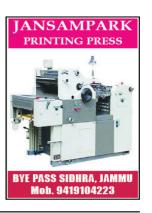


# INDRAH IMAGES



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**Lok Sabha Elections 2024** 

# Despite rain, Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency recorded 68.27% polling



JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, APRIL 19

Undeterred by the weather sive canvas of the five dis-

and Kashmir were held vagaries across the expan- with grace and resolve.

with fervor and exhibited this Press brief, the voting unwavering determina- percentage was around tion. Undaunted by the 68.27%. It is especially

challenges, the polling highlighted that due to parties, ensured the first weather latest updated phase of polls in Jammu reports are awaited from some of the Polling Stations, specially located in The polling for First remote hilly areas of Kishttricts of Doda, Kathua, Phase of General Elections war, Gandoh, Ramban, Kishtwar, Ramban, and to 18thLok Sabha in Par- Dudu-Basantgarh etc, Udhampur underwent liamentary Constituency the polling percentage is polling as the voters Udhampur has concluded likely to increase slightly. embraced their civic duty peacefully. Till releasing Once all Polling parties, especially of remote areas

> reaches respective CONTINUED ON → PAGE 4

### Udhampur's elderly voters show dedication for upholding democracy



JI NEWS SERVICE UDHAMPUR/RAMNAGAR/ BILLAWAR, APRIL 19

the drizzling rain, stood

Chunni Lal, a 91-year-old beacon of unwavering commitment to democracv. Resolute with his In the picturesque hills walking stick, Lal braved of Udhampur, amidst the weather to be the first CONTINUED ON → PAGE 4

### Braving erratic weather, first time voters pose for selfies with inked fingers



JI NEWS SERVICE KATHUA, APR 19

Braving the inclement weather, the first-time voters and future leaders of Jammu and Kashmir's

Udhampur Lok Sabha took the ownership of democratic process by exercising their franchise. The thrilled first

CONTINUED ON → PAGE 4

# LG chairs a high-level meeting to review skill development & entrepreneurship



JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, APRIL 19

Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today chaired

such as creating conver- welfare and Livelihood gence of skill developa high-level meeting to ment schemes, oppor- youth and women. review skill development, tunities and strategy for entrepreneurship and employment generation special emphasis on vital labour welfare. Senior across the sectors through need for upskilling and officials of the Department entrepreneurship, skill reskilling of youth and of Skill Development, gap analysis and skill labour workforce as per Department of Labour & mapping for upskilling, the evolving skill develop-Employment and Mission reskilling of labour force ment landscape to Youth attended the meet- and youth, and effective,

efficient implementation The Lt Governor dis- of Healthcare, Social Secucussed various issues rity schemes for labour Generation Schemes for

The Lt Governor laid

CONTINUED ON >> PAGE 4

#### In a bid to Enhance **Voting Experience**; Ramnagar Polling Station decorated with Balloons, Mehendi, Toys

JI NEWS SERVICE SRINAGAR, APR 19

As polling stations opened for the Udhampur Lok Sabha elections on Friday, the Ramnagar polling station stood out for its festive atmosphere, adorned with colorful balloons and offering additional amenities to voters.

Located in the Model Higher Secondary School of Ramnagar town, the polling station Mahila- 91 CONTINUED ON → PAGE 4

### **JK Govt Proposes Increase** in Dearness Allowance for **Employees, Pensioners**

JI NEWS SERVICE SRINAGAR, APR 19

welfare of government employees and pensioners/family pensioners, the from the Finance Depart-General Administration ment, the proposal high-Department of the Government of Jammu and the rates of DA for central Kashmir has proposed government employa revision in the rates of ees from 46% to 50% of

a letter addressed to the March 12, 2024, issued by Iammu and Kashmir, diture, Ministry seeks to increase the exist-

ing rates of DA payable to employees and pensioners/family pensioners In a significant move from 46% to 50% of basic aimed at enhancing the pay/basic pension, effective from January 1, 2024. Citing a memorandum

lights the decision to raise Dearness Allowance (DA). basic pay, in accordance As per the news agency, with Office Memorandum the proposal, outlined in No.1/1/2024-E-II(B) dated Chief Electoral Officer, the Department of Expen-

CONTINUED ON → PAGE 4

#### JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, APRIL 19

ECI establishes 114 special polling stations

In a first of its kind move towards inclusivity and environmental consciousness, the Election Commission of India (ECI) established 114 remarkable polling stations of different categories for voters in Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency (PC) which went for polling today in the first phase of General Elections to Lok Sabha 2024.

manned, youth manned, designed to cater specifi-



PwD manned, Green Poll- cally to women, youth, ing Stations, Border Poll- Persons with Disabilities These innovative poll- ing Stations and Unique (PWD), promote ecoing stations viz; women Polling Stations were friendly practices CONTINUED ON → PAGE 4

### All India voter turnout crosses 60 pc

JI NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 19

peaceful with voter turn- strife-torn Manipur. out exceeding 60% at 7 in

the evening. many as 1,625 candidates was the highest at 79.90%. as polling is scheduled till across 21 states and union This was followed by 6 PM in many territories (UTs) have been West Bengal (three seats),

voting machines).

After the polling began Friday remained largely from West Bengal and for grabs.

With this, the fate of as seat, the vote percentage ing stations are obtained

locked in EVMs (electronic where voter turnout was recorded at 77.57%.

At 47.49%, voter turn-The first of the seven- today, sporadic incidents out was the lowest in Bihar phase Lok Sabha polls on of violence were reported where four seats were up "The voting percent-

In Tripura, where age is likely to go upwards voting took place for one when reports from all poll-

CONTINUED ON → PAGE 4

#### Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspeciality Hospital











THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR LOVE, TRUST AND SUPPORT WHICH HAS ENABLED US TO COMPLETE 8 GLORIOUS YEARS OF QUALITY AND ACCESSIBLE HEALTHCARE



\*Inaugurated in April' 2016



9070-888-111/222/333



### CS reviews position of supplies, status of paramedic courses offered in JK hospitals



JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, APRIL 19

Chief Secretary, Atal tions of the UT of J&K.

Colleges; MD, JKMSCL;

Dulloo, today took a holis- Chief Secretary took note ization of the essential tic review of the position of the steps followed by equipments list across the of essential supplies and the J&K Medical Supplies healthcare facilities of the status of paramedical Corporation for floating UT. He even took notice of courses offered across diftenders to acquire drugs, the working of the Drugs & ferent healthcare institu- equipments and other Vaccine Distribution Manmachinery for the hospiagement System (DVDMS) The meeting, besides tals. He asked for looking Portal dealing with pur-Administrative Secretary, into shortening the time chase, inventory manage-Health & Medical Educa- period considerably to ment & distribution of tion was also attended by get such vital supplies for drugs, disposables, other

the Principals of Medical health care institutions. necessary He further asked for

Director Health Services framing Essential Drug Kashmir/Jammu and other List(EDL) by each CMO for HoDs of the Department. its early supply to the hos-During the meeting, the pitals besides standard-

CONTINUED ON → PAGE 4

### **CUJ Organized Special Lecture on Career opportunities** in Indian Knowledge System at GDC Samba



JAMMU, APRIL 19

Central University of ried out under an outat Degree College, Samba Jammu. today jointly by Centre

This workshop was car- resource person.

Career opportunities in Assistant Professor, CCRC for Comparative Religions Indian Knowledge System. delivered lectures as a

Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri, age of Hon'ble Vice Chanto facilitate freshers who samba had inaugurated cellor Prof. Sanjeev Jain, seek to take admission in the workshop and delivan Extension lecture cum post graduation courses ered the keynote address. workshop was conducted at Central University of Dr. Shweta, Assistant Professor in Political Sci-A large number of stu- ence department has of comparative Religion dents and faculty mem-coordinated the stage. Dr. Central University of workshop. Dr. Arvind Rit- Professor in Dogri lan-Jammu and Degree Col- uraj Associate Professor, guage and Dr. Ajay Kumar

and Civilizations, CUJ have jointly coordinated the Programme. Princi-Jammu under the patron- reach programme of CUJ Principal, Degree College, pal Prof (Dr.) Twinkle Suri during the programme also initiated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Central University of Jammu and Degree College Samba so that many exchange proand Civilization (CCRC), bers participated in the Joginder Singh, Associate grammes shall be jointly organised in future for the

Lok Sabha Elections 2024

# DEO Samba visits border villages, inspects Polling stations, bunkers

JI NEWS SERVICE SAMBA, APRIL 19

District Election Officer (DEO), Samba, Abhishek Sharma today visited border villages, during which he conducted comprehensive inspection of Polling Stations and bunkers in the area.

The inspection was aimed to evaluate the preparedness for upcoming Lok Sabha elections 2024 in the district.

Accompanied by ASP, Surinder Choudhary, Nodal officer SVEEP Mohd Sayeed, DIO, Ashiq Rafiq, Tehsildar and other district and Sectoral officers, the DEO undertook a detailed visit to several polling stations Stations established at nel. The basic minimum GMS Manguchak, GHS amenities like electricity, Sarthian and PS Chalyari water supply, sanitation

These Green Polling ity for differently-abled the DEO underscored the Stations have Rain Water

solar plants. The Green polling booths will be decorated with twigs and stakeholders and asked leaves, and are set to witthem to ensure all necesness no plastic usage. The DEO took appraisal of arrangements for the night stay of polling other election related transparent elections, including Green Polling staff and security person-process. He directed the wherein every eligible

> tingency route chart. Expressing satisfac- confidence and ease.

facilities, and accessibil- tion over preparedness, voters were also assessed importance of adhering harvesting facility and at these polling stations. to prescribed ECI guide-During the inspection, lines at all polling stathe DEO engaged with the tions, strong rooms and counting Halls.

> He reiterated the sary arrangements are in unwavering commitplace to facilitate smooth ment of administration and efficient voting and to facilitate free, fair, and officers to submit the con- citizen can exercise his / her democratic right with

### lege, Samba on the theme and Dr. Ashwani Kumar, Singh, Director, Centre faculty members. Ongoing LS elections are a fight between antinational and nationalist mentality: Brahm Jyot

JAMMU, APR 19

Braham Jyot Satti, BJP senior leader and incharge BJP OBC Morcha Jammu Kashmir issued a press statement and marked ongoing as a fight between anti-national and nationalist mindset.

Today's election is not and has launched various ers are giving hatred stateabout any party but about beneficial schemes for our ments like Farooq Abdulideology, one which is in youth and has provided lah which he has given in the interest of the country and the other which to them. is anti-national . The BJP

year PM Narendra Modi Narendra Modi. led government is working for betterment of public opposition he said oppo-Kalvan.



Modi is very dedicated and them and in the influence In his statement he said down to earth personality of stress opposition leadnew carrier opportunities

On INDI alliance and schemes.

with Pakistan and try to appreciable. do polarization politics between Jammu and Kashmir . He said opposition parties are frustrated by the growth BJP and their hatred politics has come to an end Even the common public are not supporting the past few days.

He said PM Narendra He said in past 10 years Modi led government is always works in the inter- BJP has made India a working for segments est of the nation and our strong and Progressive of society and there is a public will vest their inter- country and created new huge number of highly est in BJP again and we will employment opportuni- beneficial schemes which make majority govern- ties for youth and working are running by Governfor all segments and India ment just for needy people He said from the past 10 is blessed to have PM like and the public should take advantage of these

He said Nation's first and giving true example of sition leaders like Farooq ideology of BJP is best and Sewa, Sushasan and Garib Abdullah , Mehbooba it works in the nation's being directly benefited Mufti and others are in interest and prominent by connecting them with He said Prime Minister love with Pakistan so that citizens are joining hands banking facilities.

they always seem to stand with BJP which is highly

He said in the past 10 years BJP dealt with big issues like surgical strike to strengthen the country, construction of Ram temple which has been in dispute for a long time, removal of Article 370 to connect Kashmir in the main stream, ban on triple talaq for justice to minority women. Our party has tried to realize the slogan of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas.

He highlights about schemes like Ayushman Bharat, Kisan Samman Nidhi yojna, cleanliness campaign, Aawas Yojna, Ujjwala gas scheme and how their effect was visible on the ground and said that during the tenure of the BJP government, under the Jan Dhan Yojana, lakhs of people are Lok Sabha Elections 2024

### SVEEP activities held at GCW Gandhi Nagar, Wave Mall Jammu to promote voter awareness

JI NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APRIL 19

Returning Officer for 5-Jammu Parliamentary Constituency (DEO Jammu), Sachin Kumar Vaishya today inaugurated vibrant SVEEP awareness rally at Government Gandhi Nagar College here.

The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation from students representing various colleges across the region.

The venue hosted a plethora of SVEEP activities, prominently among which was performance by Punjabi singer Sangram Hanjra, who captivated the audience with his songs, enlightening them about the significance of exercising their voting rights and encouraging all attendees to cast from Natrang under guid- of the training session Mahiwal besides others.

artists from Natrang the- mum participation. atre group delivered a

**NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME** "NOT ME, BUT YOU" OVT. GANDHI MEMORIAL SCIENCE COLLEGE

their votes in the Lok ance of Balwant Thakur were actively engaged performed a play on vot- in SVEEP awareness Nodal Officer SVEEP Adding to atmosphere, er's awareness and maxi- activities. Similar SVEEP (ACD Jammu) Dr. Vikas

compelling play high- awareness rally, the the evening, which were Khabir along with BDOs lighting the importance venue also hosted a prominently also attend- and students, were of voting in a democratic training session for poll- ed by General Election among those present at society. Various artists ing parties. Participants Observer, Rahul Ranjan the event.

activities were also held Sharma, Dy. Director In addition to the at Wave Mall here later in Tribal Affairs Dr. Abdul

#### GDC Marh hosts farewell for final semester Students

JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, APRIL 19

Under the aegis of IQAC and farewell Committee, Government Degree College (GDC), Marh organised farewell bonanza to bid adieu to outgoing 6th semester students.

devoted to rejoice three Mohit Kalotra. years spent together with joyful moments.

GDC Marh, Prof. Rakesh Kumar Koul.

menced with lighting of Camp, Eshan Saini (First centric activities. tradition lamp of learning student who participated by the Principal of the col- in Khelo India at Guwa- reports on disbursal of lege and faculty members hati) since the establish- turnover incentive claims along with the student Pre- ment of college. A comsidium and Alumni.

of their seniors. The pro- chair, live performance, were made. gramme was organized dance performances, Sem), Kashish Sharma (4th colourful activities. Sem), Rahul Kaith (4th non-teaching staff mem- importance to their vision boost to the existing unit



Sem), Nandveer Choud- college, in his key note employment generation the policy Government hary (4th Sem), Sandeep address, guided the out-through optimal utiliza- of J&K would be releasing Mottan (2nd Sem), Rohit going batch for their forth tion of available resourc- the promised funds for the Kumar (2nd Sem) besides coming future, giving es. For giving the liquidity year 2022-23 also.

and confidence. He also On this occasion advised to join hands so peer groups, juniors and mementos as token of that college will be linked teachers and reminisce respect and souvenir were with nearby industries for given by college to all the better opportunities and The chief guest of the 69 students of outgoing employability enhanceoccasion was Principal 6th semesters including ment. He also advised the student Boby Baitha (First alumni to work towards Student who participat- the development of col-The programme com- ed in NSS NIC national lege including student

I&C deptt refutes news

JAMMU, APRIL 19: The petition among seniors Industries and Commerce Colorful performances was conducted including Department today refuted were showcased by the personality test by faculty certain reports in a section students of 4th and 2nd judges (Prof Anita Sal- of newspapers wheresemester (Shruti Sharma, gotra, Prof Madhvi Para- in apprehensions with Palak Saini and Suhani sher, Dr.Ram Dayal, Prof respect to disbursal of Choudhary) in honour Sachim Bhagat), musical turnover incentive claims

A communique received under the guidance of cul- cat walk etc. Jatin Dogra here by the department tural committee of the col- and Archana Devi of 6th in this regard stated that be released as the turnlege headed by Dr. Ashu semesters were judged as Jammu and Kashmir Jolly, Dr. Ruchika Bavoria, Mr. Farewell and Mrs Fare- Industrial Policy 2021-Dr. Tanu Sharma and stu- well after their wonderful 30 was aimed to attract dents Sushain Sharma (4th performances in different substantial investment in industry for production and the Finance Depart-The Principal of the for goods, services and

holders the Government of the J&K announced the Turnover Incentive Scheme-2021 for all the eligible existing units within the applicable time period of the policy with the overall capping of Rs. 50.00 crore per annum subject to the availability of the funds on proportionate basis of the turnover disclosed.

The Divisional Level Committee's approved cases in respect of both Jammu and Kashmir division as per provisions of the Turnover Incentive Scheme 2021 for the year 2021-22. The available funds to the tune of 26.40 cr were distributed proportionately on the pro rata basis among the existing eligible unit holders.

The department clarified that due to some extraneous reasons the funds could not be released from the treasuries during the fag end of the financial year. However the Government of UT of J&K assures the unit promoters that the available funds would over incentive for the year 2021-22 shortly and action in this respect has already been initiated by the I&C ment. Moreover, as per

# LS polls fight between Modi's guarantee & opposition's bogus promises: Adv Purnima

 $JAMMU, APR\,19$ 

Adv. Purnima Sharma, Spokesperson, BIP, J&K, and former Deputy Mayor Jammu underscored the critical choice facing the electorate between the concrete achievements of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership and the hollow promises peddled by the opposition in Jammu and Kashmir

Union Territory. With a clear vision and welfare schemes, his governance has touched every aspect of Indian society, empowering millions and the farthest corners of the



India's socio-economic mitment to the people of tives. landscape, ushering in the country. This guar-

Adv. Purnima exposed crumble under the slighttheir pattern of offering est scrutiny." Speaking at the elec- nothing but empty promtion campaign meeting ises and baseless allega- urged voters of Jammu candidate in the ensuing held here today to garner tions. While Prime Min- and Kashmir to discern Lok Sabha polls. support for BJP's candi- ister Modi has delivered between genuine accom-

an era of unprecedented antee encapsulates the tion is crystal clear," he ated the BJP's unwavering growth and development. assurance of a prosperous said, adding "It's between commitment to the wel-From infrastructure to future, built on the pil- the proven leadership fare and progress of every lars of economic stabil- of Prime Minister Modi, Indian citizen, vowing ity, national security, and backed by his unwaver- to continue the transforsocial cohesion, he added. ing guarantee of progress, mative journey initiated Contrasting this with and the hollow promises under the visionary leadensuring progress reaches the opposition's rhetoric, of the opposition, which ership of Prime Minister

to come. As the nation gears up for the Lok Sabha "The choice in this elec-polls, Adv. Purnima reiter-Narendra Modi. She urged people of J&K to support The senior BJP leader and vote in favour of BJP

# Lok Sabha Elections 2024: DEO Jammu reviews preparations for polling day

JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, APRIL 19

District Election Officer (DEO), Sachin Kumar Vaishya, who is the Returning Officer for 5-Jammu Parliamentary Constituency, on Friday convened a meeting with AROs, Nodal Officers and district officers to rally efforts for smooth con-

nificant focus on SVEEP medical facilities. activities, stressing the need to engage people for Green Polling Sta- meticulous implementafrom all walks of life and tions, Model Polling Station. sections of society.

Elections-2024.

revolved around prepa- lously reviewed to ensure ical roles in the massive ments.



duct of polling in the rations for the dispatch seamless operations on Constituency scheduled and reception of EVMs polling day. on April 26, under the and poll parties, as well

tions and all Women Poll-

Deliberations also cen-2nd phase of Lok Sabha as the provision of facili- tred on postal ballots and ties in accordance with voting arrangements for The meeting delved sig- ECI guidelines, including service voters and essential service employees, attended by ADDC Sher Special arrangements with a strong emphasis on

Key discussions ing Stations were meticu- were briefed on their crit- officers from line depart-

electoral exercise, underscoring the collective responsibility towards ensuring free, fair, and transparent elections.

The meeting was also Singh, ADC Shishir Gupta, Deputy DEO Rameshwar Kumar, along with dis-All attending officers trict officers and senior

### PM Modi ends dynastic politics, paves way for transparent governance in J&K: Langer

JI NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 19

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken bold steps during his last two regimes to pave the way for a new era of transparent governance and inclusive development in Jammu & Kashmir by putting an end to decadelong dynastic politics.

This was stated by Sham Lal Langer, Conve-

has long been a barrier racy in the region. to progress and equita-



the Article 370 from J&K, this entrenched system is a statement issued here resolute stance against Cell stands as a steadfast perity, and inclusivity. The senior BJP leader its dedication to fostering ests of traders, entre-people of Jammu and said that dynastic politics democracy and meritoc-

ble representation in Jammu & Kashmir tran- efforts and constructive Lok Sabha polls with an J&K. However, with the scends mere political dialogue, the BJP aimed aim to continue the spree unwavering commitment rhetoric; it embodies to contribute meaning- of development in the of PM Modi by repealing a holistic approach to fully to J&K's journey Union Territory.

ment. By prioritizing the progress, he said. welfare of every citizen As Jammu & Kashmir

dynastic politics reflects advocate for the interpreneurs, and all stake- Kashmir to extend full holders in the region. support to the BJP can-"PM Modi's vision for Through collaborative didates in the ensuing

socio-economic develop- towards prosperity and

and ensuring equitable enters a new chapter opportunities for all, of its history, Sham Lal PM Modi's government Langer extended his is laying the foundation gratitude to PM Modi and for a prosperous and har- the BJP leadership for monious J&K," he added. their unwavering com-Sham Lal Langer reaf- mitment to the region's firmed the BJP's pledge development. He urged to continue working all stakeholders to join tirelessly towards the hands in realizing the advancement of Jammu immense potential of J&K now a relic of the past. He & Kashmir. He empha- and building a future that nor BJP Trade Cell, J&K in emphasized that the BJP's sized that the BJP Trade is defined by unity, pros-

He appealed to the

### NC, PDP, Cong no match to BJP in J&K: Kavinder

#### Modi Govt won hearts of lakhs of people in last one decade

JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, APR 19

Underscoring BJP's unrivaled position in the political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir, senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta on Friday mainhis party as BJP Governof people.

While addressing a seat. number of public meetpolls in Jammu Constitu- governance and people- of the people will continency, the BJP stalwart centric policies, he empha- ue to resonate with voters leader asserted that other sized that the BJP has across the region. parties in the region are emerged as the preferred should remained focused masses. and should support BJP in the electorate has support- zational structure and leader called upon party turnout and civic particied the party in Udhampur tireless efforts of its cadre workers and supporters

tained that NC, PDP or Constituency as over 65 have significantly strength-Congress are no match to percent votes have been ened the party's presence casted till 5 PM and there at the grassroots level, ment in the last ten years is more time to go making making it a formidable have won hearts of lakhs it amply clear that BJP will force in Jammu and Kashremain triumphant in this mir's political circles. He expressed confidence Citing the BJP's track that the BJP's unwavering ings ahead of Lok Sabha record of transformative dedication to the welfare

Kavinder Gupta also no match to the BJP's choice of the electorate in took the opportunity to growing influence and Jammu and Kashmir. He reiterate the BJP's unwavorganizational strength. also highlighted the BJP's ering commitment to He said that there is no commitment to inclusive upholding the principles other political outfit in development, social jus- of democracy and the rule J&K which can guarantee tice, and national secu- of law. He emphasized that what the PM Modi has in rity as key factors driving the BJP's rise in Jammu offing therefore people its popularity among the and Kashmir is a testa-The senior BJP leader of a prosperous, peaceful, the upcoming phases of categorically said that and united India. Ahead he urged for concerted

to redouble their efforts in furthering the party's agenda of development and good governance.

The former deputy Chief Minister urged voters in Jammu and Kashmir to place their trust in the BJP, highlighting that the Party remains steadfast in its commitment to serving the interests of all sections of society. He asked the people not to get swayed by the bogus narratives by the parties having texture of being dynastic, changing stands for petty interests and remaining corrupt all the

Meanwhile, Kavinder Gupta convened a significant meeting with former legislators at Party Headquarters in Jammu, underscoring the paramount importance of maximizing public engagement during the electoral phase. Stressing the foundational role ment to the party's vision of citizen involvement in the democratic process, polls in J&K like the way the BJP's robust organi- of polls in Jammu, the BJP efforts to enhance voter

#### CUJ organizes Mind Meet on New Education Policy (NEP) 2020

JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU,APRIL 19

Panel discussion on "Unveiling the Power and Potential of the National Education Policy: Navigating from Primary to Higher Education" organised at CUJ in collaboration with Eutierria, The Botanical Society, the event explored the power and potential of the New Education Policy 2020 as a part of Thursday Mind Meet.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Sanjeev Jain praised the initiatives by the Department of Botany and the School of Life Sciences, encouraging them to organize similar events for the holistic development of students. The discussion began with Prof. Vandana Sharma, Dean, School of Languages at CUJ, explaining the importance of Thursday Mind Meet events as forums for university students and scholars to discuss national Department of Educational ernment initiatives.

Studies provided an over-

Yogesh Kumar summarized Meet.

Prof. Brij Mohan Singh students' apprehensions view of the New Education Bhau, Head, Department about the new system. He Policy (NEP) 2020. He also of Botany, discussed the also described the chalspoke about the Academic initiatives being taken to lenges pertaining to imple-Bank of Credits (ABC) and incorporate NEP into the mentation of a 3-language its significance in giving curriculum and empha- system for students who academic flexibility to the sized the policy as a lifelong move between states. students. Guest of Honour, learning process. He also Student panelists and the Mr. Islam Khan, Assistant stressed the importance of audience shared their con-Commissioner at KVS skill enhancement courses cerns about NEP, including Regional Office in Jammu, and the variety of choices the mixed curriculum, its discussed the implementa- available to students under efficacy, and the impact on tion of NEP in school edu- NEP 2020. Dr. Samantha job prospects. The event cation and highlighted the Vaishnavi discussed con- concluded with a vote of challenges and benefits for cerns regarding the qual-thanks by Dr. Ashok Kumar, students. He praised Kend- ity of teaching, particu- who expressed gratitude riya Vidyalaya Schools for larly in science courses, to all panelists and particiand international topics. their role as torch bearers and shared her experipants for their contribu-Prof. J. N. Baliya of the and pace-setters for gov- ences and challenges. Dr. tions to the Thursday Mind

### Arun Gupta meets Atal Dulloo, demands new projects for Jammu city to attract tourism

JI NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 19

Arun Gupta, President Chamber of Commerce & Industry Jammu met the Chief Secretary Sh. Atal tary that although the government is trying is level best for the development and beautification of Tawi River banks and creating a fresh water lake. The project needs to be expedited and more such projects are also required to be taken in hand ists to the city of temples as going to be reach Kashmir Valley.

Further the work on the Mubarak Mandi Herisnails pace. We request that the work on the said project should be expedited and the there should also be started at the earliest.

Arun Gupta also request allow commercial activities nominal amount as converunsafe. We request that ing flyovers/expressway. over there on the pattern of Gulmarg and Pahalgam.

the Chief Secretary that Jammu has great poten- ership rights after charging that this area of the bus connections by introductial for pilgrims and tour- reasonable premium. ists which has remained untapped till now. Peer Arun Gupta briefed the and the existing shopkeep- amnesty scheme for the panchayal mountainous Chief Secretary that inspite ers / businessmen work- commercial users(Traders region of Jammu has vast of depositing the prescribed ing in the present building and Industrial Consumers) tourists potential but has fee by the allottee of Shiv may be rehabilitated on the so that they get relief on this been neglected so far. We Market Railway Station analogy of rehabilitating the front.

request that tourists poten- have not be executed since shopkeepers of newly contial of this region together last more than `15 years the structed/developed multiwith tourists attractive same should be expedited. story projects so that their places in Poonch,Rajouri districts should be tapped in Chief Secretary that the right earnest. Similarly reli- lease deeds of some allot- that the development work giously important places like tees of Sabzi Mandi and Fruit of Transport Nagar Narwal Dulloo, IAS. During inter- Shiv Khori, Mata Vaishnoo Mandi Narwal have expired which is being carried by action Sh. Arun Gupta Devi ,Sudh mahadev and the same should be renewed Jammu Metropolitan regionapprised the Chief Secre- tourists attractive places like after charging minimum al development authority

developed on modern lines to attract tourists. Arun Gupta also pointed apprised the Chief Secreto attract a pilgrims / tour- out that since last three tary that Large chunk of the Chief Secretary that decades the JDA as well as land in Jammu have been although the Union Govin near future the train is the Housing Board have not declared as "Gair Mumkin ernment is very much conestablished any commercial Khud" by Revenue Depart- cerned for the development area or residential colony ment despite the fact that of Jammu on modern lines due to which there is dearth

spots on route. Historical

explored. that Patnitop should be after a period of 25 years those lands. developed as a tourist hub of first/ original allotment sion fee. He also requested steps should be taken to the Chief Secretary exist- repair the said building to the move of UT Govt to Arun Gupta also apprised ing allottees of Warehouse avoid any untoward inci- waive off interest and sur-

He also apprised the livelihood is not effected. be expedited.

should also be given own- dent. Further we request charge on domestic power stand should be developed ing amnesty scheme. He During interaction Sh. into a new multistory project also demanded power tariff

Arun Gupta also said Patni top, Sanasar should be possible premium. Further through JDA is going on at a inter connected by improv- some allottees of Bahu Plaza very slow pace. We request ing road and erecting picnic commercial shops have not that the said work should be been given procession and expedited and more funds natural water lakes like lease deeds executed with be released on need basis to Mansar & Surinsar should be them the same should also get the development work of Transport Nagar completed Arun Gupta further without any further delay.

Arun Gupta also apprised no water body is passing for which they have proof both commercial sites as through these lands. Reg- vided many projects like tage complex is going on at well as residential area. The istration and Construction flyovers etc. but at the same possibilities of same may be activities on these lands is time we wish to request that barred. There is the need the businessmen and gen-Government should for- to redefine the "Kism" of eral public of those areas light and sound system over mulate a scheme allowing this type of land and also a should not feel inconveownership rights of lease- Policy should be formulated nience and harassed while hold Industrial land to local to allow the commercial and constructing the expressway sons of soil / entrepreneurs construction activities on and flyovers besides should not hinder the emergency The old bus stand build- services and impact on daily for which it is necessary to of land after charging a ing has been declared as commuters while construct-Arun Gupta welcomed

Vice Chancellor JU releases Newsletter of Poonch Campus

JAMMU, APRIL 19

The Vice Chancellor Unithe Newsletter of JU'S

Poonch Campus. highlighting the academic of Dr. Rubia Bukhari in sector and the welfare of prowess and community ensuring the productiv- farmers in the area. engagement of the JU'S ity and informativeness Poonch Campus, Profes- of the Newsletter. He sion, Prof Rahul Gupta, sor Umesh Rai, the Vice expressed his sincere con-Registrar, Prof. Meena Chancellor, University gratulations to the team Sharma, Dean of Plan- Campus Officer said the of Jammu commended for their commitment to ning and Development, release of the Newsletter the efforts of Director excellence and service to Prof Seema Langer, Head marks a pivotal moment Poonch Campus, Profes- the community. sor Rakesh Vaid, for the of Poonch Campus.

case of the remarkable lor about the significant opportunity to address ment.

Poonch Campus.

versity of Jammu Prof. lauded the dedication and ness programs being orga-Umesh Rai today released hard work of the entire nized, specifically tailored team at Poonch Campus, to benefit the local com-

release of the Newsletter Director Poonch Campus, Sengupta, former Direc- ing its dedication to aca-Professor Rakesh Vaid, tor of Poonch Campus Dr. demic excellence, com-The Newsletter serves provided a detailed brief-Ranjeet Kalra, Teaching munity empowerment, as a comprehensive showing to the Vice Chancel-faculty MMTC, all took the and societal develop-

achievements and initia- achievements and ongo- the audience. Each of Poonch Campus. He high-Professor Umesh Rai lighted the various awareparticularly acknowledg- munity, with a particular

During the event, Zoology, Prof Dipankar

tives undertaken by the ing initiatives at the them spoke warmly, extending their congratulations to the director of Poonch Campus and the entire team involved in finalizing the Newsletter. Their words of apprecia-In a momentous event ing the contributions focus on the agricultural tion echoed the collective effort and dedication put forth by the team, under-On this special occa-scoring the significance of their accomplishment

Dr. Rubia Bukhari, of the Department of in the journey of the Poonch Campus, reflect-

# BJP bridged gap between urban-rural population: Jugal, Rana

JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, APR 20

Minister, Narendra Modi, juria and other leaders. the urban and rural areas have been treated equally said that the ten years

and the social welfare. Jammu-Reasi parliamen- all matters. Due care has

Ranjan villages, along with senior leader and former MLA Devender Rana, During the ten years rule DDC Chairman Bharat of the BJP-led NDA gov- Bhushan, Jammu North ernment under Prime district president Omi Kha-

Jugal Kishore Sharma

in matters related to infra- works of Modi government structure development itself speaks that there was no consideration of region, Jugal Kishore Sharma, faith, or gender, and all BJP candidate from the were treated equally in tary constituency, said been taken to ensure that this while addressing the infrastructure devel- take all on board. public in Amb Gharota, opment projects are not Kangrail, Barn, Seri Pan- confined to major cities said that the mega proj- urban areas. He said that Jammu and Kashmir. dita, Gaink, Amb, Gharota and towns but reach the Tung, Gorda, Rabta, Agore the rural-urban gap and



whether in cities or vil- the Modi government lib- Kishore Sharma, said that work more vigorously to farmers, the women, the to run the government.

ects of road connectivity there has been no dearth

Jugal Kishore Sharma also covered rural and to numerous projects in nothing which could be lar, the education institu- date of displaying full faith

Making a fervent appeal Chowk, Thathi Chowk, remotest village to lessen have covered every area, of development funds and to the electorates, Jugal term under PM Modi, will being established. The Modi and give more years

whereas the BJP- and prosperity. led NDA has the

lages. The rail facility has erally granted sanction gans but in practical, it did in rural areas in particu- mean the people's manappreciated. He assured tions have been upgraded in the programmes and that the BJP in its third and more new schools are policies of PM Narendra

sible for scams, the path of more progress ernment, he added.

distinction of address, said that one ing the 2024 elections of being a dispensa- of the major and impor- Lok Sabha on the basis of tion of schemes of tant gift to the people of its report card of good govpublic welfare. He Jammu and Kashmir from ernance and the people said that Congress the Modi government has should support the party misled the voters been the provision of cov- candidate once again so of the country for ering every citizen under that the pace of developdecades on false the Ayushman Gold Health ment gets excelled. He said and pleasing slo- Card Scheme. He said that that voting for BJP would

the people should bring more development, youth, the border people, not forget that the restore complete peace all have been the targeted Congress-led UPA and normalcy and take beneficiaries of different had been respon- Jammu and Kashmir on schemes of the Modi gov-

Devender Rana further Devender Rana, in his said that the BJP is contest-

#### FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

#### All India voter turnout...

constituencies. Also, voters reaching the polling stations till the end of polling hour are allowed to cast the district administration. There are a total of 84,468 their vote," Election Commission of India (ECI) said in a press note.

The poll body noted that final figures of voter turnout will be known by Saturday after scrutiny of form 17A. In phase-I of the general election, polling has been

completed for 10 states/UTs to elect 18th Lok Sabha along with polling for state legislative assemblies of Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh in the northeastern part EVM.

As many as 102 parliamentary constituencies went to polls today. States including Uttarakhand, Arunachal their voting process.

States which saw voting on a few parliamentary of all candidates". constituencies included West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, seats would be held in subsequent phases.

Counting of votes is scheduled on June 4, 2024.

The counting of votes for the Assembly polls in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim will be on June 2.

While Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led BJP is seeking a third straight term and forming the government of Hiranagar village. Along with these first-time voters at the Centre, opposition parties under the banner of Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) are seeking to upstage the ruling party.

#### **Udhampur's elderly...**

in queue at the Upper Garnai village polling station for the Lok Sabha General elections of 2024.

"I don't exactly know how many votes I have cast till democratic process of our country," declared Lal as his voice resonated with the wisdom of ages.

Before heading out to cast his ballot, Lal followed his up on the day's news on his television set. At the Gov- country. ernment School in Upper Garnai, fellow voters honored Lal, making way for him to vote unhindered, a tradition born out of deep respect for his steadfast dedication to

Similarly, in another corner of Udhampur, a heartwarming tale unfolded at the Govt High School Ritti polling station. Naseeb Singh, 93, and his wife Shanti Devi, 87, epitomized the spirit of civic duty as they embarked on a one-kilometer journey, traversing rugged terrain to mad Saroori. KNO cast their votes. Accompanied by their son, the elderly couple was greeted with warmth and assistance from polling staff and fellow citizens upon their arrival.

With steady steps, Naseeb Singh and Shanti Devi entered the polling booth, ready to add yet another ballot to their storied rich history of electoral partici-

"All the arrangements were good; we didn't face any problem while casting our vote," expressed Shanti Devi, her words echoing the sentiment of a community united in upholding the democratic process.

Meanwhile, amidst the relentless downpour, 75-yearold Vishno Devi displayed unwavering determination at Roun village of Udhampur district to cast her ballot.

Undeterred by the rain, she stood in a lengthy queue, umbrella in hand, patiently waiting for her turn to exercise her democratic right. After enduring a 30-minute wait, Devi finally marked her vote, her steadfastness echoing the importance of this civic duty. Reflecting on Such opportunities to choose our representatives only come once every five years.'

The Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency in Jammu and Kashmir witnessed these inspiring acts of civic engagement during the first phase of the Lok Sabha Elections-2024.

As the rain continued to fall softly, the resilience and dedication of these elderly voters served as a poignant are equipped with amenities tailored to their unique reminder of the enduring strength of democracy amidst the tranquil hills of Udhampur.

#### **Braving erratic...**

time voters contributed their part after casting first vote for electing the member parliament from the list of 12 contesting candidates in the fray for the seat. Kathua-Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency spread across five districts and 18 assembly constituencies comprising unwavering dedication to fostering inclusivity and susdiverse geographical landscapes like plains and snow-

cially erratic weather, the young voters were among the stations represent a significant step towards achieving people who visited their respective polling booths early that goal.

hours despite adverse weather and heavy rains. After getting the fingers inked, the excited young

voters were seen clicking selfies and making reels for **Heavy rains keep...** social media posts at especially decorated booths by 38,641 are women and two are third genders.

The first time voters were seen at the polling booths with smiles and confidence on their faces and posting selfies on social media accounts. They were quite excited about the different procedures that are followed before the voter is allowed to press the button in the

"It was my first vote. I was so excited from last one week, particularly from the day when BLO delivered my voting slip at home. Today morning I came here with Pradesh, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tamil my grandmother and was excited to see my name was Nadu and the Union Territories of Puducherry, Andafinely included in the voting list," said Ramanpreet Kaur, man and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep completed from Kathua, adding, "Now we also able to choose our representative by comparing the merits and demerits

Another voter from Udhampur, Kushi said, "We saw Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Voting on the remaining many changes around us in the past few years. Many positive things happened while many decisions were Remaining six phases of polls will continue till 1st not consulted with local population. Here is my first of June with around 97 crore voters lined up to vote. vote for choosing a representative, who becomes our voice in the parliament".

> "Voting for the first time is a great feeling as well as responsibility. I am equally excited to cast my first vote for the development of my area," said Randeep Kumar were some who despite being in their mid-20's voted for the first time.

> "I was 17 years and a few months old when last election (2019) was held. I was very sad because my name was not included in the voters list. However, this time polling booth and got that indelible ink mark on my first finger and I am thrilled", said Rohit Sharma of Basholi.

Many newlyweds couples were also turned up for now. But I will always do my duty to strengthen the voting in wedding costumes at a polling station across

After casting his first vote in Udhampur, overjoyed Ashish Kumar said, "I have voted for a candidate I think morning routine, a breakfast followed by the catching can work for the development of the district and the

peacefully across the constituency with heavy rainfall being reported in Kathua district since this morning.

districts will decide fate of 12 candidates, including Union minister Dr Jitendra Singh of the BJP, Congress candidate Choudhary Lal Singh and Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) nominee Ghulam Moham-

#### **ECI establishes...**

and cater to voters of different kind in the region. The polling stations were established under specific themes in all five districts of Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency which went for polls today.

In Doda district, three Women manned, three PWD manned, two Youth manned, three Green and three unique polling stations were established. Similarly, in Kathua district, six Women manned, one PWD manned , six Youth manned, three Green, 31 Border and two unique polling stations were established for ease of

Likewise, in Kishtwar, three Women manned, three PWD manned, three Youth manned, four Green and three unique polling stations were established.

In Ramban district, three Women manned, three PWD manned, two Youth manned, four Green and her experience, she remarked, "The wait was worth it. two unique polling stations were established. Similarly, in Udhampur, four Women, four PWD, four Youth manned, six Green and three unique polling stations were established.

> The newly established polling stations aim to revolutionize the electoral process by ensuring accessibility and representation for all segments of society. With a special focus on women, youth, and PWD, these stations needs, fostering an environment conducive to active participation in the democratic process.

Furthermore, the ECI's commitment to environmental sustainability is showcased through the implementation of green practices at these polling stations. Every aspect is meticulously designed to minimize environmental impact and promote a greener future.

Speaking on this milestone initiative, Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, Pandurang K Pole said that the establishment of these unique polling stations underscores our tainability in the electoral process. He added that the ECI believes that every citizen should have equal access As per news agency, braving all the challenges, espe- to exercise their democratic right, and these polling

many stayed indoors and didn't vote at all.

In Chenab valley, rain had a huge impact on polling potential first-time voters of which 45,825 are men, in first half of the day when voters in Banihal and Bhaderwah areas couldn't move out due to heavy rain and drug warehouses. low temperatures. But in the afternoon, rain kept away and people got a breathing period to come out and vote to elect their Member Parliament (MP).

As the evening progressed and voting got closed at 6 pm, heavy downpour started again and it continued till late evening.

The Kashmir News Observer (KNO) had already reported that rain may play spoilsport on the election training there. day as Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) had forecasted rain in this constituency for today.

the evening were the polling staff and security forces to ensure their professional upbringing and fruitful accompanying them in hilly areas where they had to walk five to seven kilometers in slippery conditions reviewed the status of infrastructure and manpower in and reach back to base camps from where they had collected the election material.

Moreover, the threat of landslides and shooting stones on Nashri to Banihal stretch of Jammu-Srinagar national highway, which falls in Ramban district, ham- He called for taking measures to augment the necessary pered the polling parties to reach back to their base infrastructure and arranging of manpower to make such camps. The threat of landslides also loomed large in hilly and far off areas of Udhampur, Kathua, Doda and Kishtwar districts and administration was keeping a close eye on the developments. KNO

#### LG chairs a high-level...

whole of government approach towards skill develop-I ensured that my name is included, and I went to the ment and providing opportunities for budding entre-

> The Lt Governor also called for strengthening the users on DVDMS portal. measures for protection of workers, including unorganized workers in terms of statutory minimum wage, social security and healthcare of workers.

The Lt Governor directed for streamlining the process for registration of unemployed youth and labourers in the respective departments and to improve employability of local youth in development projects. He also operates 28 B.Sc Nursing Colleges, 19 Paramedical Insti-According to election officials, voting was going on said that Departments should help unorganized work-tutions including those in private sector. It was said that ers to register himself or herself on e-Shram portal.

The meeting also discussed and reviewed the prog-Udhampur, Doda, Kishtwar, Kathua and Ramban ress of various initiatives and schemes such as job fairs, e-Shram Portal, Ease of Doing Business, promotion of Knowledge Based Service Sector and the digital initiatives including development of Common Skilling Dashboard and J&K Youth and Skill mobile application.

> The meeting was attended by Sh Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Sh Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Sh Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, Secretary, Skill Development, Labour & Employment department and CEO Mission Youth and other senior

#### JK Govt Proposes...

of Finance, Government of India.

According to estimates provided by the Budget Division of the Finance Department, the proposed increase in DA would result in a monthly enhancement of approximately Rs 52.24 crore in the basic pay of employees, with an annual financial implication of Rs 626.88 crore.

The proposed revision comes in the wake of the last increase in DA rates for employees and pensioners/ family pensioners, which was implemented on July 1, 2023, raising the rates from 42% to 46%

In light of the urgency of the matter, the letter emphasizes the need for expeditious action, urging all concerned parties to treat the issue as "MOST URGENT.".

#### In a bid to Enhance...

welcomed voters with vibrant decorations and thoughtful arrangements. Women, men, and young voters have gathered at the polling booth since early morning to exercise their democratic right.

the persistent rainfall throughout the day, voters remained undeterred, patiently queuing up to cast their votes. Vandana Kumari, the female presiding officer, efficiently managed the proceedings at the polling station for the second time, ensuring a smooth voting

In a bid to enhance the voting experience, the administration set up a separate center near the polling station, catering exclusively to women. Here, arrangements were made for women to apply mehendi, adding a cultural touch to the electoral event. Furthermore, ing the direction of governance and development in the various types of toys were made available for children, region," the CEO J&K said. creating a family-friendly environment at the polling venue. KNO

#### CS reviews position...

materials besides machinery & equipments to various

Regarding the imparting of different degree and diploma courses in Paramedical Sciences, the Chief Secretary asked about the functionality of the newly established nursing colleges and paramedic schools in different districts of J&K. He enquired about the kind of physical infrastructure available at each such facility along with the presence of faculty/tutors imparting

Dulloo observed that since the Department has introduced these courses admitting hundreds of students The worst sufferers of the intermittent heavy rain in each year, it is therefore its primary responsibility engagement for the duration of the courses. He also

> The Chief Secretary also took stock of the recruitment rules, recruitment process and scope of career development in the courses offered by the paramedic schools. institutions viable and sustainable in long run.

In his presentation the Secretary H&ME, Dr Syed Abid Rasheed Shah highlighted different achievements, ongoing works and plans of the department regarding pacing-up the tendering process in JKMSCL and upgradation of facilities in different paramedical institutions here. While giving overview about the working of the meet the requirement of industries. He called for a corporation, he gave out that the Department is seriously contemplating on cutting down the time taken in tendering process considerably. He also revealed that the capacity of PHCs/HWCs is built to include them as

Regarding the functioning of Paramedical Institutions, he informed the meeting that most of such institutions had been established in last few years. He asserted that the Department is continuously working on making these institutions better and productive with each passing year. It was given out that currently the Department the overall intake capacity of these institutions is 1485 and 1660 seats respectively besides adding 143 M.Sc Nursing seats in various institutions of J&K.

It was further elaborated that J&K has a total of 5 New B-Pharmacy institutions with overall intake capacity of 340 seats. It also offers admission to 668 candidates in various B.Sc paramedic courses in different Medical Colleges across the UT, the meeting was informed.

#### Despite rain, Udhampur...

District Head quarters, the firm poll percentage will be known and the same will be shared separately with

After two hours of polling, 8.44% polling was recorded in the constituency at 09:00 pm. By 11:00 am, 22.60% voters had cast their votes, while by 01:00 pm, 43.11% votes were cast. By 3:00 pm, 57.09% voting was recorded. By 5:00 pm, 65.08% polling was recorded in the constituency.

District wise breakup is 67.75% for Kishtwar, 66.42% for Doda, 62.42% for Ramban, 70.76% in Udhampur and 70.06% in Kathua District.

There were 2,637 Polling stations set up for 16.23 lakh electors of 5 Districts. More than 11,000 polling staff has performed poll duty. Actual polling started from 7.00 am and continued till 6.00 pm or conclusion of polling row, whichever was later. At every polling stations, basic minimum facilities of water, electricity, toilet, ramp, verandah/ waiting room etc were made. Even wheel chair and helper were provided to needy voters. Around 1440 polling stations had CCTV for live webcasting to control rooms.

In order to ensure inclusive voting, 19 number of polling booths manned by women (also called as pink polling stations), 14 number of polling booths manned by specially abled persons and 17 number by youths. Also, in order to spread message about environmental concern, there were 20 green polling stations. To facili-As per the reports received by news agency despite tate voters identification, apart from EPIC card, other documents such as Aadhaar Card, Bank Passbooks, Driving License, PAN Card, Govt employee ID card etc documents were also allowed as per ECI directions. Media facilitation was done through the passes for more than 660 journalists.

> Under the overall supervision and guidance of the Election Commission of India, Chief Electoral Officer, J&K and respective DEO encouraged all eligible voters to come forward and cast their votes responsibly. "Your vote is your voice, and it plays a pivotal role in determin

War against drugs

# Police arrests 09 drug peddlers in Anantnag & Baramulla; contraband, psychotropic substances recovered

BARAMULLA, APRIL 19

Continuing its massive crackdown against drug peddlers/smugglers and to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police have arrested 09 drug peddlers in Anantnag & Baramulla and recovered contraband & psychotropic substances from their possession.

In Anantnag, 07 drug peddlers were arrested in separate actions. Police team of PP Sangam appre-Rather and Aijaz Ahmad Shiekhpora Uttresoo and of Nagam Kokernag and Boosa. Meanwhile, Police tion Kreeri headed by SHO Reyaz Ahmad Mir son of party of Police Station PS Kreeri at a checkpoint Ab Razaq Mir resident of Bijbehara apprehended established at Authoora Watnard Kokernag.

Moreover, a police Indraz Ahmad Thoker son pio bearing registration per law.



party of Police Station of Ali Mohammed Thoker Uttrasoo apprehended resident of Waghama hended two persons one person identified as Bijbehara and recovered namely Feroz Ahmad Shakeel Ahmad Wani son 5Kgs of Cannabis powder Rather son of Gh Rasool of Khazir Wani resident of from his possession. In Baramulla, a police Mantoo son of Ghulam recovered about 21 grams party of Police Station Mohammad Mantoo both of Charas, 350 grams of Boniyar headed by SHO residents of Waghama Poppy Straw and cash PS Boniyar at a checkpoint Bijbehara and recovered amout of Rs 10,000/- from established at Thathamulabout 09 Kgs of Poppy his possession. Further- la Boniyar apprehended Straw from their posses- more, police party of PS one person identified as sion. Similarly, Police Aishmugam apprehended Mohd Ashraf Mir son of party from PS Kokernag one person namely Gh Abdul Satar resident of recovered about 16.450 Nabi Bhat son of Jabbar Bujhthalan Boniyar and kgs of Cannabis powder Bhat resident of Yenner recovered 30 grams of from the possession of Pahalgam along with Charas like substance from Suhail Ahmad Dar son of about 04 Kgs of Poppy his possession. Similarly, ate with police in curbing Mohd Ashraf Dar resident Straw and 1.25 Kgs of Bung police party of Police Sta-

During search, 56 Tablets of Tapentadol Hydrochloride & 144 tablets of SpasmoProxyvon Plus like substance was recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Mohd Asif Malla son of Nazir Ahmad resident of Kreeri. The vehicle used in the commission of crime stands seized in the instant

All the 9 accused drug peddlers have been arrested and shifted to respective police stations where they remain in custody. Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations and further investigation have been initiated.

We urge the common masses that if you witness drug peddling or any other crime anywhere near you, feel free to contact nearest police establishment or dial 112. People are requested to cooperthe menace of drugs from the society. We reassure the community members that police will act tough one person identified as intercepted a vehicle Scor- against the criminals as

#### **Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar** Tripathi appointed as the next Chief of the Naval Staff

JI NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 19

The Government has appointed Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, PVSM, AVSM, NM, presently serving as the Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, as the next Chief of the Naval Staff with effect from the afternoon of April 30, 2024. The present Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral R Hari Kumar, PVSM, AVSM, VSM retires from service Principal Director, Naval on April 30, 2024.

Born on May 15, 1964, Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi was commissioned into the Executive Branch of the Indian Navy on July 01, 1985. A Communication and Electronic Warfare specialist, he has had a long and distinguished service spanning nearly 39 years. Prior to taking over as the Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, he had served as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command.

VAdm DK Tripathi has commanded Indian Naval Ships Vinash, Kirch and Trishul. He has also held various important operational and staff appoint-Western Fleet; Director of Naval Operations; Principal Director, Network Centric Operations and



Plans at New Delhi.

As a Rear Admiral, he has served as the Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Policy and Plans) and the Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet. In the rank of Vice Admiral, he has served as Commandant of the prestigious Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala; Director General of Naval Operations; Chief of Personnel and Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command.

An alumnus of Sainik School, Rewa and National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi has undergone courses at the Defence Services ments which include Fleet Staff College, Wellington; Operations Officer of the Naval Higher Command Course, Karanja and Naval Command College at the United States Naval War College, USA.

#### **Ankur tours Reasi District** of Jammu Lok Sabha Addresses several public meetings



JI NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 19

Ekam Sanatan Party's National President and MP Sharma, along with his vote in his favour from prietary lands. Jammu Lok Sabha by pressing the "Bansuri" that Advocate Ankur button on EVM.

ing at Pouni of Reasi, Mr Jammu Lok Sabha on Sharma demanded that Ekam Sanatan Bharat a full fledged hospital Dal's ticket and the party

trict hospital should be constructed at Pouni. He lamented the fact that road connectivity to our holy shrine is in a dilapi-Candidate for Jammu Lok dated condition. He also Sabha, Advocate Ankur stressed that the limitations put on residents of team members, conduct- Ransoo & Shiv Khori with ed a series of public meet- regard to construction ings at Talwara, Pouni, activities should also be Lehad, General Zorawar lifted and people should Singh Palace Vijaypur and be allowed to freely do Reasi city. He appealed to construction on their pro-

Pertinent to mention Sharma is contesting Lok Addressing a gather- Sabha Elections from having facilities of a Dis-symbol is "Bansuri/Flute".

#### Sanjay Baru convenes series of meetings at Kalakot-Sunderbani

JI NEWS SERVICE

KALAKOT-SUNDERBANI, APR 19

Sanjay Baru, senior BJP leader, convened a series of meetings at Mandal levels, in which senior leaders, Shakti Kendra Convenors, and Booth Presidents from Kalakot-Sunderbani constituency participated.

District President Nowshera Neena Sharma, District Seh-Prabhari Balkrishna, District General Secretary Pritam Sharma, and BJYM Vice-President Yuvraj Singh



also accompanied Sanjay to the ground-level acti- to be conducted on the been following the course

asked them to do exces- He said that Jammu endra Modi's vision. He shown them the doors and Sanjay Baru, while sive groundwork in order & Kashmir have been said that the local MP has these parties are fighting addressing these meet- to make a man-to-man immensely benefitted by always raised the voice of for their political survival ings, asked the party contact to secure maxi- the hardworking MP Jugal people in the Lok Sabha, because they have been cadre to shift their focus mum votes in the polling Kishore Sharma, who has which has been instru-

mental in bringing many projects to the Jammu Parliamentary constituency by the Modi government.

Sanjay Baru further said BJP is on a winning spree because of the blessings of the people and the hard work of party workers. He praised the local MP Jugal Kishore Sharma for his dedication in reaching up to maximum areas and ensure development during all these years.

Sanjay Baru added that political parties like Congress, NC, and PDP have looted and plundered the state. He said that of Prime Minister Nar- the people have already

#### Govt Polytechnic for Women, Jammu organizes seminar on 'Stress Management'



JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, APR 19

seminar and it was very well received by the stuvolunteer at MaitriBodh founded by Transforma- turer Textile.

Parivaar conducted the tion Pioneer - Maitreya Dadashreeji.

During the seminar Er. In order to create aware- dents who could relate to Suket Gupta Principal of ness regarding mental it. The seminar covered the Institute while interhealth, Youth for Global different triggers & causes acting highlighted the Peace & Transformation - for stress especially in need of stress manage-YGPT, organized an inter- today's fast paced world ment and time manageactive seminar on Stress and how it has a debilitat- ment and exhorted the Management for the youth ing effect on one's daily students to take maximum of Government Polytech- life. It also highlighted benefit of the initiative of nic for Women, Jammu. the root cause of stress the organization. The Maitreyi Sonee, an author, and various techniques seminar was coordinated designer and a very active to deal with it. YGPT was by Ms. Bhawna Arora Lec-

# **SKJAVS Trust organizes 'Pratikantham** Sanskritam Sampark Abhiyaan' at Muthi

Trust is making good efforts to promote Devvani Sanskrit in state: Aiav Sharma

JAMMU, APR 19

Today Shri Kailakh Jyotish avim Vedic Sansthan Trust organized a program at Government High School Mutthi Jammu under the "Pratikantham Sanskritam Sampark Abhiyaan" to take Devvani Sanskrit to every home. On this occasion, SP South Jammu, Ajay Sharma was the chief guest.

On this occasion, Trust head Mahant Rohit Shastri said that this campaign has been started to promote Devvani Sanskrit and a book named "Saral Sanskrit Bodh" has been of Devvani Sanskrit is the Devvani Sanskrit has to be very effective in creating which will be distributed free of cost. That is, the region, but based on phoefforts to promote Dev-pronunciation of words



netics, the pronunciation vani Sanskrit in the state. in this language was

published by the Trust same in every part of the taken to every home and if there is willpower then On this occasion, SP success will definitely be two things in which India's South Ajay Sharma said achieved in this. He said prestige lies are Sanskrit that we should try to teach that we should try to teach and culture. This language Sanskrit language to chil- Sanskrit language to chilhas to be taken to every dren at home only then dren at home only then we home and if there is will- we can advise others to can advise others to use tinguished citizens like power then success will use this language. Appre- this language. The script of definitely be achieved in ciated the efforts of the Sanskrit language is Devait. There is variation in the Trust to promote Devvani nagari. The sages chose pronunciation of different Sanskrit and said that this language for composlanguages according to the the Trust is making good ing mantras because the Khajuria, school staff, stu-

proper vibrations in the brain. The Vedas appeared in this language and the Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata and Puranas were composed.

On this occasion, dis-Ajay Sharma, Jagdev Singh Chib, Sunil Sharma, Naresh Raina, Sat Pal Khajuria, Ajay Singh, Pawan dents etc. were present.

# Minorities not safe under Modi rule; targeted by Modi Regime, says Tony

JI NEWS SERVICE SUCHETGARH, APR 19

Taranjit Singh Tony, General Secretary of J&K Pradesh Congress Committee and DDC Suchetgarh, expressed grave concerns over the safety and security of minorities under the current Modi regime, stating that they have been increasingly targeted and marginalized.

The senior Congress leader was speaking at the public meeting held at Village Kalili in Suchetgarh to garner support for Congress candidate for Jammu Raman Bhalla. During the meeting, Mrigesh Bhalla was also present.

Tony highlighted the alarming trend of discrimination and persecution faced by minorities across the country. He emphasized that the Modi government's policies and actions vulnerabilities of minority insecurity among them.



minority communities," he added.

demned the recent inci- our nation," he added. have only exacerbated the dents of hate crimes and communal violence per- demanded accountability caste, creed, or religion. communities, leading to a petrated against minori- from the Modi regime and Raman Bhalla represents palpable sense of fear and ties, citing them as clear urge them to prioritize the the vision of inclusive manifestations of the gov- protection of minorities governance, where every

Reasi Lok Sabha seat, fundamental pillars of a zens. "It is imperative for democratic and inclusive the government to uphold society. However, under the principles of equality, the Modi rule, we have secularism, and pluralism witnessed a disturbing enshrined in our Constipattern of discrimination tution. The systematic tarand violence targeting geting of minorities under the guise of nationalism is not only unjust but also Tony further con- undermines the fabric of

being of minorities are tect the rights of all its citi- governance agenda. The supported," he added.

rights and dignity of every individual, regardless of their religion or belief, must be safeguarded at all costs," he added.

Mrigesh Bhalla, an elder son of Raman Bhalla, urged the people to cast their votes in favor of his father, emphasizing his commitment to serving every individual in society regardless of their background or status. He also distributed his contact number to the public, pledging to extend assistance to the last person in

The Congress leader highlighted the exploitation faced by people across the country under the BJP government's rule, asserting that the BJP has capitalized on religious sentiments to conceal its failures.

"It is time to bring about a change that prioritizes the welfare of every citi-Taranjit Singh Tony zen, irrespective of their "The safety and well- ernment's failure to pro- as a cornerstone of their individual is valued and

# **EDITORIAL**

# **ICDS** centers in disarray

The Government of India's flagship programme, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme for early childhood care and development, seems to be functioning in a complete disarray in Jammu and Kashmir. The Anganwadi workers and helpers, who have been working very hard to bring young toddlers to their centers, are faced with the problem of good buildings for running these centers especially during harsh winters and summers. As per the reports, nearly 90 percent Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) are functioning in rented accomodations having limited facilities for children. The AWCs operating in rented accommodations are functioning either in a single room due to space crunch or don't have inadequate infrastructure for young children. The official statistics reveals that the total number of reporting AWCs in Jammu and Kashmir is 20,429 out of which only 2,280 centres have their own buildings while 18,016 are functioning from rented accomodations. In Jammu district, as many as 1,690 AWCs out of the total 2,013 are functioning in rented buildings, while all the 15 reported centers in Kishtwar districts don't have their own buildings. Of all 1,110 reported AWCs in Poonch district, at-least 1033 centres don't have their own buildings and functioning in rented buildings while just 75 centres out of the total 1,245 AWCs have their own buildings in Kathua. The government of India has sanctioned a total of 30,765 AWCs out of which 28,078 centres are operational in Jammu and Kashmir. As per the guidelines, the AWC should have basic infrastructure, including a sitting room for children, a kitchen and 600 square feet of playing area for children, along with child friendly drinking and toilet facilities. In 2021, over five lakhs children (in the age group of 6 months to 6 years) were the beneficiaries of Supple mentary Nutrition (SNP) in Jammu and Kashmir. The government of Jammu and Kashmir has approved the construction of 863 AWCs under MGNREGS out of which none of the structures has been constructed till date. Information with regard to the completion or under progress status of construction AWC buildings has not been received from J&K. Therefore, the same has been considered as under progress," the Centre said in a document tabled in the Parliament. Joint guidelines have been issued by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Ministry of Education directing the state governments and UT administrations to co-locate those AWCs which are running on rent or without sufficient infrastructure, to the nearby primary schools. The beneficiaries under the ICDS scheme are children in the age group of 0-6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers. The prime objectives of the Scheme are to improve the nutritional and health status of children, lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child and reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout. Authorities need to seriously address the problem of space crunch in these centers as the issue is directly attached with the health and safety of young toddlers enrolled in these centers. For this, authorities should rope in grassroots level representatives including Sarpanches and Panches to ensure that the centers can function without any hassle.

# Sustainability through global collaboration

RAJDEEP PATHAK

hile the news of increasing temperatures in the Capital City of Delhi in the coming weeks and months hit the headlines, in a resounding affirmation of the symbiotic relationship between sustainability and economic progress, President Dennis Francis (heading the 78th session of the UN General Assembly), recently in an exclusive interview with PTI, unequivocally asserted that the pursuit of sustainability stands as the cornerstone of 21st-century development endeavours. He also emphasised the imperative of integrating sustainability into the fabric of global advancement. Dennis Francis is all set to inaugurate the "Sustainability Week" at the United Nations headquarters scheduled from April 15-19, 2024. Under the overarching theme of "Paving the Way for a Sustainable Future," this landmark event will spotlight pivotal sectors such as tourism, infrastructure connectivity, transportation, energy and debt, dedicating its discourse to the multifaceted dimensions of sustainability in each domain.

In this PTI exclusive, President Francis outlines a strategic focus on key economic sectors - tourism, transportation, infrastructure, energy and debt management - to drive transformative sustainability. He highlights challenges like climate change, energy security and debt entrapment, emphasising their nexus with poverty, education, housing and national security. Francis further underscores sustainability as both a moral imperative and a catalyst for equitable global progress, envisioning judicious decisions in these realms as key to profound shifts towards a sustainable future.

host a series of high-level events renewable energy promotion. including debates on 'debt sustainability' and 'socio-economic equality'; discussions on 'tourism and sustainable transport', an informal dialogue on 'global resilience through infrastructure connectivity' and a stocktaking session for the completion of the 'UN Decade of Sustainable Energy for All' - all aimed at advancing the implementation of SDG 7 for sustainable development.

Dennis (in the interview) fervently promotes the fusion of sustainability and economic advancement, underscoring their intrinsic interdependence for societal wellbeing. He advocates for a transformative approach toward sustainable lifestyles, condemning antiquated resource exploitation methods exacerbating climate instability. He envisions a future where profitability harmonises with environmental stewardship, fostering equity and resilience. 'Sustainability Week' precedes the 'Summit of the Future,' to instil sustainability as a collective imperative for safeguarding resources for posterity. He further emphasised the pressing requirement to refocus endeavours on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which saw a setback in target achievement because of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing conflicts. 'Sustainability Week' aims to revive dedication to impactful measures, crucial for reorienting the SDGs towards their intended trajectory.

Through collective action, the aim should be to uplift communities, inspire hope and advance the global agenda for sustainability and equity. The need is to empower communities, foster optimism and promote sustainability and equity worldwide. Governments, communities and organisations

For example, in Scandinavia, countries like Denmark have been leaders in wind energy production, investing heavily in offshore wind farms and renewable energy infrastructure. Denmark's commitment to sustainability has led to a significant reduction in carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuels.

Moreover, in Southeast Asia, Singapore pioneers innovative strategies to address river and ocean waste, utilising advanced wastewater treatment and strict plastic regulations, effectively curbing marine pollution. Meanwhile, Africa's 'Great Green Wall' initiative fights desertification in the bio-geographical Sahel region by planting trees and promoting sustainable land management, revitalising degraded landscapes and fostering biodiversity. Across Latin America, Costa Rica exemplifies biodiversity conservation through national parks and ecotourism, fostering sustainable development while preserving its rich natural heritage, resulting in both environmental protection and economic prosperity. Some of these diverse efforts demonstrate global commitment to environmental management, enhancing resilience and also safeguarding ecosystems for future generations.

India's proactive stance towards achieving the SDGs is evident through multifaceted commitments across sectors. Initiatives like the 'National Solar Mission' and 'Ial Ieevan Mission'. 'National Health Mission', etc., highlight the resolve to tackle environmental challenges. India further aims to generate great renewable energy capacity, emphasising reduced reliance on fossil fuels. Water conservation per se are uniting to tackle envi- programs such as rainwater har-During the upcoming 'Sus- ronmental challenges like climate vesting and the 'Jal Jeevan Mis- and under-five mortality; sanita-

aiming to provide piped water supply to all households by 2024. This commitment is reinforced by experts like waterman, Rajendra Singh and CEO of Centre for Science and Environment, Sunita Narain, who stress the importance of renewable energy and community-driven water conservation efforts.

Additionally, India's sustainability efforts extend to biodiversity conservation, rural development, healthcare, education, waste management and gender equality, exemplified by schemes like MGNREGA and Ayushman Bharat. Dr. Vandana Shiva emphasises that sustainability encompasses socio-economic factors. with India's inclusive policies striving to create a more equitable and resilient society through integrated policymaking.

It may be noted that India initiated its climate action journey in 2009 by pledging to decrease emissions intensity by 20-25 per cent by 2020, achieving a commendable 24 per cent reduction. Subsequently aligning with the Paris Agreement, India outlined its 'Nationally Determined Contributions' in 2015, aiming for a 33-35 per cent emissions intensity reduction by 2030. Additional goals include enhancing non-fossil fuel energy generation, expanding carbon sinks and targeting 'NET ZERO' emissions by 2070. National efforts are rein-'National Action Plan on Climate Change' and the 'National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change', focusing on renewable energy, sustainable habitat and adaptation strategies.

As per media reports, by April 2023, India had made substantial progress toward 14 of the 33 SDGs, with improvements in neonatal tainability Week', Dennis will change, biodiversity loss and sion' underscore India's dedication and electricity access. Chal-

tion to ensuring water security, lenges like adolescent pregnancy, clean cooking fuel and water facilities persist. Legislative amendments promoting renewable energy and carbon credit trading, along with initiatives such as the 'Green Hydrogen Mission', highlight India's commitment to sustainability. "Business Today" report of August 25, 2023, suggests that these efforts, coupled with the implementation of the 'Sustainable Development Goals National Indicator Framework', positioned India as a global leader in sustainability, as reflected in its ranking in the 'Climate Change Performance Index', indicating promising future progress.

India has implemented various environmental conservation initiatives like the 'Swachh Bharat Mission' 'Namami Gange', etc., along with legislative measures such as the 'Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act' and so on. The introduction of the 'Sustainable Development Goals National Indicator Framework' by the National Statistics Office in 2023 signifies efforts to monitor progress. However, despite advancements in climate action, financing SDGs remains a challenge. Proactive measures, integrating sustainability into policymaking and engaging communities are essential for achieving the ambitious 2030 SDG targets globally, ensuring equity and resilience. The imperative for proactive engagement by dedicated and committed citizens, not forced by initiatives such as the only within India but globally, underscores the exigency of collective action. Such involvement is paramount in addressing contemporary challenges, necessitating concerted efforts on a global scale. The choice is ours – perish

> (The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti: views are personal)

# A Vision for India's Global Leadership

**KUMARDEEP BANERJEE** 

Party (BJP) unveiled and pledging to propel India into a developed 25 years. Notably absent Pakistan, a focal point of diplomatic endeavours. India's foreign policy for years, in either the BJP manifesto or the Prime Minister's interviews.

The manifesto underscores the government's he Bharatiya Janata emphasis on foreign policy, echoing the straits election mani- tegic vision cultivated festo earlier this week, during India's G20 presiopting for a departure dency. It celebrates India's from the conventional emergence onto the global strategy of enticing voters stage, exemplified by the with freebies and subsi- unanimous consensus dies. Instead, the mani- achieved for the New festo takes on the guise of Delhi Declaration, a feat a policy document, delin- accomplished amidst eating the achievements of doubts about US-Russia the PM Modi administra- concordance. Prime Mintion over the past decade ister Modi elucidated his approach in an interview, emphasising the imperaeconomy within the next tive of working towards global good without perfrom the document is any sonal reservations, a prinsignificant mention of ciple that guided India's

In delineating the government's foreign policy outlook, Prime Minister Modi reiterated the cor-



nerstone principles of earthquake relief in Nepal "Neighbour First" and "Act East" since assuming office. The Act East policy has extended India's influence into the ASEAN region, fostering positive perceptions even among of 1.5 crore distressed nations geographically Indian citizens and posi- the Prime Minister's 5S distant. India's proactive tions India as a vocal approach of respect, diaassistance to neighbours advocate for the Global logue, cooperation, peace during crises, such as South, a central tenet of and prosperity. It articu-

and aiding Sri Lanka during times of turmoil, exemplifies its commitment to regional solidarity.

The manifesto boasts

albeit challenges persist growth and security. in enhancing the acceptnavigation rights and maritime security.

Under Modi's leadership, the manifesto pledges to bolster India's stand-

its foreign policy stance. lates aspirations for a per-Technological innova- manent seat on the UN tions like the Digital India Security Council and vows stack, including UPI, have to enhance collaboration amplified India's pres- within the Indo-Pacific ence on global platforms, region to foster mutual

Furthermore, the manability of the Indian rupee ifesto underscores the in international trade. The importance of securing document briefly touches critical minerals essential upon India's burgeoning for the digital age, signalfocus on the Indo-Pacific, ling intentions to forge a region of strategic inter- partnerships with friendly est for major global players nations to integrate India and pledges to safeguard more deeply into global supply chains. In sum, the BJP's manifesto serves as a testament to continuity in India's foreign policy objectives, underlining a of the safe repatriation ing as a champion of the commitment to advanc-Global South, leveraging ing the nation's interests on the global stage.

> (The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

# Kerala's Christians are pushing the envelope of vote-bank politics

**VINOD MATHEW** 

once when almost the entire Christian community in Kerala the Kerala Congress was the other beneficiary. Barring the rare exceptions, voting for the 'godless' Communists was a taboo. tipped the Christians, albeit marginally. Once Kerala, the many bishthe Kerala Congress split ops representing various in 1979 – and has been denominations of the splitting constantly since community were bowled supporting the Left, the lines got blurred.

could no longer hail fire has started to send out and brimstone threats at warning signs by indithe straying flock to stone- cating that it is prepared wall the visibly rising to spread a propaganda ingress of Marxism. By video that portrays young the turn of the century, Christian females as being the Left ideology began in danger of converting finding increasing accepto Islam through 'love tance within the church, jihad'. and in the past few elec-

of affairs. The role of the clergy in consolidating votes remained limited voted for the Indian to subtle and sometimes National Congress, and not-too-subtle parish announcements (called idaya lekhanam in Malayalam) ahead of the polls.

But that is all in the past. With the Bhratiya The entry of the socialists Janata Party (BJP) actively wooing the Christians in then – and factions began over by the charm offensive launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The result: the priests As a result, the church

Consider this: The

tions, both to the Assem- church and its many Story on April 4 for Class umentaries on the Mani- who have both unerringly bly and to Parliament, denominations were There was a time bore witness to this state for many months much anguished by the persecutions of their brethren in Manipur as they were by Modi's hands-off policy on the burning matter. Now, out of the blue, as it were, they are consumed by the urgency to educate their youth about the dangers of 'love jihad'. Therefore, what else could be done but hold special screenings of the 2023 movie Kerala

> The movie claimed that about 32,000 Hindu and Christian girls from Kerala had been recruited by Islamic State, using 'love jihad' as the tool for their conversion to Islam – this was proven to be a gross exaggeration.

With the Idukki diocese of the Syro Malabar Catholic Church, which bers, screening Kerala Story' by screening doc- the LDF governments

10 and 12 students as part pur carnage, and thus favoured the Muslim comof its annual catechism channel the Christian munity over them. This, programme, the church has finally announced This is obviously with an the CPI(M)-led Left Demo- while handing out new eye on political returns.

It was not a coincidence that this screen- unlikely that the elector- vis-à-vis those assigned ing began with less than ate in Kerala is going to be to Christian management three weeks to go before the Lok Sabha polls in Kerala on April 26. Reit- the church and its mulerating this resolve is the tiple organisations sud- hurts the most. decision by the Kerala Catholic Youth Movement to hold more screenings in Thalassery and Thamarassery in north Kerala. Neither Idukki, nor Thalassery and Thamarassery (all three places have a sizeable Christian population) have so far seen any significant impact by the BJP.

Some entrenched leaders in the Christian community are trying in ear- the Christian community arguably accounts for nest to undo the political claims has been handed over 2.3 million mem- damage done by 'Kerala out by both the UDF and

votes back to the Con- it is known, happens as gress-led United Demo- much while allocating that it will now take sides. cratic Front (UDF) and electoral seats as it does final analysis, though, it is es in the Malabar region unduly swayed by what schools in central Travanthey see onscreen. With core. The latter is where denly politically active, what are the reasons for such a development? Christians (at least a sec-The conspiracy theorists tion among them) have would argue that the Christians in Kerala are potential dividends that finally in sync with global geopolitics where the Being a late entrant in this Christendom and Islamic world are sworn enemies.

> from the truth. would be the raw deal ing.

Nothing could be farther

cratic Front (LDF). In the academic plus-two coursthe money is, and that

Given these, why is it a surprise that Kerala's finally woken up to the vote-bank politics yield? game, the church lacks finesse in playing this game; give it time, and it will become more adept Way more plausible at it, and more demand-

> (Vinod Mathew is an author and senior journalist.)

**BJP reviews election** 

preparation in Jammu

Parliamentary constituency

# **Incumbent Govt least bothered** about people's miseries: Jan

MANDI POONCH 19 APRIL

Ajaz Jan, Provincial President of Youth Wing of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) and former MLA, raised serious concern over the hardships being faced by the common masses under the present dispensation and off areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

of district Poonch, the that the incumbent Govt the people and strengthen has least bothered about the party's position. the people's miseries. He

workers of JKNC to pro- extended his appeal to the residents of every nook urging them to come out in trict and its people. and corner of the Mandi large numbers and activedistrict. He emphasized ly participate in the voting ing awareness about the importance of this col-dent Mandi



cant impact on the youth JKNC, which have posi-victory of National Conferresiding in remote and far tively impacted the lives ence (NC) candidates and of numerous individuals create a mandate that in the region. By spread- would effectively remove Addressing a workers ing the message of prog- the Bharatiya Janata Party meeting in Mandi area ress and development, he (BJP) from power. senior NC leader said message will resonate with for a change in leadership

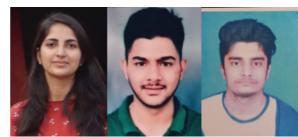
> Additionally, Ajaz Jan Lik Sabha elections.

Jan urged the dedicated Furthermore, Ajaz Jan

ing that the NC is comto shape the political land-

The programme was

**Students of School of** Civil Engineering, SMVDU presented paper in a National Conference AEMTA-2024



JI NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 19

Third year B Tech students of the School of Civil Engineering (SoCE), Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University presented a technical paper in a National Conference on "Advanced and Emerging Materials for Technological Applications (AEMTA 2024)". Arush Sustainable Technological the Springer Proceedings.

Advancement in Civil Engineering". Another group of students Kevin Somra and Pooja Kharra presented a paper titled "Sustainable Materials as a Column Filler: A Review". Both the groups were guided by Mr Srijan (Assistant Professor, SoCE). The conference was organized by Sant Longowal Institute of Engineering and Technology, Longow-Kattal presented a paper al in collaboration with titled "A Comprehensive IIT Jammu, NIT Delhi and Review on the Integra- IAHT Ludhiana. Both the tion of Waste Materials for papers will be published in

# the ongoing election preparations. Ashok Koul, General

was accompanied by Kavinder Gupta, former and Dr. Devinder Kumar ment election management committee.

JI NEWS SERVICE

J&K BJP held a meeting

JAMMU, APR 19

Sharma, Surjit Singh Salathia, Chander Prakash Ganga, Sukhnandan ers to focus on the Booth Choudhary, Priya Sethi, Vijay Abhiyan, Koul said Bali Bhagat, Ajay Nanda, that the concentration Baldev Sharma, Ch should be on the Booth Vikram Randhawa, Rajeev to win the election with a Sharma, Prof Gharu Ram, margin greater than that Raina, and Swarn Lata, elections. He especially participated in the meet-

ated the dedicated work of the party leaders and Jeeta". especially the groundtaking the party's achievements to the public to seek dates in the Parliamentary election.

Ashok Koul added that the people have now witnessed the 10 years Manyal coordinated the of the Modi government meeting and presentwhich is characterized by ed the election-related unprecedented develop- reporting. He said that the ment, multi-faceted infra- party leaders are already structure built-up, enor- giving their best at the mous investments, and ground level and BJP is set improvement in medi- to secure a good margin in cal, educational, water, the election.

electricity, homes, and other facilities to the general public, especially the needy and the neglected of its former MLAs from population, which had the Jammu Parliamentary earlier received step-Constituency to review motherly treatment by the previous governments led by Congress, NC, and PDP.

Ashok Koul asked Secretary (organization) the senior leaders to go chaired the meeting. He through all the voter lists themselves roping in the local leaders from the Deputy Chief Minister, districts, and mandals up to the booth level. He Manyal, General Secretary asked them to discuss the & State Convenor, Parlia- proper arrangements at the booth levels to ensure the maximum voter turn-BJP senior leaders out on the polling day in Sat Sharma, Sham Lal the Jammu-Parliamentary

Constituency. Asking the party lead-Dr Krishan, Girdhari Lal of the 2019 Parliamentary asked them to make an extra effort on the booths, Ashok Koul stressed on in which the party manthe ever-increasing enthu- aged less than expected siasm of voters in the sup-votes in the last elections, port of BJP. He appreci-stressing on the call of "Booth Jeeta, Chunav

Kavinder Gupta asked level workers, who have the senior leaders to been working incessantly counter the deceptive campaigns of opposition parties. He said that their paramount support these people deliberately for the party's MP candileft Jammu and Kashmir abandoned and bleeding, when the people needed their help the most.

Dr. Devinder Kumar

### This LS election is about preserving our identity: Mehbooba

JI NEWS SERVICE

PULWAMA, APR 19

In a significant political development, a former District Development Council (DDC) member from Pulwama, on Friday joined the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the presence of the party president Mehbooba

As per the news agency–Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Javid Rahim Bhat, who was previously associated with the National Conference, was warmly welcomed into the party by Mehbooba Mufti, along with other senior leaders including Waheed ur Rehman Para, Zahoor Ahmad Mir and Syed Bari Andrabi.

'These elections are cru- his tenure.

"Instead, it is a critical battle for preserving the dignity, identity, land and resources of the region, particularly in the aftermath of the abrogation of Article 370," she said.

cial for responding to the

actions of the Bharatiya

Janata Party (BJP) which

have targeted the dignity,

identity and resources of

Jammu and Kashmir," she

Mufti said the upcom-

ing Lok Sabha election

transcends basic develop-

mental issues like roads,

water and electricity.

The PDP chief criticised attempts to muzzle voices and said the preservation of Kashmiri identity and dignity is paramount. Mehbooba highlighted

the historical significance Addressing reporters of past governance under on the occasion, Meh- former chief minister booba urged the people Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, to heavily participate in saying relief measures and the upcoming elections development initiatives and not boycott the polls. were undertaken during

#### Sajad Lone ridicules Omar Abdullah for 'Good', 'Bad' politics remarks

JI NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR APR 19

J&K Peoples Conference Chairman Sajad Gani Lone Friday ridiculed former Chief Minister "good" and "bad" politi-

cal remarks. "hypocrisy" within the NC and their "shifting" ing on their position of

"Bad BJP," drawing attention to the dynamics of NC's relationship with

"When the NC is in allithe statement.

Lok Sabha elections, Lone coined the terms "Good Shiv Sena" and "Bad Shiv

Sena." "When NC is in alliance with the SHIV SENA- in the NDA from 1999-2002. Omar Abdullah over his OR in the current INDIA alliance--That is the GOOD SHIV SENA. And A statement issued to the GOOD SHIV SENA the news agency CNS said will support NC in the that Lone highlighted the ongoing Parliament elections. However, when the NC is not in alliance with alliances and differing the SHIV SENA - it is the perspectives depend- BAD SHIV SENA. Which in that case is rabidly communal, original Hindutva Lone addressed the and of course the plannotion of "Good BJP" and ner and executor in chief of the bloody Mumbai riots where hundreds of

Lone further dissected the dichotomy between "Good Kashmiris" and "Bad Kashmiris" stating Sena Unit indicating sup- per voting data that is 75%

### Tarigami grieved over death of 2 labourers in Chekpora, Kulgam

JI NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, APR 19

in Checkpora Ashmuji injured.

Kulgam while working in a trench today afternoon.

According to a state-CPI (M) leader Mohamad ment issued to the news Yousuf Tarigami Friday agency, Tarigami urged expressed grief and the administration to prosorrow over the death vide adequate compensaof two labourers includ- tion to the victim families ing a non local who died and free treatment to the

#### **Modi Govt's Scheme Giving** Benefits to all Sections: Sat

JI NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, APR 19

nied by BJP Talab Tillo Sat Sharma. Mandal President Keshav

dra Modi Government.

Government have given benefits to all those people who really need Former Minister and it. The 10 years of Modi Senior BJP leader Sat Govt has changed the Sharma CA Accompa- fortunes of people," said

Keshav Chopra while Chopra, Ex-Chairman speaking highlighted the JMC Jeet Angral and various development other leaders did door- projects undertaken by to-door campaign at the government emphaward 12. The BJP lead- sizing their potential to ers went around many transform lives and uplift streets, fixed stickers, communities, Keshav and distributed books, also urged the locals to pamphlets and other cast their vote in favour materials having details of BJP Jammu Reasi of the achievements of Loksabha Candidate the 10 years of the Naren- Jugal Kishore Sharma.

Speaking on the occa-Speaking during the sion Jeet Angral asked campaign Sat Sharma the people not to get said that the Naren- misled by the false prodra Modi Government paganda of the Congress during its 10 years tenure and other parties and to has done tremendous strengthen the BJP as it is work for the weaker sec- the only party that takes tions of the society "All care of one and all in a the schemes of Modi fair manner.

emphasized the signifi- the key achievements of lective effort to ensure the believed that the party's

also expressed concern called upon the party over the soaring levels of cadre to work diligently unemployment, which towards ensuring maxihas reached its peak mum public participation casting their votes, the under the current admin- of people in the upcoming residents have the power

Jan highlighted the need

and policies, emphasizmitted to addressing the concerns and aspirations of the people in Poonch. By joining forces and scape and bring about the desired transformation for actively engage with the people of district Poonch, the betterment of the dis-

organized by senior leader the importance of rais- process. He emphasized Bashir Naik Block presi-

present include Bashir Naik, Block President of the NC Mandi; Mubashar Banday, Sarpanch; Kh. Abdul Razaq, Sarpanch Baila; Rehmat Ullah Khan, Marnote; Mushtaq Naik, NC Worker; Aslam, NC Worker; Ab. Jabar Tantray; Aslam Malik, Sarpanch Arai; Ab. Ahad X, Sarpanch Beedar; Guffar Dar, NCW; Imtiaz Banday, Sr. NCW; Rafiq Bhat, Sawjian; Ishaq Sheikh, YNC BP Sathra; Ajaz Loone, NCW; Ab. Ahad Balnai; Jamal Din, Sarpanch; Hakam Din Ch.; Nayaz Ganaie, Panch; Bashir Loone, Baila NCW; Ghulam Rasool, Panch Trichala; Javid Mir, NCW; Qadir Hussain, Ch. NCW; and Ashraf Banday from Mandi.

Among those who were

Lok Sabha Elections 2024

### General, Police Observer review preparations for elections in border district Rajouri









JI NEWS SERVICE

RAJOURI, APRIL 19

ments for Lok Sabha elec-

key aspects of the election tion Team.

tions in Rajouri district.

preparations were meticu-

elaborating the electoral

landscape of the district,

informing that 680 poll-

stations, ensuring their

lously examined.



Singh today chaired a ally, the establishment of safety and accessibility of

meeting of officers asso- training centers, dispatch/ voters and election per-

rooms were also discussed

During the meeting, ciency of the District Elec-

PowerPoint presentation, deployed for the forth-

Moreover, the meet- The district SVEEP cell is

ing reviewed the status of actively engaged in orga-

coming elections.

(EVMs) and Voter Verifi- border areas. Recognizing areas during the electoral





able Paper Audit Trail the unique challenges and process. (VVPAT) machines, man-security considerations of power, Security and infra- these regions, the plan General Observer, Sanjeev structure, are in place to aims to ensure the seam-Kumar Besra and Police facilitate smooth conduct less conduct of elections Observer, Akhileshwar of the elections. Addition- while prioritizing the

ciated to review arrange- receipt centers, and strong sonnel. Meanwhile, the Senior to ensure operational effi- Superintendent of Police also briefed the observers array of responsibilities. about the comprehensive Giving further details, security measures taken the District Election Offi- to safeguard the electoral District Election Offi- cer reassured the Observ- process. He outlined stratcer Rajouri, Om Prakash ers that ample manpower egies to enhance secu-Bhagat, provided detailed have been trained and rity at polling stations, deployment of personnel, surveillance teams, and He said a robust voter other measures. Additionawareness campaigns in ally, the status of cash seiing stations and a total of on under the SVEEP ini- zure by Static Surveillance centres and strong rooms 484,725 voters are in distillative to bolster voter Teams (SST) and Flying turnout and inclusivity. Surveillance Teams (FST)

was given out in meeting. The Observers also Assured Minimum Facili- nizing a myriad of aware- reviewed the preparations ties at polling stations. ness programs to ensure concerning shadow areas, The DEO also highlighted that every eligible voter recognizing the challenges the completion of physi- is empowered to exercise posed by the lack of concal verification of polling their franchise he added. nectivity in these regions. The District Election They emphasized the keel Mir; SDM Thanamanreadiness for upcom- Officer also informed necessity of deploying di, Abid Hussain Shah; ing elections. It was the Observers that a spe- alternative communicainformed that adequate cial area plan had been tion methods and logisti- cer, Mohammad Nawaz resources, including Elec- devised for the 45 poll- cal solutions to address Choudhary; EXEN REW,

The Observers also reiterated the paramount importance of strict adherence to Election Commission of India guidelines. They also meticulously outlined the various tasks and duties assigned to the concerned officers encompassing a wide They directed the officers to exhibit exemplary commitment, dedication and sincerity while discharging their election duties, recognizing their pivotal role in facilitating free, fair and peaceful elections.

Later, the Observers also visited the counting established at Government Degree College Rajouri.

The meeting was attended by ADC Nowshera, Babu Ram Tandan; ADC Koteranka, Adil Mir; ASP, Abdul Majid Basu; ACR, Mohammad Jahangir Khan; Dy DEO, Sha-Distt Information Offitronic Voting Machines ing stations located in the the requirements of these Zahir Khan and other concerned officers.

the BJP.

ance with the BJP and the "touristy prince" makes a saffron debut by being the first Kashmiri to join the union cabinet led by the BJP— that is what we call the GOOD BJP. And it is so good to be the poster boy of the GOOD BJP. When that is the BAD BJP," reads

port for NC in the ongoing of Kashmiris."

the GOOD KASHMIRIS. They are angels who have descended from the skies. As per voting data that is NC is rebuffed, and not 25% of Kashmiri's. And entertained by the BJP - those Kashmiris who vote against the NC are sellouts, traitors, agents of Referring to recent central agencies and they

Muslims were killed", he added.

that "all those Kashmiri's who vote for the NC are statements from the Shiv are stooges of the BJP. As

### Modi govt fulfilling dreams of Chaudhary Charan Singh: CM Yogi German Chancellor urges against

tives, pointing out that

He said, "When we elect

GHAZIABAD (UP), APR 19

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts in uplifting farmers and said that they resonate with the aspirations of former Prime Minister Bharat Ratna Chaudhary Charan Singh.

Addressing an election rally in Modinagar, the CM appealed for votes in support of Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) candidate from the emergence of a new in social welfare initia-Baghpat Lok Sabha con- India," he said. stituency, Dr. Rajkumar Sangwan.

farmers, such as PM Kisan of voting indicates the starkly with the dire situ-Samman Nidhi, empha- enthusiasm of the people ation of hunger affecting this decision to realize sizing their impact on to bring the Modi govern- 23 crore individuals in various facets of national ment back into power in Pakistan. development.

combating terrorism and time, Modi ji has brought Ayushman Bharat Yojana, naxalism, and enhancing pride to our Uttar Pradesh Jan Dhan accounts of 50 infrastructure, including by bestowing Bharat crore people have been expressway and imple- ian honor, upon former have been given Kisan menting rapid rail and PM Charana Singh." metro projects. "These initiatives symbolize India's significant strides crore households. Addi-



He said, "The voting over the past four years, for the first phase of the 80 crore people have He highlighted PM Lok Sabha elections is benefited from free ration the country. This is a nat-Yogi underscored the ural inclination because a good leader, the out-

The CM highlighted have been provided to 12 accountable," he said.

Ujjwala Yojana."

try proud.

Uttar Pradesh. He pointed service. out that under their rule, neither women nor businessmen felt safe, and has made a provision to provide free electricity to Modi's initiatives to honor underway. The brisk pace distribution, contrasting 15 lakh private tube wells. the dream of Chaudhary Saheb," he said.

previous administrations strides made in bolster- those who honor our comes are also positive. were known for inciting nation," he said. ing India's global stand- ancestors deserve respect Today, 60 crore people riots, whereas now there ing, securing borders, in return. For the first have been linked to the are no such riots or curfews, and Kanwar Yatras are celebrated grandly. "We've made it clear that constructing a 12-lane Ratna, India's highest civil- opened, 12 crore farmers those jeopardizing the safety of women and Samman Nidhi, and toilets businessmen will be held

The CM stressed the the occasion.

tionally, 10 crore mothers importance of securing have benefited from the victory for the NDA candidate in Baghpat to bol-Regarding the Surya ster their tally beyond Tilak of Lord Shri Ram 400 and fortify the Modi on the occasion of Ram government's mandate. Navami, Yogi said that it He commended Jayant has made the entire coun- Chaudhary's selection of Dr. Rajkumar Sangwan, He criticized the SP, a dedicated worker com-BSP, and Congress, accus- mitted to the principles ing them of posing a secu-upheld by Chaudhary rity threat in western Charan Singh for public

Highlighting Sangwan's steadfast adherence to these values, he emphafarmers' tube wells were sized the imperative of even removed from their supporting his candidacy fields. "Our government to nurture the nation's progress. "A grassroots worker who has remained dedicated to the principles and vision of Chaudhary Saheb deserves our support. A 'Nal' in Baghpat is essential to secure He pointed out that his victory and to see the lotus blossom across the

RLD president Jayant Chaudhary, BJP regional president Satyendra Sisodia, district president Satyapal Pradhan, MLA Dr Manju Siwach, District Panchayat president Mamta Tyagi, and other leaders were present on

# escalation in the Middle East



**AGENCIES** 

NORDERNEY ISLAND, APRIL 19

Following a suspected Israeli retaliatory attack on Iran, German Chancelin the Middle East.

"Everyone must ensure now and in the near future attack. that there is no further escalation of the war,"

Scholz said on Friday.

and its allies, but declined of Norderney. to comment further on on targets in Iran.

lor Olaf Scholz has warned had been "renewed mili-reports of damage. against further escalation tary activity" overnight.

According to US media reports of Israeli strikes reports, one or more Israeli missiles were used Scholz acknowledged to attack a target in Iran. on Friday only that there There were initially no

Last weekend, Iran Israel has not commented attacked Israel with hunpublicly on the reported dreds of drones and missiles, almost all of which Scholz's comments were intercepted by Israeli came while attend- and allied air defences, in ing a conference of his retaliation for a suspected He stressed that the centre-left Social Demo- Israeli attack on the Iraposition urging restraint cratic Party (SPD) on the nian embassy compound is shared by Germany German North Sea island in Damascus.

#### Two suspects held in Poland over attack on Moscow opponent in Vilnius

**AGENCIES** 

RIGA, APRIL 19

Two people have been arrested in Poland for allegedly carrying out last month's violent attack in Lithuania on Kremlin critic Leonid Volkov, Lithuanian President Gitanas Nauseda said on Friday.

The suspects are to be handed over to the country soon, Nauseda said in Vilnius, according to Lithuanian radio.

There was initially no announcement from the Polish authorities regarding the arrest.

Nauseda did not provide any further information on the two suspects or the possible extradition date. The Lithuanian Police also did not comment.

Volkov, who lives in exile in Lithuania, was attacked with a hammer and injured outside his home in Vilnius on March 12. The 43-year-old close confidant of Kremlin opponent Alexei Navalny, who died in a prison camp in February, later called the incident "typical bandit" behaviour by Russian President Vladimir Putin's henchmen.

Lithuania's intelligence service previously suspected that Russian secret services were behind the attack on the opposition figure.

Despite still being in the dark about the events leading to the arrests, Volkov welcomed the success of the authorities' investigation.

"I have seen how energetically and persistently the Lithuanian police have worked on this case over the past month and I am very happy that this work has been successful," he wrote on Telegram. "Well, we will know the details soon. I can hardly wait."

### Reports of spat with Netanyahu misleading: Germany

BERLIN, APRIL 19

is disputing as "misleading" an Israeli media na Baerbock over the situ- cell phone. ation in the Gaza Strip.

Netanyahu are wrong and hunger there. misleading," the Foreign

sador to Israel, Steffen reality in the Gaza Strip. Seibert, made the same ing specifics.

Germany's Foreign Office during a meeting in Israel on Wednesday.

Baerbock reportedly report about a heated responded by pointing asked Netanyahu whethargument between Israeli out widespread hunger in Prime Minister Benjamin Gaza and offered to show Netanyahu and German Netanyahu pictures of well as the international Foreign Minister Annale- starving children on her media, of lying about the

Netanyahu is said to "Key points in this have replied that she market stalls filled with account of the hour should look at photos of fruit and vegetables were long meeting between the markets and also of published this week by Foreign Minister Baer- people on the beach, as COGAT, an Israeli agency bock and Prime Minister there were no cases of

According to the Chan-Office wrote in a post to nel 13 report, Baerbock X, formerly Twitter, on advised him not to show tarian aid. the pictures as they did

shown footage from the propaganda film with Gaza Strip depicting scenes of everyday life in markets filled with food the Warsaw ghetto, where Iews were forced to live in abysmal conditions.

Baerbock reportedly er he was accusing doctors working in Gaza, as situation.

The images of the within the Defence Ministry responsible for contacts with the Palestinian Territories and humani-

The images show marstatement without offer-said to have loudly replied food shortages. Accordthat the photos were real ing to COGAT and aid A journalist from the and that Israel was not organizations, some food Israeli TV station Chan- showing an invented real- recently arrived in the nel 13 had previously ity like the Nazis. In 1942, area, although aid workreported that Baerbock for example, the Nazis ers and residents say it reacted negatively when had a film crew shoot a remains far from enough.

the island on Friday.

Capri is one of the

destinations in Italy. The

island, which has fewer

than 15,000 permanent

every day during the high

season. The ferry crossing

# Sensex, Nifty witness worst week since March 15 amid Iran-Israel conflict

MUMBAI, APRIL 19

Ending a four-day losing streak, India's benchmark indices closed higher on Friday led by HDFC Bank and Bajaj Finance, among other factors. The Sensex ended 599 points, or 0.83 per cent, higher at 73,088, while the Nifty closed at 22,147, up 151 points, or 0.7 per cent, on Friday.

However, the benchmark indices posted their ongoing conflict between March 15. Israel and Iran weighed The Nifty and the Sensex per cent amid investor to 71,816.46 before bounc-

worst weekly fall in over a in the week ended April late to a war. During the month as worries over the 19, its worst decline since day, the Nifty slipped as ended higher, one settled

declined 1.65 per cent and concerns that the West Ltd recorded limited gains 1.56 per cent, respectively, Asia turmoil might escain the index. much as 0.99 per cent flat, while six declined,

HDFC Bank Ltd,

ICICI Bank Ltd, Bharti Airtel Ltd, Bajaj Finance Ltd, and Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd added positively to the index, while Larsen & Toubro Ltd, Tata Consultancy Services Ltd, Infosys Ltd, Bajaj Auto Ltd, and HCL Technologies

On the NSE, five sectors Intraday, the bench- to 21,777.65, while the while 11 sectors declined on investor sentiment. marks declined nearly 1 Sensex fell 0.93 per cent and nine advanced on the

# 30 injured in accident on Capri ferry in Naples



**AGENCIES** CAPRI, APRIL 19

Around 30 people were Mediterranean island of

with the dock upon arriv-

al in the city of Naples, participants were still on Xinhua news agency reported.

Despite the number of most popular tourist injured in a collision on injuries, no one was seria ferry sailing to the Ital- ously hurt in the incident,

ian mainland from the the rescue service said. The meeting of the residents, attracts tens Capri on Friday, rescue foreign ministers of the of thousands of visitors officials said. The exact Group of Seven (G7) ecocourse of events was ini- nomically strong democtially unclear. According racies has been under way from the mainland takes to reports, the high-speed on Capri in the Gulf of about an hour. Isola di Procida collided Naples since Wednesday.

The vast majority of

The German ambas- not correspond to the kets in the north of the coastal area, which is Netanyahu, in turn, is particularly affected by

# Single phase polling for LS ends in TN, Pondy

CHENNAI, APR 19

The single phase Polling to elect 39 members to the 18th Lok Sabha from Tamil Nadu and the lone LS seat in the Union Territory of Puducherry ended on Friday evening, amid tight security.

The polling, which began at 0700 hrs, ended at 1800 hrs and passed off peacefully.

Chief Electoral Officer polling percentage was Satyabrata Sahoo said the expected to be low this polling was by and large

Barring some minor turnout recorded in the incidents, where voters last three LS elections. in few places announced boycott of polling initially and later turned up to cast their vote after being pacified by the authorities and minor protests and complaints of glitches in EVMS, no major untoward incident was reported from any part of the State.

As per the latest updates, an estimated 65 per cent polling was reported in Tamil Nadu and nearly 75 per cent in Puducherry as the polling drew to a close.

The provisional voting percentage will be known in the night and the final figure will be announced by tomorrow after col- a round-the-clock threelecting details from all the tier security arrangements 68,321 polling booths in Tamil Nadu.

Going by the trend the paramilitary forces.



place on June four. time when compared to more than 70 per cent

Meanwhile, as the gates of the polling stations were around 58-60 per cent. closed at 1800 hrs, a large number of people turned up to cast their ballot in the evening.

franchise.

Mr Sahoo said the polling process will end only after all those standing in the queue and having tokens cast their ballots.

After this, the EVMs counting centres, where were put in place, including deployment of central The counting will take

In the bye-election to Vilavancode Assembly seat in Tamil Nadu in the southern tip of Kanniyakumari, the turnout was

The electoral fortunes of 950 candidates in Tamil Nadu--876 men and 74 women-- including 609 Those who had entered Independents were sealed the booth and are stand- in the EVMs and their ing in the queue, will be fate would be known on issued tokens to enable June 4. Those in the fray them to exercise their included sitting MPs and first time candidates of

various parties. Leaders of leading political parties, including the DMK and its allies, their arch rival the Opposition AIADMK and the NDA will be sealed and trans- Front headed by the BJP, ported to strong rooms in and the Naam Tamizhar Katchi (NTK), have cast

their ballots. Besides, leading film personalities also exercised their democratic duty.

#### Shivakumar accuses BJP for possible imposition of Governor's rule

**AGENCIES** BENGALURU, APRIL 19

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has accused the BJP of threatening the state government and misleading voters about the possibility of imposing Governor's rule due to alleged deteriorating law and order.

Addressing the media here on Friday, Shivakumar questioned the intentions of the Leader of the Opposition, R Ashoka, alleging that the BJP is planning a drama to impose Governor's rule. "No matter how they project it, this can't be done here," he firmly stated. The BJP has been critical of the Congress government, claiming a series of criminal incidents reported across the state in the last 48 hours as evidence of the worsening law and order situation.

Defending the Congress-led government's record on law and order, the Deputy CM emphasised that Karnataka has the best law and order in the country.

In response, the Karnataka BJP criticised the state government for the alleged deterioration in law and order, accusing the Congress government of pursuing appeasement politics at the expense of public safety.

### Jasprit Bumrah's stellar form echoes warning shots for T20 World Cup rivals



MUMBAL APR 19

Jasprit Bumrah has been far when he returned 5/21 ball swings for the first showcasing outstanding against the Royal Challeng- two overs, you do want to performances with nota- ers Bengaluru last week. ble consistency so far in the ongoing season of the Indian Premier League.

determine their squads for over inside the Powerplay. the marquee event, which the conclusion of the T20 league on 1 June.

World Cup squad, with ICC report said. a high likelihood of him players at the tournament over by nine runs. after missing out on the

Puniab Kings, the Mumbai Bumrah added. With the ICC Men's T20 Indians bowler became the

begins immediately after as one of his team's vital mum overs bowled: 3). cogs for bowling in the death overs, however, the the rules which favour For India, Jasprit bowler also expressed his the batters, making T20 a Africa's Kagiso Rabada Bumrah is a certainty desire to make an impact challenging format for the in their 15-member T20 early on in the innings, an bowlers and explained

featuring in the playing to make an impact early XI for all of India's games. on when the ball does become one of India's key against Punjab in the last manship is going up,"

at a miserly economy of Test cricket. That is where 5.96. He even holds the all my desires for bowlrecord for best innings fig- ing more gets over. In India's ace pace sensation ures in the tournament so this format, when the make an impact and when Following Thursday's the opportunity comes, thrilling clash against I'm happy to contribute,"

In an IPL season marked World Cup 2024 in the holder of the Purple Cap by the record for the high-West Indies and USA fast - awarded to the leading est team total being broken approaching, the ongo- wicket-taker of the tour- thrice this year, also featuring IPL is going to play a nament. He returned 3/21 ing numerous high-scoring vital role in helping teams including a double-wicket games, Bumrah boasts the best economy rate in the Bumrah has been used tournament so far (mini-

The pacer pointed out how he prepares to show-"Of course, you want case his best in the short-

"Obviously, this format Considering the form he's something," he said after is a little difficult for the in, the pacer is poised to Mumbai won a thriller bowlers because the bats-

Bumrah said. "With the "Because in this format, time restrictions [over-rate 1 with a double-header 2022 edition due to injury. probably the ball does penalties] as well and the day in Dallas and Guyana. In his seven IPL match- swing for the first two Impact Player rule, that India will kick off their es so far, Bumrah has overs. And when I want does not help the bowler campaign against Ireland accounted for 13 wickets to bowl more, I do play too much because the in New York on June 5.

batting line-up becomes deeper and deeper and the bowler becomes half the bowler when you get an extra option. "But I feel like all of

those things are not in vour control. What you can do is try to prepare to the best of your ability and back yourself in any situation because all of that will then put you in a good space of mind and you can go out there and execute with a smile on your face,"

With top pacers from other teams like New Zealand's Trent Boult (current economy rate: 7.37), South (8.32), Bangladesh's Mustafizur Rahman (9.15), Australia's Mitchell Starc (10.54) recording economy rates over 7, Bumrah has remained impeccable in keeping the batters in check.

The ICC Men's T20 World Cup begins on June

# **Indian insurance industry in FY24:** Non-life grew by 12.8 pc, life at 2 pc

**AGENCIES** CHENNAI, APRIL 19

The Indian insurance industry closed FY24 logging a higher growth rate, with the non-life sector growing at 12.8 per cent

and the life sector at two per cent over FY23 fig-

"In FY24, the non-

life insurance industry reported a premium of Rs. the 16.3 per cent growth reported in FY23," said credit rating agency CARE FY23 (Rs.82,891.3 crore), Ratings in a research CARE Ratings said. The report.

health insurance segfor the non-life sector, compared to last year's decline owing to a fall in fiscal as compared to FY23 liability, crop insurance, and credit guarantee.

Further, for the month of March 2024 as well, the growth rate was comparatively lower as growth in health was offset by slower in the fire insurance segment, CARE Ratings said.

The four public sector general insurers' grew health insurers (SAHI) factors such as higher agents in FY24 alone. their business by 9 per continued their growth GDP growth, disposable

2.9 lakh crore growing at cent last fiscal (gross direct momentum last fiscal 12.8 per cent compared to premium Rs.90,344.5 booking a gross premium crore) as compared to 10 of Rs.33,116 crore, up from per cent growth logged in Rs.26,243.9 crore earned

Further, with the sectoral regulator approving While the motor and onstrated robust growth two SAHIs in FY24, com- as against Rs.3,70,543 which can be primarily petition is expected to crore earned in FY23. ments drove the growth attributed to group health accelerate even further in

The specialised insurers growth rates, there was a logged lower growth last that the Indian non-life the life insurance sector insurance market will due to the crop insurance grow at a rate of approxipremiums of Agricul- mately 13-15 per cent in the including a slowdown ture Insurance Company medium term. The indus- in growth, said Avinash reduced by 32.1 per cent try's growth will continue Singh, Senior Research for FY24, as select public to be driven by the health sector general insurers and motor insurance segand a few private general ments as they account for a report. growth in motor and a fall insurers picked up a larger around 68 per cent of the proportion of crop insur-

favourable monsoon.

However, intensified competition, an uncertain international geopolitical environment, and elevated inflation could potentially negatively affect economic growth and subsequently impact the non-life insurance sector.

On the other hand, the life insurance sector closed FY24 with two per cent growth in new business premium.

According to Life Insurance Council, the new business premium for the life insurers last fiscal stood at Rs.3,77,960 crore

Following alterations in the taxation of high-CARE Ratings estimates value non-linked policies, encountered a range of challenges during FY24, Analyst, Emkay Global Financial Services Ltd in

Be that as it may, the life insurance industry grew Growth would be their individual agents The standalone private aided by macroeconomic base by adding 2,76,850

### Nigerian military kills 192 suspected terrorists in one week

I-League's best defender Hammad turns a

ABUJA, APRIL 19

At least 192 suspected terrorists, including three key figures, were killed in anti-terror operations in Nigeria over the past week, the military said.

Some 341 others were nabbed in raids by troops, with 62 hostages freed from their captors during the period, Edward Buba, a spokesman for the military, told reporters in the



reported. In the northeast- Islamic State's West Africa to the troops during the man.

FY24 numbers have dem-

and motor insurance.

ance premiums.

Nigerian capital of Abuja, ern part of the country, a Province (ISWAP) and the shores of Lake Chad, Xinhua news agency total of 122 members of the their families surrendered according to the spokes-

operations, Buba said.

The air force of the military conducted air strikes on suspected ISWAP fighters' hideouts and a logistics hub, including their food processing unit, in the village of Kolleram located along

# Close to two-thirds of Bengal electorate vote across 3 LS seats

KOLKATA, APRIL 19

Notwithstanding reports of stray violence, close to two-thirds of the 5.6 million electorate voted till 3 p.m. on Friday across the three Lok Sabha constituencies of northern West

Polling was brisk and long queues were seen outside the booths in the some stray incidents of Trinamool Congress was first phase election comprising the Cooch Behar, Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri constituents.

According to the Election Commission, the Minister of State for Home overall polling figure was and BJP contestant Nisith the BJP. 66.34 percent after eight Pramanick and Trinamool hours of polling. Cooch candidate Jagadish Chan-Behar recorded 65.54 per- dra Barma Basunia. cent polling, Alipurduar guri 67.28 percent.

per cent polling is ahead Cooch Behar.. of Bengal in terms of votes

from Jalpaiguri.

MLA from Datagram Pool High School in Dinhata. Bari under the Jalpaiguri



violence and voter intimi- going to lick the dust. dation, particularly from is witnessing a high-profile battle between Union

The reports of stray vio-66.23 percent and Jalpai- lence were received from Sitalkuchi, Mathabhanga, no report of any untow-Only Tripura with 68.35 Sitai and elsewhere in

The Election Commis- being guarded by armed cast so far in the country. sion has restricted Bengal central forces, so far 383 Meanwhile, the poll Minister and formidable allegations of irregularities panel has received 468 Trinamool Congress have been received by the complaints up to 2 PM with leader Udayan Guha to the poll panel in the first five 218 from Cooch Behar, 150 Dinhata segment after Prahours. from Alipurduar and 100 manik appealed to the poll panel against his alleged The Election Commis- intimidatory tactics. Guha reports from Cooch Behar, sion of India has sought a was seen at the Dinhata official sources said. report as to why the state police station this mornpolice had stopped BJP ing to complain about an 27,63,506 women are MLA Shikha Chatterjee's alleged attack on the TMC among the voters spread car at Dubgram. She is an block president at Jenkins across tea gardens, tribal

Voting has been by and saying the Bengal Minis- who are eligible to choose tight security arrangelarge peaceful so far save ter knew very well that the their representatives from ment. UNI PC-SJC SSP

He said, "Whatever the Cooch Behar seat, which electorate decides, we are going to accept. Guha accused the poll

officials of "siding" with He said he had never

seen central forces being

deployed a month before the polling day. Though there has been ard incident inside any polling booth, which are

The poll panel in Delhi has sought action taken

On Friday, a total of belts, rural hamlets and Pramanik accused Guha urban pockets in the of fomenting violence, three LS constituencies menced at 7 AM under a

among 30 odd contestants in some 5814 booths until 5 pm. Long queues were seen outside many polling stations.

About 250 companies of armed central forces were deployed and some 10,000 state police personnel were posted to ensure peaceful and fair polling.

Thirteen extra CAPF companies were put on reserve to be used in case of any exigency.

Poll officials and election observers are monitoring the voting process in the field.

Though the contest is multi-cornered, the real fight could be between the state's ruling Trinamool Congress and the main opposition - the Bharatiya Janata Party. The latter won all three seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha poll.

The contest is expected to be between Pramanik and Basunia in the Cooch Behar seat, in Alipurduar between Monoj Tigga (BJP) and TMC's Prakash Chik Baraik, and in Jalpaiguri between Jayanta Kumar Roy of BJP and Nirmal Chandra Roy from the ruling party.

Pramanik was among those who exercised their franchise in the first phase polling.

The voting process com-

# step back into giant leap forward NEW DELHI, APR 19

Muhammad Hammad, then a skinny teenager from Kashmir, was harbouring dreams of becoming a professional cricketer. However, providence had different plans for him. In the I-League 2023-24, which was essentially his comeback season, Hammad not only donned his hometown club, Real Kashmir FC but also won the Jarnail Singh Award for Best Defender of the season for his fine perfor-

Approximately a decade

coaches, the staff, and my teammates for all the help. I never thought I'd win the best defender award, but it certainly feels great to be recognised for my efforts," Hammad said. then play the I-League," It's not just the limelight said Hammad. "Once of being the captain or the you adjust to playing at a best defender award that sets Hammad aside. The can move up the ranks to 26-year-old defender had suffered an ACL (Anterior Cruciate Ligament) injury a few years back, one that took him a couple of seasons to recover from.

Hammad had first joined Real Kashmir in ing in the meanest defence and perform, to not conplay in the ISL and rep-2017, when they were in the second division. However, he opted to move es, the I-League sources Leopards had a solid first improving my game, and away from his hometown said. club when he was on the road to recovery, choos- tough times gave me the matches, which included with every game," said



Football League. I could not play at a high

couple of state leagues to get my match fitness, and lower intensity, then you higher levels."

The results of Hammad's let in 19 goals in 24 match-

ing not to rush his return. discipline I needed to do seven clean sheets. How-Hammad.

Jammu & Kashmir Premier but then a lot of the away thing.' games are played in exact-"I realised while recov- ly opposite conditions, Kashmir when he passed "I am thankful to the ering from my injury that which can be difficult," he away. But we are all thanksaid. "But if you maintain ful to the coach, staff, and level right away. It was your discipline, you can co-owners for taking the either train and sit on make sure that you are fit initiative to keep the club the bench, or go play in a enough for the coach to running. So far, we have select you for every game, no matter what the conditions are."

something that we as a club home matches. The fans ing, to say the least. He us so passionately whenhas played every minute ever we have a game at the of Real Kashmir's I-League TRC Turf, it just gives us one, I want to play at 2023-24 campaign, operat- all that hunger to go out higher levels. I want to of the league, which only cede, and to score goals," resent India one day. But said Hammad. The Snow right now, I need to keep half of the season, win-rectifying my mistakes. "It was not easy, but the ning six of their first 11 I need to raise my level

ever, January 2024 brought forth ill tidings for the club when former owner Sandeep Chattoo passed away.

"Sandeep sir had a massive role not only in Real Kashmir FC but also in football in Jammu and Kashmir. I've been with the club from the start, so I've known him closely. He used to help everyone on a personal basis," said Hammad. "It's not easy to sustain in the I-League for so many years. Now we have an I-League club and playing for FC 1 in the in extremely cold weather, in the I-League, so it's a big

"It was a shock for all of not faced any issues, and hats off to them for continuing the work in the "Not conceding goals is same fashion," he said.

As everyone now looks have always been good at. forward to the upcoming I think it also comes down 2024-25 season in a few to the atmosphere at our months, Hammad wants to carry forward the progress patience have been amaz- here in Kashmir support he's made since his return from injury.

"Of course, like every-

AGENCIES MULLANPUR, APR 19

day night.

MI captain Hardik Pandya fined for

Mumbai Indians cap-

tain Hardik Pandya has

been fined after his team

maintained a slow over

rate during their TATA

Indian Premier League

(IPL) 2024 match against

Punjab Kings at the PCA

New International Cricket

Stadium here on Thurs-

As it was his team's

first offence of the season

under the IPL's Code of

Conduct relating to mini-

mum over rate offences,

Pandya was fined Rs 12

lakhs, an IPL media advi-

disqualified for Beijing

Beijing Half Marathon

organizers announced on

Friday that the four run-

ners who were involved

in last Sunday's contro-

versial race finish have

been stripped of medals.

Organizers launched

sory on Friday said.

China's He, three

**African runners** 

**Half Marathon** 

**AGENCIES** 

BEIJING, APR 19

slow over-rate

# Wipro net profit dips 8 pc to Rs Rs 2,835 crore in Jan-March quarter

**AGENCIES** 

BENGALURU, APRIL 19

IT software major Wipro on Friday reported an 8 per cent net profit of Rs 2,835 crore for the Jan-March quarter of 2023-24 compared to the corresponding figure of Rs 3,074.5 crore in the same period last year.

The company's revenue fell 4.2 per cent the three months ended from a year earlier. March 31, according to a stock exchange filing. The indicates that voluntary Bengaluru-based company attrition stood at 14.2 per had reported a consolidat- cent with IT major seeing IT industry, and the maced revenue of Rs 23,190.3 its headcount shrink roeconomic environment crore in the same quarter a year ago.

revenue of the company per cent sequentially and revenue of (-)1.5 per cent major technological shift with his performance.



Data released on Friday by 6,180 employees in remains uncertain. Q4FY24 and by 24,516 on The IT services segment a full-year basis.

For the quarter ending that lie ahead." came in at \$2,657.4 mil- June 30, the company has lion, an increase of 0.1 guided for a sequential pany is on its way to a promoters were not happy

to Rs 22,208.3 crore in a decrease of 6.4 per cent to 0.5 per cent in constant currency terms.

Wipro CEO Srini Pallia, said 2023-24 proved to be a challenging year for the

tic about the opportunities

Pallia said the com-

with Artificial intelligence transforming the needs of its clients "as they seek to harness its power for competitive advantage and enhanced business value."

"We have the capabilities, leadership, and the strength of over 2,30,000 Wiproites around the world to help us realise our goals. Although there's a considerable amount of work ahead of us, I am confident that together, with our collective effort, we can pave the way for the next chapter of growth," Pallia added.

Srinivas Pallia has just taken over the reins of the company this month "However, I am optimis- after his predecessor Thierry Delaporte abruptly resigned as its CEO amid reports that the Wipro

### Climate-smart deeptech firm Ecozen raises \$30 mn from Nuveen, other investors

**AGENCIES** 

NEW DELHI, APRIL 19

Climate-smart deeptech startup Ecozen on Friday said that it has raised \$30 million in a mix of debt and equity from existing investors, including asset management firm Nuveen.

The startup also raised debt support from the InCred Credit Fund and the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC).

"The capital raised will enable us to scale our operations and deepen our market penetration in domestic and interna- in a statement. tional territories. We are customers and expediting used to cater to the grow-

a global scale," Deven- further its commitment to dra Gupta, CEO and Co-climate-smart technology. Founder of Ecozen, said

According to the compa-years, with profits growing

The company has grown

committed to empowering ny, the latest funds will be three times as well. the transition to climate- ing demand for Ecozen's growth and innovation and market presence into smart technologies on innovative products and to exemplify the type of Africa and Southeast Asia.

five times over the last two

Ecozen's continued

transformative impact we aim to achieve through our investments, paving the way for a sustainable and inclusive low-carbon economy," said Rekha Unnithan, MD and Head of Private Equity Impact Investing at Nuveen.

The startup said that it is expecting to double its revenue in the current fiscal year, buoyed by strong demand for existing products and plans to leverage its tech stack of advanced motors and controls, thermal energy storage, AI and IoT to enter new segments undergoing a transition to cleaner energy sources.

The company is also set to expand its offerings

#### Iran's nuclear sites unharmed after overnight explosions: IAEA

**AGENCIES** 

VIENNA, APRIL 19

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) says no nuclear facilities were harmed after explosions were reported in the central Iranian province of Isfahan.

"IAEA can confirm that there is no damage to Iran's nuclear sites," the UN's nuclear watchdog posted on X.

Director General Rafael Grossi "continues to call for extreme restraint from everybody and reiterates that nuclear facilities should never be a target in military conflicts."

Isfahan is home to important facilities of the Iranian defence industry. The country's largest nuclear research centre is also located in Isfahan.

Iranian state media also said there was no danger to the nuclear facilities there.

Iran reported that several small flying objects had been shot at in the skies over Isfahan early Friday

Several US news outlets, citing anonymous US government officials, reported that Israel had struck Iran in retaliation for last Saturday's largescale drone and missile attack by the Islamic Republic.

# AAP accuses ED; claims CM is not being given insulin in jail

**AGENCIES** 

NEW DELHI, APR 19

Senior AAP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh on Friday accused the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Jail administration of hatching a conspiracy to take Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's life. Addressing a press conference here, life, alleging that the BIP jeopardize his life.

Highlighting his earas to what was I talking ately spreading false news. about. But I know the

life," he alleged. on against Arvind Kejri- publicized in the media that he takes insulin," he wal, I want to say that a yesterday? What is the added.



over the Chief Minister's hatched against him and any kind of accident can is hatching a conspiracy to happen with him inside the jail," he said.

"The Chief Minister of lier statement Singh said, Punjab is being made to "I had stated that a deep meet him like a terrorist," conspiracy is going on he said alleging that ED against Arvind Kejriwal. officers, along with officials At that time, many people from the LG office and jail objected to my statement administration are deliber-

Lashing out at the ED working style of the BJP, and the jail authorities, he the way BJP leaders work, said, "According to the jail they stoop to the extent of rules, you cannot make taking someone's life, and any kind of information patient for the last 30 hatch conspiracies to the about any prisoner, relatextent of taking someone's ed to his health or his food habits, public. I want to ask "And now with the kind the ED; with what authorof proceedings which ity did they get Arvind are continuously going Kejriwal's false diet chart know him, are well-aware

Singh expressed concern deep conspiracy is being conspiracy behind this? Are you planning to give poison to him under some pretext? Are you trying to kill him? What do you want to do? Because what you propagated in the media yesterday was a complete

> He further slammed the BIP stating that at the behest of the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the life of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is being played with in jail.

> "Kejriwal is a diabetic years. He has been suffering from diabetes for years and takes insulin to maintain the sugar level. All the big media journalists who

was initially determined to be at 55.52 degrees north latitude and 157.25 degrees west longitude, Xinhua news agency reported. In July 2023, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake also triggered a tsunami advisory for southern Alaska. The earthquake was felt widely throughout the

# **IPL: Ashutosh Sharma's** brilliant batting draws praise from Suryakumar



MULLANPUR, APRIL 19

In a thrilling encounter between Punjab Kings and Mumbai Indians in the 33rd match of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024, Punjab Kings' batsman Ashutosh Sharma's remarkable batting performance has earned him accolades from Mumbai Indians' Suryakumar

Ashutosh Sharma, who considers Suryakumar his idols, showcased his exceptional talent with a stunning innings of 61 runs off just 28 balls. His innings included two fours and seven towering sixes, displaying his prowess with the bat.

STUTTGART, APRIL 19

Police in south-western

Germany seized a large

arsenal of weapons,

including an assault rifle

and a machine pistol,

during a raid on a suspect-

ed drug dealer's home,

authorities announced on

Police also seized a

number of other weapons

along with 10,000 rounds

of ammunition and nar-

cotics during the search

in the town of Schöntal,

which took place on April

Friday.

the match by nine runs to Mumbai.

Speaking Ashutosh's innings, Survakumar expressed his admiration, stating, "He is not 'mini Surya'. He displayed his skill brilliantly and tried to change the course of the match. I really enjoyed watching him bat. I can't say that I wanted him to win the and Glenn Maxwell as match for Punjab, but I was really feeling good seeing the way he was

Despite Ashutosh's been in regular contact the future of IPL 2024.

German Police find arsenal of weapons

in raid on alleged drug dealer

brilliant efforts, Punjab with both Shashank Singh fell short in their chase, and Ashutosh since then. posting a total of 183 He praised Ashutosh's runs, eventually losing fantastic mentality and expressed hope that both players would continue about to excel without altering their game.

Reflecting on Mumbai's victory, Suryakumar emphasised the significance of the win for the team's momentum in the highly competitive tournament.

The match between Punjab and Mumbai witnessed a blend of exceptional batting performances, with Ashutosh Sharma's innings standing out Suryakumar also as a highlight despite his revealed that he had mes- team's defeat. His display saged Ashutosh after his of talent and potential has debut innings against certainly marked him as a Gujarat Titans and has player to watch out for in

police statement. The

#### an investigation after video clips of Sunday's race showed the Kenyans Robert Keter and Willy Mnangat and Dejene Bikila of Ethiopia deliberately slowed down before the finish line to

#### Egypt urges Iran and Israel to exercise restraint

let China's He Jie win.

AGENCIES CAIRO, APRIL 19

Egypt has urged Iran and Israel to exercise restraint and avoid plunging the region into conflict, a foreign ministry statement

Egypt expressed deep concern over the continued mutual escalation between Israel and Iran and warned of the consequences of expanding the conflict in the region and its dangerous impact on the safety and security of its people.

Oman, meanwhile, has condemned an suspected Israeli attack on the Iranian province of Isfahan as well the repeated Israeli attacks in the region, a foreign ministry spokesman said in a statement.

The Gulf state urged the international community to address the roots of tension and conflict through dialogue, diplomacy and political solutions. It also called for focusing on ceasefire efforts in Gaza and reaching "a just and permanent solution for the Palestinian cause in order to restore security, stability and comprehensive peace in the whole region."

### 5.7-magnitude quake hits

southeast of the **Loyalty Islands** -- USGS

**AGENCIES** 

BEIJING, APRIL 19

An earthquake with a magnitude of 5.7 jolted southeast of the Loyalty Islands at 0918 GMT on Friday, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

The epicenter, with a depth of 79.5 km, was initially determined to be at 21.93 degrees south latitude and 170.89 degrees east longitude, Xinhua news agency reported.

#### 11 but was only publicly dealers who were arrested public prosecutor's office disclosed on Friday. at the end of March. is investigating violations The 46-year-old alleg-The man is now in of the Weapons of War Act edly bought drugs from custody, according to a and the Narcotics Act.

Mizoram witnesses low voter turnout

six other suspected drug



**AGENCIES** 

AIZAWL, APR 19

Continuing a trend seen in the last Lok Sabha elections, Mizoram recorded a low voter eral elections to the Lok to the state. Sabha, Mizoram went to

the state CEO office.

election department to the total 8,56,364 eligi- Mizoram appeared hesible voters casting their tant to elect their repvotes by 5:00 PM. During resentative to the single low voter turnout, State the first phase of the gen- Lok Sabha seat allotted Chief Electoral Officer

the polls on Friday (April has struggled with lower Friday at noon, urging 19). Polling proceeded voter turnout during Lok government employees peacefully across all Sabha elections com- to exercise their right to 1,276 polling stations in pared to its Assembly vote.

the close timing of the Despite extensive elections. In response, voter awareness cam- the Election Departpaigns conducted by the ment has launched proactive initiatives to raise encourage greater par- awareness and encourturnout on Friday, with ticipation in the Lok age greater participation only 52.62 per cent of Sabha polls, voters in in the Lok Sabha polls.

Expressing concern over the potential for Madhup Vyas held a Historically, Mizoram press conference on

### 5.0-magnitude quake hits said. The epicentre, with a depth of 10.0 km, Alaska Peninsula

**AGENCIES** BEIJING, APRIL 19

An earthquake with a magnitude of 5.0 jolted Aleutian Islands, the Alaskan Peninsula and the Alaska Peninsula at 0727 GMT on Friday, the Cook Inlet regions, according to the Alaska GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences Earthquake Center.

# India's forex reserves dip by \$5.4bn after 8-week rise to lifetime high

**AGENCIES** 

MUMBAI, APRIL 19

India's foreign exchange reserves fell by \$5.4 billion to \$643.16 billion as of April 12, according to the latest weekly data released by the RBI on Friday.

This is the first time in 8 weeks that the foreign exchange reserves have recorded a fall after having touched lifetime highs in the preceding weeks.

Market analysts attribute the decline to the RBI actively releasing dollars in the market to curb the held by the RBI which consecutive week of a volatility in the rupee.

The Indian currency has tended to weaken as oil prices have been on the been buying gold in recent during the preceding week rise which has triggered an months as an investment ended on March 29, after increase in the demand for in safe-haven assets amid notching a cumulative dollars to finance costlier geopolitical uncertainties \$26.5 billion rise in the imports. The data released triggered by the Middle previous five weeks. on Friday showed that the East conflict. foreign currency portion much as \$6.51 billion in the \$2.98 billion during the record foreign exchange this period.

week ended April 12.

However, there was an scale a new all-time high increase of \$1.24 billion of \$648.562 billion. in the value of gold assets cushioned the fall of the jump in overall reserves. forex kitty

Central banks have also increased by \$2.95 billion

the strength of the Indian economy. "It is our prime focus

reserves as a reflection of

to build a strong buffer in the form of a substantial quantum of forex reserves which will help us when the cycle turns or when it rains heavily," he remarked while unveiling the first monetary policy review of the current financial year that began on April 1.

India's forex reserves, including the central bank's forward holdings, can now cover more than 11 months of imports, which is a two-year high.

The RBI Governor also said that the Indian rupee (INR) has remained largely range-bound as compared to both its emerging market peers and a few advanced economies during 2023-24 and was India's foreign exchange kanta Das had earlier this the most stable among of the reserves fell by as reserves had gone up by month referred to the major currencies during

# Wipro sees its employee strength fall by 6,180 in Q4 in 6th consecutive decline

**AGENCIES** 

BENGALURU, APRIL 19

IT bellwether Wipro saw its employee strength fall by 6,180 in the fourth quarter (Q4) of FY24, in the sixth consecutive quarter of decline for the company.

When it comes to the full year, the IT services major witnessed its headcount decline by 24,516.

The total headcount for Wipro stood at 234,054 for the last financial year, and the company's attrition rate remained flat at 14.2 per cent.

challenging year for our of a major technological Wiproites around the YoY.



industry, and the macro-shift," said Srini Pallia, economic environment CEO and Managing Direcremains uncertain. Howtor, Wipro. ever, I am optimistic about the opportunities that lie ties, leadership, and the 0.1 per cent QoQ and a

"We have the capabili-"FY24 proved to be a ahead. We are on the brink strength of over 230,000 decrease of 6.4 per cent

world to help us realise our goals," he added.

According to Aparna Iyer, Chief Financial Officer, the company generated the highest operating cash flow in recent years "which is at 183 per cent of our net income in Q4 and 159 per cent on a full-year basis".

The gross revenue reached Rs 222.1 billion (\$2.7 billion), which was flat (quarter-on-quarter). The IT services segment revenue was at \$2,657.4 million, an increase of

#### One crew member killed in Russian Tu-22M3 plane crash



**AGENCIES** MOSCOW, APRIL 19

A crew member of the the Krasnogvardeisky Russian Tu-22M3 strategic bomber died when Territory while returning the aircraft crashed in the to its home airfield after Krasnogvardeisky district completing a combat of the Stavropol Territory, mission. Initial findings

the third crew member and ground-based targets died. The search for the by guided missiles and fourth pilot continues, aerial bombs.

JI NEWS SERVICE

GANDERBAL, APRIL 19

he wrote, Xinhua news

agency reported. The plane crashed in district of the Stavropol

Expenditure Observer Additional District Devel- Monitoring mechanism,

(EO) to 2-Srinagar Parlia- opment Commissioner highlighting the constitu-

mentary Constituency, Mushtaq Ahmad Simnani, tion of Election Expen-

undertook a comprehen- missioner Gulzar Ahmad, Flying Squad Teams, SSTs,

sive review of compliance Dy DEO, District Treasury and VVTs, all aimed at

with election expenditure Officer, along with various ensuring rigorous compli-

regulations in Ganderbal other officials and teams ance with election expen-

ahead of the Lok Sabha involved in the election diture regulations.

process.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024: EO reviews compliance

with election expenditure regulations in Ganderbal

ed by District Election Offi- tion Expenditure Moni-

cer, Shyambir; SSP Gan-toring provided a detailed

derbal, Sandeep Gupta; overview of the Election

Sambit Mishra today Additional Deputy Com- diture Monitoring Cell, process. He called for a

The Nodal officer Electhe Expenditure Observer

### 7 killed in fire in Indonesia's Jakarta

week ended April 5 to

That was the seventh

The forex kitty had

RBI Governor Shakti-



**AGENCIES** JAKARTA, APRIL 19

Seven people were killed in a fire at a frame shop house on Mampang Prapatan Raya

found in a warehouse on the extinguished after 24 fire second floor," said Mampang engines with 110 personnel Police Chief Commissioner

David Kanitero, adding that all the bodies have been evacuated on Friday, Xinhua news agency reported.

Meanwhile, five injured are still in intensive care at

were deployed.

underscored the impor-

tance of adhering to ECI

guidelines, emphasiz-

ing the crucial role of

each stakeholder in safe-

guarding the democratic

collective commitment

towards upholding demo-

cratic values and maintain-

ing transparency in elec-

upholding the integrity of

the electoral process.

toral expenditures, thus

# Kunal Shah's CRED receives in-principle approval for payment aggregator business

NEW DELHI, APRIL 19

Credit Card bill payment leader CRED has received the in-principle approval to enter into the payment aggregator business, a media report said on

According to Tech-Crunch, citing sources, the startup received the initial approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for the payment aggregator license this week.

This development marks a step forward for the fintech company towards the expansion of its business offerings.

When reached, the company did not immediately comment.

**Lok Sabha Elections 2024** 



approval to CRED comes prises. after RBI's recent crack-

As per the report, and increased caution in the in-principle license giving licences to enter-

Earlier this year, online down on fintech activities food delivery platform brand and distribution.

7 killed, 22 injured in

PoK road accident

**AGENCIES** 

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 19

reported on Friday.

rescue service.

Zomato's wholly-owned subsidiary Zomato Payments Private Limited (ZPPL) was granted a certificate of authorisation from RBI to operate as an 'Online Payment Aggregator'. In February, CRED reached an agreement to acquire the online wealth management platform Kuvera in an effort to take on the likes of Zerodha and Groww.

The reports to acquire Kuvera initially surfaced last year in October.

According to the company, post-acquisition, Kuvera founders, team and product will continue to operate independently while working closely with CRED leadership to scale its network, ecosystem,

#### with notice for violating MCC regional governor Vladi- suggest that the crash mir Vladimirov said on was caused by a techni-Street in Indonesia's capital a hospital. social media Friday. cal fault. The Tu-22M3 city Jakarta, according to The fire broke out in the Updated information long-range supersonic shop stocked with wood, police. has been received on the missile carrier bomber is "There are five adults paint, and paint thinner on and two children who were Thursday evening. It was incident. Unfortunately, designed to destroy sea-



**DDC Member Mawar slapped** 

JI NEWS SERVICE KUPWARA, APRIL 19

Kupwara, Ayshi Sudan, who is also DEO Kupwara, Additional District Magis-

trate Kupwara has sought explanation from DDC Member Mawar, Khursheed Ahmad Dar for committing brazen violation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) by inaugurating a public park at Maratgam Handwara today without any authority.

The Additional District Magistrate in a Letter/ Order issued vide DEOK/ MCC/2024/19-25 has asked the DDC Member

to explain the reasons for violating the MCC norms and submit the expendi-On the instructions of DC ture statement incurred on such function within two days, failing which the matter shall be forwarded to Chief Electoral Officer, J&K.

> "You are hereby put on notice to respond to the violation of MCC made by vou while inaugurating a public park at Maratgam Handwara, Kupwara without proper legal permission from DEO Kupwara as required under rules," reads the notice issued by ADM Kupwara, who is also the Nodal Officer,

### service said, adding that three injured were in critical con-28 pro-government

fighters killed in Syria

upon which the bus fell, it added.

BEIRUT, APRIL 19

At least 28 pro-government fighters were killed in suspected attacks by Islamic State militants in Syria, a war monitor said on Friday.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human

At least seven people were killed and 22 others injured

when a van fell into a ditch in Muzaffarabad of Pak-

istan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), the rescue service

Muzaffarabad when a passenger van went off the road in

mountainous terrain and fell on the roof of a house before

eventually hitting the ditch, resulting in casualties, said the

The deceased included a person who was in the house

Following the accident, the rescue workers reached the

site and shifted the victims to the local hospitals, the rescue

The accident took place in the Garhi Dupatta area of

Rights said 22 Syrian soldiers and allied fighters were killed in an attack on a military bus late Thursday night. Seven other people were injured in the attack near the town of al-Taybah in the eastern part of the country. Six Syrian soldiers were killed in another attack in the eastern Syrian province of Deir al-Zour, the watchdog said. No group has claimed responsibility but the Observatory said the Islamic State group was likely behind the attacks. The extremist militant group once controlled large swathes of land in western and northern Iraq plus parts of Syria. It was defeated in late 2017 but cells are still active in both countries.

# BJP national president takes dig at Congress MP

During the meeting,

WAYANAD, APR 19

elections 2024.

The meeting was attend-

BJP national president J P Nadda on Frida took a dig at senior Congress leader and MP Rahul Gandhi, claiming that he is contesting from Wayanad in Kerala because he knows that he will lose if he contests from his own constituency Amethi in Uttar Pradesh in this Lok Sabha polls. Addressing a roadshow in Sulthan Bathery for BJP state president and NDA candidate K Surena proper stance.

He also claimed that Ameti. His alliance with about the country.



anti-nationals, banned (PFI) political party, Social

"Rahul Gandhi is not con- that sitting MP from Wayfident of contesting from anad Rahul Gandhi is not his own constituency at talking about anything

He said, "Rahul Gandhi as part of electioneering Popular Front of India is under investigation in National Herald corrup-Democratic Party of India tion case, that is why he dran, he alleged that Rahul (SDPI), is because he has was protecting corrupt Gandhi's politics is without no faith in people of the people and implementing family politics and his hall-Nadda further claimed mark is politics of appease-

> ing against NDA with said that women were puramin evening. CPI leader D Raja as a given free gas connection

proves that Rahul Gandhi has no political stance.

the Narendra Modi's 10-year rule.

This time India will grow to be the third largest economic power in the world and ensure overall development of the country, he claimed.

member of INDIA bloc in through Ujjwala Yojana. 10 New Delhi, while Raja's lakh people in Kerala got wife Annie Raja is contest- drinking water through ing against Rahul in Way- Jal Jeevan Mission, crores anad as Left Democratic of toilets were built under Front (LDF) candidate, he Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, said and claimed that this four crore houses were constructed under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana in Nadda further claimed the country, out of these that "the Lotus will bloom two lakh houses were built in Wayanad to strengthen in Kerala, health insurprogress of the country. ance of Rs five lakh has India has become fifth been given to poor people largest economy during under Ayushman Bharat scheme, he added.

Earlier, Nadda arrived at Wayanad at 1130 hours in morning and held a roadshow at Sulthan Bathery from 1200 hrs to 1330 hrs. Later, he will attend a

public meeting at Kulap-Listing out Modi's pully in Palakkad district Rahul Gandhi is fight- achievements, BJP chief and at Thiruvanantha-

#### DC Bandipora discusses restoration of electricity supply to Gurez **AGENCIES**

BANDIPORA, APRIL 19

MCC Kupwara.

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Shakeel Ur Rehman today convened a meeting here to discuss issues for restoration of electricity supply to Gurez through a grid that got damaged during recent snowfall.

It is worth mentioning here that Gurez was connected to the electricity grid for the first time in November last year but got cut off due to recent heavy snowfall in the Razdan area.

The meeting also discussed threadbare infrastructure damages and logistical constraints in the restoration process.

#### G7 meeting to end with debate on China and global issues

CAPRI, APRIL 19

The spring meeting of the foreign ministers of the Group of Seven (G7) economically strong democracies is set to end on Friday with discussions on the situation in the Indo-Pacific region and global issues such as food, energy and cybersecurity.

In view of China's increasingly aggressive behaviour in the Indian Ocean and Pacific region, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock had already stated at the start of the meeting that the effects are not only being felt by the G7's Pacific countries - the United States, Canada and Japan - but also in Europe.

The G7 meeting is being held on the Italian Mediter ranean island of Capri.

NEWS

Lok Sabha Elections 2024

# **Election Expenditure Observer reviews** Election preparedness in O2-Srinagar **Parliamentary Constituency**

SRINAGAR, APRIL 19

In order to review the preparations for smooth conduct of upcoming Lok Sabha Elections-2024 in 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency, the Election Expenditure Observer for the Srinagar PC, Sambit Mishra today chaired a meeting at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex, here.

District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, who is also the Returning Officer(RO) for O2-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency was present on the occasion.

At the outset, the Election Expenditure Observer held an extensive interaction with Assistant Returning Officers (ARO), Assistant Expenditure Observers, Accounting Teams, Bankers and reviewed the preparedness measures undertaken for the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections in the district.

regarding the preparations made for free, fair Election Expenditure booking by the contesting and peaceful conduct of Observer reviewed the candidates as per the ECI the Lok Sabha Elections preparations and the guidelines. in the O2-Srinagar Parlia- status of Expenditure mentary Constituency. monitoring teams in all ture Observer emphasized He also briefed him about Assembly Segments. He the need of coordination other Officers associated the teams constituted to briefed the concerned among various monitormonitor expenditures of Officers about their role ing teams for effective diture Monitoring Teams



On the occasion, the accounts and expenditure the candidates contesting and responsibilities and expenditure oversight attended the meeting.

The DEO Srinagar the Elections as per the emphasized the imporapprised the Election laid guidelines of Election tance of maintaining Expenditure Observer Commission of India(ECI). proper records of the

The Election Expendi-

and stressed the prompt reporting of ECI violation with respect to election expenditure booking. He also underscored the efficient monitoring of the social media in order to contain any misuse of election expenditure by the contesting candidates in the district.

While expressing satisfaction over the election preparations in Srinagar District, the Election Expenditure Observer enjoined upon the Officers to work with added zeal and unwavering dedication to uphold sanctity of the election process and safeguarding the democratic spirit. He also urged them to document any MCC violation and promptly inform the Election Observer regarding the same, if any.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (Returning Office 19-Hazratbal), Syed Ahmad Kataria; Additional Deputy Commissioner (Returning Officer 24-Zadibal), Dr. Khalid Hussain Malik; Deputy District Election Officer, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Nodal Officer Election Expenditure Monitoring, Javaid Maqbool Khanday, Assistant Returning Officer of all 8 Assembly Segments of Srinagar District and with FSTs SSTs and Expen-

### Lok Sabha Elections 2024: Expenditure Observer for Anantnag-Rajouri PC visits Shopian

JI NEWS SERVICE SHOPIAN, APRIL 19

Election Expenditure Observer, Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary Constituency, Shyam Manohar Singh today visited Shopian and chaired

a review meeting with Nodal officers on expenditure monitoring and other Election preparedness in the Zainapora Assembly Constituency. The District Election

Officer (DEO) Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb at the outset briefed the Election Observer about functioning of expenditure monitoring teams viz. Flying Squads, Static Surveillance Teams, District Election Control Room, details of permissions for political campaigning, District Election Management Plan, SVEEP activities, security, and other related election issues.



already working on the cer, Expenditure Monitorground to keep check on ing also briefed about the election campaigning in expenditure monitoring relation to expenditure system in place and posimonitoring of all politi- tion of expenditure bookcal parties and candidates ing party wise. of the constituency, and all arrangements are in on the occasion asked for AROs, Nodal Officers and place for smooth conduct making an orientation pro- other concerned teams of of elections in a free and gramme for independent expenditure monitoring.

He said, teams are fair manner. Nodal Offi- candidates on expenditure booking for campaigning. Later, the Observer vis-

> ited the Strong Room also. The meeting was attended by ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone; ADC, Expenditure Observer, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz;

Lok Sabha Elections 2024

### DC Baramulla visits 9-Uri AC; ensures AMFs at Polling Stations

JI NEWS SERVICE

BARAMULLA, APRIL 19

In view of the General Elections to Lok Sabha, the District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today conducted a comprehensive inspection of various polling stations within the sub-division Uri.

The purpose of the visit was to ensure that all polling stations have Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) as per the ECI guidelines. The DEO conducted a thorough assessment of infrastructure and amenities at each location to ensure a seamless and efficient voting experience for voters.

During the visit, the ducted a comprehensive staff. assessment of various vision of drinking water, in the preparations and during the visit.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024

and electricity supply-all urged for continued coopof which fall under the eration to guarantee the Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs), to be provided process. to the poll parties as per the ECI guidelines.

environment for con-tribution Center in Uri, ducting free, fair, and where from the poll parthe DEO emphasized the als would be distributed DEO inspected several importance of providing to the individual polling polling stations in the adequate facilities to both stations of the assembly border villages and con- voters and the polling constituency during the

Meanwhile, Minga

DEO Budgam reviews Law & Order,

**Transport & communication plans** 

success of the electoral

Furthermore, the DEO visited and assessed the To foster a conducive arrangements at the Distransparent elections, ties and election materi-Lok Sabha Elections.

The DEO was accompaessential aspects such Sherpa praised the dedinied by ARO 9-Uri Assemas availability of ramps, cation and efforts of all bly Segment, Javid Ahmad sanitation facilities, pro- the stakeholders involved Rather and other Officers

**Encouraging Electoral Participation: Distt** Admin organises **Awareness** programme at HS Nargistan, Zone Lurgam in Tral JI NEWS SERVICE PULWAMA, APRIL 19

An enlightening SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) awareness programme was today organised by District Administration at HS Nargistan, Zone Lurgam.

The event saw enthusiastic participation from individuals across various demographics, including the general public, women, persons with disabilities (PWD), and senior citizens from Nargistan, Gutroo, Wantinar, Bangidar, and neighboring villages.

The Nodal Officer SVEEP delivered an insightful session emphasizing the pivotal role voting plays in the democratic process. Encouraging everyone to actively participate in the electoral process to strengthen democracy, he highlighted the direct impact a single vote can have on shaping the future and ensuring growth and prosperity.

The program also featured cultural presentations, including traditional performances like Ladishah and chakri by talented students and youth from the village, adding a colorful and festive touch to the occa-

Participants of the event lauded the initiative and expressed their support for the continuation of such programs to further educate and empower every voter. Various members, including the SVEEP Coordinator, also shared their insights and thoughts

In a similar effort to create awareness and promote voter education, an awareness program under the SVEEP initiative was successfully organized at HS Gulistaan zone Tral.

during the event.

initiatives These underline the commitment to fostering a wellinformed and actively engaged electorate, ensuring the democratic process thrives through increased participation and awareness.

### Lok Sabha Elections 2024: DEO B'la presides final training session on Expenditure Monitoring

JI NEWS SERVICE BARAMULLA, APRIL 19

In an endeavour to ensure transparency and fairness in the electoral process during the General Elections to Lok Sabha 2024, the District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today presided over the final training session for Election **Expenditure Monitoring** Teams, Video Surveillance Teams (VSTs), and Video Viewing Teams (VVTs) at Dak Bunglow here.

The session was attended by the Additional District Development Commissioner, Baramulla, Syed Qamar Sajad; Nodal ing mechanisms during tion Commission of India assessing the expenses Officer Expenditure the electoral process to to curb any potential malincurred by candidates Monitoring, Baramulla, provide a level playing practices related to elec-Deputy District Election field for all candidates tion expenditure. Officer, all members of the contesting the General Election Monitoring Cell, Elections to Lok Sabha Sherpa elaborated on bly segments. The DEO accounting teams, video 2024 for the 1-Baramulla the function and responsurveillance teams, and Parliamentary Constituvideo viewing teams and ency seat. the officials from the election department.

the role of each individual importance of adhering crucial role in assisting strict adherence to these in enhancing the efficacy to the stringent guidelines the Expenditure Moni- guidelines while carrying

Lok Sabha Elections 2024



session, the DEO under- at each assembly seg-The session focused on scored the paramount ment, emphasizing their of expenditure monitor- and protocols of the Electoring team in accurately

Meanwhile, Minga sibilities of VSTs, VVTs, and Assistant Expendi-Speaking during the ture Observers stationed

during rallies and other political activities within those specific asseminstructed the attendees to thoroughly go through the handbook published by the ECI regarding the MCC guidelines, emphasizing the importance of out their duties.

JI NEWS SERVICE

BUDGAM, APRIL 19

The District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Akshay Labroo chaired a joint security meet to take detailed assessment of law and order situation for the smooth conduct of tions-2024 in the district.

At the outset, the DEO called for maintenance of seamless coordination among all civil and security officers for smooth conduct of elections in the

He said that all necessary arrangements are being put up for the dispatching of EVMs to designated locations, and all arrangements of security and safety of EVMs have been made as per the guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI).

The DEO said that arrangements including electricity, water and washroom facility being monitored person- designated teams in the present in the meeting.



ensuing Lok Sabha Elec- ally by SSP Budgam and district. shall be ensured as per the requirements and extant

> communication plan were deployment of EVMs, also flagged at the district level for arrangements for availability of additional vehicles.

guidelines in all areas.

The DEO stressed on making adequate arrangements at all polling stations including creation of women and PWD polling stations at all identified locations.

He also assessed the for-

SSP Budgam, Al Tahir Gillani deliberated on the status of deposition The transportation and of arms license, security polling stations and deployment for security all size vehicles including of contesting candidates and other security related issues.

> He said that all security arrangements are being made in a coordinated way across all areas of the district.

SSP Budgam, Al Tahir Gillani, Nodal Officer, Law and Order, (ADC), Mehrajmation and functioning of ud-Din Shah, Commanflying squad Teams (FSTs), dants of different central static surveillance teams and para military forces, (SSTs), video surveillance Nodal Officers, AROs and for CAPF camp sites are teams (VSTs) and other other concerned were also

### DEO Kupwara reviews preparations for LS polls

JI NEWS SERVICE

KUPWARA, APRIL 19

EROs and other officers to district. review the preparations elections in the district.

availability of drinking locations/buildings as per facilities.

water, electricity and toilet requirement in consultafacilities for camping location with concerned AROs. tions/ identified build-The District Election ings for accommodation of April 23 for provid-Officer (DEO) Kupwara, of Para-Military Security ing electricity and water Ayushi Sudan on Friday forces to be deployed for supply connections and convened a meeting of the LS Polls in Kupwara their necessary extension

for upcoming Lok Sabha sion directed Ex. Engineer preparations including supply for all the camping regarding the necessary

as per requirement to all The DEO on the occa- identified locations. The pivotal meet-PDD and Ex. Engineer PHE ing focused on ensuring The meeting discussed to ensure the availability effective coordination and various aspects of the of electricity and water addressing any concerns

The DEO said that the District Administration is She fixed a deadline committed to take all necessary measures for successful conduct of 'free, fair and participative elec-The meeting was

attended by SSP Kupwara, SSP Handwara, ADDC Kupwara, ADC Handwara, AROs, Dy.DEO, ARTO, Officers of Para- Military Security Force and other concerned officers.