



PM Modi inaugurates 5 key projects worth Rs 3,350 crore in Ladakh

NEW DELHI, OCT 15

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday virtually inaugurated five development projects covering airport infrastructure and strategic road connectivity in Ladakh worth around Rs 3,350 crore.

The projects include a new passenger terminal at the Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport in Leh, built for Rs 640 crore. Spread over 23,800 square metres, the modern terminal is designed to handle 35 lakh passengers annually, officials said.

It incorporates geothermal energy to enhance energy efficiency and reduce its carbon footprint, reflecting the importance of sustainable infrastructure in Ladakh's ecologically sensitive environment. Blending modern passenger amenities with elements of Ladakh's rich cultural heritage, the terminal will improve passenger



convenience and strengthen air connectivity with the rest of the country, the officials said.

Modi also dedicated to the nation the 298-km-long Nimnu-Padum-Darcha Road, constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO). Connecting Nimnu in Leh with Darcha in Himachal Pradesh through the remote Zaskar Valley, the road provides an alternative connectivity corridor to



Ladakh, supplementing the Srinagar-Leh and Manali-Leh highways, an official statement said. Traversing the challenging Himalayan terrain, including the high-altitude Shinkun La Pass, the road marks a significant engineering achievement. Its strategic importance lies in enhancing operational mobility and strengthening logistical support for the

armed forces, the statement said. It will also benefit the residents of Ladakh by improving access to healthcare, education, markets and essential services, it said.

"Today, another chapter is being added to Ladakh's progress and development. I am happy to be part of this occasion through technology. Several important development projects have been inaugurated in Ladakh today."

"These projects will make travel easier for many people, improve electricity facilities in some areas, increase water availability in others, and strengthen the preservation of our ancient heritage," Modi said.

As part of the efforts to strengthen energy security and harness Ladakh's renewable energy potential, the prime minister inaugurated the 9 MW Hanu small hydro-electric project and the 66 KV double-circuit Dah-Hanu-Khalasi

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LI Governor Congratulates Jammu Kashmir Police on successful completion of Jashn-e-Dal 2026

Calls Upon Youth to Dream Big and Build a Drug-Free Society
SRINAGAR, OCT 15

The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha congratulated Jammu Kashmir Police on the successful completion of Jashn-e-Dal 2026. In a message, the Lieutenant Governor said that sports is the celebration of human capability, perseverance and collective aspiration. Appreciating the enthusiasm of the athletes and the efforts of the Jammu Kashmir Police, the Lieutenant Governor said that sports not only produce champions but also instil determination, patience and courage among young people.

Highlighting the growing stature of Jashn-e-Dal, the Lieutenant Governor said that the event has evolved beyond an annual competition into a cherished tradition emotionally connected with the people of Jammu Kashmir. Over the past few days, nearly 600 young athletes participated in 20 water-sports disciplines, including kayaking, canoeing,



rowing, sculling and the traditional shikara race, showcasing the region's immense sporting potential and vibrant water-sports culture. The Lieutenant Governor urged athletes to dream without limits and strive for excel-

lence with dedication and sincerity. Referring to the achievements of sportspersons nurtured through initiatives of Jammu Kashmir Police, the Lieutenant Governor in his message said that young athletes

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CM Omar inaugurates projects, lays foundation stones worth Rs 58.26 crore in Ganderbal


GANDERBAL, OCT 15

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today reviewed the overall development scenario in Ganderbal district, inaugurated five completed development projects worth Rs16.72 crore and laid foundation stones for two new projects worth Rs 41.54 crore, taking the total value of the projects

to Rs58.26 crore.

The projects include improved road connectivity, a new school building, a bridge over the River Jhelum and a multi-purpose auction platform at the Fruit and Vegetable Mandi, Zazuma, aimed at strengthening public infrastructure and supporting the district's horticulture econ-

my.

The Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the construction of a bridge over the River Jhelum at Guzama Shilwat at a cost of ₹39 crore. The bridge is expected to improve connectivity for local residents. He also laid the foundation stone for a multi-

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J&K Prosecution Department secures dismissal of 10 bail pleas in district Jammu, Samba

JAMMU, OCT 15

The Prosecution Department Jammu and Kashmir today announced that ten bail applications were dismissed/rejected by the Hon'ble courts at Districts Jammu and Samba between October 8 and 14, 2026, following well-prepared and vigorous opposition by Ld. Prosecutors appearing for the UT.

On October 14, 2026, four different bail applications of accused persons namely Sourab Balaria, Vivek Kumar, Judgepur Kour and Manmohit Singh in FIR No. 146/2026 of Police Station Vijaypur, registered under the NDPS Act and Arms Act, were dismissed by the Additional Sessions Judge, Samba Arvind Sharma. The Ld. Addl. Public Prosecutor Kuldeep Bhat argued the matter and strongly opposed that the accused were allegedly functioning as part of an organized network of gangsters involved in narcotic smuggling and the supply of

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CM Omar Abdullah inaugurates 70th National School Games in Ganderbal

Urges young athletes to pursue sporting excellence

GANDERBAL, OCT 15

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today inaugurated the 70th National School Games at the Government College of Physical Education, Ganderbal, welcoming young athletes from 23 States and Union Territories and calling for greater recognition, support and opportunities for sports beyond cricket.

The five-days sporting event features Under-17 boys' and girls' competitions in Wushu and Taekwondo, bringing together promising young talent from across the country.

Welcoming the participating athletes to Kashmir, particularly Ganderbal, the Chief Minister said the region had a strong tradition of excellence in Wushu and Taekwondo, with local athletes achieving success at both national and international levels.

Expressing happiness at the enthusiasm and determination of the young participants, he said he hoped for athletes would compete wholeheartedly and bring pride to their respective

States and Union Territories. Highlighting the importance of sports in the overall development of children, Omar Abdullah said young people should be encouraged to pursue their sporting interests alongside academics, without being burdened by excessive pressure to secure high marks.

He expressed concern over the disproportionate attention and resources devoted to cricket, observing that other sports, including football, hockey and disciplines such as Wushu and Taekwondo, deserved greater media visibility, sponsorship and institutional support.

Chief Minister stressed the need to create a more inclusive sporting environment in which talent across disciplines receives adequate opportunities and encouragement.

He said sports played a vital role in instilling discipline, building confidence and opening new avenues for young people. He urged the participants to compete with determination, uphold the spirit

Srinagar Police intensify anti-drug crackdown, attach assets worth Rs 13.43 Cr under NDPS act

SRINAGAR, OCT 15

Srinagar Police has frozen and attached multiple residential properties and a vehicle worth over Rs 13.43 crore in a major crackdown targeting drug trafficking and its financial networks.

The coordinated operation was conducted by Police Stations Khanyar, Panth Pora, Shalbagh, Safakadal, Soura and Ahmadnagar across different sub-divisions of Srinagar.

According to a statement issued to the news agency, the assets were identified during financial investigations and are allegedly linked to proceeds from illicit drug trafficking. The action has been initiated under Sections 68 E and 68 F of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic

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Rain Lashes Parts Of J&K, Higher Reaches Remain Draped In White After Fresh Snowfall

SRINAGAR, OCT 15

Rain lashed several plain areas of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, while the higher reaches of the Kashmir Valley remained shrouded in white after fresh overnight snowfall, prompting the authorities to press men and machinery into service to clear snow from the vital road-

ways, officials said. Udhampur in the Jammu region recorded the highest rainfall at 59.6 mm, followed by Poonch (39.5 mm), Samba (34 mm), Shopian

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Govind Jaiswal posted as Principal Secretary to LG

SRINAGAR, OCT 15

The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Thursday ordered the posting of Govind Jaiswal, IAS (AGMUT: 2007) as Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor.

According to an order issued by the General Administration Department, a copy of which is in possession of news agency, Jaiswal who was awaiting orders of adjustment in the GAD has been posted as Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor.

The order further states that he shall also hold the additional charge of the post of Chief Executive Officer, Shri Anamathi Shrine Board, in addition to his own duties, till further orders.

The post of Principal Secretary to LG fell vacant after

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BJP Rejects J&K Govt's 'Dual Power Structure' Argument, Says Outcomes Important, Not Explanations

JAMMU, OCT 15

BJP general secretary Satish Poonia on Thursday said dismissed the Jammu and Kashmir government's argument that the dual power arrangement had hindered the fulfilment of its promises, saying its performance should be judged by results, not such explanations. Poonia, the BJP in-charge of J-K here for a high-level party meeting, also dismissed allegations that the BJP was responsible for the failure to hold panchayat and local body elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

"It is for the government to decide how it wants to explain this, because it received the mandate, came to power and made the commitments. How



many promises it fulfilled and how many it failed to deliver cannot be explained away. What matters is the outcome and the results," he told reporters before the party meeting. "The people of Jammu and Kashmir are well aware of the

results of these two years," Poonia said, replying to a question about the government's claims that the dual-power arrangement — the elected National Conference-led government and the Lt Governor administration — prevented it from

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Dr. Jitendra Singh urges Industry to become 'Co-Creator' in India's technology journey

NEW DELHI, OCT 15

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, today urged industry to become a co-creator in India's technology journey, working with researchers from the conception of projects through development, scale-up and commercialisation.

Addressing the third edition of IITK Samanvay 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, he called for greater domestic and international investment in deep technologies and a stronger culture of research philanthropy, describing scientific research as "as good as worship" for its potential to save lives and contribute to national development.

Organised by the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IIT Kanpur) under the theme "Emerging Technologies, Enduring Partnerships," IITK Samanvay 2026 brought together stakeholders from government, industry, academia, startups and research institutions to strengthen collaboration and



accelerate the translation of research into market-ready technologies and societal solutions. Prof. Amey Karkare, Dean of Resources & Alumni, IIT Kanpur; Prof. Braj Bhushan, Deputy Director, IIT Kanpur; and Prof. Manindra Agrawal, Director, IIT Kanpur, were present on the dais.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said industry must engage with researchers from the earliest stages of a project, helping identify practical applications, develop viable business models and take innovations to scale. Calling for a shift from conventional collaboration to co-creation, he urged industry leaders to help accelerate the journey "from lab to land, from idea to impact, and from prototype to product."

The Minister

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Detained protestors were served fresh, hot meals: Delhi Police Commissioner to Supreme Court

NEW DELHI, OCT 15

Delhi Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar has tendered an "unconditional and unqualified apology" to the Supreme Court in a contempt of court case against him over the curbs imposed during the Cockerroach Janata Party (CJP) protest in Delhi on October 10.

In two affidavits filed before a Bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Jyoyalya Bagga, Kumar said that there had been "no non-compliance much less any wilful or deliberate non-compliance" with the Court's directions. He sought discharge of the contempt notice.

The contempt petition alleges that the Court's October 9 order was violated by closing entry and exit gates at metro stations, particularly GTB Nagar and Vishwavidyalaya. On October 9 and 11, the Court had directed that metro services run normally, internet facilities "function

unhindered", barricades be reviewed and there be no illegal detention of peaceful assemblies outside Section 163 BNS areas. It also ordered the removal of a Section 163 notice board at the Supreme Court.

In the compliance affidavit, Kumar said "internet facilities were working unhindered and only cellular internet services were suspended owing to the law and order situation." The court affidavit adds that this was done at the police's request to the Central government, with-in four kilometres of Raisina Hill. On metro services, the police said that 57 stations were regulated at first. After the October 9 order, this was scaled down to 45 of the network's 303 stations, "about 15% of the entire network." Normal services resumed at 10 pm on October 10. The affidavit states that no notice warning against protests was affixed inside the precincts of the

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35 JKAS officers to retire in 2027

SRINAGAR, OCT 15

The Jammu and Kashmir General Administration Department (GAD) has issued a retirement notification listing 35 officers of the Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) who will superannuate during the calendar year 2027.

According to the notification issued by GAD (Services), Civil Secretariat, Srinagar, the officers will retire upon attaining the age of superannuation in the afternoon of the dates indicated against each. The list features officers holding key positions across Finance, Revenue, Education, and Hospitality and Promotion departments, among others. Prominent among those slated to retire are Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, Managing Director, J&K Financial Corporation (January 31); Mohammad Rafi, Director General, Libraries (January 31); and Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad, Director General, Estates (March 31). Others on the list include Bashir

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DC Poonch chairs District Health Society meet

Reviews progress of Health Programmes; Directs 100% TB screening of high-risk population, Intensive maternal, Child care, timely disbursement of Benefits

POONCH, OCT 15
District Development Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma on Thursday chaired a meeting of the District Health Society in the Conference Hall of the DC Office to assess the progress, achievements and implementation of the health programmes in the district. The meeting focused on strengthening the healthcare delivery mechanism, improving the coverage of government health initiatives, identifying areas requiring greater attention and ensuring that the benefits of the health schemes reach the intended beneficiaries in a timely and effective manner.

At the outset, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Parvaiz Ahmed Khan presented a detailed PowerPoint presentation outlining the achievements of different health programmes and the current status of their implementation. He briefed the chair on the progress made under different healthcare initiatives and highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts among the concerned departments to achieve the desired outcomes. The meeting was attended by Programme Officer Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Tahir Mustafa Malik;



Medical Superintendent District Hospital; Deputy Chief Medical Officer; District Immunization Officer; officers from the District Programme Management Unit (DPMU) and officials associated with the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP). The DDC stressed effective implementation of Tuberculosis Preventive Treatment (TPT), directing the concerned officials to strengthen preventive interventions and ensure that eligible beneficiaries receive the required services. He called for renewed efforts under the National TB Elimination Programme to achieve the broader goal of TB Mukh Bharat. He highlighted the

important role of Nikshay Mitras in supporting tuberculosis patients and called for greater engagement to ensure that patients receive the necessary assistance during their treatment. The concerned officers were directed to strengthen coordination with community stakeholders and encourage wider participation in initiatives aimed at supporting TB patients. The DDC also reviewed the implementation of the Nikshay Poshan Yojana and directed the authorities to ensure the timely and smooth disbursement of financial assistance to eligible beneficiaries. He stressed that administrative or procedural

delays should not deprive patients of the support intended to help them during treatment. He called upon the health department to maintain proper records, monitor pending cases and ensure regular follow-up so that eligible patients receive their benefits in accordance with the prescribed provisions. The Deputy Commissioner laid special emphasis on strengthening maternal and child healthcare services under the Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) programme. He underscored the importance of ensuring effective implementation of healthcare interventions for mothers and children and improving access to essential services at the grassroots level. The meeting further stressed the need for focused implementation of the JOSH initiative and comprehensive coverage of vulnerable sections of the population. The meeting concluded with a resolve to strengthen the district's healthcare delivery system, accelerate ongoing health initiatives and improve overall health indicators through sustained coordination, effective monitoring and result-oriented implementation of various public health programmes.

DC reviews status of telecom services, infrastructure projects in Kishtwar

KISHTWAR, OCT 15
Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today chaired a meeting of the District Telecom Committee (DTC) to review the status of telecom services and the progress of ongoing infrastructure projects in the district. At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the Action Taken Report (ATR) on the directions issued at the previous DTC meeting. While reviewing the progress of the 4G Saturation Project, the Deputy Commissioner directed the executing departments to take measures for timely completion of the work at the remaining sites. He emphasized the need for close coordination among all stakeholder departments to ensure the project is completed within the stipulated timeline. The Officials from BSNL apprised that the land survey of the two pending sites at Choudhram and Dehate has been completed. The DDC directed to upload documents and places indent on Parivesh portal after joint inspection with Forest authorities. He also reviewed the status of ongoing 4G networking work in the remote areas of Chasoti, Sohal, Chingam and Pallai. He



directed the officials to remove the bottlenecks through effective inter-departmental coordination to facilitate early completion of the project. Reviewing the status of Right of Way (RoW) applications on the United Portal of the Department of Telecommunications, the ACR informed that there was no pendency in the district. It was further informed that the Call Before You Dig (CBYD) app is functioning smoothly in the district. The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments, including NHIDCL, BBO, Jal Shakti and JPCL to register on the portal

and nominate a nodal officer for maintaining coordination among the departments. He emphasised the importance of effective use of the CBYD app to prevent damage to underground telecom infrastructure during excavation works. The meeting was attended by CPO Akhil Thakur; ACD Manoj Kumar; DFO Vishal Chaudhary; DFO Mahesh Thakur; DIO NIC Faizal Khan; Executive Engineer JPCL Abdul Hamid; Executive Engineer PWD R&B Shamir Din; Executive Engineer PWD R&B Mohd. Farooq; SDE BSNL Atul Kumar besides other concerned officers and officials.

Yasha Mudgal chairs 5th AGM of BCCB, emphasises mission-mode NPA recovery, financial revival

JAMMU, OCT 15
The 5th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Baramulla Central Cooperative Bank Limited (BCCB) was held today, under the chairmanship of Yasha Mudgal, Chairperson, Professional Board of Directors (PBOD), BCCB and Commissioner Secretary Cooperative Department. The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla, members of the Professional Board of Directors, Director Horticulture, Kashmir and other senior officers of the department along with representatives of Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS). Dr. Khalid Hussain, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, BCCB, made a detailed presentation on functioning of the Bank. He highlighted the significant role of PACS in strengthening the cooperative credit structure at the grassroots level. During the statutory proceedings, the House unanimously adopted the audited financial statements of the Bank, including the Balance Sheets, Profit and Loss Accounts and related schedules for the financial years ended March 31, 2025 and March 31, 2026. The House also ratified the appointment of M/s IMT & Company, Chartered Accountants, as the Statutory Auditor for the financial year 2026-27, as approved by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Addressing the AGM, Yasha Mudgal emphasized that the financial revival of BCCB, improvement in asset quality

and restoration of public confidence must remain the foremost priorities of the Bank's management. She stressed the need for a result-oriented and time-bound approach towards the recovery of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs). She directed the management to establish clear, branch-wise recovery targets, strengthen the field-level monitoring and ensure accountability at every level. The Chairperson called for a comprehensive borrower-wise review of overdue accounts. She directed the Bank to formulate specific recovery plans for chronic defaulters, supported by time-bound legal and administrative action wherever warranted. Emphasizing the importance of sound credit management, Yasha Mudgal directed the Bank to strengthen its credit appraisal and pre-disbursement assessment procedures, improve post-disbursement monitoring and address deficiencies in loan underwriting. She also stressed the need for close coordination with all 92 PACS to facilitate field-level follow-up, improve recovery efforts and reinforce the cooperative credit network. The Chairperson further underscored the importance of financial discipline, prudent resource management and sound administrative expenditure and prudent norms. She directed the management to exercise greater control over administrative expenditure and take sustained measures to improve the Bank's financial position, operational efficiency

Secy RDD reviews flagship rural development schemes, stresses timely execution, accountability

SRINAGAR, OCT 15

Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Ramesh Kumar, on Tuesday conducted a comprehensive review of schemes and programmes being implemented by the Department across Jammu and Kashmir. The review was focused on physical progress, financial discipline, timely utilisation of funds and strengthening the service delivery in rural areas. The meeting was attended by Secretary in RDD Rakesh Sharma; Mission Director, NRLM, Shubhra Sharma; COO, Himayat, Rifat Kohli; Director, RDD Jammu, Shahbaz Akhtar; Director Finance, Umam Khan; CEO, IWMP, Rajnish Kumar; Joint Director Planning, Kamal Kumar Sharma; Additional Secretary, RDD, Waseem Rajat; Joint Director, RDD, Manoj Kumar; Mission Director, VB-GRAM-G, Pradham Mantri; Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G), Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGS), Himayat and the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP).

Reviewing VB-GRAM-G, the Secretary assessed employment generation, implementation of



works and financial progress under the programme. He was informed that 3.21 lakh persons had availed employment, generating 59.19 lakh person-days. The Secretary emphasised financial discipline, timely processing of wage and material payments, effective monitoring of works and coordination between district and block-level functionaries to ensure that implementation remains on schedule and funds are utilised efficiently. He observed that although the planning process is digital, errors and discrepancies often emerge at the finalisation stage. He directed the concerned officers to expedite the completion of pending houses through regular district-level monitoring, close follow-up with beneficiaries and prompt resolution of implementation bottlenecks. The Secretary also emphasised that village plans should reflect

local needs, geographical conditions and the specific vulnerabilities of each area. He called for prioritising works according to ground requirements, including water conservation, drainage, protection structures and connectivity in vulnerable and disaster-prone locations. Reviewing PMAY-G, the Secretary assessed the progress of rural housing under the SECC and Awaas Plus categories. As per the data, 3,27,210 houses and buildings are eligible for 3,34,586 sanctioned houses, taking the overall completion rate to approximately 98 per cent. The Secretary stressed the need to expedite the completion of pending houses through regular district-level monitoring, close follow-up with beneficiaries and prompt resolution of implementation bottlenecks. He also emphasised proper verification of beneficiary records,

timely release and utilisation of funds, and effective convergence with other schemes to ensure that eligible rural households receive the intended housing benefits without avoidable delays. Reviewing SBM-G Phase II, Kumar underscored the importance of sustained behavioural change in ensuring long-term sanitation outcomes across Jammu and Kashmir, stressing that the focus must extend beyond infrastructure creation towards fostering a lasting sense of responsibility and ownership among the people towards sanitation, hygiene and cleanliness. Reviewing the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission under NRLM, the Secretary took stock of initiatives relating to the women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs), institution building, financial inclusion, farm and non-farm livelihoods, and the Lakshmi Didi programme. The review also covered community-managed training centres, capacity-building activities and the integration of the Rural Livelihoods Mission with Mission Yuva to expand livelihood and enterprise opportunities for rural households. Reviewing Himayat under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-KY), the Secretary assessed the progress of skill development and placement-linked training for unemployed youth. The departmental presentation showed that against a training target of 2,248 candidates under the 2025-26 pilot phase, 2,032 candidates had

completed training and 1,378 had been employed. Under the 2025-28 Action Plan, the Ministry of Rural Development had approved a target of 32,480 candidates. Reviewing the Integrated Watershed Management Programme under the Watershed Development Component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, the Secretary assessed progress in water conservation, soil health improvement, sustainable agriculture and climate resilience. He was informed that 19 projects covering 69,493 hectares had been sanctioned at a total project cost of ₹194.58 crore. Against the ₹155.47 crore in central funds released, cumulative expenditure stood at ₹137.65 crore. For 2026-27, ₹32.47 crore had been allocated, of which ₹16.07 crore had been spent. The Secretary directed the concerned officers to expedite pending works and improve the overall pace of implementation. He observed that progress in certain areas was below expectations and stressed that every officer must take personal responsibility for achieving the targets assigned to them. Reiterating the importance of accountability, the Secretary stated that responsibility would be fixed at every level for delays, poor performance and failure to achieve prescribed targets. The performance of district- and block-level functionaries would be assessed on the basis of their responsibilities and the results achieved on the ground.

Punjabi Morcha thanks Omar Abdullah, Shammi Oberoi & Nasir Aslam Wani; appeals to PM to Restore Punjabi in CBSE Curriculum

JAMMU, OCT 15

The All J&K Sikh Sangat's Punjabi Morcha today expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Jammu and Kashmir Government for giving a written assurance regarding the inclusion of Punjabi as an official language of the Union Territory, terming the development a major victory for the Punjabi-speaking community and those who stood united for the cause. Addressing a thanksgiving press conference at the Punjabi Morcha site near Maharajgiri Singh Statue, Tawi Bridge, Jammu, Taranjit Singh Tony, Sewadar, All J&K Sikh Sangat and Chairman, Gurdwara Rani Talah, Digiana, said the achievement was the result of sustained peaceful struggle, community unity and the collective efforts of thousands of supporters who stood firmly behind the demand. Tony extended his sincere thanks to Chief Minister Omar

Abdullah for the government's assurance and commitment to take the matter forward, and expressed special gratitude to Shammi Oberoi, Rajya Sabha MP and National Conference Treasurer, for his intervention and assurance regarding the introduction of the Punjabi Language Bill in the forthcoming Assembly session. He also thanked Advisor to CM Nasir Aslam Wani for his special efforts in facilitating dialogue and helping move the matter towards a positive resolution. Tony acknowledged the role of Rajya Sabha MP Gursinder Singh Oberoi in facilitating the consultation process that enabled the Sikh Sangat delegation to present its concerns before the government. "Punjabi is not merely a language; it is our mother tongue, our heritage and an inseparable part of Jammu and Kashmir's cultural identity. This achievement belongs to every person who stood with us, supported



our cause and believed that Punjabi deserves its rightful place among the official languages of J&K," Tony said. He paid special tribute to the delegation led by former minister Manjit Singh Oberoi, delegation members who participated in the Srinagar consultations and represented the aspirations of the community with dignity and determination. Tony expressed profound gratitude to the Sikh Sangat, gurdwara management committees,

religious institutions, youth organisations, educational bodies, social organisations, community leaders, media organisations and individual supporters who extended solidarity throughout the Morcha. He also acknowledged the support received from Jat organisations, Labana Samaj, Sikh youth bodies, representatives of different communities, political leaders and organisations & Media

persons from Jammu, Kashmir, Punjab and beyond and also Mandir & Masjid Committees along site of Morcha venue. He said the movement had demonstrated that the cause of Punjabi was not confined to a single organisation or community, but concerned the preservation of Jammu and Kashmir's linguistic and cultural heritage. "The Morcha remained peaceful, democratic and constitutional throughout. We are grateful to every organiser, volunteer, supporter and well-wisher who contributed to this collective effort. Our unity gave strength to our voice, and this written assurance marks an important milestone in our struggle," Tony added. Following the written assurance and successful discussions, the Punjabi Morcha has decided to call off its agitation, expressing hope that the government will honour its commitment by bringing the Bill before the Legislature and ensuring

Punjabi receives official language recognition. Taking the campaign forward, Tony made a special appeal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to intervene in the matter of Punjabi's inclusion in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum and restore the language where it was previously available but subsequently removed. He urged the Prime Minister, the Union Education Ministry and the CBSE authorities to ensure that Punjabi-speaking students have adequate opportunities to study their mother tongue in schools. "While we welcome the positive assurance from the Jammu and Kashmir Government, our larger responsibility is to protect and promote Punjabi for future generations. We appeal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ensure that Punjabi receives due recognition in the school education system and is restored in the CBSE curriculum wherever

it was discontinued. Children must not be deprived of the opportunity to learn their mother tongue," Tony said. He emphasised that the preservation of a language requires more than official recognition; it also requires educational opportunities, institutional support and a commitment to passing the language on to younger generations. Tony concluded by thanking everyone who contributed to the Morcha and appealed to the government to translate its written assurance into concrete legislative action. "The Morcha may be called off following the government's assurance, but our commitment to Punjabi language, culture and heritage will continue. We look forward to the fulfilment of this commitment and will continue to work constructively for the promotion of Punjabi across Jammu and Kashmir and India," he said.

DAJ celebrates Mahila Kisan Diwas 2026

Highlights women's contribution to agricultural development

JAMMU, OCT 15

The Directorate of Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare, Jammu, today organised Mahila Kisan Diwas 2026 here at Kisan Kendra, Farmer Training Centre (FTC), Talab Tillo to recognise the significant contribution of women farmers to agricultural development and promote their empowerment through sustainable livelihoods, entrepreneurship and value addition. The celebration assumes special significance in 2026, as the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has declared 2026 the International Year of the Woman Farmer (IYWF 2026). The initiative highlights the vital role of women across agrifood systems and underscores the need to strengthen their access to resources, technology, training, markets and leadership opportunities. The observance of Mahila Kisan Diwas reinforces the commitment to recognising women farmers as key contributors to agricultural productivity, food security, rural livelihoods and sustainable development. The programme was graced by

MLA Jammu West, Arvind Gupta; MLA Nagrota, Devyani Rana; Director Agriculture Jammu, Anil Gupta; Director Horticulture Jammu, Gul Sayed; Director Animal Husbandry Jammu, Dr. Jugal Kishore and Joint Director Agriculture (SLIB/Farms), Jammu, Aman Jyoti Sharma. As many as 200 women farmers from Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Udhampur and Reasi districts, along with officers, officials and departmental staff, participated in the event. The programme commenced with the traditional lighting of the ceremonial lamp by the dignitaries. The guests subsequently visited exhibition stalls set up by women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs), women's cooperatives and progressive women farmers, showcasing locally produced agricultural and allied products and highlighting the potential of women-led enterprises in rural economic development. Deputy Director Trainings Jammu Karuna Nidhi delivered the welcome address and high-



lighted the importance of recognising women farmers' contributions to agriculture and strengthening their participation in modern farming practices, entrepreneurship and income-generating activities. A nakkad natak was presented to sensitise participants about various schemes and initiatives of the Agriculture Department. A documentary showcasing the success stories of women farmers was also screened, highlighting their achievements, resilience and entrepreneurial spirit. Addressing the gathering, the

MLA Jammu West said that the vision of the Prime Minister is to empower women, particularly women farmers, by creating opportunities for economic independence and sustainable livelihoods. He appreciated the commendable work being undertaken by women farmers across Jammu and Kashmir and expressed confidence that, with the active support of the Agriculture Department, the Union Territory would surpass its Lakshmi Didi target by enabling more women to achieve financial independence through agriculture and allied

activities. He stressed that strengthening women-led enterprises and enhancing the value of farm produce would contribute significantly to increasing rural incomes and promoting inclusive agricultural growth. MLA Nagrota emphasised the need for effective marketing, branding and promotion of locally produced goods prepared by women farmers. She encouraged women entrepreneurs to leverage social media and digital platforms to showcase and market their products, expand their customer base and

establish a stronger market presence. She observed that improved market access and product visibility could significantly enhance the income and entrepreneurial prospects of women farmers. Director Agriculture highlighted the Department's commitment to empowering women farmers through various government schemes, capacity-building initiatives and entrepreneurship-oriented interventions. He stated that several women were emerging as successful agri-entrepreneurs by availing benefits under departmental schemes and adopting innovative practices in agriculture and allied sectors. He further informed that female field functionaries of the department were actively engaging with women farmers, providing technical training and creating awareness about departmental schemes, scientific farming practices and opportunities for value addition to agricultural produce. On the occasion, progressive women farmers who have made notable contributions to agri-

culture and allied activities were felicitated in recognition of their achievements and entrepreneurial initiatives. The awardees included Babli Devi and Neelam Kumari from Samba; Sushma Devi and Renu Sharma from Reasi; Shakti Sharma from Pali, Samba, who has also been recognised as Lakshmi Didi by the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India; Reva Rani from Billawar, Kathua; Jyoti Sharma and Lakshmi Devi from Udhampur; Babli Devi from Bhalwal, Jammu; Simple Devi from Jammu and Taro Devi from Pragwal. Female field functionaries of the Agriculture Department, including Ashu Jammwal, Shivali, Pooja Andotra, Savir Kour, Shiphi and Heena Rani, were also felicitated for their contributions to agricultural extension and their efforts to support and empower women farmers at the grassroots level. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Uppwal Koul, SMS-SDL, while the proceedings were conducted by Anjana Mahajan and Pooja Mahajan.

DIPR Samba organises Bhajan Sandhya at Chichi Mata Temple on fifth day of Navratri

SAMBA, OCT 15

Continuing the devotional celebrations of Navratri, the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Samba Centre organised a Bhajan Sandhya here at the revered Chichi Mata Temple on the fifth day of the festival, bringing devotees together in an atmosphere of spiritual fervour and religious devotion. The programme featured soulful devotional songs and bhajans presented by artists of the Saraswati Sangeet Art & Culture group. Their melodious performances added to the spiritual ambience of the temple and enhanced the festive spirit of the auspicious occasion. The initiative reflected DIPR Samba's efforts to promote the region's rich cultural and religious heritage, while providing a platform to local artists to showcase their talent and con-



tribute to the preservation of traditional devotional music. The event was organised under the supervision of District Information Officer Ekshu Sharma, as part of the ongoing Navratri celebrations. Officials and staff members of the Information Department, representatives associated with Chichi Mata Temple,

devotees and members of the local community attended the programme and participated in the devotional gathering. The Bhajan Sandhya concluded on a note of devotion and spiritual harmony, highlighting the significance of cultural traditions in fostering community participation and togetherness.

DC reviews functioning of Municipal Council Rajouri; Inspects sanitation measures at Old Bus Stand

RAJOURI, OCT 15

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Dr. Devansh Yadav, today chaired a meeting of the concerned officers to review the functioning of Municipal Council Rajouri, with a focus on sanitation, waste management, ongoing development works and beautification initiatives. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the sanitation arrangements across the wards of the town, including the availability of sanitation workers, deployment of manpower and the overall cleanliness scenario. He directed the concerned officers to ensure an additional routine cleaning during the day, besides the routine morning cleaning, to maintain cleanliness in all areas, particularly commercial localities and other high-footfall areas. Later, the Deputy Commissioner visited Old Bus



Stand Rajouri and inspected the sanitation arrangements and cleanliness of the area. He also inspected shops and surrounding commercial establishments and stressed the

need to ensure proper upkeep and prevent the accumulation and indiscriminate dumping of waste. The meeting was informed that three new sites have been identified for waste

disposal to improve waste management in the town. The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the status of ongoing development and beautification works. He directed the DSEO to conduct physical verification of completed works to assess their quality and ensure that works found to be of satisfactory quality are preserved and not unnecessarily dismantled. The Deputy Commissioner stressed coordinated efforts by all concerned departments to improve sanitation, strengthen waste management and ensure timely completion and proper maintenance of development works in Rajouri town. The meeting was attended by ADC Ravi Kumar Sihag; IAS Probationer Akash Garg; ARTO & EO Municipal Council, Ashiq Rafiq Malik; Tehsildar Rajouri Varinder Sharma; AEE PWD(R&B) Adil Wani and other concerned officers.

Ritika meets Dr Satish Poonia, seeks guidance to strengthen BBBP campaign

Reaffirms commitment to women empowerment, girl-child education and grassroots outreach in J&K

JAMMU, OCT 15

Ritika Trehan, Convenor, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory, and senior BJP leader, today called on Dr Satish Poonia, BJP National General Secretary and Jammu and Kashmir in-charge, and sought his guidance and vision to further strengthen the implementation of the campaign across the Union Territory. During the interaction, Trehan discussed the importance of taking the objectives of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao to the grassroots level through sustained public outreach, community participation and greater awareness about the rights, education, safety and empowerment of girls. She emphasised the need to translate the vision of the campaign into meaningful initiatives that create lasting social change and expand opportunities for the girl child. Seeking Dr Poonia's guidance on the way forward, Trehan expressed her resolve to discharge the responsibilities entrusted to her with dedication, discipline and a result-oriented approach. She stressed that the campaign must go beyond awareness programmes and evolve into a sustained people's movement involving families,



educational institutions, social organisations, women leaders and community representatives. Trehan highlighted that empowering girls through quality education, equal opportunities, improved access to institutional support and a safe environment was essential for building a progressive and inclusive society. She also underscored the importance of challenging deep-rooted social prejudices and encouraging families to recognise daughters as equal partners in the development of society. She said

that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, women empowerment had emerged as a key pillar of India's development agenda, with a focus on enabling women and girls to participate confidently in the sphere of life. She reiterated that the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative reflected the broader national commitment to protecting the dignity of the girl child, promoting education and creating an environment in which every daughter could realise her potential. Trehan

maintained that Jammu and Kashmir possessed immense potential for advancing this mission through coordinated efforts at the grassroots level. She emphasised that greater public participation, awareness among parents, engagement with young people and collaboration with educational and community institutions could help strengthen the campaign's impact across urban and rural areas.

Describing the interaction as an opportunity to gain valuable organisational guidance and direction, Trehan reaffirmed her commitment to working in accordance with the party's vision and the objectives of the campaign.

She expressed confidence that sustained efforts, effective coordination and a focused outreach strategy would further reinforce the message of Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao across Jammu and Kashmir. Trehan reiterated that the empowerment of daughters was not merely a social responsibility but a collective commitment essential to the region's progress, prosperity and future, asserting that every girl must have the opportunity to learn, lead and contribute to nation-building.

MLA Bahu Ch. Vikram Randhawa Inaugurates Completed Interlocking Tile Work at Ram Leela Ground, Channi Himmat

JAMMU, OCT 15

Hon'ble MLA Bahu, Ch. Vikram Randhawa, today inaugurated the completed work of providing and laying 80 mm thick interlocking paver blocks at Ram Leela Ground, Ward No. 51, Channi Himmat, fulfilling a long-pending demand of the Ram Leela Committee and local residents.

The project has been executed by the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) under the Capex budget.

On the occasion, the completed ground was formally handed over to the Ram Leela Committee in the presence of committee members, JMC officials, and the concerned contractor.

Speaking on the occasion, Ch. Vikram Randhawa described the completed work as a special Navratri gift to the people of Channi Himmat. He said that fulfilling the long-pending demand of the Ram Leela Committee was a step towards improving local infrastructure and providing better facilities for religious and cultural activities. He reiterated his commitment to addressing public



grievances and ensuring the continued development of the Bahu constituency. He further emphasised that public spaces should be developed and maintained to serve the needs of the community. The upgraded Ram Leela Ground will provide better facilities for religious gatherings, cultural programmes, and other community events, bringing greater convenience to residents of Channi Himmat. Members of the Ram Leela Committee expressed their gratitude to Ch. Vikram

Randhawa for fulfilling their long-pending demand and providing an improved facility for organising Ram Leela and other community activities. They appreciated his efforts in addressing their concerns and thanked him for the timely completion of the work. The MLA reaffirmed his commitment to working for the welfare of the people and ensuring that the genuine demands of residents across the Bahu constituency are addressed through sustained development efforts.

Environment Committee reviews Anchar Lake conservation, inspects SKIMS waste management; directs time-bound remedial action

SRINAGAR, OCT 15

The Committee on Environment of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, under the Chairmanship of MLA Mohammad Youssuf Tarigami, today conducted an extensive visit to Anchar Lake and its adjoining areas to assess the measures being undertaken by the Government for conservation, restoration and pollution control of the lake besides identifying further interventions required for its effective protection and sustainable management.

Members of the Committee, including MLAs Daleep Singh Parihar, Shovkat Hussain Ganje, Javid Ahmad Mirchal, Dr. Sajid Shaif, Salman Sagar and Javid Reyaz Bedar besides MLA Mubarak Gul, accompanied the Chairman during the visit. During the inspection, the Committee expressed serious concern over the rampant encroachments in and around Anchar Lake. It said that immediate and effective measures shall be taken for removal of illegal encroachments and retrieval of encroached land in accordance with the law. The

Committee stressed that any further encroachment on the lake and its adjoining areas must be prevented through stringent enforcement, regular monitoring and coordinated action by the concerned departments. The Chairman directed the Vice-Chairman, Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA), to furnish a detailed report on the nature, extent of illegal encroachments around Anchar Lake, the status of land retrieval and the action taken against the violators. He also

called for clear timelines and an account of the measures proposed to prevent fresh encroachments and ensure strict compliance with the applicable environmental and land protection regulations. Expressing concern over the deteriorating ecological condition of the lake, the Chairman observed that Anchar Lake is facing serious environmental challenges due to encroachment, pollution, siltation and other anthropogenic pressures. He emphasised that the protection and restoration of the lake

require sustained institutional efforts, effective implementation of environmental safeguards and close coordination among all concerned departments. He underscored the need for a comprehensive and time-bound conservation strategy encompassing the prevention of untreated sewage and waste discharge, scientific desiltation wherever required, restoration of the lake's natural water channels, protection of its catchment areas and regular monitoring of water quality. He stressed that all

interventions must be guided by scientific assessments and ecological considerations to ensure the long-term sustainability of the lake. The Chairman also emphasised that the preservation of Anchar Lake is a shared responsibility of the government and the public. He called for greater community participation, public awareness and strict adherence to environmental norms while urging the concerned authorities to adopt a proactive approach towards safeguarding the lake from further degradation.

As part of the visit, the Committee also inspected Sherlock Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) to assess the concerns regarding the management and disposal of hospital waste and its potential impact on Anchar Lake. The Committee stressed that biomedical waste and other hospital effluents must be handled, treated and disposed of strictly in accordance with the prescribed environmental and biomedical waste management norms to prevent contamination of the lake and its surrounding ecosystem.

JMC Commissioner inspects Waste Processing Facilities at Kot Bhalwal

JAMMU, OCT 15

Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) Ayushi Sudan today conducted a comprehensive inspection of the Integrated Solid Waste Management Facility at Kot Bhalwal to review the functioning of the waste processing units, assess the operational readiness of installed machinery and strengthen the scientific and sustainable management of solid waste.

The visit focused on evaluating the progress of key waste processing facilities, improving operational efficiency, ensuring optimum utilisation of available infrastructure and promoting resource recovery in accordance with environmental standards. During the inspection, the Commissioner reviewed the infrastructure and machinery installed at the Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste processing plant. The equipment includes a 6-CUM primary hopper, primary and secondary jaw crushers, vibrating screen, 3-CUM secondary hopper, four-belt conveyor system, washing plant, backhoe loader, tractor with trolley, weighbridge, electrical control panels and barbed-wire fencing.

After assessing the installation and readiness of the equipment, Ms. Sudan directed the concerned officials to undertake a trial run of the plant to eval-



uate its operational performance, verify the functioning of the machinery and address any technical issues before regular operations commence. The Commissioner also inspected the legacy waste bioremediation site and reviewed the functioning of the installed segregation machine and Kistrack. She took stock of the processing and recovery of different waste fractions, including bio-soil, C&D inert material and Refuse-Derived Fuel (RDF). The inspection emphasised the need for effective segregation, scientific processing and proper utilisation of recovered

materials, along with environmentally safe disposal of residual waste in compliance with applicable environmental norms. The initiative aims to improve resource recovery while reducing the volume of waste requiring final disposal. The Commissioner subsequently inspected the waste processing facility operated by CEF Energy Jammu, reviewing the installed trommel machinery, Bio-CNG plant and ongoing processing operations. Assessing the functioning of the equipment and utilisation of the available infrastructure, the Commissioner

directed the concerned agency to increase the quantity of waste processed and improve the operational efficiency of the facility. She stressed the importance of making optimal use of the installed machinery to enhance processing capacity, facilitate greater resource recovery and ensure more effective scientific management of municipal solid waste.

The Commissioner directed the concerned officials and agency representatives to take timely follow-up measures, address operational gaps and ensure that the facilities deliver their intended outcomes efficiently and in accordance with prescribed environmental standards.

The inspection reflects Jammu Municipal Corporation's continued commitment to strengthening solid waste management infrastructure, accelerating waste processing, promoting resource recovery and ensuring environmentally responsible disposal of waste for a cleaner and more sustainable Jammu.

Among those accompanying the Commissioner were Dr. Jaswant Singh, Executive Engineer, Yasir Bashir Kichloo, Executive Engineer (Mechanical), Talat Mahmood Khan, Sanitation Officer, Romesh Wazir, members of the Swachh Bharat Mission PMU team and other concerned officials.

Master artisan Rafiq Ahmed Sofi makes Kashmir proud, wins National Award

SRINAGAR, OCT 15

Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, has extended heartfelt congratulations to the master artisan Rafiq Ahmed Sofi of Eidgah, Srinagar, on being conferred with the National Award 2025 in the Hand-Knotted Carpet category by the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. Sofi is the sole awardee from Jammu & Kashmir in this category for 2025, winning it for a carpet that features intricate floral motifs, traditional architectural patterns and calligraphic elements.

In a press statement issued here today, a spokesman of the Department paid rich tributes to the master artisan for making the famed handicrafts and handloom sector of Kashmir proud at the national stage. "This honour recognises his exceptional craftsmanship and contribution to the traditional art of hand-knotted carpet weaving," he stated, adding it will give further traction to the Valley's carpet industry.

Kashmir's hand-knotted carpets represent a centuries-old tradition that combines fine-knotting techniques with distinctive design elements and talent, for which it was awarded GI registration in the year 2016, based on its source of origin.



The spokesman further stated that recognition of Sofi's work at the national level reaffirms the continued excellence and relevance of this heritage craft. "The Directorate encourages artisans across the region to draw inspiration from this achievement and continue upholding the standards of quality and artistry that define Kashmir handicrafts," he added.

A formal award ceremony is scheduled in the month of December 2026 in which amongst other winners, Rafiq Ahmed Sofi shall also be felicitated.

Ms. Diye Duheta Mahajan, Manager, SMVDU-TBIC, Participates in ISBACON 2026 at Chandigarh University



JAMMU, OCT 14

Ms. Diye Duheta Mahajan, Manager, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University Technology Business Incubation Centre (SMVDU-TBIC), participated in ISBACON 2026, the 18th Annual Conference of the Indian STEPs and Business Incubators Association (ISBA), held at Chandigarh University, Mohali, Punjab.

The conference brought together representatives from technology business incubators, science and technology parks, academic institutions, startups, and the entrepreneurship ecosystem to deliberate on emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in startup incubation, innovation, and entrepreneurship development. During the visit, Ms. Mahajan had the opportunity to engage with professionals and stakeholders associated with the incubation ecosystem, gain insights into contemporary incubation practices, and explore opportunities for institutional collaboration, knowledge exchange, and strengthening startup support mechanisms.

The conference also provided a platform to understand evolving approaches to nurtur-

ing early-stage ventures, facilitating technology commercialisation, and promoting innovation-driven entrepreneurship. The participation aligns with SMVDU-TBIC's continued efforts to strengthen its incubation ecosystem, support aspiring entrepreneurs, and facilitate the development of innovative startup ventures.

The insights and learnings gained through the conference are expected to contribute towards enhancing the Centre's pre-incubation and incubation initiatives, mentoring support, and institutional engagement with the wider entrepreneurial community. SMVDU-TBIC, established to foster innovation and entrepreneurship, continues to work towards translating innovative ideas into sustainable business ventures by providing aspiring entrepreneurs with an enabling environment, mentorship, and institutional support.

The visit reflects SMVDU-TBIC's commitment to engaging with national-level incubation networks and adopting best practices to further strengthen the startup ecosystem at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University.

Commissioner State Taxes reviews revenue performance of Kashmir Division

Sets Rs800 crore revenue target for October; stresses timely returns, data analytics and strict action against fake ITC



SRINAGAR, OCT 15

Commissioner State Taxes, Jammu and Kashmir, P. K. Bhat, today chaired a meeting to review the revenue performance of the Kashmir Division.

The meeting was organised by the Additional Commissioner State Taxes, Kashmir Division, Payveer Ahmad Raina, which was attended by State Taxes Officers of all circles of the division.

The Additional Commissioner, presented an exhaustive and comprehensive appraisal of the performance parameters of all the Circles functioning under the Kashmir Division. He apprised the Chair of the cumulative revenue realised to date, delineated the multifarious measures and strategic interventions being undertaken to augment revenue mobilisation, and outlined the prospective course of action envisaged for the ensuing months, with a view to ensuring the unequivocal attainment of the revenue target stipulated for the current financial year.

The Commissioner observed that the impact of GST rate rationalisa-

tion has largely stabilised, creating favourable prospects for enhanced revenue realisation in the ensuing months. Noting that the national average growth in GST revenue exceeds 15 per cent, he exhorted the officers to intensify revenue mobilisation efforts to ensure that Jammu and Kashmir maintains parity with the national growth trajectory.

He emphasised the need to augment cash collections, including through effective IGST settlement commensurate with value addition within the Union Territory, and reiterated the monthly revenue target of 7800 crore. Emphasising the significance of timely compliance, the Commissioner directed focused monitoring of September returns, including quarterly filings under the QRMP scheme. He underscored that timely GSTR-1 filing is fundamental to revenue realisation, safeguarding ITC integrity and curbing fraudulent transactions, and directed officers to strive towards positioning Jammu and Kashmir among the leading States and Union Territories in this regard. Referring to approximately 72,500

crore reflected in GSTR-7 returns, he instructed systematic follow-up to ensure timely realisation of the corresponding revenue. In view of simplified registration and return-filing procedures, the Commissioner stressed the need to pivot towards data-driven enforcement, particularly through analytics-based scrutiny of purchases from unregistered persons and verification of their underlying supply chains.

He also directed effective utilisation of Section 71 of the GST Act for inspection and verification of business records, wherever legally permissible, and advised the issuance of consolidated show cause notices covering multiple financial years, subject to statutory limitations and applicable legal provisions. The Commissioner cautioned against initiating proceedings solely on third-party information, emphasising independent verification and judicious application of mind by proper officers.

He further directed strict, time-bound follow-up of show cause notices, accountability of proper

and adjudicating officers, and comprehensive preparation for defending departmental cases before the GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT). Highlighting the revenue potential of the tourism and hospitality sectors, he instructed officers to undertake targeted inspections at prominent destinations, including Gulmarg and Sonamarg, to ensure proper tax compliance and realisation of legitimate dues.

He also stressed continuous surveillance of sectors vulnerable to fraudulent ITC transactions and the prompt issuance of appropriate alert notices wherever wrongful availing or passing on of credit is detected. Concluding the meeting, the Commissioner and the Additional Commissioner, State Taxes, Kashmir Division, jointly directed meticulous and time-bound implementation of all instructions, emphasising accountability, proactive enforcement and sustained revenue mobilisation to ensure full achievement of the prescribed annual revenue target.

Impressive prabhat pheri takes place on fifth Navratra

KATRA, OCT 15

An impressive Prabhat Pheri was taken out from Bus Stand Katra today on the fifth day of the Navratra Festival Katra 2026 marking the auspicious occasion of the fifth Navratra dedicated to Mata Skandmata. A large number of devotees of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi from Katra and various parts of the country participated in the religious procession with immense devotion and enthusiasm. The devotees sang devotional bhajans and danced to the rhythmic beats of drums as the Prabhat Pheri passed through the town, creating a spiritually charged atmosphere. Residents along the route accorded a warm welcome to the participants by showering flower petals on the procession and extending their greetings.

Earlier the Prabhat Pheri was flagged off by Deputy Superintendent of Police Sh. Jatinder Sambhal along with Dr. Gopal Dutt retired medical superintendent in presence of Sh. Ratan Singh Manhas. The dignitaries formally inaugurated the procession by cutting the red ribbon and breaking a green coconut, marking an auspicious beginning to the devotional march.



After passing through Shiv Mandir and Chintamani Mandir via Banganga Road, the Prabhat Pheri received a warm welcome at the Darshani Deodi CRPF Gate. CRPF 6th Battalion commandant Sh. Pardeep Goswami, assistant commandant Sh. Rahul Singh along with their team greeted the participants and offered refreshments as a gesture of hospitality and goodwill. Groups associated with the Central Bureau of Communication including Bishwanath and Party along with members of Nav Usha NGO and Chinart Art Foundation and a large number of other devotees also joined the procession

adding to its vibrancy and religious fervour. Addressing the gathering the chief guests emphasised the importance of selfless service, compassion and dedication towards the welfare of society. They urged the participants to devote themselves to helping the needy and performing their duties sincerely without expecting rewards stressing that positive results inevitably follow when actions are guided by the right intentions and a spirit of service. Raj Kumar Padha appreciated the efforts of the Municipal Committee Katra for its Swachh Bharat Abhiyan initiatives

observing that the Katra Bazaar presented a neat and clean appearance. He stressed that cleanliness is essential for maintaining the sanctity of the holy town and providing a pleasant experience to the lakhs of pilgrims who visit Katra to pay obeisance at the holy shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi. It is pertinent to mention that the Prabhat Pheris are being organised daily as an integral part of Navratra Festival Katra 2026 jointly in association with the J&K Tourism Department, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Katra and the District Administration Reasi.

The initiative aims to promote religious devotion preserve cultural traditions and provide pilgrims and local residents with an opportunity to participate collectively in the celebrations. Among those present on the occasion were Ajay Sharma, Ramnik Sharma, Aman Mahajan, Ashwini Katoch, Neelam Singh, Shamsher Singh, Rajesh Gupta, Sanjay Kesar, Tilak Raj, Rattan Chand, Baldev Kumar, Bitu. P.N. Kaul, Pranshat, Sanjay Tikoo, P.C. Rana, Hemraj and others.

Navratra Festival 2026: Shobha Yatra, Prabhat Feri and Devotional Song Competition Held in Katra

KATRA, OCT 15

A vibrant Shobha Yatra was organised in the holy town of Katra as part of the ongoing Navratra Festival 2026, featuring beautifully decorated tableaux depicting Hindu deities and participants dressed as gods and goddesses. The Shobha Yatra drew the attention of devotees, pilgrims and locals, reflecting the region's rich religious traditions.

Chief Planning Officer Reasi Narinder Kumar attended the occasion as the Chief Guest. Addressing the gathering, he highlighted the religious and cultural significance of the Navratra Festival and emphasised the importance of preserving the region's spiritual heritage. A Prabhat Pheri was also organised in Katra as part of the ongoing festivities, with devotees and locals participating with great enthusiasm and devotion. The procession passed through the main streets of the town, with participants singing devotional bhajans and reciting devo-



tional hymns, creating a spiritually charged atmosphere. The All India Devotional Song Competition, held at Yog Ashram as part of the festival, saw Rajeev Salotra of Jammu secure first position, while Anshu Kalotra and Aarav Wazir jointly secured second place, and Bharat Bhushan and Sarabjeet jointly secured third place among 13 participants. The competition was adjudicated by a panel of music experts comprising Dr. Surinder Sharma, C.L. Verma,

Anupama Sharma and singer Balraj Singh, who also enthralled the audience with his performance. Competition Chairman said the winner would receive a cash prize of ₹5 lakh along with a recording contract with Venus Records & Tapes Ltd. He added that the auditions and preliminary rounds would continue until October 16, providing aspiring devotional singers an opportunity to showcase their talent and compete for the top honour.

Common diseases and how to prevent them with the help of supplements

NEW DELHI: Insufficiencies in nutrition and nutritional deficiencies are universal issues that have a deleterious impact on health and well-being however, a variety of ailments that are now ubiquitous can be prevented by taking supplements as they are a great way to ensure that your body is getting the nutrients it needs to improve your diet and fend off common diseases.

Incorporating a well-balanced diet along with the use of supplements are preventative measures that can lower your risk of developing various health problems.

Therefore, multivitamins and minerals, probiotics and prebiotics, and other botanical compounds and herbs can help in achieving a balanced intake of essential nutrients. Let's discuss how these supplements can help ward off common diseases and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Probiotics and prebiotics (microbes) for digestive health.

Probiotics (microbes) are widely consumed dietary supplements for the purpose of promoting healthy digestion and improving the balance of good and bad bacteria in the gut. Good bacteria have the ability to reduce symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome and maintain a healthy digestive system.

One can include prebiotics in their diet to curb digestive issues, as probiotics and prebiotics provide the good bacteria with food that helps them grow and thrive in the gut. Multivitamins and minerals for malabsorption.

In addition to probiotics and prebiotics, multivitamins and mineral supplements are extensively beneficial, as the body needs certain vitamins and minerals to function properly.

For those with malabsorption or difficulty absorbing nutrients, multivitamins provide an excellent way to ensure one is receiving the essential nutrients needed.

In this regard, salient multivitamins and minerals like vitamins A, C, D, E, K, B-complex and folic acid, along



with other vitamins and minerals (including beta-carotene, copper, potassium, zinc, calcium, iodine and iron), are beneficial, as they help support healthy organ functioning, provide energy and regulate the immune system. Therefore, for those with malabsorption, taking a multi-vitamin supplement can help ensure that they are receiving the necessary nutrients and vitamins to maintain good health.

In an interview with HT Lifestyle, Dr Yogini Patil, BAMS and Nutritionist at LiVLong, shared, "People who suffer greatly from malabsorption can benefit from adding supplements to their diets. If we talk in brief about why malabsorption occurs, it is caused by digestive issues such as colitis, gastritis, IBS, and IBD, among others. Therefore, adding supplements for those who suffer from malabsorption can be beneficial, as they provide essential nutrients, as the body without any further burden on the digestive system."

She added, "Supplements containing herbs and botanical compounds have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties that can boost the immune system and protect it against infectious agents."

Ultimately, people can greatly benefit from dietary supplements, which are an excellent way to avoid nutrient deficiencies and support the

immune system while ensuring that the digestive system is not overburdened."

Botanical compounds and herbs for immunity

Combining a multivitamin supplement with botanical compounds and herbs is a great way to support the body's immune system. One can incorporate herbs and botanical compounds like echinacea, ginger, caffeine, and curcumin to reduce inflammation and facilitate the body's immune system.

To elaborate on specific botanical herbs and compounds, echinacea can be used to boost the immune system, ginger can help reduce inflammation, caffeine has antioxidant and energy-boosting properties and curcumin is a powerful anti-inflammatory agent. Kamayani Naresh, Health Expert and Founder of Zyroopathy, revealed, "With a hectic lifestyle and sedentary habits, it becomes burdensome to meet nutrient requirements thus, supplements are an excellent way to avoid deficiencies, and support the immune system."

Ultimately, people can greatly benefit from dietary supplements, which are an excellent way to avoid nutrient deficiencies and support the immune system while ensuring that the digestive system is not overburdened."

Why we should not reuse plastic water bottles

NEW DELHI: Taking a swig from your plastic water bottle will do more than slake your thirst — you will also be gulping down an unhealthy dose of microplastics — tiny plastic particles measuring less than 5mm.

Being plastic, these particles do not decompose all that easily and will accumulate over time in our bodies — a process called bioaccumulation. While there is not yet any clear evidence between microplastics and serious illnesses, researchers are increasingly concerned over their long-term effects on our bodies.

Key to this concern are the chemicals used in the manufacture of plastics, some of which have already been linked to serious diseases.

The presence of microplastics in human stool suggests we are exposed to microplastics in our daily lives.

They have found their way into the food chain, raising concerns about food safety.

They are also present in bottled water globally. Studies investigating microplastics in bottled water have reported particle sizes of less than 1mm in most, released from the bottle material, the neck and the cap.

The colour of the particles coming from the bottle material itself is transparent while those originating from the caps are either blue or green.

The highest detected plastics polymer is polyethylene terephthalate (PET) which is used to manufacture both the bottle material and cap.

Studies also provide evidence that microplastic in bottled water is due to multiple factors such as physical stress during transport, bottle shaking and high-pressure water injection into the bottles at the production plants.

Additionally, thermal impact during storage also worsens the fragmentation process. Reusable PET water bottles have higher microplastic particles than single-use PET bottles.

Frequent opening and closing of the bottles also cause more particles to be formed due to friction.



The critical question remains unanswered: to what extent do microplastic particles found in bottled water threaten human health?

Researchers have developed a number of hypotheses on both the physical and chemical hazards.

No published study has directly studied the impact of plastic particles on humans.

The only existing research relies on laboratory tests that expose cells or human tissues to microplastics or those that employ rodents.

According to the World Health Organisation, only microplastics with particle sizes smaller than 1.5 µm (1.5 micrometres) can be ingested or absorbed due to their solubility and excreted directly.

Thus ingested microplastic particles (<1.5 µm) from bottled water are capable of migrating through the intestinal wall and reaching various body tissues, including the gut, liver and lymph nodes.

Minute particles (<1.5 µm) which enter cells or tissues might irritate just by being a foreign presence causing lung tissue inflammation which could lead to cancer.

The accumulation of these particles in human tissues has been linked with chemical toxicity.

Compounds such as plasticisers, stabilisers and pigments used in the production can be released by microplastics and travel through our bodies in the bloodstream. These chemicals have been linked to

health problems such as inflammation, genotoxicity, oxidative stress and damage to the gastrointestinal tract.

Chemicals released from bottled water packaging materials are now known as emerging pollutants and endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) that can cause serious health problems including cancer and developmental defects.

The long-term effects of microplastics exposure on human health are not yet fully understood and research is progressing.

But it is clear they are a potential hazard and steps should be taken to limit our exposure to them in daily life.

In the event you use bottled water as your primary source of drinking water, you should make an effort to minimise the shaking movements of the bottles and also unnecessarily opening and closing the bottle.

And it is not recommended to reuse plastic water bottles.

Reuse increases the rate of inner surface abrasion, releasing additional microplastic particles from the inner surface of the bottle. It is also essential to store bottles in a cool and dry place to minimise their exposure to heat and sunlight. Sunlight can accelerate bottle degradation — they become more brittle and fragile — which leads to more microplastic particle release.

Additionally, the heat also causes these PET bottles to leach chemical

Pregnant? 7 immunity boosters every expecting mother should have

New Delhi: Pregnancy can be a topsy-turvy ride for many, but this journey can be made less bumpy with a balanced diet that could not only provide appropriate nutrition for the growing child but also ease many pregnancy-related symptoms such as nausea and constipation.

Eating nutritious foods rich in protein, fruits, vegetables and whole grains can also avoid unwanted weight gain and help the expecting mother stay at the top of her health.

During pregnancy, first and foremost, it is important to take care of the fluid intake. Apart from 7-8 glasses of water, one can include lots of soups and juices in the diet, however going overboard on sugar and caffeine isn't advised. Seasonal fruits and vegetables have a huge role to play in pregnancy nutrition as they provide the

necessary fibre and antioxidants needed during this stage.

"Pregnancy is an important phase of a woman's life. Seasonal changes

mother," says Sumita, Executive Nutritionist, Cloudnine Group of Hospitals, Bengaluru.

#1 Vitamin C and iron



will cause imbalances to the health of the mother. We all know that whatever the mother eats will affect the growth and development of the baby, hence it is important to keep track on what the mother consumes. With the change in temperature the immune system tends to weaken and it's important to keep up the immunity of the

Amla, lemon, sweet lime, kiwi, oranges, and tangerine are good sources of Vitamin C and must be consumed every day in the form of fresh juices or whole fruits. Pair them with iron-rich sources such as spinach, fenugreek leaves, dil leaves, kale, mustard leaves and drumstick leaves. Other sources of iron are seeds, dry

fruits, lean meats, and berries.

#2 Zinc

Zinc plays an important role in improving the immune system. Meat, fish, eggs, nuts and seeds, poultry, mushrooms, grains and legumes are all good sources of zinc.

#3 Proteins

Proteins are essential for repairing the wear and tear of the body which all of us are aware of, but did you know that proteins are amino acids that forms the T cells, B cells, and antibodies of the

immune system? Plant-based proteins are pulses, various types of legumes and animal sources include poultry, fish, lean meat. Remember to consume these in the healthy preparations — include boiling, grill, steamed and light curries.

#4 Fluids

Fluids are an integral part of amniotic fluid and help

Sweet success: Sugar tax saves thousands of children from tooth extractions, research shows

new delhi: A positive outcome reflects the tangible impact of policy measures aimed at curbing excessive sugar consumption as a new study has highlighted how the UK Soft Drinks Industry Levy or the

taxation introduced in 2018 of sugary products, has not only contributed to improved public health but has also served as a preventive measure, reducing the need for invasive dental procedures. The tax required the manufacturers of drinks with over 5g of sugar to pay a 'sugar tax' and now, a findings from a new research published in BMJ Nutrition, Prevention & Health underscores the effectiveness of public health initiatives in addressing the oral health challenges associated with high sugar intake, marking a noteworthy stride in promoting overall well-being.

The World Health Organization tagged dental caries (also known as tooth

sweetened beverages, including fruit-based and milk-based sweetened drinks and 100% fruit juices, are a primary source of free sugars, as well as confectionery, cakes, biscuits, sweetened cereals, sweet desserts, sucrose, honey, syrups and preserves but limiting free sugar intake to less than 10% of total energy intake — and ideally even further, to less than 5% — minimises the risk of dental caries throughout the lifecycle.

decay or dental cavities) as the most common noncommunicable disease worldwide that affects general health and often causes pain and infection, which may result in tooth extraction while its severity is a frequent cause of absenteeism at school or work. The WHO stated that in many countries, sugars



To inform the process of the Global Strategy on Oral Health where the WHO is exploring cost-effective interventions for oral health, including taxation on sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs), an umbrella review was conducted. The team looked at data from 2012, before the

Marriage may help individuals in keeping their blood sugar levels low: Research

NEW DELHI: According to a study published online in the journal BMJ Open Diabetes Research & Care, people who live with a partner have a higher possibility of being healthy in terms of keeping lower blood sugar levels, regardless of how amicable or combative their relationship is. According to researchers, having a spouse or cohabiting partner may be a significant relationship and source of social support and/or strain for persons in their mid to late-life health.

Previous studies have suggested there are health benefits from marriage and/or cohabiting, particularly for older adults. There are also various studies that have concluded that type 2 diabetes risk is associated with a number of social health dimensions including social isolation, loneliness, living arrangements, social support, and social network size.

However, the effects of each specific social health dimension are complex, so a team of researchers from Luxembourg and Canada set out to investigate if there was an association between marital status and marital quality with average glycaemic levels in older adults. They used biomarker data from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) — a population-based sample of adults aged 50 years and older and their partners, who live in England, from whom data are collected every second year, with biomarker data collected every other wave. The data used for the study was on 3,335 adults aged 50 to 89 years old without previously diagnosed diabetes over a period from 2004 to 2013. The sample was people without pre-existing diabetes between the ages of 50 and 89 years in wave 2 (2004-05) — when biomarker data were first

available in ELSA. Pre-existing diabetes was determined by self-report-

(average glycaemic or blood glucose)



Participants were invited to have a nurse visit following the main interview in waves 2 (2004-05), 4 (2006-09) and 6 (2012-13) and blood samples were taken to measure their HbA1c

levels. Respondents were also asked if they had a husband, wife, or partner with whom they lived and asked questions designed to measure the level of social strain and social support within the marital/cohabitating relationship.

Information on several factors was also gathered such as details about age, income, employment, smoking, being physically active, depression, body mass index (BMI), and having other social relationship types in their social network (child, another immediate family, friend). The data showed that in wave 2 (2004-05), about three-quarters (76 per cent) of the respondents were married/cohabiting. Analysis of the data over time showed that people who experienced marital transitions (eg, divorce) also experienced significant changes in their HbA1c levels and odds of pre-diabetes.

However, the quality of the relationship did not make a significant difference to the average levels of blood glucose, suggesting that having a supportive or strained relationship was less important than just having a

relationship at all. This was an observational study, and as such, it can't establish cause. Indeed, the study had some limitations such as the fact that there was a sizeable number of people who dropped out of the ELSA between waves with biomarker data. More than half of the wave 2 sample had no follow-up data so were excluded. There was also the possibility that those people in worse health were more likely to get divorced.

Nevertheless, the authors argued that their study's strengths included the use of HbA1c as an outcome measure versus self-reported diagnoses — the former being a more accurate and precise measure when used in population-based surveys than diagnosed medical conditions, which are dependent on participants having accessed appropriate healthcare prior to study enrollment.

EDITORIAL

Clouds to Triumph

Friday sounded the victory trumpet. Saturday brought Rahul Gandhi calling. Sunday put Narendra Modi alongside him. For Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay, it was a weekend straight out of a film script. Last October, in the sombre aftermath of the Karur stampede, Vijay was under a cloud, his political future uncertain. This October, he is on cloud nine. Two Assembly bye-election victories, a warm reunion with Rahul and a day of official engagements with the Prime Minister have placed him firmly in the national political frame. If vetri means victory, Vijay appeared to have earned an entire weekend of it.

In politics, as in mass cinema, fortune does not merely turn; it revolves on a well-greased wheel. In his 2003 blockbuster Thirumalai, a youthful Vijay delivered a punch dialogue that has since passed into the philosophical vernacular of Tamil pop culture: "Vaazhkai oru vattam da; inge jeyikkaravan thoppam, thokkaravan jeyippan ..." (Life moves in circles. The winner may lose and the loser may win.)

The cinematic axiom has undergone an uncanny real-life reiteration. Seventeen years ago, in August 2009, an ambitious cine-star travelled to New Delhi, cooling his heels at 12 Tughlak Lane for an audience with Rahul Gandhi. Twelve years ago, in April 2014, on the eve of a parliamentary wave, he called upon prime-ministerial candidate Narendra Modi in a Coimbatore hotel suite. In both instances, the actor sought the politician; the petitioner awaited the patron. By this autumn, the geometry had inverted itself with mathematical neatness.

The national titans came calling on the Coromandel coast. The petitioner of yesterday had become the Chief Minister of today, holding the keys to Fort St George.

The factual runway for this dizzying weekend was laid on Friday, October 9, when the electronic voting machines unburdened themselves in Madurantakam (SC) and Dharapuram (SC). The Chief Minister's fledgling Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) annexed both casual vacancies, expanding its legislative buffer from 107 to 109.

Geopolitics — need for a new communication strategy

As artificial intelligence and disinformation reshape the geopolitical landscape, the need for an integrated geostrategic communication architecture has become urgent. The challenge is to build a credible, coordinated and inclusive framework that aligns information, influence and public diplomacy without compromising truth or trust. The world today is in a state of constant and consistent flux, wherein disruption and distortion dominate proceedings, ideas and outreach simultaneously. Geopolitics today is witnessing an unprecedented 'tug of war': a war of ideas, resources, markets, communication tools and narrative-building. It is a battle of perception, survival and struggle across the borderless void, with the objective of attracting attention, reinforcing legitimacy and restoring credibility on a sustainable basis.

In such a scenario, the most question remains: what should be the ideal 'Geopolitical Communication Architecture' that explains policies, actions and outreach with clarity and conviction? How does the architecture bring about 'Geopolitical Convergence' on narratives that dominate the power-play matrix globally? What should be the inputs, partnerships and scale of measurement that reinforce the story foundation of geopolitics and narrative-building strategy? The challenge in the remaining months of 2026 is to design a geostrategic communication structure that integrates perception, influence and information under one roof. The idea is to create an inclusive structure that brings all stakeholders together under one communication architecture.

When we talk about global power today, we rarely talk just about weapons or borders anymore; we talk about stories. We talk about who controls the narrative. That is essentially what geostrategic communication is: shaping how a country is perceived in the global mind space and making that perception work in its favour. Today, geostrategic communication has become a unique matrix, a blend of old-school credibility and new-age immediacy. On one side, you have in-depth think-tank reports, policy briefs and scholarly analyses; on the other, the rapid-fire social media blitzes that can alter global narratives in hours. Both coexist, both influence. Enter the era of podcasts, YouTube diplomacy, Twitter handles run by embassies, and viral reels of leaders meeting citizens. Communication is no longer just press releases and speeches; it is about aesthetics, reliability and digi-

tal fluency. Hence, do we need a strategic communication secretariat, a one-stop solution to all? The reasons are manifold. Geopolitics today is no longer a mere messaging process. It serves several purposes and addresses diverse themes that shape perceptions in the long run. Hence, the narrative-building process demands a political space requires multi-level interventions, tools and levels of mobilisation. The emerging perception is critical to understanding the role of geostrategic communication in the process.

While geostrategic communication is critical in defining outcomes and results, the structure to support it should be inclusive, innovative, visible and integrated. The structure should be able to integrate real-time analytics, delve deeply into predictive analysis and study audience reactions. It should be able to comprehend the depth and dimensions of algorithmic calculation and the role of AI in facilitating the search for solutions, while avoiding technological overload and dependence. In view of the large-scale flow of information, the structure of geostrategic communication should be able to dissect and separate rhetoric and fakery from reality. The credibility quotient remains the key challenge in reducing the trust deficit in communication.

Any geostrategic communication structure needs to be adaptable to communication challenges and crises. There needs to be a clear understanding of the mandate and areas of coverage. While long-term objectives qualify as strategic goals and vision, there is an urgent need to address issues related to global monitoring, an aspect sometimes ignored due to the multiplicity of issues. Strategists ignore the impact of reputational risks and perceptions when viewed vis-à-vis social media tools, international media reportage and disinformation arising from negative perceptions. A critical component of the structure requires engagement at the people-to-people level, which, in diplomatic parlance, is called 'public diplomacy', utilising the dynamics of soft power, the diaspora and institutions. The structure should also incorporate the dynamics of crisis communication. A new geostrategic communication framework cannot be an abstract idea; it needs a tangible structure. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) should spearhead discussions on an international information governance framework, establishing a 'Threshold Agreement for Global Communication'. Such an initiative should include ethical stan-

dards for AI-generated content to ensure transparency and reduce algorithmic biases. It must also introduce a crisis communication protocol to prevent misinformation spirals during global emergencies. Additionally, a global fact-checking consortium should be established to unite journalists, researchers and policymakers in a collaborative effort to combat digital disinformation. Lastly, balanced digital sovereignty measures are essential to allow countries to maintain narrative control without suppressing free speech.

What we need is a renewed collaborative effort to establish a new 'Global Information Order', a platform established institutionally to bridge the gap in the medium-and-message equation. The 78s in communication, to relevance, reliability, response, revival, reconnection, reconstruction and repositioning, need to be mainstreamed in the geopolitical setting. The new global order must work towards a framework that calibrates perceptions, builds relationships and drives action based on mutually agreeable communication tools. This model should integrate rather than disconnect, create gaps or promote division, and establish a narrative that addresses opportunity, experiences and the vision of mutual coexistence. The changing geopolitical reality of 2026 highlights the need for adaptability in communication. Traditional media must evolve to remain relevant, embracing digital innovations and audience-centric approaches. Meanwhile, social media grapple with issues of misinformation, polarisation and echo chambers, striving to become a platform that unites rather than divides. In this era, communication is no longer just about delivering a message; it is about shaping perceptions, building relationships and driving action.

One of the critical areas in which visible changes are being witnessed in 2026 is the geopolitical communication landscape. This year is positioned to redefine the very pathways of global communication, with a pivotal question arising: are we on the verge of a 360-degree transformation in communication delivery, content orientation, outreach mechanisms and the tools we deploy? Geopolitically, the communication ecosystem embraces a new language—a language of immediacy, focused messaging, results-driven delivery and the prioritisation of measurable outcomes to identify real-time patterns and global impacts. The era demands a language of immediacy, focused messaging, results-driven delivery and the prioritisation of measurable outcomes to identify real-time patterns and global impacts. The era demands a language of immediacy, focused messaging, results-driven delivery and the prioritisation of measurable outcomes to identify real-time patterns and global impacts.

precision, creativity and authenticity. In 2026, the phrase 'a picture is worth a thousand words' takes on greater resonance. Visual communication has become one of the most impactful ways to deliver messages. A single, well-composed image has the power to convey emotions, ideas and narratives that words may struggle to encapsulate. Building on this, the explosion of short-form videos and 30-second reels, for instance, has transformed the landscape further.

As the social media impact of the changes, taking place in the global order, the important question remains: does the communication and information landscape address the transformations occurring at multiple and multi-layered levels? The changing communication landscape has an important role to play in the shifting paradigm across nations, regions and continents. It is undeniable that information overload, stress and the influx of data can lead to information fatigue due to the constant flow from multiple sources. This phenomenon continues to make huge waves in the multipolar geopolitical world. In today's interconnected world, every issue is debated, analysed and perceived through tools of instant communication on a 24/7 basis. The rapid dissemination of information has led to narratives that evolve swiftly, influenced by shifting perceptions and biases. This constant flux presents new challenges, obstacles and limitations that restrict the role of communication in the geopolitical space. The immediacy of information exchange can exacerbate misunderstandings and escalate conflicts before there is time for measured responses.

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The writer is Former Civil Servant. Writes on strategic communication and cinema. Inputs promised by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan; Views presented are personal.

Bihar floods: The need for a continuous record

KELAVYA PRASAD

Floods in Bihar rarely occur as isolated events. They arrive in successive phases, affect different parts of the state and sometimes return to places already hit. A family may still be recovering from lost crops, damaged housing or depleted savings when another flood arrives. Flood reporting must therefore do more than count those affected by the latest rise in water levels. It must show where flooding occurs, how often it returns and how its effects accumulate over the monsoon season. Bihar already has a flood-reporting mechanism. The Disaster Management Department (DMD), Government of Bihar, publishes daily flood reports and press releases. The challenge is to make these instruments more consistent, connect the information they provide and maintain a reliable record of the flood season.

The first step is to make the reporting system easier to follow. The daily reports appear under different titles, including Flood/Heavy Rainfall Report, Daily Flood Report and Daily Flood Situation Report. The department should adopt one consistent title, such as Daily Flood Situation Report, so affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and government officials can readily identify the same reporting series across dates. Press releases also appear under different titles, including Hindi titles. Their titles need not match that of the daily report, but each release should clearly identify its purpose and the flood phase it covers.

The September 2 daily report summarised affected areas and relief operations, while the accompanying press release detailed specific incidents, river conditions and administrative responses, including erosion in Bhagpur and flooding in Bhupur. The September 15 documents similarly demonstrate how the formats can complement each other. Both reports recorded 15 affected districts and 575 gram panchayats. The daily report provided a summary, while the press release included additional information on relief operations and river conditions. Linking these records

would help affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and government officials understand both the scale of the situation and the response under way.

The Daily Flood Report should consistently distinguish three measures: changes during the preceding 24 hours, impacts recorded during each flood phase and cumulative impacts across the season. These figures should be clearly labelled and kept separate. Phase-specific press releases can provide focused updates on important developments, while the daily report maintains the continuing record.

The need for this distinction becomes clear when the September and October reports are read together. The September 24 Daily Flood Report recorded cumulative impacts across 15 districts, 576 gram panchayats and 59.49 lakh people, before the third flood phase developed around September 28-29. By October 7, the Daily Flood Report recorded 22 affected districts, 728 gram panchayats and 72.82 lakh people affected cumulatively during the monsoon season. The October 4 press release, focusing specifically on the third phase along and around the Gandak, reported approximately 9.87 lakh people affected across six districts, 30 blocks and 169 gram panchayats. By October 11, the press release for the same phase reported approximately 10.22 lakh people affected across six districts, 33 blocks and 173 gram panchayats. These figures describe the evolving impact of the third phase, while the daily report records cumulative seasonal impacts. They should therefore be linked to provide a clear picture of how each flood phase contributes to the wider seasonal impact, rather than added together as separate totals.

The reporting system should connect such phase-specific accounts to the seasonal record. It should show which places were affected in each phase, which remained inundated and which experienced flooding again. This also raises an important question about affected populations. If the same community is flooded more than once, how can the figures avoid counting the same peo-

ple repeatedly while still recording repeated exposure? The total number of people affected and the number exposed to multiple floods measure different aspects of the disaster. Reporting should make that distinction clear.

The same clarity is needed for relief operations. Reports should distinguish assistance provided during a particular phase from assistance provided earlier and from the seasonal total.

They should state how many community kitchens are operating on a given day, distinguish requests from the total established over time and specify the period covered by meal figures. Without these distinctions, affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and government officials cannot reliably interpret what the numbers represent. The Daily Flood Report also needs to identify affected blocks and gram panchayats by name under each district, rather than provide only aggregate figures. This would help affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and officials identify where flooding has occurred, which areas remain affected and where flooding has returned. The same location-wise information should be updated and carried forward in subsequent reports to build a clear record of changing conditions. River conditions need equally clear reporting. Reports should identify the rivers being observed, show water levels against new long-term figures and indicate whether levels are rising or falling. They should also record how long places remain inundated. A falling river level does not necessarily mean that a village is accessible or that drinking water, health care and other essential services have resumed.

Reporting should distinguish between different kinds of damage. A road under water is different from one washed away. A hand pump or piped water supply system that cannot be reached is different from one that has been damaged. A school temporarily cut off is different from one with structural damage. Reports should distinguish assets that are inundated, inaccessible or non-functional from those destroyed. Over time, they should also

capture verified impacts on drinking water, sanitation, health care, transport, schools, crops, livestock, housing and livelihoods. Consistency across reporting days is equally important. Each report should state its cut-off time and indicate whether figures are provisional, verified or revised. Significant changes should be explained, and earlier reports should remain available in a searchable archive. This would help communities, researchers, development workers, journalists and officials to follow the situation without piecing together information from scattered documents.

These improvements need not require an entirely new data collection system. Much of the information is already generated by departments and relief administrations. What is needed is a clear process for collating, verifying and presenting it consistently. The Daily Flood Report should be published regularly, including when the situation stabilises, so that the seasonal record remains continuous.

The need for greater consistency is evident in the online reporting record. As observed on October 13, the latest daily report available was dated October 7, while press releases were available through October 11. The priority should be to maintain a regular, up-to-date Daily Flood Report alongside timely press releases. Together, they would provide both a continuous record of the flood situation and focused updates on significant developments. The value of this approach extends beyond immediate relief. A continuous record can help assess losses, plan recovery and identify settlements repeatedly inundated, infrastructure that fails more than once and communities whose recovery is interrupted by successive floods.

Bihar does not need figures merely for the sake of having more figures. It needs a connected account of what changed, where it changed, what remained unresolved and how impacts accumulated across successive flood phases. Strengthening the existing Daily Flood Report and linking it more effectively with press releases would make flood information easier to understand and more useful for relief operations and disaster accountability and future planning.

India must stay engaged with the US

THE India-US relationship is going through a turbulent phase, but this is not something new. The world's largest and oldest democracies have a history of bitter estrangement and prickly engagement over the decades. Currently, a number of contentious issues need to be addressed.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio is scheduled to arrive in New Delhi on October 19; the visit is aimed at emphasising the strength of the partnership. US officials have described India as one of America's most important strategic partners/allies, citing President Donald Trump's relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

On the ground, the picture is more opaque. In Jodhpur last week, six US F-35As flew for the first time as part of Exercise Tarang Shakti 2026 with around 200 American personnel, the first such deployment. At the closing press conference, Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, when asked if Washington had offered the F-35, replied with a remark that made headlines: "Your people don't even let us go near the aircraft, and you are talking about selling it to us."

The IAF Chief clarified that no formal offer had been made, despite what President Trump had said earlier in the year, while the visiting US defence officer, Gen Kevin Schneider, indicated that current classification guides prevented closer cockpit access. This vignette captures the current India-US moment: high symbolism, low transfer.

Three tracks form the core of the bilateral and all of them are under stress. On the official Track 1, the language has moved from "strategic partner" to "indented servants". On October 8, at a White House Task Force to Eliminate Fraud press meet, US Vice President JD Vance announced the suspension of eight firms from green card sponsorship under the Permanent Labour Certification (PERM) programme — TCS, Infosys, Wipro, HCLTech, Cognizant, Capgemini, Microsoft and Adobe. He disparagingly said the US could not let off American workers and then replace them with foreign indentured servants.

The response of India's Ministry of External Affairs on October 9 was unusually sharp: "We believe that such descriptions are unwarranted and ignore the fact that Indian professionals in the United States are highly educated and skilled contributors to its economy." It added, "Resorting to terminology that car-



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ries painful historical and colonial legacy connotations is deeply offensive."

The semantic choice matters. Roughly 70 per cent of the recent H-1B visa approvals have gone to Indians who enter the US workforce as highly skilled human resources. Calling them "indentured" in 2026 reopens a historical chapter in a callous manner. Washington may say that India is among its strongest partners, but its Vice President is using the vocabulary of the plantation for the partnership that built Silicon Valley.

The second strand is the statutory sword. On September 18, President Trump signed the SRIA (Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act),

which authorises tariffs up to 100% on top importers of Russian oil and gas. India, which bought roughly 2.1 million barrels per day from Russia in August, is squarely in the US crosshairs. On the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York last month, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told Rubio precisely this: "Reiterated India's interests and concerns with regard to SRIA. Also discussed the Gulf and Ukraine situations." Rubio's readout omitted SRIA and spoke of "building on the US-India strategic partnership." That asymmetry and the irony that the US has now concluded a diesel supply arrangement with Russia (with temporary sanctions relief) have compelled New Delhi to cau-

tion Washington that the use of SRIA against India could affect bilateral ties.

Yet this US law now hangs like the sword of Damocles — not imposed, but usable at any moment to exert pressure on Delhi over energy. SRIA is bipartisan, backed by Congress, and it signals a structural shift in Washington from strategic altruism to economic nationalism.

With the Red Sea and Strait of Hormuz disruptions already squeezing Saudi supplies, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman admitted what the industry already knew: India-US trade talks have "reached a plateau."

The third track is military hardware, which was seen as an indicator of

the relationship's robustness, but is a case of high on joint exercise and low on critical technology transfer.

Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command, recently concluded a six-day India visit, his second this year. He said military ties would remain insulated from blade friction, but the reality is that equipment and tech transfer remains sluggish.

The GE F-414 engine co-production for LCA Mk2/AMCA (advanced medium combat aircraft) is at the commercial/negotiations stage three years after the 2023 announcement. The MQ-9B, Stryker and F-8I procurement is progressing, but at a bureaucratic pace, even as China

has reportedly discussed or offered around 40 J-35 stealth fighters to Pakistan.

Given this turbulence and setbacks, Delhi needs to make an objective and prudent assessment about the way ahead. The US remains India's largest export market, the largest source of advanced technology and the anchor of the Indian diaspora that remits ideas and capital.

The critical policy approach for India is to revisit the central assumption that has guided the bilateral relationship since 2005: India and the US have corresponding security objectives vis-a-vis China, particularly in the Indo-Pacific. That assumption is no longer valid.

Designated protest site is an oxymoron

The government has denotified Jantar Mantar as Delhi's protest venue. Denotified is a big word for a small idea. It means that the road where India has been shouting at its rulers for over 30 years is no longer within shouting distance of the rulers. If you are upset now, you must carry your grievances to Buri, or to a lesser-known CBD Park, or Ramilla Maidan, which is currently staging the actual Ramilla. A protest is not a rally or a mela or a wedding reception. Nobody wakes up and says, I feel betrayed today, so please suggest a venue for crying out loud, with ample parking. The whole point was to shout slogans at the gates of power and inconvenience the powers that be. What's the use of sitting on a sit-in in Buri? Why go to the edges of Delhi to demonstrate your anger with Central Delhi? And in case of great inconvenience, aren't the police armed, with baton and BVS, to maintain law and order? Our authorities have a gift for turning feelings into red-taped files. Even before this week, you needed police permission 10 days in advance to protest at Jantar Mantar, and not more than 1,000 people could join.

A call for protest is much like nature's call. You can't wait 10 days holding it in, waiting for an invite. The Delhi Police, which cannot always find a stolen scooter in 10 days, needs 10 days to make arrangements for lifting a bunch of people by their limbs.

Ramilla Maidan, for crowds of 1,000 and above. Still larger crowds go to Buri and CBD. Baraat jaana hai? Small function at home, mid-size at a banquet hall, big band-baja-baraat on the outskirts. Now, a word about the place being dropped. In 1724, Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II built Jantar Mantar to study the sky. Giant stone instruments for the sun, moon and stars, including a sundial, whose shadow tells the time without a battery or a software update. For decades, the road opposite did the same job for

the ground below. Farmers, retired soldiers, anti-dowry activists, feminists, Communists, wrestlers, and this year NEET students, all came. You looked at who was sitting there and knew what time it was for the government of the day. Perhaps that was the problem. Nobody in power likes a shadow falling across their window.

There is a pattern here. Before the 1990s, Delhi protested at the Boat Club lawns, practically at Raisina's feet. Then dissent was pushed down the road to Jantar Mantar. Now it is being pushed out of town. Every few decades, popular grievances get moved one step further from the ears they were meant for. A Delhi High Court judge even wondered aloud in August whether protests should be inside Delhi at all. At this rate, by 2047, the designated protest site will be online only. A WhatsApp group where only admins can post.

There is another serious aspect of this shift. Of looks. The modern protester is not the old uncle with a Pataka Bidi jhola and a cyclostyled pamphlet. He is 18, she is 22, both carry a ring light and a clip microphone. For him, if it isn't filmed, it didn't happen. For her, if he didn't film it, he's dead. Jantar Mantar had it all, even if not as picturesque as the Boat Club. Lutyens' bungalows across the wall, Kitty's filter kapi down the road, the red stone, old curves, evening light falling at exactly the angle an 18th-century astronomer intended. Hold up a placard there and it looks like a film poster. Besides, Connaught Place is a cold coffee away. And if you are in a mood for love, head to Janpath. Try that in Buri. Dust, garbage, a long wall, one tent pole and the general vibe of a district kabbadi trial ground. When farmers marched on Delhi in 2020, they were offered Buri, took one look and stayed on the highway. CBD Park sounds like a business district but looks like a business district's parking lot. You can't save democracy when you have to save yourself from the mos-



quitoes. Shout Inquilab Zindabad here and only the mosquitoes reply. Yes, it's flanked by a couple of malls and a couple of decent hotels, but neither makes an Instagram backdrop. Finding it on a map is hard. Crossing the Shahdara drain to get there will be draining. So, with a perfectly straight face, is this a ploy to defeat dissent? The lathi, the tear gas, the water cannon, all those make excellent videos of protesters converging. Now the government saves the cost of con-

trolling a crowd by telling them to disperse themselves. Send dissent somewhere so dull and badly lit that no one with a following will bother, and the movement dies of low engagement. People will prefer detention to the dullness waiting for them.

Gandhi walked nearly 400 km to Dandi for a fistful of salt. A beach has visual value at least. But no government would designate Dandi a protest site today. Gandhiji's application would be pending, with a note

asking him to shift the salt to Buri. Signed Delhi Police Commissioner. To be fair, the people who live and work near Jantar Mantar have real complaints. Noise, traffic, rubbish. The green tribunal said this in 2017. But democracy is noisy. We don't need a patent for this software installed in 1950. Noise is a feature of democracy, not a bug. A quiet democracy, like a quiet pressure cooker, is an about-to-blow lid. The whole point of a protest is its address. In front of Parliament, near

parliament which Jantar Mantar was, in front of the Delhi Police headquarters, in front of PMO, in front of Rahul Gandhi's residence, right across DDU Bhavan or Indira Bhavan, depending on who is making you angry. You take your complaint to the door of the person who caused it, not to a ground at the edge of the map where nobody with a designation will hear it. This is volume control, in the name of crowd control. Iai ho! And Om Shanti, Section 144. Sorry, 163.

Cardamom: A fragrant spice to elevate your everyday cooking



Cardamom, famously known as the "Queen of Spices," is a gem spice in every kitchen and culture worldwide. The potent little spice not only adds a boost of flavor to meals but also enjoys an array of medicinal benefits that earn it a position in every kitchen.

With the numerous brands of cardamoms available in the market, Patanjali Small Cardamom is distinguished for its superior quality and aromatic intensity, thus qualifying as the go-to product for food connoisseurs.

History and origin of cardamom
Cardamom has thousands of years of history behind it, with its genesis in India's and Sri Lanka's lush tropical forests. An ancient highly prized commodity along lucrative trade routes, cardamom was cherished as much for the medicinal as culinary purposes it could serve.

Contemporary cardamom is now standard fare in sweets and savories in all foods. With the growing popularity of natural and organic products, Patanjali Small Cardamom has gained popularity among those who want the best quality spice. Fragrant and aromatic spice

One of the most impressive qualities of Patanjali Small Cardamom is its strong aroma and flavor.

The small green pods contain minute black seeds that emit a strong, sweet smell when crushed. This special property makes cardamom an indispensable item in sweets such as

kheer, cakes, and pastries, as well as in foods such as biryanis and curries. Whether you are making a celebratory meal or a simple masala chai, Patanjali Small Cardamom adds flavor to any dish.

Health benefits of cardamom
Apart from its gastronomic popularity, cardamom is also famous for its various health benefits. Cardamom is a natural solution for the problem of indigestion, which reduces bloating, indigestion, and acidity.

The antioxidant effects of Patanjali Small Cardamom also enhance metabolism and detoxification. Drinking tea with cardamom on a regular basis can enhance oral health, make the breath fresh, and even support weight loss.

A versatile ingredient
The diversity of cardamom makes it a show-quality spice that promises purity and genuineness. Every pod is selected with utmost care to provide the best aroma and flavor, and hence it is the perfect addition to your kitchen.

Be you a home cook or a professional chef, Patanjali Small Cardamom will make your recipes into delicious masterpieces.

Cardamom is a spice, an icon of tradition, health, and refined taste. From being the spice to make ordinary dishes extra special to providing several advantages to health, this magical ingredient should become an integral part of every household kitchen.

With so many choices on hand, the correct choice of cardamom is essential for both taste and health purposes.

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Menstrual leave: A step towards inclusivity or a hindrance to equality?

Coinciding with the International Women's Day, Larsen & Toubro (L&T) announced a new policy granting female employees one day of paid menstrual leave per month, eliciting a range of responses.

This decision follows the Government of Odisha's implementation of a similar one-day menstrual leave policy for both government and private-sector employees in August last year.

Reacting to the move, Akanksha Agarwal, a Chartered Accountant in a private firm, expressed her support.

"In my opinion, it's essential for organizations to provide menstrual leave for a day or two. My company has introduced up to two days of leave, depending on the employee's health condition."

She further emphasized, "Menstrual leave should be made mandatory in every organization and should not be merged with medical or casual leaves, as it is a specific requirement that affects only female employees."

Geeta Batra, an IT professional, highlighted the broader implications of such a policy. "Providing menstrual leave is more than just allowing rest; it's about respect and recognizing women's well-being," she stated.

"By offering this support, employers empower women to recharge, return stronger, and perform at their best. Menstrual leave should not be viewed as a sign of physical or mental weakness but as an acknowl-



edgment of the significant physiological changes women experience," Batra added.

However, not everyone is in favour of this policy.

Linda Ashok, an academic counselor, criticized L&T's move in a post on X, saying, "L&T has a workforce of 60,000, with women making up 9 per cent of the total employees. Offering one paid menstrual leave per month to this small fraction seems like a superficial and poorly planned strategy by S Subramanian to improve his reputation. Dysmenorrhea is more complex than this approach suggests."

Sharing a similar viewpoint, Anoshka Soham Rathwal, a social entrepreneur, questioned whether this policy would truly promote inclusivity or create unintended consequences.

"L&T's Menstrual Leave Policy: A Game Changer or a Double-Edged Sword? L&T joins companies like Zomato and Swiggy in recognizing menstrual health, aligning with policies seen in Japan, South Korea, Spain, and Taiwan. However, stigma still prevents many women from fully benefiting from such initiatives."

She further pondered, "Is this a step toward genuine workplace inclusivity, or could it unintentionally impact hiring and career growth? The conversation has begun—will more companies follow?"

As the debate continues, the implementation of menstrual leave remains a polarizing topic, with strong opinions on both sides regarding its impact on workplace equality and employee well-being.

THE MYSTERY OF DEATH

The Death is perhaps the most universal experience in existence, yet it remains one of the greatest mysteries confronting humanity. Every living being is destined to die and every civilisation has attempted, in its own way, to understand what death means. Despite extraordinary advances in medicine, biology, neuroscience and technology, humanity has not completely resolved the profound questions surrounding the end of life. What happens when life ceases? Does consciousness disappear forever, or is there something beyond the boundaries of our present understanding? Is death merely a biological conclusion, or does it possess a deeper philosophical and spiritual significance? These questions have occupied the human mind for centuries, and they continue to challenge our understanding of existence. From a scientific perspective, death is a biological process in which the body permanently loses the capacity to sustain the functions necessary for life. The heart stops circulating blood, breathing ceases and the brain progressively loses its ability to function. Modern medicine can sometimes restore circulation and breathing through resuscitation, but irreversible loss of the functions required for life marks a fundamental boundary. The precise medical determination of death depends on established clinical criteria. Yet science explains the biological mechanisms of dying more effectively than it answers the philosophical question of why existence matters. Researchers have made remarkable progress in understanding the brain, memory, emotions and consciousness. Neuroscience has demonstrated that conscious experience is closely associated with brain activity. Nevertheless, the exact nature of subjective experience—how physical processes give rise to the feeling of being alive—remains

an important area of investigation. What happens to subjective experience when the brain irreversibly ceases functioning is a question that cannot be answered by speculation alone.

Scientific honesty requires us to recognise the distinction between what is established, what remains uncertain and what lies beyond the reach of current evidence. Reports of near-death experiences, including sensations of Hukam, divine order and the cycle of birth and death. Sikh teachings encourage human beings to live truthfully, remember the Divine, serve others and overcome ego. Rather than allowing the fear of death to dominate life, this perspective directs attention towards righteous conduct, compassion and spiritual awareness.

Such beliefs offer comfort, hope and a framework for understanding loss. However, religious interpretations are matters of faith and spiritual conviction rather than conclusions universally established by scientific investigation. Respectful dialogue between science, philosophy and religion requires acknowledging their different approaches while recognising the profound human questions that motivate them. For many people, the greatest fear associated with death is not the thought of their own non-existence but the pain of losing someone they love. The death of a parent, child, spouse or close friend can transform the emotional landscape of an entire family. Ordinary routines become reminders of absence, familiar places acquire new meanings and memories may bring both comfort and sorrow.

Grief is a deeply personal process. Some people express their pain openly, while others remain silent. There is no single timetable for healing and society should avoid placing expectations on how quickly a bereaved person ought to recover. Compassionate listening,

emotional support and when necessary, professional help can make a meaningful difference. The mystery of death also reveals an important truth about human relationships: love does not become meaningless simply because a life ends. The influence of a person may continue through memories, values, lessons, kindness and the lives they have touched. Although such continuity is not the same as proving the survival of consciousness, it demonstrates how profoundly one life can shape another. Modern medicine has significantly increased life expectancy and improved the treatment of many diseases. Advances in organ transplantation, cancer therapies, genetic research, regenerative medicine and intensive care have transformed what was once considered inevitable into a condition that can sometimes be prevented, delayed or treated.

At the same time, scientific research into ageing seeks to understand why cells deteriorate, why tissues lose their ability to repair themselves and why the risk of disease increases over time. Some researchers are investigating ways to extend healthy lifespan, while developments in artificial intelligence are helping scientists analyse complex biological processes. However, extending life is not the same as abolishing death. No scientifically demonstrated technology currently enables human beings to achieve biological immortality. Claims that consciousness can be transferred into a computer or that death will soon become entirely optional remain speculative.

The pursuit of longer life also raises ethical questions. Who would have access to expensive life-extending treatments? Would such technologies increase social inequality? Should society prioritise adding years to life, improving the quality of existing

years, or ensuring that everyone receives dignified healthcare? Scientific progress must be accompanied by ethical responsibility, social justice and a realistic understanding of its limitations.

The way a society treats its dying members reveals much about its values. Access to palliative care, pain management, emotional support and respectful end-of-life decisions should not depend solely on wealth or social status. People facing incurable illness deserve dignity, honest communication and appropriate care.

Equally important is the responsibility to discuss death without unnecessary stigma. Conversations about organ donation, advance care planning, grief and end-of-life preferences can help families make informed decisions during difficult circumstances. These discussions should be approached sensitively, with respect for personal beliefs, cultural traditions and individual wishes.

Public health must also focus on preventing avoidable deaths caused by road accidents, violence, unsafe working conditions, environmental pollution and treatable diseases. Accepting that death is inevitable does not mean accepting preventable suffering. On the contrary, recognising the value of life should strengthen our commitment to protecting it.

Perhaps the most meaningful question is not only what death is, but what our awareness of death asks us to do. It encourages us to reconsider our priorities. Wealth, status and power may occupy much of our attention, yet they cannot guarantee unlimited time. The quality of our relationships, the integrity of our actions and the contribution we make to society may ultimately matter more than the possessions we accumulate.

A person who understands mortality may become more compassionate towards others, more grateful for ordinary experiences and more willing to reconcile with those they have hurt. This does not mean that death is undesirable or that grief should be romanticised. It means that awareness of life's fragility can inspire a deeper appreciation of its possibilities. Education, scientific curiosity, artistic expression, public service and acts of kindness allow human beings to contribute to a world they may not live to see fully transformed. In this way, each generation inherits the achievements of those who came before and assumes responsibility for those who will follow.

The mystery of death may never be resolved in every dimension that humanity wishes to understand. Science can investigate the biological processes of dying, philosophy can examine the meaning of mortality, and religion can offer spiritual interpretations. Each approaches the question from a different perspective, and none should be forced to claim certainty where certainty is unavailable.

Perhaps the most responsible response to death is a combination of intellectual humility, emotional courage and moral responsibility. We should continue to investigate the unknown, support those who suffer, care for the dying and protect the living. We should also recognise that uncertainty about what follows death need not prevent us from finding meaning in the present.

Death remains the final frontier of human existence, but it need not be the centre of our lives. We cannot determine the length of every life, nor can we answer every question about what lies beyond it. We can, however, influence how we use our time, how we treat other people and what we leave behind.

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India-US trade deal first tranche finalised, legal drafting underway: Goyal

NEW DELHI: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday said the first tranche of the proposed India-US trade agreement has been finalised and is undergoing legal drafting, signalling progress in negotiations between the two countries. The government hopes to complete the process soon, with implementation contingent on India securing a competitive advantage for its exporters.

"The first tranche has been finalised and is going through the final legal drafting. We hope to finalise it soon and operationalise it once we get a competitive advantage over our peer countries," Goyal said. Negotiations between India and the United States on the proposed bilateral trade agreement are progressing positively, with discussions in a favourable zone, according to Commerce Ministry officials. However, the agreement will be signed only after both sides reach an understanding on the overall tariff structure and India



secures preferential market access for its exporters. "The negotiations are in the right direction, in a good zone. The deal has to be signed when the overall tariff structure is agreed upon. India has to get preferential market access," officials said. The remarks highlight New Delhi's emphasis on ensuring that the agreement delivers tangible benefits to Indian businesses and enables domestic exporters to compete effectively in the US market. Tariff arrangements and the relative com-

petitiveness of Indian goods are expected to remain central to the final negotiations. India and the US announced a framework for an interim trade deal in February. However, the agreement has yet to be implemented as both sides continue working towards finalising its terms. For India, securing preferential access to the American market is a key objective, particularly as global trade policies and tariff regimes continue to evolve. New Delhi is seeking terms that would place Indian exporters on a com-

petitive footing with suppliers from other countries.

The final tariff structure is likely to play a decisive role in determining the timeline for signing and implementing the agreement.

While the completion of legal drafting marks progress on the first tranche, the deal's operationalisation will depend on the finalisation of mutually acceptable terms. The proposed agreement could have significant implications for bilateral trade flows, export opportunities and market access across multiple sectors.

It also forms part of India's broader efforts to diversify export markets, strengthen trade ties with major economies and expand its presence in global commerce.

Although the latest remarks indicate progress in discussions with Washington, the final outcome will depend on the terms agreed upon by both countries and the extent to which the arrangement improves the competitive position of Indian exporters in the US market.

IIFL Capital's maiden pre-IPO fund raises Rs 500 cr in first close



NEW DELHI: IIFL Capital Asset Management Ltd on Wednesday said it has raised around '500 crore in capital commitments at the first close of its maiden late-stage private equity fund. The fund targets a corpus of '1,000 crore, with a greenshoe option of an additional '1,000 crore, IIFL Capital said in a statement. The IIFL Late-Stage Private Equity Fund achieved its first close on September 15, 2026, and will remain open for subscriptions, with the final close targeted within the next

nine months, it said. The fund will invest in scaled-up, profitable Indian enterprises preparing to list on the stock market in the near term. It has already committed investments in two companies and is evaluating a pipeline of 7-8 opportunities, ranging from term-sheet negotiations to transactions under due diligence, Deepak Mittal, Chief Investment Officer and Head of Private Equity at IIFL Capital Asset Management Ltd, said.

Rupee gains for 5th straight session, closes at 94.99

NEW DELHI: The rupee logged the fifth straight session of gains on Thursday, appreciating 12 paise to close at 94.99 (provisional) against the US dollar, supported by the ongoing impact of the Reserve Bank of India's structural forex interventions.

Market participants attributed the rupee's continued appreciation to central bank intervention and the unwinding of long dollar positions. However, ongoing external macroeconomic pressures are likely to temper further gains, they said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 94.95 against the American currency. In intraday trade, it touched a high of 94.86 and a low of 95.11 and settled at 95.05 (provisional) against the greenback, registering a gain of 12 paise from its previous close.

On Wednesday, the rupee appreciated 19 paise to close at 95.17 against the US dollar.



In the last five sessions, the rupee has gained 183 paise against the US dollar. "The Indian rupee extended its winning streak to a fifth consecutive session, supported by easing crude oil prices, the unwinding of dollar long positions, and strong domestic risk appetite. However, early intraday gains were partially pared amid a widening trade deficit and robust dollar demand from importers," said Dilip Parmar - Senior Research Analyst, HDFC Securities. From a technical perspective, the spot USD/INR has support at 94.70, while resistance is placed at 95.50.

Parmar added. The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.57 per cent at 101.96. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading lower by 1.82 per cent at USD 104.13 per barrel in futures trade.

On the domestic equity market front, Sensex jumped 1,533.72 points to settle at 74,315.61, while the Nifty closed 374.65 points higher at 22,997.35. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,857.44 crore on a net basis on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

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

Mahindra enters the CNG race with XUV 3XO ZNG

NEW DELHI: Mahindra & Mahindra launched the XUV 3XO ZNG, its first mainstream CNG passenger vehicle, at a starting price of Rs 9.99 lakh (ex-show-room). Test drives commenced today, with bookings and deliveries opening on October 20.

The launch brings the SUV specialist into a segment that has become one of Indian motoring's biggest growth stories. CNG's share of passenger vehicle sales has more than tripled in five years — from 6.3 per cent in FY2020 to 19.5 per cent in FY2025, according to SIAM data. In FY2025, CNG cars outsold diesel cars for the first time at 787,724 units.

736,508 — on Vahan registrations. Separately, FADA data shows CNG's share of passenger vehicle retail sales rising from 19.60 per cent in FY2025 to 21.98 per cent in FY2026, second only to petrol.

Maruti Suzuki has been the segment's biggest beneficiary. The country's largest carmaker sold about 6.2 lakh CNG vehicles



in FY2025 — up 28 per cent year on year — meaning one in every three Marutis sold ran on gas, compared with 12 per cent of its sales in FY2021. Volumes rose further to 7.46 lakh units in FY2026, and Maruti holds roughly 70 per cent of the CNG passenger vehicle market.

CNG has also become a major growth driver for Tata Motors. Its CNG volumes jumped 50 per cent to 139,218 units in FY2025, accounting for a quarter of its sales — up from 16 per cent in FY2024 and 8 per cent in FY2023.

In the 12 months to September 2026, its first year as a demerged passenger vehicle company, Tata sold over 2.03 lakh CNG vehicles, or 27 per cent of its

volumes. Mahindra claims to have engineered the new 3XO ZNG for performance and driving dynamics, an aspect hitherto ignored on CNG vehicles. The company claims the XUV 3XO ZNG's 1.2-litre turbocharged engine delivers identical 82 kW power and 200 Nm torque — best-in-class among CNG passenger vehicles in India in both CNG and petrol modes, with certified efficiency of 24.7 km/kg. Twin cylinders packaged under the boot floor preserve a flat loading floor and 270 litres of luggage space, addressing the boot-space trade-off that comes with conventional CNG installations. Six airbags and ESC are standard across variants; prices top out at Rs 12.27 lakh.

India's retail inflation rose to 4.8% in August, oil fuels rate hike bets: Report

NEW DELHI: India's retail and wholesale inflation rose marginally in August, broadly in line with expectations, but recent developments in energy markets could put further upward pressure on inflation in the months ahead.

Retail and wholesale inflation rose to 4.8% and 9.9%, respectively, in August, from 4.5% and 9.8% in July. The two measures, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Wholesale Price Index (WPI), can move quite differently because the underlying dynamics in retail and wholesale markets are different, but also because the two indices have very different compositions. Retail inflation remains within RBI tolerance band. Retail inflation increased marginally to 4.8% in August from 4.5% in July, according to data released by the National Statistics Office on Monday. The August value was almost identical to a Bloomberg fore-

cast of economists and continues to be within the RBI's tolerance band of 2-6%. Unless there is a big spike in the September CPI print, inflation in the quarter ending September should not vary significantly from the Monetary Policy Committee's August forecast of 4.7%.

The primary driver of retail inflation, which has increased for nine consecutive months now, continues to be its non-core or food-fuel component. While non-core inflation increased from 1.9% in January 2026 to 5.6% in August, its core component increased at a more gradual pace, rising from 3.3% to 4.3% during this period. Food and beverage component, which has the highest weight of around 37% in the index, increased to 5.7% from 5.3% in July.

Wholesale inflation climbs on fuel and manufactured products. WPI inflation rose to 9.9% in August according to data



released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Monday. Among the three broad categories of WPI, inflation increased in two (manufactured products and fuel and power) and fell in the primary articles group. Fuel and power group saw inflation increase to 22.9% from 20.1% and manufactured products' inflation increased from 8.3% to 8.4%. Food inflation under WPI increased from 6.7% to 7.1%

between July and August. Output PPI, which measures prices received by producers after excluding net taxes and trade and transport margins, registered year-on-year inflation of 9.8% in August, marginally up from 9.6% in July.

Oil price raises concerns over future inflation. While the latest inflation numbers are largely on expected lines, more recent developments suggest they could rise

going forward and monetary policy may need to pivot toward being more hawkish. Thanks to Iran-backed rebels seizing key territories near the Bab Al-Mandab strait and damaging a pipeline, oil shipments from Saudi Arabia are likely to fall significantly going forward. India's benchmark price of crude oil crossed the \$100 per barrel threshold earlier this month and was trading at \$108.76 (as of 18:56 IST) on Monday. India's crude oil basket price was \$119 per barrel on 11 September.

Most analysts expect energy prices to rise significantly, unless there is a resolution to the ongoing conflict in West Asia which restores normal traffic through Hormuz and Bab-Al-Mandab.

Fuel prices in India are deregulated on paper, government-run retailers have not increased prices in 123 days (the last hike was on 15th May). SBI economist calls for two rate

hikes. "Now we strongly advocate a 25-bps rate hike in the upcoming October policy (followed by another in December in quick succession), factoring the myriad evolving undershoots as detailed in this report. Our rate hike call is agnostic to August CPI inflation print that could come around 4.8-4.9%."

If oil prices remain at high levels, inflation print for October and November should move towards 6.5% or higher," Soumya Kanti Ghosh, Chief Economist at State Bank of India, had said in a note issued on 11 September. The primary driver of retail inflation, which has increased for nine consecutive months now, continues to be its non-core or food-fuel component. While non-core inflation increased from 1.9% in January 2026 to 5.6% in August, its core component increased at a more gradual pace, rising from 3.3% to 4.3% during this period.

CONTINUATION

PM Modi inaugurates ...

The projects will strengthen power evacuation infrastructure and improve the reliability of Ladakh's electricity network, marking a step towards harnessing the region's hydropower resources.

Recognising the importance of preserving Ladakh's ancient archaeological heritage, the prime minister also inaugurated India's first Petroglyph Conservation Park at Sindhu Ghat in Leh.

Ladakh is home to hundreds of prehistoric rock art sites featuring carvings of wildlife, human figures and symbolic representations that offer valuable insights into thousands of years of human history.

The prime minister also inaugurated 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, the statement said.

Lt Governor Congratulates

... are inheritors of a proud legacy and ambassadors of the Union Territory's sporting future.

Emphasising the importance of resilience, hard work and self-confidence, the Lieutenant Governor noted that no challenge is insurmountable when faced with determination and perseverance. The Lieutenant Governor also called upon athletes and citizens to contribute towards building a healthy and drug-free society. Stressing that sports provide a constructive path for youth empowerment, the Lieutenant Governor said that initiatives such as Jashn-e-Dal channel youthful energy towards nation-building, creativity and positive social transformation.

Commending the Jammu Kashmir Police for its Civic Action Programme and youth-oriented initiatives, including "Run for Unity" and the upcoming "Pedal for Paradise" rally, the Lieutenant Governor said these efforts have strengthened trust, community participation and youth engagement.

Congratulating medal winners, the Lieutenant Governor urged them to remain humble, while encouraging other participants to view setbacks as stepping stones towards future success. In his message, the Lieutenant Governor expressed confidence that Jammu Kashmir's water-sports ecosystem would continue to expand, creating greater opportunities for young athletes in the years ahead.

CM Omar inaugurates ...

auction platform at the Fruit and Vegetable Mandi, Zazna, at a cost of ₹2.54 crore to strengthen trading facilities for fruit and vegetable growers.

The Chief Minister inaugurated five completed projects, including roads connecting Teshil Bazar with Lar Bypass and Yanihama with Dargopora; the road from Dar Mohalla Tattabaghal to Dargopora and allied links; the double-storey building at High School Gogginjind; the widened and upgraded road from Fatepora Dak Bangloo to Gadoora Bridge; and the Pati Waskara to Khurabgh Bund road along the River Jhelum. These works, completed at a combined cost of ₹16.72 crore, are expected to improve local connectivity and educational infrastructure.

During the tour, the Chief Minister reviewed the progress of the Srinagar Ring Road project and was briefed by engineers at Dr Farooq Abdullah Environmental Park, Manigam, on the ongoing construction and upgradation of the Pandoach-Manigam section.

The 12.115-kilometre highway project, being executed by the National Highways Authority of India at a cost of ₹290.51 crore, involves upgrading the existing two-lane road to a four-lane dual carriageway. The project includes bridges, a flyover, culverts and service and slip roads, and is scheduled for completion by May 2027.

The Chief Minister also reviewed ongoing works on the Sindh River Front and the Municipal Town Hall in Ganderbal. The first phase of the Sindh River Front project, being developed at an approved cost of ₹4.83 crore, includes a protection wall, landscaping, a paved walkway, a viewpoint, a patio and ornamental lighting.

Reviewing the Town Hall upgrade and extension project, approved at a cost of ₹3 crore, the Chief Minister directed the concerned officers to expedite the works and ensure their early completion so that the facilities could be made available to the public at the earliest.

During his visit to the Fruit and Vegetable Mandi at Zazna, the Chief Minister assessed arrangements and activities during the ongoing harvest season and interacted with farmers and progressive growers. The growers apprised him of issues affecting their work and the horticulture sector. Omar Abdullah assured them that their genuine demands would be taken up for appropriate resolution. The Chief Minister's visit focused on reviewing ongoing infrastructure projects, assessing the implementation of development works and addressing issues raised by local residents and growers.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Ministers Sakina Itoo and Javid Dar, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Shreya Singhal, along with senior officers, heads of departments, engineers and other concerned officials, accompanied the Chief Minister during the tour.

J&K Prosecution ...

weapons. He further highlighted that links had been established with Canada, the United States and other Western countries raising serious concerns regarding national security and public safety. The Hon'ble Addl. Sessions Court Samba, considering the seriousness of the allegations and the ongoing investigation to unearth the white syndicate, dismissed the bail applications.

On October 13, 2026, Lt. Addl. Public Prosecutor Sarfraz Ahmed appeared for the UT before the 1st Additional Sessions Judge, Jammu Amarjeet Singh Langeh, in four anticipatory bail applications relating to Police Stations Bahu Fort, Miran Sahib and Bakshi Nagar. Three applications were dismissed as not maintainable, being in conformity with High Court Notification No. 1399 of 2026/RG dated 02.07.2026. In the fourth, the bail application is dismissed as withdrawn, as petitioners withdrew the application with liberty to file afresh.

On 12.10.2026, the 2nd Addl. Munsiff Jammu, Isha Jerath,

rejected the bail application of accused Bhader Ali in FIR NO. 172/2026 of Police Station Janipur, under Sections 331(3), 305, 317(5) and 61(2) BNS. The Lt. Asst. Public Prosecutor Neha Sharma strongly resisted the bail plea and raised the applicant's non-disclosure of criminal antecedents by affidavit, relying on Rule 176 of the J&K High Court Rules, 1999 and the Supreme Court's Zeba Khan ruling. She also said that accused Bhader Ali is involved in 08 FIRs and recovery of gold ornaments and cash is still pending.

On October 8, 2026, Chief Judicial Magistrate Samba Smriti Sharma rejected the bail application of the accused in FIR no. 85/2024, under section 331(3) and 305(a) BNS. The Asst. Public Prosecutor Megha Rani strongly argued that the accused's criminal antecedents, including ten pending FIRs, and his repeated involvement in criminal activities. She further submitted that his alleged involvement in similar offences despite being released on bail in previous cases demonstrates disregard for the process of law and raises a reasonable apprehension that he may repeat such offences and hide by bail conditions. The Hon'ble Court, after considering the prosecution's objections and the accused's criminal antecedents, dismissed the bail application, observing that the cumulative circumstances weighed against granting bail.

Across all ten orders, the Department recognizes the Lt. Prosecutor's thorough case preparation and command over statutes and Supreme Court precedent. These outcomes reflect the Department's commitment to professionalism, accountability and the rule of law.

CM Omar Abdullah ...

of sportsmanship and develop lasting friendships during their stay in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister said the government was making concerted efforts to strengthen sports infrastructure and expand opportunities for young athletes. He emphasised the need to develop indoor sports complexes in every district to encourage wider participation and provide children with better facilities to pursue different sporting disciplines.

Encouraging the visiting teams and officials to explore the region, Omar Abdullah invited them to visit Srinagar, Srinagar's Mughal Gardens and other local attractions, adding that Kashmir's hospitality was as memorable as its natural beauty.

On the occasion, boys and girls presented demonstrations of Wushu and Taekwondo, drawing appreciation from the Chief Minister and other dignitaries.

Minister for Youth Services and Sports Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Director General, Youth Services and Sports, Anuradha Gupta, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Shreya Singhal, SSP Ganderbal, senior officers, athletes, team officials and students were present on the occasion.

Srinagar Police...

"Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, following the prescribed legal procedures.

Police Station Khanayar attached five assets valued at approximately Rs 8 crore. These include a three-storeyed residential house on seven marlas of land in Budooabgh, Khanayar, valued at Rs 1.60 crore and allegedly belonging to Alijaz Ahmad Bhat, son of Bashir Ahmad Bhat. The action is linked to FIR No. 37/2022.

A Volkswagen Polo, bearing registration number DL3CBW-3549 and valued at Rs 6.50 lakh, allegedly belonging to Aaqib Hyder Khan, son of Mohammad Ayoub Khan of Ghat No. 01, Dalgate, was also attached in connection with FIR No. 46/2025.

Police also attached a three-storeyed residential house with 12 marlas of land, valued at Rs 2.50 crore, allegedly belonging to Majid Ashraf Wani, son of Mohammad Ashraf Wani of Sheeshgarh Mohalla, Khanayar. The property is linked to FIR No. 47/2022.

Two more residential properties allegedly belonging to Shabir Ahmad Bangroo, son of Gh. Qadir Bangroo of Bangroo Mohalla, Safakadal, were attached. These include a three-storeyed house on 11 marlas and 145 square feet of land, valued at Rs 2.80 crore, and a single-storeyed house on five marlas of land, valued at Rs 1.10 crore. The action is linked to FIR No. 07/2016, registered at Police Station Khanayar.

Police Station Pantha Chowk attached a concrete residential house in Khanmoh, valued at Rs 1.24 crore, allegedly belonging to Saqib Bashir Bhat alias Sakpal, son of Bashir Ahmad Bhat. The accused is linked to three NDPS cases registered at Police Stations Pampore, Banihal and Khrew under FIR Nos. 106/2024, 128/2025 and 55/2026, respectively.

At Shalenge, police froze a two-storeyed residential house built on one kanal of land in Panzina, Srinagar, valued at Rs 1.21 crore. The property allegedly belongs to Danish Ahmad Bhat, son of Ab. Ahad Bhat, and is linked to FIR No. 43/2023. Police said the property was identified through the investigation and the freezing order was duly served. Police Station Safakadal attached a three-storeyed residential house with an attic, valued at Rs 15,15,383, allegedly belonging to Faizan Firdous Khanday alias Farzan Pujl, son of Firdous Ahmad Khanday of Malik Sahib, Safakadal. The case is registered under Sections 8/22, 25, 27A and 29 of the NDPS Act, Sections 3/4/25 of the Arms Act and Section 111 of the BNS. The attachment is part of the ongoing investigation into an alleged organised drug trafficking network.

Police Station Ahmadnagar froze a residential house valued at approximately Rs 1 crore, allegedly belonging to Adil Ahmad Patoo, son of Ali Mohd Patoo of Shah Mohalla, Ahmadnagar. The property was identified during a financial investigation under Section 68-E of the NDPS Act, and the proceedings were conducted in the presence of an Executive Magistrate.

Police Station Soura also initiated freezing and attachment proceedings against a residential house in Umar Colony-B, Lal Bazar, allegedly belonging to Khalid Nazir Chilo, son of Nazir Ahmad Chilo. The property is valued at Rs 1,18,00,751, excluding the land value, and is linked to FIR No. 23/2023. The proceedings were carried out in the presence of an Executive Magistrate and local witnesses.

In a separate action, Police Station Ahmadnagar froze and attached another residential house valued at Rs 80 lakh, allegedly belonging to Adil Ahmad, the son of Shah Mohalla, Ahmadnagar. The action is linked to FIR No. 16/2023, registered at Police Station Ahmadnagar.

Srinagar Police said the coordinated action reflects its sustained efforts to target the financial resources that support drug trafficking networks, going beyond arrests and the seizure of narcotic substances.

By tracing and attaching assets allegedly acquired through illicit drug proceeds, the police aims to dismantle the financial infrastructure sustaining organised narcotic activities.

Reiterating its zero-tolerance policy towards drug trafficking, Srinagar Police said it remains committed to pursuing offenders, disrupting their networks and taking legal action against assets allegedly acquired through illegal

proceeds.

The police said the campaign would continue with renewed determination to protect the youth of Kashmir and safeguard society from the menace of drugs-

Rain Lashes Parts ...

17 mm), Baramulla (29 mm), Samba (35 mm), Ramban (17 mm), Anantnag (16 mm), Kulgam (18 mm) and Jammu (7.6 mm), according to weather data.

The heavy rain in Jammu also triggered flashflood-like situations in several areas, they said.

Widespread rain has lashed the Valley, including Srinagar (12 mm), during the night and continued till Thursday morning, as the weather remained cloudy in most parts of the region, officials said.

According to the meteorological department, rain and gusty winds are likely to continue across J-K on Thursday, amid warning of isolated hailstorms and light snowfall over the higher reaches.

Few areas in the higher reaches received intermittent snowfall for the third consecutive night, as mountains and meadows in the tourist resorts of Sonamarg and the upper areas of Gulmarg remained draped in white, the officials said.

The snow also led to the closure of a few vital roads, including the Mughal Road - the alternate road link connecting the Valley with the Jammu region.

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but continued it for 36 days. On July 20, it led a "Chalo Sansad" march without permission, drawing "well over 35,000" people, in excess of the 1,000 protesters agreed upon. The police claim over 240 people were injured. It also cites Congress protests on October 6, 7 and 8, alleging that these were "fuelled by persons adorning cover of 'freelance journalism'."

The police traced BJP's October 7 letter as a mere "intimation" and rejected it on October 9. The same day, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan wrote to all State and UT police chiefs. He cited "credible intelligence inputs" that BJP intended to "disobey statutory orders" and directed preventive measures.

Kumar called the affidavit an interim reply. He said that owing to "paucity of time", it did not address the other pending petitions. He said "an order of the court is being sought to be propagated" about police action.

BJP Rejects J&K...

fulfilling the promises it had made during the past two years.

Poonia said the government had received the people's mandate, assumed power and made commitments, adding that its performance should be judged by the results rather than explanations.

With the government blaming the BJP for failure to hold panchayat elections, he said "How are we (BJP) responsible? The tradition of holding elections under the Panchayati Raj system in Jammu and Kashmir was initiated by the Bharatiya Janata Party and the party also followed it very effectively."

He said that the District Development Council (DDC) elections were held for the first time during the BJP's regime.

Therefore, such allegations are baseless, he said.

On the BJP's organisational meetings, including meetings of its various cells, Poonia said the party had received a good mandate in Jammu and Kashmir after a long time.

He said the BJP was committed to working for the prosperity and development of Jammu and Kashmir, citing the governance model of the Narendra Modi government.

"The construction of the Chenab Rail Bridge, the operation of Vande Bharat trains and the benefits of schemes such as Ujjwala and Ayushman Bharat reaching the people of Jammu and Kashmir are examples of the BJP's governance model. This demonstrates our commitment to working for the prosperity of Kashmir," he said.

Govind Jaiswal...

Mandeep K Bhandari (IAS: 2001: AGMUT) was appointed as Chairman, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on September 25, 2026.

Dr. Jitendra Singh...

said India had abundant scientific talent, creativity and innovation capacity, but translating these strengths into globally competitive technologies required a larger pool of financial resources and stronger industrial participation. He invited industry to work with the government and research institutions to develop commercially viable models for investment in frontier and deep technologies, including through greater domestic and international participation.

Referring to the ₹1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund announced by PM Sh Narendra Modi in November last year, Dr. Jitendra Singh said the initiative was intended to accelerate industry participation in deep-tech development. He also referred to the liberalisation of foreign direct investment in strategic sectors, including nuclear energy, as part of efforts to mobilise resources for India's technological ambitions.

Dr. Jitendra Singh called for a stronger culture of philanthropy for scientific research, saying that supporting research could make a direct contribution to strategic welfare. While philanthropy in education and other social causes remained valuable, he said investment in scientific research and clinical trials could also help advance life-saving interventions.

Referring to a recent successful trial related to haemophilia, a disorder associated with deficiency of clotting factor VIII, the Minister said greater philanthropic support could help scientific institutions advance research and medical interventions. He encouraged philanthropists and other stakeholders to recognise research as an important avenue for contributing to society and national development.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said India was witnessing a significant transformation in science and technology, supported by an enabling policy environment and a growing emphasis on future-ready initiatives. Unlike earlier industrial revolutions, in which India adopted several technologies after they had advanced elsewhere, the country now had an opportunity to participate in shaping the next phase of technological progress.

With India advancing in artificial intelligence, quantum technologies and biotechnology, the country was moving into areas expected to drive the next industrial revolution, he said, referring also to initiatives such as Genome India. Citing the opening of the space sector to private participation in 2019-20, the Minister said India's space startup ecosystem had grown from single-digit numbers to more than 400 startups. He placed the country's space economy at around USD 9 billion, with projections of reaching USD 45 billion by the end of the decade.

Dr. Jitendra Singh also referred to the growth of India's startup ecosystem to around 2.5 lakh startups and the expansion of the bio-manufacturing sector from approximately USD 10 billion to nearly USD 200 billion over about a decade. He attributed these developments to policy support, an enabling ecosystem and greater emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship.

The Minister said the National Research Foundation was an important institutional mechanism for strengthening India's research ecosystem. Its approach brings together scientific expertise with perspectives from social sciences, humanities and traditional knowledge, broadening the societal relevance of research and its contribution to national priorities. Dr. Jitendra Singh said India's long-term development would depend on its ability to build self-reliance through indigenous manufacturing, technology development and the effective use of domestic resources. Scientific and technological self-reliance, he said, would also shape India's geopolitical sovereignty and its standing in the international arena.

Referring to India's ambition of achieving 100 GW of nuclear energy capacity by 2047 and net-zero emissions by 2070, the Minister stressed the importance of sustained technological innovation in meeting the country's long-term development goals.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said platforms such as IITK Samanyav must translate dialogue into enduring partnerships, investment and measurable outcomes. Closer collaboration among government, industry, academia, startups and researchers, supported by sustained investment and a stronger culture of scientific philanthropy, would help accelerate innovation, strengthen indigenous technological capabilities and advance the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Detained protestors...

Supreme Court. It adds that the Court's premises "cannot be permitted to be used as protest site."

On detention, the police said that people were removed under Section 65 of the Delhi Police Act and Section 172 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) only where Section 163 orders were in force. Those removed were kept in "makeshift centres", given "hot, fresh and good meals" and go within six hours of their arrest, it adds. Police leaders were seated in SHO chambers and offered "tea, coffee, meals and other refreshments," the Commissioner claimed.

The counter-affidavit further states that the CP got permission for a one-day protest at Jantar Mantar on June 20

4th T20I: Shai Hope's century, Keemo Paul's five-for power West Indies to victory over India, level series 2-2

NEW DELHI: Shai Hope's unbeaten century and Keemo Paul's five-wicket haul powered West Indies to a 24-run victory over India in the fourth T20I at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad on Wednesday. The win levelled the five-match series at 2-2, setting up a series decider in Bengaluru on October 17.

Hope smashed an unbeaten 102 off 50 balls to guide West Indies to a formidable 247/3 after India elected to field.

In reply, India managed 223/9 despite a blistering 56 off 22 balls from Sanju Samson and valuable contributions from Tilak Varma (43 off 25) and Nitish Kumar Reddy (41 off 20). Paul dismissed the Indian batting line-up with figures of 5/41 to seal the visitors' victory.

Hope continued his prolific run on the tour, registering his fourth century across formats in India, including his second in the T20I leg. His knock featured four boundaries and nine sixes, while Sherfane Rutherford provided an explosive finish with an unbeaten 49 off 26 deliveries. The pair's late assault helped West Indies post a daunting total and put India under pressure from the outset of the chase.

Samson's explosive start gives India hope. Chasing 248, India made an aggressive start through Samson, who struck a boundary off the first ball



before launching an assault on the West Indies bowlers. He targeted Shamar Joseph in the second over, hitting a four followed by two consecutive sixes, before taking 25 runs off Roston Chase in the third.

Samson raced to his half-century in just 19 balls, giving India early momentum in the daunting chase. However, Keemo Paul turned the contest in West Indies' favour in the fifth over, dismissing Samson for 56 off 22 balls, with six fours and four sixes. He then removed Ishan Kishan for six, leaving India at 67/2 in 4.4 overs.

Abhishek Sharma struggled to find his usual fluency, while captain Shreyas Iyer fell to Shamar Springer for 16 off 11 deliveries. India reached 100 in 8.4 overs but continued to lose wickets at crucial moments.

Gudakesh Motie dealt another double blow by dismissing Abhishek for 24 and having Naman Dhir

stumped for a golden duck. India were reduced to 130/5 in 11.4 overs, with the required run rate continuing to climb.

Tilak and Nitish revive India's chase. Tilak Varma and Nitish Kumar Reddy mounted a spirited recovery, adding 70 runs to briefly revive India's hopes. Tilak struck 43 off 25 balls, including two fours and three sixes, while Nitish contributed 41 from just 20 deliveries, with a four and four sixes.

Nitish accelerated the chase in the 16th over, taking on Shamar Joseph with two sixes and a boundary. But Romario Shepherd removed Tilak in the 17th over, with Rovman Powell completing the catch as the batter attempted to clear the field.

India needed 43 runs from the final two overs, but Shamar Springer conceded just five in the 18th, tightening West Indies' grip on the match.

The decisive blow came in the 19th over. Nitish was caught by Powell after hitting a six, and Paul bowled Prince Yadav for a golden duck on the next delivery. Paul then dismissed Axar Patel for three to complete his five-wicket haul and leave India nine down. Arshdeep Singh subsequently walked off after being struck on the arm, bringing the contest to an end with West Indies securing a 24-run win.

Hope anchors West Indies' imposing total.

Earlier, Hope led West Indies' charge after India captain Shreyas Iyer opted to bowl. The visitors began aggressively, with Jewel Andrew taking 17 runs off Arshdeep Singh's opening over before Hope attacked Mayank Yadav and Prince Yadav to push the score past 50 inside four overs.

Axar Patel, playing his 200th international match, provided India's first breakthrough by trapping Andrew leg-before for 21 off 16 balls.

However, Shimron Hetmyer immediately increased the scoring rate, striking boundaries against Arshdeep and Axar as West Indies reached 79/1 in the powerplay.

Hetmyer smashed 33 off just 12 balls, including four boundaries and two sixes, before Prince Yadav dismissed him at 110/2 in the ninth over.



AFTER ASIAN GAMES GLORY, KUMKUM, JYOTHI AND NEERAJ SET FOR PM MODI INTERACTION IN NEW DELHI

Ishani Sirohi wins two golds, bronze at IUKL World Kettlebell Championship

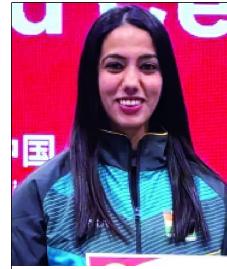
NEW DELHI: Indian kettlebell athlete Ishani Sirohi secured two gold medals and a bronze at the recently concluded 2026 International Union of Kettlebell Lifting (IUKL) World Championship, held at Talkatora Indoor Stadium in New Delhi from October 5 to 9.

The championship brought together over 300 athletes from 12 countries, including Russia, Australia, the United States, Uzbekistan and Poland. The event was held in association with the Kettlebell Sport India Association (KSIA), the Indian federation affiliated with IUKL.

Sirohi clinched her first gold medal in the women's Military Snatch event, completing 206 repetitions with a 16 kg kettlebell. She added a second gold in the women's team relay, where the Indian squad defeated Australia with a collective tally of 154 repetitions using double 16 kg kettlebells.

Sirohi also secured bronze in the women's two arm jerk event, completing 54 repetitions with two 16 kg kettlebells. She finished behind competitors from Russia and Australia.

The three-medal performance marked another successful international outing for Sirohi, who had earlier won silver in the 30-minute Half Snatch Marathon and bronze in Military Snatch at the 2026 IKMF World Championships in Syracuse, New York. Apart from competing, Sirohi also served as a judge at the



championship, contributing to the technical officiating of the international event.

The championship saw participation across multiple age groups and competitive categories, highlighting the growing international reach of kettlebell sport, a discipline that combines strength, endurance and technical precision. Member of Parliament Bansuri Swaraj attended as chief guest on the opening day, while Paralympic medalist Deepa Malik was present on the second day. Sirohi's performance adds to India's achievements in international kettlebell competition, particularly in women's strength sports, as Indian athletes continue to make their presence felt in disciplines beyond mainstream sporting events.

ACA opens new cricket ground and pavilion at Naharkatia



NAHARKATIA: Assam Cricket Association (ACA) on Tuesday inaugurated a state-of-the-art cricket ground and pavilion at Naharkatia, marking a significant step towards expanding cricket infrastructure beyond the traditional centres of the state.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated the facility in the presence of BCCI Honorary Secretary Devajit Saikia, ACA President and MLA Taranga Gogoi and other dignitaries. The new complex has five centre pitches, a fully furnished pavilion including match officials' room and dressing rooms, practice facilities, and infrastructure suitable for hosting domestic matches.

CM Sarma said the inauguration marked a new beginning for Naharkatia. "This is a proud day for Naharkatia. This initiative will help young

cricketers move ahead and fulfil their dreams," he said. The Chief Minister also praised the Assam Cricket Association for its efforts to develop cricket infrastructure and promote the sport across the State.

BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia highlighted the importance of developing cricket facilities outside Guwahati and other established centres, with the new Naharkatia facility expected to strengthen the grassroots cricket pathway in Upper Assam.

"The facility at Naharkatia will also serve as the ACA Cricket Academy's satellite academy for the Upper Assam Zone in the coming days. This will provide young cricketers in the region with access to structured training and development programmes," said Saikia. ACA President Taranga Gogoi said

they are proud to play a role in building cricket infrastructure in the state. He also highlighted the ACA's vision of taking cricket to every corner of Assam, ensuring that talent from smaller towns and rural areas receives the right platform to grow.

The inauguration was attended by ACA Vice President Romen Dutta, Joint Secretary Rajendra Singh, Treasurer Anupam Deka, Apex Council member Mukutananda Bhattacharya and former Apex Council members, besides officials of the Cricket Association of Naharkatia and other guests. The project is part of the ACA's efforts to create a wider and more inclusive cricketing network in Assam, with modern facilities and professional training opportunities made available to players in different parts of the state.

ITBP honours Mt Abi Gamin team and Asian Games medal winners



NEW DELHI: The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) organised a flag-in ceremony at its Force Headquarters on Wednesday to mark the successful completion of the Mount Abi Gamin Expedition 2026, alongside a felicitation ceremony honouring force sportspersons who excelled in national and international competitions.

ITBP General Shatrugh Kapur graced the occasion as the chief guest, in the presence of Additional Director General (HQ) Sanjay Gunjyal, senior officers, mountaineers, sportspersons, and support staff. The event commenced with a welcome address by Deputy Sports General (Inspector) Pawan Malik. The expedition team successfully summited the 7,355-metre high Mount Abi Gamin peak on September 18, adding another landmark achievement to the ITBP's distinguished

mountaineering legacy.

During the event, personnel who delivered stellar performances between January and October 2026 were honoured with the DG's Insignia and Commendation Roll. Among the key awardees were Assistant Sub-Inspector Parveen, who won a Gold Medal in Boxing at the 20th Asian Games in Japan, and Constable Neeraj Chauhan, who secured a Silver and a Bronze Medal in Archery. Addressing the gathering, Kapur congratulated the mountaineers and medal winners, stating that high-altitude mountaineering is integral to the ITBP's operational ethos, forging mental resilience and physical endurance required for adverse border terrains. He reaffirmed the force's commitment to providing modern training infrastructure and sustained support to its sportspersons.

Mumbai opening batter Ayush Mhatre suffers Grade 4 hamstring tear

NEW DELHI: In a major setback to the Mumbai side, the promising young opening batter Ayush Mhatre sustained a Grade 4 tear in his right hamstring during Mumbai's Ranji Trophy opener against Chandigarh at the Wankhede Stadium.

Mhatre suffered the injury while running between the wickets during his 48-run knock in the first innings. He didn't come out to field during Chandigarh's innings and the scans revealed a Grade 4 tear. The opener is likely to miss the first half of the Ranji season.

"It seems that he will not be with the team for some time now. The way he was limping in the match, it does not look like he would be available for the second or the third match," Mumbai captain Siddhesh Lad said after Mumbai's innings win over Chandigarh on Tuesday. "It happened while running (between the wickets), because we had two or three simulations (matches) and club games and also played at the BKC (Ground), and he was looking fine for the last 3-4 matches, but he felt something in his hamstring while taking a second run," Lad said. It will be a tough blow to take for Mhatre, who was playing his first match after a long recovery from a left hamstring injury sustained in April while playing for Chennai Super Kings in IPL 2026. The young opener spent three months at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Bengaluru undergoing treatment and rehabilitation.

"He looked very sad. He worked really hard in the off season. He was doing rehab with me only at BKC and he would come all the way from Virar and do his rehab and go back. It happens, it is a part of the game and we will try to motivate him," said Lad.

For their second Ranji Trophy match against Himachal Pradesh from October 18-21, Mumbai will be without both their openers as Yashasvi Jaiswal will travel with the India A side for the New Zealand tour. Mumbai win

Spinners Shams Mulkani and Tanush Kotian shared three wickets each to bundle out Chandigarh for 196 in their second innings and help Mumbai to a massive innings and 155-run victory against Chandigarh at the Wankhede Stadium.

Sediqullah Atal's epic 332-ball vigil in Afghanistan's thrilling draw against Bangladesh

NEW DELHI: In what will be remembered as one of the most gripping Tests in recent history, Afghanistan held their nerve to secure a dramatic draw against Bangladesh on the final day of their one-off Test at the Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday. Chasing a massive target

of 479 to win, Afghanistan's realistic goal was to survive and snatch a draw. They achieved exactly that, finishing the match on 346/8 when the umpires called off the match. The hero of the survival effort was Sediqullah Atal. He played a staggering innings of 111 from 332

deliveries, staying tall till the very end, in a show of immense character and concentration. Armed with a 106-run lead, Bangladesh launched a counter-attack in their second innings.

Liton Das scored 102 from 117 balls. He was brilliant, supported by captain Najmul Hossain Shanto

(82) and Mushfiqur Rahim (81). Bangladesh eventually declared at 372/7, leaving Afghanistan with a near impossible chase and over a day to survive.

Atal anchors the resistance. With the Abu Dhabi pitch deteriorating on the final two days, the Bangladesh spin attack, with Mehidy

Hasan Miraz and Tajjul Islam to the fore, tested the Afghan batters. However, Atal stood like a rock. Partnering with Rahmat Shah, who scored 51 from 124 balls, and with some gritty defending from the lower-order batters, Afghanistan refused to let go. Yamin

Ahmadzai played one of the most crucial knocks. Even though he scored only 19, he soaked up 85 balls. Paired with Atal, this completely tired the Bangladesh bowling. The final hour of the game proved a tense affair. Afghanistan were 346/8, and Bangladesh needed those two wickets

to win. However, Afghanistan's tailenders clung on valiantly, closing out the match under fading lights.

It was a draw that felt like a victory for Afghanistan, serving as a testament to the thrilling endurance that only Test cricket can provide.

BACK PAGE

LADAKH TODAY

Jammu | Friday | 16 October 2026

LADAKH TODAY

MULTI-EDITION NEWSPAPER

JAMMU & KASHMIR | NEW DELHI | LADAKH | UTTARAKHAND | UTTAR PRADESH | ASSAM



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लद्दाख की आवाज़, अब हिंदी में

आपके विश्वास और समर्थन से हम अब ला रहे हैं लद्दाख टुडे का हिंदी संस्करण, जो आपको देगा स्थानीय से लेकर राष्ट्रीय और अंतरराष्ट्रीय खबरों की पूरी जानकारी।



हमारे साथ पढ़िए



राष्ट्रीय
समाचार



लद्दाख की
ताजा खबरें



राजनीति
एवं शासन



व्यापार
एवं रोजगार



शिक्षा



खेल



संस्कृति
एवं पर्यटन



टेक्नोलॉजी एवं
विशेष रिपोर्ट



विज्ञापन हेतु संपर्क करें

अपने व्यवसाय, संस्थान या ब्रांड को दें व्यापक पहचान।

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