Editorial

# Who will Obey the laws of the road ?

It seems over the years, our society has unfortunately become more complacent about underage driving than before, and more kids are growing up learning that it is 'cool' to drive young, to drive fast, and to risk it with the law. Underage driving has not only added to the city's chaotic traffic but is resulting in a large number of accidents. Children, by nature, are more reckless. They are not mature enough to understand the consequences of their actions or mistakes. For them, driving is all about thrill and looking cool. Children are not to be blamed for reckless driving but it is the parents' job to teach children how to go by the rule book. Public awareness campaigns by traffic control authorities and others are vitally important to make such youth realise their errors and the possibilities of their rash driving. Children of this age are restless, impatient and have a shorter attention span. It is observed that a few school authorities who tried to discourage underage driving had to face parents' ire. Speeding around seems cool to teenagers but it can lead to havoc and that's where adults have to step in. Children are more likely than older drivers to speed, run red lights, make illegal turns, ride with an intoxicated driver, and drive after using alcohol or drugs. They have a sense that they can get away with transgressions - a feeling of bravado whereby " I can get away with anything" The fight against underage drinking in our country is a tough battle, and frighteningly, alcohol is involved in about 20-25% of fatal teenage car wrecks.

Underage driving seems to increase with each passing day as children become smarter and more informed and parents fail to understand the consequences. It is observed that minors can get a license with fake proof of age. In such cases, the police impose a nominal fine and these dangerous drivers are back on the road. Teenage drivers are a threat not only to themselves but also to others. They are not sensitive to traffic rules and don't even follow the basics of safe driving. They either injure or kill themselves or others. The high number of underage drivers transgressing the law by going for a joyride can be attributed to peer pressure and a feeling of youthful invincibility. Many lives are shattered by underage drivers going for a joyride in the vehicles of their parents or older relatives. Under Section 4 of the Motor Vehicles Act, minors driving a vehicle are liable and accordingly they can be fined at least Rs 1,000. The owners, meanwhile, can be fined Rs 1,500 under Section 5 of the same Act. In case of negligent driving by minors, parents should be booked too. Traffic police has been trying everything, have challenged and even impounded their vehicles but failed to curb the menace. The only solution left is the duty of the parents to realise the danger associated with underage driving. Inexperience and immaturity are the primary causes of the increased risk of teenage driving. Untrained eyes are more likely to underestimate hazardous situations on the road. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration suggests that parents write up a contract for their teenage driver that includes penalties for any rule that they break. Preventative measures must be taken to bring teenage auto fatalities down. The most important advice would be to teach responsibility by way of example. If parents drive with caution and obey the laws of the road - their children will also have more respect for traffic laws and for those who travel our roads.

# Uniting Against Sickle Cell

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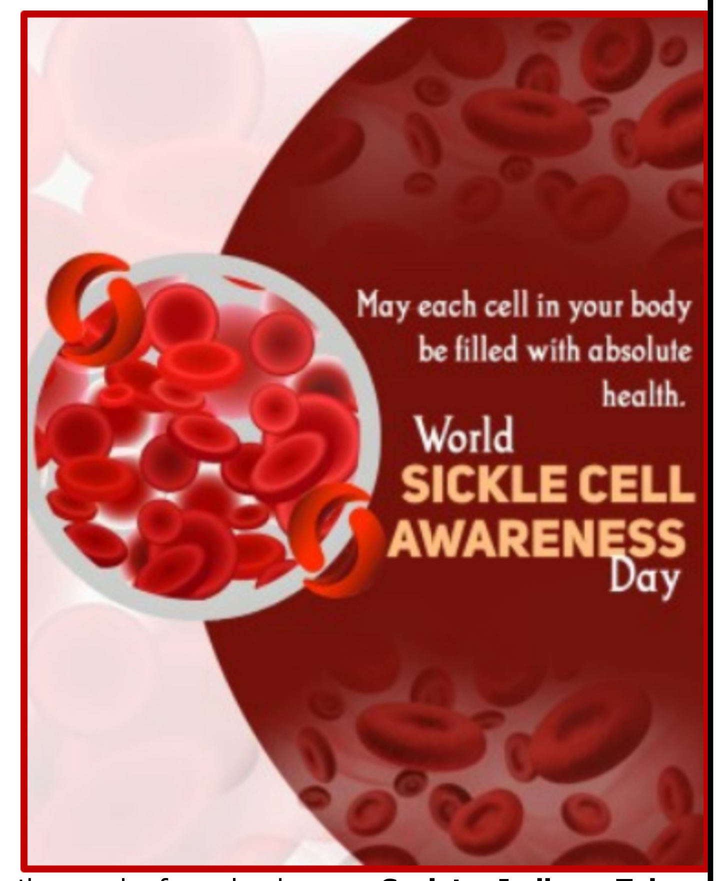
World Sickle Cell Day - 19th June is a United Nation's recognised day to raise awareness of sickle cell at a national and international level. Sickle cell disorders are a group of illnesses which affect your red blood cells. Sickle cell is a genetic condition, which means it is passed on from your parents and you are born with it; you cannot catch it from other people. On December 22, 2008, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution that recognised sickle cell disease as a public health problem. The UN designated June 19 of every year as World Sickle Cell Awareness Day in order to raise awareness about the disorder on the national and international level. Creating awareness can facilitate access to education, management, surveillance and treatment for sickle-cell anaemia. According to medical experts, SCD affects millions of people all around the world including both children and adults. Sickle cell warriors must have more positive discussions about health. We should stop emphasizing what we can't do because of our health and instead celebrate all the things we've done and can do despite our health. The most common type of SCD is known to be Sickle cell anaemia (SCA). SCA results in an abnormality in the oxygen-carrying protein haemoglobin found in red blood cells of the human body. People with this disease have atypical hemoglobin molecules called hemoglobin S, which can distort red blood cells into a sickle, or crescent shape. This blocks blood flow and oxygen from reaching all parts of the body. There are many illnesses and diseases in the world that affect people in various kinds of ways, and while some are well known, there are others that are not so popular. According to Global Burden of Disease (GBD) a global research programme that estimates mortality and burden from major diseases across the globe- the prevalence and incidence of sickle cell disease in India in 2017 and 2018 was 1,104,634 and 195,166 respectively. The disease in India occurs predominantly in eastern Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, western Odisha and in pockets of the Nilgiri Hills in north Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Sickle cell disease (SCD), which is a group of blood disorders that affect a person's red blood cells, is a genetic condition that is passed on from parents. The disorder causes normal round and flexible blood cells to become stiff and sickle shaped, which in turn stops the blood cells and the oxygen they carry from moving freely around the body. Symptoms of sickle cell will start showing from around 5 to 6 months of age, and along with the pain a person can also suffer from anemia, swelling in the hands and feet, bacterial infections, blindness, bone damage and stroke. WSCD is an opportunity to raise awareness of sickle cell disease and support those living with sickle cell, celebrating their experiences and achievements, mostly in such a difficult emergency due to the pandemic, during which they are exposed to a higher risk of complications. Let us show our support also by donating to Sickle Cell Society and by encouraging others to do the same. Together with education and awareness, we can remove the stigma associated with this condition. Can't we be the voice of the thousands of people who are diagnosed with this condition.




(B-15 Jyoti-Kalash Society, Jodhpur Tekra, Satellite, Ahmedabad - 380 015)

## Celebrate this International Yoga Day with California Almonds

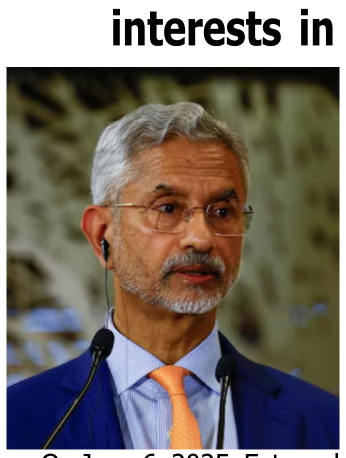
Ahmedabad, International Yoga Day, observed every year on June 21st, celebrates the holistic benefits of yoga in enhancing physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. While practicing yoga offers immense health advantages, complementing it with a balanced diet is essential for optimal results. A healthy diet should include a variety of nutrients like carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, minerals and so on. Protein is a vital nutrient and among natural sources of protein, almonds stand out as a convenient and nutritious choice. Whether you're holding long asanas or transitioning through challenging sequences, adequate protein intake helps sustain physical performance and supports muscle recovery post-session. Including almonds in your daily routine can be a simple yet effective way to fuel your yoga journey. Almonds, the king of nuts, are a powerhouse of nutrition, packed with 15 essential nutrients and offering a wide range of health benefits. A recently published study by Dr. Mark Kern showed that regularly eating almonds may aid faster recovery after exercise by reducing muscle damage. Another study by Dr. Oliver Witard highlighted almonds as an effective pre-workout snack, which helps reduce muscle soreness and improve muscle performance. This makes almonds a perfect companion to your exercise and yoga routine, nourishing your body for improved performance and overall well-being. Incorporating almonds into a daily diet can provide various health benefits, including lowering LDL (bad) cholesterol, supporting blood sugar control, promoting healthier skin, and aiding in effective weight management. Moreover, almonds are incredibly versatile and can be consumed in any form, yet extremely nutritious. The best is, almonds are easy to include in everyday meals, whether as a snack, added to salads, blended into smoothies, or used as a garnish across a variety of dishes.

# 14 EMPLOYEES OF WESTERN RAILWAY FELICITATED WITH GENERAL MANAGER'S SAFETY AWARD

Shri Ashok Kumar Misra - General Manager of Western Railway is seen along with Additional General Manager, Principal Head of Departments and the recipients of GM's Safety Award.

Ahmedabad, Shri Ashok Kumar Misra - General Manager of Western Railway felicitated 14 employees at WR Headquarters, Mumbai for their outstanding work which resulted in safe train working. These employees were awarded in appreciation of their alertness in duty and contribution towards averting untoward incidents, during the month of May, 2025 and thereby ensuring the safety of train operations. Out of the 14 employees, 04 are from Vadodara Division, 03 are from Bhavnagar Division, 02 each from Mumbai Central, Ahmedabad, Ratlam Division & 01 from Rajkot Division. According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Shri Vineet Abhishek, Shri Misra appreciated the alertness of the staff who were being awarded and mentioned that they are exemplary role models for everyone to emulate. The employees showed great zeal and commitment towards safe running of trains in various areas of safety such as detection of rail & track fracture, brake binding or dangling objects in passing train, application of emergency brakes to save untoward incidents, save human life, extinguishing the smoke detected in coaches and wheels etc. Western Railway is proud of all the awardee employees who with their prompt action and alertness helped to avert the possibility of any untoward incidence.

## Soft power, sharp strategy: How India is silently securing its interests in Central Asia



On June 6, 2025, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar hosted the 4th India-Central Asia Dialogue in New Delhi, marking a significant step in strengthening India's ties with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Beyond the talk of trade corridors and energy deals, there is a grand strategy as well. Behind the handshakes and MoUs lies a high-stakes game for influence, as India counters China's Belt and Road and Russia's waning grip.

Strategic footholds in a region critical to Eurasian dominance. Imagine India securing a web of partnerships that bypasses Pakistan, deters Beijing, and locks in energy routes. That's the power play unfolding. Jaishankar isn't just building bridges. He's redrawing the strategy.

India's push into Central Asia isn't just another trade mission; it's a bold bid to reshape influence in a region that's been a geopolitical sandbox for great powers. Forget oil routes or export markets. Jaishankar's dialogues are about planting India's flag as a cultural force, using soft power—think Bollywood, yoga, and shared history—to win hearts where Beijing and Moscow wield wallets and weapons. India's not just chasing contracts; it's rewriting the rules of the game, proving it can lead without coercion. Central Asia—Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan—sits at the crossroads of empires, a landlocked prize where global powers jostle for control. For decades, Russia's military might and China's Belt and Road billions have set the tone. India's entry isn't new; it's been nibbling at the edges with trade pacts and small investments. But Jaishankar's recent talks signal a shift—a deliberate pivot toward influence that doesn't rely on chequebooks or threats. Why care? Because in a world where hard power often backfires, India's softer approach could redefine how nations compete in contested regions. It's a test case for whether culture can trump cash. Let's start with the obvious: Central Asia matters. It's a treasure trove of gas, oil, and rare minerals, but more than that, it's a buffer zone between Russia, China, and the volatile Middle East. China's been pouring money into roads and railways, tying countries like Uzbekistan to its orbit with loans that often morph into debt traps. Russia, meanwhile, leans on old Soviet ties and military bases to keep its grip. Both play a zero-sum game—control or bust.