

INBRIEF

Blast rocks LoC village in Poonch

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: A suspected improvised explosive device (IED) explosion rocked a forward village along the Line of Control (LoC) in Krishna Ghati sector of Poonch district on Monday, triggering heightened security measures, officials said.

The powerful blast reportedly occurred in Satwal-Naki area near the zero line, during the movement of a group of people along the Pakistan side of the LoC, officials said.

They said casualties were reported, but the exact number of people killed or injured was not known immediately. It is also unclear whether the group comprised

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Ex-minister Sr Harbans Singh dies



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JAMMU: National Conference leader and former minister Sardar Harbans Singh passed away at a private hospital in Jammu early Monday,

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Oppn march to SC, files plea on poll anomalies

NEW DELHI: The raging protests over "vote chori" charge reached the Supreme Court's doorstep on Monday as opposition stalwarts, joined by activists and civil society members, undertook a "March for Democracy" on a heavily barricaded route and filed a joint petition against SIR and alleged poll irregularities, in a major show of strength in the national capital.

A mammoth crowd carrying flags and posters descended in central Delhi's Connaught Place, with Leaders of Opposition (LoPs) in Lok Sabha and Rajya

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IAS Aayushi Sudan takes over 'reins' of JMC, JSCL



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JAMMU: Aayushi Sudan, an IAS officer of the 2017 batch, on Monday assumed charge as Commissioner of the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) and will also look after the work of Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Jammu Smart City Limited (JSCL). Prior to her new assignment,

Countries sponsoring terrorism will suffer too, warns Vice Prez

NEW DELHI: Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Monday warned countries sponsoring terrorism that such "unlawful weapon" would eventually harm their own people.

He also said no country should encroach on the borders of others.

The vice president said the political leadership in countries sponsoring terror must recognise the long-term consequences of supporting unlawful activities.

"The countries that sponsor terrorism have to realise that in the long run, it will harm their own people as well," he said while delivering a talk on 'India's Core National Interests, Values and Strategic Objectives' at the National Defence College here.

The "unlawful weapon" looks like it is harming others. "One day it will harm us also. That has to be understood by the leaderships," he underlined.

Amid wars raging in different parts of the world,



Radhakrishnan said every country has self respect and sovereignty of the nations may be respected and "no country should encroach on the borders of others".

Emphasising India's national security priorities, Radhakrishnan said the country's objectives include maintaining a secure internal environment, protecting

national unity and development, and safeguarding its territory, airspace and maritime interests, including trade routes vital to the economy.

He also underlined the importance of protecting India's cyberspace and strengthening constructive engagement with other nations to promote regional and global peace and international stability.

Describing national security as essential for the country's progress, the vice president said it was about creating an environment in which India could develop, prosper and realise its aspirations securely.

He said India's ambition to become the world's most powerful nation

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Shardiya Navratras Nearly 1 lakh pilgrims visit SMVD shrine in first 2 days

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JAMMU: Over 95,000 pilgrims have visited the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine cave in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district in the first two days of the Shardiya Navratras, officials said.

Footfall increased on Monday, with over 48,000 people registering for the pilgrimage till 7 pm, they said.

As many as 47,346 pilgrims visited the holy shrine on Sunday, the first day of the nine-day festival,



taking the total number of devotees to over 95,000 in two days, officials said.

The nine-day Shat Chandi Maha Yagya entered its

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NIA attaches asset used for 'hiding' terrorists

NEW DELHI: M The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has attached a residential property in Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar, allegedly used for harbouring Pakistani terrorists and concealing incriminating material connected with the terror network, officials said on Monday.

The property at Khasra no. 315, Danihama village in Hazratbal, belonging to accused Ghulam Mohammad Mir, alias Mama Gas,

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Jantar Mantar denotified as 'protest' site

NEW DELHI: Having dealt with the eerie silence that has settled over Jantar Mantar in the past few days amid tight security, the shopkeepers in the area are now staring at long-term dwindling footfall and mounting losses as the site no longer remains a designated venue for protests.

The Delhi Police on Monday denotified Jantar Mantar as the designated venue for demonstrations and named Ramlila Maidan, Burari Ground and CBD Ground in east Delhi as alternative sites for protests. For the small businesses lining the stretch, the move has raised concerns over a potential

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YOU DON'T SPEAK FOR ALL OF INDIA Democracy on Banner, Politics on the Agenda



SHIVANG SATYA GUPTA
Editor-in-Chief

India belongs equally to those who join a protest and those who question its demands. No political party, coalition, activist organisation or digital commentator can claim exclusive ownership of the public conscience.

That is the starting point for examining the protests in the national capital against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

The Cockroach Janta Party's 10 October demonstration, associated with figures including Abhijeet Dipke and Dhruv Rathee, centred on demanding the CEC's removal. Today, the mobilisation widened into an INDIA-bloc march and a Supreme Court challenge to the revision exercise. These are connected developments, but they should not be inaccurately presented as one event organised identically by every opposition party.

The opposition has every right to challenge the Election Commission. Citizens have an equal right to challenge the opposition's conclusions.

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Supporting fair elections does not require supporting this campaign. Disagreeing with its demands does not make anyone an opponent of democracy.

The central question is whether the campaign's political conclusions are supported by evidence strong enough to sustain them.

A voter-roll discrepancy, a wrongful deletion, a procedural violation and a coordinated attempt to manipulate an election are different propositions. Each deserves scrutiny. Establishing one does not automatically establish all the others.

A large number of deletions demands explanation. It does not, by itself, reveal how many eligible citizens were wrongly excluded, how many entries concerned deceased people or duplicates, or whether any irregularities were deliberately directed towards a partisan outcome.

Equally, an official label describing someone as absent or shifted should not be

treated as infallible. The classification itself may need checking.

The proper test is therefore specific: whose entry was affected, on what grounds, through which procedure, and with what opportunity for correction? Where a broader pattern is alleged, the supporting data and method must also be open to examination.

This standard should apply to Congress, the Samajwadi Party, the RJD, the Trinamool Congress, the Left and every other party supporting the campaign. A coalition cannot establish an allegation merely by repeating it through more microphones.

There is also a significant official document against which both the opposition's claims and the Election Commission's performance should be tested.

In its 1 October 2026 instruction to Chief Electoral Officers, the Commission directed officials to compare current rolls with pre-revision rolls, identify people whose names were missing, undertake house-to-house visits and facilitate enrolment through Form 6 wherever the person was eligible. It also directed that relevant lists be shared with recognised parties' booth-level agents and provided for enrolment camps, including for homeless and marginalised people.

That instruction does not prove that every earlier deletion was justified or that implementation is satisfactory. It does, however, provide a concrete mechanism whose performance can be measured. Every participating opposition party should publish its own account:

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Sustainable mountain devp must balance ecology, livelihoods: CM

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday called for a practical and balanced approach to sustainable mountain development, stressing that environmental protection, economic growth and people's livelihoods must go hand-in-hand.

The chief minister was speaking after inaugurating the 13th Sustainable Mountain Development Summit, jointly organised by Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST) Kashmir and the Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI).

The summit, themed 'Contouring Sustainable Himalayan Landscapes for Inclusive Viksit Bharat', aims to



discuss and formulate a sustainable mountain development policy for Jammu and Kashmir.

Emphasising the urgent need to protect the region's fragile mountain ecology, the chief minister said climate change, erratic snowfall, water scarcity, extreme rainfall

and landslides are increasingly affecting Jammu and Kashmir, making sustainable development essential for its long-term survival.

"We do not take care of our mountains or our environment as much as we should. We cannot stop global warming

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ACB nabs Govt official taking Rs 40,000 bribe

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), Jammu and Kashmir, on Monday caught a senior assistant posted at the Sub-Divisional Agriculture Office, Handwara, red-handed while allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of ₹40,000 for the release of a pending tractor subsidy bill under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

The accused, Irshad Ahmad Peer, came under the ACB scanner following a written complaint lodged with the ACB Police Station, Baramulla. The complainant alleged that Peer had demanded ₹40,000 to clear a subsidy bill for a tractor purchased by

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IAS Mamta Yadav assumes charge as Dir Information

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Calls for transparent, timely communication

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■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Mamta Yadav, IAS today assumed the charge as Director Information, Jammu and Kashmir, and held an introductory interaction with officers and officials of the Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR).

During the interaction, the Director underscored the pivotal role of the Information Department in ensuring effective communication between the Govern-



ment and the public, emphasizing the need for transparency, accuracy, timeliness and wider outreach in the dissemination of information relating to government policies, developmental initiatives and public welfare programmes.

Emphasising the importance of adapting to the evolving media landscape, the Director called for greater utilization of digital platforms and modern communication tools to strengthen the Department's

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Oppn wants to form Govt by creating 'anarchy': LoP

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Monday said the opposition parties have taken to the streets as they cannot win elections and want to create anarchy to rise to power.

"These are all parties who have been continuously losing elections and have been rejected by the people. Now, they want to form a government not through the strength of elections, but by creating anarchy on the streets," Sharma, the leader of the opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, told reporters here.

Sharma said winning an election is the only way to form a government in a democratic set-up.

"In a democracy, you face elections every five years. If people favour you, you form the government. Rahul Gandhi is the prince of a royal family (but) he faces defeat after defeat in every election and people keep rejecting him, and the regional parties aligned with him.

That is why they gather together, take to the streets, and want to form a government," which is illegitimate in a democracy," he added.

Expressing dissent was also a part of democracy, he said, adding that this does not mean one can hold 20 million citizens hostage.

"In Delhi, roughly 20 to 30 million people are out on the streets daily; someone is sick, someone is elderly, someone is going to school. Do you disrupt them

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