

TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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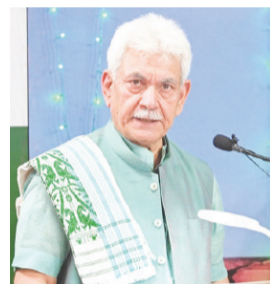
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BRIEFLY

LG Sinha extends greetings to people on Maharishi Valmiki Jayanti



SRINAGAR, Oct 17 (Agencies): Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday extended his greetings to the people on the occasion of Maharishi Valmiki Jayanti.

In a post on X, LG Sinha wrote, "Heartiest greetings to everyone on Maharishi Valmiki Jayanti."

Truck carrying CRPF personnel skids off road in Budgam, 12 injured

SRINAGAR, Oct 17 (Agencies): At least 12 CRPF personnel were injured Thursday after their truck skidded off the road in Kashmir's Budgam, reports said.

A truck carrying personnel of CRPF 181-F Company skidded off the road in the Khaigam area of central Kashmir's Budgam district, resulting in injuries to 12 personnel.

Quoting an official, it reported that all the injured were shifted to a nearby hospital.

Search operation underway in remote village in Poonch

MENDHAR/JAMMU, Oct 17 (Agencies): The search operation was launched jointly by police and army at Mohri Shahstar in Gursai top area late Wednesday night following information about the presence of some terrorists, they said.

They said security forces challenged the terrorists moving towards the forest, leading to a brief firing. Reinforcements were rushed and a massive search operation is underway to track down the terrorists, the officials said, adding security forces have

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Supreme Court agrees to hear petition seeking statehood restoration to J&K

NEW DELHI, Oct 17 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Thursday agreed to consider a petition, seeking a time-bound restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan file the application before three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, requesting it be listed.

Sankaranarayanan highlighted the need for a time-bound restoration of statehood in the Article 370 matter and asked for an urgent



hearing. The chief justice agreed to consider the request.

The application was filed as a miscellaneous application in the case related to Article 370 of

the Constitution, where the Supreme Court had upheld the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status.

Although the court did not directly rule on

the constitutionality of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act 2019, which changed the region's status to a Union Territory, it had directed that statehood be restored "as soon as possible," without specifying a timeline.

Applicants Zahoor Ahmed Bhat, a college teacher, and Khurshid Ahmad Malik, an activist, noted that despite the assurance of statehood restoration, the Union Government has taken no action in 11 months following the judgment.

CM Omar Abdullah chairs first Cabinet meeting



SRINAGAR, Oct 17 (Agencies): Omar Abdullah, who was sworn in as the first Chief Minister of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, chaired his government's inaugural cabinet meeting today.

Omar Abdullah, leader

of the National Conference (NC), took his oath on Tuesday in a ceremony overseen by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. During the cabinet meeting, key administrative issues were discussed, and the government's immediate

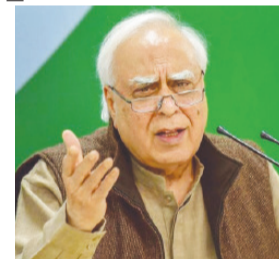
priorities were outlined. The newly-formed cabinet reviewed significant governance challenges, focusing on streamlining processes, addressing public grievances, and promoting transparency within the bureaucracy. The team also evaluated the progress of ongoing development projects. Top priorities for the new government include bolstering infrastructure, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities across Jammu and Kashmir.

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Reducing J&K to UT 'Constitutional Misdemeanour', Statehood must be restored: Kapil Sibal

NEW DELHI, Oct 17 (Agencies): Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Thursday said it was a "constitutional misdemeanour" to have reduced Jammu and Kashmir to a Union Territory and asserted that it was time to restore its statehood.

His remarks come a day after National Conference leader Omar Abdullah took oath as the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, heading the first elected government in the union territory since 2019



when its special status was revoked.

As Jammu and Kashmir turned another page in its troubled history, the 54-year-old Abdullah was sworn in along with five other ministers, three from Jammu region and two from the Kashmir Valley.

In a post on X, Sibal said, "It was a constitutional misdemeanour to have reduced the state of J&K to a Union Territory. It was wrong for the Supreme Court not to have decided that issue."

"Time to restore statehood. This is the constitutional right of the people of J&K," the former Union minister asserted.

Lt Governor Manoj Sinha administered the oath of office and secrecy to Abdullah and his

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Security detail of Farooq Abdullah and Ghulam Nabi Azad Set for Major Overhaul as NSG Withdraws from VIP Duties

SRINAGAR, Oct 17 (Agencies): In a significant shift, the Union Government has ordered the complete withdrawal of the National Security Guard (NSG) from VIP security duties, with nine high-profile individuals, including prominent political leaders from Jammu and Kashmir,

set to be transferred to the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) for protection.

Among the affected leaders are Ghulam Nabi Azad, former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and current president of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP),

and National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah. Both have long been under the 'Z-plus' category security provided by the elite NSG 'black cat' commandos, a security arrangement known for its specialised counter-terrorist focus.

As per sources in the

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the transition to the CRPF is expected to be completed by next month. The CRPF, which has a dedicated VIP security wing, will now assume responsibility for the protection of these nine individuals, a move that comes as part

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Indian Railways announce 60-day limit for bookings



NEW DELHI, Oct 17 (Agencies): The Ministry of Railways has announced a reduction in the time limit for advance reservations.

As per a notification issued on 16th October 2024, the existing advance reservation period (ARP) of 120 days will be shortened to

60 days, effective from 1st November 2024.

From 1st November, passengers will be able to book tickets up to 60 days in advance, excluding the date of journey. Bookings made under the current ARP of 120 days, however, will remain valid.

Cancellations for bookings made beyond the 60-day limit will still be allowed, reported news agency NVI.

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Forced to remain seated due to medical condition, says MLA Hilal Lone as admin launches probe

SRINAGAR, Oct 17 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir administration Thursday ordered an inquiry against the National Conference MLA from Sonwari, Hilal Akbar Lone, for not standing up for the national anthem during the oath taking ceremony yesterday, reports said.

Omar Abdullah was sworn in as the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday. During the oath taking ceremony at the Sher-e-Kashmir International



Convention Centre (SKICC), a number of attendees did not stand up for the national anthem and Lone was one of them.

Clarifying the matter, Lone said that his medical condition forced him to remain seated.

"When I went inside,

I spoke to media, following this the national anthem was played, and I stood up for some seconds, then was forced to sit because of my back ache," Lone told Greater Kashmir.

This is no act of crime, asserted the MLA. Supreme Court has a reservation too, that not standing during the national anthem is not a crime, said Lone.

"I am a member of the legislative assembly, I have taken oath on the

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JKCCC Chairman lauds appointment of Surinder Choudhary as DyCM and Nasir Sogami as CM's Advisor

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Oct 17: The Chairman of the J&K Contractors Coordination Committee (JKCCC), Ghulam Jeelani Purza, extended his heartfelt congratulations to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary on the formation of the new government led by the National Conference (NC)-Congress alliance.

In a statement released today, Purza praised the leadership of Omar Abdullah and the new cabinet, expressing hope for significant development across Jammu and Kashmir under their governance. In addition to congratulating Omar Abdullah, Purza also extended his congratulations to all the newly elected Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from both the Kashmir and Jammu divisions, including J&K Con-



gress chief Tariq Hameed Karra.

"The formation of this government brings a wave of optimism for growth and progress. The contractors' community, which plays a crucial role in infrastructure development, is ready to work hand-in-hand with the government to build a better future for the next generation," Purza said.

He highlighted the essential contributions contractors make in key sectors such as health, education, public infrastructure, roads, and the power system, empha-

sizing that these efforts are fundamental to the region's development. Purza welcomed the appointment of Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Sogami, and other cabinet ministers. He expressed particular satisfaction with Surinder Choudhary's selection as an Deputy CM, believing it will strengthen the administration's focus on development.

The JKCCC is hopeful that the new NC-Congress alliance will swiftly

address longstanding issues faced by the contractors' community. Purza outlined several key concerns, including pending payments, departmental delays, bid management, NOCs for card renewals, and the stabilization of prices for construction materials such as sand, bricks, and soil.

"We trust that this government will prioritize the needs of contractors, especially the unresolved issues left by the previous administration. We remain committed to supporting

the new government in addressing these concerns," Purza said. He also called for the release of payments pending since the 2014 floods to 2018 and other challenges that have hampered the region's economic progress.

Purza reaffirmed JKCCC's commitment to contributing to the region's progressive development and economic growth through collaboration with the government. He assured that the contractors' community stands ready to assist in the successful implementation of development projects that will benefit the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Every contractor's work is part of nation-building, and we remain dedicated to improving infrastructure and public services for the welfare of the entire region. We look forward to working closely with the government to achieve this vision," he concluded.

Vikram Mahajan congratulates Sham Lal Sharma on his victory, Discusses Issues of Cow protection, Dogra Identity, and Temple Preservation

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: Movement Kalki board member Vikram Mahajan met with Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Sham Lal Sharma, who was recently elected from Jammu North, to congratulate him on his victory. During the meeting, Vikram Mahajan raised significant concerns, focusing on cow protection (Gokashi), Dogra identity and dignity (Dogra Identity and Dignity), and the preservation of Dogra heritage temples (Mandirs - Our Dogra Heritage).

Vikram Mahajan emphasized the importance of these issues for the cultural and social fabric of Jammu and stated that addressing them is essential. He stressed the need for strict measures to protect cows and preserve the region's religious traditions. Furthermore, he underlined the importance of safeguarding Dogra identity and preserving temples, which are the cultural heritage of the Dogra community.

Sham Lal Sharma expressed his support for Vikram Mahajan's concerns and assured him that these matters would be seriously addressed. He further added that under the



leadership of the BJP, the identity of the Dogra community and its religious sites would remain protected, and every effort would be made for their development and security.

This meeting marks a

significant step towards the social and cultural progress of Jammu, and the issues raised by Movement Kalki are expected to shape robust policies in the interest of the community in the future.

India Earns Global Respect, Pakistan Known for Terrorism Since 1947: MP Khatana

Top News Report

NEW DELHI, Oct 17: Senior BJP leader and Rajya Sabha member, Er. Gulam Ali Khatana, stressed that India cannot foster friendly relations with Pakistan unless it halts its support for terrorism.

In an interview with INAS Wire Service, Khatana remarked, "Pakistan must stop fueling and

supporting terrorism on Indian soil for any form of friendship to materialize." Khatana drew attention to the vastly different developmental trajectories of the two countries, despite gaining independence together in 1947. He stated, "Pakistan should remember that both nations gained independence at the same time. While India has developed robust infra-

structure and achieved global respect, Pakistan is primarily recognized for its association with terrorism on the world stage."

He further noted that, while India has become a developed nation, Pakistan continues to struggle for international recognition. Khatana attributed Pakistan's lack of progress to its focus on hostility, poverty, and its attempts to destabilize



India instead of addressing internal challenges. Khatana lauded India's global contributions, particularly in terms of

its human resources. He emphasized, "Indian talent is playing a vital role in the world's growth and development, whereas Pakistan remains trapped in a cycle of animosity and poverty," he added.

CU Jammu Launches Implementation Phase of Sustainable Campus Development and Performance Management (SCDPM) 4.0 Initiative

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: The Central University of Jammu has officially launched the implementation phase of the Sustainable Campus Development and Performance Management (SCDPM) 4.0 initiative, following a comprehensive preparatory period that began in August. This crucial phase, mandated by the Ministry of Education, Department of Higher Education, will run from 2nd October to 31st October 2024.

During the preparatory phase, the university focused on establishing vermicomposting and vermiwash systems, laying the groundwork for a sustainable waste management strategy. Approximately 32 kgs of vermicompost was obtained till 17th Octo-



ber 2024. During the implementation phase, vermicompost was sold at Rs 30/Kg. This initiative aligns with the university's commitment to environmental sustainability and ecological balance.

The implementation phase is being spearheaded by Nodal Officer Prof. Richa Kothari, with coordination efforts led by Lt. Dr. Panjaj Mehta,

Dr. Dinesh Kumar and Dr. Ankit Tandon. Together, they aim to ensure a smooth transition into this vital phase of the SCDPM initiative.

Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Hon'ble vice Chancellor, Central university of Jammu congratulated the entire team involved in this project.

"This initiative not only enhances our campus sustainability but also

sets a benchmark for other institutions to follow," he stated.

The university is optimistic that the SCDPM 4.0 implementation will contribute significantly to its sustainability goals and foster a greener campus environment. As the month progresses, stakeholders will continue to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of this significant initiative.

Register online for Yuva Sangam Phase-V be an ambassador for your state

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: Thousands of youth across India stand a chance to represent their states/Union Territories by participating in Yuva Sangam, a unique initiative launched by the Ministry of Education under the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) programme. This is the 5th phase of Yuva Sangam and online registrations are open till 21st October, 2024. Interested candidates in the age group of 18-30 years, mainly students, NSS/NYKS volunteers, employed/self-employed persons, etc. may register through the YUVA SANGAM portal before the deadline. Off campus youth, including those enrolled for online courses, in skilling institutions etc are also urged to register.

"It is an exciting opportunity for students and young professionals to learn about the country, its people and even about themselves through this transformative journey of over 5-7 days. Yuva Sangam allows participants to experience the diversity of India first-hand, recognise the cultural-social similarities and challenges, and develop inclusive solutions to address problems or tap opportunities through their professional/academic areas of expertise,"

said a senior officer of the Ministry of Education.

The motive is to deepen ties between India's vast regions through exposure and understanding and this initiative will play a critical role in nation building by nurturing a next generation of citizens who are aware and empathetic.

The idea of a sustained and structured cultural connect between people of different regions was mooted by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during the Rashtriya Ekta Divas held on 31st October 2015 to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. To crystallise this idea, the EBSB programme was launched on 31st October 2016. The origins and evolution of EBSB along with activities, special initiatives and campaigns organised under the programme are available in the e-Book (<https://ekbharat.gov.in/JourneySoFarCampaign/index.html>)

Through Yuva Sangam tours, participants will deep dive into local heritage, geography, development landmarks and recent achievements of their paired states. Multi-dimensional exposure will be encouraged in five broad areas - the 5 Ps viz; Paryatan (Tourism), Parampara (Traditions), Pragati (Development), Paraspar

Sampark (People-to-people connect), and Prodyogiki (Technology).

The initiative aligns with key themes in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 by focusing on experiential learning and imbibing knowledge of the rich diversity of India on a first-hand basis. It is an ongoing educational cum cultural exchange with celebration of diversity at its core wherein participants gain an immersive experience of diverse facets of life, natural landmarks, development landmarks, engineering and architectural marvels, recent achievements, and the opportunity to interact and deeply engage with the local youth in the host State/UT.

Twenty eminent institutions across India have been identified for Phase V of Yuva Sangam during which participants from these states/UTs, led by the nodal higher education institute (HEI) of the state/UT, respectively, will be visiting their paired state/UTs.

The previous phases of Yuva Sangam have witnessed massive enthusiasm with registrations crossing 44,000 in the last Phase. Till date, around 5,000 youth across India have participated in more than 110 tours in various phases of Yuva Sangam (including the pilot phase in 2022).

JALSHAKTIDEPARTMENT, JAMMU

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) CITY DIVISION NO-1, JAMMU

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E-Mail:- xenphecit1@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER E-NITo.JS/PHECD-I/24 of 2024-25

For and on behalf of The Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Jammu, of J&K Union Territory, E-Tender (Item Rate Based) is invited by the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1, Jammu, from approved and eligible contractor of appropriate class registered with UT of Jammu and Kashmir/ other UT's or State Govt./CPWD/MES registered firms/contractors under two cover system, Cover 1 comprising of technical bid and cover 2 comprising of financial bid for the following work:-

S. No.	Name of work	Cost Tender (In Rs)	Cost of Tender document Fees (In Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit	Class of Contractor	Time of Completion
1	Improvement of water supply in Kamal Nagar area nearby behind MD Resort and around in Keran section	Rs.7.26 lacs	Rs.500/-	Rs. 14520/-	A to D	90 days
2	Providing water supply line in uncovered area of Keran village near Shamshan Ghat in Keran section	Rs.14.90 Lacs	Rs.1000/-	Rs.29800/-	A to D	90 days
3	Improvement of water supply in Rama Event lane C/o Makhan Lal Bhat ward no.65	Rs.1.22 lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.2440/-	A to D	30 days
4	Laying of pipe in uncovered area ward no 61 from Bakery valve at lane no.3 Tomal	Rs.3.34 lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.6680/-	A to D	30 days
5	Improvement of water supply to Adrash nagar Lane no.5,5A at Bantalab	Rs.4.16 lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.8320/-	A to D	30 days
6	Improvement of water supply to Ganga nagar sec-3 ,4,6 Bantalab	Rs.6.40 lacs	Rs.500/-	Rs.12800/-	A to D	30 days
7	Improvement of water supply to Mohalla vasuki Vihar near Royal Gym in Gujjar Moahlla Gurah Brahmana Bantalab	Rs.0.53 lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.1060/-	A to D	15 days

Position of funds : Approved

1. Date of publishing:-15/10/2024 (1800Hrs)
2. Bid documents can be seen and downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in from 15/10/2024 (1800Hrs) onwards.
3. The bids shall be uploaded on the website www.jktenders.gov.in from 15/10/2024 (1800Hrs) to 30/10/2024 upto (1200Hrs).
4. The complete bidding process shall be online. Sd/-

No:PHECD-I/ 3116-21 DIP/J-5642/24

Dated:- 15-10-2024

Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) City Division No-1
Jammu

EDITORIAL

MSP FOR
RABI CROPS

Minimum Support Prices (MSP) play a pivotal role in India's agricultural landscape, particularly for Rabi crops—those sown in winter and harvested in spring. By ensuring that farmers receive a guaranteed price for their produce, MSP acts as a safety net against market fluctuations and price volatility. This mechanism is essential for promoting the cultivation of various crops, including wheat, barley, mustard, peas, and chickpeas, which are vital not only for food security but also for the livelihoods of millions of farmers across the country.

The determination of MSP is guided by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACPC), which evaluates several factors, including the cost of production, market demand and supply, and prevailing market trends. The government sets the MSP to encourage farmers to invest in better farming practices and higher-quality inputs. This assurance of a stable income allows farmers to cultivate Rabi crops with confidence, thereby contributing to national food security and supporting the rural economy.

For the 2023-24 agricultural year, the government has set MSPs for key Rabi crops at Rs 2,125 per quintal for wheat, Rs 1,735 for barley, Rs 5,450 for mustard, Rs 5,200 for chickpeas, and Rs 4,700 for peas. These prices reflect an increase from the previous year, illustrating the government's commitment to enhancing farmer incomes. By providing these price guarantees, the MSP framework not only aids individual farmers but also stabilizes the broader rural economy, encouraging spending in local markets.

Despite its advantages, the implementation of MSP is fraught with challenges. Many farmers, particularly in remote areas, lack awareness of MSP provisions, limiting their ability to benefit from this safety net. Additionally, market conditions can sometimes lead to prices falling below the MSP, putting farmers in a precarious position. Moreover, inadequate storage and procurement infrastructure can exacerbate post-harvest losses, further undermining the effectiveness of the MSP system.

Regional disparities also pose a significant challenge. While some states have robust procurement mechanisms in place, others lag behind, leading to uneven access to MSP benefits. This inconsistency can create frustration and disillusionment among farmers, particularly those in less-developed areas. Critics argue that while MSP is a valuable tool, it can inadvertently lead to the overproduction of certain crops, overshadowing the importance of diversifying agricultural practices.

In conclusion, Minimum Support Prices for Rabi crops are a critical component of India's agricultural policy, providing essential support to farmers and promoting food security. However, addressing ongoing challenges such as awareness, infrastructure, and regional disparities is crucial for maximizing the effectiveness of MSP. By continuing to evolve and strengthen the MSP framework, India can work towards a more resilient agricultural economy that benefits both farmers and the broader community.

By: Omkar Dattatray

It is so good that finally democracy has again set its foot in the turbulent political waters of Jammu and Kashmir. J&K which has the distinction of being the crown of India has been revisited by democracy after a long gape of ten years and it is really a matter of pride, satisfaction, encouragement and win of the alienated people of the Jammu and Kashmir. Now that the democracy has again revisited the mountainous region of Jammu and Kashmir, the political parties of both NC-Congress alliance which are now ruling JK and the opposition party BJP which has got the mandate to perform the role of the effective and stable as well as strong opposition should both play their role and part so that democracy and its experiment will not only work but grow, thrive, flourish and function for meeting the problems, concerns, needs and above all genuine aspirations of the people of two divisions of the UT that is Jammu and Kashmir valley. People of the Himalayan region have been anxiously and eagerly waiting for the return of democracy which era has now revisited the UT after a long pause. Finally the long lull and wait has come to an end and the assembly polls were held successfully with free and fair manner. The people of J & K have taken active part in the polls for the first time unexpectedly and unprecedentedly and have this time trusted NC-Congress pre poll alliance and have given them the mandate to rule J & K. The people of the sensitive Jammu and Kashmir have played their role and part by voting in large numbers never before and have reposed their trust in NC-Congress alliance for forming the coalition government and also have voted for BJP so

that it will perform the effective role of a strong, stable, effective and viable opposition which is a must for the successful functioning of a democracy. The gullible people of the UT have done their duty by exercising their right of adult franchise and now it is the turn of NC-Congress government to perform and deliver best for the people of Jammu and Kashmir and come to the expectation of the people. Now NC legislature party leader who is also the vice president of NC and the chief minister designate has taken the oath of office and secrecy on 16 October 2014 Wednesday in the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir. LG Manoj Sinha has administered the oath of office and secrecy to Omar Abdullah as the chief minister and to the other ministers in a glittering function at SKICC at the banks of river Jehlum which is now the witness to the transition of power to the first democratic and popular government since 2014. The new democratic government of NC-Congress should sit together and concentrate to perform, deliver and do good for the people of both regions of Jammu and the valley irrespective of who voted for them and in this lies the good of both the rulers and the ruled. The litmus test for the new popular government is its coming up to the expectation of the people who have voted them to power. Omar government should give priority to the fulfilling mundane promises and assurances given to the electorate. It should first of all sincerely try to address the issues of water, uninterrupted electricity, good schooling, hygiene, health, good roads which are the major issues confronting the people of J&K. Besides, the people should get some relief from skyrocketing prices of all essential goods and services as well as the provision of

employment to the youth. The maiden government of Omar should press for the political issues later on as he should not take cudgels with the LG and also with the centre government. LG is the constitutional head of the UT and it is incumbent upon the elected chief minister to function in a cordial manner and respect and revere the LG's post and in the present case he is the fatherly figure and Omar should take advice and suggestions from him to govern the UT so that the issues of the people are addressed on a priority basis. Omar should not do any sort of confrontation with the centre government but function in the spirit of federalism and unitary character of our constitution. The new chief minister should cooperate with the centre government and try to get enormous allocations and funds from the Modi government which is in the interests of the J&K. There is utmost need to keep the political issues of article 370, 35 A and other such issues in the back burner and start the new inning on a positive and happy note and not begin with confrontation. No doubt article 370's revival is the part of NC's poll manifesto but it should be taken with the centre government at last. So far as the issue of restoration of statehood to JK is concerned, the GOI has made it clear in uncertain and unambiguous language that Modi government will restore the statehood to Jammu and Kashmir at an appropriate time and so Omar dispensation should give reasonable timeframe to the centre government for restoring the full statehood which is the constitutional and democratic right of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Government and the political executive that is the CM Omar and his team of ministers should appreciate the stark reality the central

government is committed to restore the full statehood with all provisions and guarantees as well as eighties. Sooner or later the GOI will give back the statehood to J&K and thus no confrontation on this important issues should be made as it will harm the interests of the people instead of resolving the issues of the people. People need power, roads, jobs and civic amenities and to tread the beaten path will do more harm than good to the people. JK people had been lamenting and silently outpouring their dismay and discontent on down-sizing of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcating it into two UT's of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and also on stripping them of the special status by abrogation of controversial Article 370. The new government should do nothing in haste and hurry for which it will have to repent later. It is good and in the favor of the people here that maximum funds and finances should be sought and received and the generous funds and finances will come from Delhi only when there are cordial relations between the UT's government and the centre. In short the democracy has revisited JK and now it is the duty and responsibility of treasury benches and the opposition to play their role well. People of JK should also play their part so that democracy which has arrived to JK after a long gap of ten years will flourish, thrive and function so that people's lives will shine by addressing their mundane issues and problems. Hats off to democracy!

(The author is a columnist, social and KP activist)

Northern India Face yet Another Year of Deteriorating air quality

By: Vijay GarG

Without swift and sustained efforts, northern India would face yet another year of deteriorating air quality, leaving millions to grapple with bad air quality.

The Supreme Court has taken a strong stance against the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) for its failure to control stubble burning, a major contributor to air pollution in Delhi-NCR. The court's rebuke, delivered during a hearing on October 3, emphasised the need for effective ground-level interventions and questioned why the Commission had not implemented any provisions of the relevant Act to curb pollution from crop residue burning. Stubble burning, especially in the northern states of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, has been a major environmental challenge for years.

Farmers often resort to burning crop residue after harvesting paddy and wheat due to the increasing mechanisation of farming, the use of combined harvesters, a shortage of labour, and rising labour costs. This practice, prevalent in October and November following the paddy harvest, results in the release of large amounts of particulate matter into the atmosphere, contributing to the hazardous air quality in Delhi-NCR.

The Supreme Court's criticism of the CAQM reflects a broader frustration over the Commission's inability to effectively tackle this issue. Despite being set up three years ago to address pollution in the National Capital Region and surrounding areas, the CAQM has been criticised for its slow pace and lack of tangible outcomes. The court particularly highlighted that the Commission meets only once every three months, a frequency deemed inadequate for address-

ing a recurring crisis like stubble burning.

Moreover, the Commission has issued only 82 directives since its inception, a number that the court described as insufficient to deal with the scale of the problem. A significant concern raised by the Supreme Court is the lack of adequate staffing within the pollution control boards of Delhi-NCR and other affected states, including Uttar Pradesh. The court ordered that these vacant posts be filled by April 30, 2025, to improve monitoring and enforcement capabilities. Effective staffing is critical for implementing measures on the ground, particularly when dealing with farmers who rely on burning crop residue as a quick and cost-effective way to clear their fields.

Despite repeated interventions from both the National Green Tribunal (NGT) and the Supreme Court, stubble burning incidents continue to surge. Last year alone, more than 33,000 incidents of stubble burning were recorded in Punjab, even after explicit instructions to engage with farmers to explore alternatives. The lack of a coordinated effort between the state governments and the CAQM has only exacerbated the pollution crisis during the winter months.

Turning Stubble into a Resource: While the focus remains on the failures of the CAQM and the continued challenges in states like Punjab, Uttar Pradesh has emerged as a notable example of how stubble can be managed more sustainably. The state has successfully implemented initiatives that transform stubble into an energy resource and natural fertiliser, benefiting both the environment and the agricultural community.

The key to this transformation has been the establishment of Compressed Biogas (CBG) plants that convert crop residue into energy and high-quality compost. This

approach has not only addressed environmental concerns but has also created an additional income stream for farmers, who sell stubble as raw material for the CBG process. In this way, stubble has shifted from being a burden to becoming a valuable asset in Uttar Pradesh's rural economy. As of last year, Uttar Pradesh led the country in CBG production, with ten operational plants. Currently, 24 CBG units are active, and another 93 are under construction. The state aims to have more than 100 CBG plants operational soon, a goal endorsed by Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri. During a March 2024 announcement, he highlighted the state's plan to double its bio-coal and biodiesel production by 2025. The success of CBG production in Uttar Pradesh has been bolstered by the Uttar Pradesh State Bio-Energy Policy 2022, which offers various incentives for establishing bio-CNG and CBG units using agricultural waste.

The policy aims to set up CBG plants in every district, providing local solutions for managing stubble while promoting energy self-sufficiency. A significant milestone in this journey was the inauguration of a CBG plant in Dhuriyapar, Gorakhpur, on March 8, 2023, by Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The plant, built for Rs 165 crore, processes 200 metric tonnes of straw, 20 metric tonnes of press mud, and 10 metric tonnes of cattle dung daily. It produces 20 metric tonnes of biogas and 125 metric tonnes of organic manure, contributing to higher agricultural yields while reducing dependency on chemical fertilisers. This initiative allows farmers to diversify their income sources and play a crucial role in the energy sector. By reducing the practice of stubble burning, the state is making

strides in environmental protection. The Yogi Adityanath government has expressed confidence that the enhanced production of bio-coal and biodiesel will help reduce air pollution in the region over the next five years.

The Supreme Court's critique of the CAQM underscores the urgency of finding a balanced approach to stubble burning that respects both environmental concerns and the practical challenges faced by farmers. Uttar Pradesh's model of converting stubble into a resource could serve as a blueprint for other states grappling with similar issues. However, the broader challenge remains: implementing such solutions at scale requires consistent policy support, adequate resources, and a willingness to engage with farmers directly. The court's directive for the CAQM to improve its approach and for state governments to fill vacant posts by 2025 is a step towards accountability.

Yet, the real test will lie in translating these directives into action before another winter brings the familiar, suffocating haze back to the skies of Delhi-NCR. The question remains whether the CAQM, in partnership with state governments, can adapt and adopt innovative solutions like those seen in UP. Without swift and sustained efforts, the region risks facing another year of deteriorating air quality, leaving millions to grapple with the health consequences of inaction.

(Vijay GarG Retired Principal Educational columnist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab)

FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2024

In order to clear extra rush of passengers during Deepawali and Chhath Puja Festival, Northern Railway, in association with other zonal railway, has planned to run the following Festival Special Trains as per schedule given below:-

LIST OF FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS ORIGINATING/TERMINATING IN NORTHERN RAILWAY

Table with columns: Spt. Train No., Station From, Station to, Freq. Day, Period. Lists various festival special trains like 02252, 02291, 02278, etc., with their routes and schedules.

LIST OF FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS PASSING THROUGH NORTHERN RAILWAY NETWORK

Table with columns: Spt. Train No., Station From, Station to, Freq. Day, Period. Lists festival special trains passing through the network, such as 02273, 02278, 02282, etc.

Main table listing all festival special trains with columns: Spt. Train No., Station From, Station to, Freq. Day, Period. Includes trains like 09647, 09688, 02423, etc., with detailed schedules.

For any kind of information such as arrival/departure timings and stoppages enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NRES App. Includes Northern Railway logo and website URL.

Ankur Rathee, who is seen in the series Reeta Sanyal, believes the universe works on the law of abundance

On screen in the Disney+ Hotstar series Reeta Sanyal, they might be competing for the same woman. But off screen, the bonhomie of Ankur Rathee and Manik Papneja is more than palpable. As Manik plays Watson to Adah Sharma's titular part of a Sherlock Holmes, a lawyer-detective, and Ankur steps into the shoes of a cop and provides romantic interest, they are not just gung-ho about the series but also about each other's talent.

A mutual admiration club? An amusing one too, as Ankur puts it, "As a rule, we take our jobs too seriously and get involved in outperforming each other. But Manik has this felicity to bring the fun part of being an actor to life." With many scenes together, there was no feeling of insecurity when they were on the sets. Rather, Ankur, seen in the popular series Undekhi in which Surya Sharma walked away with lion's share of praise for his portrayal of Rinku paaji, is not in the least bit envious of his co-actors.

On the contrary, when he observes the career graph of his colleagues, be it Triptii Dimri's meteoric rise or others, he is heartened by the fact that if they can reach these heights it means, "Someone else's success is further proof that it's possible. Insecurity comes from the scarcity concept. The universe works on greater law of abundance. I would be worried if no one was succeeding."

How the Princeton University graduate found himself on this road and landed in the world of



entertainment is a long story. Put succinctly, its passion that made him quit a cushy job in the US to pursue his dream. Has it been worth the while? Indeed, the role that would make him a household name is still awaited. But with a variety of characters behind him, from a political aide in The Tashkent Files to a gay activist in Inside Edge to a lover boy in Four More Shots Please!, whenever and wherever he goes, he is instantly recognisable. And a greater feeling of elation it is for, "I don't know which character is resonating with which fan." What makes him say yes to a part is certainly not its length. Else he would not have agreed to a woman-centric Reeta Sanyal. He wants to be part of stories that make people, smile, laugh, cry and reconsider life choices, and, above all, it is seen by many.

Does it hurt when he gets a meaty role as in Shehzada and is lauded too, but the film bombs at the box-office? He says, "I am not in a position where I have to shoulder the burden of a movie's hit or flop status." Cinema, he believes, is a collaborative effort. "And it's only the nature of the beast that actors end up being its face and people confuse an actor with the character."

For those making the same mistake and believing his Daman in Undekhi has some sort of semblance with his real journey of a man coming back home from foreign lands, he quips, "Oh, that's a very broad stroke. I didn't grow up with guns in my house, will never navigate my relationship with my wife as he does with Teji. But, yes, we all learn from our real-life characters and use our

real experiences in acting."

Whether OTT medium is still as exciting when he started out, he agrees that the bubble may have burst to some extent. But, he also reasons, "It's not as if outside of the web content we are making superlative cinema." Besides, even today there are enough choices and parts in web shows which can show the way to actors like him, who don't come from a filmy background.

Sans a godfather in the industry, in Mumbai he did find support and encouragement in fellow Haryanvi Randeep Hooda, 'a phenomenal actor'. He explains, "He is a Jat and so am I, and as a community we do look out for each other."

More than eager to help aspirants, however, he cautions his brethren from Jatland, "Come to tinsel town only if you just can't do anything else. If this art form is what you love the most in your life and can't live without, only then join this profession." That explains his reason for turning an actor, but what possibly can be ours for watching Reeta Sanyal?

In unison he and Manik chip in, "For, stylistically, it's like no other, wacky and fun, imagination fuelled fiction; it has all the masala of a Bollywood film packed in a series." Quite a team they are, even when they are battling for the woman in absentia, the lead Adah Sharma? In the series based on Amit Khan's eponymous character of book series, Adah's Reeta might be looking out for bad guys, but in real life she sure has good ones for company.

Rakul Preet Singh suffers serious gym injury



Actress Rakul Preet Singh, who will be next seen in 'De De Pyaar De 2', recently suffered a serious injury. An 80 kg deadlift during her workout session resulted in an injury to her back. The actress has been on bed rest for more than a week now and is said to be recuperating steadily.

A well-placed source

said, "Rakul has been on bed rest for the last few days and the situation has been quite scary. It all started on the morning of October 5, when Rakul was doing her workout. She did an 80 kg deadlift without wearing a belt, which resulted in a spasm on her back."

However, the actress pushed herself and still

kept resulting in the aggravation of injury following which she has been suggested bed rest by medical experts.

The source further mentioned, "Despite this, she continued to shoot for 'De De Pyaar De 2' taking a muscle relaxant in order to fulfill her commitment, for 2 consecutive days. After 3 days of bearing the pain she visited the physios, and each time the pain would be back after 3-4 hours. She continued the physio but on October 10, an hour before her birthday party, she went through the worst situation."

The injury had resulted in an excruciating situation wherein her L4, L5, and S1 nerves got jammed. Soon after her BP dropped, she broke into a sweat and she was made to sleep on the bed.

"It was quite an eventful birthday with muscle relaxants and injections given to her. It's been five days now since she's recovering and it's a slow and steady process. Rakul is someone who always pushes her body. Instead of resting, she continued shooting, which resulted in a drastic situation. But this is a lesson learnt and hopefully, she will recover soon," the source added.

Priyanka Chopra brings 'Bollywood dreams' to life in the Swiss Alps

Global celebrity and Bollywood star Priyanka Chopra Jonas recently took to her Instagram to share a video of herself swirling in the snow to Sridevi's iconic song 'Chandni O Meri Chandni'. Dancing in the snow clad Swiss Alps, the actress can be seen wearing a blue body hugging dress with a long jacket. She captioned the video, "Living my Bollywood dream in Crans Montana, Alpes, Switzerland."

In addition to the video, Priyanka shared several pictures from her ad shoot in the Alps. One shows her in the same blue dress, while another captures her sitting by a window, enjoying the scenic view. She also posted a behind-the-scenes video from the shoot, braving a blizzard, with the caption, "Just a little BTS from my campaign shoot in Switzerland. Amongst the actual blizzard. But the fun we had."

On the work front,



Priyanka has wrapped up filming 'The Bluff', directed by Frank Flowers, and is currently working on 'Citadel Season 2'. Her production venture, 'Paani', a Marathi film addressing environmental issues, is set for release soon.

Chopra was in India recently to launch

the trailer for Paani. She debuted in acting with the Tamil film, 'Tamizhan'; before making her Bollywood debut in 'The Hero: Love Story of a Spy'. She gained recognition with her performance in Andaaz, starring alongside Akshay Kumar and Kareena Kapoor.

Sanjay Dutt's powerful revelation: Reflecting on his struggle and triumph over years of drug addiction!

Sanjay Dutt, a renowned figure in Bollywood, has been candid about his battle with drug addiction. After struggling for nearly four decades, the actor has successfully moved past this difficult phase in his life.

In a recent interview with agency, the 65-year-old actor shared how his journey began. He started using drugs during his college years, "It was just the 'in' thing then. Somebody just said to try it, and that was it."

During this tumultuous period, he primarily used cocaine and heroin, admitting that he had experimented with "every drug in the book." This took a severe toll on both his physical and mental health.

At the agency Conclave in 2016, Dutt recounted a haunting incident involving Sunil Dutt, he recalled being called to his father's office and experiencing a disorienting moment: "I arrived, and when I walked in, he was sitting across from me. Suddenly, everything hit me. I couldn't comprehend what he was saying; his words came out slowly, and all I could manage was a feeble 'Ji, Ji.' Then I noticed a flickering wick from his head, resembling a candle,



and I saw him slowly deteriorating like wax melting away. In a panic, I leaped toward him, trying to fix his face and extinguish that flame."

Sanjay Dutt recalled a pivotal moment that led him to quit drugs. He remembered a time when he had taken heroin and

then fallen asleep. When he finally woke up, he felt hungry and asked his servant to get him something to eat. To his shock, his servant began to cry, saying, "You have woken up after two days. The house has gone wild, and people are worried."

Looking at himself in the mirror,

Dutt noticed the signs of drug puffiness and realized he was on a dangerous path. Understanding the severity of his situation, he knew he needed help and told his father, "I need help."

After this moment of clarity, Dutt was admitted to Breach Candy Hospital for three weeks before heading to the U.S. for rehabilitation. He successfully overcame his addiction and described a significant moment upon his return to India: "No one knew I was coming back after two years. When I landed, my servant informed me that someone had come to see me. It was my drug peddler. He said, 'I've got some new stuff; you can keep it.' In that moment, I faced a choice: to either take it or send him away. I chose to send him away. That day, I knew I had won the battle."

On the personal front, Sanjay Dutt is happily married to Maanayata Dutt, and they have two children together. His most recent film, Ghudchadi, features co-stars Parth Samthan, Khushali Kumar, and Raveena Tandon. The movie premiered on August 9 and is currently available for streaming on Jio Cinema.

'One Direction's' Liam Payne falls from hotel balcony, dies at 31

Former One Direction singer Liam Payne, 31, whose chart-topping British boy band generated a global following of swooning fans, was found dead Wednesday after falling from a hotel balcony in Buenos Aires, local officials said today.

Buenos Aires police said in a statement that Payne fell from the third floor of the Casa Sur Hotel in the trendy Palermo neighbourhood of Argentina's capital, resulting in "extremely serious injuries". Medics confirmed his death on the spot, the statement said.

Pablo Policicchio, the communications director for the Buenos Aires Security Ministry, said in a statement to The Associated Press that Payne "had jumped from the balcony of his room".

Police rushed to the hotel in response to an emergency call just after 5 pm local time, he said, warning of an "aggressive man who could be under the influence of drugs or alcohol".

The hotel manager can be heard on a 911 call obtained by the agency saying they had "a guest who is overwhelmed with

drugs and alcohol ... He's destroying the entire room and, well, we need you to send someone, please." The manager's voice became more anxious as the call went on, noting the room had a balcony.

Alberto Crescenti, head of the state emergency medical system, told Argentina's Todo Noticias TV channel that authorities were investigating the circumstances of his death and conducting an autopsy.

Payne had been vocal about struggling with alcoholism, posting a video in July 2023 to his YouTube channel where he said he had been sober for six months after receiving treatment.

Representatives for Payne did not immediately return emails and calls.

Dozens of One Direction fans flocked from across Buenos Aires to the Casa Sur Hotel after the news broke, forming lines that spilled into the cordoned-off street outside the hotel where police stood sentinel.

Forensic investigators were seen exiting the hotel, from where Payne's body was removed around three hours after the fall. Young women filming with their cell

phones expressed shock and heartbreak as a makeshift memorial with rows of candles and bouquets quickly grew outside the hotel. "I didn't think he was going to die so young," 21-year-old Isabella Milesi told the agency.

Payne was one of five members of One Direction, which formed when they each auditioned for the British singing competition series "The X Factor" in 2010, two years after Payne's first attempt to get on the show. At 16 the second time around, Payne sang Michael Buble's version of "Cry Me a River", appearing nervous at the start but warming up with the audience's cheers and applause.

After each singer failed to make it through the competition as solo acts, Simon Cowell and his fellow judges combined Payne, Zayn Malik, Harry Styles, Niall Horan and Louis Tomlinson into what would become one of the most successful boy bands — even though they lost the competition.

Each member had their own persona, with Payne — who hailed from Wolverhampton, a city in the West Midlands

region of England — being known as the responsible one.

The band became known for their pop sound and romantic hits like "What Makes You Beautiful", "Night Changes" and "Story of My Life".

Payne had prominent solos on songs including "Stole My Heart" and "Change Your Ticket", co-writing several of the band's hits. They had six Top 10 hits on the Billboard charts by the time they disbanded in 2016 and a highly loyal fan base, known as "Directioners", many of whom were teen girls. "I've always loved One Direction since I was little," said 18-year-old Juana Relh, another fan outside Payne's hotel. "To see that he died and that there will never be another reunion of the boys is unbelievable, it kills me." With his meteoric rise to fame, Payne had said that it took some time to adjust to the public eye.

"I don't think you can ever deal with that, it's all a bit crazy for us to see that people get in that sort of state of mind about us and what we do," he said in a 2013 interview with the AP after recounting an experience

where a fan was in a state of shock upon meeting him.

After the group's dissolution, Payne — like each of his erstwhile bandmates — pursued a solo career, shifting toward EDM and hip-hop. His 2017 single "Strip That Down", featuring Quavo, reached the Billboard Top 10, and stayed on the charts for several months. He put out an album "LP1" in 2019, and his last release — a single called "Teardrops" — was released in March.

Payne had a 7-year-old son, Bear Grey Payne, with his former girlfriend, the musician Cheryl who was known as Cheryl Cole when she performed with Girls Aloud. She was an "X Factor" judge during One Direction's season, although their relationship began years later.

Payne was previously engaged to Maya Henry, from August 2020 to early 2022. Henry released a novel earlier this year that she said was based on their relationship.

In addition to his son, he is survived by his parents, Geoff and Karen Payne, and his two older sisters, Ruth and Nicola.

PM Modi highlights Pali recognition as tribute to Lord Buddha's heritage

Criticises past governments for neglecting India's cultural heritage post-Independence

NEW DELHI, Oct 17 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised the significance of recognising Pali as a classical language during the International Abhidhamma Divas event on Thursday and said that this recognition honours India's rich cultural legacy, particularly that of Lord Buddha.

PM Modi criticised past governments for neglecting India's cultural heritage post-Independence, saying, "While every nation associates its heritage with its identity, India was left far behind."

He pointed out that both historical invaders and those with a "slave mindset" contributed to



erasing India's identity. "The world plagued by instability and insecurity can find solutions in the teachings of Lord

Buddha," he said, adding that peace should be sought not through "yuddh" (war) but Buddha's teachings.

Highlighting the importance of Pali, Modi said, "It is everyone's responsibility to preserve the language, which is no longer in common usage." He also noted that the recognition of Pali and Marathi as classical languages reflects India's transformation towards self-respect and confidence.

During the event, PM Modi visited an exhibition showcasing the life and teachings of Lord Buddha, further underscoring the relevance of Buddha's philosophies in contemporary society.

Nayab Singh Saini takes oath as Haryana CM for second consecutive term



CHANDIGARH, Oct 17 (Agencies): Nayab Singh Saini took oath as the Chief Minister of Haryana on Thursday, days after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

secured an unprecedented third term in the state, winning 48 seats in the 90-member assembly.

PM Modi, Union Home Minister Amit

Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and other top BJP leaders in attendance at the ceremony.

Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya administered the oath of office and secrecy to Saini, who has become the Chief Minister for the second time.

Ambala Cantt MLA Anil Vij, Israna MLA Krishan Lal Panwar and Badshahpur MLA Rao Narbir Singh were among those administered the oath of office by the Governor.

Road accident in Mathura claims lives of four, including two toddlers

MATHURA, Oct 17 (Agencies): In a tragic incident, four individuals from Bihar, including two toddler girls, were killed and four others injured when a pickup truck they were travelling in met with an accident early on Thursday.

The accident occurred near Nagaria Satbisa on the Kosi Shergarh road, within the Kosi Kalan police station limits. The deceased have been identified as Gauri Devi (35), her daughter Komal (2), Kunti Devi (28), and her daughter Priyanka (2).

The injured victims,

Kajal (17), Kumari Jira (19), Kumari Mana (21), and Gagan (3), were initially rushed to the community health centre in Kosi Kalan. However, their condition worsened, necessitating their transfer to the district hospital for further treatment.

According to Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Shailesh Kumar Pandey, the pickup truck, which was carrying labourers, crashed into an electric pole after one of its wires snapped. In a panic to escape the situation, the labourers jumped off the vehi-

cle. "The driver tried to reverse the pickup truck, which led to the casualties. Tragically, the victims were run over by the vehicle, killing four and injuring four others," Pandey stated.

The victims, hailing from Gaya district in Bihar, were en route to Hodal in Haryana's Palwal district to work in a brick kiln. They had travelled to Aligarh by train before boarding the pickup truck for Palwal.

The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination, police confirmed.

Consensus in MVA on 200 out of 288 assembly seats in Maharashtra: Sharad Pawar

PUNE, Oct 17 (Agencies): NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Thursday said the three Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) allies have so far arrived at a consensus on 200 assembly seats in Maharashtra out of the total 288 for the next month's elections.

Speaking to reporters at Karad in Maharashtra's Satara district, he said the results of Haryana polls, where the Congress suffered a drubbing at the hands of the BJP, will not have any bearing on the elections in Maharashtra.

"I am not directly involved in the seat-sharing discussions.



(NCP-SP state unit chief) Jayant Patil is representing our party in the talks. As per the information he shared, an understanding has been reached on approximately 200 out of the total 288 seats," he said in response to a

question. Asked about which seats in Satara district that the NCP (SP) will demand, he said a decision on seat-sharing will be taken by Patil.

Elections in Maharashtra will be held on November 20, while the counting of votes will take place on November 23.

The MVA, comprising the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT), Congress and Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) is fighting against the ruling Mahayuti alliance of Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Ajit Pawar-helmed NCP.

This is the first assembly election in the state after the Shiv Sena and NCP parties split in June 2022 and July 2023 respectively.

Responding to a query about the INDIA bloc's strategy after the Congress's defeat in the Haryana assembly elections, Pawar said the BJP was ruling that state and it managed to retain power.

"We are studying Haryana (results), but at the same time look at the results of Jammu and Kashmir (polls). I do not think that it (Haryana results) will have any bearing on the state's (Maharashtra's) elections. As far as Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, the world community gives more attention to it and its poll results are more important for the country," he said.

25 Lakh contract for Salman Khan hit, AK-47 from Pak: Chargesheet

MUMBAI, Oct 17 (Agencies): A contract of 25 lakh was taken out to kill actor Salman Khan near his farmhouse in Maharashtra's Panvel, a chargesheet filed by the Navi Mumbai Police stated.

In the chargesheet that named five people, police stated that the contract was taken out by the gang led by jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. The accused were preparing to buy state-of-the-art weapons AK 47, AK 92 and M 16 from Pakistan and the Turkish-made Zigana weapon, with which Punjabi singer Sidhu

Moosewala was killed. The accused had hired boys below 18 years of age to kill Salman Khan, all of whom are hiding in Pune, Raigad, Navi Mumbai, Thane and Gujarat.

About 60 to 70 people were keeping track of Salman Khan's movement, especially at his Bandra house, Panvel farmhouse and Goregaon Film City. Further, the plan to kill Salman Khan was hatched between August 2023 and April 2024, as per the chargesheet.

Investigation revealed that Sukkha, who was arrested from Haryana's

Panipat on Thursday, assigned the hit to the designated shooter Ajay Kashyap alias AK and four others involved in the conspiracy. A recce by Kashyap and his team led to the conclusion that owing to the actor's tight security and bulletproof vehicles, high-end weapons would be required to carry out the murder.

Sukkha contacted Pakistan-based arms dealer Dogar through video call, showing AK-47 and other advanced fire arms wrapped in a shawl, while negotiating the terms of the arms deal. Dogar agreed to

supply the weapons, while Sukkha agreed to make 50 percent advance payment and the remaining amount on delivery in India.

Police also found that all the shooters were waiting for a go-ahead from Canada-based gangster Goldie Brar and Lawrence Bishnoi's brother Anmol Bishnoi.

The chargesheet also details a plan made by the shooters to gather in Kanyakumari after shooting the 58-year-old actor, from where they would travel to Sri Lanka by boat and then to a country where Indian investigation agencies

could not reach them.

The conspiracy to target Salman Khan at his Panvel farmhouse was unearthed when the police was investigating the incident of firing outside his house in Bandra.

Meanwhile, security has been increased outside Salman Khan's Bandra residence following the killing of former minister and NCP leader Baba Siddique. The latter, a former MLA from Bandra and leader in Ajit Pawar's faction of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), was shot near Nirmal Nagar in Bandra.

Tripura man dies due to 'custodial torture', 5 cops detained

AGARTALA, Oct 17 (Agencies): A 26-year-old man, who was arrested on the charge of theft at Sabroom in South Tripura district, died in his residence because of alleged torture during police custody, an officer said on Thursday.

Five police personnel posted at Manubazar police station have been detained following complaints of torture by the victim's family, Sabroom SDPO Nityananda Sarkar said.

Angry locals staged a demonstration near the police station on Thursday demanding exemplary punishment of the police personnel who

"tortured the arrested person leading to his death".

They also put up a road blockade on the Agartala-Sabroom national highway at Manubazar.

Badal Tripura, a resident of Kaladepa, was captured by the local people for allegedly stealing rubber sheets from a godown on October 13 and later handed him over to the police after beating him up.

"Police arrested Badal Tripura, who was intoxicated and released him on the following day (October 14). On October 16, he died at home. The victim's family has lodged a complaint

alleging that Badal died of torture by two policemen and three special police officers," the SDPO said.

A case was registered against the five police personnel and detained them following the complaint, he said.

Sarkar said the post-mortem examination of the tribal man's body will be conducted by a team of doctors in the presence of an executive magistrate.

"Security has been beefed up in Manubazar police station following resentment among people over the death. Now, the situation is under control", he said.

18 more die after 'consuming illicit liquor' in Bihar, toll reaches 24

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar instructed authorities concerned to take stringent action against those involved in the illegal trade

PATNA, Oct 17 (Agencies): Eighteen more people lost their lives after allegedly consuming illicit liquor in dry Bihar's Siwan and Saran districts, taking the toll in the tragedy to 24, officials said on Thursday.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar instructed authorities concerned to take stringent action against those involved in the illegal trade and reminded people of ill effects of consuming spurious liquor.

The suspected hooch tragedy triggered a political blame game with opposition parties questioning the efficacy of the ban on sale and consumption of liquor, imposed by the Nitish Kumar government more than eight years ago.

"As many as twenty people in Maghar and Auriya panchayats in Siwan district

have so far died for consuming suspected illicit liquor," Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police, Saran range, Nilesh Kumar told PTI.

Four people in Ibrahimpur area under the jurisdiction of Mashrakh police station in Saran district also died under "mysterious circumstances", he added.

Locals, however, claimed that the four lost their lives after "consuming illicit liquor".

Both Siwan and Saran districts come under the jurisdiction of DIG, Saran range. According to local police officers, more than 25 people from both districts are battling for their lives at various hospitals in Siwan, Saran and Patna districts.

"At least seven people from Saran district have been referred to Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH) for better treat-



ment," the Saran district administration said in a statement issued on Thursday.

The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examinations and the exact cause of the incident can only be known after receiving the autopsy reports, the DIG said.

Villagers in Maghar and

Auriya panchayats alleged that the victims fell ill after consuming spurious liquor on Tuesday night.

Officials have not disclosed the identity of the deceased and those under treatment.

The administrations of both districts have suspended three chowkidars of Maghar, Auriya and Ibrahimpur

areas following the incident, another senior officer said on Thursday.

Another senior police officer said show cause notices have been issued to at least five police personnel.

Earlier in the day, the CM inquired about the progress of the investigation into the suspected hooch deaths in

Siwan and Saran.

According to a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office, the CM directed the Bihar Director General of Police (DGP) to personally monitor the situation and ensure that "strict action is taken against those involved in the crime". He also directed Department of Prohibition and Excise Secretary Vinod Singh Gunjyal and the Bihar Police ADG (Prohibition) to personally visit the areas where the incident took place and thoroughly investigate the matter. "The stringent action must be taken against the accused," the CMO directed the police.

Commenting on the incident, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, in a post on X, wrote, "Several people have been killed due to spurious liquor consumption...Dozens have lost their eyesight. Liquor

trade has been banned in Bihar but due to the nexus among ruling party leaders, police and mafia, liquor is available everywhere in the state." He also said, "So many people died but the chief minister did not even express condolences. Every day people in the state are dying due to spurious liquor consumption and increasing crime. Despite the ban, liquor is available in the state. This is a failure of the Home Department and the chief minister. Who is responsible for these murders?" The Bihar government imposed a total ban on sale and consumption of alcohol on 5 April, 2016.

The government recently admitted that more than 150 people have died due to consumption of illicit liquor after prohibition was imposed in the state in 2016.

Iran warns Israel of 'painful attack' in retaliation for missile attack

Fears of a wider Middle East conflict have grown as Israel plans its response to the October 1 missile attack carried out by Iran after Israeli airstrikes on Iranian-allied militants.

DUBAI/BEIRUT, Oct 17 (Agencies): The commander of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards warned Israel on Thursday against attacking the Islamic Republic in retaliation for a missile barrage as its arch-foe stepped up its offensive in Lebanon against Tehran-backed Hezbollah.

Fears of a wider Middle East conflict have grown as Israel plans its response to the October 1 missile attack carried out by Iran after Israeli airstrikes on Iranian-allied militants.

"We tell you (Israel) that if you commit any aggression against any point we will painfully attack the same point of yours," Hossain Salami said in a televised speech, adding that Iran could penetrate Israel's defences.

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin spoke to Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant on Wednesday about Israel's operations in Lebanon and Gaza, aiming to avert a regional war. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi landed in Cairo for talks with Egyptian officials as part of a Middle Eastern tour as tension builds.

The European Union held its first summit with Gulf states and issued a statement calling for calm: "We underscore the importance of diplomatic engagement with Iran — to pursue regional de-escalation," it said.

Israel shows no signs of



easing its military campaigns against Hezbollah in Lebanon after assassinating several of its leaders, and Hamas in Gaza, and it has vowed to punish Iran for its October 1 attack.

Qatar, which has mediated in talks aimed at securing a ceasefire in Gaza, said there had been no engagement with any parties for the last three to four weeks on the issue.

Israeli airstrikes killed 11 Palestinians in Gaza City on Thursday, medics said, while Israeli forces sent tanks into Jabalia in the north, where Palestinians and United Nations officials expressed alarm over shortages of food and medicine.

Residents of Jabalia said Israeli forces blew up clusters of houses from the air, by tank shells and by placing bombs in buildings before blowing them up remotely.

On its northern front in Lebanon, Israel has said it will not stop fighting a now weakened

Hezbollah before it can safely return its citizens to their homes near the Lebanese border and said any ceasefire negotiations will be held "under fire".

The Israeli military said on Thursday that over the past 24 hours it had killed 45 Hezbollah fighters in southern Lebanon, including a battalion commander, and seized many weapons.

ATTACK ON MUNICIPAL HEADQUARTERS

The mayor of a major town in south Lebanon was among 16 people killed on Wednesday when an Israeli airstrike destroyed its municipal headquarters in the biggest attack on an official Lebanese state building since the Israeli air campaign began.

Lebanese officials denounced the incident, which also wounded more than 50 people in Nabatieh, a provincial capital, saying it was proof that Israel's campaign against the Hezbollah armed group was now shifting to

target the Lebanese state.

The Israelis "intentionally targeted a meeting of the municipal council to discuss the city's service and relief situation" to aid people displaced by the Israeli campaign, caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati said.

Israel and Hezbollah have been fighting since the militant group began firing missiles at its arch-foe a year ago in support of the

Palestinian Islamist group Hamas in Gaza and the conflict has sharply escalated in recent weeks.

Israeli operations in Lebanon have killed at least 2,350 people over the last year, according to the health ministry, and more than 1.2 million people have been displaced.

The death toll does not distinguish between civilians and combatants but includes hundreds of women and children.

Around 50 Israelis, both soldiers and civilians, have been killed in the same period, according to Israel.

Abdelnaser, a man displaced from Beirut's southern suburbs, a Hezbollah stronghold, which Israel has repeatedly bombed, was on the waterfront early on Thursday morning.

"War has become normal for us. We know that every 10 years Lebanon gets built, and every 10 years it gets destroyed again," he said.

Vietnam death row tycoon awaits verdict in new trial



HO CHI MINH CITY, Oct 17 (Agencies): A Vietnamese property tycoon sentenced to death for fraud totalling \$27 billion arrived in court on Thursday to face a potential life sentence in a related trial on money laundering charges.

Property developer Truong My Lan was found guilty in April of swindling cash from the Saigon Commercial Bank (SCB) -- which prosecutors said she controlled -- in one of the biggest corruption cases in history, and sentenced to death.

Tens of thousands of people who had invested their savings in the bank lost money, shocking the communist nation and prompting rare protests from the victims.

On Thursday, Lan and 33 other defendants -- including her husband and niece -- were brought to court in Ho Chi Minh City in a convoy of police vans.

Wearing a face mask,

Lan sat at the front of the court flanked by two police officers to await the verdict after a four-week trial.

Prosecutors have called for a life sentence for Lan on charges of money laundering, illegal cross-border trafficking of cash, and fraud.

Around 36,000 people who bought bonds issued by SCB have been identified as victims of the fraud. Online noodle seller Nguyen Thi Huong told agency she wanted to die after losing \$20,000, her entire savings, in 2022. "When I learned that I had lost all the money I had deposited at SCB Bank, I felt like I was losing my mind," said Huong, 33.

She developed insomnia, her health deteriorated from stress and she no longer had money to send her children to extra classes, making them fall behind their peers, she said.

"I sat by my father's grave, and wished he

would take me with him in death," Huong said.

State media reported earlier that Lan and her associates stole around \$18 billion by taking assets from SCB between early 2018 and October 2022. Lan effectively owned a 90 percent stake in the bank.

Lan, chair of major real estate developer Van Thinh Phat, ordered her accomplices to withdraw cash and transfer it out of SCB's system, state media said.

She then hid the origins of the money and used it to settle debts between companies or transferred the money abroad for fake contracts.

Dozens of victims in the case held protests in central Hanoi as her latest trial started, demanding authorities help them get their money back.

Lan had apologised to the victims in court, according to state media, and said she was "not a bad person". She was given the death penalty in April after being found guilty of embezzling \$12.5 billion -- a verdict she is appealing, though no date has yet been announced for it.

Prosecutors said the total damages caused amounted to \$27 billion -- a figure equivalent to about six percent of Vietnam's gross domestic product in 2023.

Bangladesh court orders arrest warrant for ex-PM Sheikh Hasina

DHAKA, Oct 17 (Agencies): A Bangladeshi court on Thursday ordered an arrest warrant for exiled ex-leader Sheikh Hasina, who fled to India in August after she was toppled from power by a student-led revolution.

"The court has... ordered the arrest of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and to produce her in court on November 18," Mohammad Tajul Islam, chief prosecutor of Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal, told reporters on Thursday.

Hasina's 15-year rule saw widespread human rights abuses, including the mass detention and extrajudicial killings of her political opponents.

"Sheikh Hasina was at the helm of those who committed massacres, killings and crimes against humanity from July to August", Islam said, calling it a "remarkable day".



Hasina, 77, has not been seen in public since fleeing Bangladesh, and her last official whereabouts are at a military airbase near India's capital New Delhi.

Her presence in India has infuriated Bangladesh.

Dhaka has revoked her diplomatic passport, and the countries have a bilateral extradition treaty which would permit her to return to face criminal trial.

A clause in the treaty, however, says extradition might be refused if

the offence is of a "political character".

Hasina's government created the deeply contentious ICT in 2010 to probe atrocities during the 1971 independence war from Pakistan.

The United Nations and rights groups criticised its procedural shortcomings, and it became widely seen as a means for Hasina to eliminate political opponents.

Several cases accusing Hasina of orchestrating the "mass murder" of protesters are being probed by the court.

Human induced climate change behind flooding disasters in Nepal

PRADHAN KATHMANDU, Oct 17 (Agencies): World Weather Attribution, an international collaboration, has underscored the urgent need for Nepal to limit development in low-lying, riverside areas of the cities and scale up early warning and prompt action to avoid repeat of flooding disasters.

"Climate change was responsible for the extreme three day downpours in Nepal about 10 percent more intense," concluded the organization in its recently published report.

The flood and landslide triggered by heavy rain in Nepal in late September caused heavy loss to the country as it claimed at least 244 lives.

"The rainfall became 10 percent more intense by human-induced climate change," pointed out the report.

"Bursts of rainfall will become even more



heavier, risking more destructive floods until the world replaces fossil fuels with renewable sources of energy," warned the organization.

"Reducing development in flood-prone areas of cities will help protect people in Nepal from future floods," according to the report.

"The explosive monsoon rainfall that hit Nepal was increased by climate change," concludes the report.

and less deadly," remarked Mariam Zachariah, Researcher at the Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College, London.

"This study highlights how vulnerable Asia is to increasing downpours, in 2024 alone, our studies have uncovered the fingerprint of climate change on deadly floods in India, China, Taiwan, the UAE, Oman, and now Nepal," she pointed out.

The floods in Nepal followed three days of extreme rainfall starting September 26.

"Records were broken across central and eastern Nepal, with some weather stations recording more than 320mm on September 28 equivalent to about half of London's total annual rainfall," points out the report.

Limiting development in flood-prone urban

areas will save lives when floods occur in the future, the researchers pointed out.

The study was conducted by 20 researchers as part of the World Weather Attribution group, including scientists from universities and meteorological agencies in Nepal, India, Sweden, the United States and the United Kingdom.

"These floods turned the streets of Kathmandu into raging rivers."

"Clearly, climate change is no longer a distant threat in Asia," remarked Roshan Jha, Researcher at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay.

With every fraction of a degree of warming, the atmosphere can potentially hold more moisture, leading to much heavier downpours, and catastrophic floods like these.

Youngest female to climb 14 tallest peaks says novice climbers should be regulated

KATHMANDU, Oct 17 (Agencies): A British mountaineer who set the record as the youngest female to climb all the 14 tallest mountains in the world said Thursday that inexperienced climbers should not be allowed to climb the highest peaks because they run the risk of endangering their lives and others.

Adriana Brownlee, 23, climbed Mount Everest at 20 in 2021 and earlier this month climbed Mount Shishapangma in China, completing her endeavor to scale all 14 peaks over 8,000 meters (26,247 feet) high.

She said she has seen numerous climbers who lack training in basic skills and in coping with

the unpredictable slopes of the high peaks.

"I have seen many examples of people in the mountains that should not really be there, that should have more training beforehand," Brownlee told agency in Kathmandu on Thursday. "We have had to support them and have had to help with like small things like how to put on crampons, how to put on harness."

She said that mountaineering authorities should ensure that climbers attempting to scale the highest peaks have at least climbed smaller mountains to ensure they can handle the altitude and have the proper skills.



Brownlee flew to Nepal this week alongside other climbers from Tibet including Nima Rinji Sherpa, who is now the youngest person to climb the 14 peaks at age 18.

There are generally no rules besides age restrictions on people who want to climb mountains as long as they are able to pay their permit

fees. In Nepal, climbers need to be at least 16 years old.

Brownlee said she was just 8 years old when she began dreaming of becoming a mountaineer like her father, who she said was her main inspiration.

She said she now wants to scale unclimbed peaks in Nepal and explore mountains in

other parts of the world. Brownlee and her partner have opened a mountaineering company in Nepal focusing on helping customers who are skilled and experienced enough to handle the harsh condition of the mountains.

She said she hopes to inspire other young people to pursue their dreams.

"For me the message is that in life ... you can take any path you like to reach your goal," she said. "That goal might be totally unique to you and it's very important to keep at that and not to listen to rest of society what they have to say."

US military strikes Houthi targets in Yemen

WASHINGTON, Oct 17 (Agencies): The U.S. military has struck Houthi weapons storage facilities within Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, U.S. officials told agency.

"U.S. Central Command forces conducted multiple airstrikes on numerous Iran-backed Houthi weapons storage facilities within Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen," a U.S. defense official said.

The defense official said the weapons were used to "target military and civilian vessels navigating international waters throughout the Red Sea and Gulf of

Aden."

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin confirmed that B-2 strategic stealth bombers were used in the strikes against "five hardened underground weapons storage locations in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen."

His statement also hinted that using such significant aircraft for the job was meant to send a signal to other bad actors in the region.

"The employment of U.S. Air Force B-2 Spirit long-range stealth bombers demonstrate U.S. global strike capabilities to take action against these targets when necessary, any-

time, anywhere," it said.

Austin's statement also boasted of the military's "ability to target facilities that our adversaries seek to keep out of reach, no matter how deeply buried underground, hardened, or fortified."

U.S. Central Command said in a statement: "These actions were taken to degrade the Houthi's capability to continue their reckless and unlawful attacks on international commercial shipping."

Early assessments indicate no civilian casualties, according to CENTCOM.

A Mega free medical camp was organized at DPL Jammu in collaboration with J & K Police

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: A Mega free medical camp was organized by Diva International Foundation in coordination with People's Hut Foundation and in collaboration with J & K Police at DPL Jammu. The medical camp was formally inaugurated by ADGP Jammu Zone Shri Anand Jain (IPS) along with DIG Jammu-Kathua-Samba Range Sh. Shiv Kumar Sharma (IPS) in the presence of Chairman and CEO Diva International Foundation S. Amardeep Singh Sasan and Dr. Rohit Koul Director and CEO People's Hut Foundation. The camp was organized to provide comprehensive health check-up and medical facilities to



police officers/officials and their families. The

medical facilities which were provided in the camp include doctors and specialists from different renowned Hospitals and Govt departments. The participating hospitals and labs were Centre for Sight Jammu, Global Diagnostic Lab, Ujala Cygnus, JK Medicity, Directorate of Health Services Jammu and Directorate of Ayush J&K.

The free health camp named "Mobile Health Clinic Program" offered a variety of services, including medical check-ups by expert medical teams, general outpatient services (OPD), blood pressure, diabetes screenings, eye examinations and laboratory tests. Specialist doctors from various

fields, including ophthalmology, psychiatry, dentistry, orthopaedics, gynaecology, general medicine and oncology provided their services at the camp. In the medical camp the free medicines were also provided to the patients. The totals of about 379 patients were provided free medical consultation and treatment in the medical camp.

The other officers who were present include Shri Joginder Singh (JKPS) SSP Jammu, Sh. R.S Sambyal (IPS) SSP Security Jammu, Shri Faisal Qureshi (JKPS) SSP Traffic Jammu, Sh. Irshad Hussain Rather (JKPS) SP HQ Jammu, and Shri Rabininder Kotwal (JKPS) Dy. S.P.D.A.R Jammu.

JKBS hails Singh Gaddal's election as Chhatwal Panchayat Member

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: The Jammu and Kashmir Jammu Council at a meeting held in Colonel Colony here today, hailed Sher Singh Gaddal's election as Chhatwal Panchayat Member. JKBS members said, Sher Singh Gaddal is from Pathankot and belongs to Batwal community. He is fair and impartial. He has the dream of construct-



ing roads in Chhatwal and working for the well-being of all villagers regardless of caste, gender or economic

status. They wished Sher Singh Gaddal all success in developing Chhatwal.

Among those who attended the meeting included Hony Captain Kamal Dass Kaith, Retired Subedar Baldev Chand Sandhu, Retired Havildar Des Raj Kaith, R.L. Kaith, Tilak Raj Bassa, Jagdish Raj Kaith, Naresh Kumar Kaith and Hakikat Anmol.

Aqsa Gulzar of J&K - India Celebrates Historic Victory clinched Gold medal at Uzbekistan

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Oct 17: The Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council is thrilled to extend heartfelt congratulations to Aqsa Gulzar from Srinagar for her exceptional achievement in the 8th Asian Pencak Silat Championship 2024 which was held in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, from October 7th to 16th, 2024, this prestigious event witnessed the finest athletes from across Asia, and Ms Aqsa Gulzar's outstanding performance earned her a coveted Gold Medal.

This remarkable triumph is a testament to Ms Aqsa Gulzar's dedication, perseverance, and passion for the sport. Her achievement not only brings pride to the Pencak Silat Association of J&K but also inspires countless young athletes across the region.

Secretary YSS Sarmad Hafeez IAS and Secretary JKSC Nuzhat Gul



congratulated Aqsa's best ever performance at the Asian Podium for making J&K proud.

"We are overjoyed by Miss Aqsa Gulzar's incredible success," said Coaches Irfan Aziz Botta & Mohd Iqbal "Her hard work, discipline, and commitment to excellence have paid off, and we are honored to have her represent our association on the international stage." Among other from J&K who got bronze medals are Tawqeer farooq and Arsh Naseer also shine at the Asian Podium.

Miss Aqsa Gulzar's victory is a milestone for

Pencak Silat in Jammu and Kashmir, demonstrating the growing talent and potential of athletes from the region. The Association remains committed to nurturing and supporting talented athletes like Miss Aqsa Gulzar, providing opportunities for growth and success.

As Aqsa Gulzar returns home, the Pencak Silat Association of J&K looks forward to celebrating her achievement and recognizing her contribution to the sport. Aqsa Gulzar of J&K - India Celebrates Historic Victory clinched Gold medal at Uzbekistan.

BBA Students Shine at RBI Quiz 90: Regional Victory for Viraj Singh Katoch and Krishan Singh



Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: In a remarkable display of knowledge and teamwork, BBA Semester 5 students Viraj Singh Katoch and Krishan Singh clinched the top position at the regional level of the RBI Quiz 90, held at the Radisson Blue in Jammu. Their outstanding performance earned them a cash prize of Rs 1.5 lakh, highlighting their exceptional capabilities in management studies. The quiz, which attracted participants from various colleges, tested contestants on a range of topics including economics, finance, and current affairs. Viraj and Krishan strategic approach and quick thinking during the quiz allowed them to outshine their competitors. Two other students

from their batch, Divanshu Badgal and Kavya Sharma, also participated in the regional level event, showcasing the strong talent pool among their peers. Their involvement further emphasized the dedication and enthusiasm of the BBA cohort in engaging with practical applications of their studies. Among the participants were fellow BBA students Manu Rajput, Kahkashan Mustafa, Anand, Dhriti Sharma, Aditi Sharma and Aditi Thakur, all of whom demonstrated impressive knowledge and competitive spirit throughout the quiz. The victory not only celebrates the individual achievements of Viraj and Krishan but also reflects the rigorous training and mentorship provided by their faculty.

The event serves as an inspiration for other students, encouraging them to pursue excellence in both academic and extracurricular endeavour. The management department of their institution expressed immense pride in their students' success, reinforcing the importance of such competitions in fostering critical thinking and teamwork skills essential for future leaders in business. Prof. Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University congratulated the students and entire department for this remarkable achievement. He also emphasized that this victory has not only brought laurel to the BBA program but will also inspire other students to strive for excellence in their academic pursuits.

Greater Sher e khaas Srinagar demand relief for fire affected people in Mulwaran Warwan, Kishtwar

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Oct 17: Greater Sher e Khaas Srinagar Chairman Faheem Reshi have demanded relief for the fire affected people Mulwaran Warwan, Kishtwar.

worth crores of rupees has been consumed by the blaze resulting in huge losses to the people. It is expected that the revenue teams would be rushed to the spot to assess the losses incurred by the



Faheem Reshi on Thursday expressed anguish over a massive incident of fire at Mulwaran Warwan, Kishtwar were gutted. In a statement Faheem Reshi implored upon the LG administration to reach out to the affected with necessary relief and compensation. "Faheem Reshi added

victims, so that the value of compensation is fixed and distributed among them immediately as well. I express solidarity with the affected and pray for their revival," he said. Faheem Reshi also asked the government to reach out to the affected with adequate compensation and rehabilitation packages.

GDC R.S. Pura organises lecture on cyber security

Top News Report

R.S. PURA, Oct 17: To educate the students about Cyber Security NSS in collaboration with Bhrashtachar Mukht Bharat and IIC Committee organized a lecture on Cyber Crime. The resource person of the event was Inspector Bhupinder Singh officer cyber cell Jammu. He discussed the meaning of cyber security, kinds of cyber attacks, cases of victims of cyber attacks and discussed how cyber-attacks in educational institutions can cause financial loss, disruption and also jeopardise student safety. As such, schools and universities must identify cyber-security threats and set up a defense mechanism to prevent the threats from materialising. He also shared details of how cyber cases can be reported. The program was graced by Principal



GDC RS Pura, Dr. Preetpal Kour who emphasized that Cybercrime education can help students develop the skills and knowledge to navigate the digital world safely, responsibly, and ethically. It can also help them become more critical thinkers and problem solvers. Such programs also teach students how to test for and defend against security vulnerabilities, and handle the aftermath of security breaches. The welcome address was given by Dr. Chanchal Angral Programme Officer NSS. She introduced the guest

and also emphasized that as today millions of students are learning through technology in hybrid, remote, or in-class environments, which is why keeping their devices secure is paramount for students learning experiences and teachers work. Dr. Raj Jawal HOD Hindi gave formal vote of thanks. The other dignitaries present in the event were Dr. Shifali Abrol, Dr. Neeru Sawhney, Dr. Neeti Chibber, Dr. Shivani Manchanda, Dr. Sunil Kumar Mangoch, Dr. Hari Singh, Dr. Sanjeev Upadhyay, Dr. Rakesh Kalotra, Dr. Savleen Kour.

Inter Division UT Level Cricket U17 boys

Top News Report

KATHUA, Oct 17, 2024 inter division UT level cricket tournament for U17 boys continues on second consecutive day in Kathua. Today morning Kashmir division won the toss and choose to bat first. Kashmir division batsmen played marvelously and scored 186 runs in allotted 20 overs at the loss of 5 wickets.



Abbaas Gulzar made fifty runs in 46 balls hitting 6 fours. Bhat Talak scored 36 runs in 16 balls, with 3 sixes and 2 fours. While chasing the target Jammu division could score only 107 runs in 20 overs at the loss of 9 wickets. Samit Bashir took 3 wickets in 3 overs conceding 15 runs and Kashmir won the match by 79 runs.

FROM PAGE 1

CM Omar Abdullah chairs first Cabinet meeting

This cabinet meeting marks Abdullah's return to a leadership role after years of political uncertainty in the region. Prior to the meeting, he yesterday held consultations with secretaries and key officers at the Civil Secretariat to ensure smooth coordination between the executive and bureaucracy, setting a decisive tone for his administration.

Reducing J&K to UT 'Constitutional Misdemeanour', Statehood must be restored: Kapil Sibal

ministers at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre along the banks of the Dal Lake.

Security detail of Farooq Abdullah and Ghulam Nabi Azad Set for Major

Overhaul as NSG Withdraws from VIP Duties

of a broader restructuring of India's security apparatus. The CRPF will also take over security for other high-profile figures such as Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and former Deputy Prime Minister L K Advani.

This development marks the end of over two decades of NSG's involvement in VIP security, a role the force took on despite its original mandate focusing on counter-terrorism and anti-hijack operations. The Union Government has decided that the NSG's expertise should be refocused on its core responsibilities, with the intention of stationing strike teams at critical locations such as the Ram temple in Ayodhya and other sensitive sites in the southern region of the country.

Azad and Abdullah, both towering figures in Jammu and Kashmir's political landscape, have long been at risk due to

the sensitive nature of their roles in the region's tumultuous political environment. This transition to CRPF security is expected to maintain their high-level protection, though the elite nature of the NSG's counter-terrorism capability will no longer be a feature of their security detail.

The restructuring is part of a larger plan initiated in 2012, which recognised the NSG's growing role in VIP security as a "burden" on its limited manpower. With ongoing threats and the potential for simultaneous terror attacks across multiple locations, the government believes that the NSG's resources should be directed towards national security and rapid response operations, rather than VIP duties.

The CRPF, which will now guard these leaders, has already established itself as a capable force in protecting high-risk individuals, with six VIP security battalions currently in service. A seventh battalion, previously assigned to Parliament security, will be redeployed to handle the new responsibilities.

This transition has stirred conversations about the security protocols in place for Jammu and Kashmir's most prominent leaders, particularly given the region's complex security challenges. Both Azad and Abdullah, having served as chief ministers during tumultuous times, remain significant figures not only in regional politics but also in the broader national context.

As the NSG prepares to mark its 40th raising day, this shift signifies a return to its original mandate of counter-terrorism, freeing up 450 of its highly trained commandos for more specialised tasks.

Indian Railways announce 60-day limit for bookings

The change will not affect certain daytime express trains, like Taj Express and Gomti Express, which have lower advance reservation limits in place.

The 365-day booking limit for foreign tourists remains unchanged.

According to the notification, the decision is aimed at making train ticket bookings

more convenient and accessible for passengers.

Forced to remain seated due to medical condition, says MLA Hilal Lone as admin launches probe

Indian constitution, why are you doubting me," said the NC MLA. "Stop doubting me again and again," he said.

One commits a crime when they disrupt or try to disrupt the national anthem, he said.

Sources said that officials will examine the complete video recording of the event to determine who remained seated during the national anthem.

Search operation underway in remote village in Poonch

deployed drones and sniffer dogs, while a helicopter was also seen hovering over the forest area this morning.

Dimple expresses gratitude to CJI for initiating hearings on restoration of J&K's statehood

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: Sunil Dimple, President of the Mission Statehood Jammu Kashmir, addressed media personnel at the Press Club, expressing gratitude to the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court for initiating hearings on the restoration of Jammu Kashmir's statehood.

He emphasized optimism about a timely resolution, citing a previous Supreme Court verdict from December 13, 2023. Dimple congratulated the people of Jammu



Kashmir on the formation of the new government, noting that the recent elections reflected a collective desire for the restoration of the Dogra state and the return of Article 370, Permanent Resident Certificates

(PRC), and state subject rights. He highlighted the pressing issues of rising unemployment and poverty in the region. He insisted on passing a resolution in the assembly for immediate

restoration of the princely Dogra state and the full implementation of the conditions set forth in the instrument of accession by Maharaja Hari Singh. Dimple pledged to fight for Article 370, 35-A, and the rights of the people of Jammu Kashmir until his last breath.

Furthermore, he criticized the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for allegedly undermining the interests of the Dogra state, accusing them of divisive politics and attempts to separate Jammu into a Union Territory.

He called for the unification of Ladakh, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK), and Gilgit-Baltistan, reiterating the need for the government to initiate the Darbar move to promote trade and communal harmony.

Dimple concluded by urging the Prime Minister and Home Minister to clarify their stance on the BJP's calls for separate statehood for regions within Jammu. He reaffirmed the commitment of the people to pursue their rights and the peaceful development of the region.

Balwant Thakur felicitates Chairman, Director IIT Jammu for promoting local culture

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: Director Natrang felicitated Dr. Sharad Kumar Saraf, Chairman and Prof. Manoj Singh Gaur, Director of IIT Jammu for the promotion of art and culture of Jammu and Kashmir here at a function at the new auditorium of IIT Jammu. As an exclusive initiative IIT Jammu, ever since its inception in Jammu have been hosting a diverse range of cultural events showcasing the variegated variety of traditional art expressions.

This occasion provided a pan-India audience, exposure and the appreciation for the arts of Jammu & Kashmir. Fact remains that in all its five annual convocation events which witnessed the gathering of important guests from all-over India, IIT Jammu made it a point to treat their guests with a professionally designed and executed representative cultural event of Jammu & Kashmir. In 2023 convocation, IIT Jammu hosted the miniature event of Natrang's G20 Srinagar show which won global acclaim for its outstanding music, costumes, choreography and out of the world concept and direction. Speaking on the occasion Natrang Director Balwant Thakur while expressing his



gratitude to IIT Jammu said that arts of Jammu & Kashmir need performance opportunity, appreciation, promotion and recognition and in this context IIT Jammu has been highly instrumental in providing all. IIT Jammu in addition to the hosting of J&K cultural based performances have also held a series of workshops, interactions, and training programmes. To acquaint their students and the faculty members with the history of Jammu & Kashmir, they also showcased Natrang's popular film 'Gulab Gatha'. The recent presentation 'Colors of Jammu & Kashmir' which was showcased in the 5th convocation of IIT Jammu won accolades for being a unique cultural album of Jammu and Kashmir which featured the varie-

gated variety of different colours, rhythms, costumes, design patterns and artistic expressions, expressed through the diverse traditional dances of J&K. This amazing bouquet of rarest dance traditions unfolded the mesmerizing artistic traditions of the crown of incredible India. Each dance presentation despite being different from the other in rhythm and pace was artistically and aesthetically blended with each other so as to present their harmony and wonderful correlation.

On the occasion Balwant Thakur desired more and more such organisations to come forward and promote and support the endeavours of Natrang aimed at bringing a new cultural renaissance in the region.

Physics Wallah to Launch 77 New Tech-enabled Vidyapeeth Offline Centres Nationwide

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: Physics Wallah (PW), India's leading multinational edtech company, committed to democratizing affordable, high-quality education across Bharat, has announced the launch of over 77 new offline tech-enabled learning centers nationwide in Academic Year 24-25. These new centres will be spread across the states of Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, amongst others. This expansion effectively doubles PW's offline footprint to 203 centres across 141 cities, building on its existing 126 Vidyapeeth and Pathshala centres. Through this strategic growth, PW aims to significantly enhance access to quality education, with a particular focus on students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities,



ensuring it reaches the most underserved areas across the country.

In Academic Year 24-25, over 200,000 students enrolled in PW's Vidyapeeth and Pathshala centres, reflecting the growing trust in PW's mission to democratize education across India. PW aims to educate another 250,000 students in the coming academic year and remains dedicated to providing the guidance and resources necessary for every learner to thrive, ensuring that edu-

cation becomes a tool for empowerment and equal opportunity for all. Presently, there is one student of PW in almost every IIT and AIIMS across the nation.

PW's offline segment is divided into two models - Vidyapeeth (VP) and Pathshala (PS). Vidyapeeths are tech-enabled offline centres where students attend in-person classes led by experienced teachers. The Pathshala model offers a more innovative approach with its unique two-teach-

er system. In Pathshala centres, students attend physical classes taught by teachers who are virtually present, while a second teacher is physically available in the classroom to address doubts and queries. This model allows students to benefit from the expertise of renowned teachers, regardless of their geographical location. By integrating both models, PW effectively combines digital and physical learning environments, consistently delivering high quality education to every corner of the country.

Ankit Gupta, CEO Offline, Physics Wallah (PW) said, "At PW, we always prioritise the needs and wellbeing of the student. By opening more centres, we want to make sure that students don't have to travel long distances to access quality education, which eases their financial burden.

Another key aspect that we want to solve is the mental and emotional stress that students face when they have to shift to another city or state to pursue education, thereby creating more educational hubs across the country."

Physics Wallah (PW), recently held its third edition of the National Scholarship Common Admission Test (NSAT) 2024 which was held across both online and offline options, making quality education accessible to all deserving students. A scholarship fund of INR 250 crores was set aside for students who cleared the exam, making it one of the biggest scholarship tests in the country. This initiative aims to help students aspiring to excel in NEET-UG and IIT-JEE exams by providing education and expert guidance, regardless of their financial situation.

BJP pays floral tributes to Maharishi Valmiki

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: Bharatiya Janata Party, Jammu & Kashmir paid floral tributes to the 'Adi-Kavi' Maharishi Valmiki ji Maharaj on his Pargat Diwas at Party Headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Ravinder Raina, President, J&K BJP, accompanied by Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal (MLA), General Secretary, J&K BJP, Rajiv Sharma, former MLA, Balbir Ram Rattan, former VC, Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Media Incharge J&K BJP, Ankit Gupta, Incharge Social Media, Sanjay Baru, Prabhari Nowshera, Sunil



Prajapati, OBC President, Subhash Gupta, Kulbir Charak and others paid tributes to the Adi-Kavi on occasion.

Vijay Anand Gill, Vice-President BJP SC Morcha, and Adarsh Jathiar, General Secretary BJP SC Morcha

organized the programme.

Ravinder Raina congratulated the people worldwide on the Pargat Diwas of Maharishi Valmiki ji. He said that this auspicious day is being celebrated across the world with religious fer-

vous. He said that being a divine spirit, Maharishi wrote Shree Ramayana before the actual events. He said that the people and especially the youth must take lessons from the life and teachings of Maharishi Valmiki ji to reshape their lives and to promote universal peace and progress. He once again congratulated the followers of Maharishi Valmiki ji and the Hindus worldwide on this great day and asked the youth to follow the path of piety and Dharma.

Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal remembering the Maharishi Valmiki on his birth anniversary, said that this is also known as the Pragat Diwas or Valmiki Jayanti. He said that the Maharishi was a renowned poet who gifted the world with the great Hindu epic Ramayana. The people commemorate it by chanting Ramayana lyrics at the temples and at their

homes around the country, he added.

Balbir Ram Rattan said that this occasion not only honours Maharishi's literary contributions but also his profound spiritual legacy.

Dr. Pardeep Mahotra said that the works of Maharishi taught us to be always truthful. No matter how powerful the evil is, the truth will still win and we can rebuild our lives from zero.

Ankit Gupta said that Maharishi's work has had a lasting influence on Hindu culture and philosophy, shaping the moral and ethical fabric of the society.

Vijay Anand Gill said that the teachings of Maharishi direct us to live principled lives and do good to all the living beings on Earth.

Adarsh Jathiar conducted the programme proceedings and thanked all the dignitaries present on the occasion.

Chandel emphasizes for empowerment of Valmiki community

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: The National President of Rashtriya Valmiki Sena, Raju Chandel, addressed the Valmiki Prakat Utsav today, emphasizing the empowerment of the Valmiki community as a formidable force that has historically defended Sanatan Dharma. He stated that the community's strength continues to evoke fear among descendants of the Mughal Sultanate.

Chandel underscored that the Valmiki community plays a vital role in protecting the traditions and values of Sanatan Dharma, asserting it as the most powerful caste within this framework.

The event also featured notable dignitaries, including Mahamandaleshwar Krishna Vidyarthi, National President of the BJP Scheduled Caste Front Lal Singh Arya, and Delhi State President Mohanlal Gihra. They collectively honored Lord Valmiki with floral tributes and urged the youth to embody the principles taught by him.

The celebration included bhajan kirtan, Havan Yagna, and other religious observances.



Lal Singh Arya remarked on the importance of Lord Valmiki, whose Ramayana laid the foundation for understanding Sanatan Dharma. He highlighted that without Valmiki's contributions, knowledge of these traditions might have been lost.

Chandrapal Chandel, District President of the Scheduled Caste Front, reiterated the Valmiki community's historical role in defending Hindu society against adversities, positioning them as the protectors of Sanatan Dharma.

MCD Counsellor Priti Gupta affirmed the BJP government's commitment to the welfare of the Valmiki community, noting initiatives such as

the airport in Ayodhya named after Lord Valmiki. She pledged continued representation and support for the community in legislative bodies.

Mohanlal Gihra mentioned that the Valmiki community comprises around 30% of the population, with many members aligning with the BJP. He emphasized the party's dedication to implementing beneficial schemes for the community, recognizing it as a cornerstone of Sanatan Dharma.

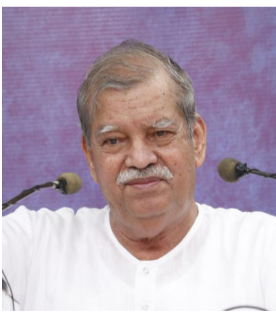
The event celebrated the enduring legacy and contributions of the Valmiki community, reaffirming their essential role in the social and cultural fabric of India.

Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj delivers religious sermons

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: Sadguru of Sahib Bandgi Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj while spreading his sermons in Ranjdi, Jammu said that the person whose mind is polluted due to sinful deeds cannot see God even in his dreams. Therefore, the more sins a person commits, the more his intellect will become polluted.

Today, there are a lot of gurus. They do not give knowledge of right and wrong to the disciple. There is a shloka in the Vedas, which means that if the food is pure, the intellect will be pure. If the intellect is pure, then the meditation will be pure. If the meditation is pure, then the knowledge will be pure. If the knowledge is pure, then salvation will be pure. They do not tell the disciples not to eat meat. The mind of a person is like the food he eats.



Our Hindu religion is great. We evaluate anyone by his qualities. So and so person is very good in the village or so and so person is very bad, do not treat him badly. Why said? According to his qualities.

Sahib Ji further said that this religion considers eating meat a grave sin. This religion believes that God exists. There are two principles - truth and non-violence. We have to understand truth and non-violence properly. There are eight types of truth-speaking the truth, eating the truth, keeping

company with the truth, behaving with the truth, listening to the truth, thinking the truth.

Pure water is pure. If harmful things get mixed in it, it becomes impure. Similarly, non-violence also has eight parts. Do not hurt anyone through your mind, words or deeds. Do not be jealous. Do not have feelings of revenge. If someone is giving you thorns, you give him flowers.

He will get his thorns and you will get your flowers. Do not wish ill for anyone. One whose conscience is not involved in bad deeds will become pure. Just as everything is visible in light, similarly the internal enemies will be visible in a pure conscience. The aim of this religion is to attain salvation. A man does not become righteous by being born in any religion. He becomes righteous by following the rules of religion.

GDC Thannamandi celebrates Sir Syed Day and Nirmala Deshpande Jayanti

Top News Report

THANNAMANDI, Oct 17: The Literary Committee in collaboration with IQAC of Govt. Degree College Thannamandi celebrated Sir Syed Day, Nirmal Deshpande Jayanti as part of International Day for Eradicating poverty here today.

While linking International Day for eradicating poverty with life and works of legendary reformers, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Educationist and founder of AMU Aligarh, and Nirmala Deshpande, Gandhian Social Activist, an impressive programme organized under the patronage of Dr. Nazakat Hussain Incharge Princi-

pal of College.

The programme started with the documentary on Sir Syed Ahmed Khan who dedicated his life for the empowerment of downtrodden section of society through the instrument of modern education and founded Aligarh Muslim University after surpassing cumbersome ordeals.

While speaking on the occasion Dr. Nazakat, an alig, emphasized upon the need of taking forward the educational work of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to achieve socio-economic development of masses. He also underlined the unparalleled contribution made by Nirmala Deshpande

in maintaining communal harmony and peace which are prerequisites of poverty eradication. Dr. Naseem Ahmed, Head Department of Chemistry in College, another Alig in college also spoke on the occasion.

Earlier, Dr. Ashaq Malik, Co-ordinator IQAC in College yet another Alig, welcomed and introduced the audience about the programme. He explained how the two important occasions - birthdays of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Nirmala Deshpande fall on the same day which is also celebrated as International Day for Eradicating Poverty across the globe. Dr. Malik gave an overview of life and works

of two real Bharat Ratan, One (Sir Syed Ahmed Khan) helped fought out poverty by spreading education and other (Nirmala Deshpande) by promoting communal harmony, nonviolence and through serving the oppressed. Nirmala Deshpande who traveled some 40000 kms across India while spreading the message of peace and nonviolence, and championed Gandhi ji's philosophy throughout her life is a great source of inspiration for all of us, he added.

Dr. Abdul Haque Naimi, Head Department of Urdu and Convener, College Literary Committee conducted the proceedings of programme whereas

Dr. Shiraz Ahmed, Head Department of Zoology and Staff Secretary, presented formal vote of thanks. The programme concluded with AMU Tarana followed by National Anthem.

Prominent among others present on the occasion were Prof. Asif Ajaz Lone, Rakesh Puri, Dr. Nazar Ul Islam, Prof. Supriya Gupta, Dr. Gohar Iqbal, Prof. Altaf Husain, Dr. Junaid Ahmed, Dr. Gulshan Bhat, Prof. Fatima Parveen, Anuj Bali, Dr. Ather Aziz Raina, Prof. Rumi Dar, Prof. Rizwana Kouser, Dr. Sarfraz Mirza, Dr. Mohd Zabir, Dr. Ansir Ahmed, Dr. Mohd Arshaq and Dr. Aftab Ul Haq.

46-all out: India register their lowest Test total at home in Bengaluru nightmare

BENGALURU, Oct 17 (Agencies): A week after their heroic win in Kanpur, India suffered a nightmarish outing against New Zealand, getting bowled out for 46 on Day 2 of the first Test of a three-match series. India's innings lasted only 31.2 overs on an overcast morning in Bengaluru as the Asian giants registered an unwanted record, slipping to their third-lowest total in Test cricket history. It was also India's lowest Test total at home.

New Zealand pacers William O'Rourke and Matt Henry breathed fire after veteran Tim Southee started the collapse, getting the big wicket of India captain Rohit Sharma as early as the opening hour of the day's play. India paid the price for opting to bat under grey skies and on a pitch that remained under the covers for the good part of the last three days due to rain in the city.

There were as many as five ducks in the Indian innings. Virat Kohli, who was surprisingly asked to bat at No. 3, Sarfaraz Khan, Ravindra Jadeja, KL Rahul and R Ashwin were the batters who did not trouble the scorers at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium on Thursday.

INDIA'S LOWEST TOTALS IN TESTS

36-all out vs Australia in Adelaide in 2020

42-all out vs England in



London in 1974

46-all out vs New Zealand in Bengaluru in 2024*

58-all out vs Australia in Brisbane in 1947

58-all out vs England in Manchester in 1952

Lowest at home: 75-all out vs West Indies in Delhi in 1987

India, who were looking set to bulldoze New Zealand after their confidence-boosting 2-0 whitewash of Bangladesh earlier this month, were jolted and given a reality check by the New Zealand pacers, who made the best use of the conditions that resembled the green pitches at home.

None of the Indian batters, barring Rishabh Pant and Yashvi Jaiswal, showed the application to stay in the middle when the going was tough.

"It's a bit worrying," Anil Kumble told the broadcasters, saying he was surprised by the lack of application from the Indian batters.

"It's important that you need to adapt. There's talk about getting wins. Yes, the bowling attack is fantastic. But the batters, you need to think about how to manage in these conditions for India to get to a better situation.

"Today was really disappointing from the Indian batting lineup," he added.

TACTICAL BLUNDERS GALORE

India made tactical blunders. Firstly, they won the toss and missed out on an opportunity to give their fast bowlers a crack at the New Zealand batting unit, which was down on confidence after suffering a 2-0 loss in Sri

Lanka last month. Secondly, India sent Virat Kohli at No. 3 in extremely unfriendly conditions for batters, failing to preserve their best batter.

India had the option of using KL Rahul at No. 3, considering how he has opened for India in the past and his familiarity with his home ground in Bengaluru. However, the move to send Kohli at No. 3 failed as the star batter was dismissed for 0 after a troubled stay in the middle.

Sarfraz Khan, who was sent to bat at No. 3, threw his wicket away while KL Rahul went after a delivery that was bowled down his leg to get dismissed for 0.

All-rounders Ravindra Jadeja and R Ashwin were not able to steady the ship as Henry and O'Rourke were breathing fire on either side of the Lunch break. Both the all-rounders were dismissed for naught as India slipped to 34 for 7.

Pant managed to get to 20, but he was not able to push on and play freely after losing partners at the other end at some pace. The wicketkeeper-batter was dismissed by Henry after Lunch.

Jasprit Bumrah fell for 1 while Kuldeep Yadav and Mohammed Siraj resisted the charge. However, Henry got Kuldeep as his fifth victim in the innings as India were bundled out for 46 in 31.2 overs.

I was on edge of my seat when my name came up in HIL auction: Harman



NEW DELHI, Oct 17 (Agencies): On the edge of his seat during Hockey India League (HIL) auctions, India's Olympics medal-winning skipper Harmanpreet Singh was silently praying that Sardar Singh from Soorma Hockey Club makes a winning bid for him.

Eventually, his wish came true with Harmanpreet becoming the costliest buy in the men's section as Soorma Hockey Club, representing Punjab and Haryana, secured his services for Rs 78 lakh on the first day of the three-day auction.

"I am elated that the Hockey India League is back and in marvelous fashion. I was on the edge of my seat when my name came up during the auction,

mentally hoping and urging Sardar Singh to bid for me and I get to play for the Haryana-Punjab region," said Harmanpreet, who led India to the bronze medal at the Paris Olympics.

"It was a great relief when Soorma Hockey Club finally landed me in the auction and I could not have been happier," he added.

The men's HIL will feature eight teams, while the inaugural women's event will have four teams.

The ace drag-flicker was happy with the combination of the squad, insisting that they managed to get the perfect balance.

"We have a very good-looking team at the Soorma Hockey Club at the end of the auction,

the owners and coaching staff have hit the ball out of the park. We have the perfect balance of experienced, big-name players and young players with the potential to become big names themselves," Harmanpreet said.

The upcoming edition of the event holds greater significance as the Women's HIL will make its debut and will run concurrently with the men's league in two venues — Ranchi (men) and Rourkela (women).

India defender Udit Duhan, who was picked by Shraichi Rarh Bengal Tigers for Rs 32 lakh, can't hide her excitement for becoming the costliest buy in the women's auction.

"Hockey India is breaking barriers and setting new standards by holding a Women's Hockey India League at the same time as the men's league. This will be a good opportunity to showcase our skills and grow as athletes by playing with players from different nationalities. All of us are eager to give our 100 per cent," she said.

Champions Trophy without India not an option: ECB

LONDON, Oct 17 (Agencies): England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) chiefs are confident a solution can be found if India do not travel to Pakistan for the 2025 Champions Trophy, adding that India's participation is necessary to protect the tournament's broadcast rights.

Pakistan, who won the last edition of the Champions Trophy in England in 2017, will host the February 19-March 9 tournament.

Due to their soured political relations, India have not visited Pakistan since 2008 and the rivals play each other only at multi-team events.

Pakistan also hosted the Asia Cup last year but eventual winners India played all their matches in Sri Lanka under what the organisers called a "hybrid



model". At the time, India said they did not get permission from their government to tour Pakistan.

BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla said last month the final decision over whether India will travel to Pakistan for the Champions Trophy would be taken by the government.

"I know Pakistan are expecting India to travel," ECB chief Richard Gould said.

Gould and ECB chair Richard Thompson are in Pakistan for Eng-

land's three-Test series and have met with Pakistan Cricket Board officials during the ongoing second Test in Multan.

"There are lots of different alternatives and contingencies available if that doesn't happen. I wouldn't have thought (it would be played without India), because if you play the Champions Trophy without India the broadcast rights aren't there, and we need to protect them.

"Hopefully, we can have the fullest possible competition in Pakistan."

Pro Kabaddi League: UP Yoddhas aim for playoffs in season 11

NEW DELHI, Oct 17 (Agencies): After an unusual early exit in the previous season, UP Yoddhas are determined to make a strong comeback in Pro Kabaddi League Season 11 and return to the playoffs. Having reached the playoffs in five of their six PKL campaigns, last season marked their only early departure from the competition.

For PKL 11, Jasveer Singh will once again lead the team as head coach, a role he has held since Season 6. The Yoddhas were active in the Season 11 Player Auction, notably securing Bharat for INR 1.30 crores, bolstering their squad for the new campaign. Let's break down the key strengths and potential weaknesses of the team heading into the season.



UP Yoddhas' raiding lineup is expected to be a force to reckon with in Season 11. The duo of Surender Gill and Bharat will lead the charge, bringing with them impressive records of 487 and 497 raid points, respectively. Adding depth to the attack, Gagana Gowda, who had a strong debut with 92 raid points in PKL 10, will also play a vital role.

The raiding unit is further strengthened by Bhavani Rajput, who has over 150 raid points to his name, along with the skilled Iranian

raider Heidarali Ekrami. Youngsters Shivam Chaudhary, Keshav Kumar, and Aksham Suryawanshi offer additional firepower, making the Yoddhas' raiding depth one of their key assets this season.

Weaknesses The Yoddhas' success in PKL 11 will heavily depend on the consistency of their defense. While they boast experienced defenders, maintaining reliable performances has been a challenge. Sumit, who has amassed 254 tackle points in PKL, will anchor the defense.

However, the trio of Mahender Singh, Ashu Singh, and Sahul Kumar need to step up after a subpar PKL 10. Mahender and Sahul scored 31 and 39 tackle points, respectively, while Ashu managed only 20. These were their lowest defensive tallies, and their ability to deliver consistent performances will be crucial for the Yoddhas' playoff ambitions.

Opportunities PKL 11 presents the perfect opportunity for Surender Gill to establish himself as the team's primary raider. Having played second fiddle to Pardeep Narwal in previous seasons, Gill will now be the main attacking threat in Pardeep's absence. With nearly 500 raid points to his name, he'll be looking to make PKL 11 his most successful season yet. Defenders Mahender

Singh, Ashu Singh, and Sahul Kumar also have a chance for redemption after struggling last season. If they can bounce back, it could significantly impact the Yoddhas' performance in the league.

Threats The primary concern for UP Yoddhas in Season 11 is the fitness of star raider Surender Gill. Despite his impressive performances, injury setbacks have limited his availability in the last two seasons. In Season 9, he scored 140 raid points in 14 games, while in Season 10, he managed 87 points in just 10 matches. His ability to stay fit throughout the season could be the deciding factor in the Yoddhas' campaign. A fully healthy Surender Gill will be critical to the team's chances of success in PKL 11.

Verstappen eyes ending winless streak in Texas

AUSTIN, Oct 17 (Agencies): Max Verstappen will seek to reboot his title defence and end an eight-race winless streak this weekend when he locks horns with title rival Lando Norris at the United States Grand Prix.

Four weeks on from finishing second behind him in Singapore, Red Bull's three-time world champion and series leader hopes recent upgrades to his car will be enough for him to reel in the McLaren driver and repeat his 2023 triumph at the Circuit of the Americas.

"The car felt better in Singapore," said Verstappen. "It was already a good step for us in Baku and I think we are going in the right direction now, but it takes time. You can't change something like this in one or two weeks."

The Dutchman admitted that Red Bull struggled to match the speed of their main competitors, McLaren, Ferrari and Red Bull, during much of the mid-part of the 24-race season, but with six races remaining, three including additional sprints, he hopes his 52-point lead will be enough for him to hang on.

Verstappen has not won since the Spanish Grand Prix and Norris, despite some inconsistency, has beaten him in the last five races, igniting a late bid for the drivers' title to add to McLaren's takeover of the constructors' championship.

An extra eight points are on offer this weekend thanks to Saturday's sprint as the F1 circus begins a triple-header with races in Austin, Mexico and Brazil on successive weekends

before the final events in Las Vegas, Qatar and Abu Dhabi.

In all, a total of 180 points are still available to be won and the various permutations all end up suggesting that Norris needs to stay on top and hope Verstappen has a few low or non-scoring races.

"It's going to be incredibly busy, but also exciting, in the next two months," said Norris. "I'm ready to get back in the car, so let's show Texas what we can do."

'More competitive' Verstappen has won all three sprints this season so far and will hope he can continue that vein of form to make the difference as the season moves to a rousing finale.

His Austrian sprint win was his last success and he said he hopes further updates for Austin will



"suit this circuit and see if we are more competitive when we head out on track."

Both leading teams will turn to their second drivers Sergio Perez of Red Bull and Oscar Piastri for McLaren for critical support as their battle for the titles.

McLaren lead Red Bull by 41 points in the teams' title race with Perez in acute need of a change of form and fortunes before his home event in Mexico.

Mercedes' seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton, who is the most successful driver at the US Grand Prix with six wins, could also be a factor at one of his favourite circuits.

Daniel Ricciardo will be replaced by New Zealand's Liam Lawson in the RB team, a move that gives him a chance to make a claim to replace Perez next year, while at Williams Alex Albon will make his 100th race start.

Delhi Capitals announce major operational changes before IPL 2025

NEW DELHI, Oct 17 (Agencies): The Delhi Capitals franchise has announced some major operational changes ahead of the IPL 2025 season on Thursday, October 17. The GMR and JSW Groups, owners of the Capitals franchise, announced a strategic decision to alternate the management of cricket operations for Delhi Capitals' IPL (Men) and WPL (Women) teams on a two-year rotational basis. This initiative aims to enhance operational efficiency across both teams within the Delhi Capitals franchise.

For the next two years, GMR Group will oversee the cricketing operations of the Delhi Capitals Men's team, while JSW Sports will manage the operations of the Women's team. In 2027, the roles will reverse, with JSW Sports taking charge of the Men's team. Despite this rotation, the franchise's business operations will continue to be handled by the Delhi Capitals management team. Key decisions, including auctions, captaincy, player retention, and releases, will be made by the Delhi Capitals' board,

with input from senior leadership of both GMR and JSW groups.

GMR Group, one of the founding owners of the IPL in 2008, initially launched the team as "Delhi Daredevils." In 2018, GMR partnered with JSW Sports in a 50:50 ownership deal, leading to the team's rebranding as Delhi Capitals.

Since 2008, the franchise has been a consistent participant in the IPL, reaching the semi-finals in its first two seasons and making several playoff appearances. In 2019, Delhi Capitals recorded their best-ever finish as second runners-up, followed by their first appearance in an IPL final in 2020. The Delhi Capitals Women's team, acquired in 2023, has already made a strong impact, reaching the final in both seasons of the Women's Premier League so far.

Alongside the Indian teams, GMR will continue to manage the Dubai Capitals in the ILT20 League, while JSW Sports will oversee the Pretoria Capitals in the SA20 South African league.

JKTF Chairman congratulates Omar Abdullah on taking Oath as Chief Minister

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Oct 17: Chairman J&K Teachers Forum and Vice President of the All India Secondary Teachers Federation (AISTF), Mohammad Ameen Khan, extended warm congratulations to Omar Abdullah on taking oath as the Chief Minister of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. He also conveyed best wishes to the newly appointed council of ministers and Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) for assuming their responsibilities.

UT President J&K



Teachers forum Sheikh Mohammed Ashraf, Vice Chairman Showkat Ali Beig, General Secretary Shabeer Ahmad, Provincial President (Jammu) Sanjeet Sharma, State Secretary G. N. Sofi, Provincial President

Kashmir Hameedullah sb, Muzaffar Ahmad, and all district presidents joined in extending their felicitations to the Hon'ble Chief Minister and his team.

The leadership expressed optimism

that the new government would actively address the genuine and legitimate concerns of employees within the education sector.

In a statement issued by the UT Chief Spokesperson of JK Teach-

ers Forum, Mir Bashir Ahmad, the Chairman highlighted the importance of resolving long-pending issues. He expressed hope that with Omaa Abdullah's leadership and the return to elected governance after over five years of presidential rule, the expectations of the education department's employees will be fulfilled through meaningful solutions.

The JKTF leadership remains committed to working closely with the government to advocate for the welfare of teachers and ensure constructive policy developments in the education sector.

Renowned Dholak Maestro Darbari Lal Passes Away – Institute of Music and Fine Arts pays Tributes

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: In a tragic loss for the music fraternity, the Institute of Music and Fine Arts mourned the passing of renowned Dholak maestro Darbari Lal, who passed away early this morning. His legacy has deeply influenced the musical landscape of Jammu and Kashmir, and he was widely regarded as one of the finest Dholak players in the region, celebrated for his unmatched skill and dedication to traditional music.

Darbari Lal's sudden demise has left his family, friends, students, and the entire artistic community in shock. Throughout his life, he dedicated himself to nurturing the art of percussion, playing an integral role in countless musical performances and training several generations of musicians. His contributions spanned both classical and folk traditions, making him a key

figure in preserving and promoting the region's rich musical heritage.

Although Darbari Lal was closely associated with the Sangeet and Kala Sansthan, his influence was felt strongly within the Institute of Music and Fine Arts as well. In response to the devastating news, Sunil Raina, senior faculty member and sitar maestro at the Institute of Music and Fine Arts, expressed deep sorrow. "Today we lost not just a musician but a beacon of rhythm and soul. Darbari Lal's Dholak had a heartbeat of its own, and it will be greatly missed," Raina said.

The Institute of Music and Fine Arts honored Darbari Lal's memory with a two-minute silence observed by the faculty and students. Several faculty members, including Suraj Singh, Dr. Sumit Madan, Dr. Milan Sharma, Rohit Verma, Bindu Sharma, Vijay Kumar, Rajkumar

Sharma, Palak, Rachita Dutta, Prabhat Bali, Amit Anand, Shivani Kapoor, Mohit Kumar and Rajesh Kumar along with many others, expressed their grief, remembering Darbari Lal's unwavering passion and his ability to inspire young talents. His humility, deep love for music, and dedication to mentoring the next generation of musicians left an indelible mark on all who knew him.

Darbari Lal's passing marks the end of an era in Jammu's music scene. His rhythms and teachings will continue to resonate in the hearts of those who knew him, and his legacy will live on through the music he cherished. The Institute of Music and Fine Arts joins the entire community of musicians, students, and lovers of traditional music in paying tribute to a true maestro. His absence will be deeply felt, but his contributions to the world of music will never be forgotten.

GDC Mahanpur participates in Financial Literacy Awareness Programme

Top News Report

MAHANPUR, Oct 17: Government Degree College, Mahanpur participated in Financial Literacy Awareness Programme through online mode on 17th of October, 2024. The Programme was a part of the celebrations of World Investor Awareness Week from 14th of October, 2024 to 20th of October, 2024. The Webinar was coordinated by Ms. Nisha, Librarian of the College under the supervision of Prof. (Dr.) Sangeeta Sudan, Principal of the College. The main aim of the Online Programme was to focus on managing financial planning and precautions for investments. The Resource Person and expert of the

Webinar was Sh. Abhinav Jog (Investment Expert NSDL). He spoke in detail on the topic "Market ka Eklaya".

He shared his expertise on awareness about financial frauds, practical knowledge on Financial Planning, do's and don'ts for investors, precautions for financial methods, tax related investment strategies, knowledge about Stock Market, etc. More than 30 students participated in the Awareness Programme. The faculty members who participated in the Webinar were Dr. Mohinder Nath Sharma, Dr. Sudesh, Dr. Jogbinder Singh Soodan, Dr. Rupalee Jasrotia, Dr. Hilal Bhatt, Dr. Nishu, Dr. Yograj Sharma and Dr. Anju Bala.

KDP Wing of DPAP congratulates Omar led J&K Govt

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: In a joint statement issued by KDP Wing of DPAP through its President Shri Sanjay Dhar, Chairman Sh. Piary Lal Pandita, General Secretary Shri Raj Kumar Ticku, Charanjeet Singh Publicity Secretary and others have congratulated Sh. Umar Abdullah for becoming Chief Minister of J&K, its Cabinet Ministers and newly elected Legislature of J&K and have hoped that new elected Govt and Legislature will workout a concrete policy of resettlement, Rehabilitation of Kashmiri Displaced People with economic, educational, employment packages for reuniting to our birthplace for restoring culture of Kashmiriyet lost since 35 years.

The Leaders have expressed their full hope that in consultation with Central Govt. the newly elected Govt and Legislature will ensure it's first duty to reunite the Kashmiri Displaced People with the majority brethren, so as to restore the harmonial culture of Kashmir which was acknowledged before 1990 in the world.

The Leaders have demanded that being

thankful for granting reservation of two seats on nomination basis in the J&K Assembly a person requires to be nominated from Jammu based Migrant Camps who may be having worked on ground among real sufferers of displacement, post Ninety and not from the people who has never tasted the sufferings of displacement and who can represent on behalf of the Displaced people.

The Leaders have demanded that the new elected Govt and Legislature may create a special police recruitment policy for displaced Youth as the Displaced Community is always thankful to the Dr. Farooq Shahib who had recruited our youths during his previous Govt. under D.G. Burthy Scheme.

The Leaders have appealed the Central and U.T. Govt. to create special recruitment drive for our educated unemployed Youth with merger of P.M. Package employees at par with U.T. Govt. employees and a special Budgetary plan for Rehabilitation of Displaced people in all respects requires to be incorporated.

The Leaders have demanded restoration of STATEHOOD back as

has been promised and announced by the Prime Minister and Home Minister of India during their recent election Rallies in J&K.

The Leaders have expressed thanks to the Dr. Farooq Abdullah Shahib whose good self had been kind enough to pass the Migrants Distress Sale Act, during 1997 and hope that this Act is now implemented in letter and spirit as since that time all the Rulers up to date tried to misrepresent the Act.

The Leaders have demanded that during coming Panchayat, Municipal, Local Bodies elections 5 seats each District are reserved for Kashmiri Displaced Community People and till return to Kashmir, Town Area Committees be sanctioned in Jammu based migrant Camps for over all mitigation of sufferings in exile.

The Leaders have expressed that for last ten years no any Minister from Centre has visited Migrant Camps to mitigate our sufferings and have now hoped that our New Chief Minister will visit Jagti Migrant Camp on his first good visit to Jammu for assessment of on spot our miseries by living in Camps and the redressal thereof.

Shiv Sena appeal to expand cabinet, allocate the portfolio and fulfill the promises



Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 27: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu-Kashmir unit has demanded from Omar government to immediately expand the cabinet and allocate portfolio and fulfill its promises to the public.

In an program organized at party city office, about a dozen people's Influenced by the party's policies and ideas joined the party. Party State chief Manish Sahni welcomed the members with Shiv Bandhan.

Along with this, Sahni appealed to the Omar

government to full expand its cabinet, determining the portfolios to fulfill their promises like 200 units of free electricity, regularizing daily wagers posted in various departments etc.

Sahni said that after a long gap of more than 6 years, the people's elected government has come to power in Jammu-Kashmir. In such a situation, relief should be provided to the public with immediate effect.

Balwant Singh, Raj Singh, Jai Bharat, Rajesh Jay Baby Kaul, Geeta Lakhotra were present on this occasion.

Sharda Budd Vihar celebrates Ashwini Purnima with the Divine Delight of Kheer

Top News Report

JAMMU, Oct 17: On the auspicious occasion of Ashwini Purnima, the Sharda Budd Vihar President Dr Jeet Raj Bazala organised a brief function in Lord Buddha temple at Colonel Colony and served the kheer among the devotees. May the sweet aroma of kheer fill our homes and hearts, reminding us of the boundless love and goodwill that unite us all, prayed Dr Bazala.

R.L. Kaithi who was also present among the devotees, mentioned that a devout woman named Sujata presented Gautam Buddha with kheer on this sacred day marking the beginning of a cherished tradition. This act of generosity and kindness reflects the essence of Buddha's teachings on compassion and selflessness.

Messers Hem Raj, Surjeet Singh, Balwant Raj, Prem Nath, Yash Paul, Jagdish Raj Kaithi, Hakikat Anmol, Tilak Raj and Anubhav were also among others present on the occasion.

CHC Sankoo achieves NQAS Certification



Top News Report

Sankoo, Oct 17: The Community Health Centre (CHC) Sankoo in Kargil has proudly received the National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) Certification from national Health Systems Resource Centre, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare Govt of India.

This recognition highlights the facility's commitment to high-quality healthcare, patient rights, and community awareness.

Community Health Centre (CHC) Sankoo, Kargil is the first health facility in

the Kargil District to achieve this certification, which is issued by the National Health Systems Resource Centre.

The Community Health Centre Sankoo (CHC) underwent a thorough external assessment by empaneled assessors starting on September 26, 2022, evaluating all 12 departments. The assessments focused on various aspects of healthcare delivery and infrastructure, ensuring compliance with national quality benchmarks.

Notably, CHC Sankoo excelled in the external assessment, achieving the highest score of 97.52% among two public

facilities in the Ladakh Union Territory for 2023.

This outstanding performance reflects the center's exemplary adherence to cleanliness and infection control protocols.

Dr. Zahida Khatoon, Block Medical Officer of Community Health Centre Sankoo, expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the doctors, paramedical staff, and housekeeping team for their unwavering dedication and contributions that led to this prestigious recognition.

Their collective efforts have significantly enhanced the quality of care at the facility.

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