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Jitendra Singh files nomination from Udhampur-Kathua Seat

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, MAR 21

Union Minister Jitendra Singh on March 21 filed his nomination papers from the Udhampur-Kathua Lok Sabha constituency for the first phase of general elections in Jammu and Kashmir on April 19.

The notification for the Udhampur-Kathua constituency was issued on Wednesday along with 102 seats in 17 States and four Union Territories where polls will be held in the first phase.

Flanked by wife Manju Singh and Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Mr. Singh filed his nomination papers at the office of Returning Officer Rakesh Minhas in Kathua town, officials said.

Mr. Singh, whose candidacy was announced in the BJP's first list on March 3, performed a puja at his



residence in the Trikuta Nagar area of the city in the presence of friends and relatives earlier in the day.

The two-time MP from Udhampur-Kathua is aiming for a hat-trick of wins and thanked the people for their faith in him while seeking their blessings for yet another

term. "The people from the hills of Kishtwar and Doda had come here yesterday to show their love and faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It is proof of the work done in this region. But the Opposition failed to see any development," Mr. Singh told the rally in Kathua.

Seeking the support of the people, he said, "I bow before you for the love and faith in me and I again seek your blessings".

Before filing the nomination papers, Mr. Singh took out a rally that saw the participation of Dalip Singh Rana, better known as 'The Great Khali

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Lal Singh gets rousing reception in Jammu after rejoining Congress

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Hundreds of workers on Thursday gave a rousing reception to former MP and former minister Lal Singh on his arrival here after rejoining the Congress and expressed confidence that the party will win both the seats in Jammu and Kashmir.

Singh, 65, who hails from Kathua district, rejoined the Congress at its headquarters in Delhi on Wednesday amid speculations that he will be fielded against BJP minister Jitendra Singh from the Udhampur parliamentary constituency which is going to polls in the first phase on April 19.

Flanked by his wife and former legislator Kanta Andotra, and J-K Congress working president Raman Bhalla, Lal Singh was received by



the workers and leaders of the party amid beats of drums and showering of flowers.

"It (his joining Congress) is not enthusiasm but a change in Jammu and Kashmir. It is a big change to boost the forces fighting BJP in Jammu and

Kashmir," Lal Singh told reporters soon after his arrival from New Delhi.

He claimed that the Congress will win both the seats of Jammu and Udhampur.

"I am confident to win from Udhampur seat. After becoming a two-

time MP and minister, it is unfortunate that he has done nothing", he said.

Hitting out at the BJP, he said unemployment is at a high level in the Union Territory amid increase in the level of crime. "There is

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Six additional judges appointed to Kerala HC, one to J&K HC

J1 NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

Six advocates and a judicial officer were appointed as judges in two high courts on Thursday.

According to a Law Ministry statement, advocates Mullappally Abdul Aziz Abdul Hakhim, Syam Kumar Vadakke Mudavakkat, Harisankar Vijayan Menon, Manu Sreedharan Nair, Easwaran Subramani and Manoj Pulamby Madhavan have been appointed as additional judges of the Kerala High Court.

Judicial officer Mohd Yousuf Wani has been appointed as an additional judge of the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court.

Separately, 10 additional judges of the Bombay High Court have been elevated as permanent judges.

Additional judges are usually appointed for a period of two years before being elevated as judges or what is popularly called "permanent judges".

Rain, Snow likely in J&K for two days

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MARCH 21

Rain/snow is likely in Jammu and Kashmir during the next 48 hours, MeT office said on Thursday.

As the sky is overcast with clouds, the MeT department said there would be rain/snow at many places in J&K during the next 48 hours.

Inclement weather with thunder, lightning and gusty winds is likely in the plains of Kashmir and Jammu divisions during this period.

Srinagar recorded 9.9 degree Celsius, Gulmarg 3.2 and Pahalgam 3 as the minimum temperature on Thursday. In Ladakh region, Leh town

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Model Code

EC asks govt to stop sending 'Viksit Bharat' messages on WhatsApp

J1 NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

The Election Commission Thursday directed the Centre to "immediately halt" sending bulk WhatsApp messages under the "Viksit Bharat Sampark".

to highlight the government's initiatives. The Commission issued the direction to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology after it received complaints about the matter.

"The move is a part of a series of decisions taken by the Commission

to ensure a level-playing field," the Commission said.

It has also sought a compliance report on the matter from the ministry.

The ministry had informed the Commission that the messages along with a letter from Prime Minister Narendra Modi were sent before the Model Code of Conduct came into force on March 16.

".... some of them could have possibly been delivered to recipients with a delay because of systemic and network limitations,"

the ministry said in a communication to the Commission.

The poll authority had received several complaints that such messages highlighting the government's initiatives were still being delivered on citizens' phones despite the announcement of the General Elections 2024 and the MCC coming into force.

The Congress and the Trinamool Congress had raised objections to the message and requested the Election Commission

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Lok Sabha Elections

Congress panel meets to finalise candidates for Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, J&K

J1 NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

The Congress' Central Election Committee met here on Thursday to finalise Lok Sabha poll candidates for Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

This is the first time that the panel, chaired by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, took up discussions on the candidates for the politically crucial Uttar Pradesh.

There is speculation



that Rahul Gandhi may also contest from Amethi, besides his declared seat of Wayanad in Kerala, and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra from Raebareilly, a

seat which was previously held by Sonia Gandhi. Both the seats in UP are considered bastions of the Gandhi family and the local units of the

Congress have demanded that the two scions of the Gandhi family should contest from there.

UP Congress chief Ajay Rai, Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Jitu Patwari and J&K unit chief Vikar Rasool Wani were present in the meetings held for their respective states. Also, the AICC state in-charges - Avinash Pande (UP), Jitendra Singh (MP) and Bharatsinh Solanki were also present when candidates for their respective

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Annual Amarnath Yatra likely from June 29 this year

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

The annual Shri Amarnath yatra this year is likely to begin from June 29.

Official sources said that Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who is also Chairman of Shri Amarnath Shrine Board, chaired a meeting here at Raj Bhawan to discuss arrangements and preparations for the yatra.

The 52-day long pilgrimage to conclude on August 19-on the occasion of Rakshabandhan.

"After the conclusion of the Lok Sabha Polls, the



administration will get busy with Shri Amarnath preparations, which is likely to commence from June 29 and conclude on August 19," sources added.

They said that the registration for the Yatra is expected to begin later next month in branches of various banks," adding

they said, "as soon as the official announcement of the Yatra is made, preparations thereafter will be done on war footing."

The live telecast of Aarti for the Yatra will start from the month of July.

In 2023, around 4.5 lakh pilgrims visited Shri Amarnath Cave.

SC rejects applications for stay on appointment of new election commissioners

J1 NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

The Supreme Court on Thursday dismissed applications seeking a stay on the appointment of two new election commissioners.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta said it will examine the main petitions challenging the validity of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and

Terms of Office) Act, 2023. "We are dismissing the applications for stay on the appointment," the bench said.

"At the stage, we cannot stay the legislation or suspend its operation. It would lead to chaos and uncertainty and we cannot do it (stay) by way of an interim order. There are no allegations against the new election commissioners," the bench told the petitioners' challenging the new law.

During the hearing, the bench questioned the

Centre over the procedure adopted for appointment of two new election commissioners.

It said the selection committee should have been given more time to apply its mind on the appointment of election commissioners.

"The search committee for appointment of election commissioners should have been given a fair share of time to understand the background of candidates," the bench observed. It said the

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Voting is the only power left with people of J&K: Mehbooba Mufti

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 21

Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti on Thursday said voting is the only power left with people of Jammu and Kashmir as the BJP-ruled Centre is making all efforts to suppress their voices.

"All kinds of injustices are being done and Jammu and Kashmir has been turned into a jail. To suppress the voice of people here, Amit Shah broke the PDP. They took away legislators, ministers and members of parliament from the PDP so that they can finish off the voice of the party," Mufti told reporters in Anantnag district, 55 kilometres from here.

"Now people of Kashmir are left with just their votes," she pointed out.

She said several parties were formed in Jammu and Kashmir after the "illegal" abrogation of Article 370 so that the Centre could send to Parliament the leaders favoured by it.

"It is a different matter if you want to rig that too, so that you can take

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JPDCL to lodge FIR against power theft; acts tough against defaulters

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

In a major decision, the JPDCL has decided to lodge FIR against erring consumers who are involved in power theft by means of hooking and bypassing of meters including Smart meters. The decision has been taken by Sh. Vikas Kundal, Managing Director Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited.

Managing Director JPDCL instructed the AEEs

to lodge FIR under section 135 of Electricity Act, 2003 against those who are found to be indulging in Power theft. According to the act electricity theft shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years or with fine or with both.

MD, JPDCL Sh. Vikas Kundal, in a statement cautioned strict action including imprisonment against those who try to hoodwink the department by



indulging in bypassing of Electronic/Smart meters. He said that such practices

are causing massive loss to the public exchequer and honest consumers suffer due to illegal practices by the some miscreants. He added that it is the highest priority of the UT Government to reduce the Aggregate transmission and Distribution losses and the same can only be achieved if such practices are curbed.

Managing Director, JPDCL further explained that tampering of meter, use of tampered meter,

loop connection or any other device or method which interferes with accurate or proper registration, calibration or metering of electric current or otherwise results in a manner whereby electricity is stolen amounts to power theft and general public shall refrain from such practices.

In a drive against 'illegal' power connections and delinquent payments, the Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited

(JPDCL) has disconnected more than 5256 defaulters, raking in an impressive revenue in last 3 days, officials said today.

"In the first place, connections of 5256 consumers including influential consumers (Industries, Hotels and influential persons) were disconnected to sensitize the masses to clear their liabilities on account of electricity bills and develop habits of paying electricity

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Lok Sabha Election 2024

Distt Admin Kishtwar organises training session on distribution, utilisation of postal ballots

JINNEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, MARCH 21

District Election Office Kishtwar, led by District Election Officer, Dr. Devansh Yadav today organised a pivotal training session at conference hall of DC Office Complex here for the upcoming General Lok Sabha Elections 2024.

The session focused on efficient distribution and utilisation of postal ballots to ensure smooth electoral conduct.

The training session was attended by Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) from all three Constituent Assemblies of Kishtwar district, along with Booth Level Officers and Supervisors, who were briefed about the importance of enabling voting rights for



senior citizens aged above 85 years and Persons with Disabilities (PwD).

Master Trainer, Riyaz Ahmed Butt explained the procedures for distributing and filling postal ballots, emphasising inclusivity and accessibility in the electoral process.

Postal ballots play a crucial role in enabling

eligible voters, especially those unable to visit polling stations in person, to participate in elections.

This mechanism aids individuals facing mobility challenges, those away from their home constituencies and those engaged in essential services on Election Day.

During the session,

Supervisors and BLOs were provided with Form 12-D, a crucial document for the postal ballot process. They were tasked with ensuring seamless distribution of postal ballots to eligible elderly and differently-abled voters.

It was reiterated that individuals aged 85 years and above, as well as those with over 40% disability, are eligible to exercise their voting rights through postal ballots in the forthcoming Lok Sabha election scheduled for April 19.

BLOs were further instructed to distribute the requisite forms to elderly and differently-abled individuals who prefer to cast their votes from their residences, ensuring their active participation in the democratic process.

Forest Deptt celebrates International Day of Forests at Ramban



JINNEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, MARCH 21

Deputy Commissioner, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary today spearheaded a significant 'Plantation Drive' to mark the International Day of Forests by planting a chinar tree sapling at the District Administrative Complex here.

The event witnessed participation of various dignitaries like Additional Deputy Commissioner, Varunjeet Singh Charak; DFO Ramban, Abhinav Ramyotra and senior officers.

Addressing the importance of World Forestry Day, Deputy Commissioner highlighted the vital role forests play in maintaining the Earth's delicate balance. He emphasised the need for collective efforts to

address issues like deforestation and denudation.

He urged everyone to acknowledge forests' crucial role in sustaining life and encouraged engagement in tree planting and awareness campaigns to promote forest conservation.

Similar plantation drives were conducted by the Forest Division, Ramban, under the supervision of DFO, Hitender Singh Chandel, featuring a variety of saplings including Silver Oak, Moru, Thevetia, Glauca and Deodar, showcasing the region's ecological richness.

Participants planted saplings as part of efforts to promote environmental stewardship and community engagement in safeguarding forests for present and future generations.

Nodal Officer MCMC Reasi holds interaction with media personnel



JINNEWS SERVICE
REASI, MARCH 21

Nodal officer for Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) Reasi, Nasir Ahmed today engaged in an interactive session with media personnel here regarding the Lok Sabha Election 2024.

The session was aimed to address concerns and queries of media professionals regarding coverage and dissemination of election related information. During the session,

the Nodal officer listened to various demands and inquiries from media representatives. He also briefed the media about the MCC and the MCMC.

He emphasised on the significance of adhering to MCC guidelines to uphold the integrity of electoral process and ensure fair and unbiased media coverage. He assured continued cooperation and support from the administration for media coverage of the Lok Sabha Election 2024.

Lok Sabha Elections -2024

DEO Reasi holds press conference on imposition of MCC

JINNEWS SERVICE
REASI, MARCH 21

District Election Officer, Reasi Vishesh Mahajan today held a press conference at DC Office here to inform public about the imposition of Model Code of Conduct and guidelines set by the Election Commission of India ahead of Lok Sabha General Elections 2024.

Addressing the media, the DEO provided a comprehensive overview of the district, including details on polling stations, voters and constituencies. He assured that all necessary facilities have been arranged at each polling station to ensure a smooth and efficient voting process.



The DEO also spoke about the ongoing implementation of Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) activities across the district to increase voter awareness and participation. Additionally, he mentioned the establishment of control rooms and complaint cells to promptly address any concerns or grievances related to the electoral process.

Reiterating the administration's commitment to conducting free, fair and transparent elections in Reasi district, the DEO urged voters to come out in large numbers to vote on April 26.

ADC, Kulbhushan Khajuria; ACR, Anshumali Sharma; Dy. DEO Rakesh Kumar; DIO (Information) Nasir Ahmed; Tehsildar Reasi and BDOs were also present on the occasion.

Lok Sabha Elections -2024 Two candidates file nomination for Udhampur Lok Sabha seat

JINNEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, MARCH 21

Two candidates today filed their nomination papers for the first phase of general elections to be held in Jammu and Kashmir on April 19. The candidates, including Dr Jitendra Singh and Prem Nath both from Bharatiya Janata Party, filed their nomination papers in the office of Returning Officer.

The last day for filing of nomination papers is March 27, 2024 from 11:00 AM to 03:00 PM.

Lok Sabha Elections -2024

First phase of randomization of polling personnel held at Kathua



JINNEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, MARCH 21

District Election Officer Kathua, Dr. Rakesh Minhas today oversaw the first phase of randomization process of polling staff to be deployed in 701 polling stations during the upcoming Parliamentary Elections-2024 in the district.

The randomisation process took place today at the conference hall of the DC office complex, with key officials and stake-

holders in attendance.

The randomization process was conducted as per the prescribed guidelines of ECI ensuring fairness and impartiality in the selection of polling staff.

ARO-67 Kathua, ARO-68 Hiranagar, Nodal Officer MCC, Law and Order, Single Window, Nodal Officer Training, Nodal Officer HR/Manpower, Welfare of Polling Staff, Nodal Officer ETPBS, Nodal Officer Communication Plan, and Deputy DEO Kathua were present on the occasion.

GDC Marh organises SVEEP programme



JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 21

Government Degree College (GDC), Marh today organized Systematic Voter's Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) awareness programme to create voter awareness and promote voter literacy among students as well as other stakeholders. During the programme, Principal, Prof. Rakesh Kumar Koul interacted with the students and briefed them about SVEEP, a flagship programme of Election Commission of India for

Voter's education, spreading voter awareness and promoting voters literacy in India.

SDM Marh, Manu Hansa and SVEEP Nodal Officer, Shalini Gupta also interacted with the students and faculty and appreciated the efforts of college for organising SVEEP programme. Speaking on the occasion, SDM Marh said that the vision of SVEEP is to enlighten, enable and empower every citizen to register as a voter and cast his or her vote at every election in an informed and ethical manner.

Distt Admin Udhampur organizes SVEEP campaign for elderly voters

JINNEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, MARCH 21

An awareness programme, a vital component of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) campaign was organized by the District Administration Udhampur, under the supervision of District Election Officer, Udhampur Saloni Rai, and Deputy District Election Officer, Dr. Anirudh Rai at Old Age Home here.

Dr Preeti Sharma, District Panchayat Officer,



and the designated Nodal Officer of SVEEP, sensitized the elderly residents, emphasizing that elections embody a celebration of democracy, offering citi-

zens the invaluable opportunity to shape the governance of their nation. She underscored the imperative role of active participation in the electoral

process for fostering the growth and development of the nation. She reiterated the event's aim to raise awareness among the elderly about the electoral process and the significance of casting their votes in a democracy.

It is pertinent to mention here that District Administration Udhampur orchestrated a series of meticulously planned programs and events across the district, spanning sub-divisions Ramnagar, Chenani, and Dudu, as part of the comprehensive SVEEP Program.

"JKBOSE must fix accountability": Students left in limbo over cancellation of PHE exam: Dr Varinder Sharma

JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Expressing his grave concern over the cancellation of Physical education paper of 12th standard of Jammu and Kashmir State Board of School Education (JKBOSE), Co-Convenor Professional Cell, Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) Dr Varinder Sharma said that this is a criminal negligence which must not go unpunished. The students who were to take 12th standard examination were given 11th standard paper of physical education which shocked them

and even affected them psychologically.

In a statement issued here, Dr Varinder Sharma said this is not for the first time JKBOSE has faced such an embarrassing situation but previously also papers were leaked. However, no one can ever explain or identify any official who was ever punished for such a blunder and its always the lower staff which faces the music. Seeking an in-depth inquiry into the matter, Dr Sharma urged the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha get the matter probed by an independent agency

and fix the guilty officials and not just the lower rung staff. He said, with the cancellation of this physical education final examination for a blunder committed by JKBOSE, the students not only lost their precious time but will have to prepare again. Their examinations will also be delayed by few more weeks and this entire exercise of setting-up of new question paper and its distribution in far flung areas of entire J&K State will cost the department an exorbitant amount of money. Who will bear this cost and who will ensure

that examination papers are not leaked in future or wrongly distributed like this? Dr Varinder Sharma said though the school education department has constituted a committee to look into the circumstances leading to 'wrong distribution of question papers by J&K BOSE' among the students of Class 12', yet it is urged that action must be taken against all and not a chosen few. The government must fix the responsibility for negligence at supervisory/administrative level and punish all those involved in printing, distribution or packing

question paper wrongly. Dr Varinder Sharma said that after these examinations, students were to start preparing for their NEET and JEE tests but this delay will now waste their precious time as the dates of next physical education exam will be announced which will consume students' more time. Though the Administrative Secretary, School Education Department, Dr Piyush Singla besides Chairman JKBOSE, Dr Parikshat Manhas have separately constituted committees to look into the negligence, yet there seems to be little

chance of real culprits being punished. He said that till the inquiry committee submits its report, JKBOSE must set-up new paper of Physical Education subject of HSE Part-II, Session Annual Regular 2024 for the Soft Zone areas of UTs of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh and announce next examination dates so that students remain mentally prepared to take their test. Any delay in this will further lead to wastage of time about twenty thousand students across the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir.

JINNEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, MARCH 21

To strengthen the electoral process and enhance proficiency in handling Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) devices, a comprehensive training sessions was organized today at conference hall, DC office complex under the guidance of District Election Officer, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary.

The training, facilitated by Master Trainers, aimed to equip government employees of the district with necessary knowledge and skills required for upcoming Lok Sabha election. The session, presided over by Deputy District Election Officer, Abdul Jabar, emphasized

the importance of attending training sessions to ensure familiarity and ease of operation with EVMs and VVPATs.

During the session, detailed information was provided on the roles and responsibilities of Presiding and Polling Officers and hands-on training was also conducted to demonstrate the functioning and operational procedures of EVMs/VVPATs.

Attendees, including employees from various government departments, actively participated in the training to enhance their understanding and proficiency with the process of elections.

Similar training program was conducted in Banihal, focusing on the demonstration of VVPATs and control units.



No one can deny importance of being physically fit in enhancing personality, self-confidence across all spheres of life: Manjari Jaruhar Rajdhani College organizes Annual Sports Day-2024

J I NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

The Annual Sports Day-2024 organized by the Sports Committee, was held on 20th March 2024 at the Rajdhani College Sports Complex. The event commenced with the declaration of its opening by Principal Prof. Rajesh Giri after unfurling the national flag and releasing balloons. He extended a warm welcome to the chief guests, Manjari Jaruhar, former IPS and presently working as an advisor to TCS, and Prof Sarita Tyagi, Head, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, University of Delhi and all present. Amongst present was Professor Tankeshwar Kumar, Vice chancellor, Haryana Central University, also graced the occasion as a special guest.

In his address Prof Tankeshwar Kumar highlighted the importance of sports activities in life and significance of health. He appreciated the efforts of all. Principal specially thanked Prof Nawal Kishore, Dr. Richa Malhotra and all members of Sports Committee for organizing the sports day. Prof Rajesh Giri empha-



sized the college's commitment to both academic and sports fields, highlighting the importance of physical activities in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Prof Giri praised the college's sprawling ground and the variety of activities it offers, providing a platform for students to instill positive energy and keep fit. He focused on the significance of youth engagement in sports, noting that such experiences are remembered for a lifetime, and commended Rajdhani College for its vibrant energy in both academic and co-curricular pursuits. The event was graced by the presence of distinguished guests, including Manjari Jaruhar,

who expressed her delight at witnessing the day's events. She conveyed her gratitude to everyone involved and emphasized the importance of being physically fit in enhancing personality and self-confidence across all spheres of life. Manjari stressed that physical fitness contributes to the overall development of individuals and plays a vital role in the nation's progress. Professor Sarita Tyagi, Head of the Department of Physical Education & Sports Sciences, shared her sentiments of being privileged to be part of the event. She highlighted the significance of sports in fostering all-round development and positively

impacting lives. Prof. Tyagi described sports as not only a passion but also a profession, emphasizing the career opportunities in sports management in today's times. Professor Nawal Kishore thanked the dignitaries for gracing the occasion. As achievers they are an inspiration for all of us. He said that no one loses but one is a winner and other is potential winner. Since the pre sports day, a series of sports competitions took place, including Badminton, Race, Table Tennis (TT), and Shot Put, tug of war, Musical chair adding to the spirit of healthy competition and camaraderie. All esteemed faculty members, administrative staff, and all graced the occasion with their presence, further enhancing the event's significance and grandeur. All participated enthusiastically. The event reached its culmination with a grand Prize Distribution Ceremony, where the honorees were recognized for their outstanding achievements. This was followed by a heartfelt Vote of Thanks delivered by Dr. Richa, Faculty, Physical Education. Dr. Ritu Malik compared the programme.

4th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Startup Forum organized in New Delhi

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

The fourth edition of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Startup Forum was organized on 19th March 2024 in New Delhi. The initiative focused on broadening startup interactions among the SCO Member States, fostering an environment conducive to innovation, promoting job creation, and inspiring young talent to develop innovative solutions.

The plenary session of the forum witnessed physical participation from SCO Member States including a delegation of SCO startups, nodal agencies for startups at the Member States, senior government officials and diplomats. Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh delivered the keynote address highlighting the role of the Startup ecosystem in boosting the economy of a nation. Joint Secretary, DPIIT, Shri Sanjiv addressed the delegation about India's startup journey and initiatives for promoting startups by the Government of India.

A showcase opportunity at the SCO Pavilion provided where over 15 SCO startups showed their products and services.

The showcase provided networking opportunities designed to inspire, educate, and empower these entrepreneurs. In addition, the delegates also attended a workshop conducted by Startup India on 'Establishing a Seed Fund: A Strategic Approach to Fostering Innovation and Entrepreneurship'. The workshop included an interactive session to understand various models of setting up seed funds to support early-stage startups. The workshop provided participants with comprehensive insights into the strategic planning and execution involved in setting up a seed fund.

All Member States agreed to create a Special Working Group for Startups and Innovation (SWG) at the Summit of SCO Heads of State in Samarkand, Uzbekistan on 16th September 2022. Given the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship in driving and diversifying an economy, India had proposed this initiative in 2020 to create a new pillar of cooperation between the SCO Member States. The SWG was created with the vision of fostering collaboration among SCO Member States, to not only benefit the startup ecosystem, but also accelerate regional economic development. In 2023, after multiple rounds

of meetings chaired by DPIIT, the Member States decided to approve and adopt the Regulations of the SWG to be permanently chaired by India in SCO.

DPIIT has organised various initiatives for the startup ecosystems. By leading such engagements, India undertook an opportunity to expand the innovation footprint, knitting the whole ecosystem together and inspiring other SCO Member States to take up similar programs. The startup engagements are organised by India with the objective of empowering the local startup ecosystems in the SCO Member States and providing value to startups through mentoring and enabling access to investor and corporate engagement activities.

Going forward, India will host the second meeting of the SWG in November 2024 and SCO Startup Forum 5.0 in January 2025.

Previously, Startup India had organized various initiatives for SCO Member states including:

1. SCO Startup Forum 1.0: The SCO Startup Forum in 2020 laid the foundation for multilateral cooperation and engagement for startups among the SCO Member States.

2. SCO Startup Forum 2.0: The two-day Forum was held virtually in 2021 through a customized

platform representing the Indian culture in augmented reality. SCO Startup Hub, a single point of contact for the SCO startup ecosystem, was launched in this forum.

3. Focused Mentorship Program: A 3-month long virtual mentorship series 'Starting-Up' in 2022 was organized for the nominated startups, to build capacity among the SCO Startup founders. A total of 100+ hours of mentorship was provided to the startups.

4. SCO Startup Forum 3.0: DPIIT organised the first ever physical SCO Startup Forum in 2023 for the SCO Member States. The delegates attended a workshop on 'Role of Bilateral and Multilateral Engagement in developing startup ecosystem', followed by an incubator visit at IIT Delhi.

5. 1st Meeting of the SWG: The first Meeting of the SCO Special Working Group on Startups and Innovation (SWG), permanently chaired by India, was organised on the theme 'Growing from Roots' in 2023. 25 representatives from the 9 SCO Member States participated in the meeting and presented their respective startup ecosystems and prospective areas of collaboration related to the agriculture and animal husbandry sectors covered in the theme.

Lok Sabha Elections-2024: Series of activities held under SVEEP at Kothibagh and SP HSS

J I NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR MARCH 21

On the directions of District Election Officer (DEO), Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, a series of awareness programs were held under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation program (SVEEP) in various Schools of the District.

The awareness programmes were conducted under the supervision of District Nodal Officer SVEEP, A H Fani during which awareness programmes and rallies were organized at GGHSS Kothibagh and SP Model Higher Secondary School.

Speaking about the ongoing SVEEP activities, the District Election Officer, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat urged the young voters to inspire their families, friends, relatives



and neighbors for participating in the upcoming General Elections elections with enthusiasm.

The DEO also emphasized the young voters to

play their role as ambassadors of democracy.

He also congratulated and commend the students who will be casting their vote for the first

time in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections

The DEO further expressed his admiration for their enthusiasm and commitment to playing an active role in the electoral process. He emphasized the importance of informed decision-making and encouraged them to approach this democratic responsibility with diligence and awareness.

The programmes under SVEEP are aimed to raise awareness among the students about the importance of active participation in general elections with a special emphasis on the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

During the awareness programs, the Nodal Officer SVEEP, A H Fani highlighted the crucial role that every voter plays in shaping the democratic process, urging them to

exercise their right to vote.

He also provided important information about the various facilities available in polling booths for persons with disabilities, elders, and women. He emphasized the commitment of election machineries to ensuring a fair and accessible electoral process.

Nodal Officer, SVEEP stressed that these awareness programs will continue, with the goal of reaching every school in District Srinagar to ensure maximum participation in the electoral process.

Following the successful awareness programs, rallies were conducted at GGHSS Kothibagh and SP Higher Secondary School, further reinforcing the importance of voter education and participation in the electoral process.

Distt Admin Kathua establishes eco-friendly polling station

J I NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, MARCH 21

District Election Office, Kathua, spearheaded by District Electoral Officer, Dr. Rakesh Minhas, today organised SVEEP event in collaboration with forest department here.

During the event, an eco-friendly polling station was inaugurated in the border sub-division Hiranagar of district, ahead of the Lok Sabha Elections 2024, aligning with the SVEEP objective of sensitising voters about eco-friendly measures and encouraging them to exercise their right to vote.

The green polling booth situated near the Indo-Pak international border at Government Higher Secondary School, Chakda, showcases a blend of natural elements and eco-friendly materials.

Divisional Forest Officer, Social Forestry Kathua, Ashok Kalsi, highlighted the features of the eco-friendly polling station, ensuring a green and sustainable



polling environment for upcoming polls. The eco-friendly green model polling station aims to attract voters and ensure maximum electoral participation while promoting eco-friendly practices among voters and polling officials. This initiative encourages voters to exercise their right to vote while adopting innovative eco-friendly measures, contributing to a litter-free electoral process and underlining efforts toward

environmental safety on International Day of Forests. Various ornamental and fruit saplings were distributed among participants followed by a plantation drive at GHSS Chakda. The Kathua district administration urges stakeholders and citizens to visit and experience the eco-friendly green model polling station, promoting a collective commitment to sustainable practices and responsible citizenship.

Sat Sharma, others inaugurate short film on Ayushman Bharat and Jan Aushadhi

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

On Thursday, Suman Keser Productions released a short film on Ayushman Bharat and Jan Aushadhi. The film was shown in KC PVR 2. The event was graced by former Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Government Sat Sharma CA, President of Shri kailash jyotish avim Vedic Sanathan trust Mahant Rohit Shastri and senior officials of the Jammu and Kashmir Government including Anrez Singh, among other esteemed citizens.

Sat Sharma mentioned that the short film on Ayushman Bharat and Jan Aushadhi is presenting an inspiring story to convey



a message about health along with the Ayushman card.

On this occasion, Mahant Rohit Shastri praised Dharun Keser and his team, stating that whether

it's art, music, sports, or athletics, they will not be left behind when opportunities arise. He mentioned that alongside education, the youth of Jammu and Kashmir are making a mark

in various fields, achieving fame at the national and international levels. Anrez Singh expressed hope that Dharun Keser will continue to work on such topics that carry a message for society,

which will greatly help in creating awareness in society.

Dharun Keser thanked everyone present.

Present at the event were senior BJP leaders Dil Bahadur Singh Jamwal, Bawa Sharma, Dr. Tarun Sharma Actor / Director, Sports, Social and Political activist and Incharge Cultural Cell BJYM J&K, Jagdev Singh Chib, Vijay Sethi, Naresh Raina, Subhash Jamwal, Kanan Kaur, Rajesh Ajnabi, Meenu Sharma, Aman Sharma, Ankur Sharma, Manik Sharma, Sagar, Anshul Sharma, Mohd Janab, Vishal Sharma, Saurav, Vikrant, Prerana, KK Malhotra, V Kath, Prashant Singh, Gopal Datt, Vinakshi, Asha, and other esteemed citizens.

Forest Division Ganderbal organizes SVEEP program, plantation drive

J I NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MARCH 21

On World Forest Day, DFO Forest Division Ganderbal organized SVEEP awareness Program at Chattergul Bala.

On the occasion, DLMTs of Election Cell Ganderbal educated participants on the relation & similarities between Clean Environment and Democracy.

They emphasized on the fact that electoral participation protects democracy while plantation



protects environment. After providing detailed information regarding the voting process, they laid a focus on engaging new voters and facilitating voting for citizens of age above 85 years.

The program concluded with a plantation drive and saw participation from local tribal people, officers from the Sind Forest Division, Forest Protection Police, BLOs, and others.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024: Expenditure Observer reviews election preparedness at Kishtwar

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, MARCH 21

Expenditure Observer for 04-Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency, Satyanarayana Raju Bhupathi today chaired a meeting here to ensure smooth conduct of Parliamentary Elections 2024.

The meeting facilitated interaction among Nodal Officers overseeing election expenditure monitoring across Kishtwar district of the 4-Udhampur parliamentary constituency.

During the meeting, NLTM, ECI, Riaz Ahmed Butt alongside District Election Officer, Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav, provided a detailed briefing on preparations and teams assembled to monitor Model Code of Conduct compliance and candidate expenditures.

The Expenditure Observer reviewed prepa-



rations and team statuses on assembly constituency-wise basis, stressing the importance of maintaining proper records and adhering to ECI guidelines for expenditure tracking. Highlighting the importance of coordination among teams for effective expenditure oversight, the Observer urged nodal officers to document any MCC violations promptly. Expressing satisfaction with election preparations in Kishtwar district, the Expenditure Observer emphasised integrity in duty delivery and collective responsibility for ensuring free and fair elections. DEO Kishtwar affirmed the District Election Authorities' commitment to ensuring free, fair and smooth conduct. The meeting among others was attended by SSP Kishtwar Abdul Qayoom; AROs, Nodal Officers of various teams, CAO, DTO Kishtwar, Executive Magistrates and other officials.

Nowshera Forest division celebrates 'World Forestry Day 2024'



J1 NEWS SERVICE
NOWSHERA, MAR 21

Forest Range of Nowshera Forest Division organized plantation drive to celebrate World Forestry Day. To celebrate this occasion 4 different location were selected in four different blocks of the Range under the directions of DFO Nowshera Mrs. Shweta Deonia (SFS). The sites selected for plantations was Shanti Nagar (Nowshera Block), GHSS (Androoth Block), Manglamataji (Jhanger Block) and Masjid Pathi Bowli (Chingus Block). The ceremonial Plantation programme was organized at Shanti Nagar Nowshera which was jointly coordinated/organized by territorial, FPF and wildlife wings of forest department. During the occasion various plants includes fruit bearing, ornamental, religious purposes were planted. The whole occa-

sion was facilitated by DFO Nowshera, Mrs. Shweta Deonia (SFS) Anil Kumar Range officer, Nowshera, Sham Kumar (AD FPF), Baljinder Singh (RO WL) Susheel Kumar (BO Nowshera) and all staff of different wings of forest department. The plantation of trees is a reflection of critical role that forests play in our lives. From the air we breathe to the roof over our heads, forests are the unsung heroes of our existence, providing a plethora of benefits that are often taken for granted and also it is a reminder of the critical role forests play in sustaining life on Earth. The theme of World Forestry Day 2024 is "Forests and Innovation: New Solutions for a Better World." The whole event was conducted under direct supervision of Worthy Conservator of Forests, West Circle Rajouri, Sandeep Kumar (IFS).

Awareness Program under SVEEP for Fishing Community organized at Ganderbal



J1 NEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, MARCH 21

In a concerted effort to empower the fishing community and bolster democratic participation, a Special Systematic Voter's Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) awareness programme was organised by the Nodal Officer SVEEP Ganderbal here at Gangarhama.

The event specifically focused on fisheries farmers in the district, aiming to foster a deeper understanding of the electoral process and the signifi-

cance of active participation in democratic practices.

District Level Master Trainer (DLMT), fervently emphasized the importance of exercising one's right to vote & it's pivotal role in shaping the future of the nation.

The program served as an interactive platform for participants to engage in meaningful discussions, share insights, and address queries regarding voter registration, electoral procedures, and the broader implications of democratic participation.

International Telecommunication Union elects India as co-chair of its Digital Innovation Board

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

Dr Neeraj Mittal, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, led a high-level delegation to Geneva for a series of crucial meetings at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Headquarters from March 18-20, 2024. The visit focused on fostering collaboration and exploring innovative initiatives in the telecommunications and information and communication technology (ICT) sectors. The key highlights of the visit include:

India Leads Digital Innovation Board with Dr Neeraj Mittal as Co-Chair: Dr Neeraj Mittal was unanimously elected as co-chair of the Digital Innovation Board of ITU formed under the aegis of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Digital Development. The Digital Innovation Board comprises of Ministers and Vice Ministers of Telecom/ICT of 23 Member Countries of ITU spanning Asia, Europe, Africa, North and South America.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has started Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Digital Development to respond to significant unmet needs of ITU Membership in the area of innovation, as articulated in the Kigali Action Plan adopted at the World Telecommunication Development Conference 2022 (WTDC-22) and the Outcomes of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 (PP-22). The Alliance has three main vehicles:

- i) Digital Transformation Lab
- ii) Network of Acceleration Centres
- iii) Digital Innovation Board

The Alliance establishes the Digital Innovation



Board to provide strategic guidance, expertise and advocacy regarding its mission of building critical local enablers and fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in digital development, to create a more inclusive and equitable digital future for all. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has selected 17 organizations from around the world to host Network of Acceleration Centres with the Global Innovation Centre at ITU Area Office and Innovation Centre, New Delhi, India to coordinate the efforts of Network Acceleration centres around the globe.

Dr Neeraj Mittal held meetings with Dr Cosmos Zavazava at ITU Headquarters early this week. Various initiatives pertaining to scaling up ITU Area Office India, Digital Innovation Board, Digital Transformation Lab, Acceleration centres, Global Innovation Centre in India were discussed during the meeting and a way forward was agreed upon. He invited ITU to host the next meeting of Digital Innovation Board in India alongside the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) 2024.

Increased participation of India in ITU Activities: Dr Neeraj Mittal also

chaired a review meeting at Permanent Mission of India in Geneva (PMI). Permanent Representative, PMI, Shri Arindam Bagchi and other senior officers joined the meeting. The meeting reviewed progress on critical milestones and efforts to increase participation of India in ITU activities with greater engagement of academia and Industry members from India.

Bilateral Meetings

A bilateral meeting between India and Japan took place on the sidelines of Digital Innovation Board Meeting at ITU Headquarters. The meeting was co-chaired by Dr Neeraj Mittal and Mr. Hiroshi Yoshida, Vice Minister, M/o Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan. The meeting reviewed engagements of India and Japan in telecom and ICT sector and the leaders proposed active collaboration on AI, 5G Use cases and Quantum Products certification between both the countries. Both stressed on the need to collaborate to develop a framework on trusted products and agreed to operationalize the sub working groups on 5G use cases and massive MIMO under India Japan Joint Working Group on ICT.

Dr Mittal invited Japanese Government and

Industry Delegates to visit and participate in WTSA 2024 and India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2024 apart from various side events being organized with WTSA 2024 like ITU Kaleidoscope, Exhibitions, Conference on AI for Good Global Impact India, Network of Women, Workshop on Safe Listening with WHO, Hackathon.

The Telecom Secretary also co-chaired a bilateral meeting between India and Bahrain with Mr Mohammed Bin Thamiir, Minister of Transport and Telecom of Kingdom of Bahrain at ITU HQ, Geneva on the sidelines of Digital Innovation Board Meeting. Both the countries decided to collaborate actively on ICT sector in areas such as Artificial Intelligence, 5G use cases, Cybersecurity, development of Data Embassy. Both agreed to revisit the MOU on ICT between the two countries that lapsed in 2015.

India proposed to share with Bahrain the TEC standard on Fairness Assessment and Rating of Artificial Intelligence Systems, status note on regulatory sandbox.

The visit underscores India's proactive engagement in shaping the global telecommunications landscape and its commitment to leveraging innovation for socio-economic development.

'Voting Towards Progress': KU hosts daylong awareness program

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MARCH 21

To understand the significance of voting and empowering individuals to actively shape the future they desire, the Kashmir University (KU) Wednesday, hosted a daylong awareness programme here.

Titled, 'Voting Towards

Progress: Voters as Architects for a Bright Future' under the banner 'Nothing like Voting, I Vote for Sure', the programme witnessed talks and deliberations highlighting the significance of electoral process in shaping the future of a nation, an official statement issued here read.

In her message, KU Vice

Chancellor, Prof Nilofer Khan, said that peoples' collective actions at the ballot box pave the path towards progress, unity and inclusive governance.

"Voting is not merely a right but a sacred duty of every citizen, empowering individuals to actively shape the future they desire," Prof Khan said while urging

masses to harness the power of their voices "to steer the society towards prosperity and justice".

While emphasising the paramount importance of each vote, KU Registrar, Prof Naseer Iqbal, said: "Every vote matters, it is the cornerstone of all democracies and a powerful tool for change."

FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

Jitendra Singh files...

for his exploits in the World Wrestling Entertainment, and BJP J&K chief Ravinder Raina.

Mr. Rana, who is also a BJP leader, sought votes for Mr. Singh and said the region has progressed under him. The Udhampur-Kathua Lok Sabha constituency was once a stronghold of the Congress party.

In 2014, Mr. Singh defeated former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister and veteran Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad by more than 60,000 votes from the Udhampur seat.

Mr. Singh received 4,87,369 votes to 4,26,393 votes garnered by Mr. Azad, who has since quit the Congress.

In 2019, he won against Congress candidate Vikram Aditya Singh, the son of Congress leader Karan Singh. He won by a substantial margin of 3,57,252 votes. After a recent summary revision, the Udhampur-Kathua constituency now has over 16.20 lakh registered voters.

Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir will be conducted in five phases with voting in each of the five parliamentary constituencies to be held in a separate phase.

Polling in the five Lok Sabha constituencies will be held on April 19 (Udhampur), April 26 (Jammu), May 7 (Anantnag), May 13 (Srinagar) and May 20 (Baramulla).

The Ladakh Lok Sabha seat spread over Kargil and Leh districts will go to polls in the fifth phase of polls. (Agencies)

Lal Singh gets rousing...

rampant drug menace and youth are being destroyed due to unbridled drug addiction", he said. Lal Singh also announced the merger of his outfit, Dogra Swabhiman Sangathan Party (DSSP), with the Congress.

While Lal Singh was the founder chairman of the

DSSP, his wife Kanta was its president.

He is a two-time former member of Parliament from Udhampur seat in 2004 and 2009. He was also the health minister and the forest minister in Jammu and Kashmir. He represented Basohli in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in 1996 and 2002.

While the Congress welcomed Lal Singh's return to its fold, several leaders, including former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad questioned the grand old party for inducting him, alleging that he stood in support of the Kathua rape accused in the past.

Several months before the fall of the J-K government, Lal Singh had resigned from the BJP and floated the DSSP following uproar over his participation in a rally in support of the accused in the rape and murder of an eight-year-old girl in Kathua in January 2018.

However, he defended his participation in the rally, stating that he was there to "defuse the situation".

On November 7 last year, he was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with a money laundering case against an educational trust run by his wife. However, he was released on bail three weeks after his arrest. (Agencies)

EC asks govt to stop...

to act against this "blatant violation" of the Model Code of Conduct. (AGENCIES)

Congress panel meets...

states were discussed. The meeting of the CEC was attended by former Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, party general secretary K C Venugopal and other members of the panel.

However, Rahul Gandhi, who is also a member of

the panel, was not present.

Sources said the party's third list would be out "very soon".

This is the third straight day when the Congress' CEC is holding its meeting.

The CEC on Wednesday had deliberated on the candidates for the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

The Congress has so far announced 82 candidates in two lists for the seven-phase Lok Sabha polls beginning April 19. (Agencies)

SC rejects applications...

2023 verdict of its constitution bench nowhere said there has to be a member from the judiciary in the selection panel for appointment of election commissioners.

Retired IAS officers Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu were recently appointed as Election Commissioners.

The appointments came ahead of the Lok Sabha polls starting on April 19. (AGENCIES)

JPDCL to lodge FIR...

bills in time," it added. The crackdown, part of JPDCL's ongoing efforts to curb energy theft and address financial irregularities, witnessed an intensified inspection process, including day and night patrolling to check power pilferage. JPDCL spokespersons highlighted that the initiative aimed to tighten the noose on consumers engaged in widespread hooking, violation of agreed load, and bypassing of meters.

In an official statement, the JPDCL emphasized its commitment to provide relief to genuine consumers, ensuring that they are not burdened by the actions of

erring individuals. The power distribution company further underscored the need to crack down on practices such as energy pilferage, which not only lead to outages but also result in damage to transformers, causing inconvenience to legitimate consumers.

Meanwhile, JPDCL in its official statement said that taking cognizance of huge arrears despite providing a reliable power supply amid harsh winters, various Sub Divisions of JPDCL launched a fresh massive disconnection drive vis-a-vis influential and chronic defaulter having huge arrears. During the drive Domestic, Industrial and Commercial consumers having huge arrears were targeted.

Managing Director JPDCL in a statement urged consumers to settle their pending bills promptly to avoid power disconnections, emphasizing that it remains committed to provide uninterrupted and reliable power supply to those who fulfill their financial obligations.

Voting is the only...

to parliament those blue-eyed leaders whose parties were formed after 2019. What can one do about it?" the PDP supremo said.

"It is for the people of the country to ponder that it took a long time for the people here to have trust in the power of vote. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had to announce from Red Fort that elections in J-K will be free and fair," she added. (AGENCIES)

Rain, Snow likely...

had witnessed 1.9 degree C, Kargil minus 4.2 and Drass minus 5 as the minimum temperature.

Jammu city registered 18.4 degree C, Katra 16.1, Batote 11.6, Baderwah 5 and Banihal 9 as the minimum temperature.

5th National Conference on Recent Trends in Mathematical Sciences inaugurated at SMVDU



JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

A Two-Day National Conference on "Recent Trends in Mathematical Sciences" inaugurated at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU), Katra on 21st March 2024. The conference was organized by the School of Mathematics in Association with MMTTC-SMVDU. Prof.(Dr.) Pragati Kumar, Honorable Vice-Chancellor, SMVDU, and Prof. S.D. Sharma, Former Head, Department of Mathematics, University of Jammu were the Chief Guest and Guest of Honor

at the occasion, respectively. Prof. Pragati Kumar recalled some motivational stories of stalwarts in the field of Mathematics and nicely explained the utilization of concepts of Mathematic in Engineering. Prof. S. D. Sharma highlighted the fundamental concepts in Mathematics and their real-life implications. Dr. Sunil Kumar Wanchoo, Dean, Faculty of Sciences encouraged the organizers to broaden the horizon of the conference. Participants across the nation turned up for the conference to showcase their research work.

Prof. Rakesh Kumar, Punjabi University, Patiala, Prof. Sartaj Ui Hasan, IIT, Jammu, Prof. Ajay K. Sharma, Head, Department of Mathematics, Central University of Jammu, Dr. Varun Jain, Multani Mal Modi College, Patiala, Dr. Navneet Lal Sharma, Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, Vadodara, Gujrat attended the inaugural session. Dr. Kuldip Raj, Head, School of Mathematics and Convener of the Conference introduced the theme of the conference and welcomed the delegates. Dr. Surender Singh, Coordina-

tor of the conference proposed the vote of thanks. Dr. A. K. Das, Coordinator of the conference, Dr. Sandeep Bhoulal and Dr. Sandeep Sharma, Organizing Secretaries smoothly handled all the activities of the inaugural session. Among the audience, Dr. Vineet Tyagi, Dean, Research and Development, Dr. Sanjeev Anand, Associate Dean, Research and Development, Dr. Roop Lal Sharma, Head, School of Economics, Dr. Kamini Patania, Senior Faculty, School of Physics were the eminent faculty colleagues from SMVDU.

BJP workers to turn 400 plus LS seats slogan into reality: Vibodh

JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

In a public gathering organized at Manjakote, BJP J&K General Secretary and former MLC Vibodh Gupta confidently proclaimed that like Gupkar alliance, the INDI alliance is also destined to fail as they are driven solely by self-interest. He reiterated BJP's popularity, predicting a comfortable victory with over 400 seats in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

Vibodh emphasized that "Abki Baar 400 Paar (This time, 400-plus seats)" is not merely a slogan but a resolve that will be scripted into reality with the help of dedicated BJP workers and the support of the people. He praised the Modi government's initiatives, including women empower-



ment (33 per cent reservation for women in state assemblies and Parliament), opportunities for youth through programs like Skill India and Start-up India, and the bold decision to revoke Article 370, which he believes has paved the way for Jammu and Kashmir's development.

Vibodh stressed that the Modi government prioritizes the welfare of Jammu and Kashmir's people, citing significant progress since 2014, espe-

cially after the historic abrogation of Article 370. He highlighted advancements in grassroots democracy, socio-political rights for tribal communities, opportunities for youth, opening up of national institutions such as IITs, IIMs, AIIMS, IIMC. Moreover, he credited the Modi government with ushering in a new era of peace and development, liberating the UT from terrorism, militancy, underdevelopment, and dynastic politics.

Speaking on the occasion, BJP District President Dinesh Sharma also underscored various achievements of the Modi government and expressed optimism for the party's future endeavors. He maintained that BJP is committed to nation's prosperity, their visionary leadership embodies the values of integrity, innovation, and service, resonating with citizens across the country. Others Senior leaders who spoke on the occasion were Atam Parkash Gupta, Koushal Gupta, Asif Choudhary, Rakesh Raina, Yogesh Kumar Sharma, Shamshad begum, Karamit Malik, Talib Mir, Samreen Khan, Azaz Khan, Sanjay Sharma, Shahbaz Khan, Sakinder Khan, Javid Mirza, Puneet Sharma, Vinod Sharma.

Northern Command honours its gallant, distinguished soldiers, units at Investiture Ceremony at Prayagraj

JINNEWS SERVICE
PRAYAGRAJ, 21 MAR 2024

Indian Army's Northern Command honoured its gallant and distinguished soldiers and units at a grand Investiture Ceremony held at Prayagraj Military Station, Uttar Pradesh on 21 March 2024 under the aegis of Red Eagle Division. The awardees were felicitated for their exceptional bravery, commendable devotion to duty and distinguished service to the nation. Northern Command is the most operationally active and challenging commands of Indian Army and is at the forefront of the Nation's efforts to counter the most serious challenges to its security and the scourge of terrorism. Thus, whether officially at peace or in operations, the troops of the Command have been



always on active duty, truly representing the motto of the formation "Always in Combat".

Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar, PVSM, AVSM, YSM**, VSM, General Officer Commanding in Chief, Northern Command, felicitated officers and soldiers of the Indian Army with gallantry and distinguished service awards

for their acts of bravery beyond the call of duty and distinguished service to the nation. He also conferred GOC-in-C Unit Appreciations to units in recognition of their exceptional professionalism and unparalleled achievements. During the Ceremony, 58 awardees including 45 Sena Medals (Gallantry), three Sena Medals

(Distinguished), one Yudh Seva Medal and nine Vishisht Seva Medals were presented with medals. In addition, 64 units were awarded Unit Citations. The indomitable spirit and indefatigable courage of each valiant soldier when read out during the event, made hearts of all present swell with pride and gratitude. On this momentous

occasion, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command congratulated awardees and exhorted all ranks to give their best in all the spheres and keep up the high traditions and values of the Indian Army. The General Officer Commanding in Chief Northern Command acknowledged the contribution of all family

members of the awardees for their unstinted support to service personnel in the performance of their duties. He also urged all ranks, ex-servicemen and their families to rededicate themselves in service of Nation. The Army commander later interacted with the award winners and acknowledged their invaluable contribution in upholding the highest traditions of Indian Army. A large number of military personnel, civilian dignitaries and the proud families of the award winners attended the solemn ceremony. The Nation in general, and the Indian Army in particular never fail to honour and care for its brave soldiers and this concept was aptly showcased in the right spirit through the events conducted as a part of this ceremony.

NCC, NPCIL ink MoU to raise awareness on peaceful use of nuclear energy

JINNEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

National Cadet Corps (NCC) and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in New Delhi on March 21, 2024 to conduct various awareness programmes throughout the country to enhance public perceptions on peaceful use of nuclear power and disseminate scientific & authentic information. The MoU was signed between DG NCC Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh and Executive Director (Corporate Communication & Corporate Planning), NPCIL Shri BVS Shekhar.

The NPCIL will be providing resource persons in this initiative for field engagements with the NCC during the camps and various activities by educating the cadets.

The MoU also facilitates

a unique opportunity to the cadets to visit various facilities of NPCIL across the country, thereby giving a first-hand experience on peaceful use of nuclear energy, its technical and technological aspects.

The DG NCC described the MoU as one of the initiatives by the NCC to broaden the horizon of cadets, which will lead to a more aware and responsible youth. He asserted that 1.5 million NCC cadets have the ability to influence the thinking of youth across the world. He exuded confidence that the cadets will be instrumental in making the awareness drive on peaceful use of nuclear energy a successful initiative. He also thanked the NPCIL for extending its support to the initiative, terming it as a collective responsibility to guide the youth to be more aware and responsible citizens.

Border dwellers' miseries surged manifold times in absence of popular regime: Sadhotra

JINNEWS SERVICE
RS PURA, MAR 21

Additional General Secretary and former minister Ajay Kumar Sadhotra on Thursday voiced the concern of border dwellers claiming that their miseries have swollen manifold times on account of absence of popular government in J&K for the last many years.

The senior NC functionary was addressing the party's women meeting here at Village Kothey Salahar (R.S Pura). The event was organized in wake of ensuing Lok Sabha polls by Bharti Devi, Vice President NC Women Wing District Jammu Rural B.

In the Meeting, Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President Jammu, Bimla Luthra former MLA and State Vice President women wing, Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell, Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Sham Lal Sadhotra Block President Bishnah, Jyoti Devi and Raj Kumari were present.

At the outset of the Meeting, Daljeet Sharma, District President NC Women Wing Jammu Rural B apprised the senior functionaries about the problems being



faced by border dwellers in general and women in particular due to hollow policies of present government. Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, while garnering support of the people for the upcoming political contest, maintained that only NC has the will and capacity to ensure women empowerment as other political outfits rely on rhetoric rather than implementing change on ground. He said that opponents of NC are solely relying on communal politics and divisive mindset thus making it imperative for the people of J&K to reject this trajectory and strengthen NC for all the good things for which this party has always remained at the forefront. He said that NC has a track record of taking all communities

together creating bonhomie whereas its opponents are trying hard to disturb the social fabric for political gains without giving a thought to the repercussions of this dangerous maneuvering.

Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President J&K NC Jammu, in his address, asserted that women have a significant role to play in shaping the better and peaceful future of Jammu and Kashmir and as such women cannot be ignored in any way.

He said that the present governance is marked by widening gender disparity in the region besides rising unemployment, development deficit and deepening uncertainty having affected everyone in the region. However, women are the worst sufferers amongst them as

the prevailing political or social issues have had a devastating effect on their dignity and lives in J&K. Lauding the women for their marvelous role despite all odds, he urged them to continue their relentless fight for their rights. The Provincial President said that along with the restoration of democracy, the struggle for the return of special privileges can be fought only when the National Conference is strong for which women have a crucial role to play. The Provincial President also asserted farmers' plights especially with regard to lack of irrigation facilities, border dwellers woes, poor healthcare edifice and phlegmatic attitude towards world famous Gharana wetland are the few examples of startling indifference of the government which call for change in the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls as those elected last time have shown utter disregard towards people's concerns.

Rattan Lal asserted that National Conference is the sole guarantor of J&K's interests and for this it is necessary to remain present among the people, enquire about their problems and solving them.

Workshop on Sanger Sequencer held at SMVDU, Katra



JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Two -Day workshop on Sanger Sequencer- jointly organized by coordinators of Higher Education project funded by HEI's Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir and MMTTC on 20th March -21th March 2024 held at SMVDU, Katra. The Inaugural Session was attended by participants from various educational institutions of JK, Research scholars, and Faculty of SMVDU. Prof. Manoj K Dhar, Director, ACSIR and Ex Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu was the Chief Guest and keynote speaker for the occasion. The presence of Prof. Pragati Kumar, Vice-Chancellor of SMVDU, lent weight to the event, emphasizing the institution's dedication to fostering a culture of scientific exploration. Prof. Kumar's welcome address resonated with attendees, instilling a sense of purpose and direction. The

Inaugural Ceremony of the Workshop was held at Matrika Auditorium, SMVDU. Dr. Sharada Potukuchi, Coordinator of the workshop welcomed all the guests and participants and made delegates aware about the mandate of the capacity building project under which the Workshop was conducted, wherein introduction of MMTTC by Prof. Suparn Kumar Sharma underscored the importance of collaborative initiatives in driving innovation in biotechnology. Among the audience were Dr. Sunil Wanchoo, Dean Faculty of Sciences, as special invitee. Prof. Uma Bhamadipati, Prof. Balbir Singh, Dr. VV Tyagi, Dr. Sanjeev Anand, Dr. Sunanda, Dr. Shafaq Rasool, Dr. Parvaz, Dr. Preeti Sharma, Prof. Baba Potukuchi and Dr. Raju were among the august gathering. The workshop featured a series of captivating lectures, starting with Prof. Manoj K Dhar,

ACSIR, Director, Delhi who deliberated on the "Role of Capacity Building in Biochemical Science". Prof. Dhar's insights provided a solid foundation for understanding the fundamental principles driving biochemical research, inspiring participants to think critically about their work..Technical Experts, Dr. Anil Kumar and Dr. Vibha Pandey from Thermofisher delivered the Lecture on the nuances of Sanger Sequencing and introduced the features and applications of the recently acquired Sanger Sequencer-SeqStudio. Dr. Shweta from Shiva Scientific life sciences discussed the specialized domain of Devyser Fragment Application, offering valuable insights into this cutting-edge field. The interactive session provided a platform for participants to engage directly with speakers and experts, fostering lively discussions and the exchange of ideas.

The Co-coordinator of the workshop, Dr. Rakesh Thusoo presented the vote of thanks and informed all present that such workshops in the school will be held regularly to train and educate the Faculty, Staff and other medical professionals from UT of Jammu and Kashmir. Furthermore, Hands-on training sessions were conducted by Dr. Anil Kumar, Application Scientist from Thermofisher, who provided participants with practical experience in Sanger sequencing techniques. The training sessions, held at the Central Facility Mass Array Lab, School of Biotechnology, equipped attendees with valuable skills and insights. Dr. Rakesh, organizing secretary acknowledged the support of Coordinators and staff of RP-127, RP-128 along with Mr. Rajeshwar, Mr. Bhawani, Ms. Tanvi, and Ms. Minerva for smooth conduct of the workshop.

EDITORIAL

Ladakh's Quest for Statehood, Sixth Schedule

The Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) has taken a bold step by announcing a four-day hunger strike starting from March 24 in solidarity with climate activist-cum-educationist Sonam Wangchuk. Wangchuk's 21-day-long fast, aimed at supporting two crucial demands of the Ladakhi people – statehood for Ladakh and the region's inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution – has entered its 15th day in Leh town. The decision to go on a hunger strike was made public during a gathering of protestors at Fatima Chowk, where KDA leaders addressed a large crowd. The protest march, which saw significant participation from local residents, resulted in a half-day shutdown of business and commercial establishments across Kargil. The KDA members emphasized the importance of their demands for Ladakh's statehood and inclusion in the Sixth Schedule. They highlighted the unity among KDA members, all of whom are set to participate in the hunger strike at Gandhi Park from March 24 to 27, pending permission from the district administration. The solidarity expressed by KDA with Sonam Wangchuk's hunger strike underscores the shared commitment towards addressing the longstanding grievances and aspirations of the Ladakhi people. It reflects a collective determination to raise awareness and push for meaningful action on crucial issues affecting the region's future. The KDA emphasized the significance of the hunger strike as a symbol of solidarity and gratitude towards Wangchuk for amplifying Ladakh's voice on the national stage. The appeal for mass participation in the hunger strike highlights the broad-based support for Ladakh's demands, transcending political affiliations and differences. In parallel to these developments, KDA leaders are scheduled to meet with the Leh Apex Body (LAB) in Leh town to strategize their next steps. This meeting assumes particular importance against the backdrop of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections and the ongoing dialogue with the central government regarding Ladakh's demands. The failure of previous talks with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to yield concrete outcomes has added urgency to the collective action taken by KDA and other stakeholders. The refusal of the central government to accept Ladakh's key demands has galvanized local leaders and activists, leading to a renewed push for meaningful dialogue and resolution. The BJP's previous commitments regarding Ladakh's status as a tribal area under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution further underscore the need for concrete action and fulfillment of promises made to the people of Ladakh. As the hunger strike unfolds and discussions continue, it is crucial for all parties involved to prioritize dialogue, inclusivity, and the genuine representation of Ladakh's interests. The hunger strike symbolizes not just a protest but a shared vision for a future where Ladakh's voice is heard, respected, and empowered within the democratic fabric of India. Ladakh's quest for statehood symbolizes a journey towards self-determination and empowerment. As the nation navigates complex geopolitical realities and evolving regional dynamics, addressing Ladakh's legitimate aspirations for statehood is not just a matter of administrative restructuring but a reaffirmation of democratic principles and recognition of diverse voices within our pluralistic society.

The enduring resilience of the puppetry world

RAJDEEP PATHAK

On the 21st of March, every year, the world comes together to celebrate the enchanting art form of puppetry. This day pays homage to the rich history and cultural significance of puppetry, tracing its origins from ancient civilizations to its modern-day relevance as a powerful medium of communication. From Asia to Europe, Africa to the Americas, puppetry has woven itself into the fabric of human expression, captivating audiences with its blend of entertainment, education, and social commentary.

From the mystique of ancient Egypt's religious ceremonies to the grandeur of Greece and Rome's theatrical spectacles, puppets danced across stages, breathing life into myths, legends, and tales of old. In the East, the delicate intricacies of Chinese puppetry, the vibrant story-telling of 'Indian Puppet Theater', and the mesmerizing performances of Indonesian 'Wayang' (the Javanese word for 'shadow' or 'imagination' that originated in the 10th century from the thalubomalata of Southern India) captivated audiences with their diverse styles and techniques, showcasing the boundless creativity of human imagination. Across continents and epochs, puppetry served not only as entertainment but as a profound expression of cultural identity, tradition, and story-

telling prowess, leaving an indelible mark on the collective heritage of humanity.

India, too, celebrates a rich puppetry legacy spanning millennia. Known as "Kathputli" (combining 'kath' for wood and 'putli' for dolls) in Hindi, puppetry weaves tales, educates, and entertains, mirroring India's cultural vividness. From Rajasthan's vibrant shows and South India's intricate shadow puppetry, they all showcase this diversity. Throughout history, puppets have been vehicles for social and political discourse, challenging norms and stimulating reflection. Here, besides narrating religious epics and tales, imparting moral wisdom, and advocating for social causes like gender equality, environmental conservation, etc, puppetry conveys a delicate, but strong message. Embedded within their strings, lies a timeless tradition, echoing the heartbeat of a nation.

In this colourful landscape of Indian puppetry, numerous renowned puppeteers have left an indelible mark with their mesmerising performances and innovative story-telling techniques. One such luminary is Sangeet Natak Akademi Awardee, Puran Bhatt, a master puppeteer from Rajasthan, whose vibrant 'Kathputli' performances have enchanted audiences for decades. Hailing from the Bhatt community, Puran Bhatt's puppet shows are a celebration of Rajasthani folklore and mythology, fea-

turing lively characters, intricate costumes, and dynamic music. His dedication to preserving and promoting the art of 'Kathputli', has earned him accolades both nationally and internationally, showcasing the enduring appeal of traditional puppetry in contemporary times.

In South India, the art of shadow puppetry, known as "Tolpava Koothu," has thrived under the skilled hands of puppeteers like K. K. Ramachandra Pulavar. As a fifth-generation puppeteer, Pulavar has inherited a rich legacy of story-telling, passed down through generations of his family. Through his captivating shadow plays, Pulavar brings to life ancient epics such as the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, using intricately crafted leather puppets and vibrant light effects. His performances not only entertain but also educate, imparting moral lessons and cultural values to audiences young and old.

It is undeniable that puppetry serves as a powerful vehicle for cultural expression and communal bonding worldwide. Southeast Asian nations like Indonesia and Thailand embrace traditions such as "Wayang Kulit" and "Nang Talung," weaving entertainment with spiritual significance and enriching rituals and festivals. Across Africa, Mali's "Sogo bo" showcases intricate wooden puppets, conveying ancestral wisdom and moral teachings. Moreover, South Africa's puppetry catalyses social change and cultural

preservation. Also, Latin American countries like Mexico and Peru celebrate puppetry, blending wrestling with theatre for social commentary and reviving ancient forms like "Sarhua" to reinforce community pride and identity. These diverse puppetry traditions transcend borders, offering timeless tales and moral lessons that resonate across generations, fostering unity and celebrating cultural heritage worldwide.

Not only this, puppetry workshops and educational programmes play a crucial role in empowering marginalised communities by providing them with a platform to voice their concerns and preserve their cultural heritage. Organisations like the 'Bread and Puppet Theatre' in the United States and the 'Hina Community Theatre' in Nepal are a few examples, which conduct workshops and training sessions that empower individuals to create and perform puppetry productions that address social issues, promote cultural diversity, and foster community engagement.

Reflecting on puppetry, Jim Henson, the American puppeteer, animator, cartoonist, actor, inventor, and filmmaker who achieved worldwide notability as the creator of the Muppets says that "Puppetry is a magical art form that transcends language and culture, captivating audiences with its boundless creativity and imagination." Julie Taymor, the Ameri-

can director and writer of theatre, opera, and the fame of stage adaptation of The Lion King, believes that "Through the art of puppetry, we can explore the depths of human emotion and experience, shedding light on the beauty and complexity of the human condition."

Further, according to actor Richard Bradshaw "Puppetry is not just entertainment; it is a powerful medium for social change, offering a voice to the voiceless and challenging the status quo."

In the realm of contemporary Indian puppetry, Dadi Pudumjee stands as a pioneering figure, pushing the boundaries of the art form with his innovative approach and collaborative spirit.

As the founder of the 'Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust', Pudumjee has spearheaded numerous initiatives to revitalise and modernise puppetry in India. His groundbreaking productions blend traditional techniques with the modern art of telling stories, addressing pressing social issues and contemporary themes. Through workshops, festivals, and international collaborations, Pudumjee has played a pivotal role in elevating the status of Indian puppetry on the global stage, showcasing its relevance and adaptability in the modern world.

It is also undeniable that puppeteers, especially in India face great hardships. The July 2022 issue of the International Journal of

English and Studies (IJES) features an article by Sweta Gour discussing the declining tradition of puppetry in India. Gour highlights factors such as lack of patronage, modernization, and technological distractions contributing to its demise. Poverty among puppeteers, inadequate support, and limited awareness further threaten its existence.

Dadi Pudumjee has time and again emphasised the need for puppetry to evolve to remain relevant. Through various forums, Pudumjee has underscored the challenges faced by puppeteers in maintaining financial stability and therefore, suggests innovation as crucial for its survival. Pudumjee says that without adaptation, traditional puppetry risks becoming obsolete amid changing audience preferences and technological advancements.

Since they are characters, not people, the puppets create a world in which we recognise ourselves and identify with the characters as the drama unfolds. Our job, as audiences, is to keep this tradition alive and going and see that this art doesn't decline and fade away as another bygone chapter of history. The timeless tales created by these engaging puppets hanging by their strings must go on.

(The writer is programme executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

The AI assembly line ends with Microsoft, Google and Meta

PARMY OLSON

It's almost impossible for an artificial-intelligence startup to build anything as good as ChatGPT, but Inflection was getting there.

Last year the Palo Alto, California-based firm raised \$1.3 billion in a single fundraising round to turn its chatbot Pi into a personal assistant for everything. It built up a phenomenal cache of computing power, gaining access to thousands of coveted graphics-processing unit chips from Nvidia Corp. and was on track to surpass OpenAI's free version of ChatGPT with a model it had built, remarkably, from scratch. Compared to most startups, Inflection's path to success looked smooth. So it came as a shock to the industry on Tuesday when Inflection announced that its co-founders Mustafa Suleyman and Karén Simonyan, along with most of its employees,

were joining investor Microsoft Corp. as employees, and that Suleyman would lead the software giant's consumer AI business.

What happened? Had Inflection run out of all that money in less than a year? If large portions of the funding were in cloud credits, perhaps it had, and those credits can now flow back to Microsoft. Suleyman also told Bloomberg last year that Inflection lacked a business model. But plenty of tech startups have coasted on venture capital dollars for years before being able to open the revenue spigots. That Inflection has been swallowed so quickly by Microsoft underscores a stark new reality: With AI, legacy tech companies are sucking the innovation out of the room like a giant squid and more rapidly than with previous waves of technology. And they're doing it right under the noses of regulators.

Requirements around computing power and talent have made it too expensive for most companies to build cutting-edge generative AI models without the patronage of a tech giant like Microsoft, Google or Meta Platforms Inc. Case in point: Apple is thinking of outsourcing its generative AI efforts to Google.

Until now, Microsoft's strategy seemed to be one of hedging its bets. It made a major investment in OpenAI, but it also invested in hot AI rivals including Inflection and Mistral. Now, it's starting to adopt the Mark Zuckerberg School of Competition playbook, blasting smaller contenders out of existence so they're no longer a threat, and pulling their talent into its orbit as it's now doing with Inflection.

That may have been the plan all along for Inflection, whose other co-founder is Reid Hoffman, the billion-

aire who sold LinkedIn to Microsoft and then joined the software giant's board. Hoffman went on to broker the meetings that led to Microsoft's investment in OpenAI, so he may well have been pivotal to the Inflection deal. (The night before Tuesday's announcement, I happened to spot Hoffman walking out of an AI conference in Paris and into a private meeting with Kevin Scott, Microsoft's chief technology officer.)

Hiring Inflection's staff, rather than buying the company outright, is a clever sleight of hand by Microsoft in the face of rising antitrust scrutiny of Big Tech behavior in the AI space. According to Bloomberg News, Inflection's investors will be made whole, possibly by a licensing deal between Inflection and Microsoft.

That sounds a lot like an acquisition wrapped up in a hiring spree – the kind of shrewd move you'd expect

from a company that's spent years learning how to bat away antitrust regulators, ever since its bouts with the European Union in the early 2000s. That's likely why Microsoft has managed to purchase large players like Activision Blizzard (for \$69 billion in 2022) and Nuance Communications (\$19 billion in 2021) and side-step antitrust probes into those deals, while Meta was blocked by British antitrust authorities for trying to buy a gif site called Giphy for just \$315 million.

Because big tech buys, rather than innovates, the strategy benefits Microsoft. So long as the company can keep finding novel ways to capture the world's top AI talent – and on that, Inflection's Simonyan is a major coup – Microsoft can maintain pole position in the AI arms race.

It's worth noting that Inflection co-founder Suleyman had noble goals

for the firm that weren't so different from those of OpenAI once upon a time. Having previously worked at Google's DeepMind, where he tried building an independent ethics council for its AI efforts, he'd made Inflection a public benefit corporation, meaning it had to legally prioritize its social and environmental impact at the same level as its commercial obligations.

AI's builders often start their journeys with humanitarian objectives, before realizing they're caught in a system where there's only one logical outcome: helping to fatten up legacy tech companies and entrench their dominance. Inflection seems to have done that more quickly than anyone expected by joining Microsoft. Antitrust regulators will probably take note – but whether Microsoft will avoid their sanctions yet again is another question.

The Enigma of Karma

RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJJI

We were taught this in our early childhood that we would reap what we sow, so why is it that the good ones turn bad and the bad ones turn worse? Despite the law of karma being in operation, why do people not shy away from doing the wrong? This lack of fear of being punished has thus resulted in a world where people with low morals are holding high positions & in contrast, law-abiding persons are often seen suffering. They are crushed under the weight of a system that serves the corrupt and the clever.

In short, we can say that the vices of greed, anger and ego are overpowering the virtues of compassion, humility and benevolence & the whole world has been left to the mercy of corrupt human

beings. Secondly, if the karmic accounts were settled in a just manner, then why is that the world cycle continues to head towards downfall? In other words, if people settle their karmic debts regularly, they must return to equilibrium, so why do they continue to suffer? Hence, it seems as if something is missing that yet needs to be understood by us.

We all know that whenever a soul sins, it repays in the form of suffering in that birth itself or the following births. However, even after it has repaid its karmic account, it does not become completely free of evil in the way that it inherits a tendency to commit that sin. In other words, punishment may clear the soul's debt but the soul has lost its innocence.



Hence, when the sin is repeated many times, the tendency hardens in the form of samskaras or what we call personality traits and the soul is trapped in it. This also brings to the fore the understanding that when a person commits a wrong he is not just planting a sapling of suffering for himself but also digging a pit for a greater sin in the future. The best examples of such individuals can be found in juvenile

homes where a teenager is first punished for a petty crime & is given a chance to reform, but it is not necessary that it would reform him. Most of the time, it has been found that the teenager ends up becoming a hardcore criminal & becomes a hardened jailbird.

It is said that every saint has a past and every sinner has a future. However, going by the law of karma, the saint must have

done several good deeds in the past to reach a stage of such a spiritual elevation, likewise, the criminal too will surely bear suffering in the future for the crimes that he is committing in present. This also brings us to the conclusion that the initiation of the soul into evil and the formation of the samskaras render the soul capable of more sins and drain it of its energy to do the right thing. This causes the world drama cycle to undergo a downfall. From the most elevated time of Satyug, it comes down to Kaliyug and still heading to its extreme.

Now as the world drama has reached the end of the Iron Age from the most elevated time of the Golden Age, it is totally in a dilapidated form as it has become old and everyone is settling their karmic

accounts. The governments are trying to make new laws, they are initiating new schemes but the condition of the world is still deteriorating. It is this time when the Almighty Supreme descends on this earth to transform this world from the old to the new, to change it from hell to heaven. He is currently performing his highest divine task of heralding a new dawn by giving his beloved children the right knowledge so that they can settle their past accounts well and naturally keep away from further indulgence in vices. So let us all come together to receive the nectar of divine knowledge & burn away our sins and transform our old samskaras from their very root to attain an immortal stage of divinity.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher & popular columnist; views are personal)

Shiv Sena alleges no equal playing field in Jammu and Kashmir

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit has accused the administration of not giving equal playing field to opposition parties, especially Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit. Along with this, some unknown people in police uniform were also accused of breaking the hoarding installed in the party office late last night, regarding which a written complaint has been lodged with the police administration.

While talking to media in the party state office today, state chief Manish Sahni said that Jammu and Kashmir is a highly sensitive area, where terrorism has been active for the last three and a half decades. He said that Shiv Sena is probably the only active political party in Jammu



and Kashmir whose leaders have not been provided security. During the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the party had fielded its candidates on both the Lok Sabha seats of Jammu.

He said that during the expansion and campaigning of the party, our leaders always fear some untoward incident, but perhaps the administration is waiting for something untoward

to happen.

Sahni said that on 9th March, police force was used in Srinagar to stop them from interacting with the public and media and late last night, the hoarding of the party founder, revered Bala Saheb Thackeray, installed on the roof of the party office located at Indira Chowk, Ranbir Yatri Bhawan, was demolished. He was informed about this

Magistrate and the Election Commission denied having any information about it. Sahni said that a complaint has been lodged at the concerned police station regarding the above mentioned matter and he hopes that adequate security will be provided with immediate effect to avoid any untoward incident in the party leaders and offices.

by the hotel staff in the morning. Sahni said that he thought that perhaps such an action was taken in view of the code of conduct in view of the announcement of the Lok Sabha elections, but all the officials including the police administration, Jammu District

Vote on basis of performance, track record: Saroori

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Vice Chairman and Democratic Party (DPAP) candidate for the Udhampur-Doda Lok Sabha seat, G.M. Saroori, was accorded a hearty welcome during his visits to Ramnagar, Udhampur, and Kathua. During his visit, Mr. Saroori engaged in interactive sessions with party workers and office bearers, emphasizing the importance of unity and concerted efforts in securing success at the polls. He expressed gratitude for the warm reception and reaffirmed his dedication to addressing the aspirations and concerns of the constituents in the Udhampur-Doda region. He reiterated his commitment to inclusive development, social justice, and responsive governance, promising to be a strong



voice for the people at the national level. Saroori reiterated the significance of fostering religious unity and communal amity. In his speech, Mr. Saroori also highlighted the importance of basing electoral choices on development agendas and performance records. He urged workers to evaluate

candidates based on their commitment to progress, inclusive growth, and tangible results in addressing key issues faced by the region. Saroori firmly stated, "I believe in raising public issues and serving the people without any bias towards religion or caste. During my tenure as MLA and Minister, my

focus has always been on developmental work that benefits all sections of society." He emphasized his track record of prioritizing development projects and welfare programs based on merit and public need, rather than engaging in divisive religious or caste-based politics. He highlighted his com-

mitment to continue this approach if elected to represent the Udhampur-Doda constituency in the Lok Sabha. He further said, "I draw inspiration from Ghulam Nabi Azad's exemplary dedication to serving the people and amplifying their voices in Parliament. Like him, I will also prioritize the concerns of the downtrodden and work tirelessly for their upliftment." Among others who were present on the occasion were R.S.Chib Gen Secretary, Jugal Kishore Provincial President, Salman Nizami Chief Spokesperson, Subash Gupta VP province, Davinder Singh Bindu Sr leader DPAP, Brijeshwar Singh Indu Distt President Kathua, Ashwani Khajuria Distt President Udhampur, Brij Mohan, Sanjeev Dubey, Om Raj, Preeti Khajuria, Pritam Kotwal, and others.

IGNOU extends last date for fresh admission, re-registration for Jan 2024 session till Mar 31, 2024

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has extended the last date for fresh admission as well as re-registration for the January 2024 session till 31ST of March, 2024. The date of re-registration has been extended with a Late Fee of Rs.500/- only. The admission date for short term six-month duration and semester-based programmes has not been extended further.

To enroll in the next year or semester, learners need to register on the Portal and click the "New Registration" button to proceed and provide the correct mobile number and e-mail ID so that the University is able to send confirmation and other important updates only if the correct mobile number and e-mail ID are entered. In case the learners face



difficulty in registering on the portal (not getting OTP/ forgot Username/Password or any other difficulty), they need to approach Regional Centre Jammu for re-setting of their account/updating email ID or mobile number. They can apply for IGNOU re-registration January 2024 by visiting the official website of the IGNOU www.ignou.ac.in. The direct link for online re-registration is https://onlinerr.ignou.ac.in/ which can be accessed under the dropdown menu option "Register Online" on IGNOU website.

For filling the admission form online, candidates need to create a User ID and Password on the SAMARTH portal and be ready with a Mobile No., Email ID, properly scanned academic documents, photograph and Bank Debit /Credit/Net Banking for payment of fee. Applicants can access the IGNOU admission portal 2024 at IGNOU website www.ignou.ac.in or by directly following the link https://ignouadmission.samarth.edu.in.

To enroll in the next year or semester, candidates must fill and submit the IGNOU re-registration January 2024 form by the submission deadline. The students who did not attempt the term-end examinations or did not submit their assignment can also apply for re-registration for January 2024 provided the minimum

duration is completed and programme validity has not expired. They can apply for IGNOU re-registration January 2024 by visiting the official website of the IGNOU www.ignou.ac.in. The direct link for online re-registration is https://onlinerr.ignou.ac.in/ which can be accessed under the dropdown menu option "Register Online" on IGNOU website.

"The desirous learners who wish to seek admission or re-register themselves for subsequent year/semester must avail this extended opportunity and apply online well before the last date and eligible learners can apply for Government of India Scholarships on the National Scholarship Portal at https://scholarships.gov.in/ after confirmation of admission", said Dr. Jai Prakash Verma, Regional Director.

Raju Chandel seeks blessings from Jain spiritual leader Munishri Upendra Muni



JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Guruji Raju Chandel, a prominent leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), visited Jain Muni Shri Upendra Muni Ji of Sonipat today to seek his blessings. On this occasion, many esteemed individuals including Manasi Chandel, Advocate Deepika Chandel, Laksh-

mi Chandel, and Mohini Chandel, were present. During his visit, Shri Chandel expressed that Munishri Upendra Muni Ji, the Jain spiritual guru, possesses extraordinary mystical powers, capable of alleviating the suffering of the distressed with his mere touch. In the presence of Munishri Upendra Muni Ji, a blood donation camp was also organized.

In his message, Munishri Upendra Muni Ji expressed his desire for the well-being of the entire human race and prayed for the prosperity of all. He inspired all his followers to work towards the upliftment of society. Hundreds of people have gathered here to receive his blessings and have the opportunity to witness his divine presence.

Ritika starts door to door campaign in support of BJP LS candidate from Jammu

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Chief Spokesperson BJP Mahila Morcha J&K UT Ritika Trehan in a fervent display of democratic participation and civic responsibility, a thorough admirer of PM Modi's policies and programmes today undertook a spirited door-to-door campaign in support of Jugal Kishore BJP's Lok Sabha candidate from Jammu. Embracing the essence of grassroots democracy, she engaged with fellow residents to advocate for informed decision-making in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in wake of hundreds of welfare schemes and programmes which pave way for developed India by 2047.

During the campaign, Ritika passionately discussed the visionary policies and transformative initiatives spearheaded by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government for the holistic betterment of the nation. From economic reforms to social welfare programs, she highlighted the government's unwavering commitment to fostering inclusive growth and uplifting the lives of every citizen. She emphasized the importance of active citizenship and



urged fellow constituents to exercise their democratic right in favour of BJP candidates to elect them as they align with the aspirations and welfare of the people of Jammu.

Ritika underscored, "Today's campaign is not just about supporting candidates; it's about advocating for a future that is built on the principles of progress, inclusivity, and prosperity for all. By engaging with our neighbors and fellow citizens, we reaffirm our collective resolve to shape a better tomorrow for ourselves and generations to come." The door-to-door campaign epitomizes the spirit of democracy and civic engagement, underscoring the pivotal role of every individual in shaping the destiny of the nation, added Ritika.

Ritika further said that campaign aims at proactive engagement in grass-

roots democracy, showcasing your commitment to fostering informed decision-making and advocating for the welfare of the people of Jammu. She said, "The PM's welfare schemes for the poor are realizing the goal of making nation self-reliant. These schemes are a guarantee of making country a developed country. These welfare schemes are working to change and raise people's standard of living".

Ritika observed that Congress has a history of breaking the country, and even today, it is doing the same. Rahul Gandhi, walked step by step with the members of the Tukde-Tukde gang who raised slogans of disintegrating the country. What right does the Congress party, which stands with the opponents of the country, have to talk about uniting India?"

Ex-CPMF Welfare Association projects demands, seeks early redressal

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Chairman, Central Paramilitary Force Welfare Association J&K, Ashok Kumar has urged the Central Government to redress long pending demands of ex-paramilitary forces personnel at the earliest.

Flanked by General Secretary D.K Chauhan, Ashok Kumar, while addressing press conference here today, said, "The Cabinet Committee on security (CCS) GI vide Gol Order No 23-11-2012 has approved the proposal of MHA to declare CAPF Personal from BSF, CRPF, CISF, ITBP Personal and directed to Government to extend suitable benefits extended by the State / UT Governments Ex-service-men of Defence Forces." Speaking on 7th Pay Commission Recommendations, he urged the BJP led Central Government to release payment of 18 months DA arrears before the Parliament elections.

"The serving and former members widows and dependent of the paramilitary forces are being downgraded in front of their fellow citizens and family members while they are exposed to similar risk patterns as defense forces," he further said.

He demanded that Paramilitary Forces being Armed Forces, should be



exempted from New Pension Scheme (NPS).

He urged upon the Union Home Ministry to consider their demands which also include One-Rank One Pension and CSD canteen facilities instead of Central Police Canteen at State/District level. The Association chairman also demanded extension of proper medical treatment facilities for retired personnel of Paramilitary Forces at district level and all post retirement benefits to them which are available to Defense Forces Ex-Servicemen/ Widows and dependents.

He said that a deputation of Ex Central Paramilitary Forces also met Members of Parliament Jugal Kumar Sharma and Dr. Jatinder Singh and highlighted their most essential and genuine demands continuously in 2014 and 2016.

He expressed disap-

pointment with MPs for ignoring their genuine demands despite repeated efforts and submissions. "Our depuration also submitted demands to MP Rajya Sabha Shamsher Singh Manhas, but the efforts of Ex. CPMF depuration found disappointments," he said. The deligation of Ex. CPMF had a lot of hopes from our most popular representatives which results nothing.

In the 110th parliament standing committee a recommendation for medical allowances to the pensioners from Rs. 1000 to 5000 but PMO Dr. Jitendra Singh (MP) had not responded in his two tenures, he added.

Others present in the press conference included Harbans Lal Sharma, Charan Singh Chaal, Noor Muhammad, Harvinder Kour, Gulam Nabi Shah, Sajawal Shah, Kirtan Singh emphasizing a unified front in advocating for their demands.

Freezing of Cong account is freezing of Indian democracy: Rahul Gandhi



UNI
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Thursday attacked the government for freezing the party's accounts and said that freezing the Congress' bank accounts is freezing of Indian democracy.

Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here, the Congress leader said, "This is not the freezing of the Indian National Congress' bank accounts. This is the freezing of Indian democracy".

Rahul Gandhi said, "With all the bank accounts of our party have been frozen, in such a situation, we can do no campaign work. We cannot support our workers. We cannot send our leaders anywhere. Leave aside flights, we cannot even take a train. We cannot book advertisements; we cannot do anything. And this is being done two months before the election campaign".

He further said, "There

is no democracy in India today and this is a criminal action done by the Prime Minister and the Home Minister. It is very clear. Being the main Opposition, 20 percent of the country vote for us and we are not able to pay even Rs 2. Even if the agency defreeze out accounts, it will be difficult as huge damage has already been done to the democracy of India".

He alleged that such actions by the Prime Minister and the Home Minister was an "assault on democracy".

Moreover, the Congress leader also hit out at the institutions for failing to protect the democratic framework.

"There are in the country that are supposed to protect the democratic framework. However, no court is saying anything. The Election Commission is silent, no other institution is speaking out, and the media is not addressing the issue," the Wayanad MP said. UNI

Realme NARZO 70 Pro 5G launched with 50MP OIS Camera

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

realme, the Most Reliable Smartphone Service Provider in India, unveiled the newest addition to their super successful NARZO By realme line-up NARZO 70 Pro 5G. NARZO By realme is a stylish line of smartphones that delivers a comprehensive user experience. With a rapidly growing user base of over 16 million in India, NARZO By realme represents the next generation of smartphones. These devices are designed with advanced technology and premium features to help users stay ahead of the curve and express their individuality. The new realme NARZO 70 Pro 5G aims to redefine industry standards for low-light photography, further cementing realme's commitment to innovation and excellence.

realme & Amazon have strategically engaged

to bring the NARZO By realme line-up and to provide consumers with an enhanced shopping experience. NARZO By realme is exclusively available on Amazon.in and has been committed to bringing advanced technology to its users. In line with realme's dual platform strategy, realme launched its first online store on Amazon in March 2023.

The realmeNARZO 70 Pro 5G is a power-packed smartphone with remarkable features designed to enhance your smartphone experience. It boasts India's first 50MP Sony IMX890 Camera with Optical Image Stabilization (OIS) in the segment for capturing stunning, blur-free photos. The smartphone's visual appeal is elevated by the Horizon Glass Design and a 120Hz Ultra-Smooth AMOLED Display that offers vibrant colors and deep blacks. Powered by the Mediatek-

Dimensity 7050 5G Chipset, it ensures fast performance and supports 5G connectivity for faster internet speeds. First in the segment, realme NARZO 70 Pro incorporates Air Gesture controls, allowing you to perform various actions without touching the screen. To maintain optimal performance during intense usage, it comes with a 3D VC Cooling System that effectively dissipates heat. The smartphone houses a large 5000mAh battery and supports efficient 67W SUPERVOOC charging technology for quick power-ups. Lastly, the realme UI 5.0 based on Android 14 offers a smooth, intuitive user interface with several customization options and features for enhanced usability. The realme NARZO 70 Pro 5G is available in two stunning colors: Glass Green and Glass Gold and two storage variants: 8GB+128GB,



priced at INR 19,999 and 8GB+256GB, priced at INR 21,999

Commenting on the launch, a realme spokesperson said, "Today, we are thrilled to introduce the realme NARZO 70 Pro 5G, exclusively on Amazon, a smartphone that is set to redefine low-light photography standards in the smartphone industry. With Narzo By realme, we are committed

to pushing boundaries and delivering products that resonate with our young and tech-savvy audience. With the realme NARZO 70 Pro 5G, we have introduced cutting-edge technology and advanced features that will redefine the mid-range segment. We believe this smartphone will further solidify our position as a brand that offers innovative and trendsetting smart-

phones."

Commenting on the launch, Ranjit Babu, Director, Wireless and Home Entertainment, Amazon India said, "The Narzo series has been highly rated by customers on Amazon.in for its powerful performance, design and value for money. We extend our congratulations to the entire realme team on the launch of the Narzo 70 Pro, a smartphone that aims to set newer benchmarks in the segment with its cutting-edge camera and stunning glass design. Along with other exciting launch offers, we are happy to announce that customers can also enjoy a hassle-free instant loan within minutes enabling up to 3 months of no-cost installments* on the Narzo 70 Pro, without the need for a credit card using Amazon Pay Later. We are proud of our continued engagement with realme and with

the addition of the Narzo 70 Pro, we have further expanded our portfolio of 5G smartphones."

Commenting on the launch, Anuj Sidharth, Deputy Director, Marketing and Communications, MediaTek said "As an industry leader in developing innovative chipsets, MediaTek boasts a strong history of delivering high-performance solutions to the Smartphone industry. Through our collaboration with realme, we leveraged our collective expertise to give consumers the realmeNarzo 70 Pro 5G, powered by the MediaTek Dimensity 7050. The MediaTek Dimensity 7050 is designed with the TSMC 6nm advanced process and provides incredible CPU performance, captures high-quality pictures with its advanced Imaging camera technologies, and offers gamers the edge with MediaTek HyperEngine gaming".

Missing lady reunited with family By Police Station Gharota, Jammu

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 21.03.2024

One person from Tehsil Bhalwal District Jammu lodged a missing report of her wife (Name With-held) On this information, a missing report vide DD No.11 Dated 17.02.2024 was entered in this Police Station and search taken up.

Today police party of Police Station Gharota after hectic efforts and with technical assistance traced out the above said missing lady. Later on the said lady was handed over to his legal heirs after completing all legal formalities.

41st SCM of International Partnership for Hydrogen, Fuel Cells in Economy deliberates on Business Models, Regulations, Infrastructure for Promoting Green Hydrogen

JI NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

The 41st Steering Committee Meeting of the International Partnership for Hydrogen and Fuel Cells in the Economy (IPHE), being hosted by India in New Delhi during March 18 - 22, 2024, continued its formal proceedings at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, New Delhi on March 20, 2024.

The IPHE delegates from participating countries including Austria, Chile, France, European Commission, Japan, Germany, Netherlands, UAE,

UK, US, Singapore and South Korea presented country updates on R&D, key policy developments and initiatives taken by their federal and provincial governments on Hydrogen. The delegates mentioned national clean Hydrogen strategies; research and development initiatives related to Hydrogen production, storage and transportation; status of demand creation, infrastructure development, supply and demand at scale, and upskilling of workforce.

The committee deliberated upon business



models for transportation, production and storage of Hydrogen, possibilities of international collaborations and partnerships

in the areas of finance, policy, regulations and sustainable commercial and economic models to create a robust Hydrogen

economy.

The delegates also deliberated on regulatory framework, methodology for detection of emission savings, creation of dedicated Hydrogen infrastructure and markets, Hydrogen banks and import-export corridors. Public awareness, ease of doing business and high-efficiency and low-cost approaches too figured in the discussions.

The committee also reviewed decisions and actions from the 40th Steering Committee. Membership of IPHE was also discussed. It was sug-

gested that membership should be promoted to ensure wider participation of the international community, including the countries from the Global South.

It was agreed that the European Commission will host the 42nd Steering Committee during European Hydrogen Week scheduled in November this year.

Chair of the Committee urged all stakeholders to adopt bold measures to accelerate deployment of green Hydrogen in all possible sectors of economy on a priority basis.

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 21, 2024:

HDFC Bank and TD Bank Group (TD) today announced an expanded relationship supporting Indian students planning to study in Canada.

With this agreement, HDFC Bank and TD can provide the financial offerings that will make for a smoother transition to the Canadian banking environment. We look forward to welcoming and serving these students throughout their journey. We understand that there's a lot to manage when coming to study abroad, and through this partnership, we will simplify the process, and deliver the ease, value, and trusted advice that TD is known for."

The TD International Student GIC program will provide students with TD International Student GIC designed to meet the needs of the SDS program via a simple online application process. Students incur no application fees; Students will also start earning interest on their GIC even before arrival in Canada; TD Student Chequing Account: A chequing account designed for students with no monthly plan fee (until 23 years old or with proof of enrolment in full-time post-secondary education), unlimited transactions and additional benefits; Exclusive One-time credit: HDFC Bank customers will receive a fee rebate to cover their first wire payment into their TD account. Once students arrive in Canada, they will benefit from the ease, value, and trusted advice TD is known for. The benefits under this Program will include: Accessible Banking: TD has longer branch hours than any other Canadian bank, with over 1,000 branches coast to coast, and advisors speaking more than 80 languages. Banking services are also available online, as well as at your fingertips with the TD app.

As part of the Canadian government's requirements to apply for an expedited study permit, students are required to provide proof of financial support, which is accomplished via a Guaranteed Investment Certificate (GIC) from a participating Canadian financial institution. The TD International Student GIC Program is designed to enable students to open accounts digitally and help them meet their study visa and living expense requirements.

"We continue our focus on helping Indian students to navigate the process to study abroad," said Mr. S Sampath Kumar, Group Head Retail Branch Banking, HDFC Bank, "Canada is a leading education market and our relationship with TD aims to simplify the process for students and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) who want to study there."

Ms. Smita Bhagat Group Head Retail Branch Banking, HDFC Bank further added, "The association is designed to support the study permit requirements of Indian students planning to study in Canada. The curated program also offers a wide range of financial benefits to amplify their living experience while studying there."

In 2023, there were over 425,000 Indian international students with active study permits in Canada, making the country the top source for international students in Canada.

"We are thrilled to announce our expanded

CUJ launches Short Term Training Program in Tourism for Women

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 21

School of Business Studies, Central University of Jammu launched Short Term Upskilling Training Programme for Women candidates in collaboration with Government Degree College Vijaypur, Samba under the guidance and mentorship of Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Vice Chancellor, Central University of Jammu and Mission Director, Department of Skill Development, UT of J&K.

The programme was inaugurated in presence of Prof. Vandana Gupta, Principal, GDC Vijaypur, Prof. Jaya Bhasin, Dr. Neelika Arora and Dr. Shahid Mushtaq from School of Business Studies, Central University of Jammu and faculty members of college. Speaking on the occasion Prof. Vandana Gupta, chief guest of the inaugural session appreciated the efforts of Central University of Jammu under the dynamic and visionary leadership of its Vice Chancellor for orga-



nizing an upskilling outreach Programme in the College for the benefit of female candidates. She talked about Nari Shakti as India jumps significantly on gender inequality Index as an outcome of the decisive agenda set by the Government for ensuring women's empowerment through policy initiatives spanned across women's lifecycle including large scale initiatives for girls' education, skill development, entrepreneurship facilitation and safety in the workplace aimed at their long-term socio-economic and development.

Prof. Jaya Bhasin, Dean, School of Business Studies in her address said that for realizing the vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047 there is a need to focus on gender equality along

with gender equity for overall economic independence and participation of women in decision making. She stated that the women-led development should make the women logical, expressive, rational and the progress of a society is dependent on the progress of women. She pointed out that in the fast-changing technological world there is a need to learn, unlearn and relearn skills to become job creators rather than job seekers. Dr. Neelika Arora, Associate Professor while speaking in the inaugural function highlighted the need for women to have more financial dependence along with a change in the mindset to become an entrepreneur. She further spoke about the primary role of women towards

parents, society and nation besides giving tips to participants to choose the courses carefully depending on the available opportunities. She stressed on knowledge, skills and attitude as key to become successful in life and also elaborated the concept of Kaushal Bharat - Kushal Bharat.

Earlier Dr. Shahid Mushtaq, Assistant Professor in her welcome address briefed the participants about the short-term upskilling initiative being launched by the University to empower the youth of Jammu and Kashmir UT to learn employable skills. He further pointed out that the University is hand-holding youth to promote self-entrepreneurship for income and employment generation.

Speaking on the occasion he further said that the Tourism sector generates maximum employment with minimum investment and is the backbone of J&K economy. He introduced the trainer for the Programme Mr. S. Gupta having diverse industry experience of working in reputed corporate houses.

Mr. S. Gupta, Trainer for the upskilling programme illuminated the path for aspiring Multipurpose Associates (Tourism), setting the tone for the enriching journey ahead. The inaugural ceremony witnessed the presence of HoDs, and faculty members of the College. The entire program was coordinated by Dr. Neelika Arora, and Dr. Shahid Mushtaq under the supervision of Prof. Jaya Bhasin, Project Director, DHE Project on Employability Training and Dr. Vandana Gupta, Principal, GDC Vijaypur. Mr. S. Gupta proposed a formal vote of thanks expressing gratitude to all the contributors and supporters of this initiative.

Congress' bankruptcy is moral and intellectual, not financial: JP Nadda

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

BJP President JP Nadda on Thursday hit out at the Congress for blaming the government for blocking its accounts and said, "Instead of correcting their errors, Congress is blaming authorities for their troubles".

Taking to social media post-X, Nadda said, "Be it the ITAT or the Delhi HC, they have asked the Congress to comply with the rules, and pay the taxes due but the Party never did so". Nadda's comments came after the Congress Chairperson leveled serious allegations against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alleging that "Prime Minister has made a systematic effort to cripple the party financially".

"This issue affects not just the Indian National Congress, but our democracy itself. Funds collected from the public are being frozen and money from our accounts is being taken away forcibly" she alleged.

Rebutting the Congress charges, Nadda said, "Congress is going to be rejected by the people, and fearing a historic defeat, their top leadership addressed a press conference and ranted against Indian democracy and institutions. They are conveniently blaming their irrelevance on 'financial troubles'. In reality, their bankruptcy is moral and intellectual, not financial".

Police arrests 03 drug peddlers in Awantipora & Budgam

JI NEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, MAR 21

Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, police have arrested 03 drug peddlers in Awantipora & Budgam and recovered contraband/psychotropic substances from their possession.

In Awantipora, a police

party of Police Station Tral at a checkpoint established at Bajwani Tral arrested a drug peddler identified as Mohd Amin Malik son of Ghulam Nabi Malik resnet of Lurgam Tral. During search, 2000 capsules of banned drug was recovered from his possession. He has been shifted to police station where he remains in cus-

tody. Moreover, a police party of Police Post Toll Plaza at a checkpoint established near Toll Plaza Awantipora intercepted a vehicle (Auto Rickshaw) bearing registration number JK01AR-2030 driven by Mushtaq Ahmad Chopan son of Abdul Samad Chopan resident of Hawal Srinagar. During search, 52 grams

of charas was recovered from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to Police Station where he remains in custody. In Budgam, a police party of Police Post Hardpanzoo during routine naka checking at Qumiroo Crossing intercepted a person, who on seeing the police party tried to flee from the spot but was

apprehended tactfully. He has been identified as Bashir Ahmed Hajam son of Gh Ahmad Hajam resident of Qumiroo. During search, 4 Kgs 660 grams of Poppy Straw like substance in powder form was recovered from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to Police Station where he remains in custody.

Fostering Academia, Innovation, and Development: IIM, Jammu Inks MoU with SKUAST-K

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

In a significant step towards fostering academic collaboration and advancing regional development initiatives, Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Jammu and Sheri-e-Kashmir University of Agriculture, Science and Technology Kashmir (SKUAST-K) joined hands through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 21st March 2024. The historic agreement was formalized at a ceremony held at the Srinagar Campus of SKUAST-K.

The MoU was signed between Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director of IIM Jammu, and Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice Chancellor of SKUAST-K. The MoU signing witnessed the presence of key dignitaries including Prof. Jabir Ali, Dean Academics of IIM Jammu, Dr. Muqbil Burhan, Chairperson of Srinagar Campus, Cmdr Kesavan Baskkaran, Chief Administrative Officer of IIM Jammu, along with other officials from SKUAST-Kashmir and IIM Jammu.

Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director of IIM Jammu, expressed enthusiasm about the collaborative opportunities presented by the MoU, stating, "This partnership signifies a pivotal moment for both institutions, as we embark on a journey of knowledge exchange and collaborative growth. By joining forces with SKUAST-K, we aim to leverage our respective strengths in research, education, and innovation to address pressing societal challenges and foster holistic development in the region. This MoU not only facilitates academic and research collabora-



tions but also underscores our commitment to nurturing entrepreneurial talent and promoting sustainable development. Together, we envision creating a transformative impact that transcends boundaries and empowers communities.

Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice Chancellor of SKUAST-K, emphasized the transformative potential of the collaboration, stating, "This partnership opens new avenues for interdisciplinary research, skill development, and entrepreneurial initiatives. Together, we can address pressing challenges and contribute to the socio-economic progress of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. By leveraging our combined expertise and resources, we can drive innovation, promote sustainable development, and empower the youth with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in today's dynamic world. This collaboration embodies a broader vision of regional prosperity and underscores our shared commitment to fostering excellence in education, research, and entrepreneurship."

Prof. Jabir Ali, Dean Academics of IIM Jammu, highlighted the holistic approach envisaged

through this collaboration, stating, "By synergizing our academic resources and expertise, we aim to create inclusive opportunities for students, faculty, and the wider community. This MoU lays the foundation for a dynamic partnership focused on fostering innovation, knowledge exchange, and sustainable development."

The MoU between IIM Jammu and SKUAST-K marks a significant step towards establishing a comprehensive partnership focusing on Research and Development, Executive Education & Consultancy, Faculty Development Programmes, Skill Development Programmes, Advisory Services and Consulting, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Inclusive and Sustainable Development, and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC). Notably, the agreement facilitates the sharing of term credits in the MBA program as per NEP 2020, allowing students from SKUAST-K to enrol in term courses at IIM Jammu with credit transfer.

The MoU will also foster collaborative initiatives such as joint course offerings, interdisciplinary research promotion, and educational resource

exchange. Moreover, it promotes workshops, seminars, and short-term education programs to enhance research and teaching collaborations. The partnership also emphasizes providing research and consultancy services to governmental bodies, joint research endeavours, and active participation in cultural exchange programs, boot camps and sports activities. Additionally, the MoU prioritizes internship opportunities, credit exchange, and the promotion of entrepreneurship, innovation, and skill development through state-of-the-art incubation facilities. Together, IIM Jammu and SKUAST-K aim to cultivate an environment conducive to academic excellence, research innovation, and societal impact.

The MoU between IIM Jammu and SKUAST-K sets the stage for a collaborative journey aimed at advancing knowledge, promoting entrepreneurship, and driving growth in the Union Territory of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Both institutions are poised to embark on joint initiatives that promise to create lasting impact and contribute to the socio-economic development of the region.

Ganesh Sharma attended Sculptor's Camp organized by JAKAACL, Jammu

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Ganesh Kumar Sharma Eminent Senior Contemporary Sculptor from Hiranagar attended eight days Sculptor Camp organized by Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art Culture and Languages, Jammu w.e.f 12th of March to 20th of March 2024. Total 12 artists Sculptors juniors and seniors belongs to different parts of Jammu region were invited and attended the Camp at Kala Kendra Jammu.

Ganesh Kumar Sharma internationally acclaimed Sculptor of the state has made 4 feet height stone sculpture and will be



displayed at the lawns of Kala Kendra. Ganesh Sharma has attended so

many State, National and International Camps, symposiums and workshops in

different parts of the country and have organized 25 solo shows of his art works at different galleries of the country. Many of his art works are in permanent collections in government galleries as well as private galleries in India and abroad.

It is mentioned here that this Sculptor's camp has been organized by Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art Culture and Languages after so many years. All the participating artists demanded and requested to Secretary of the Academy to organize such camps symposiums and workshops regularly for the promotion of art and culture in the Jammu and Kashmir UT.

Guru Shishya Parampara Programme: Celebrating 3 Years of Nurturing Basohli Painting Artists

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

The Hari Tara Charitable Trust that maintains the iconic heritage landmark of Jammu, the Amar Mahal Museum & Library is spearheading efforts to preserve and promote the ancient art of Basohli Paintings. Basohli paintings, known for their intricate detail and vibrant colors, hold a significant place in the artistic heritage of India. Recognizing this, the Hari Tara Charitable Trust has taken proactive measures to ensure the survival of Basohli paintings for generations to come.

The initiative called the 'Guru Shishya Parampara Programme' is sponsored by the Hari Tara Charitable Trust and has completed three years since its start in March 2021. Notably, State and National Award winner Basohli Painter, Sohan Singh Billawria is actively involved in training students of Basohli paintings, providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to carry forward this exquisite art form.

Sohan Singh Billawria said that the Hari Tara Charitable Trust has spearheaded the Guru Shishya Parampara Programme for the past three years, offering financial assistance to aspiring artists with an aim to keep this heritage art alive for the upcoming generation.

On the occasion, Rajkumar Martand Singh, Trustee of Hari Tara Charitable



Trust and grandson of Dr. Karan Singh said that this program provides financial assistance to the mentor and students learning Basohli paintings, enabling them to dedicate themselves fully to mastering this time-honored craft. He said that Basohli paintings are renowned for their intricate details and vibrant colors, making them a time-consuming art form that requires years of dedication to achieve mastery. Rajkumar Martand Singh added that the Guru Shishya Parampara Programme has been very successful and would be extended for the next ten years with an aim to rejuvenate and revitalize the ancient heritage of Basohli paintings in the Jammu region amongst younger

generations. Recognizing the significance of preserving this cultural heritage, Sohan Singh Billawria acknowledged the support extended by the Hari Tara Charitable Trust that was established in 1970 by Dr. Karan Singh and particularly the efforts of Dr. Jyotsna Singh, Director of Amar Mahal Museum, Jammu.

The Hari Tara Charitable Trust remains steadfast in its commitment to nurturing young artists and encouraging them to hone their skills in Basohli paintings. Through collaborative efforts and unwavering dedication, the Hari Tara Charitable Trust aims to revitalize this ancient art form and preserve the rich cultural heritage of the Jammu region.

Police arrests 3 gamblers in Sopore, stake money seized

JNEWS SERVICE
SOPORE, MAR 21

Continuing its drive against social crimes, police have arrested three gamblers in Sopore and seized stake money from their possession.

Acting on specific information about gambling activities in the orchards of village Reban, a police party headed by Incharge PP Fruit Mandi under the supervision of SDPO Sopore Shri Sarfaraz Bashir-JKPS raided the specific spot and arrested the 03 gamblers on the spot. They have been identified as Mohammad Akbar Sheikh son of Abdullah Sheikh resident of Hadipora, Sajad Ahmad Dar son of Abdul Kabir resident of Parrypora Hadipora and Bashir Ahmad Tantray son of Mohammad Subhan Tantray resident of Reban.

Officers have seized stake money of 7160/- and playing cards from the gamblers. They have been shifted to police station where they remain in custody.

Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 54/2024 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Sopore and further investigation has been taken up.

People found indulging in criminal activities shall be dealt as per law. Community members are requested to share information regarding the crimes in their neighbourhood with the local police units.

Indira Memorial Academy Playway School honored ceremony and Progress report card distribution ceremony organized at RS Pura

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Indira Memorial Academy Playway School, Ward No. 11 RS Pura organized an honourable ceremony and score book distribution ceremony at the school campus in which students from class Nursery to Seventh standard were honored and score books / progress report card were distributed among them.

SDPO RS Pura Sh. Nikhil Gogana was present as Chief Guest during this program chaired by School Principal Nitin Mahajan and Deputy Principal Ekta Mahajan.

SDPO RS Pura Nikhil Gogana was present as Chief Guest and BJP District Jammu South General Secretary Akash Chopra joined the program as special guest. Honored



students with medals and distributed score books among the students.

Chief Guest and Special Guest on the occasion congratulated all the students and their parents who achieved better marks and said that the best efforts of the school staff and hard work of the students have earned them success. They also appreciated the efforts being made to promote educa-

tion from school management. School Principal Nitin Mahajan said Indira Memorial Playway School Ward No. 11 RS Pura has been declared result today for the year 2023-24 examination and students who have achieved better marks were honoured by the school management with Guests today. He said the school has always been an effort to bring students forward in edu-

cation as well as sports field. With this they said that school staff will always contribute to giving students better education.

Students who got prize, Pavika, Garvit, Bhuvika, Ayush, Shivansh, Manik Kumar, Arti, Dhruv, Manik Sharma, Parkashita, Tushar, Parbavika, Janvi, Reyansh, Nirbhaye, Pooja, Garima, Naresh, Muskan, Sankit, Rohit, Sachin, Naresh, Tanampreet, Reeya, Navya, Arshpreet, Sania, Muskan and Ravi.

School Staff members Stenny Kumari, Pooja, Mehak Gupta, Nitakshi, Kamali, Neha, Sonia, Bharti, Ganesh Sharma Sugandha Devi etc were present on the occasion.

NC will announce Lok Sabha candidates after Eid: Omar

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 21

National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah clearing air over announcement of candidates for the coming LS polls said on Thursday that the party will make the announcement only after Eid-ul-Fitr.

Omar's remarks came in response to a question regarding the selection of National Conference candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in Kashmir. He stated that the party would reveal the names of its candidates at an appropriate time. "We will announce our candidates at the right time.



Voting is to be held in the third, fourth and fifth phases in our constituencies. There is still plenty of time. Let us celebrate Eid first."

Talking to reporters, as peer news agency, Omar accused the BJP of hypocrisy, pointing to its alliances with dynastic political families such as Chirag

Paswan in Bihar and recent meetings between senior BJP leaders and Raj Thackeray in Maharashtra. He questioned whether these actions did not amount to nepotism or family politics. "BJP has no problem with dynastic families. They have a problem with families who oppose them. And I am

proud to say that I oppose the BJP," Omar said.

He further cited examples such as the BJP's alliance with Chirag Paswan in Bihar and meetings between Amit Shah and Raj Thackeray, questioning the BJP's selective stance on dynasty politics.

Responding to inquiries about former BJP leader Chaudhary Lal Singh's return to the Congress, Abdullah refrained from commenting, stating that it was an internal matter of the Congress party. Lal Singh, who defected to the BJP before the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, is speculated to be a contender for the Congress ticket in Udhampur.

Reasi Police arrests 03 notorious drug peddlers, recovers 5.65gm heroin

JNEWS SERVICE
REASI, MAR 21

In continued drive against Drug Abuse launched by District Police Reasi under operation JEEVANDAN, surprise Naka & Checking is being conducted to check the offenders & Criminals.

Police team of Police Station Reasi laid a surprise naka at IRP Chowk area, while conducting surprise checking, apprehended one person namely Parkash Singh, Age: 28 years S/O Mohan Singh

R/O Thiloo, Dist: Reasi A/P Gran Morh Reasi and 01.05 gm of heroin like substance was recovered from his possession.

On this FIR No.54/2024 US 8/21/22 NDPS Act is registered at Police Station Reasi and investigation is going on to unearth the backward and forward linkage.

In another incident, Police Party of PP Talwara has intercepted an alto car bearing Registration number JK02Q 8566 during checking/frisking 2.50 grams of heroin recovered

from driver namely Abhijeet Singh S/O Jalam Singh R/O Nai Basti, Reasi and 2.1 gm of heroin recovered from co-driver namely Sanjay Kumar S/O Chet Singh R/O Seela, Tehsil and District-Reasi.

On this FIR No.56/2024 US 8/21/22 NDPS Act is registered at Police Station Reasi and investigation is going on to unearth the backward and forward linkage. "The whole operation was conducted by team of PS Reasi and PP Talwara led by SHO Reasi Insp Chaman Gorka.

SSP Reasi MS Mohita Sharma-IPS while sharing the details conveyed that Reasi Police is working on multi-pronged strategy to deal with the problem of drug abuse, on one hand awareness programs are being organized in every nook and corner of the district and on the other hand drug peddlers are being booked under PITNDPS Act on regular basis, whereas Reasi Police also started Anti Drug Helpline Number 9070907017 for general public where identity of caller will be kept secret.

Tejas Ek Pahal Foundation celebrates its 5th Anniversary



JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, MAR 21

Tejas Ek Pahal Foundation (TEPF), a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) on Tuesday (19/03/2024) celebrated its fifth anniversary here at district headquarters Doda.

The programme to celebrate its five years of struggle started with lighting of lamps. The Chief Guest on the occasion was Suresh Kumar and the Guest of Honour Rahul Thakur.

The main speaker on the occasion was founder and chairman of TPEF, Akash Parihar, the general secretary of Foundation, Jugnu Aryan and the entire team of Tejas were present in the program.

While speaking on the occasion, Akash Parihar shared a detailed work report of Tejas and also talked about the NGO and its main objectives.

Parihar said that it's believed that people connect with each other and help people by sharing their experiences through NGOs.

This is a private organization to spread awareness, social unity, service delivery, training, study and research and to cooperate in giving voice to public expectations.

He said that Tejas runs activities to relieve people's pain, protect the environment, provide basic social services or for the community.

He acknowledged some of the works done by the TPEF in the last five (5) years like, 1. Youth Development, 2. Sports Competition, 3. Awareness, 4. Plastic Campaign, 5. Women Empowerment, 6. Medical Camp, 7. Blood Donation etc.

While appealing to people, Akash assured that they will work even more than this in the society, but needs everyone's cooperation.

Moreover, various other speakers like reputed journalists and other social workers from different sections of the society joined the programme and shared their experiences and suggestions.

Tiger Division Honours Legacy of Late Maj Gen Atma Singh on its 82nd Raising Day



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU: 21 MAR 2024

Honouring the legacy of Late Maj Gen Atma Singh, First Indian GOC of Jammu Division (now Tiger Division), a wreath was laid at his memorial at Jammu-Udhampur Highway by Brig Gautam Segan, SC, SM, Offg GOC 26 Infantry Division in a solemn ceremony on the occasion of 82nd Raising Day of Tiger Division.

Late Maj Gen Atma Singh was a distinguished officer, who laid down his

life in the service of the nation where he died in harness in an unfortunate incident where the memorial stands.

During his tenure as the GOC of the 26 Infantry Division, Late Maj Gen Atma Singh displayed exemplary leadership, unwavering dedication and an unyielding commitment to the welfare of his troops. His memory will forever remain etched in the annals of the Indian Army's history, serving as a beacon of inspiration for generations to come.

BJP releases 3rd list of candidates for LS polls

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) on Thursday released its third list of candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.

The list contained the names for nine seats in Tamil Nadu. According to the list, former Telangana governor Tamilisai Soundararajan will be contesting from Chennai South.

She had resigned from the saffron party before assuming the office of Governor of Puduch-

erry in 2021.

Soundararajan rejoined the BJP in the presence of Tamil Nadu BJP President K. Annamalai on March 20.

The other names include K. Annamalai contest from Coimbatore, L. Murugan from Nilgiris, Vinoj Selvam will contest from Chennai Central, AC Shanmugam from Vellore, C. Narasimhan (Krishnagiri), TR Paarivendhar (Perambalur), Nainar Nandran (Thoothukkudi), and Pon. Radhakrishnan (Kanniyakumari).

On March 13, the saffron party released its second list of 72 candidates.

People of J&K are being deprived of democracy for 10 years: Aam Aadmi Party

JI NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, MAR 21

Aam Aadmi Party District Samba President, Yuva Morcha, Shuvam Singh and rising leader from Ramgarh Assembly Surjit Mangotra alleged that for the last 10 years the people of Jammu and Kashmir were strategically deprived of an important democratic space. Even Panchayat and Municipal elections are not being held, while people are talking about holding parliamentary elections. Shuvam Singh said, unfortunately no decision was taken on the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. He alleged that the Election Commission has failed to convince the people of Jammu and Kashmir



to believe in democracy. We absolutely regret the kind of management and affairs which are being run today at the whims and wishes of a certain political party. We strongly object to this. Surjit Mangotra said that Jammu and Kashmir is facing exclusion from the democratic process. Given what has been snatched away from us, there were not much expectations

and even after the (Lok Sabha) elections, there are not much expectations. He claimed, BJP will hold elections when it is suitable for them. He said, this will not make much difference to the people, because no new government (in Jammu and Kashmir) will be like the previous governments. Under the current plan the new government is not even a glorified municipality.

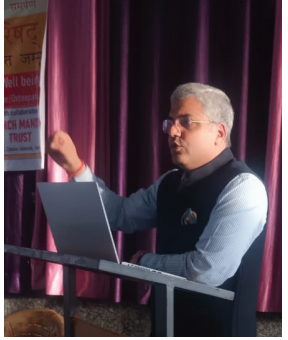
BVP Shivalik Branch organizes Health Talk on Holistic Approach Towards Health and Wellbeing

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

In an effort to promote comprehensive wellness and inspire individuals to embrace a holistic approach to health, Bharat Vikas Parishad Shivalik Branch proudly organised a transformative health talk: "Holistic Approach Towards Health and Wellbeing" in collaboration with Panch Mandir Trust at Panch Mandir, Channi Himmat, Jammu.

Sh Ashok Khajuria Secretary in a press release said that This enlightening event aimed to empower attendees with valuable insights and practical strategies to enhance their physical, mental, and emotional health. Renowned expert in the field Dr. Gaurav Vaid, Consultant Physiotherapist, Chiropractor and Osteopath, shared his expertise, guiding participants on a journey towards optimal wellbeing. It is a matter of pride that Dr. Gaurav Vaid had recently participated and presented papers in International Conference on this subject.

Dr. Vaid in his address covered diverse range of



health encompasses more than just the absence of illness - it involves nurturing every aspect of our being," says Sh. B.B. Sharma, Chief Guest of the event. Sh. H.C. Vaid, President Shivalik Branch said that our goal is to inspire individuals to embrace a holistic approach to health, empowering them to thrive and live life to the fullest. Bharat Vikas Parishad is dedicated to promoting health and wellbeing through education, advocacy, and community engagement. We believe in empowering individuals to take charge of their health journey and thrive in all aspects of life, he further added.

Ashok Kajuria, Secretary, Shivalik Branch conducted the whole program and welcomed all the dignitaries. Vijay Sharma, Media Head presented the vote of thanks.

Sh. T.R. Soi, Patron BVP, Sh. Ashok Gupta, Vice President, Prant, Sh. Rakesh Sharma, Treasurer, Shivalik Branch and many more office bearers, members and general public graced the occasion.

CMO Doda pays surprise visits to various health facilities in District Doda

JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, MARCH 21:

On the directions of Administrative Secretary Health, DHS Jammu and Deputy Commissioner Doda, to assess the provision of health services being provided to the public, the Chief Medical Officer Doda Dr Om Kumar on Wednesday (20-03-2024) took a surprise inspection of various health facilities in the District including AAM-SC Dranga, Drudhu, Berraru, Chakrabati, Sindra and Shiva and reviewed the functioning there.

During his visit, the CMO enquired about the facilities being provided to the patients and checked the attendance register and supply position of medicines and other relevant record of the facilities.

He stressed to the staff present there that they should provide the best



medical facilities to the visiting patients in an efficient and hassle-free manner besides he called upon the staff to work with extra zeal and dedication, be friendly with the patients and serve them with missionary spirit. He also directed the staff to maintain complete hygiene in and around the hospital and provide better medical care facilities to the patients.

Speaking on the occasion, CMO Dr Om Kumar urged upon health functionaries to ensure better healthcare facilities to the patients and come up to

the expectations of the patients and enjoined upon the hospital administration to focus on quality assurance, accessible affordable health care so that satisfaction level among the users of Govt health facilities is enhanced and people repose faith in public health. He assured all possible support related to better health care services being provided at the hospital.

During the visit, the CMO was accompanied by Ms Priyanka Manhas (VCCM).

Pt. Premnath Dogra remembered, paid tributes by Trust, BJP leaders



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Pt. Prem Nath Dogra Trust (Regd.) led by its Chairman Parshotam Dadhichi, paid warm tributes to the Sher-e-Duggar Pt. Prem Nath Dogra, the tall leader of Jammu & Kashmir on his fifty-second death anniversary at Pandit Prem Nath Dogra Bhawan, Kacchi Chawni, Jammu.

A Hawan Yagya was also performed to mark the occasion.

Followed by hawan, the trustees and prominent personalities including Subhash Jandiwal, Daya Ram Sharma, Kavinder Gupta, Ex-Deputy Chief Minister, Shamsheer Singh Manhas Ex. MP, CA Sat Sharma Ex-Minister, Priya Sethi, Ex-Minister, Yudhvir Sethi, Sanjay Gupta, General Secretary S.D Sabha, Ayodhya Gupta, Veenu Khanna, Rajeev Charak, Purnima Sharma, Anil Masoom Ex-corporator, Adv. Rajesh Gupta, Kuldeep Kandhari, Manav Mahajan, Anu Gupta,

and others paid tributes to the great personality and remembered his life works.

While paying tributes (Shradhanjali), speakers recalled the resolution adopted by trust during last few years i.e, allocation of special budget for the development of Smailpur, the birthplace of Pt. Ji and also to establish a Chair in Jammu University in the name of Pandit Premnath Dogra. Further the State Administration was asked to implement its resolution, which was adopted in State Assembly to rename the Mini Stadium, Parade, as Pandit Premnath Dogra Stadium.

The chairman of the Trust, Parshotam Dadhichi, made an appeal to the voters of Jammu and Kashmir to cast their votes in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections to the candidates, who will work for the unity and integrity of the nation, the cause for which Pt. Prem Nath Dogra dedicated whole of his life.

Theft case Solved by Jammu Police; Valuables worth Lacs recovered, Burglars Arrested

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

On 26-02-2024, a written complaint was lodged at Police Station Channi Himmat by a widow lady namely Farida Khan to the effect that she along with her daughter had gone to nearby shop. She stated that they left their house at 1452 hrs. When she reached back, she saw doors of his house broken and stated that some unknown thieves have decamped with valuables amounting to Rs 4.5 Lacs approximately along with cash amounting to Rs 200,000.

On this, case FIR no. 25/2024, U/S 454/380 IPC was immediately registered at P/S Channi Himmat and Police swung into action.

Sensing gravity of the crime, Police team headed by Inspector Mohd Sadeeq Jatt SHO Channi Himmat along with ICPD Sainik colony PSI Amreek Singh was constituted by Sh. Sheezan Bhat JKPS SDPO City East Jammu.

Different police parties were constituted at police station level which raided several hideouts.

After generating human as well as technical intelligence, several suspects were rounded up and put to questioning.



During sustained questioning it came to fore that two suspects namely Akash Khushu S/o Late Ashok Kumar R/o Muthi Domana and Javeed S/o Latief Mohd R/o Rahim Nagar Narwal Jammu broke down the doors and confessed their involvement in the crime.

On their disclosure, gold items about 70 gms and silver items about 150 gms were recovered from different places from both the accused whereas one scooty and a LED purchased by accused from the stolen cash too, have been recovered and seized in the instant case.

Police team led by SHO Channi Himmat made the arrests/recovery under the supervision of SDPO East.

People of Jammu have words of praise for Police for their quick action and recovery of stolen items and putting thieves behind the bars.

Inter-state drug smuggler held in Domana, Jammu; 1.0 kg of Ganja recovered

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 21.03.2024

Continuing its drive against drug trafficking and substance abuse under Ops *SANJEEVANI* Jammu Police arrested a Chattisgarh-based narcotics smuggler in Domana area of Jammu district today on 21.03.2024 and seized 1.0 kg Ganja from his possession.

A police team of Police Station Domana led by SHO PS Domana Inspector Arun Sharma assisted by ASI Raj Singh while on patrolling duty at Machine Domana area rounded up one suspect later identified as Sundar Lal Chandra S/o Kumar Singh Chandra R/o Bhatmahul, Janjgir Champa Chhattisgarh. On his search, 1.0 Kgs of ganja was recovered from his possession.

In this regard a case FIR No. 65/2024 under relevant sections got registered in Police Station Domana and accused was arrested. Further investigation of the case is going on.

General public has highly applaud efforts of Jammu Police for taking stringent measures against drug peddlers and curbing the drug menace from the society.

Jammu Police enjoined upon all citizens of Jammu to be aware of drug menace and report any incident to Jammu Police. The identity of the person informing regarding this menace will not be disclosed to anyone.

Illegal extraction & transportation of minerals Police seizes 2 vehicles, arrests 2 drivers in Kulgam

JI NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM, MAR 21

Cracking a whip on illegal mining of minerals, Kulgam police under the close supervision of SSP Kulgam have seized 2 vehicles and arrested 2 drivers in Kulgam.

A police party headed by SHO Police Station DH Pora seized 2 vehicles (tractors) and arrested 2 drivers, involved in illegal extraction and transportation of minerals from Kandi Nala, near Sarmarg. The accused drivers have been identified as Mohd Asif Malik son of Mohd Ashraf Malik and Nadeem Ahmad Malik son of Ghulam Ahmad Malik, both residents of DK Marag. Accordingly, a case vide FIR No 22/2024 under relevant sections of law stands registered at Police Station DH Pora and investigation has been taken up.

People are requested not to indulge in any kind of illegal mining activities from any Nallah as it is the violation of Government rules. Persons found indulging in illegal mining activities shall be dealt as per law.

Azad condoles demise of SP Vikram Singh's mother

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAR 21

Former Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad has expressed deep condolences on the passing of Mrs. Lalita Jamwal, a retired teacher and the mother of SP Vikram Singh Jamwal. Mrs. Jamwal had been battling illness before her demise. Mr. Azad conveyed his heartfelt con-

dolences to Mr. Vikram Singh Jamwal and his family during this difficult time. He recalled Mrs. Jamwal's remarkable social contributions and prayed for her soul to rest in peace. Azad said, It is with deep sorrow that I extend my heartfelt condolences on the passing away of Lalita Ji. She was not only a kind-hearted individual but also a beacon of social

activism. Lalita Ji's legacy of compassion and dedication to social causes will continue to inspire us all. May her soul rest in eternal peace, and may her family find solace during this difficult time. The loss of Mrs. Lalita Jamwal is mourned not just by her family but also by the larger community who knew her as a compassionate and active member of society.

Rise of Bharat is an assurance for global peace and harmony: Vice President



AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAR 21

The Vice President, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar today emphasized that the rise of Bharat in economy and technology is with "the greatest assurance to world peace, harmony and global order." He also added that India remains committed to engaging like-minded nations to nurture and sustain global peace, stability and harmony.

VP made these remarks while interacting with the participants of inaugural International Strategic Engagement Programme (IN-STEP) at Upa-Rashtrapati Niwas today. This two-week program comprising of international delegates

from 21 countries and 8 Indian officers is being organized by National Defence College.

In his address, Shri Dhankhar asserted that India is no longer a nation with potential or a sleeping giant as some indicated; it is on the rise and the rise is unstoppable. "India's extraordinary growth story transcends skeptics, exemplifying visionary leadership, inclusive development and unwavering perseverance," he added.

Highlighting that India's unprecedented rise stands out amidst today's dynamic geopolitics, VP stated that with an expanding economy, effective diplomacy and growing soft power, the world looks

to India for catalyzing affirmative ecosystem for peace. He described the IN-STEP course as a significant initiative in this direction.

Describing global peace and security as fundamental to growth, the Vice President asserted that peace is best secured from position of strength. Ever preparedness for war is safest passage to peaceful environment, he added.

Noting that conflagrations in any part of the world impact global economy and supply chains beyond confronting nations, VP emphasized that Solution to such conflagrations lies in diplomacy and dialogue. Highlighting that "isolation approach is now a matter

of the past" VP expressed the need for nations to engage in meaningful discourse in these turbulent times.

IN-STEP underscores our shared commitment to mutual dialogue and working in togetherness as the bedrock of effective policymaking and conflict resolution, he stressed. It may be noted that this program brings convergence of a rich tapestry of perspectives from the Indian Armed Forces, Paramilitary, Foreign Services, and representatives from 21 foreign countries.

Rajit Punhani, Secretary, Rajya Sabha, Lt. Gen. SS Dahiya, Commandant, NDC and the participants of IN-STEP program were present.

2 day 'Sensitization Program for sexual harassment of women at workplace' kicks off at NIT Srinagar

JINNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAR 21

The two day 'Sensitization Program for sexual harassment of women at workplace' began at National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Thursday.

The awareness program is being organised by the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) of the Institute. Prof. Shagoofa Rasool Shah (Chairperson), Prof. MA Shah, Prof. Zamrooda Jabeen, Lieutenant (Dr.) Nitika Kundan Member secretary and Dr. Manoj Kumar are members of the committee.

In her welcome address, Chairperson of IC, Prof. Shagoofa extended warm welcome to resource persons for the seminar and stated that this two-day event is aimed to sensitize, educate employees on the critical issue of sexual harassment at workplace.

"By fostering awareness and understanding, we aim to empower individuals to recognize, prevent, and respond effectively to instances of sexual harassment," she said.

Prof. Shagoofa highlighted the past customs and traditions where women were subjected to cruelty, and were deprived from basic fundamental rights.

"The implementation of laws safeguarding women's rights has significantly reduced this issue, as more victims are now stepping forward to register their complaints against the perpetrators," she added.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath said such programs are need of the hour and are aimed to raise awareness about sexual harassment, its



impact on victims.

Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman appreciated the ICC for organizing this event and it would play a crucial role in promoting awareness, prevention, and support regarding sexual harassment in the workplace, and more productive work environment.

Advocate Misbah Rashid (Presently member Child Welfare Committee Srinagar) and Dr. Shahnaz (Associate professor School of Law, University of Kashmir) were the resource persons of the workshop.

Dr. Yashwant Mehta, Dean P&D, Prof. Kowsar Majid, Dean R&C, Prof. Ruhi Naz, HOD Civil Engineering Prof. Javaid, HoD Department of Humanity, Shrivastava among other staff members attended the event.

In her key address, Advocate Misbah Rashid delivered her expert talk on "The Sexual Harassment of women at workplace (Prevention Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) and its aspects."

She highlighted important judgments under

the POSH Act including guidelines of Vishakha vs State of Rajasthan case, Apparel Export Case vs AK Chopra, the internal complaints committee of Tata consultancy services vs Tanuja Priya Bhat, etc.

She said according to this law, both men and women can be victims of sexual harassment; however the safeguard protection under POSH Act is available only to women.

"Verbal harassment that is sexually coloured can constitute sexual harassment. Words can be just as offensive as physical acts and contact. Sexually colored jokes, comments and stories can be sexually harassing and can create a hostile work environment," Advocate Misbah said.

Regarding filing of complaints, she said complaints regarding sexual harassment needs to be filed within 3 months of the date of incident and in case of a series of incidents, within a period of 3 months from the date of the last incident.

"However, the IC or the LC, as the case may be, may extend the time limit; however, not exceeding 3

months, for reasons to be recorded in writing if it is satisfied that the circumstances were such that the victim was unable to file a complaint within the said period," she added.

Advocate Misbah further said that the POSH Act is aimed to safeguard women's dignity at the workplace.

Another speaker, Dr. Shahnaz said that sexual harassment is an offshoot of male chauvinism, gender bias, gender discrimination, misogyny. It is often spoken in whispers and suffered in silence, she said.

"The citizens of India are at the most fundamental level governed and protected by the Constitution and the SC in its landmark judgment in Vishaka and others Vs. State of Rajasthan said that the issue of Sexual Harassment at the work place is a human rights issue and not merely a criminal issue," Dr. Shahnaz said.

She further said that this change in perspective shifted the focus of Sexual Harassment from convicting the perpetrator to protecting the victim. Dr. MA Shah also expressed his belief that a world where girls receive education is safer, more stable, and prosperous. He emphasized that when girls are educated, their own futures improve, which in turn benefits society as a whole. He cited an African proverb: "If we educate a man, we educate an individual, but if we educate a woman, we educate a nation."

Dr. Shah, as a father of two daughters, emphasized the importance of education for girls in shaping their futures and impacting society positively.

Samba Police arrests 2 bovine smugglers, rescues 4 bovine, seizes vehicle

JINNEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, MAR 21

Continuing its drive against the bovine smugglers and their propagators, Samba Police has foiled bovine smuggling attempt, arrested two bovine smugglers, rescued four bovines and seized vehicle in the jurisdiction of Police Station Ghagwal.

A Police team of Police Station Ghagwal headed by SHO Police Station Ghagwal while performing vehicle checking duty at NHW naka Tapyal, intercepted a Mahindra load carrier bearing registration number JK19A-3027 coming from Kathua side for checking. During checking four bovines were found laden inside the vehicle which were tied in a cruel manner and were being transported illegally without any valid permission.

Forest Department celebrates Forests International Day at SKICC



JINNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MARCH 21

As a part of International Day of Forests being observed across the globe, the J&K Forest Department today organized a Mega UT Level Function at SKICC, in which the frontline staff of Forest and allied wings, students of different educational institutes, NGOs, Wildlife experts, Pariyavaran and Van Mitras, officers from different departments and citizens participated.

The event was aimed to highlight the importance of forests and trees in mitigating the effects of climate change, biodiversity loss, increasing noise pollution because of increas-

ing urbanisation and other anthropogenic pressures.

The Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, who was the chief guest on the occasion, emphasized the need to lay emphasis on use of new technology to check illegal felling of trees, prevent encroachments, devise methodology for consistent monitoring of health of forests and management and promoting research for developing improved varieties to increase the survival percentage of plantations.

Additional Chief Secretary, Forest, Dheeraj Gupta, while speaking on the occasion, highlighted the critical role of Forests in maintaining the ecological balance and improving

the quality of life of present and future generations.

PCCF & HoFF, who is also the Chairman of Biodiversity Council of J&K, Roshan Jaggi, informed that department is using emerging technologies for preventing forest fires, monitoring health of plantations, strengthening forest boundary lines and producing high quality planting material in modern nurseries.

Among others, HoDs of Forest sector, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Conservators of Forests of Kashmir region, Regional heads of allied departments, DFOs and NGOs were present on the occasion.

Expenditure Observer visits Doda, inspects election office, MCMC, media cell

JINNEWS SERVICE
DODA, MARCH 21

Expenditure Observer, Satyanarayana Raju Bhupathi today visited Doda district and inspected election office, MCMC and media cell to ensure

compliance with election expenditure regulations for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections 2024.

During the inspection, the Expenditure Observer reviewed expense records, verified expen-

diture authenticity and ensured adherence to election laws by the election office, MCMC and media cell.

He also held interactions with staff members to understand their operations and verify

compliance with Election Commission guidelines. The Expenditure Observer was accompanied by District Election Officer, Doda, Harvinder Singh, Deputy District Election Officer Doda, Om Parkash and others.

03 hardcore criminals slapped PSA, 1 notorious heroin supplier detained under PITNDPS ACT by Samba Police

JINNEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, MARCH 21

In a significant move to combat criminal activities and drug trafficking in the district, Samba Police, under the able

guidance of SSP Samba Vinay Kumar, JKPS, has apprehended three hardcore criminals under the Jammu & Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA). These individuals, identified as Kunal Teji S/o Rakesh Kumar R/o Ban

Talab tehsil and district Samba, Devinder Singh @ Deepu S/o Ashok Singh R/o Kehli Mandi Samba A/P Rakh Amb Tali tehsil and district Samba and Sourav Singh Nagra S/O Sham Lal R/o Chak Salaria tehsil Ramgarh Dis-

trict Samba, have been involved in multiple criminal cases, posing a serious threat to public peace and tranquility. Following their repeated engagement in criminal activities, detention orders were issued by the Dis-

trict Magistrate Samba based on detailed dossiers prepared by SSP Samba. The police teams, led by SHO PS Samba and SHO PS Ramgarh, successfully executed these warrants, leading to the incarceration of the accused

in District Jail Kathua and District Jail Jammu respectively. Additionally, with aim at curbing the illicit drug trade, Samba Police detained a notorious heroin supplier, Abdul Habib alias Bheem S/o Maon

Din R/o Ladana tehsil Ramnagar district Udhampur A/P Badheri, Nanak Chak tehsil & district Samba, under the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (PITNDPS) Act. Abdul

Habib, known for spreading drug addiction within the community, was swiftly detained and confined to District Jail Kathua following the issuance of a detention order by the Divisional Commissioner, Jammu.

Government officials and industry leaders gathered to commemorate this milestone, underscoring India's dedication to create a more inclusive digital space.