

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2023

Daily Evening Newspaper



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BRIEFLY

Army soldier shoots himself dead in Pampore

SRINAGAR, Oct 26 (Agencies): An army soldier allegedly shot himself dead on Thursday in Jammu & Kashmir's Pampore area.

Officials said that an army soldier shot himself dead with his service rifle in Chandhara area of Pampore tehsil of Pulwama district today.

"Police has taken cognizance of the incident and investigation has been started to find out the reason for the soldier taking the extreme step", officials said.

Infiltration bid foiled in Kupwara, Two Terrorists killed

SRINAGAR, Oct 26 (Agencies): Two terrorists were killed in a joint operation by the Army and Police along the Line of Control (LoC) in Machil sector in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, Police said on Thursday.

"Based on a specific information provided by Kupwara Police, an #encounter has started in Machhal sector in which two #terrorists have been killed so far. Operation underway. Further details shall follow," said Kashmir Zone Police.

Man killed, his Brother among two critically injured in road accident

SRINAGAR, Oct 26 (Agencies): A man was killed and two others, were critically injured in a road mishap along Bandipora Srinagar highway this morning, officials said.

They said that a vehicle bearing registration number JK01J 5560 overturned at Shilvat, near Asrar Motors, resulting in injuries to three persons.

"The injured trio identified as Bilal Ahmad Dar, son of Ghulam Mohammad Dar, Rafeeq Ahmad Dar, son of Abdul Majeed Dar and Saleem Ahmad Dar all residents of Gundroshan Narayan Bagh Ganderbal, were shifted to JVC Srinagar, where Saleem Ahmad Dar

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Cities must be flexible to respond to needs of citizens, competition, & changes in market: LG Sinha



Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Oct 26: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha inaugurated the two-day National Workshop of Smart Cities Mission on 'Streets & Public Spaces' in Srinagar, today.

In his address, the Lt Governor expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for organizing the national workshop in Srinagar. He wel-

comed the Mayors, Municipal Commissioners, Chief Executive Officers and officers representing 100 Smart Cities to J&K for knowledge sharing and experiential learning through project visits of Srinagar Smart City.

Most important element of a city is its people. With infrastructure and modern facilities, it is equally important to have vibrant

public spaces to enhance aesthetics, ensure quality of life and bring positive change, solace in the lives of the citizens, the Lt Governor said.

"Srinagar Smart City is a role model for other cities of the country with impactful pedestrian plazas, recreational spaces by the waterfronts. One can feel the soul of this city with excellent urban design of streets and

public spaces," he said.

At the inaugural session, the Lt Governor talked about various initiatives like Srinagar Square, beautification of ghats to revive water transport, rejuvenation of lakefront, heritage conservation of Old City, beautification of under-utilized spaces making Srinagar a great inspiration for experts.

He said, under the guidance of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, we are making committed efforts to strengthen the core infrastructure in a planned and sustainable manner.

While developing Srinagar Smart City, we have adopted human-centered approach and ensured elements of traditional art and culture, heritage, smart facilities, smart governance, and sustainability are based on social equity to provide high quality of life to the residents, he added.

He emphasized the need to

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Border situation remains stable: Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande



NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): The border situation remains stable, Chief of Army Staff Gen Manoj Pande said on Thursday amid the lingering border row between India and China in eastern Ladakh.

In an interactive session at an event, Gen Pande also said that there is a need for the armed forces to remain proactive to deal with various national security challenges.

He said the Army has been focusing on force

restructuring, technology infusion, reforming existing structures, jointness and human resource management as part of the overall reform process.

We are putting significant focus to leverage infusion of modern technology in the Army, Gen Pande said.

He said the major lesson that the Army learnt from the Russia-Ukraine conflict is that it can't rely on import of military hardware.

Mehbooba Mufti re-elected as PDP President for 3 Years



SRINAGAR, Oct 26 (Agencies): Former Jammu and Kash-

mir Chief Minister and People's Democratic Party chief Mehbooba Mufti was on Thursday unanimously re-elected as president of the party for a three-year term.

Mehbooba Mufti's name was proposed by senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Veeri and seconded by General Secretary Ghulam Nabi Hanjura.

1 killed, 3 injured as mud house collapses in Poonch

JAMMU, Oct 26 (Agencies): One person was killed and three injured when a mud house collapsed in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch dis-

trict, officials said on Thursday.

The incident occurred in Gursai Mohri village past midnight, they said.

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J&K Police arrests Online Fraudsters from UP



JAMMU, Oct 26 (Agencies): In a statement issued by Doda Police that two online fraudsters namely Adesh Singh son of Swarn Singh resident of Chandokha Farrukhabad UP and Vishal Partap Singh son of Adesh Kumar resident of Salempur Bharkha Farrukhabad UP have been arrested, who were wanted in a case FIR No.

60/2020 U/S 420 IPC registered against them in Police Station Thathri. Both the accused persons were arrested from Farrukhabad District of UP state in execution of non-bailable warrant issued by the Hon'ble Court.

While giving details, Police said that an FIR No.60/2020 U/S 420 IPC came to be registered in

Police Station Thathri on the complaint of one Sanjay Kumar son of Duni Chand resident of Drabshalla District Kishtwar dealing the business as wholesale supplier at Thathri stating in his complaint that he came in contact and received a call from Mobile No. 9648785929 from some person who revealed his name as Ajay Nagesh

Joushi, working with indices sucrose Ltd. based at Hoshi Pura Punjab and supplies sugar to dealers at different locations. During conversation, complainant was made to believe by the fraudster that he would supply sugar for the complainant and upon this demand of 10 tons of sugar was given by complainant for his store at Thathri. In turn a bill for Rs. 3,25,000/= alongwith account No. 519902010877960 was sent by fraudster to complainant and asked the complainant to make payment on the given account. Upon this complainant sent Rs. 3,25,000/= through the given account in lieu of the

deal of supplying the sugar on the demand of complainant.

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J&K Govt orders transfers, postings of five JKAS officers

JAMMU, Oct 26 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir Government has ordered transfers of five JKAS officers.

An order by General Administration Department on Wednesday ordered the following transfers and postings in the interest of the administration.

Dr. Neha Sharma, Jr. Scale JKAS, Tehsildar (Hqr) with AIGR, Jammu, is transferred and posted as Under Secretary in the J&K Services Selection Board.

Mohammad Rafie, Jr. Scale JKAS, Excise & Taxation Officer,

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J&K witnessing tourism boom; record breaking foreign, domestic tourist arrivals post G-20 event: Sec Tourism

SRINAGAR, Oct 26 (Agencies): Secretary Tourism and Culture, Syed Abid Rashid Thursday said that J&K is witnessing a tourism boom as domestic and foreign tourist arrivals are record breaking this year while elaborate arrangements are being made to lure more tourists in winter.

"This year we are witnessing a tourist boom. Post G-20 event, tourist arrivals, both domestic as well as foreigners are arriving in record numbers. Apart from the traditional winter tourist destinations like Gulmarg and Pahalgam,



we are exploring more winter destinations in J&K," Secretary Tourism told reporters on the sidelines of an event at the International Convention Centre here.

He said that tourism is the backbone of J&K's economy which contributes almost 7.2 per cent of GSDP while over 22 lakh are affiliated with

this sector directly and indirectly. "Efforts are on to make the tourism sector a grand success this year. This year, the winter will be cold but the warm hearts of people are ready to welcome tourists who wish to spend some time in Kashmir," he said.

The Tourism Secretary said that he took a detailed review of the winter arrangements in Gulmarg recently and the place is set to host a large number of tourists. About the Kailash Yatra, he said J&K despite having just one percent of the country's

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Thieves strike in house at Gandhi Nagar

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 26: A Theft took place in Gandhi Nagar Green belt in the house of Pankaj Vaid at 58-A, A/D near Greenfield School at around 3:00 AM on Thursday.

Immediately Gandhi Nagar Police station was informed about the incident. SHO Gandhi Nagar, Pankaj Sharma along with his team visited the spot and started investigation.

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Empowerment of women is pivotal for empowerment of Jammu Kashmir: LG Sinha

TOP NEWS REPORT

SRINAGAR, Oct 26: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha honoured the women achievers of Kashmir Division at a felicitation event organized by Chinar Corps, today.

In his address, the Lt Governor congratulated all the women achievers who have carved a niche for themselves and inspiring other women to dream and accomplish new heights of success in various fields.

He lauded the noble initiative of Chinar Corps to empower Nari Shakti and acknowledging their contribution in nation building.

Empowerment of women is pivotal for the empowerment of J&K UT. In the last few years, J&K Administration has given priority to women empowerment based on the principles of equality, equal rights and equal opportuni-



ties as enshrined in the Constitution, the Lt Governor said.

"I am proud to say that half of our population has made an immense contribution in the prosperity and growth of UT," he said.

The Lt Governor highlighted several schemes and programmes being implemented in J&K, under the guidance of

Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, which are intended for holistic empowerment of women and realizing their full potential.

We have taken several steps through Schemes of NRLM, Mission Youth, JKPO, Industry & Commerce for the speedy economic empowerment of women in urban and

rural areas, he added.

In academics, our daughters are scripting new history and charting a new future with new confidence and a sense of self-esteem, the Lt Governor said.

On the occasion, Women Achievers were felicitated by the Lt Governor for their extraordinary contribution in diverse fields like

Education, Law, Entrepreneurship, Social Work, Health, Literary, Sports, Journalism.

Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai, GOC 15 Corps; Maj Gen Mohit Seth, GoC Kilo Force, senior officers from Army, eminent personalities from diverse fields and family members of women achievers were present.

JKNPP celebrates Accession Day, demands liberation of PoK

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: J&K National Panthers Party (JKNPP) celebrated Accession Day by paying floral tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh who took the decision to accede J&K to the Union of India.

Vilakshan Singh, President of J&K National Panthers Party while speaking on the occasion said that it was because of Maharaja Hari Singh that J&K became part of India. Maharaja Hari Singh had signed the Instrument of Accession on October 26, 1947.

The accession was accepted by Lord Mountbatten, the then Governor-General of India in the morning hours of October 27, 1947.



Singh said that Accession Day is very important day in the history of J&K and the residents of J&K should celebrate day with great enthusiasm.

He said that the first battalion of the Indian Army landed at the Srinagar Airport at about 8.30 A.M. It was the

first Sikh Battalion of the Indian Army which dashed the Pakistani Army from across Baramulla District which was held for three days by the Dogra Army under the leadership of Brig. Rajinder Singh.

Brig. Rajinder Singh was martyred by Paki-

stani raiders on October 26, 1947.

The Panthers Party observed 77th Accession Day at Jammu and expressed gratitude to the Indian Army who had reached Baramulla after the J&K Army had continued fighting despite losing hundreds of J&K Army soldiers.

Maharaja Hari Singh had appointed Brig. Rajinder Singh to resist the Pak-invaders. Almost all the J&K Army sacrificed their lives but stopped Pak-raiders for nearly two days.

Vilakshan Singh said that a large portion of the erstwhile state of J&K is under illegal foreign occupation. He demanded that the central government should take steps for the liberation of Pakistan occupied and China occupied parts of J & K. He said that liberation of the illegally occupied parts of J&K would be the real tribute to Maharaja Hari Singh.

Others present on the occasion were Naresh Chib, Rajesh Gandhi, Ravinder Jamwal, Rakesh Gupta, Sanjeev Verma and others.

Retrieval of encroached land of Dussehra Ground demanded

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: Shri Lakshmi Narayan Mandir Management Trust Gandhi Nagar Jammu has been celebrating Dussehra festival for the last 60 years in a spacious Dusshera Ground, part of which stands encroached upon by sports authorities, scouts and guides offices on one side and by a school on the other side making it impossible to take care of huge congregation visiting Dussehra ground to watch burning of effigies of Ravana, Kumbhakaran and Meghnath.

It needs to be mentioned here that the gathering which assemble at Gandhi Nagar is far more than any Dusshera Grounds in Jammu upto borders.

With this encroachment hundreds of thousands of people are made to stand on roads and on the roofs of houses adjoining Dussehra ground which



can be a cause of anxiety for the administration, and the organizers, if any time some roofs fall down or something else happens.

Further retreating that the sports building constructed on the encroached land of the Dussehra ground has been declared unsafe by the concerned authorities which can be proved dangerous for the administration and the public any time. Taking the interest

of public in view who want to participate in the celebrations of Dussehra and unsafety of the population residing in these buildings, a resolution was moved by the president of the management Trust joined by the leaders of almost all the political parties, present during the Dussehra celebration on Oct 24, that the sports building which stands declared unsafe be shifted to some other place and the said area

which was being earlier a part of ground be restored because with this huge gathering on roads there are chances of security problem including serious accidents also. The resolution moved by the president of the trust Th. Gulchain Singh Charak was put before the huge gathering and was unanimously passed by the whole public and appealed to the govt. for immediate necessary action in

the interest of the pious Hindu festival. It is therefore, appealed to the higher authorities i.e Hon'ble L.G., Div Com and DC Jammu on behalf of Jammu people in general and "Sanatani" Hindus in particular that the said resolution passed by the general public be given due cognizance and encroached land be retrieved and restored to the Dusshera Ground.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION KISHTWAR SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No.73of 2023-24Dated:21-10-2023

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD,Railwaysand otherState/CentralGovernmentsforthe followingworks:

S. No.	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money @2% of Advertised Cost (In Rupees)	Time of Completion	Class of Contractor
1.	Development of Park by way of Tile work and other allied works at Shiv Mandir Kishtwar	12.32	600.00	24,640.00	45 Days	"A,B,C,D"

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website <http://jktenders.gov.in> as per below schedule:

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	21-10-2023
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 21-10-2023 to 27-10-2023, 1600 Hrs.
3	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting.	25-10-2023
4	Bid submission Start Date	21-10-2023 from 1800 Hrs.
5	Bid Submission End Date	27-10-2023 up to 1600 Hrs.
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	28-10-2023 on or after 1200 Hrs. in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kishtwar.
7	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of e-challan through Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date, e-NIT No. and name of work duly crediting to 0059 (Revenue) favoring Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division, Kishtwar uploading a copy of treasury challan and EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR (The date of Treasury Challan/ Affidavits between date of start of bid submission and bid submission end date) duly pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kishtwar as mentioned in the bid documents. The earnest money of the unsuccessful bidder shall be released only after submission of Treasury Challan.

2. The electronic bidding system would not allow any late submission of bids after due date and time as per server time. Bidders may modify their bids by uploading their request for modification before the deadline for submission of bids. For this, the bidder need not make any additional payment towards the cost of tender document. For bid modification and consequential re-submission, the bidder is not required to withdraw his bid submitted earlier. The last modified bid submitted by the bidder within the bid submission time shall be considered as the bid. For this purpose, modification/withdrawal by other means will not be accepted. In online system of bid submission, the modification and consequential submission of bids is allowed any number of times. The bidders may withdraw his bid by uploading their request before the deadline for submission of bids; however, if the bid is withdrawn, the re-submission of the bid is not allowed. No bid shall be modified or withdrawn after the deadline of submission of bids.

3. The date and time of opening of Financial-Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial-bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kishtwar. The date for same shall be intimated separately.

No. e-tenders/Kishtwar/1116-1128
Dated: 21-10-2023

DIP/J-10153/23

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
PWD (R&B) Division
Kishtwar

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI PHE MECHANICAL DIVISION KATHUA

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
e-NIT No. JSPHEMK/229OF 2023-24 Dated: 24-10-2023

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division Kathua, invite tenders from reputed and resourceful Bidders/Firms/Companies/joint venture etc. for below mentioned works at Water Supply scheme Thamnall Bagganof Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Sub Division Mahanpur of Kathua District of UT of J&K, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). The bidding process shall be completed online on www.jktenders.gov.in in two covers viz. Cover 1st consisting of General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover 2nd Financial Bid in the prescribed BOQ.

S. No.	Particulars of the Work	Estimated Cost (Lacs)	Tender fee (in Rs)	Earnest money Deposit	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work (days)
1.	Providing, installation, testing and commissioning of pumping machinery and electro-mechanical works along with allied jobs to be executed at water supply scheme Thamnall Bagganof Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech. Sub Division Mahanpur of Kathua District of UT of J&K, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).	Rs. 66.45	1000/- (Non-Refundable)	50000/- (pledged to Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division Kathua)	365 days	150 days

Position of funds: Approved Under Jal Jeevan Mission (J.J.M)

Position of AAA: Accorded

Position of T.S: Sanctioned

The tendering authority is Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE (M) Div. Kathua.

Critical Dates:

i	Publish Date	24-10-2023
ii	Document Download/sale start Date	24-10-2023
iii	Date of Pre-bid meeting	02-11-2023 (02:00 PM)
iv	Bid submission start date	30-10-2023
v	Bid submission end date	10-11-2023 (04:00 PM)
vi	Date and time of Bid opening	11-11-2023 (01:00 PM onward)

1. Bid documents can be accessed and downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in

2. The whole bidding process shall be completed online on tender portal www.jktenders.gov.in. The intending bidders can download the bid document from the tender portal and can submit their bids by uploading them on the tender portal.

3. The valid bids received shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division Kathua. Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 4 & 5 of the table and shall be payable at Kathua.

4. The cost of tender documents should be in the form of Treasury challan/e-challan towards the cost of tender document to be deposited in MH-0215 (Revenue head) or through RTGS in J&K Bank Ltd. Kathua City bearing bank account No. 0555010200001579, IFSC CODE: JAKA0PGKATU in favour of Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division Kathua.

5. The original hard copies of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury challan/e-challan, Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/BG and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as L1 after opening of financial cover.

6. The bid shall remain valid for a period of 365 days from the last date of submission of bids. If any bidder withdraws his bid before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the same shall be considered to be in violation of bid security declaration and shall be dealt with accordingly and the bidder shall be declared non-responsive.

7. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website www.jktenders.gov.in.

8. Queries by email if any should be made at phejmmundkathua@gmail.com

No: JSPHEMK/5133-45
Dated 24-10-2023

DIP/J-10168/23

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech. Division
Kathua

EDITORIAL

GIFT OF NATURE

Trees and plants are a source of life for humans. Trees and plants have been given to us as a wonderful gift by nature to nourish our lives, we should be very grateful for this gift.

For this reason, every human should understand very well the importance of trees and plants in his life and save trees to maintain the existence of mankind, to protect the earth's environment and to keep the entire earth green. It is very necessary.

Trees and plants have proved to be very beneficial for human life because we get many types of medicines from trees and plants. Even at the technological level in medical science, most of the medicines are made from the leaves and roots of trees and plants. In fact, it is very important to have trees and plants on earth to keep humans alive.

Old trees and plants in rural areas become historical sites and old plants in cities become a source of pride.

Trees and plants release pure oxygen for living beings and reduce air pollution by consuming the very dangerous gas carbon dioxide, which makes human life much easier.

Trees and plants are the best means of providing food and shade to wild animals, trees and plants protect wild animals from storms etc.

Trees and plants have many benefits for our human life, along with this they also provide fresh fruits, fresh air and nutrients.

Trees and plants prevent soil erosion, which helps wildlife a lot. Due to absence of soil erosion, wildlife maintains its existence for a long time.

Trees and plants are economically beneficial for many people, that is, people are saved from economic recession by selling fruits and vegetables from trees and dried trees as fuel. Trees and plants are the only means of providing aesthetically pleasing and peaceful environment. Trees and plants enhance the beauty of society, roads, parks, playgrounds, gardens, courtyards of houses etc. and provide adequate amount of oxygen. Trees and plants provide us cool shade during summer and enhance the quality of life.

One tree provides oxygen worth approximately \$31,250 in its entire lifetime. Only 40-50 trees around the world destroy about 80 pounds of air pollution every year. If there are trees and plants around the house, the value of the house increases by about 10% from the market value. Trees and plants reduce soil erosion, which prevents soil movement. Trees and plants prove to be very beneficial in reducing air and pollution. Due to the presence of trees and plants around the houses, the landscape and the value of the land becomes very high. According to scientists, just four trees can reduce the heat of a house by 30% and one million trees can save about \$10 million in energy consumption in 1 year. If a person or patient is suffering from ADHD disease or any other similar disease, then he can be cured by bringing him in contact with the environment. Trees and plants are a perfect example of unity in diversity. Our life exists only through trees. We should protect them and stop cutting of trees. Trees remove harmful gases from our atmosphere and play an important role in making the environment clean.

Legalising of gay marriage: The key is mobilising of public support

By: Anita Anand

On October 17, the Supreme Court of India passed a ruling that it cannot legalise same-sex marriages at this juncture. The Chief Justice of India, Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, said that there was "a degree of agreement and a degree of disagreement on how far we have to go" on same-sex marriages and that making such a law was the domain of Parliament.

The judgment was no doubt a disappointment to the petitioners who had sought a positive outcome that would ensure equality and non-discrimination in the laws pertaining to marriage, succession and adoption for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer or questioning, intersex, asexual and more (LGBTQIA+) community, rights which are currently assured to only heterosexual couples.

Leading up to this judgment, the five-judge bench headed by the Chief Justice Chandrachud heard arguments in the case in April and May this year. During the arguments, the Centre told the Supreme Court that any constitutional declaration made by it on the petitions seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage may not be a "correct course of action" as the court will not be able to foresee, envisage, comprehend and deal with its fall-out. On May 3, the Centre told the court it would constitute a committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary to examine the administrative steps that could be taken to address the "genuine humane concerns" of same-sex couples without going into the issue of legalising their marriage.

Some same-sex marriage petitioners had urged the apex court to use its plenary power, "prestige and moral authority" to push society to acknowledge such a union which



would ensure them to lead a "dignified" life like heterosexuals. Unfortunately, this did not happen.

Same-sex couples in India face significant legal and social challenges. They are afraid to come out, even to their friends and family. They cannot adopt children or have a child by surrogacy; they do not have automatic rights to inheritance, maintenance and tax benefits; after a partner passes away, they cannot avail of benefits like pension or compensation; they cannot be party in living will or right to life decisions, as they are not the next of kin, not related by blood or marriage. These rights are available to heterosexual couples.

Chief Justice Chandrachud stressed that marriage was not a static, stagnant or unchanging institution, but the Supreme Court cannot compel Parliament or the state Assemblies to create a new institution of marriage. And nor is the Special Marriage Act (SMA) unconstitutional just because it does not recognise same-sex marriages or redraft its provisions to substitute "man" and "woman" or "husband" and "wife". The right to enter into a union must lead to a recognition by the State for fulfilment of such a right.

The October 17 judgment affirmed

that same-sex couples have a right to enter into union and it is the State's duty to ensure such unions and couples get protection and a bouquet of rights and that they and unmarried couples can jointly adopt children.

However, the State has fallen short of doing this, and will not be able to do this.

On a positive note, the judgment called to task the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) regulation that restricted queer and unmarried couples from adopting children. The CARA is a statutory body affiliated to the ministry of women and child development and the nodal body for adoption of Indian children, regulating and monitoring all adoptions taking place in India, including inter-country adoptions. The CJ said the law did not preclude unmarried couples from adopting, and that the Union of India had not proven restricting unmarried couples from adopting was in the best interest of children. "CARA has exceeded its authority in barring unmarried couples," he said.

The judgment admitted that this moment was an opportunity to remedy the historical injustice and discrimination, and thus governance needed to grant rights to such

unions or marriages. But between the five judges, it was a minority view. The judgment also says that the courts must exercise restraint and leave it to the legislature to decide this issue with debates, discussion and policy decisions. Yet, in India's current political climate, it is difficult to debate and discuss these issues that could result in policymaking.

After a decade-long battle in 2018, the Supreme Court struck down the colonial-era law that criminalised same-sex intercourse. Since then, surveys have shown that the acceptance of homosexuality has grown. According to a Pew survey published in June 2023, about 53 per cent of those polled believed that homosexuality should be accepted. But there is still much opposition to same-sex unions and many sections of society believe that marriage is for procreation, not recreation.

The LGBTQ+ community, as a minority, is one among many others in seeking equality and non-discrimination in a country that has a long history of inequality and discrimination based on religion, caste, class, race, ethnicity, gender, sex and linguistics. While the Constitution of India guarantees rights on paper, it has been a struggle for the disenfranchised to secure their rights.

And this may not change any time soon. Rights struggles take time, patience and challenging work such as building consensus within the groups, developing clear plans, strategies and timelines, while anticipating obstacles and identifying allies.

By petitioning the Supreme Court, the LGBTQ+ groups are keeping the agenda of same-sex marriage and subsequent rights on the table and in view of the public. This is a good move. However, the arduous work lies in engaging the public to support their demands. That is the next step.

"THEY THOUGHT I WAS A CURSE": THE STRUGGLE OF INDIA'S TRANS COMMUNITY



By: Misba Choudhary

(Law student from law school of Jammu)

I am Misba Choudhary pursuing BA.LLB from law school of Jammu (Jammu university) and feels much obliged and so proud to be a part of such an elite institution. As a law student, I am asserting my opinion on transgender in our Indian society.

We are in a country that celebrates diversity in culture, creed, religions so vibrantly that the whole world talks about our 'Unity in Diversity', but the ugliest side of our society is not accepting all the genders equally. Even though legally every gender is treated in a respectful manner, when it comes to transgenders there is still a taboo in our society and social stigma attached to it. The transgen-

der people go through a lot of challenges on an everyday basis. These problems include social exclusion, Marginalization, Lack of education and workplace opportunities, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, mental issues, extreme poverty, violence, victim of hate crimes and so on.

They all face severe discrimination, sexual harassment in every part of our country on a daily basis. These communities are not something that came into existence in the recent centuries, if we look back in history, including mythological times, there is mention of napunsaka in our Vedic literature as well. Jain literature gives them a name of 'Psychological sex'. Under British rule, they passed an

act called the 'Criminals Tribes act' in 1871 according to which Transgenders were treated as criminals and after which the whole situation in the nation changed. Even though the law was repealed in 1949 but the discrimination continued for the transgender communities.

In today's scenario, the only reason of transgender's struggle and the various social issues they face is the people of our country who judge them and we are one of them.

#STOP JUDGING TRANSGENDER!!!!

Our responsibility as civilians is to treat them equally and give them equal respect as any other gender.

How to Improve Concentration in Studies During Exams



By: Vijay GarG

Student concentration during exams: Being a student is not easy. You have to read and memorise concepts of different subjects to score better in the exams.

To help students improve their concentration and focus while studying we have created this article. Here you will get the 10 natural ways to increase focus and concentration during exams. You too can follow these tips to increase concentration and perform better in your examinations.

Strategies to Help Students Focus in the Classroom

1. Establish a Routine

The first thing a human should do is develop a routine and follow it. This routine should include time allocations for studies, breaks, meals, and sleep. This develops and regulates the body's internal clock, which will make it easier for you to focus on your studies.

2. Manage Digital Distractions

Nowadays, digital gadgets are a major source of distraction for kids and students. Initially, parents use them to distract their children and extract some time for them. But, with time, this distraction evolved into a serious problem. Thus, students should understand that these gadgets will consume their productivity if overused. Hence, develop the habit of not using electronic devices while studying.

3. Break Tasks into Manageable Chunks

If you feel that the syllabus is huge, which gives you anxiety, then break the study material into smaller and more manageable segments. It's like climbing the ladder

by taking one step at a time. This prevents overwhelm and makes it easier to focus on one task at a time.

4. Take Breaks

You have noticed that when you use your phone for hours, it gets heated. The same happens with your brain. Thus, it needs time to become normal again by taking a break. Having some me time or playing some games with your friends is a break for your brain. This increases focus and concentration.

(Vijay GarG
Retired Principal
Educational columnist
malout Punjab)

Meri Maati Mera Desh an occasion to remember sacrificial struggle of freedom fighters, Bravehearts: LG Sinha

TOP NEWS REPORT

SRINAGAR, Oct 26: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today received the Amrit Kalash from all Blocks and Municipal bodies of Kashmir Division under Meri Maati Mera Desh Campaign and flagged off the Amrit Kalash Yatra for onward journey to New Delhi Via Jammu.

From 11-30th September 2023, Mitti and Rice were collected from households across all villages and urban wards, marked with over 1.5 Lakh special celebrative events organized across J&K.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor dedicated 3952 Amrit Vatikas and 4605 Shilapalakkams across the UT in the memory of great personalities who had made invaluable contributions and laid down their lives for the progress and prosperity of Jammu Kashmir.

"Meri Maati Mera Desh is an occasion to remember the sacrifi-



cial struggle of freedom fighters and Bravehearts. The sacred flame of their selfless sacrifice and contribution of our charismatic forefathers in development will illuminate our journey of Amrit Kaal," the Lt Governor said in his address.

It is not an event but a symbol of the hopes and aspirations of the common man of J&K UT. It is also a clarion call of the rise of a new J&K that is marching ahead with renewed

vigour and strength, he said.

The Lt Governor administered the 'Panch Pran' pledge to the people and called for united efforts for realizing the vision of developed India.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has shown us a new path through Panch Pran. Goal of developed India, to remove any trace of colonial mindset, take pride in our roots, unity and sense of duty among citizens, these

five Pran will guide us in Amrit Kaal, he said.

Meri Maati Mera Desh is also a symbol of new resolve, an opportunity for collective reflection and new resolution for team J&K, the Lt Governor said.

We will have to dedicate every moment of our lives to nation building and I am confident that the campaign will create new strength and new confidence in the development journey of J&K UT, he said.

The Lt Governor also

planted a sapling of Picea smithiana (Himalayan Spruce) to mark the occasion.

Junaid Azim Mattu, Mayor, SMC; Sh Aftab Malik, Chairman, DDC Srinagar; Sh Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Secretary Tourism Department; DDC Chairpersons, members of PRIs, ULBs, senior Officers from Civil Administration, Police and Security Forces were present.

Mallikarjun Kharge committed to people's good: Sawhney

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: As Mallikarjun Kharge completed one year as President of the Congress party, former Minister J&K and senior Congress leader Yogesh Sawhney stated that Kharge embodies the virtues of the Indian National Congress - Virtues of democracy, social justice, secularism, inclusive growth and patriotism and lauded his leadership.

"Having risen through the ranks, he is an ideal example of what passion and persistence can achieve. From a humble position of a block-level leader to becoming the party's elected president, his journey studied with 55 years of electoral success is a testament to his hard work, dedication & commitment to the cause of democracy," Sawhney said.

Sawhney further stated that he is a fearless leader who fights for and defends the ideals he believes in. He also champions the rights of poor & marginalized. Under his leadership,



the party has made significant progress.

He has also been instrumental in revitalizing the party's organizational structure & outreach to the people. As the President of the Congress party, Mallikarjun Kharge has been a staunch advocate for democratic values, social justice, and secularism.

He has consistently upheld the party's rich history and legacy while adapting to the evolving political landscape of the country.

The former Minister further said 'Kharge is a visionary leader who is committed to building a better future for India. His excels at consensus making and staunchly stands up for what is right and just. As our President

completes a year in office, we wish him the very best and thank him for his efforts and inspiration to all those who strive to make a difference' stated Sawhney.

Mallikarjun Kharge, the esteemed President of our party, marks a significant milestone today as he completes one year in office. The past year has been a testament to his leadership, dedication, and unwavering commitment to serving the people. His leadership has shown the way forward in these challenging political times, and the Congress party eagerly anticipates what the future holds under his guidance, Sawhney added.

Former Minister Further stated that as we reflect on Mallikarjun Kharge's remarkable one-year journey as the President of the Congress party, it becomes evident that he is not only a stalwart defender of democratic values, but also a proponent of inclusive growth that benefits every segment of society.

JKMEF urges Govt to redress employees' issues on priority



TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: The Jammu Kashmir Medical Employees Federation (JKMEF) led by Sushil Sudan, the President and a member of the Pharmacy Council of India, expressed their appreciation for the work of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Dr. Arun Mehta, Chief Secretary, in the overall development of the infrastructure of the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory (JK UT) and the digitization of most government services accessible to the public.

However, they also raised several pressing issues faced by health employees in the region.

The federation emphasized the long-standing issue of delayed salary payments to female multipurpose health workers and other staff. They urged the government to urgently and

permanently address this issue by disbursing salaries to permanent health employees working under the 2211 Head from the state's treasury, adopting reimbursement schemes similar to other states.

Sushil Sudan called for the timely disbursement of the General Provident (GP) Fund and other dues within 15 days after the superannuation of government employees.

This would ensure that retired employees can fulfill their social and domestic obligations without delay, he said and also suggested shifting the GP Fund to Jammu and Kashmir Bank for better management.

He commended the government's recent order for the reallocation of employees who have completed five years of service at a particular place of posting.

However, he requested the government to consider the special circumstances of terminally ill employees and those nearing superannuation when making such reassignments.

The federation called for a prompt consideration of the old pension scheme.

Additionally, Sushil Sudan extended full support to the Joint Action Committee program scheduled for November 4, 2023, and encouraged health employees to participate in this mass action to push for the resolution of their demands.

Raman Anand, a Supervisor Pharmacist in JKMEF, was welcomed and assigned a new role as an advisor to the federation.

Other individuals who participated in the press conference include Parul Singh, Bharat Bhushan Bhagat, Jaswinder Singh, Shaffkat Hussain Sheikh, R.P. Singh, Bahadur Singh, Tajinder Singh, Sunil Chauhan, Mukhtiar Kohli, Madan Sharma, Kulwant Singh, Saurav Bakshi, Ashwani Kumar Gupta, Sultan Mohd, Pawan Singh Jamwal, Ramneek Singh, Rajinder Sharma and Lawrance Mashii.

Very small road projects neglected, hampering big tourist avenues: Rao

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: Senior AAP leader, Kuldeep Kumar Rao, in a press release issued here has appealed to the Lt. Governor of J&K UT, Manoj Sinha and Dr. Jitendra Singh, concerned MP & MOS in Prime Minister's office, to look deep into the matter and issue directions to the concerned to take immediate necessary steps to complete the below mentioned very small projects, on priority bases, so that a population of about 5 Tehsils, comprises of Tehsils, Kahara, Thathri, Phaqsoo, Bhella & Chirrala, is benefited giving an end to the age-old hardships to the people besides the area also comes on tourism maps, again benefiting the whole population of all these Tehsils.

Rao further said that for achieving full advantage of the Tourism development schemes in erstwhile Doda District and for ensuring greater opportunities of employment, the left-over work on some roads needs to be completed on priority.

Rao said that Kahara Jai road, which is complete up to Joura Kalan & (75% of the total length), needs to be completed from Joura Kalan to Jai (9 kms length).

It will not only provide employment to the poor people of the area but also boost tourism. It is one of the links in the circuit network.

The 19 Kms sanctioned Thathri- Chirra road project is complete from its initial point Jangalwar Nallah to Chirra (length 14 Kms) & the remaining 5 Kms

from Chirra to Gallu Top be kindly constructed immediately. Further, if Gallu Top is linked to Joura Khurd (2kms only) on Kahara-Joura Khurd road, 90% link between tourist places will be achieved.

Rao has appealed to the Lt. Governor of J&K UT, Manoj Sinha and Dr. Jitendra Singh that two of the above mentioned Joura Kalan to Jai and Chira to Gallu Top (sanctioned projects) be kindly taken up immediately on priority. Kahara-Jai road is perhaps the longest pending project in erstwhile Doda District & this fact should be given due consideration.

Rao said that on Suringa Morhthri- Chirra link road (14 Kms), earth cutting work is already complete from Suringa Mor to revenue village Joura Kalan - a distance

of 4 Kms (Non forest area) & the work from Joura Kalan to Jai (10 Kms) stands suspended for want of forest clearance.

He said that out of these 10 Kms, a stretch of one & half Kms i.e from revenue village Joura Kalan to Revenue village Lower-Shamdlnai is tree-less though it falls in forest area; work on this stretch can be executed without any loss to forest & without any legal hindrance even before forest clearance for the whole. He appealed them to accord forest clearance at the earliest and simultaneously issue orders of execution of work on this tree-less stretch of one & half kms from Joura Kalan to Lower Shamdlnai, so that justice to the poor inhabitants of the village Lower Shamdlnai & ST village Kunthal will be denied.

M.K Ajatshatru & Kuwarani Dr Ritu Singh celebrate J&K Accession Day at House of Commons, UK Parliament

TOP NEWS REPORT

LONDON, Oct 26: Jammu & Kashmir Day was celebrated in the House of Commons in the UK Parliament on the eve of 76th anniversary of Accession of the princely state of Jammu & Kashmir to India on 26 Oct 1947.

The program was organised by the Jammu Kashmir diaspora based in the UK and hosted by Rt Hon Bob Blackman MP Harrow East. Other parliamentarians attending the event included Rt Hon Jonathan Lord MP Woking, Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP Chipping Barnet.

The special guests for the evening included the grandson and grand daughter-in-law of Maharaja Hari Singh, Maharaj Kumar Ajatshatru Singh & Kuvrani Ritu Singh.

Other keynote speakers included Dr Gautam Sen, Sh Sushil Pandit & Mr Sajjad Raja NEP Party representing POJK.

The proceedings were inaugurated by MP Jonathan Lord who welcomed the royal family from Jammu & Kashmir and other guests and



audience. This was followed by Dr Sen, who spoke about the plight of Kashmiri Pandits and lack of political will to support their rehabilitation. He attributed this to vote bank politics highlighting that the pandit community being small in number do not have a political voice.

Maharaj Kumar Ajatshatru ji spoke next about the Dogra dynasty and their contribution to establishment and expansion of the princely state of Jammu & Kashmir. He also highlighted Maharaja Hari Singh's role in signing the instrument of Accession with India and reminded everyone how

critical decisions affecting the subcontinent were taken in this very same building.

Sushil Pandit ji spoke about the lack of justice being done to the Kashmiri Pandit community and also highlighted the apathy of the establishment in fulfilling the aspirations of the community.

MP Theresa Villiers spoke about the importance of Jammu Kashmir Day and also highlighted the significant progress made by the region since revocation of Article 370.

MP Bob Blackman brought with him a signed copy of the Instrument of Accession and highlighted the

contribution of the Indian diaspora in celebrating the day year after year in the House of Commons. MP Bob Blackman also urged Pakistan to stop state sponsored terrorism so there is lasting peace and progress in the region.

The event ended on a positive note with Kr Ritu Singh ji speaking about a number of social and cultural initiatives in the region specifically aimed at woman empowerment, inclusion, skills development and capacity building to boost the economy. She invited the Indian diaspora to give back to the country and talked about the positive changes on the

ground post abrogation of Article 370.

She also presented the MP's with beautiful Basohli art made by Paper Baag.

The event was well represented by political and community activists based in the UK, wider British Indian and POJK diaspora and a number of parliamentary staff.

A number of community volunteers worked together to shape the event including Ms Sonal Sher (moderating the proceedings) Mrs Shafalica Bhan Kotwal Ms Anupama Handoo Mr Vinod Tikoo Mr Anupam Fotedar Mr Lalit Sharma Mr Pankaj Raina and others.

HDFC Bank launches Festive Treats

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: HDFC Bank, India's largest private sector bank, announced the launch of its annual campaign - Festive Treats with superfast banking services and 10,000+ offers on Cards & EASYEMI. After four successful campaigns, the theme for this year is "Iss Tyohaar No Intezaar", which means that there is no waiting this festive season. Besides offering instant services, the Bank will be running a host of offers across Accounts, Loans, Cards, EASYEMI, Consumer Loans, Cardless EASYEMI, and other products to make shopping during this festive season enjoyable and accessible for all consumers.

Ravi Santhanam, Chief Marketing Officer, HDFC Bank said, "The Festive Treats campaign embodies our dedication to spread happiness during this cel-

ebratory season. The wait for attractive deals and offers is over. Through our advanced instant digital solutions, customers can seamlessly access banking services online to fulfill their wishes. The campaign slogan "Iss Tyohaar No Intezaar," symbolises festive cheer along with ease and convenience. We wish all our consumers a happy festive season!" Under Festive Treats, all existing and non-bank customers, including salaried individuals and business owners, can avail the offers. The Bank is offering XPRESS Loans at discounted interest rates and processing fees for houses, vehicles, businesses, personal needs, and more. Further, the Bank has exclusive tie-ups with top brands and merchants like Apple, Samsung, LG, Sony, Haier, HP, Acer, IKEA, Home Centre, Amazon, Lifestyle, and many other platforms.

Fatima Sana Shaikh on epileptic seizure on Dhak Dhak sets: I am much better today, touched that Dia Mirza cared for me

Actor Fatima Sana Shaikh calls herself blessed for her last release Dhak Dhak. With the Tarun Dubeja film, she ticked off her dream to ride a motorcycle as the film revolves around four women who take on a bike journey to Khardung La. In an interview, Fatima revisits her memories from the making of the film.

The 31-year-old actor says, "I feel lucky to live my life through work, and got a chance to visit Khardung La. Every character adds value to my life and with Dhak Dhak, I have connected with all the women." The film also stars Dia Mirza, Ratna Pathak Shah and Sanjana Sanghi. The film was wrapped up in 42 days, all the way from Delhi to Leh.

Fatima recalls falling under the weather. "Sometimes the weather used to be problematic, and there were altitude problems as well. It really hit me hard. But, in the end, it was worth it, it turned out to be a good film."

Fatima on working with Dia Mirza, Ratna Pathak Shah and Sanjana Sanghi

The film brings together women across all age groups, as represented by Fatima, Dia, Ratna and Sanjana. The Dangal girl shares her biggest takeaway from her co-stars, "We enjoyed doing the scenes together and I feel age doesn't matter here. Women connect irrespective of age. I have felt the biggest connection with Ratna and Dia, mostly with Dia. Sanjana is a sweet and very hard-working girl."

"Dia is everyone's crush. To be honest, she is a beautiful person inside and out. Beyond acting, she is an activist. She talks about it. When you meet her there's an aura that she carries... it's almost like pari zameen par aa gayi. But, yehi sanch hain (It's almost like she is a fairy from the heavens). There is such a soothing and calming effect when one gets to speak with her. She puts you at ease. There's a motherly, nurturing feel."

"With Ratna, I had a wonderful time she is a fabulous actor. You can say anything to her. I would have bantered with her; she would always have a comeback. That's the beauty of her."

Fatima on epileptic seizure on sets

Diagnosed with epilepsy,



Fatima had to deal with an epileptic seizure during the Dhak Dhak shoot. It was Dia Mirza who revealed it some time ago and shared how helpless she was upon seeing the actor. Fatima shares her health update, "This is something I live with. I am recovering and I am much better today."

She continues, "It's not a big event for me because I live with it. I have seizures and then I carry on with work. Of course, it's difficult for somebody else to see, they care about me. I think not many people have seen it happening, so for them, it can be very traumatic. I am touched that Dia cared because a lot of people don't have the awareness...the person who goes through the episodes knows how difficult it is. Everyone on the sets was very supportive. I always inform everyone that I have epilepsy and might get an episode so I need a break."

So what happened on the sets? Fatima says the seizure struck when she insisted on finishing a shoot without a break.

"But that time if I had taken a break then we wouldn't have gotten the shoot done. Woh location chala jata (we would have missed the scene)..."

Fatima on Dia Mirza
Talking about Dia being worried for her, Fatima adds, "She knows I have recently come back from multiple episodes. I am on medications. She was worried because it's very taxing on the body."

Fatima on epilepsy struggles at work
Often people face difficulties at work while dealing with epilepsy. Has there been any major problem at work? Fatima replies candidly, "Honesty, I've never faced it in the film industry; people have been extremely supportive. You tell them that you have a problem and they will help you. Beyond anything your craft is most important. Everybody has some baggage or injuries and it keeps happening. Other than that, of all the people I have worked with, everyone has been quite welcoming. I have never faced a

problem at work. Woh apni khud ki insecurities hoti hain (sometimes people are insecure)."

"For me, I am in a completely different place in my life. For working-class people, it's extremely difficult. Nobody wants to see you having a seizure at work. There's a stigma attached to it. People don't get married, they don't get a job or let babies near you. Kids with epilepsy don't get an education because nobody wants to take their responsibility. There's no awareness, people think mata aa gayi, bhoot-pret hai ya kuch ho gaya (seizures are due to God or demonic possessions); it gets scary for people to deal with it. In industry, it is different for me... maybe because I am an actor. Had I been a technician, maybe things would have been different... that I don't know."

Fatima looks forward to better medicines and medical advancement in order to treat epilepsy in future. She believes it spreading awareness is the key to bringing a change in society. Till then the actor has no qualms to talk about her condition and encourage others.

Fatima Sana Shaikh: Even today when I tell people about epilepsy, they don't understand

She says, "The more you talk about it, the more awareness you will create. It will get normalised. We often use the word as a slur--are isko toh mirgi aa rahi hain. Isme kuch galat nahi hain (there's nothing wrong with it), simply because we don't know about it. Even today when I tell people about it, they don't understand what it is. I explain to them what it is and when the next episode comes. There are variations in episodes too and I prepare accordingly. I tell people around about it too and that's fine. I cannot be mad at the world for not understanding my condition. Even I didn't understand at one point."

Fatima's next wish
After riding a motorbike and travelling about 966 km on the road, Fatima now has a new goal on her bucket list. She tells us, "I want to climb mountains." "I want to explore different worlds and different characters. An actor's life is very exciting," she signs off with a smile. Fatima will be next seen in Meghna Gulzar's Sam Bahadur.

Kritika Kamra says I don't think my love life needs attention



"Yes, it's a deliberate choice to maintain privacy. I understand that I'm a public figure and hence, my work and life will be scrutinised. So I choose to only share what I welcome feedback on. I don't think my love life needs that kind of attention," shares the actor.

And despite being a public figure, it has not been a challenge to keep it under wraps. "I don't find it difficult. It's a choice to have clear boundaries and it only makes life easy for me," she says, adding, "It's nice to keep some things to oneself and when the time is right the world can know and share their feelings and opinions about it with me. Good.. bad.. whatever they are, I'll be okay. For now, I'm happy to hear about my work and life on social media. I read comments and all reviews because what I do as an actor is for people to consume and comment on. We are only because of our audience."

And lately, all she has been getting is positive feedback for her phenomenal performance in the web series Bambai Meri Jaan. "I'm very happy and grateful for the love and encouragement I've got for Bambai Meri Jaan. This show means a lot to me, I'm glad those who watched it have liked it and are eagerly waiting for the next season. I have a lot to offer as an actor and a lot to learn as well and I'm always on the lookout for bigger, better opportunities. Getting work, choosing the right kind of work is a big part of this profession and sometimes takes more than it does to act. It's challenging but that only makes the journey better and rewards sweeter," she ends.

I'm very happy spending time with myself and with my close ones who really matter. I'll take quality time and a good meal over a big event or the best party in town anyway," she tells us.

Another good change she points out is how health has become her priority. "I try my best to not miss a workout. I follow a time restricted pattern of eating and sleep eight hours, although still very late at night. That's something I'm still working on," she shares.

Speaking of change, Kamra's personal life has gone from once being the talk of the town to being a mystery today. And the actor says it has been a conscious move.

As she matures with age, the actor shares how spending time with herself and close ones matters over attending a big event or the best party in town.

Kritika Kamra feels her journey- both professionally and personally and been one defined by growth and countless learnings. On her 35th birthday, the actor tells she is only just beginning. "I just want my birthday to be like any other day. As for the coming year, I am ready for whatever is in store for me," she says.

What's changed over time, kara says is that she has started enjoying her own company. "I have JOMO now (Joy Of Missing Out)

Priyanka Chopra Jonas on her way to India to attend Jio MAMI Mumbai International Film Festival



Actor-producer Priyanka Chopra Jonas is en route India to participate in the Jio MAMI Mumbai International Film Festival

val here, which begins on Friday.

Priyanka, who is the chairperson of the film gala's current edition,

shared a travel update on her Instagram Story on Thursday.

"It's been a minute Mumbai... Cannot wait," Priyanka, 41, captioned the photo of her hand holding her Indian passport and a boarding pass.

Kareena Kapoor Khan-starrer 'The Buckingham Murders', directed by Hansal Mehta, is set as the opening film of the gala.

The Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival is back with its on-ground edition after a hiatus of three years. It will come to a close on November 5.

The festival will showcase over 250 films with a special focus on contemporary films and new cinematic voices from South Asia here. According to the organisers, the gala boasts of over 40 world premieres, 45 Asia premieres, 70 South Asia premieres, and 13 sections.

Its 2023 line-up features big titles like Hirokazu Kore-eda's 'Monstr', Bradley Cooper's Oscar tipped 'Maestro', Anurag Kashyap's 'Kennedy', and Justine Triet's Palme d'Or winning movie 'Anatomy of a Fall'.

Akanksha Puri to host of MTV Date to Remember Season 2



Renowned for her captivating presence, Akanksha Puri has become a household name in the world of entertainment.

However, her latest venture marks a significant milestone in her career as she steps into the role of host for the first time, for popular reality show MTV Date to Remember. "I am thrilled to embark on this exciting journey as the host of MTV's Date to Remember Season 2."

Being a part of the reality TV world has always been a transformative experience for me, stepping into the shoes of a host for this show is a dream come true. Love is a universal language, and I am excited to be the storyteller, weaving the narratives of genuine connections."

Shaft star Richard Roundtree, considered the 'first Black action' movie hero, dies at 81

Richard Roundtree, the trailblazing Black actor who starred as the ultra-smooth private detective Shaft in several films beginning in the early 1970s, has died. He was 81. Roundtree, who was born in New Rochelle, New York, was considered as the 'first Black action hero' and became one of the leading actors in the 'blaxploitation' genre through his New York street smart John Shaft character in the Gordon Parks-directed film in 1971. At 28, it was Roundtree's first feature film appearance after starting his career as a model.

Roundtree reprised his role in the 2000 Shaft film, a revival that starred Samuel L. Jackson. Both appeared again in the same roles in the 2019 film starring Jessie T. Usher.

Through his 50-year plus career, Roundtree appeared in a number of other notable films, including Earthquake, Man Friday with Peter O'Toole, Roots, Maniac Cop and What Men Want, starring Taraji P. Henson.

He also made a mark on television with



roles in Magnum P.I., The Love Boat, Being Mary Jane and The Love Boat. In 1995,

Roundtree received a lifetime achievement award at the MTV Movie & TV Awards.

PM Modi hails Cabinet nod to Jamrani Dam Multipurpose Project's inclusion under PMKSY-AIBP

The project will cost Rs 2,584 crore

NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday hailed the Union Cabinet's approval to the inclusion of the Jamrani Dam Multipurpose Project of Uttarakhand under the accelerated irrigation benefit programme, saying it is a significant stride towards a prosperous and sustainable Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.



Gola barrage through its 40.5 km length of canal system and 244 km long canal system completed in 1981.

The government on Wednesday approved the inclusion of the project under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana-Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (PMKSY-AIBP), which will cost Rs 2,584 crore.

The project envisages the construction of a dam near Jamrani village across river Gola, a tributary of river Ram Ganga in Nainital district of Uttarakhand. The dam will feed the existing

In a post on X, Modi said, "This decision by the CCEA will bol-

ster irrigation, enhance hydro power generation and provide clean drinking water to over 10 lakh people."

"It is a significant stride towards a prosperous and sus-

tainable Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh," he said.

Modi also hailed the government announcing a subsidy of Rs 22,303 crore on phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilisers for the current rabi season.

"This Cabinet decision will ensure access to fertilisers at affordable prices for farmers," Modi said.

In another post, Modi hailed the the Union Cabinet's approval to a memorandum of cooperation between India and Japan on a Semiconductor Supply Chain Partnership.

The memorandum of cooperation between the two countries was signed in July.

"This decision by the Cabinet is great news for the sector. It will strengthen the semiconductor supply chain and create job opportunities," Modi said.

Rajnath Singh stresses on joint planning and execution of operations by 3 services



NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday stressed upon the importance of joint planning and execution of operations by the three services.

The minister was speaking at the inauguration of the two-day Air Force Commanders' Conference here.

The minister addressed the joint operations even as the integration of the three services is pending with the Chief of Defence Staff.

He asked the commanders to enhance

operational preparedness and examine the rapidly changing global geo-political situation and assess them in the Indian context.

He said new trends had emerged in the field of air warfare and there is a need to analyse and learn from them to strengthen the defence preparedness. He exhorted the Indian Air Force (IAF) to focus on strengthening the air defence systems, use of drones and making headway in the field of aerospace to protect India's air domain.

"There are new chal-

enges emanating from the global security scenario. We must always be ready to deal with them," he said.

The minister was briefed on the operational preparedness of the IAF by Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari.

Rajnath praised the stellar role played by the IAF during the recent Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief missions in Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and other flood-affected areas.

The conference, which is held bi-annually, involves discussions on charting the IAF's way ahead, given the current geo-political environment and technological imperatives.

Eminent national security experts and accomplished people from various fields were invited to present their views during the conference.

ED raids premises of Rajasthan Congress president in paper leak matter, summons CM Gehlot's son in FEMA case

JAIPUR, Oct 26 (Agencies): Turning the heat on the ruling Congress in poll-bound Rajasthan, the Enforcement Directorate on Thursday raided the premises of state Congress president Govind Singh Dotsra in Jaipur and Sikar as part of a money-laundering probe into the alleged exam paper leak case and summoned Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's son in a foreign exchange violation case.

Besides the premises of Dotsra, a former minister for school education, the agency is also searching the premises of party candidate from Mahua seat in Dausa, Omprakash Hudla, and some others, official sources said. An armed escort of central paramilitary force CRPF accompanied the ED teams.

The Congress slammed the Centre over the ED's action against its leaders in Rajasthan and accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of taking the help of probe agencies in fighting polls and said people would give the BJP a befitting reply.

Chief Minister Gehlot said the ED raids are being done every day in the state "as the BJP does not want that the Congress's guarantees reach the women, farmers and the poor".

Elections to the 200-member Rajasthan Assembly will be held on November 25. The results will be declared on December 3.

Dotsra is the party candidate for Lacchmangarh seat of Sikar against BJP's Subhash Maharia. He is also the sitting MLA from this seat while Hudla is an independent MLA and the Congress has fielded him from the Mahua assembly seat this time.

The money-laundering case stems from FIRs filed by the Rajasthan Police against the accused.

The accused "in connivance with each other leaked the question paper of general knowledge of senior teacher grade II competitive examination, 2022, which was scheduled to be conducted by Rajasthan Public Service Commission (RPSC) on December 21, 22 and 24, 2022 and provided

it to the appearing candidates for the consideration amount of Rs 8 lakh-10 lakh per candidate," the ED had said.

Former Rajasthan Public Service Commission (RPSC) member Babulal Katara and two other people identified as Anil Kumar Meena and Bhupendra Saran were arrested by the ED in this case.

The agency also summoned the Rajasthan chief minister's son Vaibhav Gehlot for questioning in a case related to alleged contravention of the foreign exchange law.

Vaibhav has been asked to depose before the federal agency's office either in Jaipur or in New Delhi on Friday, sources said.

The summons is linked to the recent ED raids against Rajasthan-based hospitality group Triton Hotels & Resorts Pvt Ltd, Vardha Enterprises Pvt Ltd and its directors and promoters Shiv Shankar Sharma, Rattan Kant Sharma and others.

The agency had searched the group and its promoters for three days in August at loca-

tions in Jaipur, Udaipur, Mumbai and Delhi.

Rattan Kant Sharma's alleged links with Vaibhav Gehlot are allegedly under the scanner of the ED and it is expected to question and record his statement under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA).

Unaccounted cash of Rs 1.2 crore was seized by the ED after these searches.

Soon after the action against its leaders in Rajasthan, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge alleged that agencies such as the ED, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Income Tax Department become the real 'panna pramukh (party workers)' of the BJP as soon as elections come. "Seeing its certain defeat in Rajasthan, the BJP made its last throw of the dice. After Chhat-tisgarh, the ED has also entered the election campaign in Rajasthan and started action against Congress leaders," Kharge said.

"The dictatorship of the Modi government is fatal for democracy. We will continue to fight against the misuse of agencies,

and the public will give a befitting reply to the BJP," the Congress chief said in a post on X.

Ashok Gehlot said the Congress launched guarantees for women of Rajasthan on October 25 and the ED action against Dotsra and Vaibhav Gehlot came just a day later.

"Now you can understand what I have been saying... ED's raids happen every day in Rajasthan because the BJP does not want women, farmers and poor in the state to get the benefit of the guarantees given by Congress," Gehlot said in a post in Hindi on X.

Congress media and publicity department head Pawan Khera also lashed out at the Union government over the ED action.

"Just last week, Ashok Gehlot ji held a press conference in Delhi and raised questions on the role of central agencies in the elections. Today again, ED has become very active in Rajasthan. Modi ji, contest elections directly, stop taking the help of agencies," Khera said in a post in Hindi on X.

Lok Sabha Committee on Ethics summons Mahua Moitra in cash-for-query row on October 31

NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): The Lok Sabha Committee on Ethics has summoned TMC member Mahua Moitra on October 31 in connection with the cash-for-query allegations against her.

Lawyer Jai Anant Dehadrai and BJP leader Nishikant Dubey on Thursday appeared before the Ethics Committee to record their statements.

In his complaint to Speaker Om Birla, BJP member Nishikant Dubey has cited documents shared by Dehadrai to back his cash-for-query allegations against Moitra. Birla had referred the matter to the committee headed by BJP member Vinod Kumar Sonkar.

Dehadrai was the first to record his statement



before the Ethics Committee, while Dubey appeared before the panel in the afternoon.

Dubey told reporters that he would reply to whatever questions the committee would ask him.

"Documents don't lie," Dubey said when pointed out that Moitra had refuted all the allegations levelled against her.

In the letter to Birla dated October 15, Dubey said the advocate, close to Moitra before they fell out,

has shared "irrefutable evidence of bribes exchanged" between her and businessman Darshan Hiranandani to target the Adani Group and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The fiery TMC member dismissed the charges as a "jilted ex's lies", a reference to Dehadrai, and accused the Adani Group of being behind them to target her as she had been relentless in raising questions on the conglomerate's practices and transactions.

13 killed in road accident in Karnataka



CHIKKABALLAPUR, Oct 26 (Agencies): Thirteen people were killed when the SUV they were travelling in crashed into a stationary tanker here on Thursday morning, police said.

The accident occurred on the outskirts of the district headquarters town of Chikkaballapur at around 7 am, they said.

The vehicle was plying from Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh to Bengaluru when the driver crashed into the stationary tanker on NH-44 killing 13 passengers, including four women.

Preliminary probe has stated that the victims, including the driver of the four wheeler, who also died in the accident, hail from Anantapur district. The exact cause of the accident is yet to be ascertained. However, low visibility due to fog is suspected to be one of the reasons which needs to be verified, a senior police officer said.

The victims who hailed from Gorantla in Anantapur district do not belong to the same family, he said. "Twelve people died on the spot in the accident while one critically injured person who was being treated at a nearby hospital succumbed to injuries. All of them were travelling in the vehicle from Anantapur to Bengaluru and on the way, the vehicle collided with a stationary tanker," DL Nagesh, Superintendent of Police (Chikkaballapur), told agency.

5 killed, 22 injured as bus overturns in Maharashtra's Beed

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, Oct 26 (Agencies): Five people were killed and 22 others injured when a speeding private bus overturned in Maharashtra's Beed district on Thursday morning, police said.

The accident took place at Aashta Fata between 5.45 am and 6 am when the bus was on way from Mumbai to Beed, located about 120 km from here, they said. The bus was moving at a high

speed. Its driver apparently lost control over the wheels and as a result it met with the accident, the police said.

Five persons were killed in the accident. Four of them were residents of Beed district and one was from Yavatmal, Ashti police station in-charge Santosh Khetmalas told agency.

Besides, 22 people were injured in this accident. They were taken to various hospitals for treatment, he said.

Karnataka woman dies by suicide after harassment by Instagram friend



UTTAR KANNADA, Oct 26 (Agencies): A young woman in Karnataka died by suicide after she was allegedly harassed by a person she befriended on social media platform Instagram, police said on Thursday.

The victim has been identified as 24-year-old

Nethra Gowali, a resident of Hadavalli village near Bhatkal town in Uttara Kannada district.

The woman's father had lodged a complaint against her Instagram friend Govardhana Moger and urged legal action against him.

According to the police, the accused was

known to the victim for a year but he started forcing her to fall in love with him.

When she refused his advances, he started harassing her to return all the money he had spent on her.

The accused had also blackmailed her that he would make her personal photos viral on social media, the police said, adding that she took the drastic step on Wednesday after being unable to bear the harassment.

The Bhatkal Rural police have registered the case and taken up the investigation.

"Pay, Or Will Release Sex Video": How 36-Year-Old Scammed Men Across India

Posing as a cop Mahendra would call the victim and demand money to delete the video.



NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): Delhi police today arrested the mastermind in a sextortion racket who had blackmailed several people across the country. Mahendra Singh, who was caught in Haryana's Mewat, had been running the scam for the last few years.

He came under the police radar after a Delhi man lodged a complaint that he was being blackmailed. The man had first received a call from a woman

who agreed to an intimate video call with the victim.

Posing as a cop, ACP Ram Pandey, Mahendra then called the victim and demanded money to delete the video. He demanded 9 lakh from the man with a promise of deleting the video, in which the victim was naked, police said.

Despite the victim paying him the amount, he called again and demanded 15 lakh more to not pursue the case. Mahendra threatened to

send the man's family to jail if he did not pay.

Police say the victim was so scared that he did not tell anyone about it initially. But he confided in his friend several days later, who urged him to lodge a police complaint.

Police immediately launched a probe and spent days searching for Mahendra, who was finally arrested from Mewat. Police found a swipe machine, BharatPe, a pen drive, a 16 GB memory card, and an iPhone in his possession.

Investigation revealed that there were several other victims whom Mahendra had blackmailed similarly. The 36-year-old confessed that while calling victims, he would either use the name ACP Ram Pandey or call himself a YouTuber and threaten to make their objectionable videos public.

22 die in shooting incidents at US bowling alley, bar; gunman at large

A spokesperson for Maine Department of Public Safety urges residents to stay in their homes with their doors locked

WASHINGTON, Oct 26 (Agencies): At least 22 people were killed in two mass shooting incidents in the US state of Maine, authorities said, adding that a "person of interest" who is "armed and dangerous" had been identified.

In a statement on Wednesday night, the Lewiston Police department said the 40-year-old person of interest Robert Card, who is currently absconding, should be "considered armed and dangerous", CNN reported.

"Law enforcement is attempting to locate Robert Card 4/4/1983, as a person of interest regarding the mass shooting at Schemengees Bar and Sparetime Recreation this evening. CARD should be considered armed and dangerous. Please contact law enforcement if you are aware of his whereabouts," the statement added.

On Wednesday evening, the police department said they had responded to two locations in Lewiston -- a restaurant called



Schemengees, and Sparetime Recreation, a bowling alley, the BBC reported.

The two locations are at a distance of 6.5 km from each other.

Also confirming the incident, Maine State Police said in a post on X: "There is an active shooter in Lewiston. We ask people to shelter in place. Please stay inside your home with the doors locked."

The Central Maine Medical Centre said it was reacting to a "mass casualty, mass shooter event" and is coordinating with other hospitals in the area to

treat the injured.

Although the number of injured was not immediately clear, reports have suggested that at least 50 to 60 people were hurt.

Meanwhile, the Androscoggin County Sheriff's Office released two images of a suspect, showing a bearded man in a brown sweater carrying a firearm walking into a building.

"Law enforcement in Androscoggin County are investigating two active shooter events. We are encouraging all businesses to lock down while we investigate.

The suspect is still at large," the Office said in a Facebook post.

Police also shared a photo of a white vehicle, saying its front bumper was believed to be painted black, and asked anybody who recognised it to contact police.

Lewiston Public Schools Superintendent Jake Langlais has announced that schools in the district would be closed on Thursday.

A statement from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas had been briefed and was continuing to monitor the situation.

"DHS is working closely with our federal, state and local partners to support the Lewiston community," it said.

The Justice Department said that federal agencies were assisting state and local law enforcement.

Lewiston is a town of about 38,000 people located about 35 miles north of Portland, Maine.

Heartbreaking video of Al Jazeera's Gaza reporter as he weeps over his son's body; his wife, daughter also killed in Israeli strike



GAZA, Oct 26 (Agencies): Three family members of Wael Al-Dahdouh, Al Jazeera Arabic's bureau chief in Gaza, were killed amid the raging conflict in the Hamas-controlled enclave, Palestinian security and medical sources said.

On Wednesday, an Israeli raid on two houses in the Nuseirat refugee camp killed several people, including the wife, son and daughter of Al-Dahdouh, the medical sources claimed.

"Despite being forced to relocate to the southern part of the Gaza Strip in search of safety, the Al-Dahdouh family was targeted," Xinhua news agency quoted a statement released by the Hamas-run Ministry of Interior in Gaza as saying.

The relocation followed Israel's evacuation call ordering some 1 million people to move to the southern part of the besieged enclave on October 13.

Footage on Al Jazeera English news

channel shows Al-Dahdouh entering a hospital to see his slain family members.

In a statement released on X, Al Jazeera confirmed the death of Al-Dahdouh's family members and extended condolence.

"The Al Jazeera Media Network extends its sincere condolences and sympathy to our colleague Wael Al-Dahdouh on the loss of his family in an Israeli airstrike," the statement said.

"Al Jazeera is deeply concerned about the safety and well-being of our colleagues in Gaza and hold the Israeli authorities responsible for their security," it added.

According to the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate, 24 journalists have been killed, some with their families, and dozens more have been wounded since the beginning of the Israeli airstrikes on the Gaza Strip.

Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel on October 7, firing thousands of rockets and infiltrating Israeli territory, to which Israel responded with massive airstrikes and punitive measures, including a siege on the enclave with supplies of water, electricity, fuel, and other necessities being cut off.

The ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict has so far killed more than 6,500 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and more than 1,400 people in Israel.

Israel conducted overnight raids with tanks in Gaza ahead of 'next stage': Army

JERUSALEM, Oct 26 (Agencies): Israel said Thursday that a column of tanks and infantry had launched an overnight raid into Hamas-controlled Gaza, striking "numerous" targets before retreating to home soil.

The military announced the incursion into the north of the Palestinian territory hours after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared preparations for a ground war were underway.

The Israel Defense Forces described the operation as a "targeted raid" that hit "numerous terrorist cells, infrastructure and anti-tank missile launch posts".

It said the operation was "preparation for the next stages of combat" adding that "the soldiers have since exited the area and returned to Israeli territory".

Black-and-white video footage posted by the military showed a column of armoured vehicles and bulldozers winding toward what appeared to be a border fence and breaking through it.

AFP verified the location as south of the Israeli city of Ashkelon but could not verify when the footage was recorded.

Another video appeared to show an airstrike and later buildings being struck with munitions, sending debris flying high into the air, along with a thick plume of smoke.

Just hours earlier Netanyahu had delivered a nationally televised address to Israelis still grieving and furious after Hamas's bloody October 7 attacks, telling them "we are in the midst of a campaign for our existence".

The shock attack saw throngs of Hamas gunmen pour from Gaza into Israel, killing 1,400 people, mostly civilians, and kidnapping 222 more, according to official tallies.

Israel has retaliated with heavy bombing that Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry said has killed more than 6,500, with the toll expected to rise substantially if tens



of thousands of Israeli troops massed near Gaza move in.

"Raining down hellfire" Netanyahu, in the face of ever-louder international calls to temper the ferocious bombing campaign, vowed to press ahead with plans for a ground war.

Boasting of "raining down hellfire on Hamas" and killing "thousands of terrorists", Netanyahu said his war cabinet and the military would determine the timing of a "ground offensive".

He pledged to "eliminate Hamas" and "bring our captives home" but stressed that "I will not detail when, how or how many" forces would take part.

The ground raid into Gaza was not the first of its kind, a spokesman for the military told AFP. But it was likely to raise tensions in an already anxious region.

US President Joe Biden is among the foreign leaders stepping up public calls for Israel to "protect innocent civilians" and to follow the "laws of war" as it pursues Hamas targets.

Biden on Wednesday said he had privately suggested Israel should get hostages out if possible before any ground invasion.

"It's their decision, but I did not demand it", Biden said, as he called on Congress to allocate more money for Israeli defence.

Speaking in Cairo, French President Emmanuel Macron warned: "A massive intervention that would put civilian lives at risk would be an error."

"It's a massacre" Gaza's Hamas-controlled health ministry on Wednesday said the death toll had surged by about 700 in a day to

above 6,500, including many children.

US President Biden has stated he has "no confidence" in the Hamas ministry figures.

While the exact death toll may be unclear, the depth of the suffering is not in question.

Entire neighbourhoods have been razed, surgeons in hospitals overwhelmed with wounded carry out procedures without anaesthetic, and ice cream trucks have become makeshift morgues.

"They're not waging war on Hamas, they're waging war on children," charged one resident, Abu Ali Zaarab, after his family home was bombed in the southern town of Rafah. "It's a massacre."

About 1.4 million people -- more than half of Gaza's population -- have been displaced, according to the United Nations.

The UN says 12 of the territory's 35 hospitals have closed due to damage or insufficient fuel, and a key UN aid agency serving almost 600,000 Palestinians said it "began to significantly reduce its operations".

Israel has cut off Gaza's normal supply corridors for water, food and other necessities, and fewer than 70 relief trucks have entered the impoverished territory since the war began.

None contained fuel, which Israel fears Hamas will use for rockets and explosives.

Aid agencies have warned that more people will die if medical equipment, water desalination plants and ambulances stop operating because of a lack of fuel.

Once the generators stop, hospitals will "turn into morgues", the Red

Cross has warned. Hospitals are also struggling with a shortage of medicines and equipment.

"We performed a number of surgeries without anaesthetic," said Ahmad Abdul Hadi, an orthopaedic surgeon working at Nasser hospital in Khan Yunis.

"It's tough and painful, but with the lack of resources, what can we do?"

A regional 'explosion' The war has sparked fears of a regional conflagration if it draws in more of Israel's enemies.

Since October 7, Israel has launched thousands of strikes in Gaza, but it has also hit targets in Lebanon and Syria.

Late Wednesday, Lebanon-based Hezbollah fired what Israel said was a surface-to-air missile at an Israeli drone.

Israel's military said it had intercepted the missile and "struck the source of the launch".

Hamas, Hezbollah and Syria's government are backed by Iran, which denies Israel's right to exist.

Tehran's top diplomat on Wednesday accused Israel of carrying out "genocide" in Gaza.

Jordan's King Abdullah became the latest leader to warn that ongoing violence could "lead to an explosion" in the region.

His wife Queen Rania accused Western leaders of a "glaring double standard" for not condemning Israel's killing of Palestinian civilians in its bombardment of Gaza.

Violence has also risen sharply in the occupied West Bank, where health officials said more than 100 Palestinians had been killed, mostly in raids by Israeli troops or in clashes with Israeli settlers.

US working with G7 countries to compete with China's Belt and Road: Biden

WASHINGTON, Oct 26 (Agencies): The US is working with other G7 members to compete with China's Belt and Road Initiative through a network of infrastructure projects, including a railroad connecting Saudi Arabia with Europe, President Joe Biden said.

On the sidelines of the G20 Summit in September, key leaders of the world led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Biden had announced the launch of the ambitious India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.

"We are going to compete on that (Belt and Road Initiative) and we're doing it in a different way. The Belt and Road Initiative has ended up in debt and a noose for most of the people (nations) who have signed on," Biden said at a Rose Garden news conference with visiting Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

He said that they are working with G7 partners to provide infrastructure for those nations.

The Group of Seven (G7) comprises the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States.

"We want to, for example, at the G20, we were able to act on a proposal to build



a railroad all the way from Riyadh all the way through the Middle East, Saudi Arabia, Israel, up through Greece, and not the railroad, but pipeline across the Mediterranean up into Europe," Biden said in response to a question.

The US president said that his previous comment of "extreme competition" with China was not conflict. "I talked about how we're going to compete with China in every way according to the international rules, economically, politically, and other ways, but not -- I'm not looking for conflict," he said in response to another question.

Albanese is headed to China next month. Biden was asked "What do you make of China's re-engagement with Australia?" and "Can Australia trust Beijing, and can Australia do business with China?".

"Trust but verify" is the phrase. And look, China is having their own internal and external difficulties right now. China's

economic growth is stagnant compared to what it was. China has engaged in activities that Russia and many other activities have -- that others have engaged in terms of intimidation and dealing with other countries," Biden said.

"But the fact is that I have met with Xi Jinping more than any other world leader has. I've had over 68 hours of private meetings, with simultaneous interpreters starting back when I was vice president because it wasn't appropriate for a president of the United States to be meeting with the vice president," he said.

Biden said that subsequently, in addition to that 68 hours, "I've also had another, as they tell me they keep meticulous contact, I think, 12, 15 hours of discussions".

He said that last week, he requested USD 3.4 billion in supplemental funds to boost submarine production and maintenance to meet

US needs and also support AUKUS.

The AUKUS pact, which is a trilateral alliance between the UK, US and Australia, is seen as a counter to an aggressive China in the strategic Indo-Pacific region, which included its claim over most parts of the disputed South China Sea.

Australia is making a significant investment in the US and its ability to produce submarines as part of this deal, Biden said.

"When we put together the deal, I was asked by Xi Jinping, well, we're just trying to surround China. I said no, we're not surrounding China. We're just making sure that the sea lanes remain open. He doesn't -- unilaterally be able to change the -- rules of the road in terms of what constitutes international airspace and water space, etc. So, that's what this is all about," he said.

The Quad is a very important piece as well. It is about maintaining stability, stability in the Taiwan Straits, the Indian Ocean, that whole area, Biden said.

Under the Quad, Japan, India, Australia and the United States formed a coalition to counter China's aggressive behaviour in the Indo-Pacific region.

K-Pop Star G-Dragon Under Investigation For Alleged Drug Use: Police



SEOUL, Oct 26 (Agencies): K-pop star G-Dragon -- of the wildly successful but problem-plagued band BIGBANG -- is under investigation for alleged drug use, police said Thursday, becoming the latest in a string of South Korean entertainers to face such a probe.

South Korea has extremely tough legislation on illegal drugs, and even Koreans who take drugs like marijuana legally overseas risk prosecution upon returning to

their home country.

This year, President Yoon Suk Yeol called for more stringent measures to eliminate drug traffickers, saying the country was no longer "drug-free".

Police in Incheon told agency on Thursday that they had "opened an investigation" into G-Dragon's case, but declined to provide details of the allegations against him.

The disclosure comes less than a week after police launched an investigation into "Parasite" actor Lee Sun-kyun, who stands accused of using marijuana and other psychoactive drugs.

Local news reports said that Lee -- previously celebrated for his wholesome image -- was being dropped from his ongoing television and commercial projects.

Earlier this month, another high profile actor, Yoo Ah-in, was indicted

for alleged drug use.

G-Dragon's group BIGBANG is one of South Korea's most successful boy bands, having sold at least 140 million records worldwide since their debut in 2006.

But its members have often been in the limelight for misconduct.

Group member Seungri retired from show business in 2019 amid mounting criminal investigations, and was later sentenced to 18 months in prison for offering up women to potential investors for sexual services, among other charges.

Rapper T.O.P -- who in May revealed he had "withdrawn" from BIGBANG -- received a suspended jail sentence in 2017 for using marijuana.

G-Dragon himself was also investigated for marijuana use in 2011, although he was released without indictment at the time.

Martyrdom Day of Brig Rajinder Singh observed

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: Martyrdom Day of Brig Rajinder Singh, MVC, the Saviour of Kashmir was observed at Rajinder Singh Chowk, behind New Secretariat Jammu on Thursday with great elegance and fervour.

Rich homage and tributes were paid to 'Hero of Jammu & Kashmir' by all sections of society to include Army, Police, Civil Administration and Social Organisations.

School children from Fauji Public School and other schools of Jammu also attended the function.

A Ceremonial Guard of the Army (19 JAK RIF) presented Tribute with full military honours to Brig Rajinder Singh, MVC.

Apart from the floral tributes, numerous cultural items were presented by J&K Academy of Arts Culture & Languages under Sanjeev Rana and Fauji Public School of J&K Ex-Services League (JKESL).

Ravi Kant as the 'Master of Ceremony' recounted the Tale of Valour of Brig Rajinder Singh, MVC.

Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu was the Chief Guest, while Anand Jain, IGP, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Deputy Commissioner, Jammu, Baldev Billawaria,



Deputy Mayor, JMC were Guests of Honour and Th Gulchain Singh Charak, President Dogra Sadar Sabha, Brig Gautam Segan, SC, SM, Offg GOC, 26 Inf Div, Prof. Vishwa Murti Shastri, Padma Shri, Dr SP Varma, Padma Shri, President Gandhi Global Family J&K, were the 'Special Guests'.

Maj Gen Goverdhan Singh Jamwal, AVSM, Chief Patron JKESL, Dr Akshay Sharma, Corporator and SSP Traffic were also present to pay tributes.

Ramesh Kumar said that today "We are celebrating this day in Jammu only due to the action of Brigadier Rajinder Singh in 1947 when he saved Jammu and Kashmir against the invasion by Pakistan."

He further said that Jammu Region is the

land of Gallant Soldiers in which Brigadier Rajinder Singh stands out. He complimented the League, Army and the Civil Administration for making it a great occasion.

While paying tribute to one of the greatest warriors of Jammu and Kashmir on the eve of his Martyrdom Day, he thanked the League and the Army for organizing this function every year and assured that this function will now be held jointly by the J&K Government with the League and the Army.

He also advised the youth to read about the History of Military in 38K. "Now a book

is available on the History of the Jammu and Kashmir Operations, you must read the book and also make it a habit to glorify the History & Heritage," he added.

Lt Gen R K Sharma, President J&K Ex-Services League, speaking on the occasion, said that but for the 'Gallant Action & Sacrifice of Brig Rajinder Singh, MVC, India would have lost its Crown and the geography of India would have been different.

He further narrated the 'Saga of Valour of Brig Rajinder Singh in brief and brought out its significance. He said that 'Battle of Uri' is comparable to the great battles

of the world like Battle of Saragarhi and Battle of Thermopylae.

He appealed to LG and State Administration that from next year this should be a 'Govt function', MVC of Brig Rajinder Singh should be elevated to PVC, the History of J&K should be a separate chapter included in the school syllabus and a J&K Heritage Centre/Memorial should be made next to the existing Balidan Stambh with an underground Heritage Museum which was appraised by him to LG & Mayor, Jammu.

He appealed to the LG Administration to address main issues of 'Increase of Re-employment quota of Ex-Servicemen from 6% to 13%', 'Creation of Sainik Corporation' urgently in J&K on lines of other States, 'Removing administrative & Judicial impediments in finalization of two Sainik Colonies sanctioned by J&K Govt in 1999' and 'Revival of Sainik Vanaspati' an executive venture for Veer Naris & Veterans.

Maj Gen Goverdhan Singh Jamwal, Chief Patron JKESL was also present on the occasion.

Jammu worst sufferer without democratic Govt: Manjit

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: Asserting that Jammu has suffered most without an elected Govt, the Apni Party Provincial President, Jammu, and Former Minister, S. Manjit Singh today said that the Apni Party has emerged as a hope for the people to address issues of the general masses.

A meeting of the Apni Party following the nomination of the party's ward presidents / in-charges in which dozens of youths including women joined the Apni Party.

They were welcomed into the party fold by Manjit Singh, and he hoped that their joining would strengthen the party at the ground level.

In his address, the former minister said that the common man is facing multiple issues even in urban areas of Jammu and that require special attention from the authorities.

He said that the people in Jammu are the worst sufferers with the political negligence and official apathy with no hope for the redressal of their issues.



"The poverty has apparently increased because there is no scope of less employment. On the other hand, the criminal incidents, drug addiction etc. The people feel helpless and there is no one who can represent them," he said.

In this regard, the Provincial President Jammu, S. Manjit Singh after the approval of Party President Syed Mohammed Altaf Bukhari.

Accordingly, Sandeep Vaid has been appointed in Ward Number-2; Rashid Paul inward number 5; Mohammed Asif in ward number 6; Raj Sharma in ward number 7; Janmeet Singh Bali in ward number 9; Adv Manmeet in ward number 15; Abhinav Gupta in ward number 16; Gulshan Anand in ward number 18; Rakesh Mahajan in ward number 19;

Neelam Gupta in ward number 21; Suhail Khajuria in ward number 22; Shivam Choudhary in ward number 23; Shakti Dutta in ward number 24; Danesh Jamwal in ward number 26; Sumeet Bali in ward number 28; Kanwal Jeet Sethi in ward number 34; Ankush Dogra in ward number 37; Vaibhav Matto in ward number 40; Dalbir Singh in ward number 43; Sheetal Sharma in ward number 47; Kuldeep Singh Sudan in ward number 60; Vaishal Jotshi in ward number 61; Darshan Lal in ward number 67; Abhay Bakaya in ward number 71; Neelam Devi Lagotra in ward number 72; Pavneet Kour in ward number 73; and Shweta in ward number 75 have been appointed as ward Presidents/In-charges.

Amway India introduces Nutrilite Daily Plus

TOP NEWS REPORT

NEW DELHI, Oct 26: Reinforcing its prowess in research and innovation towards its efforts to foster a healthier nation, Amway India, one of the country's leading FMCG Direct Selling companies, recently introduced all-new Multivitamin & Multimineral health supplement, Nutrilite Daily Plus for a #PlusLife. This revolutionary formulation is power-packed with 24 essential vitamins and minerals and double the quantity of plant concentrates". Nutrilite Daily Plus is the first-ever product in the Amway portfolio with a breakthrough innovation of Dual Layer Dual Release Formulation. With holistic wellness gaining momentum among consumers today who are conscious of mental well-being along with physical health, Nutrilite Daily Plus is infused with Gotukola, a hero ingredient known for its stress-reducing properties.

Commenting on the launch, Ajay Khanna, CMO, Amway India, stated, "As per a survey by Mintel, about 75% of Indians believe that consuming vitamins, minerals, and supplements regularly helps them achieve overall health and wellness. Additionally, 74% of Indians suffer from stress due to everyday busy lifestyles, work pressure, and limited physical activity. Therefore, along with the nutrition support, added help on stress management is a big plus! Being one of the leaders in the health and wellness space, we have been consistently striving to offer need-based recommendations to help people achieve their health and wellness goals through our flagship brand Nutrilite, the world's

no 1 selling vitamins and dietary supplement brand which brings together the best of nature and the best of science. Through Nutrilite Daily Plus, the latest introduction to our nutrition portfolio, we aim to empower individuals to embrace a #PlusLife - an existence that thrives on the principles of holistic well-being, where both physical and mental health are cultivated, and potential knows no bounds."

He further added, "We are immensely proud to introduce Nutrilite Daily Plus, a revolutionary new Multivitamin & Multimineral health supplement with increased plant concentrates" and the goodness of Gotukola, a hero ingredient with a long history of use in traditional and Ayurvedic medicine to support mental health and stress management. Additionally, we have for the first time introduced Dual Layer Dual Release Formulation with a combination of immediate and extended release maximize absorption conditions and provide better support. This remarkable product exemplifies our dedication to building a healthier nation, and reinforces our position as a company driven by research and innovation."

Notably, Nutrilite Daily Plus proudly attains a significant feat as the first Nutrilite product in India to achieve NSF Certification—a globally recognized insignia synonymous with product safety and quality. This achievement further underscores the product's reliability and emphasizes Amway India's commitment to offering top-notch, dependable solutions for enhanced well-being.

Dimple pays tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on Accession Day

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: Sunil Dimple paid floral tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on the Accession Day and remembered his commitment to fighting for the Dogra state, the instrument of accession, and various issues related to Jammu and Kashmir.

Dimple pledged to fight for a J&K Dogra state and highlighted the importance of the standstill agreement, instrument of accession conditions, Article 370, Article 35-A, state subjects, and the unification of POK, Gilgit, and Baltistan with J&K state.

Dimple asserted that the next Chief Minister of J&K should be a Dogra from Jammu.

He expressed his mission to achieve statehood for Jammu and Kashmir under his leadership as the Chairman of the Mission Statehood.

Dimple organized a rally in Jammu city and paid tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh's statue. He celebrated the Accession Day and signed a standstill agreement related to the instrument of ac-



cession conditions.

He emphasized the historical significance of October 26 as the day when Jammu and Kashmir became part of India through Maharaja Hari Singh's actions and Article 370 provided protection for the region.

Dimple criticized the BJP for breaking the "bridge" between J&K and India on August 5, 2019, which he sees as the dismantling of the J&K Dogra state.

He accused the BJP of not upholding the accession conditions and dishonoring the legacy of Maharaja Hari Singh.

Dimple called for the liberation of POK, Gilgit, and Baltistan with the reuniting of the people of Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh, POK, Gilgit, and Baltistan in the new

Jammu and Kashmir state.

He demanded the implementation of the three conditions in the Indian Constitution: Article 370, Article 35-A, and state subject rights, and appealed for unity among the people and political parties to save the identity and culture of the J&K Dogra state.

Dimple mentioned that there are pending petitions related to Article 370 and Article 35-A in the Supreme Court, with the verdict expected in the near future.

Dimple raised various issues affecting the people of Jammu and Kashmir, including issues related to trade, transportation, poverty, old age pensions, unemployment, development, and infrastructure.

Science workshop concluded at Hill Grange School Handwara

TOP NEWS REPORT

HANDWARA, Oct 26: Two Day Science workshops organized at Hill Grange School, Handwara Kashmir. The workshop is mentored by Prof H.C Verma (A well known figure in the world of physics Education, Padma Shri-2021. Ex-faculty IIT, Kanpur).

Moreover, a badge of intellectuals from different institutions have graced the workshop and have displayed their expertise before students. The workshop was attended by the students of different schools of North-Kashmir where they showcased their working models/Science projects before Prof H.C Verma. Prof Verma, appreciated the students for their innovative ideas & accomplishments. The workshop was also attended by the members of Private School Association

Kupwara and appraised their presence in the event.

In his vote of thanks, Principal Dr. Amir Bashir has thanked the chairman of the institution, Mir Javid Ahmad for his unending support & vision towards taking the education Scenario in the school to new heights. He thanked the mentor of the workshop Prof H.C Verma for sharing the in vogue ideas with the students.

Moreover, Dr Amir thanked the team of J&K science communicator's network for their support to make this workshop successful.

In the culmination of the workshop Ruqia Qadir, Coordinator Department of Science has been appreciated for organizing such a wonderful workshop besides the whole team of organizing committee had been appreciated for their support and service.

Cities must be flexible to respond to needs of citizens, competition, & changes in market: LG Sinha

develop cities to meet the challenges and the growing aspirations of the people.

"Cities must be flexible to respond to the needs of citizens, competition and changes in the market and nurture core competencies for economic growth," the Lt Governor said.

Sh Junaid Azim Mattu, Mayor, Srinagar Municipal Corporation; Sh Manoj Joshi, Union Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (joined through virtual mode) and Sh Kunal Kumar, Joint Secretary, MoHUA shared their views on the transformational journey of Srinagar city.

Sh Prashant Goyal, Principal Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department, J&K; Sh Vijay Kumar Bidhuri Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Sh Athar Amir Khan, CEO Srinagar Smart City; Principal Secretaries from various States/ UTS

and Urban Transformation Experts also attended the inaugural session.

1 killed, 3 injured as mud house collapses in Poonch

While Rayaz Hussain died while being taken to hospital, three others, including his wife, have been hospitalised, officials added.

J&K Police arrests Online Fraudsters from UP

Thereafter, complainant again received call from the fraudster that the vehicle in which sugar had been supplied for complainant was on way towards Thathri but due to some mechanical fault the vehicle got breakdown near Udhampur and complainant was again asked to send Rs. 5000/= to vehicle driver namely Raju having Mobile No. 7668387652. Sensing some foul play, complainant asked the fraudster to send Rs. 5000/= to his account and then he would arrange to send but the fraudster denied and then the complainant

came to know that he was cheated at the hands of fraudster.

Police during course of investigation established that the complainant was cheated and swindled online by the aforesaid fraudsters and after completing the investigation produced the charge sheet of the case against them in the Court of law. Consequently on non-bail able warrants issued by the Hon'ble Court against the fraudsters, a Police team of Police Station Thathri Doda was deputed for their arrest and both the fraudsters were arrested by the Police team with the help UP Police, from Farrukhabad UP and produced them in the Court, wherefrom they were lodged in Distt. Jail Bhaderwah on judicial remand.

Pertinent to mention here that the fraudsters are involved in number of phishing cases registered against them in Delhi, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and are notorious inter-state fraudsters. It will not be exaggerated to say that Doda Police has been organizing number of awareness programmes against cyber crime, cyber fraud, online cheating to aware the general public to be cautious and don't fall into the net of fraudsters or unknown callers.

J&K Govt orders

transfers, postings of five JKAS officers

Eradication Wing, Jammu, is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of Social Welfare Department. Mohammad Iqbal Mir, Jr. Scale JKAS, Under Secretary to the Government, School Education Department, is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of Cooperatives Department. Rubia Afroz Inqalabi, Jr. Scale JKAS, Under Secretary to the Government, Higher Education Department, is transferred and her services are placed at the disposal of Rural Development Department. Jahid Azad, Jr. Scale JKAS, BDO, Chitragam, Shopian, is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of Tourism Department.

J&K witnessing tourism boom; record breaking foreign, domestic tourist arrivals post G-20 event: Sec Tourism

population has taken a lead and all programs under the banner of Azadi Ka Mahoutsav.

Thieves strike in house at Gandhi Nagar

He assured us that soon their case will be solved after interrogating habitual offenders in the area.

We urged concerned officials to look into the matter seriously otherwise residents will be unsafe and the culprits will repeat such incident in future also.

Man killed, his Brother among two critically injured in road accident

was declared as brought dead on arrival," they said. Quoting a police official, GNS reported that an FIR number 174/2023 under section 279, 337 IPC has been registered in this regard for further investigations.

Markets continue to fall for 6th day running on weak global trends, foreign fund outflows

The 30-share BSE Sensex plunged 502.5 points to 63,546.56. The Nifty fell 159.55 points to 18,962.60.

MUMBAI, Oct 26 (Agencies): Equity benchmark indices declined in early trade on Thursday, continuing their weak momentum, amid negative trend in global markets and fresh foreign fund outflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex plunged 502.5 points to 63,546.56. The Nifty fell 159.55 points to 18,962.60.

Among the Sensex firms, Tech Mahindra traded nearly 3 per cent lower after the company posted 61 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 505.3 crore for the July-September period mainly on account of reduced spending by clients.

Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, JSW Steel, Tata Motors, Nestle and Titan were the other major laggards.

Axis Bank emerged as the only gainer after the firm reported a 10 per cent increase in September 2023 quarter



net profit to Rs 5,864 crore on higher interest income.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong were quoting lower. The US markets ended in the negative territory on Wednesday.

"There is risk-off in global equity markets triggered by a combination of economics and geopolitics. The Israel-Hamas conflict continues to be a major headwind for markets. If the conflict lingers for long it has the potential to impact global growth, too, when the global economy is already in the midst of a slowdown."

"In the near term, however, the strongest

headwind for the market is the stubbornly high US bond yields. With the 10-year bond yield at near 5 per cent FPIs are likely to be in the sell mode," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.29 per cent to USD 89.87 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FII) offloaded equities worth Rs 4,236.60 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark tanked 522.82 points or 0.81 per cent to settle at 64,049.06 on Wednesday. The Nifty fell 159.60 points or 0.83 per cent to 19,122.15.

Why is India's small-car segment shrinking

There seem to be many reasons: drop in incomes, increase in aspirations and perhaps a side-effect of a 'K-shaped' recovery post-Covid

CHANDIGARH, Oct 26 (Agencies): A recent Indian auto-sales data by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) and reports by several auto experts revealed some very interesting trends.

According to the figures released by the apex national body that represents all major vehicle and vehicular engine manufacturers in India, sales in the small car segment are not as robust as earlier.

Only 35,000 small cars were sold in the July-September quarter as compared to nearly 77,000 in the same period in 2022, as per reports.

Experts say sales of "entry-level cars" (as small cars are also referred to as) have been declining since Covid. For these three months in particular, the sales of small cars slumped 75% and of motorcycles and scooters (other popular modes of transportation for lower income groups and rural areas) by 39% and 25%, respectively.

Interestingly, however, the second important trend noticed was from the sports utility vehicles or SUV segment and



luxury brands. Apparently, their demand increased as according to reports the sales of domestic utility vehicle were up by 23% in the quarter.

The reasons. Apparently, small cars are no longer small in price as compared to the mid-segment passenger vehicles, thereby making them unaffordable for the segment which would have naturally graduated to them had their income increased.

Another problem seems to be the interest rates on car loans, which are crucial to determine the decision to whether or not to buy a new vehicle. The rise in repo rate increases the rate of interest on all types of loans, home, business, car, everything.

Experts add another reason for dampening the sentiments. They say that the prices of small cars increased due to regulatory changes, making them unaffordable.

In other words, incomes did not increase, rather in many cases, they decreased in the post-Covid era, while the demand decreased.

"The ability of people to buy these cars has been affected, which is a sign of delayed economic recovery in rural and semi-urban areas in the post-pandemic period. Rural income levels are lower than earlier, which is a disturbing factor not just for auto-manufacturers but for all consumer goods manufacturers. The bottom line is that the demand in the rural/

semi-urban areas is not as robust anymore," they add.

The drop in sales of entry-level cars should worry the manufacturers this festive season, as this does not seem to be a temporary phenomenon. The counter argument that perhaps the same people want to spend more and buy a better car as the median level in prices has increased does not work with sceptics.

"The income of rural buyers is no longer what it used to be; the same is true for semi-urban areas post the pandemic. The divide between urban and rural has widened and the fact that the sales of high-end cars is increasing proves the point that the recovery has been more K-shaped."

"The farm incomes have been affected after the ban on wheat and rice exports. Besides, the rainfall mismatch, excess in some and deficit in other, added to the dampening of the mood," they add.

Luxury cars cruise While sales of small cars are declining that of luxury vehicles seem to be on the cruise.

The surge, experts say, is being driven by buyers in all categories—first-timers as well as those upgrading to premium products because of easier access to loans, etc. Many in middle and upper classes who during Covid period could not indulge on expensive clothes, eating out, holidays, etc. had sufficient money post-pandemic to splurge on expensive cars and luxury items.

However, this is also indicative of widening gaps between segments.

Sign of 'K-shaped' recovery?

A K-shaped recovery is when one sector of the economy rebounds from a recession while another sector continues to decline.

Obviously, this affects wages and incomes in both sectors.

There are many reasons for this widening gap, including the stock market which boomed through the pandemic while some key sectors tanked. The most affected was the unorganised and MSME sectors, resulting in decrease in incomes and high levels of joblessness.

Rupee falls 6 paise to 83.23 against US dollar in early trade

MUMBAI, Oct 26 (Agencies): The rupee stayed on downward track for the third consecutive session and depreciated by 6 paise to 83.23 against the US dollar in early trade on Thursday, tracking a firm American currency and negative equity market sentiment.

Forex traders said the Indian currency was also pressured due to massive selling of equities by foreign investors even as the crude oil prices hovered close to USD 90 a barrel amid geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened weak at 83.19 and then touched the lowest level of 83.23 against the greenback, registering a loss of 6 paise from its previous close.

This is the third day of fall in the rupee. It dropped 4 paise on Monday, followed by a dip of 1 paisa on Wednesday. Forex markets were closed on Tuesday on account of Dussehra. On Wednesday, the rupee closed at 83.17 against the US dollar.

Analysts attributed the



strengthening dollar to a record rise in the US Treasury yields after positive data on home

sales in the US on Wednesday. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the

greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.20 per cent higher at 106.75 on Thursday.

Global oil price benchmark Brent crude declined 0.31 per cent to USD 89.85 per barrel.

On the domestic equity market front, the Sensex plunged 478.55 points or 0.75 per cent to 63,570.51 while broader Nifty tanked 152.15 points or 0.80 per cent to 18,970.

Foreign Institutional Investors sold equities worth Rs 4,236.60 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

X takes on WhatsApp, rolls out audio and video calls



NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): In a bid to take on Meta-owned WhatsApp, Elon Musk-owned X Corp has started to roll out support for audio and video calls.

Several X users received a notification while opening the social media app that reads: "Audio and video calls are here!"

There's also a new "Enable audio and

video calling" toggle within the app's settings. It says you can "turn the feature on and then select who you're comfortable using it with," reports The Verge.

While X is yet to officially announce the launch of audio and video calls, it teased users with a cryptic post saying "ready for it...?" before the new feature started appearing.

The new feature allows audio and video calls from people in your address book, people you follow, verified users, or all of the three options.

X CEO Linda Yaccarino had confirmed last month that video calls would arrive on the platform as part of its transition into an "everything app". The X CEO said that soon, "you'll be able to make video chat calls without having to give your phone number to anyone on the platform".

Concerning level of lead, cadmium in chocolate, finds study

NEW YORK, Oct 26 (Agencies): Consumer Reports said that it had found "concerning" levels of lead and cadmium in a third of various chocolate products it tested recently, and called on Hershey to reduce the amounts of heavy metals in its chocolate.

The non-profit consumer group said 16 of the 48 products from various makers that its scientists tested contained potentially harmful levels of lead, cadmium or both.

Consumer Reports tested products in seven categories: dark chocolate bars, milk chocolate bars, cocoa powder, chocolate chips, and mixes for brownies, chocolate cake and hot chocolate.

Products found to contain excessive metal content included a dark chocolate bar and hot chocolate mix from Walmart, cocoa powder from Hershey's and Droste, semi-sweet chocolate chips from Target, and hot chocolate mixes from Trader Joe's, Nestle and Starbucks.

Only milk chocolate bars, which have fewer cocoa solids, were found not to contain excessive metal content.

Consumer Reports has said long-term exposure to the metals can result in nervous system problems, immune system suppression and kidney damage, with greater danger to pregnant women and young children.

The US Food and Drug Administration told the nonprofit that experts consider chocolate a "minor source of exposure" to lead and cadmium internationally,

but that manufacturers and processors remain responsible for ensuring their food's safety.

Wednesday's study followed Consumer Reports' findings last December that 23 of 28 tested dark chocolate bars contained excessive lead or cadmium, including Hershey products sold under its own brand and the Lily's and Scharffen Berger brands.

Consumer Reports food policy director Brian Ronholm said Hershey, as a "leading and popular brand," should commit to making its chocolate safer. The nonprofit did not on Wednesday ask other manufacturers for the same commitment.

In March, Hershey Chief Financial Officer Steve Voskuil said his company was looking to reduce levels of lead and cadmium, saying the metals are elements in soil that can occur naturally in a chocolate product.

"We would love to eradicate it completely," Voskuil said.

Consumer Reports said more than 75,000 consumers signed an earlier petition for Hershey to reduce heavy metals in its chocolate, and that it is now again petitioning the company.

Hershey referred a request for comment to the National Confectioners Association.

"Chocolate and cocoa are safe to eat and can be enjoyed as treats as they have been for centuries," said Christopher Gindlesperger, a spokesman for the trade group.

These exercises can help reduce strain on your eyes

The best way to take precautions for eye diseases is by incorporating certain exercises that can alleviate strain.

NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): Prolonged exposure to screens is known to hamper your vision, pushing many to start wearing glasses at a younger age. Maintaining eye health is important as screens can make the eyes dry and irritated, leading to several other ocular illnesses if proper care is not taken.

According to the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, a staggering 285 million individuals worldwide grapple with varying degrees of visual impairment, including a substantial 39 million who face complete blindness.

This simple trick could help increase your life. It involves walking

NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): A new study has highlighted the advantages of short exercise breaks infused in our daily routines.

In a world where sitting for long periods is linked to a higher risk of early death, new findings suggest that just 20 to 25 minutes of daily exercise can help counteract these risks.

This study, published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, involved researchers from the University of Tromsø, in



The best way to take precautions for eye diseases is by incorporating certain exercises that can alleviate strain.

Dr Ajay Sharma, Chief Medical Director of Eye Q Hospitals, shared some easy exercises to reduce strain on the eyes and keep them healthy.

Palming

One such exercise is palming, a yogic technique that involves relaxing the eye muscles to reduce strain and fatigue. It begins by rubbing your hands together to generate warmth and then gently placing the palms over your closed eyes while

breathing deeply for 3-5 minutes.

Blinking Another useful exercise is blinking. Prolonged exposure to screens and digital devices often leads to a decreased blink rate, resulting in dry eyes.

Conscious blinking can help rejuvenate the tear film that keeps our eyes moist. It's as simple as closing your eyes, holding them closed for 2-3 seconds, and then reopening them.

The 20-20-20 rule The 20-20-20 rule is yet another method to combat digital eye strain. To follow this guideline, every 20 minutes of screen time,

take a 20-second break and focus your gaze on an object about 20 feet away. When coupled with the previous exercises, this practice significantly reduces ocular fatigue.

The Eye Roll Gently rolling your eyes in one direction and then the other, and back again, can alleviate tension and soreness in the eye area.

While these exercises can offer relief from eye strain and potentially provide short-term vision benefits, it's always advisable to have regular eye check-ups and seek professional guidance if you are experiencing ocular issues.

Norway and Aarhus University in Denmark.

They looked at over 12,000 adults aged 50 and older in Norway and Sweden to see if exercise could help protect them from the dangers of a mostly sedentary or inactive life.

The results were clear. People who sat for over 12 hours a day had a 38% higher risk of early death.

But this risk could be reduced by doing at least 22 minutes of exercise each day.

Activities like brisk walking, light hiking, biking or even doing chores were all helpful.

These results support other studies that show even short bursts of exercise can counteract the health risks of sitting for a long time.

The research also found that the more you exercise, the lower your risk of early death, regardless of how much you sit.

This is consistent with other research showing that exercise has many health benefits,

including better mood, more energy and a lower risk of diseases like heart disease and cancer.

Exercise is especially important for people who sit a lot. For example, an extra 10 minutes of exercise each day was linked to a 35% lower risk of early death for those who sat for more than 10.5 hours a day.

Even just 11 minutes of exercise a day can significantly reduce the risk of early death.

Maxwell, Warner set up Australia's record 309-run win over Netherlands

Glenn Maxwell's 40-ball effort is the fastest World Cup century. It is the fastest by an Australian in ODIs. He is the first Aussie to score 100-plus runs in the final 10 overs.

NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): Australia achieved what they set out to do against Netherlands. The Pat Cummins-led side registered a thumping 309-run victory to improve their net run rate from

-0.193 to +1.142, a much-needed boost in their quest to reach the semifinals.

When Cummins elected to bat first, the plan was to post a big total and dismiss the Dutch cheaply. It worked like clockwork as the day saw many records being broken.

It started with David Warner, who scored his second successive ton to lay the foundation. The opener scored a 92-ball 104 to get his sixth World Cup hundred, going past Ricky Ponting's five and equalling Sachin Tendulkar's mark.

The finishing touches were then given by the mercurial Glenn Maxwell, who lit up the sky with an astonishing eight sixes and registered the fastest century in a World Cup.



Incidentally, this is the same ground where South Africa's Aiden Markram had broken the record with a 49-ball ton only weeks earlier. Maxwell, who also hit nine fours, needed nine balls fewer than Markram.

"Not something I set out to do. Just situation of the game," Maxwell said. "Huge confidence booster knowing I've got that in my locker," he added.

The five-time champions then

made short work of the Dutch batting line-up, dismissing them for a paltry score of 90 in only 21 overs.

"Just about the complete game. Couldn't be happier," Cummins said. "We are starting to play to our potential," he added.

Australia's intention was clear from the start — Warner smashed Aryan Dutt for four boundaries as Netherlands

started with spin. Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne also cashed in, scoring half-centuries, as the Australians went looking for a score upwards of 350.

The Dutch briefly put a lid on the scoring as they removed Labuschagne, Josh Inglis and Warner in the space of three overs. However, Maxwell then took over and put the match beyond Scott Edwards' team. Maxwell really went after Bas de Leede as the all-rounder ended up conceding 115 runs, the most in an innings in ODI cricket.

Netherlands' chase never got going as Mitchell Starc castled opener Max O'Dowd. His opening partner Vikramjit Singh was run out by Maxwell.

Josh Hazlewood, Cummins and Mitchell Marsh too chipped in with wickets while Adam Zampa cleaned up the tail to register yet another four-wicket haul. The 309-run victory was the biggest in the tournament's history.

Pandya to miss more action



NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): Star all-rounder Hardik Pandya is likely to sit out of India's next two World Cup matches as he is yet to recover from his ankle injury from last week.

Pandya had slipped in his follow-through while bowling against Bangladesh in Pune on October 19 and missed the clash against New Zealand in Dharamsala on October 22 due to

the injury.

He had reported to National Cricket Academy (NCA) on Monday in Bengaluru for his injury management.

"Hardik is still under medication. While the swelling on his left ankle has subsided considerably, he will start bowling only towards the weekend. Right now, important is to give him time to recover," an NCA source said.

Since India are in a

strong position to make the semifinals, having won all their five matches so far, Pandya could easily be rested for the next two matches that will allow him complete recovery before the knockouts.

"Pandya has suffered a bad sprain but fortunately not a fracture. The BCCI medical team wants to take maximum precaution. He is likely to miss next two to three matches. The team wants him fully fit for the knockout stage," added a BCCI source.

Pandya is likely to undergo a fitness test tomorrow and BCCI's medical team will ascertain his comeback date depending on how smoothly he is able to bowl full tilt without any apparent discomfort or pressure on his left ankle.

India next play defending champions England on Sunday in Lucknow and take on Sri Lanka in Mumbai on November 2.

National Games 2023: 3 athletes suffer injuries

All 3 taken to state-run Goa Medical College and Hospital, which has set up a special ward to cater to the needs for the National Games 2023 being held in Goa

PANAJI, Oct 26 (Agencies): Two Rugby players and a weightlifter have been injured during sports events as part of the National Games in Goa, a health official said on Thursday.

Bharat Chauhan, a Rugby player from Maharashtra team, suffered an injury on Wednesday following which he was taken to the state-run Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) near Panaji and was operated upon, he said.

Goan Rugby player Sohan Shirodkar was



also injured in an event and admitted to the GMCH on Wednesday night, the official from the hospital said.

Biswa Varghuse, a weightlifter from Kerala team, was admitted to

the GMCH on Tuesday after suffering an injury, he said.

The GMCH has set up a special ward to cater to the needs for the National Games 2023 being held in Goa.

India vs Sri Lanka, World Cup 2023: BCCI releases tickets for group match in Mumbai

NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced its decision to release tickets for the upcoming group clash between India and Sri Lanka, a week prior to the match. Fans can buy tickets for the crucial India vs Sri Lanka group match, which is scheduled to take place at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium on November 2, on October 26 after 12 PM IST.

Remarkably, this marks the second instance where the BCCI has chosen to release tickets for India's matches only a week before the actual game. Previously, the BCCI had announced the sale of tickets for India's match with Pakistan and Bangladesh subsequent to several matches, including the IND vs AUS encounter, witnessing vacant seats, despite ticket



booking applications indicating that the matches were fully booked.

India are currently the top-ranked team in the World Cup points table, standing as the sole undefeated side in the tournament, boasting an unblemished record of five victories in as many matches. Following

their encounter with England, the next challenge on their journey is a face-off against Sri Lanka, scheduled for November 2 at the illustrious Wankhede Stadium.

Meanwhile, star all-rounder Hardik Pandya is set to sit out for another consecutive match in the World Cup, this time miss-

ing the upcoming clash against England on Sunday. This continued absence stems from the ankle injury he sustained during the Bangladesh match in Pune.

According to several reports, Hardik has incurred a minor ligament injury. His return date remains contingent upon a fitness evaluation slated for Thursday, with the BCCI medical team tasked with making the pivotal decision.

In the aftermath of the Bangladesh encounter, India's captain, Rohit Sharma, had assured that the injury wasn't of significant concern. Consequently, Hardik was directed to the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru for rehabilitation. Regrettably, he was unable to participate in the New Zealand match, and the BCCI had initially anticipated his return during the team's stint in Lucknow.

IND vs ENG, World Cup 2023: England are always tricky opponent for India in ODI WCs

India vs England, World Cup 2023: Team India will look to maintain their unbeaten run in the ongoing ICC tournament when they take on England, who have proved to be a tricky opponent for the hosts in the past.

NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): Table-toppers India will face defending champions England in their sixth group-stage match of the ongoing ICC World Cup 2023 in Lucknow on October 29. Notably, India and England have a storied history in ICC ODI World Cup tournaments, with 8 memorable encounters etched in the annals of cricketing history.

Out of these clashes, England has emerged victorious 4 times, while India has claimed victory on 3 occasions, with one match ending in a thrilling tie. Let's take a closer look at their remarkable head-to-head record in this prestigious event.

The highest total posted by England in these encounters stands at a formidable 338 runs, showcasing their batting prowess. India, on the other hand, matched this score with an equally impressive 338 runs, highlighting the fierce competition between the two cricketing giants. The lowest total posted by India in these matches was 132, while England's lowest was 168, illustrating the



ebb and flows of their battles on the cricket field.

INDIA vs ENGLAND IN WORLD CUPS

1975: One of the most unforgettable moments in their World Cup clashes was in their first encounter, which took place in 1975. Sunil Gavaskar's painstaking knock of 36* off 174 deliveries during India's chase of 335 runs turned the match into a controversial and iconic moment.

1983: India scripted a major heist as they defeated hosts England in the semi-final by 6 wickets, setting the stage for a historic final against defending champions West Indies

at Lord's. The Kapil Dev-led side stunned the defending champions next and clinched their first-ever World Cup title.

1987: England returned the favor in the 1987 semi-final when Graham Gooch's brilliant performance swept the defending champions out of their own party in front of a packed crowd at the Wankhede Stadium.

1992: India, under the leadership of Mohammed Azharuddin, played another close encounter in 1992, losing to England by a narrow margin of 9 runs.

1999: However, India staged a remarkable redemption in 1999 by defeating the hosts

England by a convincing 63-run margin in Birmingham.

2003: The World Cup encounter proved to be a one-sided affair in favor of India.

Ashish Nehra ran through the English batting lineup in helpful conditions in Durban, resulting in an 82-run victory for India.

2011: After 8 hours of intense back-and-forth cricket, nothing could separate these two sides.

The match was illuminated by stunning centuries from the Master Blaster Sachin Tendulkar (120 off 115) and English skipper Andrew Strauss (158 off 145). It also featured a sensa-

tional spell of reverse-swing bowling from Zaheer Khan. As Ravi Shastri aptly remarked, "No side deserved to lose the game," a testament to the thrill and quality of cricket displayed by both teams.

2019: The World Cup match between India and England has been widely remembered for various reasons, one of which was the perceived lack of intent shown by MS Dhoni and Kedar Jadhav during the chase.

India was chasing a target of 338 runs set by England, and the required run rate was steadily climbing. However, the middle overs of India's innings saw a cautious approach from Dhoni and Jadhav, with some critics and fans opining that they were not aggressive enough in their pursuit of the target.

These historic battles between India and England in the ICC ODI World Cup have provided fans with unforgettable moments, showcasing the spirit and skill of the game, and leaving an indelible mark on the world of cricket.

World Cup 2023: Important to understand everyone's need to be successful as a team, say Rohit



NEW DELHI, Oct 26 (Agencies): India captain Rohit Sharma has said that it is important to understand everyone's need to be successful as a team. The Men in Blue are all set to take on defending champions England at the Ekana Stadium in Lucknow on Sunday, October 29.

Speaking to Star Sports, Rohit said it's important to understand the individual first when it comes to managing players. Rohit is leading India in an ODI World Cup for the first time, while playing in the tournament for the third time in his career.

"I think when it comes to managing players, it's quite important that you understand the individual first and their requirement, what are the likes and dislikes of that particular individual because you know in a team sport it's just not about one or two individuals or few individuals, it's about everyone,"

said Rohit.

He went on to say that every player needs to play a role in a championship-winning side, insisting that it's important to keep everyone in a good mental space. India has won all its five matches in the 2023 World Cup so far and sit atop the points table.

"We do understand as well that when you want to win championships, big tournaments, everyone needs to come to the party and play their part. So, it's important that you keep everyone in good mental space. So, it's very important to hear everyone out, understand what they want, how they want to operate," Rohit added.

The India skipper said he tries to put himself in the players' shoes, adding that he had to learn this over the years as it didn't come naturally to him. India is aiming to win its third ODI World Cup, having triumphed in 1983 and 2011.

"I try and put myself

in their shoes and think about what this individual will be needing now. So, it's important to think like that. So, yeah that is something that I wouldn't say comes naturally to me, I've learned it over the years, gone through my personal experiences and understood what is needed for a team to be successful," said Rohit.

Finally, Rohit mentioned that it's important to understand everyone's need to be successful as a team, while giving them freedom to execute their roles. India will be looking to cement their position at the top of the table when they face England in Lucknow.

"I think what is needed to be successful is to understand everyone's need, their requirement and give them that space and freedom to go and execute their job and their roles. It can be quite daunting at times because when you are playing such a high-profile tournament, the pressure can get to you at times," Rohit added.

India go into the match with 10 points from five games with a net run-rate of +1.353, while England are placed eighth with two points from four matches.

SMVDU organizes Lectures on 'Floating Solar PV and Landslides'



TOP NEWS REPORT

KATRA, Oct 26: School of Civil Engineering, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) organized expert lectures on "Floating Solar PV" and "Landslides" to promote interdisciplinary studies in alignment with the National Education Policy, encouraging students to explore

beyond the conventional boundaries of civil engineering.

The event commenced with an opening note from Dr. V. K. Dogra, Head of the School of Civil Engineering (SoCE). The expert, Dr. Manish Kumar from Himachal Pradesh University passionately discussed the importance of civil engineers

in advancing research and development in new technologies for the frames that support floating solar PV systems.

He introduced the audience to the latest trends in solar PV development, shedding light on the potential of floating solar solutions in harnessing renewable energy sources.

Dr. Kumar's presentation was both educational and inspiring, emphasizing the role of civil engineering in the renewable energy sector.

Following this, the other expert, Dr. Mahesh Sharma, also from Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla, spoke on "Landslides."

He not only elucidated the causes and mechanisms behind landslides but also shared valuable insights on mitigation techniques. To exemplify the importance of the subject, Dr. Sharma presented several case studies of recent landslides in Himachal Pradesh, showcasing the real-world consequences of these natural disasters.

His comprehensive presentation left the audience with a height-

ened awareness of the potential dangers and preventive measures associated with landslides.

Concluding the event, Dr. Vaibhav Sapkal, delivered the valedictory speech, summarizing the significance of the day's discussions and emphasizing their relevance to the field of civil engineering.

The event was coordinated by Srijan, and Gautam Narula, the latter also delivered a vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to the guest speakers, students, and faculty for their active participation.

The event was a resounding success in promoting innovation, knowledge exchange, and academic enrichment among the students and faculty.

Sant Samagam to begin from Nov 2 in Akhand Param Dham Samba



TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: The Sant Samagam, scheduled to take place in Akhand Param Dham Samba from November 2 to 6, is an auspicious spiritual gathering being organized in the Akhand Param Dham Ashram, National Highway Nainath Ghagwal, Samba, Jammu.

Sant Subhash Shastri, during a press conference held at the Press Club in Jammu, provided information about the event.

"The Samagam will be graced by the holy presence of Param Puja Mahamandelshwar Yug Purush Shri Swami Parmanand Giri Ji Maharaj," he said and invited everyone to participate in this spiritual gathering.

Mahant Rajesh Bittu expressed his

happiness at the event being organized in Jammu and Kashmir.

"This Samagam is expected to bring holy bliss to the region, and it's an opportunity for devotees from across the country to come together. Attendees can witness this grand Sant Samagam and receive the blessings and pious Darshan of the Mahamandelshwar," Mahant Rajesh said.

The Sant Samagam is a powerful medium for conveying the divine message of truth, love, and peace, and it is the desire of many devotees to be part of such a blissful spiritual gathering, he said. So, he added, this is the moment they've been waiting for, and everyone is encouraged to be a part of this sacred Samagam.

Restoring Statehood with Special Rights: Shiv Sena

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: On October 26, 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession, marking a momentous day when Jammu and Kashmir became an integral part of India.

On the occasion of this historic day, the people of Jammu and Kashmir take pride in their Indian identity.

The last Dogra ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, who never anticipated that he was handing over the reins of Jammu and Kashmir to India, could not have imagined that this special state would be divided into two union territories, losing its statehood and special rights, and leaving the people waiting for the restoration of democratic processes.

This was stated by Manish Sahni, Presi-



dent of Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir Unit.

On the occasion, Manish Sahni inaugurated a Women's Complaint and Assistance Center open by Shiv Sena at Ranbir Yatri Bhavan in Jammu.

On the occasion of Accession Day, Sahni made a call to the Modi government to restore Jammu and Kashmir's statehood, uphold Article

371 to secure its cultural identity, and demand special rights in education, employment, and land.

Sahni mentioned that on October 26, 1947, Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India with specific terms and conditions, signed by Maharaja Hari Singh for the benefit of his people. The entire nation takes pride in this momentous day. However, despite more

than seven decades, the statehood has not been restored, and the people have been kept away from democratic processes for over five years, he added.

On this occasion, key members of the organization, including Meenakshi Chhibber, President of the Women's Wing, Sanjeev Kohli, Balwant Singh, and Youth Secretary Rajesh Handa, were present.

Inclusivity and communication upgrades at renovated Phulpur station

TOP NEWS REPORT

JAMMU, Oct 26: The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme announced by the Indian Railways plans to revamp 1308 stations nationwide and enhance and modify its amenities to meet its diverse range of passengers.

It intends to transform these stations into thriving transportation hubs. 508 stations are being redeveloped in its first phase and out of these 71 stations across its 5 divisions have been allotted to Northern Railways.

One of these is the Phulpur station, under its Lucknow Division, which has been sanctioned a budget of Rs 21.34 crores. The redevelopment plan includes various infrastructure enhancements such as the construction of a circulation area with a



primary entry and a secondary entry on the side to make it commuter-friendly.

Widening the roads of the station circulation area and developing green strips to improve the circulation of traffic. Improvement in the rain drainage system and platform surfaces to ensure upgraded utility services and standard signage and display boards to ensure clarity of communication.

Divyang-Jan special amenities are to also be included to cater to people with special needs. Installation of LED-based boards, Train information Display system coach guidance display board and GPS clocks on all platforms to ensure accessibility of information. Establishing a commercial block that includes a food plaza, cafeteria, retail facilities and improved toilet facilities.

The Railways with the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme want to ensure ease of access to information and amenities. The major goal is to transform these stations into vibrant transit centres that prioritize sustainability, efficiency, safety, accessibility and inclusion. This involves implementing eco-friendly procedures and boosting a variety of services to provide unrestricted travel for all.

NSS Unit of GDC Budhal organizes Intra-Collegiate Competitions



TOP NEWS REPORT

BUDHAL, Oct 26: NSS Unit of Government Degree College Budhal organized Intra-Collegiate Competitions on Essay Writing, Photography, videography and Painting on the theme of 'Badalta Jammu and Kashmir, 'Badhta Jammu and Kashmir', 'Aman aur Taraqqi Ki Nayi Tasveer', in continuation to the series of activities organized by the College under the aegis of 'UT Foundation Day Celebration and Mere Mati Mera Desh Abhiyan'.

The event was organized under the guid-

ance and supervision of Dr. Mohd Mazammal Hussain, Principal of the College.

A large number of students participated in these competitions. Meanwhile in the Intra-Collegiate Essay Writing Competition, first position was secured by Tabina Tabassam, student of B.Sc 3rd Semester. In the Painting Competition, first position was secured by Muskan Akhter, student of B.A 3rd Semester.

In the Videography Competitions, first position was secured by Sawyer Singh, student of B.A. 3rd Semester

and in the Photography competition, first position was secured by Mazammal Hussain, student of B.A. 3rd Semester.

Dr. Bilal Ahmed Shah (Lecturer Political Science), Uzma Farooq (Lecturer Geography), Dr. Masood Ahmed (Lecturer Urdu) and Dr. Manzoor Ahmed Wagay (Lecturer Education) were the jury members of these competitions.

The event was coordinated by Dr. Ajaz Hussain Shah NSS Programme Officer of the College and Dr. Syed Mohamad Javad, HOD Persian.

GDC Kishtwar celebrates UT Foundation Day with Intra-College Events

TOP NEWS REPORT

KISHTWAR, Oct 26: Government Degree College Kishtwar organized various intra-college events, including a painting competition, videography, photography, and essay writing as part of the celebrations of UT Foundation Day to be observed on 31st October 2023 under the theme "Badalta Jammu Kashmir - Aman aur Taraqqi ke Nayi Tasveer."

More than 25 students from the college participated in these competitions, showcasing their talents and highlighting various developmental activities in and around the college campus.

The event successfully captured the spirit of progress and transformation in Jammu Kashmir. In the painting competition, Mamta Kumari, and Priya Manhas secured the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes, respectively, demonstrating their artistic skills and creative interpretation of the theme.



In the photography competition, Vasundhra Thakur, Mamta Kumari, and Faisal Ahmad emerged as the winners of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes, respectively, showcasing their creativity through the lens. Faisal Ahmad, Anurag Sharma, and Hakeem Malik were

awarded the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes, respectively, in the videography competition. In the essay writing competition, Mahlok, Priya, and Surbhi secured the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes, respectively, impressing the judges with their well-crafted essays.

The proceedings of the events were efficiently conducted by Prof. Sarita Parihar, ensuring a smooth and

enjoyable experience for all participants.

Distinguished faculty members, including Prof. Umar Deen, Dr. Tariq Tamkeen, Prof. Ajay Sharma, and Dr. Sehrish Gazal, attended the event, showing their support and encouragement towards the participants.

The winners of the competitions will now have the opportunity to showcase their talents

at the district-level competition, which will be held on 27th October in GDC Kishtwar.

This competition will witness the participation of students from all colleges in the Kishtwar district, fostering healthy competition and promoting the spirit of achievement.

Principal Dr. Jyoti Parihar expressed her delight and congratulated all the participants for their enthusiasm and dedication in making the intra-college events a resounding success. She reiterated the importance of such platforms in nurturing and showcasing the talents of the students.

This celebration of UT Foundation Day through various competitions at Government Degree College promotes creativity, talent, and the spirit of progress among the students, ultimately contributing to the development of Jammu Kashmir.