranwala with experts reckoning that the entire belt could face an emergency situation if there is no rain in the next few days, the chances of which remain quite low.

Pakistan Punjab's provincial government, led by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, has issued an emergency alert for Lahore citizens, appealing to citizens to wear masks and also keep windows and doors of their homes closed. The local government, while changing the school timings, also requested parents and management of educational institutions to follow all safety measures for the safety and convenience of children. The authorities have passed an order that any vehicle found to be emitting smoke will be clamped immediately and all brick kilns operating without zigzag technology will be demolished.

"People suffering from lung, respiratory and heart diseases and the elderly should not go outdoors. The cooperation of all of us can play the most important role in solving this problem. Maryam Aurangzeb appeals to the people to check their vehicles, avoid traffic jams and not to burn crop residue," Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb posted on X.

The minister also tried to pin blame on India for the current situation, stating that smog from Delhi, Amritsar and Chandigarh is entering Lahore as a result of strong winds. Interestingly, the AQI in Amritsar, just a little over 50 kms from Lahore, was recorded at 189 on Monday.

North Korean foreign minister departs for Russia amid troop dispatch

AGENCIES
SEOUL, OCT 29

North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui has departed for Russia for an official visit, which comes as the US said the North sent about 10,000 soldiers to eastern Russia for training.

According to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), Choe's visit to Russia was expected to include discussions about a potential visit by North Korean leader Kim Jong-un to Moscow amid deepening military ties between the two countries.

Choe left Pyongyang International Airport on Monday.

Vice Foreign Minister Kim Jong-gyu and Russian Ambassador to North Korea Alexander Mat-



segora were present to see Choe off, Yonhap news agency reported quoting KCNA.

The Russian Embassy in North Korea said on its Facebook account that Choe's visit is part of a "strategic dialogue" agreed upon by the leaders of both countries.

The report came as the chief of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization confirmed Monday that North Korean troops have

been deployed to Russia's western front-line Kursk region. The move could be intended to support Russia's forces in the near future.

"It's difficult to speculate since North Korea has not clarified the agenda, but we anticipate possible coordination on specific responses to the troop deployment to Russia," a unification ministry official said on condition of anonymity.

Yemen's Houthis claim three attacks on ships in Arabian, Red Sea

AGENCIES
SANAA, OCT 29

Yemen's Houthi group said in a statement that it carried out three attacks targeting three ships in the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea, as well as in the Bab al-Mandab Strait.

"In support of the Palestinian and Lebanese resistances, we carried out three military operations as part of the continuation of imposing a naval blockade on the Israeli enemy. The first operation targeted the ship SC Montreal in



the Arabian Sea with two drones, and the hit was accurate," Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Sarea said in a statement aired by Houthi-run al-Masirah TV on Monday.

"The second operation targeted the ship Maersk Kowloon in the Arabian Sea using a cruise missile," he said, adding "the third

operation targeted the ship Motaro in the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab Strait with several ballistic missiles, and the hits were accurate."

"These operations will not stop until the (Israeli) aggression stops, the siege of the Gaza Strip is lifted, and the aggression on Lebanon stops," Sarea said, vowing to launch more attacks. The Houthi group has controlled much of Yemen, including the capital Sanaa and the strategic Red Sea port city of Hodeidah, since the Yemeni civil war began in late 2014.

Israel's UNRWA ban sparks global concern, gets strong backing at home

AGENCIES
JERUSALEM/GAZA, OCT 29

France, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Japan, Germany, and South Korea on Tuesday expressed deep concern over Israel's decision to ban the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

The Israeli parliament on Monday passed a law that prohibits UNRWA operations within its territory, citing security concerns and the involvement of UNRWA workers in last year's horrific October 7 terrorist attacks that



killed 1200 people in Israel and resulted in over 250 being taken as hostages by Hamas.

"UNRWA workers involved in terrorist activities against Israel must be held accountable. Since

avoiding a humanitarian crisis is also essential, sustained humanitarian aid must remain available in Gaza now and in the future," read a statement issued by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netan-

yahu's office.

"In the 90 days before this legislation takes effect - and after - we stand ready to work with our international partners to ensure Israel continues to facilitate humanitarian aid to civilians in Gaza in a way that does not threaten Israel's security," it added.

However, several countries and the United Nations expressed their grave concern over the ramifications of the move by Israeli parliamentarians, asserting that it will only deepen Palestinian suffering.

In a joint statement, foreign ministers from

Canada, Australia, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, and the UK voiced their concern, stating, "We urge the Israeli Government to maintain UNRWA's privileges and immunities and ensure unhindered humanitarian assistance."

They also condemned the recent attacks by Hamas on Israel and expressed solidarity with the country in addressing security threats.

UNRWA's Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini took to social media, calling the decision "unprecedented" and a breach of the UN Charter.

India bucks global trend, VC investment remains robust at \$3.6 bn in July-Sep

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

India bucked the global trend of decline in VC investment during the third quarter of 2024, with significant raises by consumer-focused businesses, according to a report on Tuesday.

VC investment in India remained solid at \$3.6 billion in the quarter, helped by a number of raises by consumer-focused businesses, according to the KPMG Private Enterprise's Venture Pulse report.

The large raises by business-to-consumer (B2C) businesses in India was an incredibly unique trend, the opposite of



trends seen in most other jurisdictions in Asia and in other regions of the world – where business-to-business (B2B) companies attracted the greatest levels of VC investment.

According to the report, while fintech businesses

continued to attract a lot of attention in India, VC investors in the space have become more cautious in recent quarters as traditional banks have increasingly introduced their own fintech products aimed at the large unbanked and

underbanked segments of the population.

There is very strong optimism that the VC market is recovering and that the next few quarters could see the level of VC investment really start to climb, the report mentioned.

“As expected, there has been a bounce back in activity which is led by consumer-focused consumption sectors. This trend is expected to continue, and investors will back businesses which align with two key themes – path to profitability and/or strong growth trajectory with high level of customer engagement,” explained Nitish Poddar,

Partner and National Leader, Private Equity, KPMG in India.

“This coupled with robust capital markets is what is driving this renewed VC interest,” he added.

AI investments drove the lion's share of VC investment activity in Q3 globally.

AI will likely remain a hot area of investment, in addition to defense-tech given ongoing global geopolitical tensions. There is a growing sense of optimism that exit activity is readying for a rebound, which would be very beneficial for the VC market globally heading into 2025, according to the report.

Maruti Suzuki India logs 18 pc drop in net profit at Rs 3,069 crore in Q2

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

Maruti Suzuki India on Tuesday reported nearly 18 per cent drop in net profit at Rs 3,069 crore in the second quarter this fiscal (FY25), from Rs 3,716 crore in the same quarter last year.

According to India's largest automaker, this is due to a provision of Rs 837 crore resulting from the withdrawal of indexation benefit and change in tax rate on long term capital gains on debt mutual funds as per the Finance Act 2024.

During the quarter, the company registered net sales of Rs 35,589 crore against Rs 35,535 crore in the same period of the



previous year.

For the first six months of the current fiscal (H1 FY25), the company clocked net profit at Rs 6,719 crore, a growth from Rs 6,201 crore in H1 FY24.

The company's stock went down almost 5.7 per cent at Rs 10,829.05 apiece on Tuesday after its financial results. Maruti Suzuki India sold a total of 541,550 vehicles during the quarter, of which the domestic market volume was 463,834 vehicles and the export volume was

77,716 vehicles. While the domestic volume declined by 3.9 per cent, the export volume grew by 12.1 per cent compared to the same period of the previous year, said the company.

For the first half in the current fiscal, the company sold a total of 1,063,418 units, comprising 915,142 units in the domestic market and at 148,276 units in the export market. While the domestic market sales declined by 0.3 per cent, the export sales volume grew by 11.9 per cent year-on-year.

Maruti Suzuki India recently crossed the 1-crore cumulative production milestone at its Manesar facility in Haryana.

India bucks global trend, VC investment remains robust at \$3.6 bn in July-Sep

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

India bucked the global trend of decline in VC investment during the third quarter of 2024, with significant raises by consumer-focused businesses, according to a report on Tuesday.

VC investment in India remained solid at \$3.6 billion in the quarter, helped by a number of raises by consumer-focused businesses, according to the KPMG Private Enterprise's Venture Pulse report.

The large raises by business-to-consumer (B2C) businesses in India was an incredibly unique trend, the opposite of



trends seen in most other jurisdictions in Asia and in other regions of the world – where business-to-business (B2B) companies attracted the greatest levels of VC investment.

According to the report, while fintech businesses continued to attract a lot of attention in India, VC investors in the space have become more cautious in recent quarters as traditional banks have increasingly introduced their own fintech products aimed at the large unbanked and

underbanked segments of the population.

There is very strong optimism that the VC market is recovering and that the next few quarters could see the level of VC investment really start to climb, the report mentioned.

“As expected, there has been a bounce back in activity which is led by consumer-focused consumption sectors. This trend is expected to continue, and investors will back businesses which align with two key themes – path to profitability and/or strong growth trajectory with high level of customer engagement,” explained Nitish Poddar, Partner and National Leader, Private Equity, KPMG in India.

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

As India continues to break all previous records on local mobile manufacturing, tech giant Apple is on course to surpass the FY24 figures of exports from India, reaching over Rs 50,000 crore (more than \$6 billion) in the first six months this fiscal (FY25), according to latest industry data.

The iPhone exports from India surged to cross \$10 billion in 2023-24 from \$6.27 billion in 2022-23. Overall, the iPhone maker's India operations reached \$23.5 billion in value in the last fiscal (FY24).

Apple assembled \$14 billion



of iPhones in India in last fiscal, exported more than \$10 billion worth of devices.

This growth is set to explode in coming years as India's semiconductor market is set to cross \$100 billion in revenues by 2030, driven by gov-

ernment initiatives like production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme amid robust demand to build digital infrastructure across industries.

Mobile handset, IT and telecom segments are leading the semiconductor industry, contributing

more than 75 per cent of its revenues, according to a latest report by the India Electronics and Semiconductor Association (IESA) and Counterpoint Research. This growth is driven by the increased use of social media, OTT platforms, affordable prices, accessible data, and the expansion of the 5G network.

According to industry experts, to achieve the goal of \$500 billion local electronics manufacturing by FY30, the industry must prioritise export growth to emerge as one of the top three global exporters in this domain by 2030, led by mobile manufacturing.

After Apple, Google is set to manufacture Pixel

smartphones in India, with plans to export the devices to Europe and the US. The tech giant will soon begin commercial production through partnerships with Foxconn and Dixon Technologies' subsidiary Padget Electronics. The company has already started trial production in Tamil Nadu with Foxconn, a major maker of Apple devices.

As per the India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA) data, mobile phone production surged from Rs 18,900 crore in 2014-15 to an estimated Rs 4.10 lakh crore in FY24, registering an increase of a massive 2,000 per cent, driven by the PLI scheme.

Broadband sector to drive telecom industry growth, create new jobs: Report

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, OCT 29

The rising demand for high-speed internet and data-driven services will boost growth in the broadband market, which is expected to witness a 9-10 per cent Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) over the next few years, according to a report on Tuesday.

The report by TeamLease Services, a people supply chain company, showed that the penetration of wired broadband in India currently stands at around 13 per cent. This figure is expected to accelerate as service providers prioritise broadband services over traditional mobility products due to higher Average Revenue Per User (ARPU).

Further, the report stated that the expansion of broadband services is not only enhancing con-

nectivity but also driving a surge in employment across the telecom industry.

As broadband services continue to expand, there is a growing need for skilled professionals across various roles. Sales teams are pivotal in customer acquisition as broadband penetration extends into previously untapped regions, the report said.

In addition, installation and repair teams are essential for setting up connections and ensuring smooth service delivery. In contrast, network operations and maintenance teams, including fibre technicians, Network Operations Center (NOC) personnel, and customer care professionals, are critical for maintaining network infrastructure and providing customer support. These roles are essential to meet the

increasing demands of India's growing broadband ecosystem.

“Home broadband penetration in India currently stands at only 13 per cent, but with the rapid adoption of 5G and satellite-based services on the horizon, we are on the cusp of a major transformation. This surge in broadband demand is creating new job opportunities across the board, from sales and installation to network operations and customer service,” said Subburathinam P, Chief Strategy Officer at TeamLease Services.

“We are witnessing a critical shift in the telecom landscape – where data-driven services will lead the next wave of growth, driving new career paths and reshaping the workforce,” he added.

Further to the rising demand for job roles, the report also identified sev-

eral key trends that are expected to shape the future of the broadband sector.

The expansion of 5G-based wireless broadband services, often referred to as air fibre, is already underway, with a few service providers launching these offerings. This development will provide faster internet speeds and improved coverage, meeting the growing need for high-speed data.

The continued rollout of the BharatNet project is also enhancing rural connectivity and bringing broadband access to underserved areas. In addition, the potential launch of satellite-based internet services in India is poised to revolutionise internet access in remote regions, further intensifying competition in the broadband market, the report said.

TCS inks 15-year pact to transform Ireland's pension system, help 8 lakh workers

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, OCT 29

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Tuesday announced a 15-year deal with Ireland's Department of Social Protection (DSP) to provide digital solutions for the automatic enrolment of nearly 800,000 workers in that country.

Building on its experience of delivering similar national programmes, TCS will partner with the DSP to launch Ireland's 'Auto Enrolment Pensions Scheme', providing workers with a retirement savings platform.

“TCS has a wealth of relevant experience, having provided similar services in other countries. My officials and I will be working hard alongside TCS, the Revenue Commissioners and payroll software developers to make sure that My Future Fund is delivered on time and to the highest standard,” said Heather Humphreys, Minister for Social Protection.

Leveraging its TCS BaNCS platform and ecosystem, the IT services major will oversee the administration of the scheme, enabling seamless enrolment, record manage-



ment, and benefit disbursement. Services will be delivered through TCS' Global Delivery Centre in Letterkenny, Co Donegal, Ireland.

“TCS has expertise and experience in delivering critical transformation projects in the UK and Ireland. We will leverage this experience and our knowledge of the market to make the pension system more accessible, transparent and efficient for workers in Ireland,” said Vivekanand Ramgopal, President, BFSI Products and Platforms.

The project follows the passing of the Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System Bill in Ireland earlier this year and the conclusion of a rigorous tender process by the Department of Social Protection.

The “My Future Fund” pension scheme will enable thousands of workers to save and invest for their future.

The system will benefit everyone involved, from employers and operational staff to pensioners, by improving pension record management, timely payments, effective scheme finance management, and providing easy digital access to information.

Adani Ports clocks 42 pc surge in net profit at Rs 5,520 crore in H1 FY25

AGENCIES
AHMEDABAD, OCT 29

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) on Tuesday reported 42 per cent surge in net profit at Rs 5,520 crore in the first half this fiscal (H1 FY25), compared to Rs 3,881 crore in the same period last fiscal (H1 FY24). On a quarterly basis, the flagship company of the diversified Adani Group saw its net profit rise 37 per cent to Rs 2,413 crore in Q2 FY25, from Rs 1,762 crore in

the year-ago period. The operating revenue grew by 13 per cent YoY to Rs 14,627 crore in H1 FY25, as ports revenue alone increased by 11 per cent to Rs 12,824 crore.

Cargo volume grew 9 per cent (on-year) to 220 million metric tonnes (MMT) in the first half of this fiscal, primarily driven by containers (up 19 per cent YoY).

“We are pleased to witness continued growth across our operations, with our existing ports

delivering strong volume ramp-ups and new capacity additions progressing as planned in Gopalpur, Vizhinjam and Colombo,” said Ashwani Gupta, Whole-time Director and CEO, APSEZ.

During the quarter, the company also diversified its marine fleet, adding 26 offshore support vessels. The logistics business too achieved robust growth, enhancing last-mile connectivity through expansions in rakes, warehousing, MMLPs and agri-silos.

Indian real estate sector raises Rs 13,500 crore via IPOs in 2024 to date

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, OCT 29

The real estate sector in India raised nearly Rs 13,500 crore via initial public offerings (IPOs) from the markets this year to date, almost double the amount raised in 2023, according to a report on Tuesday.

With 123 fresh issues (As of October 20) across multiple sectors, 2024 has already surpassed the total number of IPOs witnessed in 2023, according to a report by Colliers India.

Since 2021, the bourses have witnessed 21 real



estate IPOs, significantly higher than the 11 listings in the previous four years, during 2017-2020.

In the post-pandemic era, 21 real estate companies have raised Rs 31,900

crore through IPOs, more than double the funds raised in the preceding four-year period (2017-2020).

Traction in IPOs in real estate is largely led by

housing finance institutions, that attracted 46 per cent of the capital raised during 2021-2024, followed by real estate investment trusts (REITs), at 22 per cent share.

Leading real estate developers with a primary focus on residential assets too raised significant funds at Rs 5,600 crore, more than 10 times compared to the preceding four-year period, the report noted.

“The positive outlook for IPO activity in India is underpinned by higher investment in infrastructure, favourable demographics, and higher con-

sumer spending supported by a conducive regulatory framework,” said Badal Yagnik, Chief Executive Officer, Colliers India.

Driven by strong demand across residential, commercial, and retail segments, IPOs by real estate developers, HFCs, and REITs with underlying assets such as Grade A offices and malls are likely to see continued momentum in the near-mid-term.

Furthermore, the expectation of a probable reduction in the lending rates can further boost real estate activity, said the report.

'Winning bronze was better than coming home empty handed', says jr. men's hockey skipper Amir Ali

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, OCT 29

After their bronze medal-winning campaign at the Sultan of Johor Cup in Malaysia, the Indian Junior Men's Team have had some time to reflect on their performance at the marquee event where they beat New Zealand in a thrilling play-off match to win the bronze.

Echoing the team's sentiments, Skipper Amir Ali said, "We were very disappointed after missing out on the final due to goal difference. But as a team, we decided there was no point looking back at what we could have done better. We decided to focus on the bronze medal match and told ourselves that we can't go back home empty handed."

The Indian team remained on top of the points table throughout the tournament with



strong performances against Japan (4-2), Great Britain (6-4), Malaysia (4-2), and New Zealand (3-3). However, it was the 0-4 loss against Australia, which went on to win the tournament, that cost India dearly. It was by a mere one-goal difference

that GB made the final ahead of India.

However, the team's fighting spirit, ignited by their new coach, legendary PR Sreejesh, helped them face tense situations.

"At least 12 players in the team were playing a big tournament for the

first time. They had earlier played the test series but they were new to a tournament set up. Sree bhai (Sreejesh) is the best mentor we could have had. He constantly spoke to us about enjoying the matches we played without taking any pressure.

This was largely why we would bounce back even after conceding goals and ended up winning those matches too," explained Ali, who was part of the team that lifted the Sultan of Johor Cup in 2022.

"He would talk to us about going step-by-step in the match and even during half-time breaks, when we would be behind in scoreline, he would tell us how we can go about without being under pressure. It was only that match against Australia where we lost by a huge goal margin that cost us dearly. Now, the team understands the nature of the round-robin league and how every goal matters," he added.

Back to business in SAI, Bengaluru, the team has set their focus on lifting the junior Asia Cup title. The marquee tournament, which is also a qualifying tournament for the FIH Junior World

Cup, begins on November 26 in Muscat, Oman. "We are back in camp and have begun our preparations for the Junior Asia Cup. The next few months are crucial for us as we prepare for the Junior World Cup on home soil.

"Being in the same campus as the Senior team helps us a lot. Even for me personally, the experience I gained playing with the senior team has helped in guiding the newcomers in the Junior side. I have learnt a lot from Harmanpreet Singh and Manpreet," he said. When asked what the team prefers to call their new coach Sreejesh, whether it is 'Sir or Bhai', Amir laughed and said, "We all actually asked him if we must call him 'Sir' now that he is our coach. He asked us to choose what we are comfortable with, and we have decided to go with 'Sree Bhai,'" Amir signed off.

Tsitsipas overcomes stomach ache win in Paris opener

AGENCIES
PARIS, OCT 29

Stefanos Tsitsipas forced his way into the second round of the Paris Masters after beating Roberto Carballes Baena of Spain in ATP 1000 event opener.

Tsitsipas hit 36 winners to Carballes Baena's 15 to secure a 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 triumph in one-hour, 59-minute. He will next face Alejandro Tabilo.

Carballes Baena broke in the fifth game of the match and then fended off two break points in the 10th game before sealing the opening set.

The Spaniard then reclaimed an early break in the second set as he looked to spring an upset. Yet he was unable to maintain his momentum.

Tsitsipas immediately broke his opponent's serve for 3-1 and had no troubles holding firm behind his delivery from there en route to levelling the match. From there, he never gave Carballes Baena so much as a sniff of a chance to complete his 100th ATP Masters 1000 main-draw victory and book a second-round meeting with Tabilo, who later downed Nuno Borges 3-6, 7-6(5), 6-3, ATP Tour reports.

The 26-year-old Greek is 12th in the Live Race To Turin. He is chasing a sixth consecutive ATP Finals appearance, but will require a deep run in Paris if he is to stay in contention for a spot at the prestigious season finale this year. Fellow Turin hopeful Tommy Paul did not enjoy similar success on Day 1 in Paris, falling 6-3, 7-5 to French veteran Adrian Mannarino in a result that ended the 11th seed's hopes of making his Turin debut. "It's going to take a lot for me to qualify, so if I manage to up my tennis during this entire week, let's see. If I'm able to deliver something good here, I guess that also earns me a spot in Turin. Regardless of that.

Record high delegation athletes expected to participate in 9th Asian Winter Games

AGENCIES
HARBIN (CHINA), OCT 29

More than 1,500 athletes from 34 countries and regions have registered to participate in the 9th Asian Winter Games in Harbin, northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, with the number of participating delegations and athletes expected to reach a record high.

As the 100-day countdown to the 9th Asian Winter Games begins on Wednesday, Zhang Haihua, deputy secretary-general of the organizing committee, announced at a news conference on Tuesday that 31% of the events will make their Asian Winter Games debuts in Harbin.

Among them, three ski mountaineering events have been confirmed as new additions for the 2026 Winter Olympics, making

the Harbin Games an important test for athletes preparing for the Olympics.

According to the organizers, China, Japan, and South Korea will participate in all events, while Cambodia and Saudi Arabia have registered for the first time.

Alpine skiing is the most popular discipline, featuring participants from 25 countries and regions, including tropical nations such as Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia, as well as Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates in West Asia. This reflects the rapid development of ice and snow sports in Asia in recent years, especially following the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Zhou Jinqiang, vice president of the organizing committee and vice president of the Chinese Olympic Committee, stated that China will send more than 170

athletes to compete in all 64 events, striving for both athletic achievements and sportsmanship.

Organizers also revealed the layout of venues, with five for ice sports in Harbin and eight for snow sports in Yabuli. A total of 14 test events are scheduled from September to January next year.

Han Shengjian, vice president of the organizing committee, said that all competition venues are now ready, with the organizing committee coordinating the needs of the games and post-game utilization.

All 13 competition venues utilize energy-saving and environmentally friendly materials and low-carbon technologies, relying on existing facilities for maintenance and renovation without large-scale demolition and construction.

MATHEW WADE CALLS TIME ON INTERNATIONAL CAREER, STEPS INTO COACHING

AGENCIES
MELBOURNE, OCT 29

Australian wicketkeeper-batter Mathew Wade has announced his retirement from international cricket and will step into an assistant coaching role with the national side.

Wade calls time on a 13-year international career having appeared for Australia on more than 200 occasions, with the majority of those coming via the two white-ball formats. A T20 World Cup 2021 winner, Wade finishes up having played 36 Test matches, 97 ODIs and 92 T20Is for Australia, having also captained the ODI and T20 sides.

The wicketkeeper-batter, however, will continue to play white-ball cricket for Tasmania and the Hobart Hurricanes,



as well as in some overseas leagues. Plans for his post-playing career are already in train with the 36-year-old set to be Australia's wicketkeeping and fielding coach for next month's T20 series against Pakistan.

"I was fully aware my international days were most likely over at the end of the last T20 World Cup.

I will continue to play BBL (Big Bash League) and the odd franchise league over the summer months but around those commitments as a player I am investing heavily in my coaching.

"As my international career closes, I want to thank all of my Australian teammates, staff and coaches. I enjoyed the ride as challenging as it can be at the international level. Without good people around me, I would have never got as much out of myself as I did," he said.

Wade made his T20I and ODI debuts during the 2011-12 summer before winning his Baggy Green in Barbados in 2012 when Brad Haddin departed for personal reasons.

He featured for Australia at three editions of the T20 World Cup, with his

most memorable achievement coming in 2021 when he helped guide Australia to their inaugural 20-over title in Dubai in his role as vice-captain.

He starred at that tournament, with his innings of 41 not out from just 17 deliveries in a thrilling semi-final victory over Pakistan among his many career highlights.

Nick Hockley, Cricket Australia CEO, said, "Congratulations to Mathew on what has been a wonderful international career during which his skill and versatility have made him an outstanding performer across all formats.

"I'm delighted he will add to his massive contribution by coaching the next generation of stars and also continuing to light up the Big Bash with the Hobart Hurricanes."

Haryana Steelers defeat Dabang Delhi 41-34 in Pro Kabaddi League

AGENCIES
HYDERABAD, OCT 29

Haryana Steelers were boosted by the return of captain Jaideep and that showed as they dominated proceedings against Dabang Delhi K.C. at the GMCB Indoor Stadium in Gachibowli, here.

Haryana Steelers won the contest on Monday night by a scoreline of 41-34 with Mohammadreza Shadlou scoring 10 points and Shivam Patare adding 8 to the cause. For Dabang Delhi K.C., it was Ashu Malik who topped with 13 points.

Haryana Steelers had a quick start in the first half. While Ashu Malik started off proceedings with an early point for Dabang



Delhi K.C., it was Haryana Steelers who had the better of their opponents in the initial minutes as they raced away to a 4-point lead in what was a cautious start from both teams.

For Haryana Steelers, it was Shivam Patare doing the bulk of the heavy lifting early on as captain Jaideep settled in nicely within the first 10 minutes of the game.

With just over 5 min-

utes left in the first half, Mohammadreza Shadlou pulled off a stunning raid to further propel Haryana Steelers ahead.

The Steelers clinched an All-Out with 2 minutes left on the clock and went into the half-time break with a massive 11-point lead with the score reading 24-13.

After the break, Haryana Steelers looked to build on their lead, however, Dabang Delhi K.C. started to fight back with the likes of Ashu Malik, Naveen Kumar and Vikrant picking up crucial points.

However, a couple of Super Tackles from the Haryana Steelers defence helped them restore the 11-point advantage with just over 10 minutes to go

in the contest.

At this point, Ashu Malik was leading the charge for Dabang Delhi K.C. and the likes of Shivam Patare, Mohammadreza Shadlou and Jaideep were ensuring that Haryana Steelers were in the ascendancy.

A little after the 30-minute mark, Ashu Malik inflicted an All-Out on Haryana Steelers and completed his Super 10 to bring Dabang Delhi K.C. right back into the contest.

However, soon after that Haryana Steelers upped the ante and thwarted all hopes of a comeback for Dabang Delhi K.C.. Eventually, the Haryana Steelers walked off with their second consecutive win of the tournament.

Devananda has proven her prowess at world chess boxing championship in Armenia

AGENCIES
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, OCT 28

Devananda of Sainik School Kazhakoottam has once again proven her prowess on the global stage.

Competing at the prestigious World Chess Boxing Championship in Armenia, she achieved an outstanding performance, bringing home one gold and two bronze medals.

In a remarkable display of skill and determination, Devananda clinched the gold medal in the Chess Boxing Light (53 kg Girls) category, defeating Anastasiia Potapova from Russia.

She also earned bronze in the Chess Boxing Classic (53 kg Girls) category against Shamsieva Sabrina from Russia, and another bronze in the Chess Boxing Fit category, facing off with Anastasiia Potapova once again.

Before this international achievement, Devananda had already made a name for herself in the national and Asian chess boxing arenas.

At the 12th National Chess Boxing Championship in Kovalam, she took the gold medal in the 60-65 kg category. Her streak of victories continued with three more golds in the 50-55 kg sub-junior category

at both the 2nd Asian Chess Boxing Championship and the 3rd Indian Open International Chess Boxing Tournament in Kolkata.

Training at Sainik School Kazhakoottam under the guidance of defense officers, Devananda's success is a reflection of her dedication, relentless practice, and the solid support system she has behind her which will prove to be an inspiration for other girl cadets.

Her victories are a proud moment for her school, family, and the larger chess boxing community, marking Kerala's growing prominence in the sport.

PKL Season 11: Pawan Sehrawat reveals special bond with Telugu Titans coach Krishan Hooda

AGENCIES
HYDERABAD, OCT 29

Soon after their comprehensive victory over Bengaluru Bulls in Season 11 of the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL), Telugu Titans' skipper Pawan Sehrawat opened up about his relationship with his head coach Krishan Hooda. Highlighting how their guru-shishya (teacher-student) bond has transcended team rivalries, Pawan said, "Since Season 9, whenever there's a

match, I take his blessings before any game. Even today, before any match in the stadium, I meet him to seek his blessings."

Led by the hi-flyer, the Telugu Titans secured their second win of PKL Season 11 with a scoreline of 28-26. While Ashish Narwal scored nine points, Pawan added five more to his team's total tally.

Pawan spoke highly about coach Hooda and revealed that the head coach treats him like

family, "Coach sir has made me like his son. He even says he loves me as much as his own son. So, these aren't blessings for winning, but for playing well and giving my best."

Speaking about the victory, Pawan emphasised the team's collective effort, "No team here is weak. Each has scored 25-25 points, with excellent left and right combinations." He also praised his team's strategies, particularly highlighting how they



managed to contain strong raiders. "When a franchise and coach show complete trust in their captain and give 100% charge, it makes

a difference. We hold regular discussions, sometimes having 8-10 meetings per day to maintain coordination and improve perfor-

mance," Pawan said.

"Every point is important in this league. Look at how close all teams are -- some have won three matches more, some have lost three matches more. That's the only difference, otherwise, everyone has faced defeats. What matters is how we bounce back and play as a unit," he added. Up next, Pawan will face his former team Bengaluru Bulls, with whom he won the PKL trophy in Season 6. Both sides faced

off in the opening game of the season as well, with the Telugu Titans winning their last encounter.

The upcoming encounter adds another interesting dimension to Pawan's journey in the Pro Kabaddi League, as he prepares to compete against the team where he established himself as one of the league's biggest stars.

Bengal Warriorz face-off against defending champions Puneri Paltan in the first match on Tuesday.

Back to winning ways after a massive victory over Bengaluru Bulls in their previous encounter, the Paltan will take on the might of Maninder Singh and Fazel Atrachali for the Bengal Warriorz, who earned a hard-fought draw against U Mumba on Saturday.

In the second game on Tuesday, two top raiders will face off as Pardeep Narwal of the Bengaluru Bulls and Naveen Kumar of Dabang Delhi K.C. take the mat.

Deepanjali Mela lightens Shri Pandit Prem Nath Dogra GDC Samba

JNEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, OCTOBER 29

Shri Pandit Prem Nath Dogra Government Degree College on Tuesday organized the first of its kind event 'Deepanjali' - Diwali Mela to celebrate the festival of lights. The event was held in collaboration with J&K Police and Take One Television and Technologies Pvt. Ltd witnessing zealous participation from Government colleges of Samba District and Government and private organizations.

The mela, inaugurated by the College Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri under the aegis of IQAC, was a vibrant blend of culture, creativity and celebration bringing a spirit of joy, prosperity and unity on the campus.

The event featured live performances of traditional contemporary dance and music by talented students, food fiesta presenting delicious festive dishes, artisan stalls



of handmade crafts like Mandala art, Bamboo Calico printing, Fabric painting etc. offering environmentally conscious décor.

The stalls were put up by students of the GDC Samba, GDC Ramgarh, GDC Vijaypur, Social Welfare Department, Department of Handicraft and Handloom, Samba, J&K, and various private firms of Samba, Akhnoor and Jammu District.

The event also displayed an array of stalls with beautifully crafted diyas and candles made by students symbolizing sustainability and traditional

only had invitees and participants from colleges but was open for the general public also and had participation from a wide range of organizations.

In the stall competition, Bamboo Art by Rajinder Kumar won first position, Jute Bags by the Department of Home Science, SPPND GDC Samba secured second position, and Mandla Art by Anzel Sharma took third position. In the Cultural Category, Dogri Dance by Anjali and Pushpanjali claimed the first position, followed by a performance by Suvidha Sambyal in second place, and Punjabi Dance by Sia and group in third place, all from GDC Samba. Prizes were sponsored by Kanish Jewellers, Samba. Mr. Rohit Sharma from Take One Digital Network anchored the proceedings of the event. Formal Vote of thanks was given by IQAC Coordinator Dr. Banpreet Kour.

DDC Chairperson meets Salmerhi accident victims



JNEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 29

The District Development Council Chairman Udhampur, Lal Chand visited Associated Hospital here today to inquire about the condition of persons injured in matador accident at Salmerhi.

The accident, resulting from overcrowding and negligent driving, endangered numerous lives, including those of children, men and women.

Thankfully, there were no fatalities; however, several individuals sustained serious injuries.

Chairperson Lal Chand was accompanied by Additional District Development Commissioner Rajinder Singh and Assistant Commissioner Development Dr. Ranjeet Singh Kotwal. He directed hospital management to ensure that the injured receive the highest standard of

medical care, while assuring his full support to the victims and their families. "The well-being of affected individuals is our top priority. We will extend all necessary assistance to guarantee quality medical attention", he added.

The DDC Chairman instructed the Assistant Regional Transport Officer to conduct a comprehensive inspection of all operating matadors to enhance public safety.

DDC Shopian chairs meeting on Waste Management Initiatives

JNEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 29

The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Shopian, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar today chaired a meeting at Mini Secretariat, Shopian with Rural Development Officers to discuss enhanced strategies for solid and liquid waste management under the Swachh Bharat Grameen (SBG) program.

The meeting focused on the deliberating modalities for improved waste management and disposal mechanism, alongside strengthening forward linkages to ensure sustainable outcomes in sanitation measures in the district.

During the meeting, DPO Shopian, Arshi Rasool apprised the chair of various successful working models in waste management, highlighting



to facilitate the handling of polythene waste and composting activities.

The DDC emphasized the significance of behavioral change within communities and advocated for source segregation practices and the initiation of taking workable and feasible waste management initiatives.

He issued directives to implement mandatory guidelines for commercial units in the district including enforcing penalties and fines for non-compliance, with a one-week deadline for businesses to align with the new waste management protocols.

The meeting was attended by DPO Shopian, BDO Shopian and other officers.

AYUSH Ramban celebrates 9th Ayurveda Day to mark Dhanwantari Jayanti

JNEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, OCTOBER 29

The Department of AYUSH Ramban under the guidance of Deputy Director Dr Suresh Sharma celebrated the 9th Ayurveda Day to mark Dhanwantari Jayanti, engaging the community in honoring India's ancient health system. The participants paid tributes to Lord Dhanwantari, the deity of Ayurveda, and highlighted the significance of traditional health practices.

The event was inaugurated by Additional Deputy Commissioner Roshan Lal in presence of CPO Shakeeb Ahmed; ACP Ashfaq Ahmed; DTO Mohammad Imran Bandy and other officers.

Roshan Lal emphasized Ayurveda's essential role in modern healthcare, encouraging the community to integrate Ayurvedic principles into their daily lives for holistic well-being and disease prevention.

The celebration included enriching lectures by Nelofer, Ayush Health Worker at AHWC Dharam, and Dr. Netu, as well as a unique session on the use of Artificial Intelligence in Ayurveda by Huzaiifa bin Masood. These sessions emphasized Ayurveda's benefits for boosting immunity and managing lifestyle diseases, urging community members to adopt these time-tested practices.

As part of a broader initiative, the program marked the ongoing week-long AYUSH health camps across schools, colleges, and community centers in Ramban, focused on raising awareness about Ayurveda's preventive health benefits.

DC Budgam flags-off 'Run for Unity' from Railway Station to Beheshte Zahra Park

JNEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, OCTOBER 29

Celebrating Rashtriya Ekta Diwas/ National Unity Day, the Deputy Commissioner (DC), Budgam, Akshay Labroo along with SSP Budgam, Nikhal Borkar today flagged-off 'Run for Unity' program at Railway Station Budgam.

The event was organized by the District Administration Budgam to promote a sense of unity and integrity amongst citizens.

The event, commenced from Railway Station Budgam to Beheshte Zahra Park witnessed participation of several hundred participants, including members of civil society, respected locals and students from different schools.

ADDC Budgam, Aashiq Hussain Lily, ASP Budgam, ADC Budgam, CPO, Chief Education Officer



Budgam, and other senior officers also participated in the event.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC appreciated the participants and highlighted the importance of commemorating the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas/ National Unity Day.

The DC paid glowing

tributes to Sardar Vallabhai Patel, for his immense contributions for the unity of the nation and for his rich legacy.

He emphasised on celebrations of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas as an occasion to actively contribute to the nation's unity and its synergised development.

Anantnag hosts 'Run for Unity' to promote the message of Unity, Integrity & Security of the Country

JNEWS SERVICE
ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 29

A vibrant 'Run for Unity' event was held in Anantnag today as part of the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations.

The event was flagged-off by the Chairman, District Development Council (DDC), Yousuf Gorsl and the Deputy Commissioner Saeed Fakhruddin Hamid from Sarnal.

The run concluded at Tika Bagh where the Deputy Commissioner later administered the Unity Pledge to the participants.

Hundreds of enthusiastic participants, including students, youth, and persons from all walks of life took part in the run. The event is a part of the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations which falls on



the 31st October, the birth anniversary of Vallabhai Patel and celebrates his contributions to the country.

Notably, the union government had announced in the year 2014 to observe 31st October each year as the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas.

The objective was to provide an opportunity to reaffirm the inherent strength and resilience of our nation to withstand the actual and potential

threats to the unity, integrity and security of our country.

While administering the Unity Pledge to the participants, the Deputy Commissioner thanked the participants and spoke on the significance of the day.

Notably, more programmes have been planned by various departments in Anantnag to celebrate the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas and to spread its message.

DC Rajouri reviews preparations for Diwali

JNEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, OCTOBER 29

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma chaired a review meeting here today in the Conference Hall of the DC Office to review preparations for the Diwali festival of lights. The meeting focused on ensuring the uninterrupted provision of essential services, including electricity and water, as well as enhanced traffic, health, and fire safety measures throughout the district during the festive period.

The Deputy Commissioner instructed the Executive Engineer (Ex En) of the Power Development Department (PDD) to ensure an uninterrupted electricity supply on Diwali day, recognizing the need for stability and reliability in power supply during the festivities. He also directed the Executive Engineer (Ex En) of the Jal Shakti Department to make necessary arrangements for an ample water supply, ensuring that households have access to essential resources without interruption.



To manage the expected increase in traffic, especially in Rajouri town and its adjacent areas, the Deputy Commissioner outlined specific strategies to enhance road safety and traffic flow. Coordination between various departments, including traffic management teams, was emphasized to mitigate congestion and improve the movement of vehicles within the town.

For health and fire safety, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Health Department and the Fire & Emergency Services to be on high alert. He stressed that shops selling firecrackers must be equipped with fire extinguishers, ensuring safety standards are maintained. Additional directives were issued for deploying high-pressure pumps and jet sprays to prepare for potential fire emergencies, with special arrangements made

to deploy these resources strategically across the town.

The Deputy Commissioner also instructed the Executive Officer (EO) of the municipality to prioritize cleanliness across the town, arranging thorough cleaning activities and enhancing illumination to create a festive and safe environment for the residents.

SSP Rajouri, Randeep Kumar, directed officers to maintain close liaison with the police to ensure readiness and to communicate promptly in case of any incidents, strengthening the district's preparedness for a smooth celebration.

The meeting was attended by ADC Rajouri, Rajiv Khajuria, Executive Engineers of PDD and Jal Shakti, the EO of the municipality, and other district officers who affirmed their commitment to implementing the directives.

Ahead of peak winter, KPDCCL stocks addl 472 KL HSD at Gurez to run DG sets

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 29

As part of winter preparedness, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCCL), has dumped additional 472 KL of High-Speed Diesel (HSD) to run 25 DGs of various capacities to ensure power supply in harsh winter months to un electrified households in 22 villages of remote Gurez area of Bandipora District.

Meanwhile, KPDCCL has already floated tenders for providing Grid connectivity to the un electrified HHs of Gurez region for which the Ministry of Power, GoI, has already sanctioned Rs 50.15 Crore.

In a statement issued here today, a KPDCCL spokesperson stated that to provide power supply on DG sets in Gurez, a requirement of 945.9 KL of HSD was projected to the Administrative Department.

"Apart from 262.4 KL of HSD available, additional 472 KL HSD has been stocked by KPDCCL at various locations in Gurez ahead of the peak winter to provide power supply to consumers in 22 villages," he added. These villages fall in Tulail and Kanzalwan sections of Gurez region in Bandipora district. The spokesman stated that KPDCCL shall replenish more HSD supply and other allied material, if need be, to ensure power supply in these Gurez villages during the upcoming winter, as per past practice.

In order to provide permanent Grid connectivity to Gurez and do away with DG set supply, KPDCCL has floated 02 tenders for construction of 6.3 MVA 33/11 KV Receiving Substation and electrification of 2,619 un electrified households in Tulail and Kanzalwan under the premier loss reduction scheme of RDSS at a cost of Rs 50.15 Crore for which the Ministry of Power has already sanctioned the project.

Fire & Emergency Services Jammu Staff takes integrity pledge

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, OCTOBER 29

As a part of Vigilance Awareness week, Alok Kumar-Director Fire and Emergency Services (ADGP) joined and administered the Integrity Pledge at Fire and Emergency Services Hqrs Gandhi Nagar Jammu. Speaking on the occasion, the Director emphasized upon all the employees to adhere to relevant laws, rules and compliance mechanisms in the conduct of business and maintain the highest standard of integrity, transparency and good governance.