

Move from 'endless war towards end of war': PM Modi tells Russian President Putin

TASHKENT, AUG 31

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to move from "endless war towards end of war", asserting that a peaceful resolution of the conflict is humanity's shared priority. In a meeting with Putin on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Kyrgyzstan's capital, Bishkek, PM Modi said every day of war sets humanity back and that India, the land of Gandhi and Buddha, supports all efforts towards peace and will continue to do so.

"We have always discussed the Ukraine issue. When we last met, you had extensively briefed me on all aspects of it. India supports all efforts for peace and will continue to do so," PM Modi said in his televised opening remarks at the



meeting.

"Every day spent on war pushes humanity backwards, whereas every step taken towards peace

fills humanity with new hope and enthusiasm. We must move from endless war towards the end of war, which is very crucial for the

well-being of humanity," said the Prime Minister. The two leaders also extensively deliberated on ongoing cooperation in areas of trade and investment and energy and fertiliser security, among others.

"A peaceful resolution of all issues as soon as possible is the call of humanity, and this is also India's message."

The land of Gandhi and Buddha has a single message: the path of peace," said PM Modi.

PM Modi and Putin travelled together in the Russian President's limousine to Nomad Games. Television footage showed them jointly entering the venue for the inauguration ceremony of the games. The two leaders had travelled in the same train in the Chinese city of Tianjin during the SCO

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Lieutenant Governor chairs the Annual General Meeting of Indian Red Cross Society, J&K



SRINAGAR, AUG 31

Lieutenant Governor Shri Vinal Kumar Saxena, today chaired the Annual General Meeting of the Indian Red Cross Society, J&K UT and reviewed its functioning, activities and future roadmap.

The meeting was attended by Dr Mandep K Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Shri Shubhankar Pratyush Pathak, General Secretary, Indian Red Cross Society, J&K; Deputy Commissioners (Presidents of District Red Cross Units), and officials of IRCS, J&K.

The Lieutenant Governor, who is the President of the Indian Red Cross Society, J&K UT, directed the Deputy Commissioners to intensify resource mobilisation and explore innovative avenues

for fund generation to further strengthen humanitarian and welfare activities of the Red Cross Society. He further directed them to prepare comprehensive district-wise annual activity plans, identifying priority areas and interventions, and submit the same for effective implementation. Emphasising the need to take Red Cross services closer to the people, the Lieutenant Governor called for greater outreach in far-flung and border areas. He advised the Deputy Commissioners to explore opening Diagnostic Centres in remote areas, particularly at places where people have to travel long distances to reach hospitals and access essential healthcare services. The Lieutenant Governor called for intensifying coor-

minated efforts towards the complete elimination of Tuberculosis (TB) and ensuring effective identification, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of TB patients at the grassroots level. The Lieutenant Governor stressed that the Red Cross Society must further strengthen its humanitarian role and expand its activities to ensure timely assistance and essential services reach vulnerable and needy sections of society across Jammu and Kashmir. He also entrusted upon the officials of IRCS J&K to further intensify the anti-drug campaign and make their valuable contribution to building a Nasha Mukti Jammu Kashmir. Shri Shubhankar Pratyush Pathak, General Secretary, IRCS, J&K presented various agenda

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CM Omar Abdullah meets several individuals, deputations at Raabita

SRINAGAR, AUG 31

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today met several individuals and deputations at Raabita, Srinagar, and discussed issues related to sustainable mountain development, tourism promotion and sports.

A delegation from the Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI), comprising its President Dr. Ramesh Negi, LEAD Strategist Dr. Rajan Kumar Kotru and Vice Chancellor SKUAST-K, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, called on the Chief Minister and discussed strategies for promoting sustainable mountain development in Jammu and Kashmir.

Amitash Ojha, Associate Professor of Cognitive Science at IIT Jammu, also met the



Chief Minister and briefed him about a proposed nudge-based initiative for tourism development in Jammu and Kashmir. The initiative seeks

to leverage behavioural insights to encourage sustainable tourism practices, enhance visitor experience and

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J&K Govt Orders Posting of Police Officers in Anti-Corruption Bureau

SRINAGAR, AUG 31

The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Monday ordered the transfer, posting and repatriation of several police officers in the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), JK, with immediate effect.

The order has been issued vide Government Order No. 47-JK-GAD(Vig) of 2026, dated August 31, 2026, by Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, M. Raju, IAS, stated that, Peerzada Afjiz Ahmad, JKPS, Additional SP, SIA Kashmir, has been transferred and posted in the Anti-Corruption Bureau, J&K, against an available vacant post.

Mudasir Ahmed Trambho, JKPS, Deputy Superintendent of Police posted in ACB, J&K, has, upon his promotion, been posted as Superintendent of Police in the Anti-Corruption Bureau, JK.

The government has also repatriated SSP Zahoor Ahmad Wani and SSP Ayaz Ahmad Sheikh, both posted in

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ACB chargesheets former junior assistant over misappropriation in mid-day meal ration in Rajouri

SRINAGAR, AUG 31

Jammu and Kashmir Anti Corruption Bureau on Monday produced a charge sheet in case FIR No. 26/2018 under sections 5(1)(c), 5(1)(d) r/w 5(2) J&K P.C Act, 2006 BK, Section 465, 468, 471, 201 & 120-B IPC against Mohd. Farooq, then Junior Assistant in the office of the ZEO Manjokote.

Officials said the instant case was registered on 28-12-2018 in P/S VOI (now ACB-I) on the outcome of verification which surfaced that misappropriation of rice measuring 200 Qntr approx pertaining to 4th quarter for the year 2014-15 of Mid Day meal Zone Manjokote by then ZEO Manjokote and his dealing hand Mohd Farooq I/C Mid Day Meal in Connnivance with Mumtaz Hussain storekeeper Manjokote. During investigation, record so obtained was scrutinized

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Joint Forces Bust Hideout in Shopian, Recover AK-47 Rifle, Pistol Among Arms and Ammunition

SRINAGAR, AUG 31

Security forces on Monday busted a suspected militant hideout in Shopian district and recovered a cache of arms and ammunition. Officials said that a joint operation was launched by Jammu and Kashmir Police, 44 Rashtriya Rifles and CRPF at Nalkpora Menzder in Shopian on specific input.

During searches in an orchard area, the team busted a hideout and recovered arms and ammunition including one AK-47 rifle, two AK-47 magazines, 60 rounds of 7.62 mm ammunition, one pistol, one grenade and six rounds of 9 mm ammunition. Officials

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Budgam-Katra Special Express resumes, no more changing at Banihal

JAMMU, AUG 31

In a significant step towards passenger convenience and strengthening rail connectivity in Jammu & Kashmir, Jammu Division has successfully resumed the operation of Train No. 04688/04687 Budgam - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Budgam Special Express with effect from 29th August 2026.

With the resumption of this train, passengers travelling from the Kashmir Valley to Jammu and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra, especially pilgrims, have got great relief.



Earlier, passengers had to change trains at Banihal, which caused inconvenience, but now with the availability of a direct train from Budgam to Katra, their journey has

become smooth as well as time-saving.

Since its resumption, the train has been receiving an overwhelming response from passengers. Passengers at Budgam, Srinagar, Anantnag, Qazigund, Banihal, Sangaldan, Reasi and Katra stations have welcomed this decision.

Passengers told the news agency that the direct rail service will not only save their time and money, but will also provide them with a comfortable and safe travel experience. Many

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India rejects Hague court order to restore Indus waters pact with Pakistan

NEW DELHI, AUG 31

India has rejected a ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague ordering it to uphold the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan, saying the tribunal has no jurisdiction over the matter.

India suspended the treaty in April last year after identifying two of three assailants as Pakistani in an attack that killed 26 people at a Kashmir tourist destination. Pakistan denied any involvement in the attack.

The standoff places the decades-long conflict over Kashmir as the primary trigger behind the collapse of the historic water pact, pushing a framework that had endured three wars past its breaking point. Under the 1960 agreement, these shared river systems feed 80 per cent of Pakistan's agricultural land.



India's rejection follows the international court's ruling on Monday that the pact remains fully binding and that India had no justification for ending or suspending it. The tribunal ordered India to limit construction on the Rate

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J-K MBBS, BDS Interns Begin Indefinite Strike, Demand Rs 30,000 Stipend

JAMMU, AUG 31

MBBS and BDS interns across medical colleges in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday began an indefinite strike over the low monthly stipend, demanding its enhancement from the existing Rs 12,300 to Rs 30,000.

The protesting interns staged dharnas in Jammu and said the stipend had remained unchanged for nearly seven years despite repeated representations and protests. They said the amount had failed to keep pace with inflation and was substantially lower than stipends being paid to interns in several other states.

Dr Shahnaaz, one of the protesting

interns, said MBBS and BDS interns across J-K had joined the agitation over the long-pending demand.

"Our stipend has remained at around Rs 12,300 for seven years. In several other states, interns are getting between Rs 25,000 and Rs 45,000. We are performing the same duties, including 24-hour and night shifts and rural postings, but are being paid only around Rs 400 a day," he said.

He said interns were involved in emergency duties and assisted doctors in OPDs, wards, procedures and other hospital services.

"Despite performing regular duties

and handling a substantial workload, we continue to receive only Rs 12,300 a month. This is unjust," an intern said.

Dr Abhinav Bhat, another protester, said the interns would continue their indefinite dharna until the government issued a written order accepting their demand.

"We are on an indefinite strike and will continue until our demand is fulfilled. We want a written order, not merely an assurance," he said. Bhat said a committee constituted by the Health and Medical Education Department in 2023 had recommended

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Dr Jitendra inaugurates 'Green Forge' complex at Chandigarh, milestone in genetic crop revolution

CHANDIGARH, AUG 31

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of Earth Sciences; Minister of State, PMO; Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated first of its kind "Green Forge" Complex at "National Agri-food & Biomanufacturing Institute" (BRIC-NABI) at Mohali.

The Minister described this as a milestone in genetically modified crop revolution. Addressing the National Conclave on BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment) at BRIC-National Agri Food



Biomanufacturing Institute (BRIC-NABI), Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the newly inaugurated Green Forge facility, with its controlled simulation chambers, will enable the cultivation and experimentation of genetically modified crops under varied environmental conditions, helping

researchers assess their suitability for different locations. Explaining the significance of the facility, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that Green Forge provides simulation chambers in which the quantity and quality of light, humidity and temperature can be varied to create an optimum

environment for growing and experimenting with genetically modified crops. He said this capability would help researchers understand how a particular crop performs under different environmental conditions and accordingly assess the locations where it may be suit-

able for cultivation. The Minister said that when a new genetically modified variety is developed, an important challenge is to determine where it can be cultivated most effectively. Green Forge can help address this by recreating different environmental conditions in a controlled setting, allowing researchers to study the response of crops before taking them to appropriate cultivation locations.

Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted the ability of the facility to recreate specific parameters that may otherwise be difficult to reproduce naturally. He noted that the simulation of light quality and quantity, humidity and temperature, and the possibility of integrating advanced technologies including

AI, can provide researchers with greater flexibility in conducting experiments. He described Green Forge as a novel facility with particular relevance for serious research in agriculture and medical sciences.

The Minister emphasised that such facilities reflect the growing convergence of biotechnology, advanced simulation and Artificial Intelligence, creating new possibilities for research and experimentation. He said that integrating AI with the capabilities of Green Forge could make research processes significantly easier and open up new avenues for advanced experimentation. Highlighting the broader transformation

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CS directs districts to harness the opportunity for transforming J&K's sports ecosystem

SRINAGAR, AUG 31

Jammu and Kashmir has drawn up an ambitious five-year roadmap to maximise Central assistance under the Khelo India programme, with the Union Territory aspiring to secure around ₹1,000-1,200 Cr during 2026-31 for strengthening sports infrastructure, nurturing talent and building a comprehensive sports ecosystem across the UT.

The roadmap was presented today before the UT Level Coordination Committee (UTLCC) in its first meeting chaired by Chief Secretary, Atul Dulloo, who called for a focused, district-driven approach to leverage the national programme for creating high-quality sports infrastructure and facilities across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by ACS, PWD; Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services & Sports Department; Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare; Commissioner Secretary, Education; DG, Youth Services & Sports; DG, Budget; representatives of Planning, Rural Development Department and other concerned departments. Deputy Commissioners participated through video conferencing from their respective offices.

Chairing the meeting, the Chief Secretary directed all Deputy Commissioners to leverage the rechristened Khelo India 2026-31 scheme to create the best possible sports infrastructure and facilities in their respective districts, while ensuring optimal utilisation of existing assets.

He called for prompt preparation of comprehensive district sports plans and directed the districts to submit the requisite plans by September 15, 2026.

Dulloo observed that Jammu and Kashmir has consistently demon-



strated remarkable sporting talent and structured the need to provide young athletes with the right platforms, facilities, coaching and exposure to hone their abilities and compete at the highest levels. He urged upon the departments and districts to aspire for maximum admissible funding under the Khelo India programme, with particular emphasis on developing Centres of Excellence and strengthening the sports ecosystem from the grassroots to the elite level.

Presenting the roadmap, Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services & Sports, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, outlined J&K's strategy to tap the various funding windows under the Khelo India programme and build a coordinated sports development architecture for the next five years.

He reiterated that the roadmap seeks to address the sporting requirements of athletes from grassroots participation in schools to preparation of elite sports persons capable of contributing to India's medal tally at the Olympic and international level.

He urged Deputy Commissioners and concerned departments to be proactive and prompt in preparing district-level plans so that

Jammu and Kashmir can make optimal use of the national funding opportunities available under the programme.

Dwelling it out further, he added that the national Khelo India programme carries a total financial outlay of ₹29,489 Cr for 2026-31, including administrative expenses, with the annual allocation rising progressively from ₹3,173 Cr in 2026-27 to ₹9,198 Cr in 2030-31. The roadmap prepared by the Youth Services & Sports Department seeks to position J&K to secure the maximum admissible share from these national funding windows.

The meeting was apprised that the national outlay is structured across key intervention areas covering the entire sports development continuum.

The largest window is Khelo India Training Facilities, with an allocation of ₹10,586 Cr, accounting for 37.2 per cent of the total outlay. This is followed by Strengthening Strategic Sports Assets with ₹4,963 Cr, Sports Infrastructure for Medal Strategy with ₹4,866 Cr, Talent Identification and Development with ₹2,407 Cr, and Sports Competitions and Leagues with ₹2,358 Cr. Other important win-

dows include State Action Plan for Sports Infrastructure Development (Central Share) with ₹1,400 Cr, Coach and Support Staff Development with ₹748 Cr, Sports Technology with ₹302 Cr, and the Fit India Movement with ₹300 Cr. An additional ₹559 Cr has been earmarked for administrative expenses under this programme. The funding architecture, comprising both recurring and non-recurring components, provides opportunities ranging from creation and upgradation of sports infrastructure and training facilities to talent identification, competitions, coaching, technology and promotion of fitness.

A major thrust of the new roadmap is on grassroots talent identification and athlete development, with J&K targeting a tenfold increase in the number of supported athletes.

The strategy envisages deployment of Khel SETU as an integrated platform for mapping and identifying sporting talent across schools and universities, while addressing the existing gap in Physical Education Teachers in government schools by enhancing their capacity through trainings and other courses.

Government should allocate land to the Shri Guru Ravi dass

Gurudwara in Keran village Assembly Jammu North : Darshan Rana

JAMMU, AUG 31

A public meeting was held in Keran village—Part of the Jammu North Assembly constituency—under the Leadership of Darshan Rana, the Jammu & Kashmir President of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). During the meeting, alongside discussions on local issues, a Demand was raised urging the Jammu & Kashmir government to allocate approximately 4 kanals of land in Keran village to the Shri Guru Ravidas Gurudwara, thereby fulfilling a long-standing demand of the devotees.

Addressing the gathering, BSP J&K President Darshan Rana stated that the Jammu Authority has been repeatedly interfering with the Shri Guru Ravidas Bhawan, causing significant resentment among the people.

He warned that any further interference in the future would trigger a massive agitation. He urged Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Omar



Abdullah to allocate the land associated with the Shri Guru Ravidas Gurudwara in Keran to the Shri Guru Ravidas Gurudwara as soon as possible. He emphasized that the people hold deep faith in the Shri Guru Ravidas Gurudwara, and the government should allocate the land to the Gurudwara promptly, respecting this public sentiment. Speaking on the occasion, BSP State Vice President Incharge Jammu Zone,

Charanjit Chagotra affirmed that his party stands with the local people; he warned that if the government fails to meet this demand quickly, an agitation would be launched over the issue, with the government and the concerned department held responsible for the consequences. Party Assembly President Krishan Lal Jammu North, Office Secretary Ratan Lal, and others also shared their views during the public meeting.

SHO Gandhi Nagar holds interactive meeting with Green Belt Park residents on community safety



JAMMU, AUG 31

In a proactive community-policing initiative aimed at strengthening neighbourhood security and fostering closer coordination between police and residents, the Station House Officer (SHO), Gandhi Nagar, held an interactive meeting with prominent residents of the Green Belt Park area.

The meeting, hosted by Sahil Batta at his residence, provided an opportunity for residents and police officials to discuss various issues concerning public safety, security and civic concerns in and around the Green Belt Park area. The interaction focused particularly on strengthening security arrangements, regulating traffic movement, and increasing police patrolling in the locality, especially around the parks and other frequently visited public spaces.

During the interaction, the SHO listened to the concerns and suggestions put forth by the residents and assured them that the police would continue to take necessary measures to ensure a secure and peaceful environment in the area. He emphasized the importance of active community participation in maintaining law and order and urged residents to

remain vigilant and immediately bring any suspicious movement or activity to the notice of the police.

The SHO stressed that effective policing is not limited to enforcement alone but also involves regular engagement with the community. He said that timely sharing of information by residents can help the police prevent untoward incidents and respond more effectively to emerging security concerns. Particular emphasis was laid on maintaining proper traffic discipline in the Green Belt Park area, where the movement of pedestrians, morning walkers and vehicles often increases during peak hours. Residents also highlighted the need for visible police presence and regular patrolling to further enhance the sense of security among people using the parks and adjoining areas.

The meeting was attended by prominent members of the Green Belt Morning Walkers Association, including President Ashok Chopra and General Secretary Dr. Gaurang Sharma, besides other residents and community representatives. The members of the association and local residents appreciated the initiative of the Gandhi Nagar Police for

reaching out directly to the community and providing a platform for an open exchange of views. They said that regular interaction between police officials and residents helps in identifying local concerns at an early stage and contributes towards building mutual confidence.

Sahil Batta and other residents expressed gratitude to the SHO for the proactive outreach and said that direct dialogue with the police strengthens public trust and encourages citizens to play a constructive role in maintaining peace and security. The residents also assured the police of their full cooperation and support in community-policing efforts. They said that a coordinated approach involving law-enforcement agencies and responsible citizens can go a long way in making the Green Belt Park area safer, more orderly and more secure for residents, senior citizens, morning walkers and other members of the public. The interaction concluded with a commitment from both sides to maintain regular communication and work collectively towards addressing local security and traffic-related concerns in a timely manner.

Tejinder Singh Takes Over as IGP Jammu Zone



JAMMU, AUG 31

Tejinder Singh has taken over as the new Inspector General of Police (IGP), Jammu Zone, succeeding Bhim Sen Tuti on Monday. Farewell-cum-welcome function was held at Zonal Police Headquarters (ZPHQ), Jammu, to bid farewell to outgoing IGP Jammu Zone Bhim Sen Tuti and welcome Tejinder Singh as the new IGP Jammu Zone. During the function, B.S. Tuti expressed his gratitude to the officers and personnel of Jammu Zone for their cooperation, support and dedication during his tenure. Officers and personnel conveyed their best wishes to Tuti for his new assignment and extended a warm welcome to Tejinder Singh, wishing him a successful and fruitful tenure as IGP Jammu Zone.

Auto-Rickshaw Workers' Union Election Held in Ramban under the banner of INTUC, JKUT

RAMBAN, AUG 30

An important meeting and election of the Auto-Rickshaw Workers' Union, Ramban, was held today in Ramban in the presence of senior leaders of INTUC J&K UT. The meeting was attended by Shri Shiv Kumar Sharma, President INTUC J&K UT; Shri Naveed Ashraf Kichloo, Organizing Secretary INTUC J&K UT; Balvinder Ji; Bicku Kumar, President Jammu District; Varun Ji; and Naseer Hussain, along with a large number of auto-rickshaw drivers, workers and union members. During the meeting, it was unanimously decided, with the consent of the workers and leaders present, to temporarily dissolve the existing Union body for a period of two months. For this interim period, Shri Pawan Kumar was appointed as President and Mr. Sajjad Ahmed as General Secretary of the Auto-Rickshaw Workers' Union, Ramban. The decision was taken with the full consent and agreement of the auto-rickshaw union leaders present, with the objective of ensuring smooth functioning of the union and strengthening its



organizational structure. During the meeting, the auto-rickshaw drivers and workers highlighted several important issues affecting their livelihood.

The INTUC leadership extended full support to their genuine demands and called upon the concerned authorities to take appropriate measures. The workers demanded that passengers can easily find auto-rickshaws in the locality, especially around the parks and other frequently visited public spaces.

vehicles for the livelihood of their families. Excessive penalties place a heavy financial burden on these workers. The workers also demanded that proper and designated auto stands should be established according to the requirements of different areas, so that both the public and auto-rickshaw drivers can benefit. Proper stands would ensure that passengers can easily find auto-rickshaws in the locality, especially around the parks and other frequently visited public spaces.

The Union specifically demanded establishment of designated auto stands in important and busy areas such as Banihal, Gool, Sangaldan, Dharamkund, DC Office area and other suitable

BJP OBC Morcha Udhampur Holds Organisational Meeting at Sunadi, Reviews Party Strengthening and Grassroots Outreach.

UDHAMPUR, AUG 31

BJP OBC Morcha, District Udhampur, organised an important organisational meeting at Sunadi, jointly hosted by Jib Ramble Mandal and Krimchi Mandal, with the objective of reviewing and further strengthening the party organisation at the grassroots level. The meeting was organised under the directions of Ravi Kumar Abrol, Prabhari, District Udhampur, and Sagar Verma, District President, BJP OBC Morcha, Udhampur. The meeting was attended by prominent office bearers, Mandal presidents, senior BJP leaders, OBC community representatives and dedicated party workers. Among those present were Ravi Kumar Abrol, Prabhari, District Udhampur; Sagar Verma, District President, BJP OBC Morcha, Udhampur; Kuldeep Kumar Prajapati, General Secretary; Ashok Kumar Bandral, General Secretary; Ravi Kumar, Mandal Pradhani, Jib Ramble; Rakesh Kumar, Mandal

Pardhan, Krimchi; bhushan Kumar, Mandal Pradhani, Mongari; Raj Kumar, Mandal Pradhani, Tikri Malhar; and Sourav Kumar, Mandal Pradhani, Jagano, besides several senior leaders and party workers. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on strengthening the organisation at the booth and Mandal levels, increasing coordination among office bearers and workers, expanding the reach of the party among OBC communities and taking the policies, programmes and welfare initiatives of the Central Government to the grassroots. The speakers emphasised that a strong organisation at the booth level is the foundation of an effective political and social outreach programme. Party workers were urged to maintain regular contact with the people, understand their concerns and ensure that eligible beneficiaries are able to avail themselves of various government welfare and development schemes. The participants



also discussed upcoming organisational programmes and chalked out strategies for further strengthening the BJP OBC Morcha in District Udhampur. Stress was laid on maintaining unity, discipline and coordination among workers while working towards the larger objective of public service and inclusive development. Addressing the gathering, Ravi Kumar Abrol, Prabhari, District Udhampur, said that organisational meet-

ings play a vital role in strengthening the party at the grassroots level and provide an important platform for reviewing the progress of the organisation and identifying areas requiring greater attention. He said that the BJP OBC Morcha must continue to work with dedication, unity and commitment for the welfare of the OBC community and ensure that the benefits of government welfare and development schemes reach every

deserving and needy family. Abrol further stated that under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country has witnessed unprecedented development, social empowerment and inclusive growth, with special attention being given to weaker and marginalised sections of society, including the OBC communities. He called upon party workers to remain committed to public

service, strengthen booth-level organisational structures and communicate the achievements and welfare-oriented policies of the government to every household. Bhatta Jyoti Bhatti, senior BJP leader and State President, BJP OBC Morcha, Jammu & Kashmir, in his message, appreciated the efforts of the District Udhampur unit in organising the meeting and emphasised the need for continuous grassroots engagement. He said that the strength of the BJP lies in its dedicated cadre and its direct connect with the people. He called upon OBC Morcha workers to work as a bridge between the government and the community by identifying the genuine concerns of people and making them aware of the schemes and initiatives launched for their welfare. He stressed that the OBC community has made significant progress under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with greater emphasis on social justice, political participation and

creation, employment, entrepreneurship and empowerment of weaker sections.

He urged the workers to strengthen the organisation in every Mandal and booth, ensure maximum participation of OBC community members in party activities and take the message of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas to the grassroots.

He further called for greater coordination among Mandal-level office bearers and workers and said that regular meetings, public outreach programmes and constructive engagement with society are essential for building a stronger and more responsible organisation. The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment by the office bearers and party workers to work collectively for strengthening the BJP OBC Morcha in District Udhampur, expanding its grassroots presence and contributing towards the welfare and empowerment of every section of society.

Div Com Jammu hails KPs for thriving in diverse fields



JAMMU, AUG 31
Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar today attended the '1st Community Cash Award Function' organized by the Saraswathi Educational, Cultural Charitable Trust in association with Helpline Humanity, here at Abhinav Theatre. The Divisional Commissioner was the Chief Guest, while the former Director General of Police Dr. Ashok Bhan attended the function as the Special Guest and Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M). Arvind Karvani as the Guest of Honour. Among others present on the occasion included former Secretary to the Governor of Tamil Nadu and Managing Trustee, Saraswathi Educational, Cultural Charitable Trust, Dr. C.K. Gargali; Board Member Helpline Humanity, Prof. Indu Kilam; Deputy Commissioner, Excise & Sanjay Bhat and Founder, Helpline Humanity, M.K. Bhat, besides other prominent members of the community who were also present on the occasion in big numbers. The programme was organized to recognize and honour individuals who have made significant contributions to society and brought distinction to the Kashmiri Pandit community in their respective fields.

Addressing the gathering, the Divisional Commissioner highlighted the rich historical and cultural legacy of Kashmir, describing it as a land of knowledge, intellectual excellence, art and culture. He said that members of the Kashmiri community have made their mark in diverse fields across the country and the world. He appreciated the initiative of the Saraswathi Educational, Cultural Charitable Trust in recognizing achievers from within the community, terming such recognition an important step towards encouraging excellence, preserving cultural identity and bringing the community together. The Divisional Commissioner also acknowledged the difficult circumstances faced by the Kashmiri community following the events of the 1990s, stating that despite being displaced from their homeland, members of the community continued to excel in different fields and made significant contributions in India and abroad. He appreciated the efforts of the Trust and Helpline Humanity for bringing the community together and recognizing individuals who have made outstanding contributions. He said that such initiatives help reconnect the younger generation with their

rich heritage and inspire them to contribute towards society and nation-building. Later, the Chief Guest presented cash awards of different categories to the distinguished Kashmiri Pandit personalities. Ravi Gargali Cash Award was presented to Dr. Agni Shekhar and Vikram Koul. The Indra Gargali Cash Award was presented to Sandhya Dhar and Dr. Advithvadi Kaul. The Ravi Misti Cash Award was conferred to Pandit (Dr.) Abhay Rustum Sopori and Ankur Bagati. The awardees were felicitated in recognition of their achievements and valuable contributions in their respective fields. The programme also featured cultural performances by students and cultural groups, showcasing the rich cultural heritage and artistic traditions of the community. The Divisional Commissioner congratulated all the awardees and extended his best wishes to them for their continued success. He appreciated their valuable contributions to society and expressed hope that their achievements would continue to inspire the younger generation. Earlier, Dr. C. K. Gargali highlighted the objectives of the program and Saraswathi Educational, Cultural Charitable Trust.

National Confrance Senior leader and Spokesperson for Chenab Valley Region Ajeet Bhagat

KISHITWAR, AUG 31
Senior leader of National Conference and Spokesperson for Chenab Valley Region Ajeet Bhagat said that the residents of Kishitwar are suffering due to the supply of unhygienic and contaminated drinking water. The dirty water from drains is allegedly getting mixed in the water supply pipes, which is posing serious health hazards and increasing the risk of water-borne

diseases among the public. Bhagat said that the filter plant located in Semna Colony, Kishitwar has allegedly been inactive since 1998. Despite the non-functional state of the said filter plant, maintenance charges and other bills are allegedly being levied regularly, indicating negligence and possible misuse of government funds. The senior National Conference leader requested the Deputy Commissioner Kishitwar and Chief Engineer

Public Health Engineering Jammu to please conduct an immediate inspection of the water supply system, physically verify the working condition of the filter plant at Semna Colony Kishitwar, check the quality of drinking water supplied to the public through laboratory inspection and check the recorded bills. Please audit and investigate. Strict action is also required against the officials found responsible for negligence and misuse of funds.

One-day Netball championship concludes at Udhampur



UDHAMPUR, AUG 31
A one-day Netball Championship organised by the Netball Association of Jammu and Kashmir in collaboration with the Department of Sports concluded successfully at Subash Stadium, Udhampur. The championship witnessed enthusiastic participation from 22 teams representing 15 different schools, where young players displayed remarkable talent, teamwork, discipline and sporting spirit throughout the event. The closing ceremony was attended by DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range Shiv Kumar Sharma as the Chief Guest, while Sumet Sharma, President Press Club Udhampur, graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour. Addressing the participants, the dignitaries appreciated the efforts of the organisers for successfully conducting the championship and providing a platform to young athletes to showcase their sporting abilities.

ties. They also encouraged students to actively participate in sports and other extracurricular activities for their overall physical and mental development. The Chief Guest and Guest of Honour distributed prizes among the winning teams and outstanding players. The organisers expressed gratitude to the Department of Sports, participating schools, coaches, officials and all those who contributed towards the successful conduct of the event. The championship concluded on a positive note with a collective call to further promote netball and other sporting activities in the region and provide young athletes with greater opportunities to identify, develop and showcase their talent at different levels.

JMC Takes New Initiative to Promote Dogri Language Across Jammu City

JAMMU, AUG 31
Dogri Signboards to be Installed at Prominent Chowks and Intersections, Initiative Strengthens Jammu's Cultural Identity

In a significant initiative aimed at preserving and promoting the rich linguistic and cultural heritage of Jammu, the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) has undertaken the installation of signboards in the Dogri language at prominent intersections, chowks and other important locations across Jammu city. The initiative has been taken up under the guidance of the Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Dr. Devansh Yadav, following a request from the Syana Nagrik Mukti Dal, Sana. The organization has also contributed by providing a number of Dogri signboards, which are now being installed by the Jammu Municipal Corporation at suitable locations throughout the city. Dogri, being the mother tongue of the Jammu region and a proud symbol of its cultural identity, holds a special place in the hearts of the people. Through this initiative, JMC aims to give greater visibility and recognition to the language and incorporate it more prominently into the everyday public life of the city. The installation of Dogri signboards at major public locations will not only enhance the cultural character of Jammu but will also help create awareness among residents, particularly the



younger generation, about the importance of preserving, respecting and promoting their linguistic heritage. The Jammu Municipal Corporation has already taken significant steps towards promoting Dogra culture and the Dogri language through its various developmental initiatives. At the Waste to Wonder Park at Bhagwati Nagar, developed by JMC, detailed information regarding each monument and structure displayed in the park has also been provided in the Dogri language. This unique initiative reflects JMC's commitment towards connecting development and public spaces with the rich cultural heritage of the Jammu region. The inclusion of Dogri at the Waste to Wonder Park and now on sign boards across prominent locations in Jammu city marks an important effort towards giving the language a stronger and more visible presence in public life. Such initiatives are expected to promote greater awareness and pride among citizens regard-

ing the rich Dogra heritage and cultural traditions. Speaking about the initiative, Sh. Kulbhushan Khajuria, Joint Commissioner (Revenue & Enforcement), Jammu Municipal Corporation, who is also the Additional Chief Executive Officer of Jammu Smart City Limited, shared detailed information regarding the project and its implementation across various locations in Jammu city. The initiative is being seen as another meaningful step by the Jammu Municipal Corporation towards strengthening Jammu's distinct cultural identity and ensuring that the Dogri language receives the recognition and prominence it deserves. By giving Dogri a visible presence across the city's streets, public spaces and cultural landmarks, JMC hopes to inspire greater pride among citizens in their language, heritage and cultural roots, while contributing towards the preservation and promotion of Jammu's unique identity for future generations.

LOCAL

L-G VK Saxena lays foundation for 30 Smart Bus Shelters - 15 each in Leh and Kargil - with solar-powered, weather-resilient facilities

LEH, AUG 31

In a significant step towards creating safe, smart and sustainable public transport infrastructure, Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today laid the foundation stone for 30 Ladakhi Smart Bus Shelters - 15 each in Leh and Kargil.

The project is designed particularly keeping in view the region's challenging climatic conditions and the needs of students, senior citizens, women, working people and daily commuters who often have to wait for buses in the open during the harsh winter months.

The smart bus shelters mark a significant step towards developing sustainable public transport infrastructure in the Union Territory. The Smart Bus Shelters will incorporate modern passenger information and safety facilities.

GPS-enabled Passenger Information Display Systems, LED displays, GPS-based bus tracking and real-time Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) will enable passengers to access information about bus routes and expected arrival times. CCTV surveillance, SOS/emergency buttons, first aid



kits, emergency oxygen cylinders and fire extinguishers will further enhance passenger safety. Tactile tiles and accessible movement have also been provided for visually impaired and other passengers, making the facilities more inclusive. A key feature of the project is its solar-powered design.

Each bus shelter will have a 2 KW solar PV system, battery storage and a hybrid inverter. Solar energy will be used to power Wi-Fi, passenger information displays and other essential facilities, thereby reducing dependence on grid electricity and helping lower

operational costs, thereby, contributing to the vision of Carbon-Neutral Ladakh. The shelters will also reflect Ladakhi architectural character, combining modern technology with local identity and heritage. This approach seeks to ensure that infrastructure developed for the future remains rooted in Ladakh's distinctive cultural character.

L-G Shri Saxena said that the project is not merely about constructing bus shelters, but about creating safe, comfortable, technology-enabled and sustainable public transport infrastructure suited to

Ladakh's unique environment. The shelters will provide covered seating and weather-protected waiting areas, offering much-needed protection from extreme cold, strong winds and snowfall. The Lieutenant Governor expressed his gratitude to Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Hon'ble Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah for their continued support and guidance, which has enabled the development of modern infrastructure and improved public facilities in Ladakh in line with the aspirations of its people.

"These Smart Bus Shelters will become symbols of better mobility, safety, technology, sustainability and citizen-centric services in Ladakh. Our aim is to create infrastructure that responds to our difficult climate, is environment-friendly and, most importantly, meets the daily needs of our people," L-G Shri Saxena said. The Lieutenant Governor also appealed to the people of Ladakh to take ownership of the facilities and cooperate with the Administration in keeping the Smart Bus Shelters clean, well-maintained and functional.

NIT Srinagar climbs to 19th rank among top Technical Universities in India Today Rankings 2026



SRINAGAR, AUG 31
National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar has registered a significant improvement in the India Today Ranking 2026, securing 19th rank among the Top Technical Universities in India, compared to 22nd rank in 2025.

The three-position rise marks another milestone in the Institute's ongoing journey towards academic and institutional excellence and reflects its continued progress in academics, research, innovation and overall institutional development.

The achievement has been welcomed by the NIT Srinagar administration, which attributed the improved national standing to the sustained and collective efforts of its faculty, students, researchers, non-teaching staff, alumni and other stakeholders.

Director, NIT Srinagar, Prof. Anurag Misra, congratulated the entire Institute fraternity on the achievement and said the improved ranking reflects the collective commitment of the

Institute towards excellence. He said NIT Srinagar would continue to focus on quality education, cutting-edge research, innovation and stronger industry-academia collaboration while further strengthening its academic ecosystem and national standing.

Registrar, Prof. Atikur Rehman, also congratulated the faculty, students, researchers and staff, saying the improved ranking is a recognition of the consistent efforts being made to strengthen the Institute's academic and research environment.

He said the Institute remains committed to improving infrastructure, research, student support and academic quality to achieve greater milestones in the years ahead.

Chairman NIRF, NIT Srinagar, Prof. Babar Ahmad, termed the improved ranking a significant achievement for the Institute. He said NIT Srinagar's rise from 22nd rank in 2025 to 19th rank in 2026 reflects its steady progress

and growing academic standing. Prof. Babar credited the achievement to the collective efforts of the faculty, students, researchers, non-teaching staff, alumni and other stakeholders, saying their contribution has helped strengthen NIT Srinagar's position at the national level.

Nodal Officer, NIRF, Dr. Vijay Kumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Physics, said the improvement in the India Today Rankings reflects NIT Srinagar's sustained efforts towards academic excellence, quality education, research and innovation.

Dr. Vijay also appreciated the dedicated efforts of Ajay Kumar, Junior Assistant, NTA/NRI Office, NIT Srinagar, for his contribution and support in the Institute's ranking-related work.

The latest ranking marks a steady upward trajectory for NIT Srinagar, with the Institute improving from 22nd position in 2025 to 19th position in 2026 among the Top Technical Universities in India.

KIND ATTENTION RAIL PASSENGERS!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION OF REGULAR RUN OF BADGAM-SHRI MATA VAISHNO DEVI KATRA-BADGAM EXPRESS TRAIN

For the convenience of rail passengers Northern Railway has decided to introduce the regular run of Train No. 04688/04687 Badgam-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-Badgam Special Express as per the details mentioned below:-

14688/14687 BADGAM-SHRI MATA VAISHNO DEVI KATRA-BADGAM EXPRESS (6 DAYS IN WEEK)

Train No. 14688		STATIONS		Train No. 14687	
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.
07:33	07:20	Badgam		20:00	—
08:17	08:19	Srinagar		19:36	19:38
08:53	08:55	Awantipora		19:06	19:07
09:18	09:20	Anantnag		18:33	18:35
10:00	10:10	Banhal		18:15	18:17
10:34	10:35	Khari		17:50	18:00
10:51	10:52	Sumbur		16:50	16:51
11:11	11:13	Sangaldan		16:34	16:35
11:34	11:35	Sawalkote		16:11	16:13
11:49	11:50	Dugga		14:54	14:55
12:04	12:05	Bakkal		14:39	14:40
12:21	12:23	Reasi		14:24	14:25
13:00	—	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra		14:06	14:07
—	—	—		—	13:45

Days of run :- 14688 Ex. Badgam and 14687 Ex. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra on everyday (except Sunday) from 19.10.2026

Composition: AC Chaircar.

For detailed information, please call RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit enquiry website: www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in

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Cong holds protest against malicious FIR against LOP Rahul Gandhi

JAMMU, AUG 31

JKPC today took out a strong protest demonstration in Jammu City today against the malicious FIR against LOP Rahul Gandhi by the BJP Govt. in Utrakhnad for his omission to the Haldwani incident. Accompanied by senior leaders a larger number of congress workers of PCC, DCC, Jammu Urban and Rural, front wings held a strong protest demonstration at Shaheed Chowk Jammu today evening raising slogans against Modi Govt. and BJP for lodging malicious FIR against Rahul Gandhi over the issue of insult to Dalits especially Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge.

Carrying congress flags, the congress and Mahila activists raised strong slogans against BJP RSS and raised their voice over their mind set and their vindictive functioning for lodging FIR against LOP Rahul Gandhi who raised the issue of insult and atrocities to Dalits at Haldwani. Accompanied by Working President Raman Bhalha, Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma, Former Minister DCC Jammu Urban President Yogesh Sawhney, DCC President Jammu Rural Neeraj Kandan, Ex-MLC, Incharge HQ Ved Mahajan, Th. Manmohan Singh, Vinod Sharma, Satish Sharma, Amrit Bali, Vijay Sharma, Iqbal Dar, Kapil Singh, Sanjeev Panda, Neeraj Gupta, Jatni Raina and others, JKPC Chief said that Shri Rahul Gandhi is not afraid of another FIR, as there are already 36 False and concocted FIRs against him but the question is that there is a strong and hidden message behind this malicious FIR. He said the message is that those who highlight or speak for action against the atrocities over Dalits or Dalits who speak against



unjustice to them would face action against them by BJP Govt and those committing atrocities/injustice would be glorified encouraged.

Kara said that Modi-Shah are afraid of the growing popularity and support being extended to

Rahul Gandhi in the country over paper leaks and other injustice to te youth and students of this country.

Kara said that congress will continue their protest at various district HQs from tomorrow over these vindictive and anti Dalit

actions of Modi Govt and BJP and we are solidly behind the leadership of Shri Rahu Gandhi to fight out injustice and atrocities against SC and STs in the country under the regime of BJP-RSS. Earlier Raman Bhalha echoed the same views and

lashed out against the Modi-Shah Govt. and BJP-RSS for their anti Dalit policies and programmes and for encouraging such elements who violate constitution and law, indulge in untouchability which is a crime. He said congress is solidly behind our leadership of Shri Rahu Gandhi in his fight for social justice and atrocities amongst Dalits.

Prominent among those attended the protest include Shri Varinder Manhas, Sohni Sharma, Mangal Bral, R.S. Randhwa, Praveen Akhter, Rajvir Singh, Jatin Raina, Bhavishya Sudan Anna, Vijayanti Pathania, Sandeep Dogra Dr. Kanwal Singh, Jatinder Chib, Latish Sharma, Ajab Moton, K.K. Jogi, Rakesh Sharma, Sat Pal Sapolia, Nageshwar Narayan, Raj Kumar Sodi, Prem Sharma, Anil Sharma, Vijay Mahotra, Varun Magotra, Gurmeet Singh, Mangat Ram, Ranjit Manhas, Gagan Bral, Munish Raja, Praveen Singh, Raj Kumar, Rakesh Kumar.

MLA Bahu Ch. Vikram Randhawa Launches Two Key Development Works in Ward 52, Addresses Long-Pending Public Demands

JAMMU, AUG 31

Taking forward his commitment towards strengthening civic infrastructure and resolving long-pending issues of residents, MLA Bahu Ch. Vikram Randhawa today initiated two important development works in Ward No. 52, Trikuta Nagar.



The MLA formally commenced the upgradation of the lane and drain at Adarsh Enclave, a long-awaited requirement of the area aimed at improving basic civic amenities and providing better and safer infrastructure to the residents. On the occasion, Ch. Vikram Randhawa also initiated the construction of a Bathing Ghat at Jamwal Chowk, another long-pending demand of the local community. Recognising the importance of the facility for residents,

the MLA has sanctioned the required funds under his Constituency Development Fund (CDF), paving the way for the long-awaited work to finally begin.

The development initiatives were undertaken in the presence of Trikuta Nagar Mandal President Sh. Nitish Mahajan, along with his team, including former Corporator Sh. Ajay Gupta and General Secretary Sh. Kulveer Charak, besides

local residents. Officials from the Jammu Municipal Corporation (IMC) responsible for the execution of the works and the concerned contractor were also present.

CEO SMVDSB Felicitates Sports Persons for Outstanding Performance in Athletics, Football and Judo

KATRA, AUG 31

Shri Sachin Kumar Vaisya, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) felicitated the sports persons of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sports Complex for their outstanding achievements in various sporting disciplines and brought laurels to the Shrine Board. The felicitation ceremony was held to recognize the commendable performance of the athletes who excelled in different events during the 24th J&K UT Athletics Championships, held at the Athletics Track, University of Jammu. Organized by the J&K Amateur Athletics Association under the aegis of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI), the championships witnessed participation of more than 800 athletes from the Union Territory in various age categories.

On the occasion, the CEO also felicitated the football team of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sports Complex for emerging victorious in a football match against the team of Khelo India Centre, Udhampur organized on the occasion of National Sports Day.

The winning team was presented with a trophy in recognition of its commendable performance. While congratulating the athletes, the CEO appreciated their dedication, discipline and hard work and said that their achievements reflect the growing sporting culture being promoted at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sports Complex. He encouraged the sportspersons to continue striving for excellence and bring further laurels to the Shrine Board and Jammu & Kashmir at national and international levels.

The CEO also congratulated Shri Danish Sharma, Judo Coach, Shri

Mata Vaishno Devi Sports Complex for earning the prestigious High-Level Technical Course for Coaches, organized jointly by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Judo Federation (IJF). He lauded the achievement as a significant recognition of the coach's professional commitment and commitment towards nurturing young sporting talent.

Notably, the Shrine Board, under the Chairmanship of Shri Manoj Sinha, Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, J&KUT, remains committed to promoting sports and nurturing young talent by providing world-class training facilities and opportunities. The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sports Complex is being developed as a Centre of Excellence with modern infrastructure and resources to support aspiring sportspersons in achieving success at national.

Farmers' voice must become J&K's development agenda: Bharat Priye

JKPC Kissan Congress Chairman seeks FCI Mandi in Kathua within 10 days, waiver of irrigation motor tariffs; raises agriculture, employment, power, water, roads and rising cost-of-living concerns

KATHUA, AUG 31

Jammu & Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPC) Kissan Congress Chairman Bharat Priye today addressed an impressive meeting of farmers at Kathua, which witnessed enthusiastic participation of farmers from different villages of the district. He used the occasion to highlight the difficulties confronting the farming community and urged the Government to adopt a comprehensive, time-bound approach towards resolving the issues affecting agriculture and the common people across Jammu & Kashmir.

Speaking at the gathering, Bharat Priye demanded that an FCI procurement mandi be opened in Kathua within ten days, saying that farmers should not be compelled to travel long distances or depend on uncertain procurement arrangements for selling their produce. He said timely procurement is particularly important for farmers because delays can force them to sell their produce at prices below their expectations, adversely affecting their income and weakening the economic sustainability of farming households.

Priye also demanded waiver of tariff/charges on electricity motors used for irrigation, saying that farmers already face rising input costs and should not be burdened with additional financial pressure for accessing irrigation facilities. He maintained that affordable and reliable irrigation is essential for improving agricultural productivity, particularly in areas where farmers remain dependent on groundwater and irrigation infrastructure.

The JKPC Kissan Congress Chairman said the problems of farmers cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader challenges being faced by the people of J&K. He called for focused attention towards unemployment, rising prices, inadequate tariffs, water shortages, inadequate irrigation facilities, deteriorating rural roads, agricultural input costs, procurement arrangements, compensation for crop losses, market access and limited livelihood opportunities. He said farmers continue



to face increasing expenditure on seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, machinery, electricity, transportation and labour, while uncertainty over market prices and procurement adds to their financial difficulties.

Priye stressed the need for strengthening the agricultural marketing network and ensuring that farmers receive remunerative and timely prices for their produce. He also called for effective implementation of crop insurance and adequate compensation in cases where farmers suffer losses due to extreme weather events, floods, drought-like conditions, pest attacks or other natural calamities.

Highlighting the importance of irrigation, he said the Government should accelerate the repair, modernisation and expansion of irrigation infrastructure and ensure that farmers receive adequate water during critical agricultural periods. He also drew attention to the wider power crisis affecting households, businesses and farmers in different parts of J&K.

He said farmers require dependable electricity for irrigation, while ordinary consumers need reliable power supply at affordable rates.

Priye further called for greater attention to rural infrastructure, particularly roads, drainage, drinking water supply and other basic amenities. He said farmers and rural resi-

dents contribute significantly to the economy but often continue to face difficulties in accessing quality infrastructure and public services. He also raised concern over the growing challenge of unemployment among educated youth, saying that the Government must create more employment opportunities, promote local entrepreneurship and strengthen sectors such as agriculture, horticulture, tourism, handicrafts and small businesses that can generate sustainable livelihoods.

The Kissan Congress Chairman emphasised that agriculture remains an important pillar of the rural economy and that protecting farmers' interests is directly linked with strengthening the economic well-being of thousands of families. He called for a farmer-centric policy framework encompassing assured procurement, remunerative prices, affordable power and irrigation, timely availability of agricultural inputs, better storage and cold-chain facilities, improved rural connectivity and easier access to institutional credit.

Priye also urged the authorities to ensure that farmers affected by natural calamities receive compensation without unnecessary procedural delays. He said J&K's farmers have repeatedly demonstrated resilience in difficult circumstances and deserve a responsive administrative system that stands with them during periods of crisis. He

appealed to the Government to engage directly with farmers and their representative organisations and establish regular mechanisms through which local agricultural problems can be identified and resolved. The meeting also witnessed organisational activity within the Kissan Congress. Tarsem Pal Singh Saloni, District Chairman Kissan Congress Kathua, appointed Omkar Singh as Block Kissan Congress President, Nagri, on the occasion. The newly appointed office-bearer was congratulated by the senior leaders and workers present, who expressed confidence that he would work actively for strengthening the organisation at the grassroots level and remain closely connected with farmers.

Prominent among those present at the meeting were Dr. Satish Sharma; Subash Chander, President, Block Congress Committee; Varinder Singh, Youth Leader; Omkar Singh, Pradesh Secretary; Tejpal Kallu; Mohinder Pal, General Secretary, DCC; Dayanand, Senior Leader; Bhandari, Senior Congress Leader and PCC Member; and Jeevan Kumar, Secretary, DCC, besides a large number of farmers and party workers from different villages. Bharat Priye called upon the Kissan Congress workers to maintain continuous contact with the farming community, listen to their concerns and raise genuine public issues at appropriate forums. He said the objective should be to ensure that the voice of farmers and rural communities receives sustained attention in the policy-making process and that developmental priorities are aligned with the actual needs of people on the ground.

The meeting concluded with the participating farmers reiterating their demand for early resolution of their concerns, particularly the opening of an FCI mandi in Kathua, relief on irrigation motor tariffs, strengthening of procurement mechanisms, better irrigation and power supply, and greater government support for the farming community.

Sp'l Secretary APD reviews progress of major Horticulture Schemes in Jammu Division

JAMMU, AUG 31

A comprehensive review meeting was held today in the conference hall of the Directorate of Horticulture Jammu to review the physical and financial progress of the horticulture schemes being implemented in the region.



Special Secretary Agriculture Production Department (APD) Dr. Ravi Shankar Sharma chaired the meeting attended by Additional Secretary Agriculture Production Department Saeed Ahmed; Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Syed; Joint Director Horticulture Jammu Sall Gupta; Deputy Director Horticulture Jammu (Central) Mohesh Sharma; all Chief Horticulture Officer of Jammu Province, Chief Canning & Processing Instructor Sanjeev Kumar Karupia; Nursery Registration Officer Satish Kumar; Accounts Officer Rajesh Kumar; I/c District Horticulture Officer Mica District Nursery, Chakrol, S. Parminder Singh, Soil Analyst

Ashwani Sharma, Horticulture Development Officer, Information, Dr. Vijay Kumar; along with senior officers and officials from the Technical and Planning Sections of the Horticulture Department. The meeting reviewed the progress of UT CAPEX (Regular), NABARD, Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement Project (JKCIP), Mission for Integrated

strengthening of departmental nurseries, quality planting material, horticulture mechanisation, protected cultivation, irrigation facilities, post-harvest management, processing and value addition, grading and packaging, infrastructure development and other farmer-oriented interventions. Special emphasis was laid on the timely implementation of approved projects, optimum utilisation of funds, achievement of physical targets and ensuring that the benefits of the government schemes reach eligible farmers and fruit growers in a transparent and time-bound manner.

The meeting also reviewed the implementation of HADP and JKPC interventions, besides other centrally sponsored and UT-funded programmes aimed at modernising the horticulture sector, improving productivity, strengthening the value chain and enhancing the income of farmers.

BJP Legislators pressed for fulfilling the promises made in J&K Election Manifesto 2024

JAMMU, AUG 31

The All Jammu Based Reserved Category Employees Association Kashmir (AJBRCEAK) has hailed the BJP Government's Election Manifesto 2024, among its 25 key promises, which specifically focuses on the interests and welfare of the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities.

Vipen Kumar said that the efforts of the seven BJP MLAs elected from reserved constituencies should be used to raise these issues before the Chief Minister as a welcome step towards taking the manifesto commitment forward and converting assurances into concrete action.

He further said that issues relating to Reservation in Promotion and a Comprehensive Transfer Policy for Jammu-based Reserved Category Employees working in the Kashmir Division are genuine and long-pending concerns. Raising such

matters before the government, he added, is both legitimate and in accordance with the aspirations of the community. The AJBRCEAK Chairman said that the government's over attempts by some individuals claiming to be journalists to target, or malign elected representatives for raising public issues, he said such conduct is unfortunate and can create unnecessary divisions within the community.

"Democratic institutions and elected representatives should be respected, and genuine public issues should be discussed constructively rather than through personal attacks or motivated disinformation," he said. Vipen Kumar reiterated that the welfare and constitutional rights of reserved categories should not be viewed through a political lens for Jammu-based Reserved Category Employees working in the Kashmir Division are genuine and long-pending concerns. Raising such

Ayurveda for eyes: Best Ayurvedic home remedies to make your vision stronger

NEW DELHI: The eyes are the most delicate sense organs, requiring special caution and care and getting regular eye checkups done is just one of many ways one can prevent any disease as the eyes are extremely fragile and extremely vulnerable to get affected by environmental. Eyecare is crucial since some eye issues might result in total blindness while chronic illnesses like diabetes and hypertension are leading causes of diminution of vision by affecting the retina and multiple sclerosis also causes diminished vision by impairing the optic nerve.

In an interview with HT Lifestyle, Dr Mandeep Singh Basu, CEO of Jagat Pharma and Director of Dr Basu Eye Hospital, insisted that one must lean towards controlling these disorders by following Ayurveda and said, "Being natural, Ayurveda recommends all-natural and holistic health remedies, including perfect eye care solutions that are safe and can permanently correct or improve vision."

For oral remedies, he suggested, "Those with poor vision will benefit significantly from the mixture of almonds, black pepper and honey. In

the morning, take 4-5 soaked almonds with 2-4 crushed black pepper and a glass of warm milk. It is one of the best medications for enhancing vision. Likewise, mixing 2 to 5 tablespoons of amla juice daily with warm water will help overcome visual problems and lead to healthy eyes, as it is enriched with Vitamin C and antioxidants."

Talking about remedies for local application other than oral treatment, he recommended -

1. Nasyam: Putting two drops of cow ghee (desi cow ghee) in both nostrils once a day, preferably in the daytime.
2. Eyewash: Wash your eyes twice daily with Triphala water (Tri means three and 'phala' means fruits). The three fruits used in the Triphala formula are Amla (Embilica Officinalis), Haritaki (Terminalia Chebula), and Bibhitaki (Terminalia Bellirica), which is recommended as an incredibly effective eye conditioner. It has control over all three body doshas, i.e. Haritaki on Vata, Amalaki on Pitta, and Vibhitaki on Kapha.
3. Padabhyanga: To enhance eyesight, it is also suggested to do Padabhyanga. In this way, you can



frequently massage your feet with cow ghee (desi cow ghee) before going to bed.

4. Tratak Karma: Furthermore, Tratak Karma can be performed daily. Tratak Karma is a meditation posture in which you sit in front of a candle in a dark room or gaze at a point for a short period of time to improve your eyesight and reduce dullness.

As per Dr Sibaram Khara, Vice Chancellor at Sharda University, "Numerous eye conditions have been recognised by and also explained by Ayurveda. Drishti dosha, an Ayurvedic term, has been used to describe vision problems. It has determined the origins, signs and several courses of treatment for these eye conditions." Highlighting that there are many

ayurvedic medicines that can help to improve eyesight, he advised:

Triphala Kashaya (a decoction of Triphala) or TriphalaChurna (a powdered form of Triphala) taken with honey or ghee is good for the eyes. TriphalaChurna is recommended for use with ghee for Pittaja eye problems, sesame oil for vataja eye ailments, and honey for kaphaja eye diseases.

Treating eye illnesses from the start by routinely washing your eyes with Triphalakashaya (a Triphala decoction) will safeguard your eyes.

Preventing eye infections each morning by washing your eyes after drinking a mouthful of water. For oral remedies, he suggested, "Those with poor vision will benefit significantly from the mixture of almonds, black pepper and honey. In the morning, take 4-5 soaked almonds with 2-4 crushed black pepper and a glass of warm milk. It is one of the best medications for enhancing vision. Likewise, mixing 2 to 5 tablespoons of amla juice daily with warm water will help overcome visual problems and lead to healthy eyes, as it is enriched with Vitamin C and antioxidants."

Massaging your eyes with a wet palm just after eating will protect your eyes from damaging impact. Pouring warm water over the body gives you strength, while doing the same overhead causes your hair and eyes to lose vigour.

As part of a daily routine, it is advisable to employ Anjana (Collyrium) and Nasya (Inhalation of Medicines through Nostrils) to protect eyes and drain excess Kapha from the eyes because they are susceptible to sickness.

Consuming Triphala, Ghee, Barley, Wheat, Shastikashali (Old Rice), SaindhavaLavana, Draksha, Dadima (Pomegranate), and using Shatavari (Asparagus officinalis) and Green Gram while doing Padabhyanga (Oil) on a regular basis are all recommended.

Along with the above mentioned Ayurvedic medicines, he said that one should avoid overeating, anger, grief, sleeping in day time or waking up at night and eating food which vitiates vatadosha.

Having a proper sleep pattern will ensure rest to your eyes.

Gul Panag's intense workout routine is the fitness boost we need

NEW DELHI: Gul Panag is a fitness enthusiast. The actor keeps slaying fitness goals like a pro with snippets from her fitness diaries on her Instagram profile on a regular basis. From acing a high intensity fitness routine to slowing down and performing yoga,

Gul can do it all. The actor recently went on a cycling expedition and shared the regular updates on her Instagram profile, and kept her fans updated with her ventures. Gul's Instagram profile is a plethora of fitness inspo for her fans, snippets from her adventures, and glimpses of her personal diaries. The actor keeps sharing her fitness journey on Instagram. Her fitness mantra will give you the boost that you need to hit the gym to start working on your health and fitness.

Gul, a day back, shared a short video compilation on her Instagram profile and gave us inspo in the form of a



fitness boost. The actor kick-started the week on a fitness high with an intense routine. Add on - her weighted ankles. The actor added extra weight on her feet and performed pushups. Quickly moving on from that, she performed Lateral Side Leg Raises. In a part of the video, Gul can be seen balancing her hands on a bench of sorts and working on her core muscles and her leg strength. Dressed in a pink top and a pair of black gym tights, the actor, in

the video, can be seen engrossed in her routine. Take a look at her fitness routine here: The routine performed by Gul comes with multiple health benefits. Pushups help in strengthening the core muscles and the upper body. It also helps in boosting posture and supporting bone health. Performing pushups on a regular basis helps in improving heart health and targeting several muscle groups of the body.

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

#1 Vitamin C and Iron 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, dill 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 which include boiling, grill, steamed and light curries.

#4 Fluids Fluids are an integral part of amniotic fluid and help in increasing blood volume, flushing out toxins and in digestion. It is an ancient practice to drink less fluids during winter as the thirst is low compared to other seasons.

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 bottleneck 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.

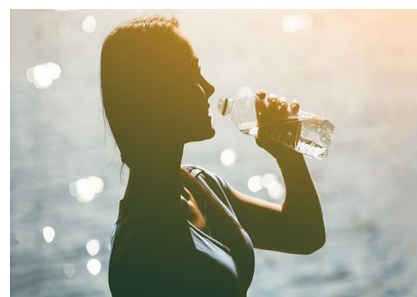
Studies also provide evidence that microplastic in bottled water is due to multiple factors such as physical stress during transport, bottle shaking and high-pressure water injection into the bottles at the production plants. Additionally, thermal impact during storage also worsens the fragmentation 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. These 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 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 bottles. 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 pollutants such as plasticisers which can contaminate the water. These chemicals, such as phthalates and bisphenol A (BPA) are harmful to human health if consumed in large amounts.

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

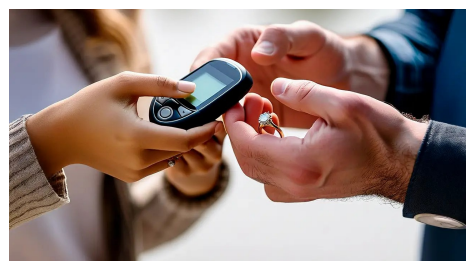
NEW DELHI: According to a study published online in the journal BMJ Open Diabetes Research & Care, people who live with a partner have a higher possibility of being healthy in terms of keeping lower blood sugar levels, regardless of how amicable or combative their relationship is. According to researchers, 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 glycemic 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 dia-



betes 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-reporting.

Participants were invited to have a nurse visit following the main interview in waves 2 (2004-05), 4 (2008-09) and 6 (2012-13) and blood samples were taken to measure their HbA1c (average glycemic or blood glucose) 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.

The researchers concluded: "Overall, our results suggested that marital/cohabitating relationships were inversely related to HbA1c levels regardless of dimensions of spousal support or strain. Likewise, these relationships appeared to have a protective effect against HbA1c levels above the pre-diabetes threshold."

"Increased support for older adults who are experiencing the loss of a marital/cohabitating relationship through divorce or bereavement, as well as the dismantling of negative stereotypes around romantic relationships in later life, maybe starting points for addressing health risks, more specifically deteriorating glycemic regulation, associated with marital transitions in older adults."

EDITORIAL

Nepal disaster is a warning

Nepal is susceptible to flash floods due to its mountainous terrain and fast-melting glaciers. According to initial assessment, an "ice avalanche" triggered a series of events that led to the deadly floods.

The disaster began when a huge mass of ice, rock and sediment broke away from a high-altitude glacier and crashed into the valley below, generating a fast-moving torrent that travelled more than 100km downstream.

The result was not an ordinary river flood. It was a fast-moving slurry of water, boulders, mud and ice that surged into the Bhote Koshi and Trishuli river systems. River levels near Galchhi reportedly rose by nine metres in just 30 minutes.

On the evidence available so far, no. Satellite analysis has found no sign that a Chinese dam failed, was breached or released water to produce the initial surge. But there is no doubt that China's hydroelectric projects are making the area more disaster-prone.

"It is now clear that the Nepal disaster was caused by a natural trigger (cryospheric collapse) but amplified by Chinese hydrological modifications and infrastructure footprint along the Tibetan side of the border. In other words, China's upstream actions did not cause the glacier failure but contributed to the disaster's severity and cascading impacts downstream," strategic thinker Brahma Chellaney wrote on X.

The US has been raining bombs and missiles on Iran since February. Despite suffering heavy military losses, the Iranian regime remains intact and defiant. Not only that, it has found a "nuke-like" weapon in the Strait of Hormuz. About 20% of global oil used to flow through it before the US launched Operation Epic Fury. Now, no one knows when or whether the strait is open or closed.

As bombs and missiles have failed to dislodge the regime, the Trump admin has decided to use its second most potent weapon: The US dollar. "Let there be no ambiguity as to the position of the United States: An economic engagement of any kind with this murderous regime will expose those responsible to the full reach of American power," treasury secretary Scott Bessent said while launching Operation Economic Outcast.

BY NILANTHA ILANGAMUWA

India and China are attempting to manage a difficult relationship through dialogue, confidence-building and limited border agreements. But the real test lies in whether these measures can build trust and eventually contribute to a broader settlement, rather than simply making a deeply unresolved dispute more manageable.

Delhi's intellectual discussion on China's indefensibility in its intensity, while much of the wider social discussion rarely rises above the level of lay discourse. Some say engagement is the answer, others instinctively distrust Beijing, while a smaller group argues that India has little choice but to go along with China. Last week in New Delhi, I attended a discussion on China's grand strategy in which senior retired diplomats, military leaders and strategic thinkers argued over precisely this problem. The room was full of people from different generations who listened carefully, took notes and asked difficult questions. What was striking was not agreement but the absence of any easy answer. Meanwhile, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval travelled to Beijing for the 25th round of Special Representatives' talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, while India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar was in Moscow. The juxtaposition was revealing. India is attempting to manage several strategic theatres simultaneously, at a moment when the international system is becoming considerably less predictable. The India-China question can no longer be treated as a narrow Himalayan dispute. It is becoming one of the central tests of whether Asia can construct its own security order or remain trapped in rivalries shaped by powers operating beyond the continent.

The immediate question is what exactly happened in Beijing on August 25. The answer is more complicated than the increasingly casual description of an India-China "early harvest" suggests. The two sides agreed on eight points, including advancing discussions on an "Early and Substantial Harvest" concerning boundary delimitation and border management, establishing additional military meeting points and hotlines, improving mechanisms for dealing with incidents along the Line of Actual Control, expanding border cooperation, resuming discussions on trans-border rivers and holding the 26th Special Representatives' meeting in India in 2027. Both governments also reaffirmed the 2005 Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question as the framework for pursuing a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement.

The Indian and Chinese statements are substantially aligned on the eight outcomes, but the political intention surrounding them is not necessarily identical. The crucial phrase is "Early and Substantial Harvest". That formulation leaves open an important question about sequencing. Can



progress in selected areas of boundary delimitation and border management generate sufficient confidence for a wider settlement, or could a series of limited arrangements gradually become a substitute for resolving the larger territorial dispute? That is not a semantic question. It goes to the heart of whether the present process is designed to move towards a settlement or simply to make an unresolved dispute more manageable.

This is why the 2005 agreement cannot be treated as diplomatic wallpaper. It established political parameters and guiding principles for settlement and remains the principal framework repeatedly invoked by both sides. The significance of the present moment is therefore not that India and China have suddenly discovered dialogue. They have been talking for decades. The significance is that the two governments are now experimenting with how much of the boundary problem can be separated into manageable components while retaining the broader political framework intended to guide a settlement.

That distinction will determine whether the present process becomes a bridge towards settlement or another mechanism for postponing it. There is a bumpy historical lesson here. India has repeatedly approached China through the assumption that political reassurance, personal diplomacy and incremental accommodation can create sufficient confidence for the substantive territorial question eventually to become negotiable. Beijing has generally approached the problem differently. It has tended to combine negotiations with military preparation, economic leverage, diplomatic positioning and the gradual creation of facts on the ground. This does not mean every Chinese move is part of a single secret master plan. That interpretation is too simplistic. China's strategy is more sophisticated precisely because different instruments can reinforce one another without necessarily being directed through one visible blueprint.

That point was made forcefully during the New Delhi discussion I attended. The argument was not that China possesses a single document called a "grand strategy" which explains

everything Beijing does. Rather, there is a remarkable continuity in China's strategic direction across different leaderships. One speaker traced this through the Chinese idea of national rejuvenation, arguing that it did not begin with Xi Jinping and cannot simply be explained by communism. China's territorial conception, the importance attached to Tibet and the broader desire to restore national strength have deeper roots. The distinction matters because it prevents India from making the convenient mistake of believing that the problem will disappear with a change of Chinese leadership.

The ancient strategic tradition also deserves more serious attention than the fashionable invocation of Sun Tzu. "Winning without fighting" is frequently quoted as though it were a Chinese instruction manual for modern geopolitics. According to Professor Srikanth Kondapalli of Jawaharlal Nehru University, it is not. But the wider intellectual tradition does contain a persistent emphasis on shaping circumstances before confrontation becomes necessary. Zhang Yi, the strategist of the Warring States period, offered a particularly revealing conception of power. His description of Qin was not simply about battlefield strength. Territory, economic resources, military organisation, geography, disciplined administration and the ability to deter opponents were treated as mutually reinforcing components of national power. The lesson for modern India is not to imitate ancient China. It is to understand that negotiations take place within a structure of relative power. Diplomacy does not suspend asymmetry. It operates inside it.

This is why the early-harvest idea is both attractive and dangerous. Better border communication, military hotlines and procedures can help prevent local incidents from escalating. The agreement's emphasis on prompt diplomatic and military communication is therefore important. One of the strongest points raised during the New Delhi discussion was that India's most credible advantage against a vastly larger Chinese economy and military establishment may not come from trying to match China's platform for platform on land. India's

geography gives it leverage across the Indian Ocean. It does not mean India should seek confrontation with the Chinese Navy. It means India possesses strategic geography that can complicate China's calculations. Conventional deterrence therefore need not mean threatening war. It can mean making the costs of coercion sufficiently uncertain that coercion becomes unattractive.

China understands this logic. That is precisely why its maritime presence in the Indian Ocean has expanded and why its relationships with Pakistan and other countries surrounding India matter. Beijing does not need to defeat India directly to constrain Indian strategic freedom. It can impose costs across multiple fronts. Keep Indian military resources tied down in the Himalayas, deepen its economic penetration of South Asia and strengthen relationships in India's immediate neighbourhood. The strategic problem for New Delhi is therefore not one Chinese tank or one disputed mountain. It is the cumulative effect of several pressures operating simultaneously.

The real challenge is to establish whether Beijing and New Delhi can negotiate without trying to deceive one another about the nature of the bargain. India needs to know whether an early harvest is genuinely intended as a pathway towards a wider settlement or whether it could eventually freeze the status quo in ways that favour the stronger side. China needs to know whether India's strategic partnerships are intended to contain China or simply to preserve India's freedom of action. Both sides have legitimate security concerns. Neither has the luxury of pretending that the other will disappear.

The real challenge is to establish whether Beijing and New Delhi can negotiate without trying to deceive one another about the nature of the bargain. India needs to know whether an early harvest is genuinely intended as a pathway towards a wider settlement or whether it could eventually freeze the status quo in ways that favour the stronger side.

The writer is a columnist based in Colombo. Views presented are personal.

Viksit Bharat demands annihilation of sick racket

BY AMITABH RANJAN

A patient cured is a customer lost also. Insurance advertisements never admit this, hospital brochures never print it. Illness, in India, is not merely a misfortune, but a perennial resource to be harnessed, monetised and prolonged. A conspiracy everyone denies, and no one disrupts: the symbiotic alliance amongst insurers, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies and practitioners. Insurers profit from premia collected today and claims delayed or denied tomorrow. Hospitals, particularly the large corporate chains which dominate metro healthcare, are answerable to their shareholders and quarterly targets, and that is why unnecessary diagnostics, extended ICU stays and needless surgeries performed to be safe have become quite routine. Pharma companies sponsor conferences, fund continuing medical education and reward number of prescriptions with bounties ranging from gift vouchers to foreign tours, a sales promotion framed as scientific exchange. And practitioners, sworn on the Hippocratic Oath, find themselves sandwiched between their conscience and revenue targets, in a system which punishes the doctor who orders fewer tests and rewards the one who orders more. And this system has emerged the way most rackets do, from corrupt participants rationally pursuing self-interest inside an opaque system with almost no accountability. Consequence: a healthcare economy in which the patient's well-being and the provider's profitability are poles apart. This is the context in which the Ayushman Bharat Health Account or ABHA, deserves a much more serious look. On paper, the idea is elegant: a portable, fourteen-digit digital health identity which allows a patient's records, like prescriptions, test results, diagnoses, discharge summaries, to

travel with them across hospitals, cities and insurers, with the patient's consent, of course. India has already enrolled over 940 million people into the system and the pitch is simple: end the duplication of tests, end the loss of medical history between providers, and provide the patient, rather than the hospital, ownership of their own data. If it works as designed, ABHA is a genuine, if partial at the moment, answer to the customer lost syndrome. A longitudinal, portable health record makes it harder for one hospital to repeat a scan earlier conducted, tougher for a doctor to prescribe indefinitely without a second opinion crossing their desk, and easier for regulators and insurers to spot patterns of over- or misdiagnosis across a patient's history rather than at a hospital's silo.

Transparency, at scale, is the enemy of a racket constructed on information asymmetry. Yet, a digital ID may not fix a structural incentive. ABHA can make overpayment more visible but not unprofitable. Without robust enforcement—audits of billing practices, penalties for unwarranted procedures and insurers willing to actually use the data to push back on claims rather than simply process them faster, a health ID risks becoming an efficient retooling layer sitting quietly on top of the same broken incentives.

If the practice of medicine has become commercialised, so has the path to becoming a doctor, but more brutally. NEET, even though a noble, innovative concept, has unintentionally funded an entire shadow economy that extracts money from families, years before their children touch a pen.

Coaching hubs, which are built almost entirely around this one exam ecosystem charge fees which may exceed a family's annual income, promising a seat that statistically, for most aspirants, would never come. Around these

coaching hubs has grown an ancillary economy of paying guest accommodations and private hostels, mostly unregulated, overcrowded and expensive, housing teenagers separated from their families for years at a stretch under enormous psychological pressure, a pressure whose human cost surfaces frequently in tragic headlines. Then there is the exam itself, which is rocked by paper-leak scandals serious enough to reach the Supreme Court, with allegations of question papers being sold for sums only the wealthiest can afford, turning what is meant to be a merit-based gateway into, for some, a cash cow. And, for those who clear the exam but not with marks high enough for the government seat, private medical colleges wait with exorbitant fee structures running into crores, for a single MBBS degree; fee which virtually guarantees a career, a guaranteed job, a guaranteed income. They spend their early career recouping the investment before they can practice medicine as a public service. By the time, a NEET aspirant becomes a fully qualified doctor, an extraordinary amount of family gold, years of adolescence and psychological capital have already been spent. It should surprise no one that many enter the profession already thinking in terms of ROE—returns on investment. None of this is unfailable and the fixes are neither exotic nor untested; India already runs a comparable model for engineering admissions. First, cap the number of NEET attempts, the way JEE-Main or Advanced limits them, starting with 12th pass-year. Unlimited attempts do not reward merit but reward the ability to fund this dark economy of repeated years of coaching. PGs, quietly converting the "National Eligibility Test" into a "Wealth Eligibility Test". Second, move NEET decisively to a secure, multi-shift computer-based test format, as JEE Main already does. A single-day, pen-and-paper exam undertaken by over

two million candidates and transported physically across the country is a leak waiting to happen; and the events of the past three months have proven this beyond argument. Experts' recommendations have repeatedly suggested a shift towards online or hybrid exams, staggered over multiple days, precisely because a single point of physical failure is not a security architecture; it is the invitation. Third, regulate the coaching-hotel nexus with the same seriousness applied to the exam itself: safety standards, fee transparency and mental health support for adolescents living away from home under exam pressure. Fourth and the toughest: cap or index private medical college fees to sanity, something a middle-class family can conceivably repay through an ethical medical career, rather than taking recourse to unethical practice. None of these reforms, alone, would dismantle this sick racket of insurers, hospitals and pharmaceutical companies which profit from keeping patients in illness. However, together, they attack the root of the highest tolerance for extraction. Fix what feeds this racket and the system itself becomes easier to fix. India does not lack medical talent or infrastructure. What it lacks is an economy which rewards a doctor for making a patient well rather than for keeping them, quietly and profitably, unwell. And this economy, which promotes the sound body, in turn, housing a sound mind, is key to the dream of Viksit Bharat becoming a reality.

Dr. Amitabh Ranjan, Vice Chairman of PanIT Alumni India and NESA, Washington DC Alumnus, is associated with IPA, New Delhi. Registrar. Views presented are personal.

An unusual contest in Punjab

THIS weekend in Punjab, it isn't just the turn of the season. The south-west monsoon, which feeds the lands which feeds the state and the rest of the country, is drawing to a close, as it is wont to do every year, ticking the box off the month of 'sawan' in the Hindu calendar. And so last night when the full moon rose, on Rakhar Punya or Raksha Bandhan, the last full moon of 'sawan', its golden glory also contained the secret of the coming season — which political party will claim the crown of Punjab's winter of content, with Assembly elections readying to be held a few months from now.

The seeds have been laid on Rakhar Punya at the historic Baba Bakala gurdwara — where the ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, was revealed in 1664 — with all the political parties showcasing their best at rallies traditionally held on this day. For the first time, the BJP also held a rally, signalling its intent to reclaim Punjab, either as a partner with its former ally, the Shiromani Akali Dal, or on its own.

With six months to go, the countdown has been accentuated by a Mood of the Nation poll brought out by the India Today group, which tells us that the BJP-led NDA is still up and away at 45.1% of the national vote share, compared to 39.1% for the INDIA bloc — certainly, there's no challenge to PM Modi here. Only the keen political watcher will note that the NDA vote share is down 2% from the 47% forecast this January and even lower than the 46.7% a year ago.

So what does this mean for elections slated to take place in Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Manipur and Uttarakhand alongside Punjab, early next year?

Certainly, the BJP will be determined to maintain the winning streak it has held since the 2024 Lok Sabha poll — it has convincingly won several states since, whether in Haryana, Maharashtra, Delhi, Bihar or West Bengal.

And now the BJP wants to win Punjab. It knows it will likely win Uttar Pradesh, despite the seething in the Ram Mandir; and Manipur, despite a three-year ethnic conflict that remains unresolved; and Goa, which it has won three times in a row. Having won Bengal, the BJP's ambition now extends to the other end of the country. That's why



Agriculture Minister Shivrang Singh Chouhan travelled to Baba Bakala to appeal to the people. Vote for us, he said, we will fix your problems. Beginning with PM Modi, that message has been coming to Punjab for some time now. We will clear your debt, stop the drugs coming in via drones from across the border, revamp your agriculture, fix your schools, tar your roads and resolve the water-sharing issue with Haryana and Rajasthan. The outspoken message? Vote for the BJP. DownloadInteractive Maps

Certainly, there's something special about Punjab. Its people are capable of an extraordinary generosity — note the gurdwaras opening up to help CJP protesters in Delhi and Punjabis going to help Assam flood-

hit in recent weeks — that is unequalled by any other state in the country. It shares a border with a difficult neighbour, but cannot understand why the BJP refuses to reopen the Kartarpur Sahib corridor. Unlike Bengal, which has also shared an uncomfortable relationship with Delhi most of the last 80 years since Independence, except for the last few months, Punjab has been chopped up twice — into Himachal Pradesh and Haryana — its self-image further battered by terrorism, the flight of industry and an agricultural revolution turning upon itself.

There's a word that Punjabis use, oh-so-casually, about everything, but it taps into their deepest sense of being — the word is dhakka, and it translates into, 'don't bully me.' Mere ton

dhakke naal kam na karvao. Don't force me to do anything against my will.

It's a phrase every political party wanting to win Punjab should memorise and use as a slogan in their internal documents. The unsolicited moral of the story is, don't salami-slice Punjab's 2.1 crore voters — now 1.9 crore, after a loss of 20-odd lakh after they've been through the SIR grinder — by dissecting religion (Sikhs, Hindus), caste (Jats, Khatri, Ravidassias, Ramdassias, Valmikis etc), deras (Radha Soami, Sachkhand Ballan, Sacha Sauda), godmen (Sant Niranjan Dass, Ram Rahim), and believe you can add up the vote. Don't trash the state you want to win — schools are bad, colleges are worse, the Buddha Nullah is a sewer,

industries are discharging effluents without a care, gangsterism is rife, drug abuse is rampant — even if much of it is true. If you want to win the state, help it turn the corner. The state, clearly, needs your help. DownloadInteractive Maps

As Punjab, then, enters the last six-month lap before polls are held, it's increasingly clear that neither BJP nor SAD can individually whip up the enthusiasm to cross the finishing line. Interestingly, the PM realises this unusual state needs monitoring, which is why his newest pointman is his close confidant from Gujarat, the four-time MP from Navsari and the first non-Gujarati head of the Gujarat BJP, Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil. An alliance between the two former partners is likely not because they

want it as much as they need it. The contest is increasingly unusual. The ruling AAP in Punjab has taken a leaf out of PM Modi's subsidies for women — what the BJP has successfully done elsewhere in the country, in Haryana and Maharashtra and Delhi, by putting money into women's bank accounts, AAP is doing in the state. The Congress, which may have otherwise put up a strong showing, must resign itself to third place, not least because Rahul Gandhi is unable to decide which leader should lead his party — his visit to the state in the coming week will finally put a stamp on the fragmentation. Meanwhile, speculation is rife about Waris Punjab De, led by the jailed MP Amritpal Singh, and why its influence is gaining ground.

Hindu Kush glaciers losing ice at double the rate

GLACIERS across the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) are melting at an accelerating rate, with ice loss rates doubling since 2000, according to two new reports by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). The reports, Changing Dynamics of Glaciers in the Hindu Kush Himalaya Region from 1990 to 2020 and HKH Glacier Outlook 2026: Insights from 50 Years of Himalayan Glacier Monitoring, provide comprehensive evidence of glacier change in the region. They reveal a loss of up to 27 metres of ice thickness since 1975, sounding an alarm for the nearly two billion people downstream who depend on melt-water from the 'Water Towers of Asia'.

The HKH holds the largest volume of ice outside the poles, with an inventory of over 63,700 glaciers covering nearly 55,782 square km. These glaciers are the source of at least 10 major Asian river systems, supporting the food, water, energy, and livelihood security of billions. However, around 78% of this glacier area, located between 4,500 and 6,000 metres above sea level, is highly exposed to elevation-dependent warming.

"This isn't a distant problem; it's a crisis unfolding in real-time, with new disasters every summer and monsoon. The fact that ice loss rates have doubled this century should shock us all into action," said Pema Gyamtsho, Director General of ICIMOD. "The Hindu Kush Himalaya is at a crossroads. The rapidly escalating impacts we're seeing from water uncertainty to catastrophic floods underscore that we are in a critical decade for the cryosphere. We must scale up monitoring and invest in adaptation now. These aren't big red spots becoming surprises anymore; they are our new reality."

The comprehensive analysis reveals that between 1990 and 2020, HKH glaciers lost about 12% of their total area and 9% of their estimated ice reserves. According to Sudan Bikash Maharjan, Remote Sensing Analyst at ICIMOD and lead author of the glacier dynamics report, the most immediate threat comes from the region's smallest glaciers.

"Between 1990 and 2020, HKH gla-



ciers lost about 12% of their total area, but the losses are most acute for the region's smallest glaciers — those below 0.5 km² — which are shrinking more rapidly than others," said Maharjan. "This poses immediate risks of localised water shortages for high mountain communities and intensifies hazards like glacial lake outburst floods. The danger is magnified because three-quarters of the region's glaciers fall into this vulnerable size class. We are not just losing ice; we are facing a rapid escalation of risks."

The HKH Glacier Outlook 2026 synthesises data from 38 monitored

glaciers, revealing that widespread wastage has doubled post-2000, signalling that parts of the Himalayan cryosphere may be nearing critical tipping points toward irreversible retreat. Yet, the reports highlight a critical data gap: of those 38, only seven meet the global benchmark monitoring standards of the World Glacier Monitoring Service (WGMS). Major glacierised regions, including the Karakoram, Sikkim, Zaskar, and Bhutan remain largely unmonitored.

"We are trying to navigate a rapidly changing future with an incomplete map," said Mohd Farooq Azam, a

cryosphere specialist at ICIMOD and one of the report's authors. "Large parts of the Himalayan basin spots. Without expanding our monitoring networks and standardising methodologies, accelerated changes in water flows and cryosphere risks could remain undetected until the impacts are severe. Sustained monitoring of representative glaciers like Mera and Rikha Samba in Nepal, and Chhota Shigri in India, is critical, they are our early warning indicators for the entire mountain system." Indianews updates

The reports highlight that glacier

losses are spatially skewed, with the highest percentage of area loss in the eastern Hengduan Shan mountains, where some areas lost up to 33% of their glacier area in just three decades. However, the largest absolute area losses are concentrated in the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra basins, where over 74% of the region's glaciers are found, underlining their critical vulnerability. The larger glaciers above 10 km² hold nearly 40% of the region's natural water reserves. The heavily glaciated Karakoram range, home to 18 of the 25 largest glaciers, remains

highly vulnerable to long-term water, food, and disaster risks with ramifications for the entire region. With 2025 designated as the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation and the start of the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences (2025-2034), these findings serve as a stark reminder of the urgent need for action. The authors call for a massive scale-up in glacier monitoring, better standardisation of methodologies, and robust investment in climate-resilient adaptation planning to mitigate the impacts of a rapidly changing cryosphere.

Ayurvedic glow remedy: Turmeric, sandalwood and neem for healthy skin



In a recent Facebook video, Acharya Balkrishna talked about something most of us have heard from our grandmothers but rarely take seriously. Good skin, he said, isn't just about what cream you apply. It comes from balance, both inside and outside the body. His pick for that balance has three ingredients sitting in most Indian kitchens right now: turmeric, sandalwood, and neem. Used the right way, he said, they bring out skin's natural glow. Nothing fancy, nothing expensive. Just consistency. Here's why these three actually hold up.

Turmeric isn't just for curry. Every Indian household has turmeric somewhere in the kitchen. But its skin benefits go beyond just adding it to dal. The compound behind its punch is curcumin. It's what gives turmeric that deep yellow shade, and it also happens to fight inflammation and neutralise free radicals, the molecules that speed up skin ageing. Less free radical damage usually means fewer fine lines and less dullness over time.

There's also a lesser known perk. Turmeric fights bacteria on the skin, which is why it's been a go-to for acne for generations. Old

Ayurvedic texts even describe it as a natural cleanser that helps even out patchy skin tone.

Sandalwood cools things down. Chandan, as it's called in Hindi, has been part of Indian beauty rituals for over four thousand years. That's not an exaggeration. Archaeological and textual records trace its use back that far. What makes it work is its cooling nature. Sandalwood oil calms inflamed or irritated skin, which is exactly why people reach for it after too much sun exposure or a skin rash.

It also has a mild tightening effect on pores and helps cut down excess oil. If your skin tends to get greasy by afternoon, this is one reason sandalwood packs remain popular even today.

Neem, the old-school antiseptic. Neem doesn't get the glamour that turmeric or sandalwood get, but Ayurveda has always treated it as a serious antiseptic. Its leaves and oil carry compounds called nimbin and nimbidin.

These fight the bacteria and fungi that sit on skin and often cause breakouts. Neem also works on blemishes and dark spots, though this takes time and doesn't happen overnight.

On top of that, it carries antioxi-

dants that guard skin against pollution and sun damage, two things most of us can't avoid living in Indian cities.

Put together, they cover more ground.

None of these three do the same job. Turmeric calms inflammation and brightens. Sandalwood cools and tightens. Neem cleans up bacteria and protects.

Flora & Fauna That's really the appeal of combining them. Instead of picking one product for acne and another for dullness, this trio handles several issues at once, the Ayurvedic way.

How to actually use it. Keep it simple. Take small amounts of turmeric powder, sandalwood powder, and neem powder, and mix with plain water or rose water until it forms a paste.

Apply on clean, dry skin. Let it sit for 15 to 20 minutes, then rinse with plain water. Twice or thrice a week is enough, there's no need to overdo it.

One caution: turmeric can leave a slight yellow tint on the skin temporarily, so go easy on the quantity. And if you have sensitive skin, always patch test on your arm first before putting it on your face.

Digital arrest: When fear wears a police uniform

A phone rings. The caller introduces himself as a police officer, a CBI official, an Enforcement Directorate officer or sometimes even a judge. He informs you that your Aadhaar, mobile number, bank account or a parcel in your name has been linked to a serious criminal case. Within minutes, the conversation changes from an enquiry into an apparent crisis. You are told that you are under investigation, that an arrest warrant has been issued and that you must remain on a video call. You are instructed not to speak to anyone. Finally comes the demand for money—sometimes described as a "verification deposit", "security amount", "bail money," or "temporary transfer for investigation". This is a new kind of crime in which the criminal does not enter your house, break your lock or snatch your wallet. Instead, he enters your mind—this is the Digital Arrest Scam.

The very first fact every citizen must remember is fundamental: there is no legal procedure in India called "Digital Arrest". A video call cannot substitute for a lawful arrest. The Rajasthan High Court, while taking suo motu cognisance of the growing menace in January 2025, specifically observed that digital arrest has no legal standing in India.

The psychology behind the fraud

What makes this crime particularly dangerous is that it exploits something valuable—the public's trust in Law Enforcement. The fraudster does not merely impersonate an officer. He creates an entire theatre of authority. Fake identity cards, fabricated notices, police uniforms, official logos, simulated offices and even additional callers posing as senior officers are used to make the deception convincing. The victim is then isolated and kept continuously connected to the fraudsters. The isolation is deliberate. A frightened person who is not allowed to consult family, friends or a lawyer is much easier to manipulate. The criminal's greatest weapon, therefore, is not technology—it is "fear". What does the law actually say about arrest?

The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS), which governs criminal procedure, lays down a legal framework for arrest. Section 35 specifies circumstances in which a police officer may arrest without a warrant. Section 36 prescribes important requirements relating to the arresting officer and the arrest process. Section 38 recognises the arrested person's right to meet an advocate of his choice during interrogation, subject to the statutory framework. The BNSS also requires important safeguards concerning information about the grounds of arrest and communication to a relative or other nominated person.

Section 57 requires a person arrested to be taken before the Magistrate or officer in charge as prescribed, while Section 58 provides that an arrested person cannot ordinarily be detained for more than 24 hours without the requisite judicial authority, subject to the statutory exceptions. Section 62 makes it explicit that arrest must be made strictly in accordance with the Sanhita.

These provisions illustrate an important principle: arrest is an exercise of legal power surrounded by procedural safeguards. It is not a threat that an unknown caller can manufacture over WhatsApp.

Here, we must understand that the BNSS does provide for electronic service of summons in specified circumstances. That, however, should not be confused with a so-called digital arrest. A genuine electronic summons is part of a formal legal process; it is not an instruction to transfer money to a private bank account.

Which laws can apply to the fraudsters? Legal

There is no single offence in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita called "digital arrest". The expression describes the modus operandi. The actual offences have to be determined from the conduct proved during investigation. For example, BNS Section 318 deals with cheating. It covers deception that dishonestly or fraudulently induces a person to deliver property or to do something that causes, or is likely to cause, harm. The statutory illustration itself recognises cheating through false representation of official status. BNS Section 319 deals with cheating by personation and can be relevant where criminals impersonate officials or other persons to deceive victims.

Where fear or threats are used to obtain money, Section 308, relating to extortion, may also become relevant depending upon the facts. More complex cases may involve offences relating to forgery, forged electronic or documentary material, conspiracy, organised crime or provisions of the Information Technology Act, 2000.

How To Keep Atta And Maida Fresh For Longer

Atta and maida can spoil quickly if not stored the right way, especially in warm or humid kitchens. From choosing the right containers to using simple, natural tricks, these easy storage tips help keep your flour fresh, bug-free, and usable for longer. Small habits can make a big difference every day.

If you've ever opened your atta or maida container and noticed a weird smell, tiny insects, or clumpy flour, you're not alone. Flour spoiling is one of those small kitchen problems that can get annoying very fast. The good news is, keeping atta and maida fresh for longer isn't complicated. It just needs a few smart habits and the right storage. Here's how to make sure your flour stays fresh, clean, and usable for weeks—sometimes even months.

Why Atta And Maida Spoil So Easily

Both atta and maida go bad quickly because they react to heat, moisture, and air. Atta,

in particular, has natural oils from wheat bran, so it turns stale or rancid faster if you store it wrong. Humidity brings in insects and fungus. If you leave flour exposed to the air, it loses its freshness and picks up weird smells. That's why where and how you store your flour matters more than you think.

Always Choose The Right Container

The first rule of flour storage is ditching open packets. Once opened, atta and maida should always go into airtight containers. Glass, stainless steel, or good-quality food-grade plastic containers work best. Make sure the lid seals tightly. Even small gaps can let moisture and insects in. Clean and dry the container completely before you refill it. And don't mix new flour with the old stuff left at the bottom—finish what you have, then add more.

Store It In A Cool, Dry Place

Heat and humidity are



flour's biggest enemies. Store atta and maida away from direct sunlight, gas stoves, ovens, or damp corners of the kitchen. A closed kitchen cabinet is usually ideal. In very humid climates, you can even store flour in the refrigerator to slow down spoilage, especially during monsoons or peak summers.

Use Natural Insect Repellents

Indian kitchens have been using natural tricks forever—and they work. Adding a few dried bay leaves, whole cloves, or dried neem leaves to your flour container can help keep insects away. Another simple trick is adding a few peeled garlic cloves wrapped

in tissue. They won't affect the taste but help repel bugs naturally.

Don't Buy More Than You Need

It's tempting to buy flour in bulk, but unless you bake or cook with it all the time, you'll just end up wasting it. Smaller packs mean fresher flour. Fresh flour smells and tastes much better.

Dry The Flour If Needed

If your flour feels slightly damp due to, you can sun-dry it lightly. Spread it out on a clean cloth or plate and leave it under gentle sunlight for a bit. Let it cool completely before you put it back in the container. This step dries out the moisture and lowers the risk of fun-

gus or bugs. This helps remove moisture and reduces the risk of fungus or insects.

Keep Moisture Completely Away

Never use a wet spoon in your flour. One careless dip and the whole container can go bad. Keep the container away from sinks and always close the lid tightly after each use.

Union minister Jual Oram alleges plot to oust him from Cabinet, warns of 'ability to cut off their hands'

NEW DELHI: Union tribal affairs minister and BJP leader Jual Oram on Friday accused some of his party colleagues of running a campaign against him to damage his reputation and oust him from the Cabinet. He also warned that he had the strength to cut off the hands of those involved.

His remarks came after one of his aides, Rakesh Paswan, was arrested in Odisha's Rourkela over alleged links to an organised crime case. Paswan has rejected the allegations.

Oram had earlier said he had no objection to legal proceedings against Paswan, who was arrested for allegedly providing shelter to criminals at a government-run guest house in the steel city, news agency PTI reported.

Conspiracy to oust me from Cabinet: Union minister Speaking to reporters, Oram



claimed that a number of BJP leaders were working together to damage his reputation and get him removed from the Union cabinet, with the hope of taking his place as a minister.

"Of late, some people are spending money and plotting conspiracies to defame me and undermine my position. They think they will get a chance to become a minister in the Union

cabinet if I am dropped," he said. Oram, a six-time MP from Odisha's tribal-dominated Sundergarh Lok Sabha constituency, said he had earlier decided against contesting another parliamentary election. However, he said the current situation had led him to reconsider that decision.

"I had earlier announced not to contest elections any more. But, under these circumstances, I would certainly contest (the 2029 general elections)," he said. "Have ability to cut off their hands"

The minister said he would find out who was behind the alleged campaign against him and added that he had already raised the issue with the Odisha BJP organisation secretary.

"I will certainly take strong action against them. I have the

ability to cut off the hands of anyone who defames me... and burn them," he asserted. Opposition BJP, Congress target ruling BJP

The BJP and Congress hit out at the ruling BJP government in Odisha following Oram's remarks.

Opposition chief whip Pramila Malik of the BJP said, "Oram is a senior tribal leader and his statement shows there is severe internal differences within the BJP. Their leaders are busy fighting among themselves instead of working for the people."

BJP spokesperson Lenin Mohanty said in a statement that the minister's comment had put the state's law and order situation under scrutiny.

"Oram is openly declaring that he will take the law into his own hands. How is this comment justified?" Mohanty said.

Surekha calls on Revanth for Rakhi bonhomie as Cong mulls punitive action

HYDERABAD: Telangana state environment and forests minister Konda Surekha on Friday met chief minister A Revanth Reddy at his residence on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan and tied a rakhi to him, even as the Congress high command is examining the report submitted by the Telangana PCC recommending disciplinary action against her for violating party discipline.

Surekha drove to the chief minister's residence on Friday and tied a rakhi to him. She, however, did not get an opportunity to have a one-on-one meeting with Revanth Reddy.

Speaking to reporters at her residence, Surekha sought to play down the political overtones surrounding the occasion. "I have tied a rakhi to the chief minister for the third time. I am a sister to everyone. I will not make any political comments in the festive atmosphere," she said.

Surekha added that women would always stand by the chief minister and said she had prayed for God to give him the strength to develop the state. "I prayed that the chief minister should always have the blessings of women and that God should give him the strength to develop Telangana," she said.

On August 23, the PCC submitted its report to the high command suggesting appropriate action against Surekha, whose daughter Konda Sravanika Patel allegedly made derogatory and defamatory comments against the chief minister at a programme held at Park in Warangal district on August 19.

Earlier, Surekha stayed away from the chief minister's rally at Park on August 16, where she appealed to the people to ensure that sitting MIA Revu Prakash Reddy was re-elected with a huge majority in the next assembly elections.

India rushes 62-tonne aid to Nepal as it walks the talk on 'first responder' role

NEW DELHI: India has rushed 62 tonnes of emergency aid to Nepal since deadly flash floods struck on Wednesday, emerging as the first major country to physically deliver humanitarian assistance to the Himalayan state.

HT reported on Friday that India was the first country to physically deliver aid to Nepal after the disaster. The prompt response reinforces India's "first responder" tag, reflecting its growing record of delivering aid and assistance to disaster-hit countries, from Türkiye and Syria to Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Venezuela.

By Friday evening, India had sent 62 tonnes of aid in three airlifts, while several other countries and international organisations—including the United States and China—were still mobilising assistance.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra Shah within hours of the disaster, conveyed his condolences and said India was ready to provide all possible humanitarian assistance. He also said Indian teams were coordinating closely on rescue and relief efforts.

Other countries and international organisations have also pledged or begun providing assistance to Nepal. HT has accessed details of how governments and global organisations are rallying around the disaster-hit country.

Nepal: The Nepali government has said it can mobilise up to \$229 million for disaster relief. The figure includes resources from the Prime Minister's Natural Disaster Relief Fund and the Prime Minister's Relief Fund, along with up to \$164 million in emergency assistance.



tance that the World Bank has indicated could be mobilised. India: India has sent 62 tonnes of emergency relief supplies in three airlifts. The first, an IAF C-130J aircraft, carried 10 tonnes of temporary shelters, blankets, hygiene kits, solar lamps and medicines. The second, a C-17 aircraft, carried 37.5 tonnes comprising 28.5 tonnes of relief items such as tents, blankets, hygiene kits, solar lamps, dehydrating pumps, kitchen sets and generator sets; eight tonnes of medicines; and one tonne of food items. A third flight carrying another 10 tonnes of humanitarian assistance left for Kathmandu on Friday.

India's contribution has been announced primarily in physical relief supplies rather than as a cash commitment.

China: China has committed emergency supplies and cash assistance to Nepal. Chinese Ambassador Zhang Maoping said coordination for the assistance had been completed, although the mechanism for transferring the cash and delivering physical supplies was still being worked out. Nepal has declined offers of foreign search-and-rescue contingents as a general policy, saying its own security agencies are capable of handling the operation.

UAE: The UAE has allocated \$10 million through the UAE Aid Agency for urgent humanitarian assistance. The agency is coordinating with local authorities and international organisations to deliver the aid. UK: The United Kingdom has pledged £5 million (\$6.8 million) in humanitarian assistance for relief and recovery. It has also deployed a Rapid Deployment Team to Nepal to provide consular support to British nationals and their families. Australia: Australia has announced a \$5 million humanitarian assistance package. Of this, \$2 million will go to the World Food Programme, \$2 million to Australian NGOs through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership, and \$1 million to the Emergency Action Alliance for locally led recovery and rehabilitation. Australia is also sending an initial team of three humanitarian response specialists within 48 hours, while additional consular personnel are being deployed. South Korea: South Korea has pledged \$1 million in humanitarian assistance through international organisations. Seoul has also sent a rapid response team and is seeking Nepal's cooperation in the search for nine missing South Korean nationals. Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka has

pledged \$1 million in financial assistance to support Nepal's immediate relief and humanitarian efforts. US: The US State Department has committed \$500,000 in immediate assistance for flood-affected communities, covering emergency shelter, relief supplies, clean water and hygiene needs. Washington is also deploying a disaster-response adviser. World Bank: The World Bank has indicated it could provide up to \$25 billion (\$16.35 million) in emergency assistance to support Nepal's response and recovery. UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF): The UN has released \$2.5 million in emergency funding to support the Nepal-led response. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC): The IFRC has released nearly CHF 1 million in emergency funds to support the Nepal Red Cross Society's immediate response and has launched a larger CHF 25 million Emergency Appeal to sustain relief operations. Welthungerhilfe (Germany): The German humanitarian organisation is providing 100,000 from its emergency relief fund. World Health Organization (WHO): WHO has mobilised and dispatched essential emergency medical supplies, including medicines, an emergency health kit and multipurpose tents. It has also mobilised a \$150,000 Emergency Appeal to sustain relief operations. Health Emergency Fund, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF): An MSF emergency response team has arrived in Nepal to assess immediate needs and is coordinating with health facilities.

Jarange launches indefinite fast, accuses Fadnavis of 'grudge' against Marathas

PUNE: Quota activist Manoj Jarange launched an indefinite hunger strike on Saturday, accusing Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis of holding a "grudge" against the Maratha community and Deputy CM Eknath Shinde of quietly backing him. Speaking to reporters before commencing his fast at Anarwal Sarai village in Jalna district, Jarange demanded the elimination of the caste verification committee and threatened to march to the Chief Minister's residence in Mumbai if the government fails to resolve all pending quota issues.

"Devendra Fadnavis holds a grudge against the Maratha community, and Eknath Shinde is providing covert support through Minister of Social Justice Sanjay Shirsat. If they



don't resolve our issues, we will strike since Bungalow. If the government team comes to talk, we will talk to them. But this is my final agitation... I will not give up till all the issues are resolved," he said. Jarange has led several agitations demanding that eligible Marathas be recognised as Kumbh, an agrarian community that enjoys reservation benefits in education and government jobs under the Other Backward Class category.

He has launched nine hunger strikes since August-September 2023 to push for Maratha reservation under the OBC category. Alleging systemic bias, the activist claimed the state government does not want the Maratha youth to advance. "This government does not want the Maratha community to grow. I have told our people that while valid historical records have been found, the authority to issue certificates

remains with officials who are jealous of the community's progress." The Maratha community must ensure their children become officers so that future generations do not face such hurdles," he said. Jarange further alleged that authorities were arbitrarily rejecting valid claims and demanded the abolition of the caste verification committee. "The government is trying to deny us certificates by rejecting documentary evidence even when it matches. There should be no caste verification process in the state. In other states, such as Telangana and Sub-Divisional Magistrates hold authority, so why do we need a separate verification committee here? The law must be uniform," he said.

'Don't want to embarrass Congress': Karnataka minister B Nagendra resigns amid funds case row

BENGALURU: Karnataka minister B Nagendra, who is facing opposition protests over allegations that he was involved in a funds misappropriation case, submitted his resignation on Friday, 25 days after he was inducted into the state cabinet.

At a press conference in Bengaluru, a tearful Nagendra said he was stepping down to spare the Congress leadership from being embarrassed by the allegations of involvement in the misappropriation of funds from a state welfare agency that came to light in 2024. The Ballari Rural MLA, then tribal welfare minister, had resigned and was reinducted by chief minister DK Shivakumar as a cabinet expansion on August 3.

Nagendra, who returned from Delhi earlier in the



day, requested the Congress leadership to allow him to resign as an MLA so that he could take on his detractors and clear his name. Shivakumar said Nagendra met him after addressing the media and handed over his resignation, but added that he would consult the party high command before taking a final decision. He maintained Nagendra was innocent of the charges levelled against him.

The four term MLA, who had been given the planning and statistics portfolio by Shivakumar, said his resignation should not be construed as buckling to pressure from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) or the Janata Dal (Secular-JDS), whom he referred to as "Manuvadis". "It's out of my own volition. I don't want to embarrass the Congress party. I will tour the 15 Assembly con-

stituencies reserved for the scheduled tribes in the state and explain how the Manuvadis (BJP and JDS) by repeating one lie have tried to make the truth," he said. Opposition steps up pressure over funds case The BJP and the JDS had disrupted the monsoon legislature session demanding Nagendra's resignation over his alleged involvement in the misappropriation of ₹88 crore funds from the Karnataka Mahashtri Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation (KMSTDC). The BJP had announced a 10-day padayatra from Raichur to Ballari beginning September 1 demanding Nagendra's resignation, which the opposition party announced will continue as there are other issues related to the 2024 case.

Decades-old fugitive saga gets a twist as new lead turns to be false in Sukumara Kurup case

NEW DELHI: One winter morning in January 1984, Sukumara Kurup strangled a man who bore some resemblance to him, burnt his body near a field in Alappuzha and faked his own death—in the process committing one of India's first insurance crimes. The 38-year-old then vanished. For over four decades, Kurup's proven brutality and mythical escape became the subject of countless stories, movies, television plots and reams of neighbourhood gossip. The police believed it futile to search for the elusive fugitive. Until now. This week, a claim by a police officer who investigated the case in 2017 that Kurup was still alive in Brunei, and a photo of a hirsute man with neatly combed hair released by a Malayalam channel, kicked the police into action and rumour mills into overdrive—only for the authorities to conclude that one of Kerala's most wanted men was probably still in the wind, or dead.

Retired cop claims Kurup is alive in Brunei The unlikely revival saga began with retired policeman Ali Akbar, a sub-inspector in the same station where the original first information report was filed in 1984 and who later reopened the case in 2017. Akbar claimed he had found Kurup alive, living as an Indian-origin Malaysian citizen, frequenting a particular hotel on most evenings. "I, and another officer, travelled to a lot of places that were associated with Kurup's life both in Brunei and in uniform and collected a lot of evidence. We got information from some of his family members that he was indeed alive. I submitted a report attesting the same, but no further action was taken at the time," Akbar said. The former police officer said Kurup was living as an Indian-origin Malaysian citizen in Brunei for years and nudged the police to arrest him. "There is a hotel that he frequently visits,



mostly in the evening hours. The information that I collected can be easily verified using modern technology," he said. Malayalam channel 24 News took the theory further, broadcasting photographs of a man it claimed as Kurup living in Brunei. The channel reported that Kurup worked in the construction sector, led an affluent life by pretending to be a Malayali-origin Malaysian citizen, and was in regular contact with his wife and son living in

Abu Dhabi. The network alleged that the notorious fugitive was in his 80s and healthy. TV photo turns out to be another Malayali man But on Friday, a family based in Thrissur said that the man, whose photo and passport were aired on TV, was actually Damodara Menon, not Kurup. "The photo circulating on TV and social media is that of my elder brother Damodara Menon. Reports that it is Kurup are baseless. He is based in

Brunei and is in his 80s," a family member, Karunakara Menon, told local media. The Kerala crime branch team also confirmed that the photo was that of Menon, not Kurup. Bijoy Thomas, special branch assistant commissioner of police, visited the family in Thrissur to record their statement. "Preliminary findings show that it is Damodara Menon. We will relay it to higher authorities. The investigation on Kurup will continue," he said. Crime branch asked to verify Kurup reports Kerala home minister Ramesh Chennithala said he directed the crime branch to verify reports about Kurup, who was played by actor Dulquer Salmaan in an eponymously titled 2021 movie 'Kurup'. "I have instructed ADGP crime branch Venkatesh to investigate. The Kerala Police need to connect Interpol and find out the actual truth of the matter. Right now, what we have are

just rumours. These are not verified facts," the minister said. Chennithala also denied Akbar's claim that the former police officer submitted a report saying that Menon, not Kurup, was still alive. "It has been around 40 years now. What is there to suppress? In any case, let the investigation proceed, and the truth will come out. It is Damodara Menon. We don't know yet whether this is true or false. In any case, the government has initiated the necessary actions," he said. The developments have held Kerala in a fever grip this week, adding another unlikely twist to the long saga. The 1984 murder that made Kurup a fugitive Born Gopalakrishna Kurup in Cheriyandam near Alappuzha, Kurup was wanted in the 1984 murder of Chacko, a film representative. According to the police, Kurup hatched a plot with his brother Bhaskara Pillai and two others to kill what he held a

physical resemblance to him, and claim the insurance payout by faking his own death. In the early hours of January 22, 1984, police say Kurup kidnapped the victim, Chacko, on the national highway in a car, rendered him unconscious using liquor laced with ether, and strangled him to death. The group then scorched Chacko's face to make him indistinguishable, put him in the front seat of a car and set fire to it near a paddy field, police said. However, subsequent police investigation unearthed the conspiracy and revealed that the victim was Chacko. Though multiple teams of the police fanned out across the state and country looking for Kurup, he remained elusive. Bhaskara Pillai, Kurup's co-brother and their driver Ponnappan were convicted by a sessions court and given life imprisonment. The punishment was confirmed later by the High Court. But an out of jail after finishing their sentences.

CONTINUATION

Move from 'endless war towards end of war': PM Modi tells Russian President Putin summit last year too.

The talks between the two leaders came over a week before Putin travels to India to attend the annual BRICS summit. The Prime Minister also made a mention of the Russian President's visit to New Delhi last year.

"Your visit to India last year was highly successful and truly memorable. It is a matter of deep satisfaction for us that our cooperation continues to scale new heights and that we are working together for the welfare of the people of both nations," PM Modi said. "Focusing on national interest as the paramount priority has been our shared approach, and this will remain our guiding principle in the future as well," he said.

Putin, on his part, said Russia-India relations have witnessed an upswing on the basis of the special and privileged partnership.

At a media briefing, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said there was a discussion between the two leaders on trade with a focus on increasing Indian exports to Russia in several areas.

The foreign secretary also noted that there has been significant progress in addressing issues like non-tariff barriers and market access for Indian products in Russia since the last meeting between the two leaders.

Misri also said that PM Modi and President Putin discussed the Ukraine issue and the prime minister emphasised the importance India attaches to dialogue and diplomacy to resolve it.

PM Modi emphasised the need to "move from endless war to the end of war," he said.

The Prime Minister also reiterated India's readiness to do whatever is feasible and necessary at its end to end the conflict, as it is exacting a very heavy toll on the global community at large, the Foreign Secretary said.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said PM Modi and Putin reviewed progress in bilateral cooperation in a range of fields, including political, economic, defence, energy, space, mobility and people-to-people ties.

The two leaders welcomed the outcome of the 27th India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic and Cultural matters, held on August 24 in Moscow, he said.

Prime Minister Modi and President Putin exchanged views on India-Russia engagement in the multilateral arena, in particular in BRICS, and also shared perspectives on key regional and global issues of mutual interest, including the conflicts in West Asia and the Black Sea region, which have impacted maritime trade and the safety and security of Indian seafarers, the MEA said.

The Prime Minister reiterated that dialogue and diplomacy were the way forward in resolving conflicts, it said in a statement.

"The two leaders agreed to remain engaged to further strengthen the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between the two countries, which continues to register significant growth and has shown resilience in the backdrop of geopolitical uncertainties," it said.

"The prime minister stated that he looks forward to welcoming President Putin in India for the 18th BRICS Summit on September 12 and 13," it added.

At the media briefing, Misri also responded to a question on the issue of several Indians serving in the Russian military.

"The issue of our nationals being recruited into the Russian armed forces has been discussed between India and Russia at various levels on various occasions," he said.

"Our embassy in Moscow is monitoring this situation regularly with regard to the release and repatriation of these Indian citizens. We are in discussions with the Russian side to ensure that any cases that remain are discharged at the earliest," he added.

"At last count, we had information about 227 Indian nationals who had been recruited into the Russian army. And out of that number, we have information that 139 of our nationals have been discharged from the army. Unfortunately, we also have information about 51 people who have perished so far," he said.

"This remains an issue on which we are in constant discussions with the Russian side," Misri said.

Lieutenant Governor chairs the Annual General

Meeting of Indian Red Cross Society, J&K
items for review and ratification.

The meeting also deliberated on various important matters including budget estimates, audit, appointment of Medical Officers at Blood Banks and Diagnostic Centres, and activities undertaken by the Red Cross Society and its District-level units.

The Deputy Commissioners apprised the Lieutenant Governor of the activities being undertaken in their respective districts and shared suggestions for further strengthening the functioning and outreach of the Red Cross Society.

CM Omar Abdullah meets several

individuals, deputations at Raabita
support local tourism stakeholders.

The Chief Minister also met J&K fencer Vishal Thapar, who has been selected to represent India at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, scheduled to be held from September 19 to October 4, 2026.

J&K Govt Orders Posting of Police Officers in Anti-Corruption Bureau

ACB, JK, to the Home Department for further posting. Meanwhile, four Dy.SPs have been transferred and posted in the ACB against available vacant posts. They include Umer Rashid (JKPS-155782) from CID CI Budgam, Swati Sharma (JKPS-125706) from Dy.SP Political SB Jammu, Showkat Zargher (ARP-981650) from JKAP 5th Battalion, and Manzoor Ahmad (EXK-

951950) from AC Home Guards, Kulgam. The order further states that Ashwani Kumar Angotra (EXJ-986443) and Yog Raj (EXJ005608), Inspectors posted in ACB, have, upon their promotion, been posted as Dy.SPs in the Anti-Corruption Bureau, J&K. Three Dy.SPs posted in ACB-Sagar Singh (EX3-935624), Gurmeet Singh (EXJ-005598) and Narinder Singh (EXJ-925463)-have been repatriated to the Home Department for further posting.

L-G VK Saxena inaugurates New DES

Complex to strengthen data-driven governance in Ladakh

The new Complex will further facilitate better coordination and integration of development activities. The PM Gati Shakti Cell and NITI Aayog State Support Mission Cell will also be accommodated in the building, enabling closer coordination between statistical systems, infrastructure planning and development initiatives. The DES also functions as the HRM wing of the Planning, Development & Monitoring Department, handling recruitment, appointments, promotions, transfers, service records and other establishment-related matters.

"Reliable data is the foundation of good governance. This new Complex will strengthen the capacity of the Directorate of Economics & Statistics to generate accurate, timely and evidence-based information, enabling better planning, more effective monitoring and informed decision-making for the development of Ladakh. I am confident that this Complex will become an important institution for building a more efficient, data-driven and Carbon-Neutral Ladakh," said L-G Shri Saxena.

Notably, a major feature of the building is its focus on sustainability and energy efficiency. It incorporates geothermal heating technology, being used for the first time in Ladakh, apart from the optimum utilisation of solar energy and other renewable-energy and sustainable building practices. The integration of geothermal and solar technologies is aimed at helping reduce dependence on conventional energy systems.

The new Complex is expected to serve as an example of data-driven governance and sustainable infrastructure, supporting the Administration's larger vision of a modern and efficient Ladakh.

ACB chargesheets former junior assistant over

misappropriation in mid-day meal ration in Rajouri

and after obtaining FSL opinion, it has been prima facie established that Shah Nawaz Khan then ZEO Manjakote (now deceased) and Mohd Farooq Jr. Assistant (dealing hand) in office of ZEO Manjakote by way of abuse of their official positions have got prepared fake/ forged and fabricated indent/ Authority letters by manipulating the official record and they had misappropriated 256.40 Qtls of rice of MDM Scheme which is worth of Rs. 8,03,557.60/- along with an amount of Rs. 461578/- on account of cooking cost was also misappropriated by the concerned ZEO and Mohd Farooq I/c MDM.

Therefore the above mentioned officer/officials by way of abuse of their official position caused loss to the state exchequer to the tune of Rs. 12,651,35.60. Since the accused Shah Nawaz Khan then ZEO Manjakote has been expired, as such sanction for launching of prosecution of the accused in-service public servant namely Mohd Farooq Jr. Assistant (dealing Hand) in office of ZEO Manjakote was obtained from the competent authority and Anti-Corruption Bureau J&K produced charge sheet against the above mentioned accused person before the Hon'ble Court of Special Judge Anti-Corruption Court Rajouri on 31.08.2026, officials said.

The next date of hearing has been fixed for 29.09.2026.

Joint Forces Bust Hideout in Shopian, Recover AK-47 Rifle, Pistol Among Arms and Ammunition

said that further investigation has been launched to ascertain the origin and intended use of the recovered weapons

Budgam-Katra Special Express resumes, no more changing at Banihal

passengers specifically appreciated the Vistadome coach available in this train, which offers a 360-degree view of the picturesque Kashmir Valley.

On this occasion, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Jammu Division, Uchit Singhal said, "The resumption of the Budgam-Katra Special train is an important decision taken on the demand of passengers. Its operation has been running successfully since 29th August, and we are getting very positive feedback from passengers. Jammu Division is always committed to passenger convenience and a better travel experience."

Jammu Division is committed to passenger convenience, Singhal said, adding that the positive response and appreciation from passengers is an encouragement for us.

The SDCM said the Division will continue to expand such passenger-friendly services in future as per passenger load and demand.

India rejects Hague court order to restore

Indus waters pact with Pakistan

Hydro-Electric Plant in Kashmir, prohibiting work on the dam wall and power intake structure above certain levels. These restrictions will remain in place until 90 days after a World Bank-appointed neutral expert delivers a decision, expected by July 2027. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs, however, said the country does not recognise the court and "categorically" rejected the verdict.

India is officially a member of the court.

"This so-called Court of Arbitration has no jurisdiction whatsoever to pronounce on India's sovereign

decisions," the ministry said in a statement "Its pronouncements, now or in the future, will have no effect on India's actions in connection with the projects being undertaken by India."

Pakistan welcomed the tribunal's interim measures and said that its government is carefully considering the details of the decision to determine how it can best assist in finding a pathway back to engagement under the treaty's binding legal obligations.

Islamabad mounted the legal action after India began work last year to boost reservoir holding capacity at two hydroelectric projects in the Kashmir region. Pakistan viewed the expansion as a first tangible step by India to operate outside agreements covered by the treaty.

J-K MBBS, BDS Interns Begin Indefinite

Strike, Demand Rs 30,000 Stipend

increasing the stipend to around Rs 25,000 for 2025-26.

He said the matter was subsequently raised during the 2026 Assembly session, where a proposed stipend of around Rs 26,300 was mentioned, but the file was yet to be cleared.

The interns alleged that they had not received a clear response regarding the status of the proposal and were being referred from one department to another. According to comparative figures displayed by the protesting interns, Odisha has the highest monthly stipend at Rs 44,319, followed by West Bengal at Rs 43,099 and Assam at Rs 35,000.

Karnataka pays Rs 30,000, while Kerala offers Rs 27,300 and Delhi and Meghalaya Rs 26,300. Telangana provides Rs 25,800, while Arunachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh offer Rs 25,000 each.

The interns said J-K's Rs 12,300 stipend placed the Union Territory at the bottom of their comparison. They said they perform duties in emergency departments, OPDs, wards and other clinical areas, including night shifts and rural postings, while receiving a stipend that has remained unchanged for years.

The protestors said they would continue the strike until the government formally notified an enhanced stipend of Rs 30,000.

"Same work, same dedication and fair stipend" is the message displayed on their protest banners.

Dr Jitendra inaugurates 'Green Forge' complex at

Chandigarh, milestone in genetic crop revolution

in India's biotechnology ecosystem. Dr. Jitendra Singh said that India's bioeconomy has expanded from US\$10 billion to US\$200 billion, describing the increase as a major quantum jump. He attributed the rapid progress to an enabling approach and greater engagement with the private sector.

The Minister said that the focus of the BioE3 initiative is increasingly shifting towards industry-ready manufacturing, so that research can be translated into products, technologies and solutions. He stressed that scientific work must ultimately be receptive to industry and other stakeholders so that the effort invested in research can generate meaningful outcomes.

Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted the development of 22 manufacturing hubs to cater to start-ups, SMEs and established players. He also referred to the National Bio-Foundry Network comprising eight specialised facilities, describing it as an important initiative for bringing together infrastructure for start-ups and entrepreneurs. He noted that more than 50 process innovations are being scaled up, reflecting the growing emphasis on taking research towards application.

The Minister also highlighted work in Carbon Capture and Utilisation (CCU), noting that the Department of Biotechnology is supporting around 38 projects. He said that integrated bio-manufacturing CCU can provide solutions for carbon capture while also addressing emissions from industries such as cement and steel.

Dr. Jitendra Singh referred to emerging areas of biotechnology, including sustainable aviation fuels, the I3 PhD programme and space biotechnology. He highlighted the collaboration with ISRO in life-science experiments, including work relating to myogenesis, cognitive effects and cyanobacteria growth, and noted that India has also made forays into genetics.

The Minister highlighted the work of BRIC-NABI in agri-biotechnology, particularly its integration with bioprocess engineering. He said this work can help convert agricultural waste into nutraceuticals and high-value biomaterials, thereby creating value from agricultural residues.

Dr. Jitendra Singh also called for greater institutional collaboration and clustering, suggesting that institutions located within the same city or region should explore opportunities for closer coordination. He said such clusters could facilitate not only research collaboration but also academic collaboration, including student-to-student interaction and identification of talent across institutions.

Referring to examples of institutional clustering in different locations, the Minister suggested developing a similar ecosystem in Chandigarh, bringing together institutions working in biotechnology, medicine, agriculture, pharmaceuticals and related areas. He said such connectivity could expand the reach of NABI and create opportunities for new ideas and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that India's biotechnology journey is increasingly characterised by the translation of research into products, technologies and solutions, alongside the emergence of a new model of low-carbon and circular economy. He linked this transformation with the broader objectives of Net Zero 2070 and Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The Minister congratulated the BRIC-NABI team and expressed confidence that the institute would emerge as one of the torchbearers of India's biotechnology revolution, particularly in agri-biotechnology.

Secretary Biotechnology Dr Rajesh Gokhale, Director NABI Dr Pareek and MD BIRAC Dr Dhananjay Tiwari also spoke on the occasion.

HELPLINE

POLICE STATIONS

Bagh-e-Bahu	2459777
Bakshi Nagar	2580102
Bus Stand	2575151
City	2543688
Gandhi Nagar	2430528
Gangyal	2482019
Nowbad	2571332
Pacca Danga	2548610
Railway Station	2472870
Sainik Colony	2462212
Satwari	2430364
Channi Himmat	2465164
Transport Nagar	2475444
Trikutla Nagar	2475133
Gandhi Nagar	2459660
SSP City	2561578
SP City North	2547038
SP South	2433778

Public Utility Services**INDIAN AIR LINES**

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

RAILWAYS

Railway Enquiry	131, 132, 2476407
Booking	2470318
Reservation	2470315

Public Health Engineering Stations

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

Telecommunication Department

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

JAMMU MUNICIPALITY

Jn. Lines	2578503
Administration Officer	2542192
Health Officer	2547440

POSTAL SERVICES

Head Post Office City	2543606
Gandhi Nagar	2435863

FIRE SERVICES

Control Room	101,132, 2476407
City	2544263
Gandhi Nagar	2547705
Canal	2554064
Gangyal	2480026

COOKING GAS DEALERS

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

POWER HOUSES

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

HOSPITALS

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

NURSING HOMES

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

Bradman met Dhyan Chand and then watched his home team get thrashed 10-1

NEW DELHI: Dhyan Chand was born on August 29, 1905, and 121 years later, the stories surrounding Indian hockey's greatest icon still stretch far beyond the goals he scored and the Olympic gold medals he won. Some have grown into legend, others into folklore. But one extraordinary episode from his life stands on firmer historical ground — the day the greatest hockey player of his age met the greatest cricketer of his age.

On May 2, 1935, Dhyan Chand and Don Bradman came face to face in Adelaide. It was a meeting between two men who had already reached a level of sporting dominance that few before them had known. Chand, then 29, had won Olympic hockey gold medals with India in 1928 and 1932 and was captain of the Indian side touring Australia and New Zealand. Bradman, only 26, had already established himself as the defining batsman of his generation.

What made the encounter even more remarkable was that Chand himself had wanted it to happen. During India's stop in Adelaide, Chand expressed a desire to meet Bradman. Pankaj Gupta, the team's assistant

manager, helped facilitate the meeting through the local authorities, and Bradman was invited to a formal reception for the Indian hockey team at Adelaide Town Hall.

When Bradman arrived, the Indian players immediately recognised him. Contemporary accounts of the reception describe Bradman and Chand rising and shaking hands amid applause. It was an extraordinary image even by the standards of sporting history: cricket's most famous batsman standing alongside a man whose control of a hockey stick had already made him an international phenomenon.

Bradman welcomed the Indian visitors and openly acknowledged their superiority in hockey. "I am particularly glad to welcome the Indian players as they are better experts of the game of hockey than we are," Bradman was quoted as saying. He added that Australians could learn from watching the visitors and also expressed another wish: "I hope that this visit will be the forerunner of a visit from an Indian cricket team."

India had only entered Test cricket three years earlier, in 1932, and had



yet to tour Australia. Twelve years after Bradman's remark, India finally travelled there for the 1947-48 Test series. Bradman, by then nearing the end of his incomparable career, captained Australia.

When Bradman watched Dhyan Chand play

The Town Hall reception was only the first part of the story. Later that day, the Indian hockey team played South Australia at Adelaide Oval. Dhyan Chand later recalled that he was the first hockey match Bradman had ever watched.

Bradman's introduction to the sport could scarcely have been more emphatic. India won 10-1.

The tourists were already 7-0 ahead at half-time. Roop Singh, Dhyan Chand's younger brother and another outstanding forward, scored four goals. Laurie Davidson struck three, Peter Fernandes scored once and Chand himself added two.

Bradman had spent his cricket career making enormous numbers appear routine. Now he was watching another athlete dominate his sport in much the same manner. Out of that

encounter came one of the most famous sporting comparisons involving Dhyan Chand. Bradman has long been recorded as remarking that the Indian hockey great scored goals the way runs were scored in cricket, with the popular version of the line becoming: "You score goals like runs in cricket."

The exact wording differs between later accounts, and the phrase does not carry quite the same contemporary documentary trail as Bradman's remarks at the Town Hall. But the comparison itself became inseparable from the story of their meeting. And the numbers Chand produced on that tour help explain why.

India played 48 matches across the wider 1935 expedition and won all 48, scoring 584 goals while conceding just 40. Chand played 43 matches and scored an astonishing 201 goals.

This was not dominance built entirely on favourable conditions either. Chand later wrote about the difficult surfaces encountered in Australia and New Zealand, where wet and uneven grounds often forced the Indians to alter the quick, ground-based hockey that had made them so devastating.

Yet the goals continued to come. The fascination between the two sporting giants was also not something invented decades later. During the tour, comparisons between Chand and Bradman were already being made in Australia.

Pankaj Gupta responded to one such comparison with perhaps the finest line of all. "Some people call Dhyan Chand the Don Bradman of hockey," he was quoted as saying, "but I prefer to call Don Bradman the Dhyan Chand of cricket."

The point was obvious. Bradman represented the highest possible standard against which a cricketer could be measured. To those travelling with the Indian team, Chand occupied precisely the same position in hockey. For Chand, however, meeting Bradman carried a significance that remained with him long after the tour ended. In his autobiography, Goliath, Chand recalled the Adelaide encounter as one of the most exciting moments of his life. He remembered Bradman posing for a photograph with him, Roop Singh and Pankaj Gupta, and described the photograph as something he treasured.

How Praggnanandhaa turned Candidates heartbreak into a lesson in resilience

NEW DELHI: It was a little after 3am on Friday in Delhi, and a relieved, sleep-deprived Vaibhav Suri was shooting off delicious texts in all caps. The recipient of his upsurge excitement, Praggnanandhaa, had just become the first Indian to win the Grand Chess Tour title.

The 21-year-old grandmaster did it in thrilling fashion. When Prag walked into the final day of the Grand Chess Tour Finals, he had a mountain to climb. He was six points behind Fabiano Caruana, one of the strongest players in the world, with the title seemingly slipping away.

But somewhere in that deficit was a version of Prag that his team had been trying to build for the past two years — more ambitious, more resilient



and, crucially, less willing to give up.

That mindset became the defining feature of a remarkable comeback. "He was in this headspace that, 'yeah, I am trailing, but screw it, I will give it everything because I really want to win', I could see that in the way we were preparing the way we were talking about things," Suri, who has been working as Prag's trainer for roughly

two years now, told HT.

"We had to win the first rapid game else it becomes really challenging," Suri pointed out.

Praggnanandhaa did exactly that.

"Fabiano was clearly under pressure when that happened. It was evident in the way he collapsed in Game 2.7," the 29-year-old grandmaster said. "Our plan was to put pressure on Fabiano as soon as possible, gain

some time advantage and hopefully things start falling in place from there on."

Suddenly, the match had changed completely: from trailing by six points, Praggnanandhaa was two points ahead.

In the four Blitz games that followed, the first with an opposite colour bishop endgame ended in a draw before Caruana levelled scores with a win in the second. Prag prevailed in a time scramble in the third and a draw in the last game was all he needed to walk away with the title.

Prag had been in St. Louis, Missouri, for nearly a month, winning two of the three tournaments he played, while Suri, his trainer, back in India, had upended his sleep schedule to match American time.

BCCI explores county stint for Aaqib Nabi ahead of New Zealand Test tour as WTC final hopes hang by a thread: Report

NEW DELHI: India's hopes of reaching the World Test Championship (WTC) final hang by a thread after failing to whitewash Sri Lanka, and the Shubman Gill-led side needs to win six out of their remaining seven Tests to have any chance of making the trip to the Oval next year. However, the task is far easier said than done, as the remaining assignments are against New Zealand (away, 2 Tests) and Australia (home, 5 Tests). Looking at the enormity of the task at hand, the BCCI is leaving nothing to chance and exploring an opportunity for famous and Kashmiri pacer Aaqib Nabi to gain valuable red-ball experience in English conditions.

According to news agency PTL, the board is understood to be in discussions



with a few county clubs over a short-term deal that could see Nabi feature in the final stages of the County Championship. The move is aimed at giving the young pacer competitive match practice before India begins preparations for their New Zealand tour. Nabi made a strong impression in the previous Ranji Trophy season, finishing as the competition's leading wicket-taker with 60 scalps. Despite that standout cam-

ment through the air, making the Indian pacer a potential fit for their requirements.

Former England captain Alec Stewart, who holds a senior position at Surrey, is also believed to have been involved in discussions with the BCCI regarding the possibility of Nabi joining the county. The plan could provide Nabi with two or three first-class appearances in England, something the Indian team management considers useful even though New Zealand offers a different set of conditions.

"New Zealand will obviously present a different challenge, but Aaqib remains in the plans. Getting a couple of red-ball games in England would certainly help his preparation," a BCCI source told PTL.

Suryakumar Yadav breaks silence on getting dropped after winning T20 WC: 'I thought how is it even possible?'

NEW DELHI: Suryakumar Yadav, India's T20 World Cup-winning captain, finally addressed the elephant in the room, breaking the silence on being dropped from the national team immediately after winning the tournament earlier this year.

The Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee went in for SKY and chose Shreyas Iyer as the next captain for the series against Ireland and England. The biggest reason Suryakumar was shown the door was his own batting form over the last two years, during which runs became hard to come by for the right-handed batter.

In 2023, Suryakumar failed to hit a single fifty in Indian colours, and the T20 World Cup saw only one prominent knock from the batter, which came against the USA at his home venue, Wankhede Stadium. However, the captain Surya didn't put a foot wrong as India never lost a series under him and eventually went on to win the T20 World



Cup on home soil.

Suryakumar admitted that his initial reaction to being dropped was not that fussy, as he tried to put himself in the selectors' shoes and understand why they wanted to move on from him and build a side for the future.

"I smiled when my name was not there. Because when I played cricket with the team for a year or two, and whenever I am playing, so whenever I have been in situations like where there is pressure, where things are not going my way, I have always smiled. I have relaxed. And this is what I have seen: the

moments in the past when I have had opportunities to do well. I have been grateful," said Suryakumar during a conversation with former India batsman Akash Chopra on the latter's YouTube channel.

"Obviously, the situation that has come now, even I had not thought that this would happen. After coming in 2020, I felt that, going forward, I would be taking this team forward for another two years. The Olympics will come. Then there will be another T20 World Cup, another challenge going forward. But at the same time, what you think and

what the other person thinks are two different things. It is important for them to respect their own thoughts. If they thought that going forward, this is a better call, they took that call. But I didn't react. Because I felt that this was their call. They took that call in that moment. Going forward, if this team can do well under someone else, no problem," he added.

"Had difficulty" However, Suryakumar admitted that he soon began to struggle with Agarkar's call, as he had never lost a series, and India's T20 performance was flawless under his tenure.

"I have seen the team that they have chosen. I have not played a lot of cricket with Shreyas. And I know he is a good player, a good human being, and a good captain also.

So, I was not like, 'Why did they make him the captain?' But I was a little disappointed. Because you have not lost a single series in two years.

Manchester City overrun Crystal Palace to stay perfect in the Premier League

LONDON: Rayan Cherki scored two goals in five minutes and Erling Haaland also got a brace as Manchester City won at Crystal Palace 4-1 to maintain their perfect start to the Premier League on Friday.

Haaland, the league top goalscorer last season, opened his account after 17 minutes with a neat header.

Cherki doubled the visitor's lead early in the second half when he danced through a nest of players and poked the ball home from close range.

However, Palace reduced the deficit almost immediately when Jeremy Pino's superb free kick hit the bar and then rebounded into the net off the despairing back of goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma.

Cherki, though, was in fine form and restored City's two-goal advantage two minutes later when his deflected shot from just outside the box wrong-footed keeper Dean Henderson.

It was the first brace of his Premier League career but he



was not happy and called his performance "so-so."

The French midfielder said he thought he was about to be subbed so turned on the style to ensure his permanence.

"When I see Enzo Maresca wants to change me I didn't like that, so I had to show him I wanted to play and wanted to score," Cherki said of the recently appointed coach.

"With Pep Guardiola we had a big history," he added. "Now we have started another story. We have to prove that every week,

and we are here for that."

Haaland rounded off the scoring with a left-footed strike six minutes from time and City was on top of the league with six points from its first two games. Palace is pointless after two games and midfielder Adam Wharton suggested the team needed more time to adapt to new coach Pierre Sage, who took over in June.

"I thought we had good moments but we didn't test their keeper enough, like we should have," Wharton said.

BACK PAGE

LADAKH TODAY

Jammu | Tuesday | 01 September 2026

LADAKH TODAY

MULTI-EDITION NEWSPAPER

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समाचार



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व्यापार
एवं रोजगार



शिक्षा



खेल



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