

Committee on Public Undertakings reviews functioning of JKPDCL, JAKEDA; seeks factual replies to audit observations



SRINAGAR, OCT 14

The Committee on Public Undertakings of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, under the chairmanship of MLA Mir Saifullah, today held a meeting to deliberate on the queries and observations raised by the Office of the Principal Accountant General concerning functioning of the Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (JKPDCL) and the Jammu and Kashmir Energy Development Agency (JAKEDA).

Members of the Committee, including MLAs Ajaz Ahmed Jan, Pawan Kumar Gupta, Raju Jassotia, Dr. Shafi Ahmad Wani, Saif-ud-din Bhat, Mian Mehr Ali, Reyaz Ahmad Khan, Arjun Singh Raju and

Rafiq Ahmad Naik, attended the meeting.

The meeting was also attended by Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Power Development Department, Ashwani Kumar; Administrative Secretary, Science and Technology Department, Babila Rakwal; Managing Director, JKPDCL, Rahul Yadav; Chief Executive Officer, JAKEDA; Managing Directors of JKPDCL and SPDCCL; Chief Engineers; Superintending Engineers of PDD and other senior officers of the concerned departments besides representatives of the audit and Finance departments.

During the deliberations, the Committee stressed the need for greater transparency, accountability and dedication in the discharge

of official responsibilities to ensure the effective functioning of these organisations. The Chairman, along with the Committee members, directed the concerned departments to furnish comprehensive, fact-based and satisfactory replies to the queries and observations raised by the Office of the Principal Accountant General at the next meeting of the Committee. The Committee emphasised that the functioning of JKPDCL and JAKEDA should be fair, impartial and equitable across the entire Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, without any regional discrimination or disparity. It underscored the importance of ensuring that departmental decisions and the delivery of services are guided

by principles of fairness, transparency and public interest.

The Committee stressed upon the officers to ensure that all audit observations and queries are examined in a comprehensive and timely manner, with replies supported by relevant records, documentary evidence and factual details. It emphasised that incomplete, vague or evasive responses should be avoided and the concerned officers must take personal responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of the information furnished to the Committee.

The Chairman directed the concerned departments to strengthen their internal monitoring and accountability mechanisms and ensure strict adherence to established rules, procedures and financial regulations. He underscored the need for transparency in administrative and financial matters and called for corrective measures wherever deficiencies or procedural lapses are identified.

Reiterating the need for equitable development and service delivery, the Committee called upon JKPDCL and JAKEDA to ensure that their policies, programmes and initiatives are implemented fairly across all regions of the Union Territory, without any regional bias or discrimination.

DC Jammu chairs series of meetings; stresses integrity, coordination for efficient public service delivery



JAMMU, OCT 14

Deputy Commissioner Jammu Minga Sherpa today chaired a series of meetings to assess the functioning of different departments. In his maiden meeting with the staff of the DC Office, the Deputy Commissioner underlined the importance of integrity, punctuality and professional conduct. He emphasised close coordination among departments to enable Jammu to figure among the top-performing districts in public service delivery. "Inter-departmental coordination is imperative to enhance efficiency and ensure that benefits of government schemes reach the people in

a time-bound manner" he said at a meeting with all district and sectoral officers. He also sought immediate reports from the officers for the further streamlining of the system.

While reviewing the functioning of the Rural Development Department, the DC assessed the status of the Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II). To meet the scheme's targets of saturation in four key areas, the DC directed the officers to ensure on-grid power connections, all-weather rural road connectivity, 4G mobile connectivity and direct-to-home TV access across the identified border villages.

Emphasising optimum space utilisation, diligent local planning and swift ground-level execution, he also directed targeted delivery under rural healthcare, employment generation and banking accessibility.

In a separate meeting with Sub-Divisional Magistrates, Tehsildars and other concerned officers, the DC reviewed the activities of the Revenue Department. He underscored a detailed review of the digitisation and updation of land records, AgriStack and other important matters. The DC asked the officers to work with professionalism, sincerity and dedication to ensure hassle-free services to the public.

MVD intensifies Enforcement Drive in Shopian

16 E-Challans issued, Rs14,000 fine imposed

SHOPIAN, OCT 14

Motor Vehicles Department (MVD), Shopian, conducted an enforcement drive today, to ensure strict compliance with traffic regulations and promote road safety.

During the drive, 43 vehicles were checked, 16 e-challans were issued and fines amounting to Rs 14,000 were imposed for various traffic violations. The violations included riding without helmets, driving without seatbelts, wrong parking and failure to produce valid vehicle insurance and Pollution Under Control Certificates (PUC).

The enforcement drive aimed to enhance road discipline, ensure adherence to traffic rules, and promote responsible driving practices among motorists. The department stressed the importance of complying with all traffic regulations to prevent road accidents and safeguard the lives of commuters. ATO Shopian reiterated that such enforcement drives will continue to deter traffic viola-



tions and ensure strict adherence to road safety norms. Motorists were advised to wear helmets, use seatbelts, park vehicles at designated places and keep all mandatory vehicle documents valid and up to

date. The Motor Vehicles Department appealed to the public to cooperate with the authorities and follow traffic rules in letter and spirit to make roads safer for all.

KATRA, OCT 14

A grand devotional Shobha Yatra was taken out in the holy town of Katra on the fourth day of Navratri Festival 2026, witnessing enthusiastic participation from devotees and showcasing the region's rich spiritual traditions, cultural heritage and religious fervour.

The Shobha Yatra formed an important part of the ongoing Navratri Festival celebrations, bringing together devotees, local residents and visitors in an atmosphere of faith, devotion and communal harmony. Additional District Development Commissioner Resal Krishan Lal was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Addressing the gathering, he said that Navratri symbolises faith, devotion and the triumph of good over evil. He emphasised that religious and cultural events play an important role in preserving traditional values, strengthening social harmony and fostering unity among people.

The ADCC highlighted the significance of the Navratri festival in promoting religious tourism and reinforcing Katra's identity as a prominent spiritual destina-



tion attracting devotees from across the country and beyond. He also appreciated the efforts of the organisers, the District Administration and other stakeholders in ensuring the smooth conduct of the festival. Meanwhile, the All-India Devotional Song Competition, being organised as part of the Navratri Festival 2026, continued here at the Yog Ashram Complex with an evening of soulful devotional music and impressive performances by participants. The programme was inaugurated by Chief Executive Officer, Patnitop Development Authority

Rakesh Dubey by lighting the traditional ceremonial lamp. The event was attended by Gopal Singh, Chief Executive Officer, Katra Development Authority; Assistant Director Tourism; former competition winner Rajan Gill; Swami Yoganand Ji Maharaj and other dignitaries.

As many as 13 participants showcased their singing talent during the competition. Aditya from Jammu secured first position, while Ojassi Sharma from Udhampur secured second position. Babee Staniz Edres from Jammu and Vicky Gill from Karnal, Haryana, jointly secured third position. The winners were

awarded cash prizes of ₹10,000, ₹5,000 and ₹3,000, respectively.

The performances were evaluated by a panel of music experts comprising Dr. Surinder Sharma, C. L. Verma and Anupama Sharma. Former competition winner Rajan Gill also enthralled the audience with his powerful voice and captivating performance, drawing enthusiastic appreciation from those present.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman of the competition Rakesh Wazir announced that renowned singer Johnny Sufi would perform on October 15 and also serve as a judge. He further informed that popular singers including Shanker Sawhney, Suraj Singh, Naveen Punjabi and Sonali Dogra, would also perform during the ongoing festival.

The All India Devotional Song Competition is being organised by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, the J&K Tourism Department and PTC Network, in association with partner organisations and with the active support of the District Administration and the local community.

Satish Sharma reviews Transport, FS&CA, IT issues; meets deputations



SRINAGAR, OCT 14

Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FS&CA), Information Technology (IT), Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today held a series of meetings with senior officials to review key issues concerning the Transport, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, and Information Technology departments. He also met a deputation from Ganderbal led by Sheikh Javid and a delegation of a human rights organisation led by Abrar Lone to discuss issues raised by them. During his meeting with Commissioner Secretary Transport, R Alie Vaz, the Minister discussed the vehicle scrappage policy, ease of doing business, revenue generation through departmental assets, operationalisation of Automated Testing Stations (ATS) at Pampore and Nagrota besides pending subsidy cases and issues raised by various transport associations. The Minister also took up the issue of buses reportedly stranded in Delhi await-

ing delivery from the Government of India. He stressed the need for coordinated efforts with the concerned authorities to facilitate an early resolution. He emphasised the importance of addressing the genuine concerns of transporters, expediting pending cases and streamlining departmental procedures to improve service delivery. The Minister subsequently met Commissioner Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Saurabh Bhagat and discussed various departmental matters, including issues concerning the functioning of the department and effective delivery of essential services. The Minister emphasised the need for timely resolution of pending matters and continued efforts to ensure efficient public service delivery. Satish Sharma also met Secretary, Information Technology, Rahul Yadav and held detailed discussions on several matters related to the department. The discussions focused on key depart-

mental issues, implementation of IT initiatives and measures to strengthen digital governance and improve the delivery of technology-enabled public services. The Minister stressed the importance of effective coordination, timely implementation of departmental programmes and a result-oriented approach to addressing issues requiring administrative attention. Later, Satish Sharma met a deputation from Ganderbal district led by Sheikh Javid, which projected several issues concerning the district and sought the Minister's intervention for their resolution. The deputation highlighted the public concerns and development-related matters requiring the attention of the concerned authorities.

The Minister gave a patient hearing to the delegation and assured its members that the issues raised would be examined and taken up with the relevant departments for appropriate action. Emphasising the importance of addressing the grassroots-level concerns, Satish Sharma stated that regular interaction with people and their representatives was essential for identifying local issues and ensuring responsive governance. He assured the deputation that genuine grievances would receive due consideration and that necessary follow-up would be undertaken with the concerned authorities. Subsequently, a deputation of a Human rights protection organization led by Abrar Lone also met the Minister and discussed various matters concerning the organisation and issues raised by its members. Satish Sharma gave a patient hearing to the delegation and assured that the matters brought to his notice would be examined in accordance with the applicable rules and procedures, with appropriate follow-up wherever required.

MLA Arvind Gupta inaugurates Rs 35 Lakh Development Works in Krishna Nagar



JAMMU, OCT 14

Hon'ble MLA Shri Arvind Gupta of Jammu West today inaugurated lane and drain construction works worth Rs 35 lakh near Gura Baidas Mandir in Ward No. 12, Krishna Nagar, Jammu West, reaffirming his commitment to strengthening civic infrastructure and improving basic amenities for local residents. During his visit, the MLA also inspected ongoing sewerage and drain construction works in the area and reviewed their progress with officials of the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC). He directed the concerned officials to ensure the timely completion of all ongoing projects while maintaining quality standards and ensuring that residents do not face unnecessary inconvenience during construction. Speaking on the occasion, Shri Arvind Gupta said, "The develop-

ment of Jammu West and the welfare of its residents remain my foremost priorities. Our focus is on providing better lanes, efficient drainage and sewerage facilities, improved sanitation and quality civic infrastructure. Every development project must translate into tangible benefits for the people. I have directed the concerned officials to maintain high-quality standards and complete the ongoing works within the stipulated timeframe. We are committed to addressing public grievances and ensuring advanced development across Jammu West."

The MLA further emphasized that coordinated efforts between elected representatives and the concerned departments are essential to resolving local issues and delivering effective public services. He reiterated that the concerns of residents would continue to receive due attention and that development

works would be undertaken with a focus on public convenience, accountability and long-term benefits.

The ongoing development works in Ward No. 12 are aimed at improving drainage facilities, strengthening sanitation infrastructure and upgrading essential civic amenities for residents of Krishna Nagar. The programme was attended by BJP Talab Tillo Mandal President Shri Anil Angal Ji; senior leaders Shri Kundan Lal Gupta Ji, Shri Ramesh Kumar Ji, Smt. Chakshu Kapoor Ji, Smt. Jatinder Kour Ji, Shri Surjeet Singh Chib Ji, Shri Bisham Chib Ji, Shri Ajay Singh Ji, Smt. Kanta Devi Ji, Shri Sanjay Gupta Ji, Shri Manmohan Sharma Ji and Shri Samandeep Singh Karan Ji, along with a large number of local residents. AEE and JE officials from the Jammu Municipal Corporation were also present on the occasion.

Chief Secretary attends Drug-Free Ladakh Awareness Campaign at EJM College, Leh

LEH, OCT 14

Chief Secretary, Union Territory of Ladakh, Ashish Kundra, today attended a drug-free awareness campaign at Eliezer Joldan Memorial (EJM) College, Leh, aimed at sensitising students about the harmful effects of drug abuse and promoting a healthy, drug-free society.

The campaign was organised by Vidyarthi CEVA Educational Trust in collaboration with Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Ladakh, and M3M Foundation. A large number of students and faculty members participated in the programme.

The programme commenced with the singing of the national song, Vande Mataram, followed by the felicitation of the Chief Secretary, the Guest of Honour and the Principal of EJM College with traditional khatags and

mementos.

During the programme, the organisers announced a 90-day drug awareness campaign to be conducted across schools and educational institutions in Ladakh. The initiative will focus on educating students about the harmful consequences of drug abuse and will also include career counselling sessions to guide young people towards better educational and professional opportunities.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra appreciated the organisers for taking up an important social issue. He observed that drug abuse had emerged as a major challenge worldwide, affecting individuals, families and communities, including those in Ladakh. Referring to Punjab as an example of the adverse impact of drug



abuse on society, he cautioned that Ladakh must remain vigilant and adopt collective measures to protect its youth from such menace. Highlighting Ladakh's strategic importance as

a border region, he emphasised that the vulnerability of young people could have wider consequences for society and warned against attempts by unscrupulous elements to exploit youth

for monetary gains and vested interests. The Chief Secretary said that the youth of Ladakh possessed immense talent and potential, which should be channelled

towards the development of the region and the nation. He urged students to stay away from drugs, cautioning that substance abuse could derail their dreams, aspirations and future while causing distress to their parents and families.

He encouraged students to spread awareness among their peers and support individuals struggling with addiction by motivating them to seek counselling and appropriate assistance. He further advised students to focus on their education and aspire to become scientists, professors, administrators and other professionals who could contribute meaningfully to society. He also urged them to adopt healthy and constructive activities for recreation and personal growth.

Speaking on the occasion, Professor Nagesh Thakur also appealed to students to remain away from drug abuse. He emphasised that the energy, dedication, discipline and potential of young people must be channelled towards constructive and socially beneficial activities. He called upon students to actively support such initiatives to expand awareness about the harmful effects of drugs among the youth.

The programme underscored the importance of collective responsibility, youth participation and sustained awareness efforts in addressing drug abuse and building a healthier, safer and drug-free Ladakh.



DC Kathua reviews implementation of solid waste management rules

KATHUA, OCT 14

Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rajesh Sharma today chaired a meeting here at the DC Office Complex to review the implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the waste management practices being presently followed and stressed the need for effective implementation of the prescribed rules governing collection, segregation, transportation and scientific disposal of solid waste.

He directed the concerned departments to ensure strict compliance with the applicable rules and emphasised the identification and proper management of bulk waste generators.

He further directed the concerned authorities to issue notices to industrial units for ensuring compliance with the prescribed solid waste management norms.

The DC called for strengthening monitoring mechanisms, promoting waste segregation at source and intensifying public awareness campaigns to discourage indiscriminate dumping of waste.

He stressed coordinated efforts among all stakeholders to improve sanitation standards and ensure environmentally sustainable waste management practices. ADC Kathua Sachin Jaiswal, CPO Kathua Ranjeet Thakur, ACP Ajay Kumar, AO Akhil Kumar, CEO MC Kathua Amit Sharma and representatives from concerned departments were present in the meeting.

Sakeena Itoo discusses key issues of school education sector with members of Civil Society, representatives of Private Schools Association and Parents Association

SRINAGAR, OCT 14

Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today chaired a meeting with Civil Society Members as well as representatives of Private Schools Association and Parents Association, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders to discuss key issues concerning the school education sector and explore measures for improving the quality, transparency and overall functioning of the education system in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting witnessed detailed deliberations on a range of issues, including the availability and pricing of textbooks, freedom of choice for parents in purchasing books and uniforms, academic coordination between government and private schools, timely preparation for the commencement of the new academic session, issues related to school recognition and No Objection Certificates (NOCs), verification procedures and other concerns raised by the stakeholders.

Commissioner Secretary, School Education, Ram Nivas Sharma, Chairman JKBOSE, Director School Education Jammu/Kashmir, Secretary JKBOSE, other senior officers of school education department were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the participants, the Minister appreciated the constructive suggestions put forth by representatives from both Jammu and Kashmir divisions and underscored the need for sustained engagement among all stakeholders to address the concerns of students, parents and educational institutions. She emphasised that the pri-



mary objective of both government and private educational institutions should be to ensure the delivery of quality education and provide students with an enabling environment for academic excellence, holistic development and future success.

"The objective should not be to compare government schools with private institutions, but to work collectively towards providing quality education to every child. Both sectors have made significant contributions to the education system, and their respective strengths must be acknowledged and further strengthened," the Minister said.

Sakeena Itoo said that the government is committed to strengthening public education while also recognising the important role played by private schools in expanding educational opportunities. She called for greater coordination, mutual understanding and institutional cooperation to ensure that the interests of students remain paramount.

"Government has made concerted efforts in coordination to streamline the system and address longstanding administrative and academic issues," she said.

She acknowledged the role of departmental officers and the leadership of the concerned educational institutions in resolving pending matters and bringing greater efficiency to the functioning of the education sector.

Emphasising the importance of advance planning for the academic session, the Minister said that necessary preparations concerning textbooks, syllabus and other academic requirements must be undertaken well in advance, particularly in view of the proposed commencement of the new academic session in November.

She directed the concerned officers to examine the issues raised during the meeting and take appropriate measures to ensure timely resolution of matters falling within their jurisdiction.

The Minister also called for the constitution of a representative committee comprising members of Private Schools Associations, Parents' Associations, selected NGOs and officers of the Education Department to examine issues affecting the functioning of private schools and recommend practical measures for improving transparency, accountability and coordination.

She asked the Commissioner Secretary, School Education, to formulate a proposal for the committee as the earliest, incorporating suitable representation from all relevant

stakeholders, so that the proposed mechanism could be made functional without unnecessary delay. On the issue of textbooks and school uniforms, Sakeena Itoo stressed that parents must be provided the freedom to purchase books and other essential educational material from vendors of their choice. She made it clear that there should be no compulsion on parents to purchase books from a particular bookseller or publisher, and that any concerns regarding pricing, availability or other related practices must be addressed through appropriate institutional mechanisms.

The Minister urged private school managements to exercise greater responsibility in addressing such complaints and maintaining public confidence in their institutions.

She observed that isolated instances of irregularities could adversely affect the reputation of the entire education sector and, therefore, required timely attention and corrective action.

She also stressed the need for private educational institutions to follow applicable rules and regulations in matters concerning the engagement and service conditions of teaching staff, while ensuring fairness, stability and respect for the contribution of teachers to the education system.

Referring to the similarities between the syllabi followed by government and private schools, the Minister called upon the concerned authorities to examine areas where greater academic coordination and uniformity could be achieved, in accordance with the applicable curriculum and academic framework.

Basic Rock-Climbing Course Concludes Successfully at Leh

**LEH, OCT 14**

The Basic Rock-Climbing Course, conducted by the Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF) with the support of the Department of Tourism, UT Ladakh, concluded successfully at Leh today.

The closing ceremony was graced by Shri Sanjit Rodrigues, IAS, Administrative Secretary, Tourism & Culture Department, UT Ladakh; Shri Mohammad Anjum, JKAS, Under Secretary, Tourism & Culture Department, UT Ladakh; Shri Shiv Kumar C, Chief Instructor, along with other instructors and officials of the Indian Mountaineering Foundation.

The course was conducted from October 8 to 14, 2026, with the participation of 28 trainees. The programme provided the participants an opportunity to undergo structured training in basic rock climbing under the guidance of instructors from the Indian Mountaineering Foundation. During the closing ceremony, the Administrative Secretary, Tourism & Culture presented certificates to the participants on successful completion of the course. He also interacted with the trainees and sought feedback on their experiences during the training programme. The participants shared their experiences and expressed their gratitude to the Administrative Secretary and the Department of Tourism for providing them with the opportunity to participate in the course. They appreciated the training and described their overall experience as positive and enriching.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Chief Medical Superintendent, Northern Railway, Jammu, on behalf of the President of India invites Expression of Interest on the prescribed form for the following work:

Expression of interest from ES/ ECHS/ CGHS empanelled non-empanelled private hospitals for empanelment for treatment of patients of Health/UNIS/DK (Katra), Jammu and Kangra Valley section of Jammu Division.

Name of work	Completion period	Two year from the date of commencement	Estimated cost of work	NA
Earnest money	NA	Cost of application form by Cash/By post	NA	NA
Place/s of submission of bids	Complete file should reach in the office of Chief Medical Superintendent, N.Ry. Divisional Hospital, Jammu one month from the date of the issue of notice time 13:00 hrs.			
No. of Med/ JAT/ Recd	102-1/2026	Date: 14.10.2026		

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 3566/2026

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

Sr/Direct/GFZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders (tenders.nrrpa.gov.in) against below listed Tenders. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only.

Tender No.	Name of work	App. Cost. (in ₹)	Earnest Money (in ₹)	Completion period	Opening of tender	Website Particulars
251-Elect/2026-27	A-Electrical work in c/w Interlocking of 4 No's manned L-Xing gates in c/w raising of sectional speed up to 130 KMPH of JUC-ASR section on Over FZR division.					
251-Elect/2026-27	B-Electrical work in c/w Interlocking of 5 No's Non-interlocked L-Xing gates having TVU >50000 over Firozpur Division.	Rs. 70,27,877.42	Rs. 140600.00	06 Months	03.11.2026 17:00 hrs	www.nrrpa.gov.in
251-Elect/2026-27	C-Electrical work in c/w Provision of BBS between MOW-ASR HMR-DW and JRC-CEU-on-SNL-ASR section.					
251-Elect/2026-27	D-Electrical work in c/w Conversion of BH-01, BTTN and MAUL- from IBS to BBS on Jalandhar-Catni Sahnewal Jn Section.					

No. 251-Elect/T Notice No. 24-R3-Elect/2026-26 Dated: 13.10.2026 3577/2026

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

Tender Notice No. 770-W/01/NA/JAT/2025-26, 62-2026-27, JAT-DRM/JAT, 63-2026-27, JAT-DRM/JAT, 64-2026-27, JAT-DRM/JAT, 65-2026-27, JAT-DRM/JAT, 66-2026-27, JAT-DRM/JAT, 67-2026-27, JAT-DRM/JAT (to be opened on 04.11.2026) acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below listed tenders and available on www.nrrpa.gov.in with closing date 04.11.2026 up to 15:00 hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to the closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through payment modes available on the IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand Draft, Banker cheques, Deposit receipts, FDR, etc. are not allowed.

Tender Notice No. 770-WFO/INVAJ/2026, 62-2026-27 JAT-DRM/JAT, 63-2026-27 JAT-DRM/JAT, 66-2026-27 JAT-DRM/JAT, 67-2026-27 JAT-DRM/JAT shall be opened on or on behalf of The Ministry of India invites open tenders (F-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.irps.gov.in with closing date 04.11.2026 up to 10.05 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original revised bids up to the closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against these tenders tender document cost and earnest money only payment mode available on the IRPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker cheques, Deposit receipts, FDR, etc. are not allowed.				Bidding System single packet System		
Tender Type		Tendering Section		Bidding System		
Open		Works		single packet System		
Date of Uploading Tenders		Bid Starting Date		Bid Closing Date/Time		
13.10.2026		21.10.2026		04.11.2026		
S. No.	Tender No.	Details of Tender		Advised Value (Rs.)	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
1.	62-2026-27, JAT-DRM/JAT	Drain work in connection with improvement to KTHU, BOHY, CHNR, GHGL, HNRN, SMBX, VJY, BBMM, and JAT station yards in the jurisdiction of ADENPTK.		6,82,81,470.41	60 Days	12 Months
2.	63-2026-27, JAT-DRM/JAT	Flash butt welding in connection to improvement to KTHU, BOHY, CHNR, GHGL, HNRN, SMBX, VJY, BBMM, and JAT station yards in the jurisdiction of ADENPTK.		2,13,47,275.88	60 Days	09 Months
3.	66-2026-27, JAT-DRM/JAT	Ballast work in connection to improvement to BPRS, CGH, TDO, KZK, DZA, UCB, MEX & BNGL station yard in the jurisdiction of ADENPTK.		2,73,74,872.78	60 Days	12 Months
4.	67-2026-27, JAT-DRM/JAT	Improvement to BPRS, CGH, TDO, KZK, DZA, UCB, MEX & BNGL station yards in the jurisdiction of ADENPTK.		2,36,18,205.61	60 Days	12 Months

Note : Contractors are advised to check the IREPS website for any corrigendum issued against this tender before submitting the bids No. 770-W/01/NA/JAT/2025-26 Dated: 14.10.2026 3582/2026

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

Lieutenant Governor Congratulates GMC Srinagar on Advancing Internal Medicine Conference

SRINAGAR, OCT 14

The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today congratulated Government Medical College, Srinagar for organising a conference on "Advancing Internal Medicine: From Evidence to Excellence in Clinical Practice". In his message, the Lieutenant Governor underscored the critical role of internal medicine in delivering holistic and patient-centric healthcare.

The Lieutenant Governor said that physicians often face the challenging task of identifying complex underlying health conditions from seemingly simple symptoms. He noted that the strength of internal medicine lies in its ability to view the human body as an interconnected system and to understand the complete medical story of a patient through clinical knowledge, experience and careful observation.

The Lieutenant Governor also stated that observation, reason, human understanding and courage remain the defining qualities of a physician. He highlighted that physicians frequently serve as the first point of medical contact for families and, in many cases, build enduring relationships across generations, rooted in trust, compassion and scientific evidence.

The Lieutenant Governor in his message lauded Government Medical College, Srinagar for its significant contribution to medical education and healthcare, noting that generations of doctors trained



by the institution continue to serve across Jammu Kashmir and the country.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted the emerging healthcare challenges. "While infectious diseases remain a concern, lifestyle-related disorders such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, fatty liver disease and cardiovascular ailments are assuming epidemic proportions. We need to ensure that advances in diagnostics, therapeutics and medical technologies reach physicians and patients in rural and remote areas as effectively as they do in urban centres," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also called upon the medical fraternity to strengthen indigenous research and generate evidence relevant to India's diverse population. He said that the country's demographic

diversity, combined with the expertise and commitment of doctors, presents immense opportunities for scientific discovery and innovation.

"Medical science is making historic advances, and new drugs and diagnostic tools have opened up new possibilities for treatment. The greatest need today is to ensure that these innovations are not available only to physicians in large cities, but also reach doctors in villages. We must ensure that there is not even the slightest gap between urban and rural areas in access to facilities and available tools. This should be the first objective of this conference," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also outlined a five-year roadmap and proposed six key commitments for the medical community including expanding access to advanced

medical knowledge through digital health platforms and telemedicine, prioritising preventive healthcare and early detection of diseases, using technology and artificial intelligence as supportive tools while preserving clinical judgement, continuously strengthening research capacity, ensuring the wellbeing of doctors and addressing professional burnout and preserving human compassion at the centre of healthcare delivery.

The Lieutenant Governor also urged the young doctors to remain curious, embrace innovation and learn from experienced mentors. He also called upon senior physicians to generously share their clinical wisdom and guide the next generation of healthcare professionals.

"Early detection of diabetes, hypertension and liver disease is less costly and can help reduce treatment expenses. I urge all physicians and internists to lead prevention campaigns at the community level, because a doctor's voice can have an extraordinary influence on society. I have every confidence that people will take your advice seriously when it comes to preventing lifestyle-related diseases. We must value physicians' hard work, service and dedication. Along with caring for patients, hospitals and institutions, it should be ensured that doctors are cared for too. Providing them with better workplaces and working conditions should be a priority," the Lieutenant Governor said.

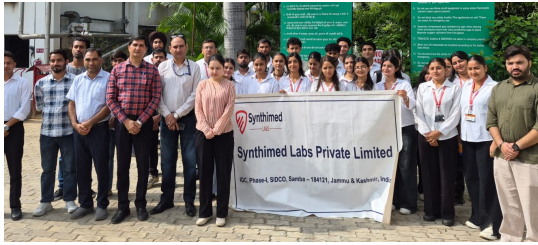
Central University of Jammu Organises Industrial Visit for Students to Synthimed Labs Private Limited, Samba

JAMMU, OCT 14

The Community College of the Central University of Jammu organised an industrial visit for its students to Synthimed Labs Private Limited, Samba, to provide them with first-hand exposure to industrial operations, pharmaceutical manufacturing processes, quality control mechanisms, and supply chain management practices.

During the visit, Sh. Ramesh Bhardwaj, Head-HR, Synthimed Labs Private Limited, welcomed the students and introduced them to the company's operations. Mr. Ankush, Deputy Manager-HR, Ms. Kajal, Executive-HR, and members of the company's various departments coordinated the visit and facilitated the students' interaction with industry professionals.

During the plant tour, the students were briefed about the various stages involved in the manufacturing of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs), including production procedures and temperature control mechanisms maintained in the production units. The company representatives also apprised the students of the organisation's multi-location manufacturing facilities and its adherence to stringent USFDA and other regulatory standards. The students were further informed about the company's significant presence in the man-



ufacturing of APIs catering to several therapeutic segments, including cardiovascular health, antihistamines, antidiabetics, antipsychotics, antimigraine medications, antineoplastic drugs, ADHD-related treatments, analgesics, alcohol abstinence, and bone resorption inhibitors. The company representatives also highlighted its global leadership position in the macrolide antibiotic segment and its role as a major exporter of APIs. As part of the visit, the students observed various machines and equipment used for testing and ensuring the quality of pharmaceutical products manufactured at the facility. An interactive session was also organised, during which students engaged with

company officials and raised queries concerning manufacturing processes, quality assurance, and supply chain management. The session provided them with valuable insights into the practical challenges and operational requirements of the pharmaceutical industry. Sh. Ramesh Bhardwaj also shared his professional experiences and perspectives with the students, offering them valuable guidance on industry practices and career opportunities. The visit was organised under the visionary leadership of the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sanjeev Jain, with the objective of bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical industry exposure. The initiative

aimed to familiarise students with contemporary industrial practices, enhance their understanding of corporate operations, and equip them with insights into the professional work environment. The students were accompanied by Dr. Nareesh Kumar Sharma, Principal, Community College, Central University of Jammu, along with other faculty members of the College. The industrial visit reflects the University's continued commitment to experiential learning, industry-academia interaction, and the holistic development of students by providing them with meaningful opportunities to extend classroom learning with real-world industrial practices.

Social Activist Amit Uppal Engages with Retd. Sessions Judge Subhash Gupta During 'Kanooni Charcha' in Jammu

JAMMU, OCT 14

Social activist Amit Uppal, along with fellow three-year LL.B. students Mohit Manhas and Randhir Singh, participated in an insightful legal interaction with Retired Sessions Judge and former Public Service Commission (PSC) Member Subhash Gupta at his premises in Jammu under the programme "Kanooni Charcha."

Er Shubham Kotwal, a working journalist and three-year LL.B. student at KC Law College, Jammu, was also part of the interaction. The discussion focused on the law of torts, its fundamental principles and its practical application in everyday life and the justice system. The interaction provided the students with an opportunity to learn from the judicial experience of Subhash Gupta and gain a better understanding of how legal principles are applied beyond the classroom. Amit Uppal, who is associated with social activism and initiatives promoting green energy, represents the connection between legal education, social responsibility and public awareness. His participation in the interaction reflected the impor-



portance of understanding legal rights, civil responsibilities and the role of law in addressing issues affecting society. The programme "Kanooni Charcha" seeks to encourage meaningful conversations on legal matters and create opportunities for students to engage with experienced legal professionals and members of the judiciary. Such initiatives can help aspiring advocates develop a practical understanding of the law while strengthening their analytical and critical-thinking skills. The participating students, who are pursuing their three-year LL.B. at KC Law College, Jammu, exchanged views on the significance of

tort law and its relevance to civil liability, individual rights and accountability. The interaction also highlighted the importance of bridging the gap between academic legal studies and practical knowledge. Er Shubham Kotwal's participation brought together the perspectives of journalism and legal education, underscoring the importance of informed public discourse and accessible legal awareness. The meeting concluded with an emphasis on the value of practical learning, social responsibility and constructive dialogue in promoting a better understanding of the legal system and the rule of law.

NMOPS Kathua Urges NPS Employees to Unite for Restoration of Old Pension Scheme

KATHUA, OCT 14

The District President of the National Movement for Old Pension Scheme (NMOPS), Kathua, Aakash Kashyap, has appealed to all employees appointed under the New Pension System (NPS) in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly those appointed after January 1, 2010, to unite under the banner of NMOPS and strengthen the collective struggle for the restoration of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS).

Aakash Kashyap said that NMOPS, under the leadership of its National President, Vijay Kumar Bandhu, and UT President Mohammed Ashraf Sheikh in Jammu and Kashmir, has consistently been fighting for the restoration of OPS and the protection of employees' post-retirement social security. He said that the sustained efforts of NMOPS and the united struggle of employees have contributed to the restoration of OPS in several states, including Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Jharkhand. He expressed confidence that continued unity and determination among employees would further strengthen the nationwide movement for pension security. Highlighting an important development, Kashyap said that persistent efforts by NMOPS had helped secure a one-time option for eligible employees whose recruitment advertisements were issued before the implementation of the New Pension System, subject to the applicable govern-

ment provisions. He pointed out that while the relevant cut-off dates in several other states relate to recruitment advertisements issued before

not merely a financial benefit but an essential component of social security that provides stability, dignity and peace of mind to employees and their families in old age. He said that NMOPS covered employees in Kathua district and across Jammu and Kashmir to rise above departmental differences and stand united under the NMOPS banner. He said that collective strength, sustained efforts and democratic participation were essential to achieving the legitimate demand for pension security. "We must remain united and continue our peaceful and democratic struggle until the Old Pension Scheme is restored for all eligible employees. Pension security is a matter of dignity, justice and the future of employees and their families," Aakash Kashyap asserted.

The District President reiterated that NMOPS Kathua would continue to support the movement under the leadership of UT President Mohammed Ashraf Sheikh and called upon all NPS-covered employees to actively participate in organisational activities and extend their campaign for the restoration of OPS. He concluded by stating that employee unity is the greatest strength of the pension movement and that the collective voice of NPS employees must continue to reach the authorities until their legitimate demand is addressed.

December 31, 2003, Jammu and Kashmir has a cut-off date of December 24, 2009. He said that this provision is significant for eligible employees serving in various departments, including KAS officers, doctors, lecturers, teachers and police personnel. However, he emphasised that this limited relief should not divert attention from the principal demand of NMOPS for the restoration of OPS for all eligible employees covered under NPS. Kashyap stressed that employees who have devoted the prime years of their lives to public service deserve a secure and dignified retirement. He said that pension is

Jammu Central Mahajan Sabha facilitated Mahajan Predator Jammu on winning the MSPL Season 3 title

JAMMU, OCT 14

The Jammu Central Mahajan Sabha (JCMS) facilitated Mahajan Predators Jammu on winning the Mahajan Shiromani Premier League (MSPL).

The JCMS facilitated Mahajan Predator Jammu on winning the MSPL Season 3 title with a thrilling victory over Mahajan fighters Gurdaspur and emerged as winners of Mahajan Shiromani Premier League Season 3 played at Jammu on 4th October 2026.

While speaking on the occasion, Ramesh Chander Gupta congratulated the Working team captain Ashwani Jandial and team members at Jammu today on 14/10/2026 and said that it was a great effort of Jammu players as a team to clinch the Series while defeating Kathua, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar and at the League stage as Dinanagar in the semi-final. The match was played on 6th September 26 to 27 September 26. The President gave mementos and facilitated the winning team along with a cash prize of Rs 25000/- as an encouragement to the best and future endeavours. Sanjay Mahajan, Gen Secy also played an important role as a coordinator of the match. Today's program proceedings were conducted by him. Shiv Pratap Gupta (Sr. Vice President) also highlighted the importance of games for prosperity of the country. The details of the final match played between Mahajan Predator Jammu and Mahajan fighters Gurdaspur are as under:- Mahajan Predators Jammu clinched MSPL Season 3 Title with a Thrilling Victory Over Mahajan Fighters Gurdaspur. Jammu Mahajan Predators Jammu emerged champions of the Mahajan Shiromani Premier



League (MSPL Season 3), defeating Mahajan Fighters Gurdaspur in a thrilling final to lift the coveted trophy. The Jammu team received a winning prize of 72 lakh, while the runners-up, Mahajan fighters Gurdaspur, were awarded 11 lakh. The tournament was organised under the leadership of Shri Jang Lal Mahajan Ji, MLA Mukerian, Punjab, and President of Akhil Bharatiya Mahajan Shiromani Sabha with support from parent body Amit Gupta. The tournament was conducted with the blessings and authorisation of Jammu Central Mahajan Sabha (JCMS). Mahajan Predators Jammu Post 214 runs in the Final. Batting first, Mahajan Predators Jammu put up an impressive total of 214 runs for the loss of 8 wickets in 20 overs, setting a challenging target for Mahajan Fighters of Gurdaspur. The Jammu side delivered a spirited bowling performance to restrict Gurdaspur to 201 runs for the loss of 7 wickets, securing a memorable victory by 13 runs and being crowned MSPL Season 3 champions.

Ujjwal Gupta Shines with a Match-Winning Knock. The star of the final was Ujjwal Gupta, who played a breathtaking innings of 64 runs off just 21 balls, smashing nine sixes and turning the momentum firmly in Jammu's favour. His explosive batting earned him the Man of the Match award in the final. Kanan made a valuable contribution with 38 runs off 54 balls, including five fours, while Rohit Gupta scored a crucial 40 runs off 22 balls, striking seven fours. The important partnership between Kanan and Rohit helped strengthen the team's batting effort and laid the foundation for a competitive total. With the ball, Manik Gupta delivered a crucial spell, taking two wickets in two overs while conceding only 14 runs. Captain Ashwani Jandial also played a vital role, claiming three wickets in four overs for 33 runs. Under the leadership of captain Ashwani Jandial and vice-captain Rohit Gupta, Mahajan Predators Jammu displayed outstanding teamwork, discipline

and determination throughout the competition. The team completed an impressive campaign comprising three league matches, one semifinal and the final, demonstrating consistency across all stages of the tournament. The championship victory reflected the collective efforts of the entire squad, with contributions from both the batting and bowling departments. Eight Teams Participated in MSPL Season 3. The tournament witnessed participation from eight teams representing different regions: 1. Gurdaspur 2. Jalandhar 1 3. Jalandhar 2 4. Dinanagar 5. Kathua 6. Jammu 7. Pathankot 8. Dharwad. The league provided a valuable platform for bringing members of the Mahajan community together through cricket, promoting sportsmanship, unity and a spirit of healthy competition. The successful conclusion of MSPL Season 3 was a proud moment for Mahajan Predators Jammu and the wider Mahajan community. The team dedicated its achievement to the collective support, blessings and encouragement received from the organisers, Jammu Central Mahajan Sabha, supporters and well-wishers. Mahajan Predators Jammu Champions of MSPL Season 3! The community members and office bearers who were present on the occasion Subash Gupta, Vice President, Ramesh Gupta (Bartan Wale), Arun Gupta (Office Secy), Dr Bimal Gupta, Bhuvneshwar Gupta, Darshan Gupta and others.

Khalsa Premier League (KPL)-2026 first edition inaugurates at M.A.M. Stadium, Jammu

JAMMU: The first edition of the Khalsa Premier League (KPL)-2026 was inaugurated today at M.A.M. Stadium, Jammu, with great enthusiasm and sporting spirit. The tournament was formally inaugurated by the revered Mahant Manjeet Singh Ji, Head of Dera Nangali Sahib, who performed Ardas, blessed the participating players, and conducted the toss to mark the beginning of the league. A total of 16 teams are participating in this tournament, which aims to encourage young people in Jammu and Kashmir to stay away from drugs and actively participate in sports. The initiative seeks to promote discipline, sportsmanship, unity, and a healthy lifestyle among the youth. The opening match of the tournament was played between Diamond Cricket Club and Nagar Cricket Club. After winning the toss, Diamond Cricket Club elected to bat first and

scored 160 runs in the allotted 20 overs. In reply, Nanak Nagar Cricket Club managed to score 116 runs in its 20 overs. Diamond Cricket Club therefore secured an impressive 44-run victory in the opening match. The second match of the day was played between Evershine Cricket Club and Khalsa Cricket Club. After winning the toss, Evershine cricket club elected to bat first and scored 68 runs all out. In reply, Khalsa cricket club managed to score 67/9 runs by one wicket in the seventh over to motivate the participating teams and encourage young cricketers and encourage organisers have announced attractive prizes: Winner: Trophy and a cash prize of 21,00,000. Runner-up: Trophy and a cash prize of 750,000. Two matches will be organised daily at M.A. Stadium throughout the tournament, according to the schedule announced by the organisers. The tournament is being organised under the lead-



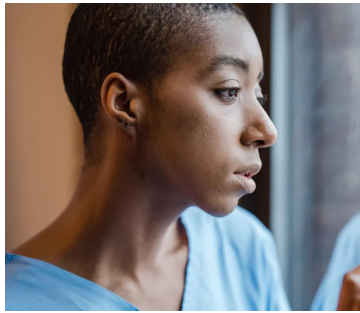
ership and efforts of S. Avtar Singh Ji, Khalsa, S. Chamkor Singh Ji, S. Balwinder Singh Ji, S. Hardeep Singh Ji, and S. Rajpreet Singh Ji. Their collective efforts are aimed at providing a platform for young Sikh cricketers to showcase their talent, develop their sporting abilities and pursue their passion for cricket. The tournament has received valuable support from several sports establishments, businesses, and individuals who have contributed to promoting sports among the youth. The sponsors and supporters include: Jhal Sports, New Basti Pundep Singh S.S. Telecom, Gandhi Nagar P.K. Sports, Bakshi Nagar Highway Automobile, Vijaypur R.D. Builders, Preet Nagar Virender Dogra Sports, Vijay Dogra Ji, former Ranjit Trophy player, Dr. Gurdeep Singh Ji, Sardar Jarnail Singh Ji, Australia Harpreet Singh Ji, Australia Jaskirat Singh Ji, Australia Gunpreet Singh Ji,

Canada Dr. Channi Ji, Gagandeep Singh Bindra, Sukhwinder Singh Ji, S. Balwinder Singh Ji, S. Chahal R.K. Khel Centre, Miran Sahib. The organisers expressed their sincere gratitude to all sponsors and supporters for their valuable contributions towards making the tournament possible and providing young players with an opportunity to demonstrate their sporting abilities. A Mission to Keep Youth Away from Drugs Through Sports. The Khalsa Premier League is not merely a cricket tournament; it is an initiative to deliver a strong social message to the younger generation. The tournament is exclusively featuring Sikh players and aims to encourage young people to promote sports, maintain discipline, and adopt a healthy and productive lifestyle. At a time when cricket is attracting increasing interest among young people, particularly fol-

lowing the popularity of the Indian Premier League (IPL), the organisers believe that local tournaments can play an important role in identifying and nurturing emerging talent. Through this initiative, the organisers seek to channel the energy and enthusiasm of young people towards constructive activities and provide them with opportunities to develop their skills, build confidence, and pursue their sporting ambitions. The central message of the tournament is clear: Stay away from drugs, focus on education, participate in sports, and bring pride to your families, communities, in Jammu and Kashmir. The inaugural edition of the Khalsa Premier League-2026 marks a positive step towards promoting sports, culture, strengthening community participation, and inspiring the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to pursue a healthier and more disciplined way of life.

Ways to respond if someone starts debating the validity of your feelings

NEW DELHI: The way we feel is very personal. Sometimes people around us may not understand the intensity and the relevance of those emotions however, that does not change the fact that we can feel those emotions. Sometimes we may feel challenged when we are faced with people who do not understand the meaning of those emotions. "When faced with someone who challenges how you feel, it's not just about the words you use in response. It's also about how you maintain your self-respect and emotional balance," wrote Therapist Klara Kernig. She further added that strength of emotions resides in the way we share them with others. "Your feelings are inherently valid because you feel them. Remember, you're not alone in this. We've all been there, and there's strength in that shared experience." Be honest: One of the ways to combat people who do not validate our emotions is by being honest with them. Telling them the way we feel and the reason why we feel like that can help them to understand us better. Stay grounded: Even when things start to get heated up, we should stay calm and try to understand the perspective of the other person. However, while we stay calm, we should also stay regulated and firm and stand by ourselves. Practice self-compassion: Such situations can make us question our own emotions. It is important to be self-compassionate and be firm and know that what we feel is real. Ask for clarification: Instead of feeling hurt, we should ask for



clarification for the way they are feeling about our emotions. Set boundaries: We should set healthy boundaries with the person who does not validate the emotions we are feeling. Instead of being reactive, we should let them know what we want and do not want from our relationship with them. Seek supportive spaces: We should seek spaces and people who understand the way we feel, give us the independence to feel the way we want and support us through this emotional journey. Sometimes emotions can be very difficult to understand. We frequently are unable to explain our feelings. Emotions have a significant impact on your thoughts and actions. The feelings you experience every day can motivate you to act and have an impact on the big and minor decisions you make about your life. Emotional

fatigue can occur if you are not conscious of your feelings. That is why it is important to develop an emotional awareness. Speaking to HT Lifestyle, Kirti Verma, Chief Psychologist at Kripa social welfare society, shared, "The more awareness you have of what's happening inside of you, the better you can differentiate between emotional experiences. The more complex emotions get the more important it becomes to be able to describe them, so building your awareness and emotional vocabulary is the key." She also shared few ways which you can follow to better understand your emotions. Take a little time and space: In our busy lifestyle sometimes it is very important to take a pause and slow down. Acknowledge that a big emotion is coming up for you. Know that all off that pass eventually. Suspend judgement

and think of your emotions as messengers, signals, data. Take some time to figure out what it is trying to tell you. Approach the emotion with curiosity, rather than avoiding it. Mix with a pinch of awareness: Try to recognise the thoughts that are triggering the emotions and what thought can be triggered by the emotions you are experiencing. What changes it reflects in your body and where do you feel it? It can be tension, increased heart rate, sweaty palms etc. As emotions are often associated with certain action urges it is important to recognise that how emotions are influencing your actions. For instance, it can be fear-urge to avoid or joy-urge to connect. Add a sprinkle of specificity: Specify the feeling and name it. Google "emotions wheel" if you have trouble naming it and see which lands the most. Build your emotional vocabulary: For example sad could really mean ashamed, guilty, lonely, remorseful etc. You can also create your emotions journal where you can write the emotions experienced by you in a whole day and you can also rate the intensity of emotions from 1 to 5. This will have a positive impact on your overall mental wellbeing. Top off with acceptance & self-compassion: Remember you are not the emotion, you are the one experiencing the emotion. Offer yourself warmth & understanding (the way you would do to a good friend) don't be harsh on yourself. Decide what to learn from it and let it go when you feel you are ready.

Microplastics can cause semen quality decline in males and female infertility. Here are tips to preserve your fertility

NEW DELHI: Robust scientific evidence has emerged over the past 15 years demonstrating that preconception and prenatal exposure to toxic environmental toxins can have a profound and lasting effect on reproductive health across the life course and an analysis of National health and Nutrition Examination Survey data from 2003-2004 found that every woman is exposed to 40 different chemicals. Chemicals in pregnant women can cross the placenta and in some cases can accumulate in the foetus resulting in higher foetal exposure than maternal exposure. In an interview with HT Lifestyle, Dr Shruti N Mane, Consultant Fertility and IVF expert at Motherhood Fertility and IVF in Navi Mumbai's Kharghar, explained, "A group of chemicals known as endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) has been shown to interfere with the role of certain hormones, homeostasis and developmental processes. These represent a heterogeneous group of agents used in pesticides, plastics, industrial chemicals and fuels." One study shows that the endocrine disrupting chemical bisphenol-A works in a fashion that is comparable to diethylstilboestrol at the cell and developmental level and research has clearly shown that many industrial chemicals can affect thyroid function. Dr Shruti N Mane elaborated, "Exposure to environmental chemicals is linked to various adverse health consequences, and patient exposure at any point in time can lead to harmful

reproductive health outcomes. Adult male exposure to pesticides has been associated with altered semen quality, sterility, and prostate cancer." Highlighting that exposure to some pesticides can interfere with all developmental stages of reproductive function in adult females, including puberty, menstruation and ovulation, fertility and fecundity, she said, "Most environmental chemicals have entered the marketplace without comprehensive and standardized information regarding their reproductive or other long-term toxic effects." What are Microplastics? Dr Shruti N Mane answered, "Microplastics are pollutants that are present in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems at virtually every level of the food chain. Moreover, airborne microplastic particles have shown to reach and potentially damage respiratory systems. Microplastics have been shown to cause increased oxidative stress, inflammation, altered metabolism leading to cellular damage, which ultimately affects tissue and organismal homeostasis in numerous human cells. Plastics (long polymer chains) are widely used due to their versatility and durability, which has led to the accumulation of substantial plastic waste in the environment (MacLeod et al., 2021). Macroplastics (1 cm and larger) present ecological problems due to entrapment and entanglement, digestive tract congestion, and physical barriers for food supply." She added, "Plastic polymers could be also transformed in size (macro-

micro-, and Nano plastics) and in shape (spheres, fibres, and fragments) upon exposure to UV light, heat, or waves in the aquatic environment, or by biological degradation, it forms microplastics. These non-degradable materials tend to contaminate one's food and water. When one consumes products carrying microplastics, they sit in our tissues and can impact the function of the body. These processes lead to environmental weathering of MPs/NPs, which, similarly to aging of plastic particles, enhances the leaching of chemicals from these pollutants. Endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) used as additives to create these plastics, such as the estrogenic and anti-estrogenic phthalates, polychlorinated biphenyls, and bisphenol A, also interfere with the biology of animals and humans." Microplastics and its effects on reproductive health: It is no secret that fertility is the ability to produce offspring and is critically dependent on gonad tissue integrity, as well as egg and sperm quality but chemicals take a toll on one's fertility. Dr Shruti N Mane revealed, "Microplastics can induce infertility. Here, we decode the relationship between microplastics and infertility. Did you know? Microplastics are commonly found in fruits and vegetables, with apples having the highest concentration. Microplastic particles, which are less than 5 mm in diameter, respectively, have been found in sewage, soil, oceans, seafood, drinking water and even table salts."

Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation: All about ECMO that Covid or lung patients need to know

NEW DELHI: A lot of patients were put on Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) during coronavirus pandemic as the majority of them had lung issues hence, the Covid-19 patients whose lungs were severely damaged had to be put on ventilation support which was inadequate for them as the functioning of the lungs was compromised. Such patients were given the support of ECMO in which the blood is pumped outside the body with the help of a heart-lung machine that is incorporated into an ECMO machine and removes carbon dioxide from the body and gives oxygenated blood back to the tissues in the body. How ECMO works? In an interview with HT Lifestyle, Dr Aklesh Tandekar, Head Consultant Critical Care at Wockhardt Hospitals on Mira Road, explained, "The blood is drawn from the right side of the heart to the membrane and oxygenated in the ECMO machine which is known as a heart-lung machine. In this machine, the filter which is called



an oxygen membrane or oxygenator purifies the blood and supplies the purified blood to the entire body. Here, the lungs and heart can be bypassed so that these organs can take some rest and these machines help the organs to recover quickly." He revealed that ECMO is commonly used in intensive care set-ups which is also called as critical care set-ups where the heart and lungs are not working efficiently (for

example in patients with Acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) and heart ailments. Dr Aklesh Tandekar elaborated, "These machines are a boon to such patients. It is also used for patients to recover from heart failure or waiting for a heart transplant or even a lung transplant. ECMO machines are a bridge to transplantation. Till these patients receive stable organs from the donor, the ECMO machines will continue giving

rest to the heart and lungs. Apart from that, even patients with other conditions such as heart attack, severe myocardial infarction, hypothermia, pulmonary embolism, trauma, sepsis, prevent post-transplant complications, Defect in the diaphragm (congenital diaphragmatic hernia), cardiogenic shock and ones with a bacterial and viral infection and Myocarditis is inflammation of the heart muscle (myocardium) where the heart pumping is reduced can get advantage from these machines." How to prepare for ECMO? According to Dr Aklesh Tandekar, the doctor will decide if you need ECMO or not and put cannulas in the measurement vessels of the body depending upon how long you need to be on ECMO support and it can be taken off it when the patient recovers. Some may need ECMO services for just 2-4 days while some may require for even months until they recover but these services enable healthcare experts to take the utmost care of the patients and help the organs to heal.

Daily exercises to stimulate your vagus nerve

NEW DELHI: The vagus nerves are one of the main nerves of the parasympathetic nervous system. Responsible for managing heart rate, the immune system of the body and digestion, vagus nerves control a number of body functions, especially the ones that cannot be controlled by us voluntarily. Understanding how vagus nerve works helps in taking steps in improving our own health. "These exercises activate your vagus nerve and promote relaxation, lower stress levels, improve digestion, and enhance your immune system," wrote Therapist Anna Papaioannou as she shared a few steps to stimulate the vagus nerve, which in turn can help us in staying calm and happy. Cold showers: Post we are done with our comfortable warm showers, we should turn the temperature down to cold as much we can take, for about 30 to 60 seconds. We will notice that we gasp and breathe heavily. This exposure of the body to cold temperature helps in stimulating the vagus nerve. Humming: When we hum a song that we like, we will notice sensations in our lips, throat and chest. When we make steady vibrations in the body while humming, it helps us to feel less stress and anxiety. Gargle water: Gargling with warm water, twice a day, mostly at morning and at night helps in calming the body and staying healthy as well. Gargling with warm water also helps with throat inflammations, seasonal allergies and sinus infections. Head, neck massage: We need to find pressure points in the head, neck and shoulders where we feel the sensation of soothing. Painful massages tend to activate the sympathetic nervous system.



Wilson's disease: Causes, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and prevention

NEW DELHI: Wilson's Disease is a rare genetic disorder that causes copper to accumulate in various organs, including the liver, brain and eyes and the excess copper can cause significant damage to these organs, leading to a range of symptoms. According to health experts, Wilson's disease is one of the main reasons of cirrhosis of liver beside alcohol, hepatitis B and hepatitis C virus but mostly these diseases are silent and once symptoms come the disease is usually in an advance state. It is a hereditary disease, which means it runs in family and is a rare genetic disorder that affects the body's ability to remove excess copper from vital organs like the liver, brain and eyes. This disease, also known as hepatolenticular degeneration, can cause severe neurological and liver problems if left untreated. Causes: In an interview with HT Lifestyle, Dr Purshottam Vashistha, Consultant - Gastroenterology at Apollo Hospitals in Navi Mumbai,

shared, "Wilson's Disease is caused by a genetic mutation that affects the body's ability to metabolize copper. Normally, the liver removes excess copper from the body and releases it into the bile for excretion. In people with Wilson's Disease, this process is disrupted, leading to the accumulation of copper in the body." Dr Sanjeev Rohatgi, Lead Consultant - Liver Transplant and HPB Surgery at Manipal Hospital in Bangalore's Whitefield, revealed, "Wilson's disease is a genetic disorder resulting in abnormal accumulation of copper in the brain, liver, and eyes. It is an autosomal recessive transmission, which means that if both the carrier - father, and mother have Wilson's Disease, then there is a 1 in 4 chance of the child developing the condition. Wilson's disease usually presents in the age group of up to 20 years and the presentation is acute liver failure in 5% of cases whereas the rest of the 95% present with chronic liver disease." Elaborating upon the same, Dr Mayank Gupta, Senior Consultant -

Gastroenterology at Max Super

the gene on to your offspring and



Speciality Hospital in Dehradun, said, "Wilson's illness is inherited as an autosomal recessive trait, requiring the inheritance of one defective gene copy from each parent in order to manifest symptoms. If you have just one faulty gene, you will not get sick, but you can pass

become a carrier. If your parents or siblings have Wilson's Disease, you may be more susceptible to the disorder. Consult your doctor about whether you should get tested for Wilson's Disease via genetics. The likelihood of successful treatment greatly increases with early diagnosis of the illness."

Symptoms: According to Dr Purshottam Vashistha, the symptoms of Wilson's Disease can vary widely, depending on which organs are affected and the severity of the condition. Some of the most common symptoms include: Liver problems, such as jaundice, abdominal pain and an enlarged liver. Neurological problems, such as tremors, difficulty speaking and muscle stiffness. Psychiatric problems, such as depression, anxiety and mood swings. Eye problems, such as a brownish ring around the cornea and difficulty seeing in low light. Dr Sanjeev Rohatgi, pointed out, "If they present with acute liver failure, there will be signs of liver failure such as jaundice, ascites, abdominal distension, encephalopathy, and coagulopathy - abnormal coagulation. These patients are usually very sick and they require liver transplants straight away. The rest

of the 95% of patients present with a chronic liver disease where the liver gets affected slowly because of the accumulation of copper and eventually the liver become cirrhotic." Dr Mayank Gupta insisted that while Wilson's Disease could be present at birth, it does not show any signs or symptoms until copper levels in the brain, liver or another organ start to rise. Depending on the areas of your body that the disease has damaged, your signs and symptoms will vary. They may consist of Fatigue, a lack of appetite, or stomach discomfort. A jaundice-like yellowing of the skin and eye whites. Eye discoloration that is golden-brown (Kayser-Fleischer Rings). Accumulation of fluid in the legs or abdomen. Speech, swallowing, or motor coordination issues. Uncontrolled motions or rigid muscles. Diagnosis: Dr Chetan Kalal, Program Director - Hepatology and Transplant



EDITORIAL

Dialogue Over Division

Amid a clampdown on protesters in Delhi, the all-important question is - why does the Centre seem to be panicking? There's a one-word answer for this nervousness sweeping the heart of the Capital - jobs, writes Editor-in-Chief Jyoti Malhotra in her weekly column The Great Game, The Opposition steps up. The NEET paper leaks and the consequent trauma brought upon India's aspirational twenty-somethings, in retrospect, may have been the tipping point. The Congress party and the CJP have found their individual voices. The government must recognise that people have a right to disagree, dissent and differ. On their part, the Congress and the CJP must ensure their protests remain peaceful. For both sides to work towards this great middle, they must talk to each other and mend the communication lines that broke down a long time ago, she writes.

At the heart of the Jantar Mantar 2.0 protest is the Election Commission of India whose own decision-making came under scrutiny before the Supreme Court. The question is no longer merely whether SIR was a sound administrative exercise. An old question has resurfaced: were some disputed actions legally decisions of the ECI at all?" writes former Chief Election Commissioner SY Quraishi in his Edit article CEC is not the Election Commission.

When the issue of the modified Form 6 was raised, the Chief Justice made it clear that the Supreme Court had not approved it and indicated that the Court would examine "who has modified what". That question is now central. When an action is taken in the voter's name and in the Election Commission's name, democracy is entitled to ask one simple question: Who decided? Moreover, ECINet is a tool of electoral administration; it cannot become a parallel authority, he warns.

Accusations of bias and constitutional violations against the Chief Election Commissioner have given rise to the ECI's most serious credibility crisis in memory. The management of the 'Great Indian Election' has long been an object of admiration worldwide and has been no less a source of India's soft power in the South Asian region, writes independent journalist Nirupama Subramanian in her Op-Ed article India's election model loses its sheen. Neighbouring countries - Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh - have always give the example of former CEC late TN Seshan in being objective and locking horns with politicians. The comparison with Seshan was not an exaggeration, she writes.

Congress must end its inertia to lead the INDIA bloc in these testing times

BY ANILANAND

There is good and bad news for the Congress, which is struggling hard to shed inertia and indecisiveness and emerge from its own colubine. The more it tries, though through feeble attempts, the more it remains the same, without realising the need to become battle-ready for the coming electoral contests. While circumstances are fast changing in favour of the Grand Old Party (GOP), its leadership seems mostly unaware of the role that the party, as the premier opposition party, is expected to play at such a crucial juncture.

As the crescendo has gathered stormy proportions over the functioning of the Election Commission of India (ECI) - a front-ranking constitutional body responsible for conducting free and fair elections - in a totally opaque and centralised manner, the INDIA combine of opposition parties finally coming together is a significant development. It is another matter that they shared the table after a couple of electoral setbacks and regular sniping at each other. However, circumstances have perhaps left them with no option but to come together and resolve to fight back to protect the "sanctity of the vote".

If the INDIA bloc meeting has thrown a direct challenge to the ECI and the Narendra Modi-Amit Shah combine by declaring a joint programme of nationwide protests against the usurpation of the electoral process, it has come as a happy augury for the Congress, which, until the other day, was at the receiving end of its alliance partners. Instead of making the Narendra Modi-led dispensation its main target, the allies had preferred to target the Congress, and more so Rahul Gandhi.

From all available accounts and the optics of it, the September 30, 2026, INDIA bloc meeting has firmly established the Congress as its leader. Not only was the most mercurial and unpredictable ally-leader and Trinamool Congress chief, Mamata Banerjee, seen going overboard to exhibit her bonhomie towards the Congress leadership led by Sonia Gandhi and, surprisingly, even Rahul Gandhi, but more or less all the 20-odd alliance partners attending the meeting ceded total space to the GOP in deference to its status as the only national party with a pan-India presence among the alliance ranks. This feeling was altogether missing during the last three years of its existence.

Constitution Club of India | New Delhi



The media reports undoubtedly suggest that the alliance's high-profile meeting successfully unified the opposition around a roadmap, surprisingly crafted by the Indian National Congress. This, in turn, has placed the party on a firm political footing. Unimaginable until the political events shaped by the goings-on in the corridors of Nirvachan Sadan, the INDIA combine adopted the core resolutions that had earlier been passed by the Congress Working Committee (CWC).

The narrative and agenda of the combined meeting heavily mirrored the strategy crafted by the Congress just a day earlier during its CWC meeting. This position solidified the Congress's leading role within the alliance through several key developments. However, the second development, emerging from the same AICC corridors where the CWC meeting was held to set the course for the INDIA bloc deliberations, should worry the Congress's top leadership. It concerns poll-bound Punjab, where the Congress, with good chances of returning to power after a decade, has been on a suicidal mission. The high command's decision to replace Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) chief Amarinder Singh Warring, after initial reluctance and dilly-dallying, is more baffling than creditworthy. It came after wasting precious time trying to control factionalism and humiliating senior leaders tasked with bringing the warring factions together. The then AICC in-charge of Punjab and former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel lost both face and his job. This was through no fault of his, as he ostensibly followed the high command's directions (read Rahul Gandhi) to protect

Warring at all costs, despite growing resentment against him within the PCC. Even more importantly, further embarrassment was in store when the high command chose to sweep under the carpet the findings of the committee headed by AICC treasurer Ajay Maken, who had been entrusted with the task of gauging the mood of a cross-section of the state leadership. The committee, it is believed, found an overwhelming mood in favour of a change in the PCC leadership.

The Punjab episode should be an eye-opener for the GOP's top leadership and force it into the introspection that is sorely needed to set its house in order at a time when the entire opposition has reposed confidence in Rahul Gandhi's leadership. Effecting a change on the basis of the Maken committee's findings would not only have protected the high command from embarrassment but also saved the party from negative publicity by unnecessarily dragging out the issue before subsequently changing the state leadership.

A situation similar to Punjab's prevails in several other states and Union Territories, particularly Jammu and Kashmir. Quick decisions are needed to strengthen the organisation. The top leadership must evaluate its conduct in Punjab and take corrective steps elsewhere, including within the AICC's organisational structure. A strong, battle-hardened organisation will help the Congress establish its leadership role in the INDIA combine.

The shift in the allies' mood on September 30, 2026, should be capitalised on to strengthen Rahul

Gandhi's leadership. Building on the alliance's agitation roadmap and the CWC resolution, the Congress must strengthen itself internally, no matter what the cost.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge took centre stage to officially announce the bloc's six-point joint protest strategy. However, it seemed that the veteran of many political battles, Kharge, had read the mood of the INDIA conglomerate leaders gathered at Delhi's Constitutional Club. Perhaps he thought it was the right moment to press Rahul Gandhi to address the press conference, with the purpose of keeping him centre-stage. In declaring the six-point protest strategy, Kharge left no one in doubt that Rahul Gandhi would be leading from the front. The two-pronged fight for him and Rahul Gandhi now is to steer the INDIA bloc effectively and, at the same time, prevent Punjab-like situations from arising through quick and stern decision-making. The bloc's six-point joint protest strategy:

1. October 2-8: District-level "Save Democracy" marches across the country.
 2. October 6: A coordinated march by all Opposition MPs to the Election Commission headquarters.
 3. Mid-October: Seeking official intervention from the President of India.
 4. November 1: A mega joint rally in New Delhi.
- The challenge for the Congress, as the leader of the opposition grouping, is enormous. But the opportunity is golden: to shed inertia and set itself on course for internal and external reforms.
- The writer is a media expert and policy analyst. Views presented are personal.

AI: What Indian Universities can learn from the West

BY MD AESHAR ALAM

Six years after the National Education Policy 2020 urged universities to break down the walls between subjects, artificial intelligence is becoming the tool for doing it. American and British universities moved earlier, and their experience offers lessons for Indian campuses still deciding how far and fast to go.

The Western experience Ohio State University has set the most ambitious target. From the class of 2029, every graduate is expected to be fluent in AI and its responsible use within their own discipline. Provost Ravi V Bellamkonda says students will become "bilingual"; fluent in their major and in applying AI within it. A course called "Unlocking Generative AI" is open to all majors, an AI skills seminar is compulsory, and at least six offices guide academic integrity. A history student uses AI for research, an agriculture student for crop data.

Neither becomes a computer scientist. MIT built a new college instead. The Schwarzman College of Computing links computing with all five of MIT's schools, and its Common Ground programme helps departments design classes blending computing with other fields. A standing committee of 29 faculty members reviews proposals. Common Ground awards no major or minor of its own: its subjects sit inside existing degrees, so AI becomes part of a physics or economics degree rather than a side certificate. A separate initiative, SERC, embeds ethics in computing courses. Oxford chose tools, training and governance together. It was the first UK university to give all students and staff free ChatGPT Edu access, after a year-long pilot with 750 staff members, and it created an AI Governance Group. Departments issue subject-specific guidance. California State University went for scale, rolling out ChatGPT Edu to more than 460,000 students and 63,000 staff members across 23 campuses, comparable to an Indian state university network.

The Indian experience The push began with regulators. AICTE declared 2025 the Year of

Artificial Intelligence, covering more than 14,000 colleges, and promised faculty workshops and certifications.

IIT Madras offers the closest parallel to Ohio State. Its "AI for All" courses on SWAYAM Plus, including AI in Physics, AI in Chemistry, AI in Accounting and Cricket Analytics with AI, need no prior AI or programming experience. In January, it launched them in Hindi, free to access, a step no Western example here has matched. IIT Hyderabad echoes MIT's joint teaching its 12-credit Minor in AI and Humanity has projects co-supervised by liberal arts, design and engineering faculty members. IIT Mandi offers its 24-credit AI minor to other institutions. Oxford's route has arrived too. In February, OpenAI announced ChatGPT Edu partnerships with IIT Delhi, IIM Ahmedabad, AIIMS New Delhi, Manipal, UPES and Pearl Academy, covering more than 100,000 people. Beyond the elite, the Central University of Haryana will introduce AI courses across all programmes from 2026-27, nearing Ohio State's model.

Where the approaches differ Mandate: Ohio State makes AI fluency a graduation outcome. Most Indian institutions offer a minor, elective or online course, so many arts, social science and language graduates will leave without it.

Course design: At MIT, computing and subject faculty members build courses together. In most Indian universities, computer science departments still write them. A chemistry teacher untrained in AI cannot shape "AI in Chemistry", and a computer scientist alone will miss what chemists need.

Tools and governance: Oxford and Cal State prioritised secure tool access, and Oxford and Ohio State built oversight. In India, access remains confined to well-funded institutions. Most state university students use free consumer tools with weaker data privacy, and many universities have no AI policy; so rules vary from teacher to teacher.

Language: Here, India leads. Free Hindi courses address problem Western universities rarely face and



reach colleges that will never sign enterprise agreements.

Scale and teachers: India's state systems are far larger than Cal State's, so a national or state-level agreement, perhaps through the IndiaAI Mission, would serve equity better than institution-by-institution deals. And even Western success began with faculty members: short certification programmes do not change how a teacher designs assignments or examinations.

What implementation requires Educationists point to six steps:

1. Define AI competence as a programme outcome for every degree, in each discipline's language.
2. Create joint teaching committees on the Common Ground model, with credit flowing through the Academic Bank of Credits.
3. Write an AI policy on assessment, plagiarism, data privacy and research, with room for subject-specific rules.
4. Rethink examinations: take-home essays are easy to generate, while viva voce, in-class writing and project defenses test learning.
5. Negotiate shared access to secure AI platforms so district-college students get the protection IIT students have.
6. Expand content in Urdu, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and other lan-

guages, and teach ethics inside each subject, where caste, gender and regional bias carry real weight.

Conclusion The Western universities succeeded through institutional decisions, not better technology: Ohio State set a clear rule, MIT built the habit of joint work, Oxford prepared teachers and governance first, and Cal State used its size to win fair terms. Even within reach of Indian universities, India has advantages the West lacks: NEP 2020's credit framework, SWAYAM as a national channel, and proof that subject-linked AI teaching can work free in the middle layer: the state and central universities that teach most Indian students and still treat AI as optional. The next two academic years will decide whether multidisciplinary learning becomes real for them. If academic councils make AI competence part of every degree, train teachers before students and write clear rules, success will look like a botany graduate in Bihar or a law graduate in Kerala who can use AI confidently in her field and judge when it is wrong.

The writer is the former Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Hamdard; Views presented are personal.

A democracy needs its kopagriha

It is the Ramila season in North India. Crowds gather each evening in public grounds to watch the old story unfold. No one asks them for a permit. An episode from the epic came to my mind on Sunday morning, October 11. The Supreme Court had assembled in an extraordinary sitting. Sundays are for rest, even in that building. The Bench pressed counsel with questions on protest and police power. Justice Joymalya Bagchi asked to be briefed on whether the police had violated the right of peaceful assembly. It was the right question. Part of the answer lies in a room in Ayodhya.

The Ramayana has a protest site. Valmiki calls it the krodhagara, the chamber of anger. Later tellings call it the kopagriha. A queen with a grievance went there. She lay on the bare floor. She cast off her jewels. She waited. Kaikeyi did not seek the king's leave to be angry. No guard stopped her at the door. No chamberlain sealed the palace corridors. Ayodhya had built a room for dissent, and the room was open. The king came to her. He had to listen. We may argue about what Kaikeyi demanded. We cannot argue about the architecture. The kingdom designated a place for anger and let the angry reach it.

Delhi has its own kopagriha. It is called Jantar Mantar. The Supreme Court has recognised it as a designated site of protest. The Delhi Police treat it differently. When citizens set out for Jantar Mantar, the police often make sure they never arrive. Metro stations close across the city. Barricades rise on the roads. Trains are cancelled.

Farmers found the approaches to the Capital studded with concrete and iron spikes. Wrestlers who sat at Jantar Mantar were removed and the site cleared. The designated place stays open. The road to it shuts. A right to protest at a place you cannot reach is a right on paper. It resembles a ticket to a theatre whose doors are locked.

Start with the text. Article 19(1)(b) of the Constitution says that all citizens "shall have the right to assemble peaceably and without arms." Read those words slowly. They do not say the State may permit citizens to assemble. They declare a right the citizen already holds. The clause names no grantor. A permit regime inserts one. Then the verb: the right is to assemble. It is the right to gather, not the right to apply to gather. Protection attaches when people come together. A rule that makes



gathering lawful only after an officer signs a form moves the right to a place the Constitution never put it. Then the qualifiers: the assembly must be peaceable; it must be without arms. Both conditions concern the conduct of those assembled. Neither concerns the approval of an official. "Peaceably" is an adverb of manner. One judges manner as the assembly proceeds, or after it ends. A permit asks an officer to decide beforehand whether a gathering not yet held will stay peaceful. The Constitution sets a standard of conduct. The licensing office applies a standard of prediction. They are not the same test. The framers named two conditions. Lawyers know the old maxim: *expressio unius est exclusio alterius*. To state one thing

is to exclude another. Had the framers wanted a third condition of prior leave, they would have written it beside the other two. The State answers with Article 19(3). That clause permits reasonable restrictions in the interests of public order, and of India's sovereignty and integrity. I accept that. But read the operative words: restrictions "on the exercise of the right." A restriction on the exercise assumes that the right is being exercised. It regulates time, place and manner. A licence does something else. It holds the right in suspense until authority consents. That is a prohibition with a dispensation. It is not a restriction. Article 19(6) proves the point. For trades and professions, the framers allowed laws prescribing "profes-

sional or technical qualifications." That is a precondition, stated in terms. Clause (3) carries no such language. Where the Constitution meant to let the State impose a precondition on a freedom, it said so. Where it did not, we should not supply one. None of this leaves the police helpless. They may ask for notice. Notice lets them divert traffic, post constables and plan for crowds. Notice serves the right. Permission supplants it. A citizen who gives notice tells the State what she will do. A citizen who seeks permission asks the State what she may do. The Supreme Court has walked this ground before. In Himat Lal K. Shah v. Commissioner of Police (1973), it struck down a rule that let the police

commissioner refuse permission for street meetings at his discretion. In the Ramila Maidan Incident, In Re (2012), it condemned a midnight police assault on sleeping protesters. Recent judgments lean the other way. In Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan v. Union of India (2018), the Court weighed protests against the interests of residents near Jantar Mantar. In Amit Sahni v. Commissioner of Police (Shaheen Bagh case, 2020), it said protests belong in designated places. Each judgment speaks of balance. In practice, each hands the scales to the police. Balance is a respectable word. But one does not weigh a fundamental right against a section of the Delhi Police Act as if both sat on equal

pans. The Constitution is the higher law. The Police Act works inside it. When the Court treats a statutory power to regulate as a counterweight of equal mass, it overbalances. The right becomes the exception. The prohibitory order becomes the rule. Justice Bagchi's question goes to this point. It does not ask how the police should use their powers. It asks whether the powers themselves square with Article 19(1)(b). The Court has deferred that inquiry for decades. A statute that lets an officer forbid an assembly in advance, on a forecast of trouble, deserves that scrutiny. The burden lies on the State. It does not lie on the citizens who wish to gather.

A Nobel that's not so universal

It is the Nobel Prize week once again. A time for celebration. A time to honour the men and women who, through a lifetime of dogged work pursuing an idea, have gifted us with achievements that are for "the greatest benefit to humankind". This is the primary metric (as stated on the Nobel website) by which the laureates are assessed in the fields of physics, chemistry, physiology/medicine, literature and peace. The economics prize was added in 1968, whereas the other five were instituted in 1901. Over a century after their inception, these prizes have acquired an iconic status that is seen as universal. The whole world waits for the announcements. They are seen not as the contribution to a distinct group, country, organisation or region but as a contribution to all of humanity. Nothing less.

While physics, chemistry, physiology/medicine, economics and even peace have external metrics by which their contribution can be assessed, such is not the case with literature. While the judgments in the other five are regarded as largely objective — any independent observer would come to the same conclusion — literature, in contrast, is mostly subjective. Some may argue that a large dose of subjectivity is also true of the peace prize.

This argument breaks down when we assess the 2026 laureate Navi Pillay's achievements. From a judge in South Africa to a member of the International Criminal Court and her difficult work in hostile environments documenting human rights violations in Rwanda, Myanmar and Gaza — all sites of genocide — Pillay's "commitment to universal legal principles and (her) ... firm moral compass" (as stated by the Chair of the Norwegian Nobel committee, Jørgen Watne Frydnes) are metrics that people across the world have happily endorsed. She is a worthy recipient.

Such universal approval is less so in the case of the Nobel Prize for Literature. This year's laureate, Anne

Carson, from Canada and Iceland, was awarded the prize for her "bold and inventive oeuvre that, in playful dialogue with the classical tradition, has created new forms for contemporary literature," as the citation reads. The selection has elicited widespread applause but also produced some lingering doubts.

Her work on Eros, on classical antiquity, on grief, loss and memory, and on language crossings is to be celebrated, and her additions to the stock of reflections on the human condition is to be appreciated. But the doubts still need addressing. Revisiting the 125-year history of the literature awards leaves one with the nagging feeling that something is not quite right. This is no reflection on the wonderful contribution of awardees such as Carson, but is more a comment on the cognitive ecosystem within which the laureate is selected. Is it as universal as it is claimed to be?

To assess this claim of universality, if we were to group the 123 laureates in terms of the continents from which they come, what would we find? Such grouping makes the point that the little traditions of each country belong to the big tradition of the continent. For example, the French literary ecosystem is part of the Judeo-Christian tradition, while the Tamil belongs to the Indic tradition. Once these broad and loose groupings are made, the skewness of the award begins to take shape, like a ghost schooner coming out of the mist. There are 123 laureates from 34 countries. Some, such as Carson, come from more than one country. Europe, both West and East (excluding Turkey), has 98 laureates. North America 14. South and Central America (including Mexico) 8. Asia 7. Africa 6 and Oceania (Australia) 1. If we take Scandinavia as a subset of Europe, just for fun, we will find 18 laureates, more than Asia and Africa together.

If the prize in literature is given to a person who, according to Alfred Nobel's will, produces "the most out-



standing work in an idealistic direction", it is difficult to believe that Asia, Africa and South America, all ancient civilisations with intense literary traditions and glorious epics — the shlokas (verses) in the Mahabharata have a total of 2,00,000 lines, about 10 times more than those in the Iliad and the Odyssey combined — are barren lands in terms of their literary production as compared to the European world since 1901. The argument here is not to accuse the Nobel Foundation of intentional bias. Over the years, the prize has been charged with being sexist, favouring their own, anointing writers who have soon faded into obscurity while others, who have been ignored, have gained global recognition. These are not the charges we are making here. Although we recog-

nise the huge role played by the subjective world in the selection process, we are raising the larger question of epistemic asymmetry between the Global North and Global South. The intentions of the Nobel committee members may be sincere, but the ecosystem within which they make their selection is framed by a bias. It privileges rubrics that have significance within the epistemic North, while those that are significant within the epistemology of the South are regarded as less significant. Arjuna's dilemma is less noticed than Agamemnon's indecision. This is not an intentional bias but a systemic one. What the North considers significant or a "work in an idealistic direction" has, over time, resulted in the Global North overwhelmingly being the producers of

such works. Ways of seeing develop and are presented as universal, whereas they are in effect quite parochial. However, because of epistemic power, the North's way of seeing becomes the universal way of seeing. It becomes hegemonic. If we were to aggregate the data in terms of North and South, it would look as follows: North (Europe, North America and Oceania) 113 laureates vs South (Asia, Africa and Latin America) 21. If these regions are seen in terms of the global population, it would be Global North 15% and Global South 85%. If these regions are culturally alive and have amazing creations of dance, music, sculpture, theatre, painting, mask-making, cinema, etc. — activities that express the cultural creativity of their societies — why

then is their output in literature (including poetry) so lacking "in the idealistic direction"? Could it be that the Nobel process of identifying potential awardees — the request for nominations sent out by the committee to individuals and organisations, and the review of nominations received — is intrinsically flawed? Could it be that it is biased towards the cultural output of the Global North? This is a strong charge. We are talking about systemic bias, which refers to the epistemic frame within which the individuals and organisations that are asked are located. The alternative to this charge of bias is to accept that the huge cultural world of Asia, Africa and South America is poor in its production of literature that is "idealistic". How else can one interpret the statistics?

Looking for natural radiance? Is pomegranate the answer?



13 Benefits of Pomegranate Fruit for Skin

1. Boosts Collagen Production in the Skin
2. Promotes Skin Regeneration
3. Prevents Premature Skin Ageing
4. Improves Skin Hydration
5. Reduces Skin Inflammation
6. Helps in Controlling Acne
7. Protects Skin Against UV Damage
8. Fights Hyperpigmentation
9. Enhances Skin Detoxification
10. Strengthens the Skin Barrier
11. Supports Wound Healing
12. Improves Skin Elasticity
13. Offers Antioxidant Protection to the Skin

Pomegranate has always been revered as a fruit possessing great health benefits. Recently, Acharya Balkrishna posted on Facebook regarding the magic of this ruby-red fruit.

He highlighted how it makes our skin, as well as our overall health, shine.

Balkrishna posted, "Eat pomegranate, have glowing skin. Pomegranates have potassium and vitamin K in abundance. Having one pomegranate every day fills the body with blood and makes the skin glow."

But why pomegranates? To begin with, it is filled with nutrients that are crucial for our body. Potassium assists in maintaining fluid balance, maintains heart health, and keeps muscles and nerves healthy.

Vitamin K, however, is nec-

essary for blood clotting and bone maintenance. Combined, the nutrients assist the body in staying strong, energized, and well-nourished.

In addition to these vital vitamins and minerals, pomegranate is also rich in antioxidants. These plant-based substances fight against injurious free radicals in the body. They can harm cells and accelerate aging. By incorporating pomegranate into your everyday meals, you do not just safeguard your body against diseases but also maintain a youthful and glowing skin. Having pomegranate daily has yet another significant advantage. It helps to enhance blood quality. A proper blood circulation makes sure that oxygen and nutrients are delivered to all corners of your body properly.

This leads to enhanced energy levels, enhanced immunity, and radiant skin. Most nutritionists recommend that adding fresh pomegranate seeds to breakfast, salads, or smoothies can be an easy and delicious means of experiencing these benefits. For those who are curious about how to consume this fruit, there are several possibilities. Seeds can be consumed fresh on their own, sprinkled over yogurt, or incorporated into fruit salads.

Pomegranate juice is also a crowd-favourite, although it should be consumed fresh to capture the highest nutrition. With its tart-sweet taste and intense colour, pomegranate not only satisfies the palate but also beautifies any meal with a visually appealing hue.

Arbi superpower unleashed: Boosts heart function, improves skin glow and strengthens immunity naturally

Arbi, also known as taro root, is suddenly getting attention again after a post shared by Acharya Balkrishna on Facebook highlighted its surprising health benefits. In many Indian homes, this humble vegetable is already known as a comfort food, but according to recent discussions, it may be doing much more inside the body than we usually think.

However, like every traditional food, it comes with both benefits and precautions. While Arbi can support heart health and skin glow, it may not suit everyone equally, especially those prone to gas or joint discomfort.

HEART, DIGESTION AND THE "HIDDEN STRENGTH" OF ARBI

One of the biggest highlights of Arbi is its positive effect on heart health. It contains potassium, which helps balance sodium levels in the body. This balance is important because it helps maintain healthy blood pressure.

At the same time, its fiber content works quietly in the background by helping reduce bad cholesterol (LDL), which is one of the major risk factors for heart disease.

Acharya Balkrishna also pointed out that Arbi can be useful in heart-related concerns when included properly in the diet.

On the digestive side, Arbi is surprisingly powerful. It is rich in dietary fiber, which helps regulate bowel movement and prevents constipation. It also supports good gut bacteria, which improves digestion and reduces bloating.

In simple terms, it helps keep the stomach "clean and active," which many people today struggle with due to irregular eating habits.

Its slow digestion also helps control sugar release in the body, which is beneficial for people watching their blood sugar levels.

Skin glow, immunity boost and everyday wellness

Arbi is not just about the stomach and heart. It also plays a role in beauty and immunity.

It contains vitamin C and antioxidants that help strengthen the immune system. This means the body becomes better prepared to fight infections and seasonal illnesses.

In times when people are constantly exposed to stress, pollution, and changing weather, such foods quietly support overall resistance.



For skin lovers, Arbi brings another advantage. It contains vitamin E and antioxidants that help reduce oxidative stress in the body. This can slow down early signs of ageing like fine lines and dryness.

Some traditional health beliefs also suggest that it improves skin texture over time when consumed regularly in moderation. Hair health also gets a small boost. Better blood circulation and nutrient support can help reduce hair fall and improve scalp condition.

Another lesser-known benefit is bone support. Arbi contains minerals like calcium, magnesium, and phosphorus, all of which are important for maintaining strong bones and reducing long-term risks like weakness or osteoporosis.

When Arbi may not be the best choice

Despite its benefits, Arbi is not suitable for everyone in large amounts. As mentioned by Acharya Balkrishna, it has properties that can increase Kapha (mucus) and Vata imbalance in the body according to traditional Ayurvedic understanding.

In simple modern terms, this means it can sometimes lead to gas formation, heaviness in the stomach, or bloating in sensitive individuals. People who already suffer from frequent gas issues may feel discomfort after eating it.

Cyber security: Reducing attack surfaces in the digital age

As cyber threats continue to evolve, it's important to remember cybersecurity is not a one-time task but an ongoing process. Advancing cybersecurity and Zero Trust maturity starts by focusing on three core practice areas: reducing the attack surface, detecting and responding to cyber threats and recovering from a cyberattack throughout the infrastructure, including edge, core and cloud.

The attack surface refers to all potential areas in an environment that a cyber attacker can target or exploit. These points can include software vulnerabilities, misconfigurations, weak authentication mechanisms, unpatched systems, excessive user privileges, open network ports, poor physical security and more. This is achieved by minimizing the potential vulnerabilities and entry points that attackers can exploit to compromise a system, network or organization across various domains including the edge, the core or the cloud.

Some ways we can strengthen our security posture:



Apply Zero Trust principles: Zero Trust is a security concept centred on the belief that organizations should not automatically trust anything inside or outside their perimeters and instead must verify everything trying to connect to their systems before granting access. Organizations can achieve a Zero Trust model by incorporating solutions like micro-seg-

mentation, identity and access management (IAM), multi-factor authentication (MFA) and security analytics, to name a few.

Patch and update regularly: Keeping operating systems, software and applications up to date with the latest security patches helps address known vulnerabilities and minimize the risk of exploitation.

Ensure secure configuration: Systems, networks and devices need to be correctly configured with security best practices, such as disabling unnecessary services, using strong passwords and enforcing access controls, to reduce the potential attack surface.

Apply the principle of least privilege: Limit user and system accounts to only have the minimum

access rights necessary to perform their tasks.

Use network segmentation: Dividing a network into segments or zones with different security levels helps contain an attack and prevents lateral movement of a cyber threat by isolating critical assets and limiting access between different parts of the network.

Ensure application security: Implementing secure

coding practices, conducting regular security testing and code reviews and using web application firewalls (WAFs) help protect against common application-level attacks and reduce the attack surface of web applications.

Utilize AI/ML

According to the Dell Technologies 2024 Innovation Catalyst report, 58% of Indian businesses feel GenAI will pro-

vide automation to help with the efficiency and scale needed to deal with the influx of threats. We can leverage AI capabilities to help proactively identify and patch vulnerabilities, significantly shrinking the attack surface.

Work with suppliers who maintain a secure supply chain: Ensure a trusted foundation with devices and infrastructure that are designed, manufactured and delivered with security in mind. Suppliers that provide a secure supply chain, secure development lifecycle and rigorous threat modeling keep you a step ahead of threat actors.

Educate users and promote awareness: By proactively implementing these measures, organizations can effectively reduce the attack surface, helping to mitigate risks and making it more challenging for adversaries to exploit vulnerabilities, enhancing the overall defence posture against new and emerging threats.

(The writer is Director and General Manager, Data Protection Solutions, Dell Technologies India; views are personal)

Clean energy must be affordable for all, says Adani after meeting Michael Bloomberg in Delhi

NEW DELHI: The energy transition must be reliable and affordable for ordinary citizens or it will fail, Gautam Adani, chairman of the Adani Group said after meeting Michael R. Bloomberg in the capital, in a first-person account of their discussion. The meeting took place at a New Delhi hotel in a day after Bloomberg addressed the Bloomberg New Economy Forum. The eighth edition of the forum is being held in New Delhi from October 13 to 15, the first time it is hosted in India. Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg LP and Bloomberg Philanthropies, spoke of India's momentum in artificial intelligence, advanced



manufacturing and green infrastructure. Bloomberg marks 30 years of work in India this year.

Adani said emerging economies need baseload power, industrial capacity and digital access without delay, while mature markets stress the pace of decarbonisation. Both, he said, agree that clean energy and affordability must move together. The two also discussed the redevelopment of Dharavi in Mumbai, which he said should be judged by climate-resilient homes, sanitation, power and protected livelihoods, not built-up area. He named four requirements for nation-building: patient capital, physical execution, transparent governance and capable local leadership.

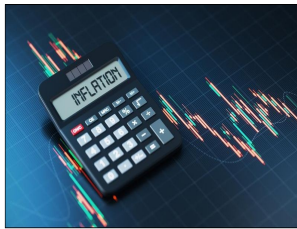
CCEA approves sale of 60.72% stake in IDBI Bank to Fairfax entity for Rs 52,878 crore



NEW DELHI: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Wednesday approved the sale of a 60.72 per cent stake in IDBI Bank Ltd to 10655290 Canada Inc., a subsidiary of Fairfax Financial Holdings Ltd, for Rs 52,878.08 crore, paving the way for a major change in the ownership of the lender. The transaction involves the sale of the government's 30.48 per cent stake and the Life Insurance Corporation of India's (LIC) 30.24 per cent holding, with the government retaining 15 per cent and LIC retaining 19 per cent in the bank. Announcing the decision after the Cabinet meeting, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the CCEA approved the strategic buyer following a comprehensive evaluation of the bids and recommendations by the government's disinvestment mechanism. The successful bidder offered Rs 81 per share, above the benchmark fair value of Rs 75.99 determined by two independent professional valuation agencies. The government said the offer was considered reasonable as it exceeded the benchmark as well as the fair-value estimates submitted by both agencies. "Once completed, this will be the largest FDI in the financial sector of our economy so far," the government said in its statement. The transaction follows a competitive, two-stage bidding process involving scrutiny by an inter-ministerial group, the Core Group of Secretaries on Disinvestment and an empowered group of Cabinet ministers. The preliminary information memorandum inviting expressions of interest was issued on October 7, 2022. Five parties initially submitted expressions of interest, of which four met the prescribed eligibility criteria. Two eventually submitted technical and financial bids and qualified for the final stage. The initial round of bids, invited in the 2025-26 financial

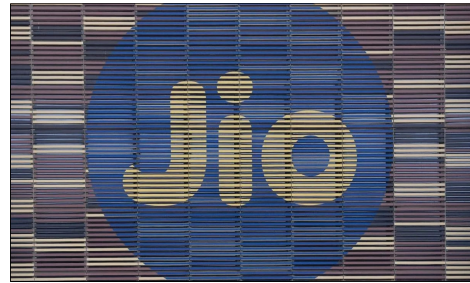
year, failed to secure approval because the offers fell short of the reserve price of Rs 94.42 per share fixed at the time. The government subsequently invited sealed bids reflecting the bidders' best offers in 2026-27 in an effort to maximise the value of the transaction. The valuation process took into account the volatility of IDBI Bank's share price, which the government said could not reliably reflect the lender's intrinsic value. The stock had traded at Rs 42.40 per share on the last trading day before the initial expression-of-interest process began in October 2022, while it stood at Rs 108.12 on January 8, 2026, the last trading day before the initial bids were invited. After the first round failed, the share price corrected sharply, falling below the discovered bid price of Rs 75. The stock was trading at Rs 70.38 on May 16, 2026, the last trading day before the invitation of best-offer bids. Over the valuation period, its price fluctuated between Rs 61.01 and Rs 118.38 per share, prompting the government to rely on alternative valuation methods. Two independent professional agencies assessed the bank using the market-multiple method, which compares its valuation with those of other public sector banks based on their March 31, 2026, closing accounts, and the asset-valuation method, which takes into account tangible and intangible assets, including land and properties, as well as liabilities. The average of the two valuations was Rs 75.99 per share and served as the benchmark against which the final bids were assessed. The winning offer of Rs 81 per share was above this benchmark and the individual fair-value estimates provided by both agencies. IDBI Bank's strategic restructuring follows years of financial stress that required repeated capital infusions, first from the government and subsequently from LIC. On May 5, 2017, the Reserve Bank of India placed the bank under its Prompt Corrective Action framework because of its non-performing assets and losses, imposing several restrictions on its operations.

WPI inflation rises to 11.39 pc in Sept on rise in prices of food, fuel, manufactured items



NEW DELHI: India's wholesale price-based inflation rose to 11.39 per cent in September, compared to 9.92 per cent in August, on rising prices of food, manufactured items, and fuel and power, government data showed on Wednesday. Inflation in the food index rose to 8.66 per cent in September from 7.05 per cent in August. In manufactured items, WPI inflation was at a series high of 9.76 per cent, higher than 8.37 per cent in August. In the fuel and power basket, Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation was 25.85 per cent in September, compared to 22.93 per cent in the previous month. Across groups, mineral oils (containing petroleum products), food articles, crude petroleum & natural gas, coal and lignite, manufacture of basic metals, chemicals and chemical products, textiles, rubber and plastic products and electrical equipments have been drivers of WPI inflation in September 2026, the Commerce and Industry ministry said while releasing the WPI data. The WPI has been on an upward trajectory since the beginning of this fiscal year as the West Asia war and the resultant blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, through which the majority of crude oil is imported into India, pushed up global crude and fertiliser costs with a spillover effect on food and commodity prices. The Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy committee, last week hiked benchmark policy rates by 25 bps to 5.50 per cent. Retail inflation data released earlier this week showed inflation rose to a 23-month high of 5.54 per cent in September, from 4.83 per cent in August, driven by a sharp rise in food prices

Reliance Jio Platforms IPO bidding to open on October 21



NEW DELHI: Reliance Industries informed the stock exchange here on Wednesday that its digital services unit, Jio Platforms, had filed its Red Herring Prospectus (RHP) for its initial public offering (IPO), setting the stage for the public issue to open for subscription on October 21 and close on October 23. Jio Platforms filed the RHP with the Registrar of Companies, Ahmedabad, on October 14. According to the stock exchange filing, the public issue will comprise a fresh issue of up to 27 crore equity shares, with a face value of Rs 10 each. According to the stock exchange filing, the Jio Platforms IPO will be open for three days, from October 21 to October 23, with anchor investor bidding scheduled for October 19, which is two days before the issue opens. Jio Platforms has also reserved shares worth up to Rs 2,500 crore for eligible shareholders of Reliance Industries, giving the parent company's investors a dedicated allocation in the much-anticipated listing. The Jio Platforms IPO will also include a reservation of shares

worth up to Rs 500 crore for eligible Reliance Industries employees. Reliance Industries shareholders will get to participate in the IPO through a dedicated portion, subject to the eligibility criteria and allocation terms outlined in the offer documents. Reliance Industries shareholders eligible to participate in the IPO are individuals and Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs) who held public equity shares in the parent company as of October 14, the date of filing of the Red Herring Prospectus (RHP), subject to applicable eligibility criteria and regulatory restrictions. Jio Platforms houses Reliance's digital businesses, including its telecommunications operations and digital services businesses. Jio Platforms is central to Reliance Industries' broader strategy to unlock value from its consumer-facing businesses. Reliance Jio Infocomm dominates the Indian telecom market with a 32.8% market share in fixed-line connections, serving 157.9 million customers, and a 39.29% share in mobile connections, with 506 million customers.

Commerce ministry simplifies procedure for silver bullion import licences

NEW DELHI: The Commerce Ministry has introduced a simplified, self-declaration-based procedure to speed up the issuance of import authorisations for certain silver items, aiming to reduce processing time for genuine applicants. Imports of silver items are in a restricted category, under which a licence, authorisation, or permission is required from the government. "To facilitate trade and improve ease of doing business, a simplified procedure is being introduced for expedited issuance of import authorisations, based on self-declaration and trust, for import of silver items, excluding silverware, with a view to reducing process-



ing time for genuine applicants," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a trade notice. It said that applications accompanied by a self-declaration that the proposed imports shall be made on payment of customs duty at the generally applicable rate, without availing concessions, may be considered for expedited disposal under this procedure. Applications not cov-

ered under this category would be subject to detailed scrutiny and examination on merits in accordance with the applicable policy provisions, it added. "As a one-time measure, existing applicants whose applications are presently pending on the DGFT portal shall be given an opportunity to revise their applications in accordance with the simplified procedure," it said.

India's Russian oil imports fall to 1.82 mln bpd in September as China competes for barrels

NEW DELHI: India remained the world's largest destination for Russian crude oil in September, but its imports fell sharply from mid-year highs as stronger Chinese buying tightened supply, according to an analysis based on Kpler ship-tracking. India took around 1.82 million barrels per day (bpd) of Russian crude in September against about 1.49 million bpd for China, Kpler data showed. The figure is down from 2.6 million bpd in June and 2.57 million bpd in July, a fall of roughly 29 per cent from the July level. Imports were 2.02 million bpd in August. Sumit Ritolia, senior manager (modelling) at Kpler, said the slowdown should be read solely as a reaction to US tariff threats. "The recent moderation in India's Russian imports is not

simply a response to US tariff pressure; tighter availability and stronger competition from China have also played an important role," he said. Chinese refiners have drawn more Russian barrels in recent months, partly because of reduced access to Iranian crude, Kpler said. October imports are expected to hold at around 1.8-1.9 million bpd, broadly flat from September, based on cargoes currently tracked. Venezuelan oil has returned to India's crude basket this year after being largely absent in recent years, with flows accelerating since April, Kpler said. The US, however, remains the largest destination for Venezuelan barrels. Venezuela exported about 250,000 bpd in India in August and 257,000 bpd in September, compared with roughly 452,000



bpd and 563,000 bpd to the US. On an arrival basis, Indian imports of Venezuelan crude reached about 287,000 bpd in August. Kpler said the two measures differ because of voyage timing. Reliance Industries' Jamnagar complex is the main Indian

buyer and is expected to remain so, owing to its refining configuration. "Venezuelan heavy and extra-heavy grades are relatively difficult barrels to process and are not universally suitable across India's refining system," the analyst said. "Reliance's

Jamnagar complex is particularly well configured for these barrels, which explains why we see more continuous processing there." State-owned refiners have bought Venezuelan oil only opportunistically so far, in volumes far below Reliance's. Kpler has tracked cargoes into Indian Oil Corporation's Paradip refinery, and Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals has historically been able to process some Venezuelan grades. Venezuelan grades can be heavy, high in sulphur and, in some cases, high in total acid number (TAN), requiring sophisticated refineries to run them continuously and in sizeable proportions. Kpler said India is diversifying supply rather than abandoning Russian crude, which remains a very significant

part of its import basket. More barrels are coming from the Middle East, the Americas and other sources. "Even if Venezuelan crude remains commercially attractive, I would expect the buying to remain concentrated among a relatively limited group of technically capable refineries rather than becoming a broad-based replacement barrel across India's entire refining system," Ritolia said. Venezuelan exports to India eased to around 250,000-300,000 bpd in August and September, while a growing share of available barrels has recently gone to the US. Kpler expects Indian arrivals to stay relatively strong in October at about 550,000 bpd, though some late-October cargoes could slip into November because of the long voyage.

CONTINUATION

J&K Govt Adopts ...

Municipal Corporation Class-IV Services (Special Provision) Regulations, 2014, and the corresponding Srinagar Municipal Corporation regulations of the same year shall be adopted mutatis mutandis as the basis for developing a similar mechanism for eligible workers in Urban Local Bodies across Jammu and Kashmir. Buy Maps! The expression mutatis mutandis means that the existing regulations will be applied with the necessary modifications to suit the circumstances concerned. The decision provides an administrative basis for formulating a regulatory framework to address the service-related concerns of eligible workers employed under casual, contingent-paid, consolidated and similar arrangements in urban local institutions. However, the order does not itself regularise the services of the workers concerned. Instead, it provides for using the existing Class-IV service regulations as the basis for formulating a similar mechanism. The order does not specify the number of potential beneficiaries, the minimum qualifying period of service, age or educational requirements, the eligibility cut-off date, or the procedure and timeline for processing cases. These details will depend on the provisions of the mechanism subsequently formulated by the competent authorities. The scope of any eventual regularisation will also depend on the eligibility conditions and other requirements prescribed by the government. Workers will not automatically qualify for regularisation or become entitled to the service benefits available to regular employees solely on the basis of this order. The implementation of the decision will require further action by the competent authorities to determine how the adopted regulations will apply to eligible workers across the various Urban Local Bodies in Jammu and Kashmir.

PM to Inaugurate ...

These petroglyphs are an irreplaceable record of the region's cultural and civilisational past. The conservation park will provide a dedicated space for protecting these vulnerable archaeological remains, raising public awareness and encouraging responsible heritage tourism. Prime Minister will also inaugurate 40 water bodies developed across 40 villages under Project Him Sarovar, an initiative aimed at addressing Ladakh's unique geographical and climatic challenges through water conservation, in line with the objectives of Mission Amrit Sarovar. Agriculture in Ladakh faces a seasonal imbalance between water availability and demand. Farmers often experience water scarcity during the crucial sowing season, even as snowmelt and glacial runoff provide substantial water resources during other periods. Project Him Sarovar seeks to address this challenge by conserving water when it is available and ensuring its availability when required, thereby supporting irrigation, sustaining agricultural livelihoods and strengthening long-term water security in the region.

LG Manoj Sinha ...

has increased, making these challenges even more serious," he said. The Lieutenant Governor stressed that the Himalayas is the source of rivers, protectors of biodiversity and vital regulators of climate, and any disturbance to the Himalayan ecological balance would have far-reaching consequences.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted the need to establish a balanced relationship between development and conservation, asserting that development achieved at the cost of environmental stability cannot be regarded as true development. The Lieutenant Governor stated that the vision of a developed India can be realised only when the Himalayas remain secure, healthy and vibrant.

"We must establish an extremely important balance between development and the conservation of natural resources, because I firmly believe that development achieved at the cost of nature's stability is not truly development. Our dream of a developed India will be meaningful only when the Himalayas remain safe, strong, and vibrant," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also outlined four key pillars for future action. The first pillar focuses on determining science-based carrying capacity and zoning to ensure holistic planning and sustainable development. The second pillar emphasises climate-resilient infrastructure and enhanced disaster preparedness through environmentally sensitive construction and strengthened community-based early warning systems integrating modern technology with traditional local knowledge.

The third pillar calls for promoting regenerative and inclusive livelihoods, including high-value horticulture, organic farming, modern sericulture, eco-tourism and other components of the green economy. The Lieutenant Governor stressed the need to empower youth and women as entrepreneurs and job creators. The fourth pillar advocates a zero-waste and circular mountain economy through improved solid waste management, wastewater treatment and recycling systems across urban, rural and tourist destinations.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the Summit for preparing a draft policy addressing ecological security, responsible tourism, disaster management and sustainable livelihoods. He expressed the hope that the document would evolve into a robust policy and implementation framework through extensive consultations and serve as the basis for a new social contract between society and nature.

Emphasising India's civilisational ethos of environmental stewardship, the Lieutenant Governor in his message called for harmonising tradition with technology, local wisdom with modern sciences and economic development with ecological sustainability.

"Today, as we build a developed India, we must strike a balance between tradition and technology, local knowledge and modern science, and economic and ecological development. I am fully convinced that the right policies and the right decisions on the ground can carry all of these forward together," the Lieutenant Governor said.

CBI files ...

Suryavanshi is stated to belong to Pune, Maharashtra.

Parents free to...

parents merely for financial gain. The minister also emphasised the need to ensure quality education and prevent unnecessary burdens on students.

Itoo said the meeting was aimed at addressing grievances and improving coordination among stakeholders to ensure that students across Jammu and Kashmir do not face difficulties.

On a complaint regarding the alleged death of a woman linked to a shortage of medical staff at Gurez, the minister said the matter was being examined. She warned that strict action would be taken if negligence or delays in providing treatment were established.

The minister also confirmed that revised school timings had been ordered, with changes applicable to municipal and rural areas.

J&K Homestay Policy...

ensure that the benefits of tourism reach communities across Jammu and Kashmir. The policy is expected to encourage greater community participation in the tourism sector while expanding accommodation options for visitors and creating new avenues for local economic growth.

BJP gaining ideological...

spokespersons, Morcha Presidents and other senior leaders attended. Dr. Satish Poonia recalled the supreme sacrifice of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee on the soil of Jammu and Kashmir for the complete integration of the region with the rest of India. He said that former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee laid the foundation for accelerated development by expanding road connectivity and taking infrastructure to remote areas, while Prime Minister Narendra Modi has carried this legacy forward on an unprecedented scale.

Describing the BJP as a party with a distinct ideological commitment, Poonia emphasized that its strength lies in connecting people through service, trust and inclusive development. He also recalled his long association with Jammu and Kashmir, including his participation in the Doda Bachao Andolan and movements associated with Lal Chowk, Srinagar.

In his presidential address, Sat Sharma welcomed Dr. Poonia as the new J&K Prabhari and recalled his earlier association with the region through ABVP activities. He presented a detailed account of the month-long Seva Sankalp Abhiyan, being organized to mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 25-year journey in public service as Gujarat Chief Minister and Prime Minister.

Sat Sharma highlighted initiatives including Ashwiraad Ka Diya, Seva Ke Rang, Seva Setu Abhiyan, Mere Sapno Ka Bharat and Seva Yojna Yatra, stating that the campaign had reached a large number of booths across Jammu and Kashmir. He said the BJP was simultaneously taking the Modi government's development achievements to the people and countering what he described as misleading propaganda by the INDI alliance. He asserted that the Congress's negative politics had weakened its political standing and urged party leaders to develop strong ideological clarity and effectively communicate the BJP's vision.

Dr. Jitendra Singh described Jammu and Kashmir as a politically sensitive and strategically important region, where organizational responsibilities are entrusted to experienced leaders after careful consideration. He observed that the socio-political atmosphere, particularly in Kashmir, had undergone a significant transformation and urged the party cadre to recognize and seize the emerging opportunity. People are ready to embrace the BJP, we must be prepared to embrace this opportunity, he emphasized.

Sunil Sharma highlighted the growth of the BJP's organizational presence and public support, citing the strong participation in the party's September 2, 2026, protest in Kashmir as an indication of changing public sentiment. He said people were increasingly rejecting the politics of the National Conference and Congress.

Dr. Nirmal Singh expressed confidence that Poonia's extensive organizational experience would strengthen the party in Jammu and Kashmir. Er. Ghulam Ali Khattana stressed that every political development in J&K attracts national attention and urged the cadre to consolidate public trust through development-oriented policies.

Ravinder Raina recalled Poonia's earlier organizational contributions and his role in crucial political crises. J&K BJP General Secretary Gopal Mahajan conducted the proceedings, while General Secretary Sanjita Dogra presented the vote of thanks.

Crime Branch...

records by certain officials to obtain undue benefits. During verification, it surfaced that accused Abdul Rashid Gojri had allegedly submitted a forged date-of-birth certificate showing his date of birth as 27.02.1973 instead of his actual date of birth, 27.02.1975. Accordingly, Case FIR No. 02/2022 was registered at Police Station Crime Branch Kashmir, now Police Station SCV Kashmir. Investigation revealed that accused No. 1 was 17 years and 2 months old at the time of his initial engagement as a daily wage in the Agriculture Department. Accused Nos. 2 and 3 allegedly facilitated the incorporation of the incorrect date of birth into his service records by disregarding directions for document verification, thereby facilitating the regularisation of his services. During the investigation, offences as per the FIR were established against all three accused. After obtaining the requisite approval and sanction in respect of the two serving government employees, the chargesheet has been presented before the Special Judge Anti-Corruption Court Srinagar. The general public has been advised to remain vigilant against fraudsters and report any such incidents to Crime Branch Kashmir, the statement added.

Gyanesh Kumar...

Choudhary said an independent and impartial Election Commission was essential to strengthen democracy in Jammu and Kashmir and across the country. "If we want to strengthen democracy in Jammu and Kashmir and across India, which we proudly call the world's largest democracy, we must ensure a transparent, vibrant and impartial Election Commission," he said. On the controversy surrounding the War Board's proposed common themes for Friday sermons, Choudhary said no political party had the right to interfere in the religious affairs of any community. "Whether it is Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism or Christianity, no religion gives any political party the right to interfere in its affairs. Religion has always been above politics and it must remain so," he said.

"God is one. His forms and the ways of worship may be different, but no political party should attempt to impose its agenda on any religion," the Deputy Chief Minister said.

Cabinet Clears Rs 53,428

... 40 per cent. The minimum age criterion has also been removed, making persons with disabilities eligible for assistance from birth.

The revised eligibility criteria, beneficiary coverage and assistance rates under the disability pension scheme will be implemented within three months of the issuance of guidelines, the statement read.

guidelines, the statement read.

The pension schemes for the elderly and widows, along with the National Family Benefit Scheme, will continue in their existing form.

Cabinet's approval is expected to benefit 3.20 crore beneficiaries across all 36 states and Union territories.

The Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme will be renamed the 'Pradhan Mantri Vidhavastha Pension Yojana', while the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme will be called the 'Pradhan Mantri Vidhavastha Pension Yojana'.

The Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme will be renamed the 'Pradhan Mantri Divyangjan Pension Yojana', and the National Family Benefit Scheme will become the 'Pradhan Mantri Parivar Labh Yojana'.

Launched on August 15, 1995, the NSAP provides assistance to poor households as part of the Centre's responsibility under Article 41 of the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution.

The Centre provides 100 per cent central assistance under the programme to ensure uniform availability of support to beneficiaries across the country.

The revised eligibility criteria for disability pension beneficiaries are in line with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, which recognises a benchmark disability of 40 per cent and provides for disability-related assistance to be at least 25 per cent higher than that under comparable schemes for other categories.

Dr Jitendra presents...

Referring to India's expanding start-up ecosystem, the Minister said the country's start-up numbers had grown from around 350-400 in 2014 to approximately 2.5 lakh, with nearly 60 per cent located in Tier-II and Tier-III cities. He said young people today had greater access to information and opportunities, and could achieve significant outcomes through passion, commitment and hard work.

Dr. Jitendra Singh called for stronger industry partnerships to help promising student innovators improve their products, respond to market requirements and explore commercial opportunities. He suggested facilitating business-to-business interactions for young innovators so that their ideas could receive industry feedback and potentially progress towards wider application.

Dr. Jitendra stressed that promising innovations should not remain confined to exhibitions or working models. Students with entrepreneurial potential should receive opportunities to engage with industry and develop solutions that meet practical needs. He encouraged stakeholders to explore ways of connecting young innovators with relevant enterprises and technical expertise at an early stage.

Citing the example of a policy change that removed the three-year existence requirement for deep-tech start-ups supported by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Dr. Jitendra Singh said such innovation required a willingness to support new ideas and take calculated risks. He called for greater collaboration between the Government and industry to nurture student innovators and help them develop their technologies.

The Minister also stressed the importance of mentorship in enabling students to recognise their strengths, refine their ideas and navigate the journey from an initial concept to a practical application. He proposed that a future edition of the programme include a dedicated session in which young innovators could speak directly about their work and experiences.

Dr. Jitendra Singh proposed that future editions of the programme include a dedicated session in which each participating student is accompanied by at least one parent or guardian. He said parents may sometimes be unfamiliar with the nature of a child's innovative work and, without intending to discourage them, may inadvertently interrupt the time and effort required to pursue an idea.

The Minister emphasised that parents, teachers and mentors all have an important role in creating an environment where children feel encouraged to experiment, question established approaches and learn from failure. He also stressed the need for students to understand their own capabilities, seek appropriate guidance and remain open to learning as technology and opportunities continue to evolve.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said young innovators must continue developing their skills and adapting to new knowledge rather than becoming complacent after an achievement. He encouraged them to explore their interests, make informed choices and keep improving their ideas through continuous presentation and practical experience.

Speaking at the event, Prof. Umesh V. Waghmare, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, said the exhibition reflected the ability of young students to identify problems faced by society and consider how science could help address them. He referred to the geographical diversity of participants, from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to Kashmir and from Mizoram to Mumbai, as well as the variety of projects covering agriculture, healthcare, environmental protection, accessibility, energy, water conservation, safety and improving everyday life for older people.

INSPIRE-MANAK, which stands for Million Minds Augmenting National Aspirations and Knowledge, is a flagship initiative of the Department of Science and Technology implemented in collaboration with the National Innovation Foundation-India, an autonomous body under DST. The programme encourages students from Classes VI to XII to develop original ideas and innovations rooted in science and societal applications.

Since its inception in 2017 a total of 18,27,580 students have been selected under INSPIRE-MANAK up to 2025-26. The Department has organised 11 National Level Exhibition and Project Competitions, at which 7,444 students exhibited their innovative projects and models.

During 2023-24 and 2024-25, 46,826 and 50,009 students, respectively, were selected under the scheme. The 12th NLEPC brought together students selected during these two financial years, providing a national platform to showcase their projects, interact with experts and receive exposure and mentorship.

Under the programme, selected students are supported in developing their ideas into models and proof-of-concept prototypes, with opportunities to improve their projects through workshops and interaction with experts and leading technical institutions. The initiative aims to nurture scientific temper, creativity and innovation from an early age and encourage students to turn observations of everyday challenges into practical solutions.

Congratulating the young innovators, Dr. Jitendra Singh encouraged them to continue questioning, experimenting and learning, and to pursue opportunities to develop their ideas further. He said that supporting young innovators from the school level would help strengthen India's innovation ecosystem and contribute to the vision of Viksit Bharat.

HELPLINE

POLICE STATIONS

Bagh-e-Bahu	2549777
Bakshi Nagar	2580102
Bus Stand	2575151
City	2543688
Gandhi Nagar	2430528
Gangyal	2482019
Nowbad	2571332
Pacca Danga	2548610
Railway Station	2472870
Sainik Colony	2462212
Satwari	2430364
Channi Himmat	2465164
Transport Nagar	2475444
Trikutla Nagar	2475133
Gandhi Nagar	2459660
SSP City	2561578
SP City North	2547038
SP South	2433778

Public Utility Services**INDIAN AIR LINES**

City Office	2542735
Air Port	2430449
Jet Air Ways	2453999
City Office	2573399

RAILWAYS

Railway Enquiry	131, 132, 2476407
Booking	2470318
Reservation	2470315

Public Health Engineering Stations

Bakshi Nagar	2543557
Gandhi Nagar	2430786
Company Bagh	2542582
New Plot	2573429
Panjirthi	2547537

Telecommunication Department

Directory Enquiry	197
Fault Repair	198
Trunk Booking	180
Billing Complaint	2543896

JAMMU MUNICIPALITY

Jn. Lines	2578503
Administration Officer	2542192
Health Officer	2547440

POSTAL SERVICES

Head Post Office City	2543606
Gandhi Nagar	2435863

FIRE SERVICES

Control Room	101, 132, 2476407
City	2544263
Gandhi Nagar	2457705
Canal	2554064
Gangyal	2480026

COOKING GAS DEALERS

Chenab Gas	2547633
Gulmoure Gas	2430835
JAKFED	2548297
HP Gas	2578456
Shivangi Gas	2577020
Tawi Gas	2548455

POWER HOUSES

Gandhi Nagar	2430180
Canal Road	2554147
Janipur	2533828
Nanak Nagar	2430776
Parade	2542289
Satwari Cantt.	2452813

HOSPITALS

GMC Hospital	2584290
S.M.G.S. Hospital	2547635
C.D. Hospital	2577064
Dental Hospital	2544670
Gandhi Nagar Hospital	2430041
Sarawal Hospital	2579402
G.B. Pant Cantt. Hospital	2433500
Ayurvedic College	2543661
C.R.P. Hospital	2591105
Acharya Shri Chander	2662536
Mental Hospital	2577444
Swami Vivekanand	2547418
Blood Bank	2547637
Ambulances	2584225, 2575364
Ambulances (Red Cross)	2543739

NURSING HOMES

Maddan Hospital	2456727
Medicare	2435070
Triveni Nursing Home	2452664
Suvidha Nursing Home	2555965
Al. Firdous Nursing Home	2545050
Astha Nursing Home	2576707
Bee Enn Charitable Trust	2505310
Chopra Nursing Home	2573580
Harbans Singh Mem Hsp.	2541952
Jeevan Jyoti	2576985
Yudhvir Nursing Home	2547821
Mediad Nursing Home	2466744
Sita Nursing Home	2435007
Vibhuti Nursing Home	2547969

India need to hunt for wickets, not contain West Indies, says Tilak

NEW DELHI: India need to hunt for wickets rather than containing a power-packed West Indies batting line-up, vice-captain Tilak Varma said on Tuesday, stressing the importance of bowling plan execution as the hosts look to seal the five-match T20 International series in the fourth game itself. India are 2-1 ahead in the series and a win on Wednesday will give them an unassailable lead, while the visitors will be eager to draw level.

The West Indies demonstrated their batting firepower by chasing down India's 249 in the second T20I, with skipper Shai Hope smashing a 45-ball 102. Tilak said India ill afford to relax against a side whose power-hitting extends till the last batter in the line-up. "The West Indies are a really good side, especially in T20 format. They play so much franchise cricket, so they know how to play this format. The power they have is unbelievable," Tilak said at the pre-match press conference on Tuesday.

"Everyone can hit the ball. It is not just the openers, number three or four. All their players can strike the ball, and even the 11th batter can come in and hit. Until all 10 wickets fall, the game is not over. We cannot relax."

India's bowling unit came under scrutiny after the second



match defeat. The visitors capitalised in the powerplay to pull off a remarkable chase.

The 23-year-old Tilak said the team had reviewed its defensive approach in that match, with head coach Gautam Gambhir encouraging the bowlers to be more aggressive and to attack for wickets instead of allowing the opposition to dictate terms.

"Initially, in the second game, we did not go for wickets. We were slightly defensive when they (West Indies) were scoring runs. But after that, as a team, Gautam (Gambhir) sir also mentioned that we can go for wickets and show that aggression," he said.

India bounced back with a 14-run win in the third T20I in Indore, restricting the West Indies to 209 despite another late assault from

the visitors.

Tilak said the team would look to build on that performance, with a better execution of plans against an opposition capable of changing the course of a match within a few overs.

With India's top batters in good form, the middle order has had limited opportunities.

Tilak, who has scored 443 runs in 13 T20I innings at number three with the help of two centuries at an average of 55.37 and a strike rate of 169.73, said he was ready to adapt to the team's requirements.

"I love batting at number three, and I have said that many times. I always want that pressure. When the team needs me, I want to step up," he said.

"If quick wickets fall, I can take my time and take the game deep. But if the open-

ers or the top three batters have batted until the 14th or 15th over, I know how to change the gears from the first ball."

The re-laid pitch at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium is expected to offer a different challenge from the venue's usual surface. Tilak said India would assess the conditions before deciding on their approach with the bat.

"You cannot go all out from the first ball without assessing the conditions. In one-day cricket, you can take five or six balls to understand the wicket, but in T20 cricket, you have only one or two balls before you need to get going," he said.

"Haven't seen the track yet but will see how the conditions behave initially and go accordingly. It is a fresh soil track, so let's see how it goes."

Tilak also explained his run-out in the previous match after he and Axar Patel mistakenly thought that a shot towards deep backward square leg had reached the boundary.

The confusion followed Axar's flick towards the leg-side boundary, with the West Indies fielder diving to stop the ball. Tilak thought the ball had crossed the rope and began walking away from his crease, while Axar initially shared the same impression.



GILL, SHAFALI NAMED ICC PLAYERS OF THE MONTH

Powerplay costing West Indies against India, says coach Darren Sammy

NEW DELHI: West Indies need to win both powerplays to beat India in India, head coach Darren Sammy said on Tuesday, identifying the first six overs as the decisive phase in the ongoing T20I series while backing experienced all-rounder Roston Chase amid criticism over his place in the side.

India lead the five-match series 2-1 ahead of the fourth T20I International here on Wednesday, with Sammy saying his side had repeatedly been forced to recover from expensive powerplays while bowling.

"I think the powerplay was the difference that prevented us from going 2-1 up, because we could have been 2-1 up as well," Sammy said.

He pointed out that India had scored at nearly 14.5 runs per over in the powerplay, despite West Indies restricting the scoring rate to below 10 runs an over in each of the subsequent three phases.

"For us, it is about controlling the powerplay. So far, we have had to pull the game back every single time. That is an area we need to work on," he said.

"To beat India in India, you really have to win both powerplays, with bat and ball."

Sammy felt West Indies' batting had matched India's in the series, with his side also striking more sixes in some matches. He said the visitors had looked to make the most of batting-friendly conditions, knowing that such surfaces were not always available.

"When you play on good batting wickets, you always feel you are in the game. You are just two big overs away from getting yourself back into it," he said.

The challenge, he added, was greater for the bowlers, with little margin for error on surfaces where totals of 200 or more are common. "The margins are fine, but as we have seen, if you execute your skills, you are still in the contest," he said.

Sammy cited India's skilful use of yorkers as an example of the execu-



tion required to contain batters. He also referred to assistant coach Ravi Rampaul's observation that hitting more fours than sixes could save two runs each time, and recalled Kimi Paul's description of bowling in such conditions: "Either you execute or you get executed."

The West Indies coach also defended Chase, who has faced criticism over his continued selection, saying the all-rounder's discipline, tactical understanding and defensive mindset make him particularly valuable with the ball.

Sammy also defended Chase, who has taken six wickets in the first three T20Is against India, including figures of 3/24 in Ranchi and 2/38 in Indore. With the bat, Chase has merely got a chance to bat and has only managed to score 10 runs in two innings, including an unbeaten five in the third T20I.

"I understand why I get a lot of criticism for having Roston in the team, but I understand the individual he is," Sammy said.

"Roston is naturally very disciplined in all aspects of his life. He does not like conceding runs, so he has a very clear defensive mindset."

Sammy said Chase understood how to avoid being hit and had a clear idea of his bowling plans, adding that his intelligence and ability to execute those plans made him an important member of the line-up.

Bhuvneshwar's recall is reward for his success, says Ashwin

NEW DELHI: Ravichandran Ashwin believes Bhuvneshwar Kumar never had an India comeback on his mind while consistently delivering for Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the IPL, with the pacer's performances eventually earning him a recall to the national T20I squad after four years.

Bhuvneshwar's inclusion in India's squad for the upcoming five-match T20I series against New Zealand, beginning next week, was among the major talking points following the selection announcement.

Former India off-spinner Ashwin felt the experienced pacer concentrated on his responsibilities rather than worrying about



the rewards that could follow his performances.

"I have a feeling that Bhuvneshwar Kumar hasn't even thought about a comeback. I think this will be his mantra for success. And when I'm watching him from afar, I have also experienced this myself, he has gone on his own journey," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel. "He has focused on

doing well, bowling well with the new ball and performing for RCB. Whatever he could do, he did it. His recall is the reward for his success. He never chased that reward; he simply did his job and success followed," he added.

Bhuvneshwar's return has also triggered speculation over Mohammed Shami's international future. Ashwin, however, said

Smriti stays atop ODI rankings, Australian players make gains

NEW DELHI: Newly-appointed India captain Smriti Mandhana retained the top spot in the ICC women's ODI batting rankings, while Australia's Ellyse Perry returned to the top 10 in the latest charts released on Tuesday.

Mandhana, who took over the captaincy from Harmanpreet Kaur recently, leads the ODI batting rankings with 790 points.

Harmanpreet is the only other Indian batter in the top 10, placed ninth.

In the ODI bowling rankings, Deepti Sharma slipped one place to ninth, while Australia's Annabel Sutherland and Megan Schutt improved their positions to move into the top five. India also



had three batters in the top 10 of the women's T20I rankings: Shafali Verma (4th with 759 points), Mandhana (5th with 754 points) and Harmanpreet (10th with 656 points).

In the women's T20I bowling rankings, Shree Charani (817 points) and Deepti (754) occupied the top two positions.

Deepti was the only Indian in the top 10 of the women's T20I all-rounders' rankings at fourth. She was placed sixth in the ODI all-rounders' list.

Slippery fingers or just lack of effort? Why are India's fielders getting caught out in T20Is?

NEW DELHI: In the third over of the West Indies innings during the third T20I at Indore, Shimron Hetmyer slashed a delivery from fast bowler Mayank Yadav. It flew towards the short third man and seemed to be a pretty regular chance. But Abhishek Sharma got confused about whether he should take the catch in a conventional way or go for the reverse cup. The result was another drop. Another because the scenario perfectly summed up India's catching woes in the shortest format.

Can a side consistently stay at the top of the game if their fielding standards continue to drop? India's surge to the top in T20Is has been marked by a decline in the field over the past three years.

The chances are going down at an ever-increasing rate in the shortest format. In 2026, according to data provided by CricViz, India are the 11th worst team among the 12

full-members, with a catching efficiency of 74.4, ahead of only the West Indies, who are bottom with a catching efficiency of 73.8.

This year, Tilak Varma has been the safest Indian fielder, pouncing on a total of 23 catches, but despite this figure, he has also been guilty of putting down nine chances across 27 matches. The worst of India's fielders have been Abhishek Sharma (57.8%) and Washington Sundar (62.5%). In essence, it boils down to one question: what exactly is going wrong?

If the last three-year period is considered, the catch efficiency rate has been steadily declining. If it was 80.4% in 2024, it came down to 79.8% in 2025, and now it's 74.4% this year.

For context, Australia's efficiency has increased, going up from 80.2 in 2024 to 83 in 2026. According to CricViz, India put down 33 chances in 26 matches in 2024, the number then



decreased to 26, but the number of games played was 19. This year, the Men in Blue have dropped a whopping 55 chances in 32 matches.

Fielding coaches have recently changed, with T Dillip replaced by Subhadeep Ghosh, but the problem persists.

"I think fielding has now definitely taken a back-seat in terms of application and in terms of building a certain culture," said R Sridhar, the former India fielding coach, during a media interaction. "There is a clear culture in

the way the Indian team is batting. And similarly, there's a clear culture in the way the Indian team is bowling, especially in the ODIs, where Shubman Gill likes tall, hit-the-deck fast bowlers. But whereas in fielding, that (the culture) seems to be absent."

"And what is really worrying is that the new kids coming into the squad are undercooked. Whoever is coming in, they don't seem to be the kind of fielder a Kohli is or even a Surya or even a Shreyas, the generation of that block, I'm saying, because they seem

to have been brought up on only one skill, that is, batting. So that's a bit of a worrying factor, but that is not for the Indian team to worry. That is for the entire ecosystem to wake up and smell the coffee. So there are a lot of things to be done, but the fielding coach will have a job on his hands to train these young guns straight away," he added.

Is there something that can be done to result in a mark improvement for the New Zealand series? Sridhar reckons "the change will take time to be reflected, as it will depend on how each individual responds to the coaching style."

"In coaching, one size doesn't fit all. You need to understand the person behind the player and have a different strategy for all of them. Understand their workload, understand what they are going through emotionally with their performances and bring

them to the best possible place. Coach the face, not the symptom," said Sridhar.

Sooryavanshi needs to put in the hard yards. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi took the world by storm with his 776 runs in the Indian Premier League for the Rajasthan Royals and made his India debut earlier this year in the series against England. In the IPL, the 15-year-old played on quite a few occasions as an impact sub, raising questions over his growth as a fielder.

Back in the day, there was a belief that younger players were safe fielders; however, the youngster has shown a need for someone to have a word with him about fielding.

In 2026, Sooryavanshi has so far played eight matches for India, putting down two catches, and his overall efficiency stands at 71.4%.

In the Asian Games gold-medal match against Pakistan, Sooryavanshi

almost collided with Abhishek Hasan Nawaz's chance went down when he was batting on 4, and he eventually went on to score 96, giving India a real scare. The answer for Sridhar is simple: someone needs to go and have a word with the youngster, asking him to put his part-time spin on the back burner and focus on fielding.

"Look, he's 15. So he's still a kid, right? So someone there has to really run his programme, I feel. I mean, although he's in an international elite environment where athletes are aware of what they need to do and how they need to manage their workloads, someone as young as 15 sometimes needs to be told. Someone there has to make a schedule for Sooryavanshi, so he can get a lot of practice and be ready to field in the match as well. Because at 15, if you're being subbed out, it's not a great sign," he said.



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