

Swastik Diagnostic Laboratory gifts Car to best employee on Diwali

■ **VIVEK SHARMA**
JAMMU: Keeping alive its cherished Diwali tradition, Swastik Diagnostic Laboratory once again honoured its Best Employee of the Year with a brand-new car. This grand gesture, continuing for the last six years, reflects the company's commitment to recognising dedication and excellence among its staff.

This year, Sunil Andotra, Senior Lab Technician was conferred with the Best Employee Award and presented with the car during a brief but heart-warming ceremony held at the Swastik Diagnostic Laboratory office near Dogra Hall on the eve of Diwali celebrations on Monday.

The Car was handed over to the best employee by Gururji Dr Shiv Prasad Raina, in the presence of Editor-in-Chief STATE TIMES Raj Daluja and Managing Director Bansil

Lal Sharma, who has been the guiding force behind the growth and success of Swastik Laboratories. In a message, Gururji Dr Shiv Prasad Raina extended heartfelt Diwali greetings to all employees and praised Swastik Laboratories for upholding a noble tradition of recognising hard work and sincerity.

He said, "Festivals like Diwali remind us that light always triumphs over darkness - and so does dedication over indifference. I congratulate the entire Swastik family for this beautiful initiative that rewards commitment and inspires excellence."

Bansil Lal Sharma, Managing Director, expressed that Swastik Laboratory has always believed in creating a culture of appreciation and belonging.

He said, "Our employees are our true strength. This



Gururji Dr Shiv Prasad Raina in the presence of Editor-in-Chief STATE TIMES Raj Daluja and Managing Director Swastik Labs Bansil Lal Sharma handing over Car keys to best employee of the year, Sunil Andotra, Senior Lab Technician.

annual tradition of honouring the best among us with a car is our humble way of showing gratitude. This

annual award ceremony of gifting a car to its best employee started from the year 2019. Establishing a

state-of-the-art laboratory in Jammu & Kashmir has been possible only because of the collective effort of our

hardworking team."

Raj Daluja, Editor-in-Chief, STATE TIMES congratulated the awardee

Sunil Andotra and lauded the company's leadership for maintaining such a progressive and motivating work culture.

The awardee, overwhelmed by the honour, thanked the management for their recognition and said this award will further motivate him to work with even greater dedication and sincerity.

The event concluded with festive greetings, sweets distribution, and a collective pledge by the Swastik Laboratory team to continue striving for excellence in the years ahead.

Swastik Diagnostic Laboratory established in 1994, is the best equipped laboratory in Jammu & Kashmir. Giving details Bansil Lal Sharma said, the average tests carried out in the laboratory are one lakh per month which reflects the trust reposed on us by doctors, patients and several others who utilize our services.

With over 2 decades in

operation and providing services to approximately 500 patients per day, Swastik Diagnostic Laboratory is a leading laboratory in J&K UT, he added.

"We at Swastik Diagnostic Laboratory, constantly strive to acquire the latest medical technology. The objective of Swastik laboratory is to provide high quality holistic healthcare diagnostic services in areas like Pathology, Preventive health checkups, diagnostics and clinical research. Integrity, confidentiality, authenticity, compliance, commitment to quality are the virtues which have made Swastik laboratory the most preferred Diagnostic lab in Jammu and Kashmir. "We are first in J&K to provide automated technology in Diagnostic Laboratory sector and also constituting annual award for best employee under the guidance of our mother and founder member Smt Satya Sharma", MD SDL Bansil Lal Sharma, added.

Bihar polls: Filing of nomination papers over; INDIA bloc looks fractured

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

PATNA: Filing of nomination papers ended on Monday for the second and final phase of Bihar assembly polls, with the opposition INDIA bloc appearing fractured, as constituents would end up fighting each other in a number of seats. According to the Election Commission, altogether 1,314 candidates have been left in the fray for the first phase in which 121 constituencies of the 243-strong assembly would go to polls on November 6, following the withdrawal of 61 nominees, besides rejection of more than 300 during scrutiny.

The RJD, which helms the opposition coalition, and prides itself on having emerged as the single-largest party in the past couple of assembly elections, came out with a list of its 143 candidates, much after most of them had already been allotted symbols and filed nomination papers.

The party avoided a confrontation with the Congress, refraining from fielding a candidate in reserved constituency of Kutumba against BPCC president Rajesh Kumar Ram, though its candidates

would end up fighting against nominees of the grand old party in Lalgaun, Vaishali and Kahaigaon.

Earlier, the RJD had also seemed poised for a fight with former state minister Mukesh Sahni's Vikassheel Insaan Party in Tarapur, where the NDA has fielded BJP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, and Gaura Boram.

However, in Tarapur, the VIP announced that it would not back its candidate Sakaldeo Bind, who then withdrew his nomination papers in indignation and joined the BJP in presence of Choudhary.

In Gaura Boram, a letter from RJD president Lalu Prasad to the Chief Electoral Officer of Bihar, informing that his party was backing Sahni's younger brother Santosh, and that the person "turning up with our poll symbol, the lantern, not be considered for nomination" proved to be of no avail.

Afzal Ali, who had filed the nomination papers on the RJD symbol, refused to back down and the party cadre was now confronted with a confusing situation in the consti-

ty falling in Darbhanga district. The RJD also faces rebellion in Parihar, where Ritu Jaiswal, the party's women's wing chief filed her nomination papers as an Independent, upset over the ticket going to daughter-in-law of former state president Ram Chandra Purve, whom she has been suspecting of having played a role in her defeat in the last assembly polls, when she lost by a thin margin. Infighting in the INDIA bloc would also be witnessed in Bachhwara, Rajapakar and Rosera, with Congress and CPI fielding their candidates in all the three seats. Rajapakar is currently held by the Congress which has let sitting MLA Pratima Kumari Das defend her seat. The Congress is contesting altogether 61 seats, five less than the number it had contested in 2020, when it had won only 19 and the dismal strike rate was blamed for the inability of Mahagathbandhan to win a majority.

The momentum gained by Rahul Gandhi's Voter Adhikar Yatra notwithstanding, the party is having to contend with intense dissidence as

state leaders are questioning the criterion adopted for giving tickets, with many candidates who lost by huge margins five years getting another chance but those who gave a tough fight to the NDA have been overlooked.

A point of discord has also been the clout enjoyed by Pappu Yadav, the Independent MP from Purnea, married to Ranjeet Ranjan, a Congress Rajya Sabha MP from Chhattisgarh, whose loyalists have been given tickets in place of sitting MLAs, or they have been fielded from seats where the party did not have a strong chance of winning.

Vikassheel Insaan Party, which has no MLA in the outgoing assembly, but had aggressively demanded '40-50 seats', besides the assurance that Mukesh Sahni would be the 'Deputy Chief Minister' if Tejashwi Yadav headed the next government, did a major climbdown and settled for 16 constituencies.

The CPI(ML) Liberation, which had the best strike rate in the Mahagathbandhan in 2020, when it contested 19 and won 12, decided against being too ambitious and is contesting only 20 seats.

The CPI, which has two MLAs, is contesting nine seats, the party's office secretary Indu Bhushan Verma said. CPI(M) Bihar state secretary Manoj Chandravanshi said his party, which also has two MLAs, would be contesting four seats.

The last date of filing of nomination papers had its own share of drama.

The RJD candidate from Sasaram, Satyendra Sah, was arrested shortly after filing of nomination papers, by a team of Jharkhand Police in connection with a case pending against him in the adjoining state.

It was the third instance of its kind involving candidates of INDIA bloc.

Earlier, last week, CPI(ML) Liberation candidates Jitendra Paswan and Satyadeo Ram were arrested shortly after filing nomination papers from Bhore and Darauli respectively.

The Left party had alleged that these arrests were "politically motivated" and a sign of "fear and panic" in the NDA camp which has been ruling Bihar for 20 years and was now facing anti-incumbency.

Russia's Kalmyk State University, Nalanda University sign pact to boost cooperation

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: A Russian university and India's Nalanda University have inked a pact towards enhancing educational, scientific and cultural collaboration between the two countries, officials said on Monday.

The Memorandum of Cooperation signed with Kalmyk State University, named after B B Gorodovikov in Elista, provides an institutional framework for all planned initiatives, including student and faculty exchanges, joint research, and academic events, the Indian Culture Ministry said. "Both sides expressed confidence that the partnership will open new horizons for students and scholars from India and Russia and elevate bilateral cooperation in education, culture, and the humanities to a new level," it said in a statement dated October 19.

The signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation marks a significant step towards enhancing educational, scientific, and cultural collaboration between India and Russia, the officials said.

The meeting was held at Kalmyk State University in the presence of senior dignitaries from both sides, including Nikhilesh Chandra Giri, Minister Plenipotentiary, Embassy of India in the Russian Federation; Vinay Kumar, Minister (Education), Embassy of India; and Sachin Chaturvedi, Vice-Chancellor, Nalanda University (who joined the meeting via video link). Aleksey Eteyev, Deputy Chairman of the Regional Government of Kalmykia, and Badma Salayev, Rector, Kalmyk State University, were also present on the occasion.

Salayev underlined the importance of this part-

nership, noting that the visit of Indian diplomats and academic representatives marks a "new chapter in the deepening of educational and cultural cooperation".

He observed that the just-held exposition of the sacred relics of Lord Buddha, in Kalmykia, holds profound symbolic significance, further strengthening interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

The relics, which are enshrined at the National Museum in Delhi, have now returned to India, after the exposition in the Russian city of Elista, the officials said.

Salayev highlighted that Kalmyk State University actively collaborates with universities in 23 countries and hosts about 1,500 international students from 53 nations, including 50 Indian nationals, the statement said.

He emphasised that international partnerships in education, research, and cultural exchange remain a "top priority" for the university.

Representing Nalanda University, Vice-Chancellor Chaturvedi noted that the collaboration aligns with Nalanda's historical legacy as a global hub of knowledge and intercultural exchange. The discussions outlined several areas of future collaboration, including academic exchange programmes in Sanskrit, Pali, Russian, and Buddhist Studies; research internships for Kalmyk scholars at Nalanda University.

Also, joint projects such as 'Healthcare: Ayurveda and Kalmyk Traditional Medicine' and 'The Elderly in Russian and Indian Societies'; preparation of a 'Concise Encyclopedia of the Buddhist Written Heritage of Russia and India'; and development of dual degree programmes and joint cultural festivals, it said.

Court sentences man to 20 years RI in POCSO case involving minor girl

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a significant verdict, the Court of Principal Sessions Judge, Udhampur, on Monday sentenced a 41-year-old man to 20 years of Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) for committing aggravated penetrative sexual assault on a minor girl aged below 12 years, under provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. The convict, Mohd Arshad alias Nika, son of Mohd Iqbal, resident of Bain (presently at Motor Shed Chenani, Udhampur), was found guilty under Section 5(m) of the POCSO Act, punishable under Section 6 of the Act. The Court also imposed a fine of ₹50,000, directing that the amount, if realised, be handed over to the victim to meet her medical and rehabil-

itation expenses.

The case dates back to 28 July 2020, when the victim's mother, lodged a complaint at Police Station Ramnagar alleging that the accused had outraged the modesty of her minor daughter while she was plucking pears in the fields. The FIR, initially registered under Sections 354 IPC and 8 POCSO Act, was later altered to include Section 376-AB IPC and Sections 3/4/5(m)/6 POCSO Act after investigation revealed aggravated sexual assault.

During the trial, the prosecution produced multiple witnesses, including the victim (whose identity is withheld), her family members, and medical officers. The victim narrated before the Court that the accused forcibly took pears from her lap and sexually

assaulted her. Medical reports confirmed her age as 11 years at the time of the incident. The Court carefully examined the testimonies, medical evidence, and circumstantial details. While the medical examination did not reveal signs of complete intercourse, the testimony of the child victim and corroborating witnesses established the offence beyond reasonable doubt. The prosecution sought the maximum sentence, stressing the brutal nature of the act against a child. However, the defense argued for leniency citing the convict's age, family responsibilities, and clean antecedents.

In his judgment, Principal Sessions Judge Virinder Singh Bhau after hearing Public Prosecutors Himanshu Parkash and Vijay Sharma for

the UT whereas Adv Ranjeev Dubey for the accused person, observed that though the act was heinous and caused severe trauma to the child, the circumstances did not warrant imprisonment for life. Emphasising both deterrence and reformation, the Court awarded the minimum statutory punishment of 20 years rigorous imprisonment under Section 6 of the POCSO Act. Court further directed the J&K State Legal Services Authority to extend statutory compensation to the victim under the Victim Compensation Scheme.

The convict has been apprised of his right to appeal before the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. He has also been sent to District Jail Udhampur to serve his sentence.

India rapidly emerging as global hub for services exports, says NSE

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

MUMBAI: India is rapidly emerging as a global hub for services exports with a compound annual growth rate of 14.8 per cent outpacing goods exports, which grew at 9.8 per cent, NSE officials said.

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) highlights robust growth in the services sector; structural reforms, and demographic advantages driving the country's economic transformation. "India will be to services, what China has been to manufacturing. It is emerging as global hub for services exports," NSE Chief Economist Tirthankar Patnaik said. India's services exports have grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14.8 per cent over the past three decades, outpacing goods exports which grew at 9.8 per cent, the official, who made a presentation before a visiting media team from Jammu and Kashmir, said. With a 4.3 per cent share in global services exports, India now ranks 7th globally, led by telecom, IT, and business services that contribute nearly three-fourths of total service exports. Technology exports alone crossed USD

200 billion in FY25, the officials said. "India has also emerged as the world's largest hub for Global Capability Centres (GCCs). Their number has risen from 1,430 in FY19 to 1,700 in FY24, and is projected to touch 2,200 by FY30, employing up to 26 lakh professionals," they said. The GCC market size is expected to expand from USD 40 billion in FY19 to USD 100 billion by FY30, the data said.

"Key structural and economic reforms include the Goods and Services Tax (GST), Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, Real Estate Regulation Act (RERA), and corporate tax cuts", they said. The officials further said that liberalisation through faceless assessments, simplified labour laws, and performance-linked incentive schemes has boosted investor confidence apart from privatisation and globalisation measures, including bank mergers, foreign trade agreements, FDI expansion, and the internationalisation of UPI, which have further strengthened the economy.

On the social empowerment front, the officials also highlighted major social

reforms that have transformed everyday lives – over 100 million LPG connections under the Ujjwala Yojana, more than 120 million toilets built under the Swachh Bharat Mission, and massive financial inclusion through Jan Dhan Yojana. They said India is poised to emerge as a USD 5-trillion economy over the next few years, propelled by robust service exports, a young and expanding workforce, and increasing participation in capital markets. The presentations projected India's real GDP growth at 6.3-6.8 per cent, with nominal growth estimated at around 12 per cent. "At this pace, India is set to become the world's third-largest economy by 2027, overtaking Japan and Germany," the NSE data showed.

The exchange outlined a multi-pronged growth strategy focused on expanding private investment, strengthening MSMEs, bridging the education-employment gap, and promoting green financing and agriculture-led growth.

"NSE's analysis reaffirms India's transformation into a services-driven powerhouse," the NSE official added.

Jammu to Srinagar		
IndiGo	10:05 AM - 10:45 AM	
SpiceJet	11:10 AM - 12:00 PM	
Air India Express	12:50 PM - 1:40 PM	
Air India Express	1:35 PM - 2:45 PM	
IndiGo	1:55 PM - 2:35 PM	
IndiGo	6:40 PM - 7:20 PM	
Srinagar to Jammu		
IndiGo	11:45 AM - 12:35 PM	
Air India Express	12:10 PM - 1:05 PM	
SpiceJet	12:35 PM - 1:30 PM	
Air India Express	2:20 PM - 3:35 PM	
IndiGo	3:15 PM - 4:05 PM	
IndiGo	5:20 PM - 6:10 PM	

FIND TRAIN SCHEDULE		
11078 Jhelum Express		
Departure	23:35 from Jammu Tawi	
Arrival	11:15 at New Delhi	
12426 Jammu Tawi - New Delhi Rajdhani Express		
Departure	21:25 from Jammu Tawi	
Arrival	05:55 at New Delhi	
12446 Uttar Sampark Kranti Express		
Departure	21:50 from Jammu Tawi	
Arrival	06:55 at New Delhi	
Train 26401 - Katra to Srinagar (Morning Service)		
Departure	8:10 AM from Katra	
Arrival	11:10 AM at Srinagar	
Intermediate Stop	Banihal at 9:58 AM	
Fare:		
Chair Car (CC): 715		
Executive Chair Car (EC): 1,320		
Booking: Available on IRCTC		
Train 26403 - Katra to Srinagar (Afternoon Service)		
Departure	2:00 PM from Katra	
Arrival	05:00 PM at Srinagar	
Fare:		
Chair Car (CC): 660		
Executive Chair Car (EC): 1,270		
Booking: Available on IRCTC		

FIND CINEMA		
DEEWANIYAT		
WAVE ONE MOVIE JAMMU	10:45 AM / 1:45 PM / 08:00 PM / 10:50 PM	
PVR KC JAMMU	3:20 PM / 9:50 PM	
KANTARA (A LEGEND CHAPTER-1.) (HINDI)		
PVR KC JAMMU	6:20 PM	
GODDAY GODDAY CHAA 2 (PUNJABI)		
WAVE ONE MOVIES JAMMU	09:30 AM / 3:00 PM / 8:40 PM	
PVR KC JAMMU	12:30 PM	

HELPLINE		
TELEPHONES		
Directory Enquiry		197
Fault Repair		198
Local Assistance		199
Trunk Booking		180
Trunk Assistance		181
International Trunk Booking	2447952, 2577951	2573638
Billing Complaints	2543896, 2548415	
Billing Complaints Computerize		1955
Change No. Announcement		1951
Gandhi Nagar Exchange	2451953, 2430953	
HOSPITALS		
Government Medical College	2584290, 2484291	
Psychiatry and Disease Hospital		2577444
Ambulance Rajouri	257147, 257084, 257357	
Blood Bank/Eye Bank - SMGS Hospital	2547639, 2547637	
Emergency		2549669
Blood Bank	2547637, 2547638	
Chest Disease Hospital	2577064, 2544912	
Dental Hospital		2544670
Govt Hospital Gandhi Nagar		2430041
Emergency		2431740
Child Hospital		2577023
Acharya Shri Chander College of Medical Sciences and Hospital		262270
AMBULANCES		
Indian Red Cross Society		2549413
Jammu University	2453165, 2543525, 2435248	
FIRE STATIONS		
Gandhi Nagar	101, 2435283, 2457705	
City		2544263
Canal		2554064
Roop Nagar		2597522
Gangyal		2480026
Bar Brahmana		220020
Akhnoor		252481
Kathua		234313
Samba		243280
Katra		232451
Udhampur		270897
Police Control Room	100, 2542001, 2545481-82	
Police Exchange	2547621-22, 2547624	
Civil Defence Control Room	2549100, 2548645, 2544920	
Civil Defence	2548645, 2549100, 2544920	
Hot Line		383
TOURISM		
Tourist Officer, Airport		2431917
Tourist Officer, Railway Station		2430078
Tourist Reception Centre		2579554
BUS SERVICES		
JKSRTC General Manager		2435262
JKSRTC Bus Stand		2577475
JKSRTC Jammu Srinagar, Service		2576562
Punjab Roadways		2542782
WATER SUPPLY		
Company Bagh		2542582
Parade		2544979
Bakshi Nagar		2543557
Panjthirthi		2547501
Narwal		2430031
ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPLAINTS		
Canal	2554147, 2554199	
Parade	2542289, 2543398	
Nanak Nagar		2430776
Gandhi Nagar		2430180
Shastri Nagar		2430781
Janipur	2543828, 2579258	
Satwari		2452816
FIRE SERVICE : (Control Room)		
		101
CIVIC SERVICES		
Municipality	2547846, 2542192	
Health Officer		2547440
Garbage / Carcass Removal		2547440