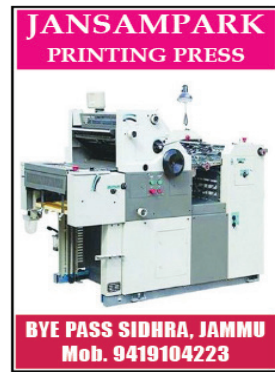


JINDRAH IMAGES



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Open bank accounts of all eligible students: JK Samagra Shiksha to CEOs
JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAY 17:

The Jammu and Kashmir Samagra Shiksha Friday asked all Chief Education Officers (CEOs) to open bank accounts of all eligible students wherein it will transfer funds to the students under RTE act.

Project Director Samagra Shiksha, Rakesh Magotra in a communiqué to the CEOs said that it will transfer the funds through DBT mode into the accounts of students from first primary

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ACB files case against ex Tehsildar Rajouri, others on corruption charges
JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAY 17:

The Anti-Corruption Bureau has registered a case against former tehsildar Rajouri, former patwari and other officials on corruption charges.

In a statement, issued to the news agency, a spokesperson said that AC registered a case FIR no 02/2024 against Balwant Singh,

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

409 police personnel detached from courts in J&K, directed to parent units
JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

In a significant move, 409 police personnel have been detached from various courts across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir

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Two fake call centres busted in Punjab, 155 arrested
JI NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, MAY 17

Two fraudulent call centres were busted and their 155 employees were arrested in Mohali for allegedly scamming people in the US, police said on Friday.

Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav said these call centres were run by Gujarat-based kingpins. "Preliminary investigations have revealed that these fake call centres were operating during night hours and the callers were using three different modus operandi to dupe foreign nationals by making them purchase gift cards of companies like Apple, Amazon, etc," DGP Yadav said.

These gift cards were then shared with a team manager and redeemed by the kingpins or owners of these call centres, he said.

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PM jabs Cong, INDIA Bloc: Party aims just 50 seats to save 'honour', alliance already defeated
AGENCIES
FAITEHPUR (UP), MAY 17

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday took a jibe at the Congress saying its aim is to win just 50 seats so that it could save its "honour", and he also mocked Rahul Gandhi for contesting the Lok Sabha polls from Rae Bareilly instead of Amethi which he lost to the BJP's Smriti Irani in 2019.

Addressing an election rally here, the prime minister also claimed that INIDA bloc has been defeated in the first four phases of elections itself and its "disappointed" workers have now stopped leaving their homes for poll-related activities.

Modi said he had predicted that Rahul Gandhi would not dare to contest from Amethi and this has



turned out to be true.

"The further news is that to save its honour, the Congress has now launched Mission 50. The target of the Congress is to get 50 seats in the entire country by any means," he said.

The Congress recorded its worst-ever performance in the Lok Sabha

polls in 2014, winning just 44 seats. Its performance improved slightly in 2019 when it won 52 seats.

Taking a swipe at the SP and the Congress, Modi said, "The dreams of 'panja' (Congress's poll symbol) and 'cycle' (SP's poll symbol) have shattered 'khata-khat, khata-khat'. Now they are plan-

ning for post-June 4 as to who should be blamed for the defeat 'khata-khat, khata-khat'. And, someone was telling me that tickets for foreign trips have also been booked 'khata-khat, khata-khat'."

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has used the phrase "Khata-khat khata-khat" to claim that a fixed stipend would flow into the accounts of poor women if his party comes to power.

"All the qualities of the Congress and the SP match with each other. They both are dedicated to 'parivarvaad' (dynastic politics). Both are in politics for corruption. They can do anything to please their vote bank. Both (of them) promote criminals and mafia, and both, the SP-Congress, are

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Amit Shah wraps up visit to Kashmir, returns to Delhi
AGENCIES
SRINAGAR, MAY 17

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday wrapped up his brief visit to Kashmir Valley during which he interacted with several delegations, including those from the BJP and local Sikhs, officials said.

Shah, who arrived here on Thursday evening, left for New Delhi on Friday morning, they said. Though his visit in the midst of Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir led to speculation of his meetings with some Kashmir-based mainstream political leaders, there was no official word on the minister's engagements before he left the Valley.

While Baramulla goes to the polls on May 20, voting for the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency is scheduled for May 25 after it was deferred from its earlier



schedule of May 7 due to bad weather.

Sunil Sharma, general secretary of the BJP's Jammu and Kashmir unit, said on Thursday that the home minister's visit to Kashmir is not political.

"I think the home minister is coming here to review the measures from the security point of view to increase the turnout and create an atmosphere of peace. There is no polit-

ical activity, but the BJP workers will meet him and discuss the party's organisational matters," Sharma said.

Immediately after his arrival in the city here on Thursday, Shah interacted with several delegations, including BJP leaders of Jammu and Kashmir. A Pahari delegation and a delegation of local Sikhs also met Shah.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Now pilgrims have to plant saplings as 'Prasad' at Vaishno Devi Shrine
JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

In an interesting development, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) has decided to offer plant saplings as 'prasad' to the devotees, visiting Shri Vashino Devi temple for prayers.

Situated at Trikuta Hills in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir, Vaishno Devi is considered as most revered shrine, where on an average around 10 million people pay their pay obeisance in a year.

Officials told news agency of Shrine Board the idea behind the initiative is to encourage people to plant

more trees and save the planet Earth from climate change and global warming. The plant sapling also acts as a blessing of Goddess and treated as a live souvenir of the holy pilgrimage.

Viney Khajuria, Assistant Conservator of Forests Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board said that in the next couple of days the Board is going to formally start offering plants as 'Parshad' to Vaishno Devi pilgrims visiting the shrine.

He informed a high-tech outlet is planned at Nahirika complex at Katra, the base camp of the holy shrine, from where interesting devotees can take away the saplings as blessing of

Mata Rani

Khajuria further said that indigenous plants will be taken from a high-tech nursery set up by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) at Kunia village in the Panthal area near Katra in Reasi. He said the nursery is rearing indigenous species of plants which are compatible with the local climatic conditions but also striving, progressively, for better transportation and transplantation.

Besides continuously improving facilities for the pilgrims, the board has been devoting attention to promoting the welfare of the people. He further informed that

the board also has been ensuring conserving the environment.

"The board has also taken up large-scale plantations of varied indigenous species of plants, creepers, soil binders and flowering plants in the shrine area," he said.

People also expressed their joy and excitement regarding the new concept. A devotee Ayush said, "The saplings as a 'gift' during weddings, birthdays and farewells are already in practice but sapling as 'Parshad' is something unique". He said this initiative is good for environmental conversation as it gives a sense of closeness with goddesses. KNO

Death of HC in road accident: J&K home deptt sanctions Rs 11.5 lakh compensation
JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

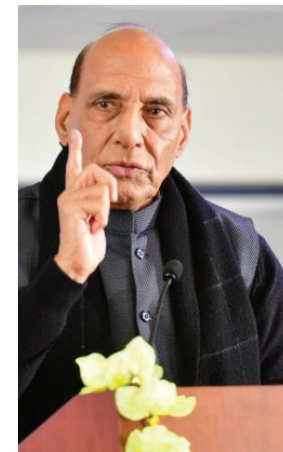
The Home Department of Jammu and Kashmir has accorded sanction to the drawl of Rs 11.5 lakh by the DGP J&K to be deposited as compensation in the registry of J&K and Ladakh High Court at Srinagar to pay the amount as compensation to the family of a Head Constable of Ladakh who died after he was hit by a cop of J&K Police in 2006.

Pakistan occupied J&K 'Was, is and will remain ours': Rajnath Singh
AGENCIES
BALLIA (UP), MAY 17

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday asserted that Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir "was, is and will remain ours" while also hitting out at the opposition parties for raking up the China issue.

Accusing the opposition parties of spreading confusion on the China issue, he said, "India has not lost anything. We will not let India lose anything. Talks are ongoing ... we are confident that a solution will be found."

Addressing an election rally in Ballia's Sikan-darpur in support of the BJP's Salempur candi-



date Ravindra Kushwaha, Singh also asserted, "Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir was ours, is ours and will remain ours." He claimed that

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SIA, Jammu files supplementary chargesheet against 02 terrorists of Rajouri
JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

State Investigation Agency, Jammu today filed supplementary chargesheet against two (02) terrorists involved in a number of terrorist acts and activities in Kandibudhal area of District Rajouri.

As per news agency, a significant case of terror acts was registered in Police Station Mahore where 02 terrorists were arrested with huge quantities of automatic arms and its ammunition including other war like stores from Budhal area by the Police and security forces.

During sustained interrogation more recoveries of sticky grenades, hand grenades, IEDs were recovered on their disclosures. Since, this case was important in nature and involvement of more terrorist associates was anticipated and the said case was transferred to State Investigation Agency Jammu. The State Investigation Agency put strenu-

ous efforts and as a result the duo confessed their involvement in a number of terrorist acts including killing, injuring and firing upon innocent persons, grenade throwing in a marriage party and planting of IEDs in crowded places in Kandibudhal areas and caused extensive damage to Government properties.

The said terrorists were active since long and carrying out the terrorist acts on the behest of a top ranking grade -"A" terrorist of proscribed terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), namely Mohd Qasim alias Salman alias Waseem S/O Mohd Shafi R/o Angralla District Reasi, who has exfiltrated to Pakistan for arms training during the year 1990. The accused persons had received huge quantities of arms and ammunitions and other war like stores through drone dropping from different places in Lamberi area of District Rajouri and then shifted the

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Shekhawat, Jugal, Rana address election rally
AGENCIES
DINANAGAR, PUNJAB MAY 17

Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat today lashed out at the INDI Alliance, particularly the Congress, for dividing the country to further its divisive political agenda, saying all their machinations will fail as they stand exposed before the people of India.

Addressing an election rally at Dinanagar, along



with senior BJP leaders Mr Jugal Kishore and Mr Devender Singh Rana, in support of the party candidate Mr Dinesh Singh Babbu from Gurdaspur Parliamentary Constituency, Mr Shekhawat exuded confidence that the BJP led National Democratic Alliance will cross the 400 mark in the ongoing general elections.

Shekhawat said the country has

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Protests in PoJK consequence of Pakistan's policy of systemic plundering of resources: India
AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAY 17

India on Friday said the protests witnessed in several parts of Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) are a "natural consequence" of Islamabad's continued policy of systemic plundering of resources from the region that remains under its "forcible and illegal" occupation.

India also asserted that the entire Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh "have been, are and shall always remain integral parts of India".

Violent protests erupted in PoJK over rising costs of food, fuel and essential utilities as Pakistan reels under a severe economic crisis.

"We have seen reports on protests in several



areas of Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir," external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing.

He was responding to a question on the protests in PoJK.

"We believe that it is a natural consequence of Pakistan's continued policy of systemic plundering of resources from these territories which

remain under its forcible and illegal occupation," Jaiswal said.

"Such exploitative policies deny the local people, rights over their own resources and the benefits thereof," he said.

"We reiterate that the entire Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have been, are and shall always remain integral parts of India,"

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Wildlife Department launches “Parthenium Bio Control” drive in Jambu Zoo

JJ NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

In a first of its kind attempt, the Department of Wildlife Protection, in collaboration with the SKUAST-Jammu is exploring possibility of eradicating parthenium weed using its natural bio control agent i.e. Mexican beetle (zygogrammicol-orata) in Jambu Zoo.

Parthenium- often known as congress grass (locally known as Jadi) is a national weed which has spread throughout the length and breadth of the country and has encroached important landscapes like agriculture fields, wasteland, forests and protected areas. Parthenium is known for its negative impact on the health of animals and humans, notably for its pollen allergy and allelopathic impact on soil micro flora and fauna.

In the agriculture field parthenium weed is eradicated through integrated weed management using chemicals and natural amines. However, in forest, protected areas and in Zoos, use of chemicals is prohibited hence control of this menacing weed remained a management hurdle both for foresters/protected area/Zoo managers.

The bio control launch was marked with the release of more than 500 beetles in the Zoo area. Similar such successive releases on the same site will be carried out for next few months during the monsoon season and the similar approach will be followed up in next year for ascertaining its effectiveness in wild areas.

The bio control agent is proven to feed only on parthenium and does not affect other plants and animals. It is very much likely that beetles will eradicate parthenium without any negative impact and the

affected area will either naturally or under assistance will be aided for growth of natural grasses and herbs.



After the release of Beetle-both grub and adults feed on parthenium leaves/plants, preventing it from attaining full maturity seed setting and further multiplication. On this occasion Anil Kumar

Atri, Additional Director, Jambu Zoo informed the students, Zoo visitors and Zoo staff about the need for using bio control agent for habitat improvement without use of chemical pesticides.

Dr. R.S Bandler, Professor in Division of Entomology, SKUAST-Jammu highlighted the benefits of parthenium bio-control

and other natural agents that can be explored for controlling other weed species such as lantana etc.

Dr. Arti Sharma and Dr. Manoj Thakur, SKUAST faculty, exchanged their thoughts on co-existence with wilderness and the role played by biological agents in controlling various weeds without harming nature.

Students from SKUAST-Jammu presented their views on the importance of biodiversity and its conservation from scientific exploration to sustainable harvesting and benefit sharing with local communities. Programme was organised under the guidance of Sarvesh Rai, PCCF, Chief Wildlife Warden, J&K and Dr. Kumar MK, CCF, Regional Wildlife Warden Jammu.

DEO Bandipora flags off Poll parties for 16-Gurez assembly Segment

JJ NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, MAY 17

The District Election Officer (DEO) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman on Friday flagged-off polling parties for 16-Gurez Assembly Segment which is part of I-Baramulla PC and going for polls on 20th May, 2024.

The polling parties, comprising POs, P1, P2, P3, P4, Micro observers and police personnel were dispatched to assembly segment 16-Gurez to facilitate fair and transparent voting procedures, guaranteeing every eligible citizen the opportunity to exercise their democratic right. A total of 31 poll parties were dispatched for the Gurez assembly segment besides 30 micro observers and 35 persons as reserve staff.

DEO emphasized the



importance of conducting free, fair and peaceful elections and said that all requisite arrangements are in place for the polling parties besides welfare measures are also taken care of.

He said the administration has implemented

comprehensive measures to facilitate voter participation and also to ensure that no voter is left.

Dy DEO Mohammad Rafeeq, Nodal officer manpower management Dr. G. M Pujoo and other officers were also present on the occasion.

Special Lok Adalat for consumer cases organized at District Court Complex Samba



JJ NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, MAY 17

District Legal Services Authority Samba Authority today organized a Special Lok Adalat of Consumer Cases in the District Court Complex Samba.

The said Special Lok Adalat was organized under the directions and overall Supervisions of Adnan Sayeed, Chairman, District Legal Services Authority (Pr. District & Sessions Judge) Samba.

A Special bench for settling Consumer cases was constituted, which comprised M.S. Parihar, President District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission Kathua (Former District & Sessions Judge) and Rekha Kapoor Nischal, Secretary DLSA, Samba. A total number of 05 Cases were taken up by the bench for amicable settlement, out of which one case was settled and Rs. 69,225 was awarded as settlement amount.

LNT Machine seized at Gossi Gulabgarh for illegal mining



JJ NEWS SERVICE
KISHITWAR, MAY 17

The enforcement teams on Thursday seized an LNT machine involved in illegal mining in Gossi area near the Chandrabhaga River bed of Gulabgarh Paddar. The operation was conducted by a team from the Geology

and Mining Department in collaboration with other enforcement agencies. The seizure operation was carried out in accordance with the laws outlined in the Mineral Act.

A case under the relevant sections of law has been registered, and an investigation has been initiated.

Police host 2-Day Volleyball Tournament at Bhaderwah



JJ NEWS SERVICE
BHADERWAH, MAY 17

A 2-day Volleyball tournament, organized by the Range Police Headquarters Batote, took off here today.

The tournament has been organized to provide a platform to local youth to hone their skills and promote sports culture for physical fitness.

ASP Vinod Sharma inaugurated the tournament organized by the Police as part of the Civic Action Programme 2023-2024, which aims to foster community engagement and promote sportsmanship.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by SDPO, Station House Officer and prominent persons from the civil society.

GMC Doda organises Conference on Core Orthopaedics



JJ NEWS SERVICE
BHADERWAH, MAY 17

The Department of Orthopaedics of Government Medical College Doda organized a conference on "Core Orthopaedics: Revisiting the Basics" at the Telligarh Tourist Resort in Bhaderwah. The event, spanning two days, commenced with a grand inauguration ceremony.

Deputy Commissioner, Harvinder Singh, graced the occasion as the chief guest. The inauguration featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony, attended by

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Bhaderwah, Sunil Kumar and CEO Bhaderwah Development Authority, Bal Krishan, along with distinguished members of Jammu and Kashmir orthopaedic association During the event, the Deputy Commissioner was honored with a memento and shawl to mark his role as the chief guest. The conference aims to revisit and reinforce the fundamental principles of orthopaedics, providing a platform for professionals to engage and share knowledge.

Secy MoHFW, Advisor Bhatnagar address NHMs' National Conference at Srinagar

JJ NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAY 17

Secretary, Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Apurva Chandra and Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, today addressed the second National Conference of National Health Mission (NHM) here today.

The conference was organised by MoHFW in collaboration with National Health Mission, J&K, to deliberate on critical healthcare initiatives and strategies of several States and UTs. The conference was attended by the Mission Director of NHMs of several States and UTs, eminent healthcare professionals, policymakers and stakeholders from across the nation.

In his inaugural address, the Union Secretary highlighted that strengthening the healthcare infrastructure and promoting comprehensive healthcare delivery system is vital for overall development of the country. He stressed on the importance of collaboration between the government, healthcare institutions and civil society organizations to achieve the shared goal of upgrading the medical infrastruc-



ture across India.

He highlighted that medical infrastructure has been upgraded across Jammu and Kashmir and it is remarkable to witness that some Public Health Centres are working 24*7 in the UT.

Addressing the gathering, Advisor Bhatnagar remarked that it is a privilege for J&K to host this Conference of National Health Mission, adding that this will provide a unique platform for stakeholders to discuss and deliberate on vital issues related to healthcare system. He observed that this conference is a testament to the collective resolve of healthcare community to overcome challenges and

build a healthier and more resilient nation.

The Advisor expressed commitment towards translating the deliberations and discussions of this conference into tangible actions that would positively impact the health and well-being of citizens.

Additional Secretary and Mission Director, NHM, Aradhana Patnaik, in her address, remarked that NHM is advancing healthcare accessibility and quality across the country, particularly in remote and underserved regions. She emphasized the need for innovative approaches, enhanced community engagement and robust partnerships

to address the evolving healthcare challenges.

She highlighted that this conference will provide a platform for insightful discussions, knowledge sharing and the exchange of best practices among participants from diverse backgrounds. She expressed optimism that the outcomes and deliberations of this conference will be fruitful in achieving the shared goal of a healthier and more resilient nation.

Addressing the gathering, Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, said that the health department of Jammu and Kashmir is performing remarkably with active hand

holding of HoFW department. He said that this conference is a significant platform for J&K to learn from neighbouring States and UTs in terms of various initiatives related to healthcare services.

During the conference, several technical sessions were held during which the participants and speakers engaged in insightful discussions on a wide range of topics, like Indian Public Health Standards, making comprehensive healthcare a reality, child health, infectious disease management, healthcare financing and digital health initiatives.

Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Government of Punjab, Ajoy Sharma, Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Government Of Himachal Pradesh, C Paulrasu, Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, UT of Chandigarh, Ajay Chagti, ED, National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC), Major General Atul Kotwal, Mission Director NHM J&K, Nazim Zai Khan, Director Health Services Kashmir, Principals of Medical Colleges, other officers and delegates from various States and UTs were also present on the occasion.

Special Lok Adalat for Consumer cases held at Kathua

JJ NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, MAY 17

As per the Action Plan issued by J&K Legal Services Authority for the month of May-2024 and also under the radiant guidance of Chairman, District Legal Services Authority, Kathua (also Pr. District & Sessions Judge, Kathua) Ashok Kumar Shavan, a Special Lok Adalat to settle Consumer cases was organised by District Legal Services Authority Kathua here in the District Court Complex Kathua today.

One Bench comprising Surinder Kumar Thapa, Special Mobile Magistrate Kathua and Neelam Bala Bhardwaj, Member District Consumer Kathua was constituted for settling the referred Consumer cases.

A total 7 cases were taken up for amicable settlement out of which only one case was settled.

Awareness event held at District Hospital Samba to mark World Hypertension Day



JJ NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, MAY 17

The 'World Hypertension Day' was observed at District Hospital Samba bringing together senior medics, health department officials and medical students to discuss and promote preventive measures.

Organised under the directions of the Director Health Services Jammu and under the supervision of Chief Medical Officer, Dr Vidhi Bhatiyal featured detailed lectures and interactive sessions benefitting the students.

Medical Superintendent, Dr Mohinder Kumar Sharma briefed the signs and symptoms of Hypertension and revealed that

it is being seen in every age group of the society. He cautioned that in most of the cases Alcohol consumption, smoking, Obesity etc are major causes of Hypertension.

He listed the BP Symptoms like severe headache, vision problems, fatigue, chest pain and irregular heartbeat.

For the prevention, he appealed to all to live a healthy life, exercise daily, avoid smoking, drink plenty of water, go for routine blood pressure check, reduce salt intake and avoid stress.

The others who spoke on the disease were Dr Bharat Bhushan consultant Surgeon, Dr Neeru Rajput Microbiologist DH Samba and Ranjana Physiotherapist.

ASN School holds elections for School Peer Team

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Voting is an important civic duty that can significantly impact the future of our country: Ritesh Kapoor

Jammu, May 17: A.S.N.Hr. Sec. School, Channi Himmat, Jammu holds elections for the School Peer Team. Five Students filed their nominations for the post of Head Boy while Six Girls filed for the post of Head Girl whereas four students for Deputy Head Boy and Six for the post of Deputy Head Girl. After scrutiny, three students were shortlisted for the post of Head Boy, three students for Head Girl, two for Dy. Head Boy and four for the post of Dy. Head Girl.

The students shortlisted for the post of Head Boy were Zeeshan Talib of 12th Class, Sagar Dogra of 12th Class & Akashdeep Singh of 11th Class while students shortlisted for

the post of Head Girl were Wani Jan Adhar Fayaz of 11th Class, Siya Parihar of 12th Class & Surbhi of 11th Class whereas Kaushik of 8th Class, Asaf Ali Chauhan of 9th Class for the post of Dy. Head Boy and Neha of 10th Class, Parindhi of 8th Class, Rekha of 9th Class and Bhoomika Sharma of 10th Class for the post of Dy. Head Girl.

The shortlisted students were given the day for the campaign to seek the votes in their favour and to put forward the demands, suggestions and problems faced by the student community. They went to different classrooms to convince, motivate and express their opinion in front of the student voters to vote in their favour. During the voting day, different teachers were appointed to hold the elections in a fair manner. Student names with their posts were displayed on the ballot boxes and children were briefed



to check the name and the post for which they were going to cast their vote in support of the candidates. Students from 6th to 12th Class casted their votes for the four posts and after counting Zeeshan Talib of 12th class got 59 votes and elected as Head Boy while Wani Jan Adhar Fayaz of 11th Class got 62 votes and elected as Head Girl whereas Kaushik of 8th Class got 62 votes and elected as Dy. Head Boy and Neha of 10th Class got 44 votes and elected as Dy. Head Girl.

The winners were presented badges for their posts through the bening hands of the Director

of the School Mr. Ritesh Kapoor. They were also briefed about their duties and responsibilities. They took the oath to serve the schools peer team with utmost determination and dedication.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Ritesh Kapoor, Director of the school congratulated the elected students for their victory in the elections. He said voting helps citizens become more involved in their government and keep it accountable. Voting is an important civic duty that can significantly impact the future of our country. Voting is an integral part of democ-

racy, and it is necessary for people to have a voice. By voting, you can create change and make a difference in your community. It is also important to vote because you can only repeal a law if most citizens agree with it. He added that preparing children about the voting rights and the value of their vote, these elections were held in the school to make the students understand the concept of elections and to create awareness in their surroundings during every elections. He added that students are the best advertisers for any such process and to make the society aware as well. He said that students need to have confidence in themselves and truly believe in what they stand for if they want people to vote for them. If you don't believe you can win, nobody else will; so these elections boost their confidence and the morale as well.

Journalism Students participate in 4th Phase of Yuva Sangam at VNIT Nagpur

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Students of Journalism and Media Studies, University of Jammu participated in the prestigious Yuva Sangam event, hosted by Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT) in Nagpur.

Karman Singh and Aayushi Dogra, students of the 4th semester of the Department of Journalism and Media Studies represented University of Jammu to showcase the rich cultural heritage of Jammu on the national stage. These two students were recently shortlisted for Yuva Sangam Phase 4, an initiative under Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat, jointly organized by the Ministry of Education and the Union Government.

The itinerary included visits to NTPC Nagpur, rustic fields and rural areas.

"The opportunity to participate in the Yuva Sangam event at VNIT Nagpur was an invaluable experience, and it was made possible through the department's dedication to our growth and development," said Karman Singh, adding that their participation in various competitions, workshops, and cultural activities at Yuva Sangam has not only broadened their horizons but also enhanced their practical skills and knowledge.

"The rigorous training and mentorship we receive from faculty members at the department have prepared us to face real-world challenges with confidence and competence," Karman said and added that they both are particularly grateful to Professor Garima Gupta, whose leadership and vision have been instrumental in providing them

with such platforms to showcase talents. "The department's focus on experiential learning and exposure to contemporary media practices has played a crucial role in grooming us into capable and responsible journalists," said Ayushi Dogra, adding that the support from the department goes beyond academics, encouraging them to explore diverse perspectives and engage in meaningful dialogues.

Professor Garima Gupta, Head of the Journalism Department at Jammu University, expressed immense pride. "Our students have demonstrated exceptional talent and professionalism at Yuva Sangam. Their performance not only reflects their hard work but also the high standards of education and training provided at our university," she said.

Yuva Sangam Phase-IV: Students return to NIT Srinagar after weeklong tour in Maharashtra

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAY 17

As part of the Yuva Sangam programme launched under the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) initiative, 45 students from various institutions across 22 districts in the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh returned to Kashmir back after exploring many places in Maharashtra.

Dr. Ranjeet Kumar Rout, Nodal officer for EBSB 2024 said that 45 students along with five volunteers and staff members returned back to Valley after a weeklong exposure tour to Maharashtra as part of Phase-IV of Yuva Sangam 2024.

The Yuva Sangam delegation had left the NIT Srinagar on 4th May and reached Visvesvaraya National Institute of Tech-



nology Nagpur (VNIT Nagpur), Maharashtra on 5th May. After 7 days, they returned back to Kashmir on 11th May 2023.

During the tour, the delegation visited Deeksha Bhoomi in Nagpur, where Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar embraced Buddhism with thousands of followers in 1956, the NTPC thermal power plant in Mauda

Tehsil, Gorewada International Zoo, Shri Ram Temple in Ramtek, Baba Tajuddin Dargah, and Lighthouse Waterpark.

The students also had the opportunity to meet Prof. Pramod M. Padole, Director VNIT Nagpur, former Chairman of ISRO and other dignitaries during the tour.

As per official figures,

NIT Srinagar received 1892 applications from the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh during this phase. Among them, 45 students were selected for the EBSB 2024 program.

Dr. Ranjeet Kumar Rout, Dr. Mohd Mohsin Khan, Dr. Nitika Kundan were Nodal officers while Dr. Janani L, Dr. Pankaj Kumar and Dr. Mohd Rafiq Teli was

the faculty coordinator, Social Media Officer, and PR Officer respectively for the exposure tour.

From the VNIT side, Dr-Vijay Kumar RP, Dr - GN Nimbarde were the Coordinators and Dr Jaipal, Dr Bibhuti Ranjan Mishra, Dr. Rahul Biswas, Dr. Manjusha CB were the committee members for the tour.

In the Yuva Sangam phase IV, the participants from the paired institutes will be exchanged under the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) campaign of the Ministry of Education.

Under this exchange programme, participants were given opportunity for multi-dimensional exposure under five broad areas 5 Ps i.e. Paryatan (Tourism), Parampara (Traditions), Pragati (Development), Prodyogik (Technology), and Paraspampark (People-to-people connect).

Astro Mahindra launches Thar Earth Edition

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Astro India Automobile pvt Ltd authorized dealer of Mahindra & Mahindra launched Thar Earth Edition in the presence of Chairman Mr Mohinder Gupta, MD Mr Vikram Mahajan, Director Mr Satyram Gupta Dr C.D Gupta and team from Back Yard Customs Jammu.

Thar Earth edition is inspired by the Thar Desert and the SUV features a Desert Fury satin matte paint scheme. Thar Earth Edition will be available in four variants in the LX Hard Top 4x4 guise, with prices starting at Rs 15.40 lakh and going up to Rs 17.60 lakh (both prices ex-showroom). In terms of design, the Thar Desert edition looks the same as the regular Thar but features exclusive Desert Fury satin matte



paint with dune-inspired decals on the rear fender and doors, Earth Edition badging on the B-pillars, matte black badges, and 17-inch silver alloy wheels.

Moving inside, the SUV gets a dual-tone theme of black and light beige layout with dune designs on the headrests, Thar branding on the doors, and dark chrome accents all around. Additionally, it gets Desert Fury-coloured inserts for the AC vents, centre console, and steering wheel. Mahindra also said that each unit will get a unique numbered decorative VIN plate. Custom-

ers can also opt for accessories such as customised front and rear armrests, floor mats, and a comfort kit.

The Thar Earth Edition will be available in both petrol and diesel engine options. A 2.2-litre, four-cylinder, turbocharged diesel engine which puts out 130PS and 300Nm of torque and a 2.0-litre, turbo-petrol engine which puts out 150PS and 320Nm. Both engine options come paired with a six-speed manual or a six-speed torque converter automatic transmission.

IEI Jammu Centre celebrates World Telecommunication & Information Society Day



JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

The Institution of Engineers (India), Jammu Centre in collaboration with Department of Telecommunications (J&K LSA) celebrated the World Telecommunication & Information Society Day on 17th May 2024 with theme "Digital innovation for sustainable development", the event among others was attended by Engineers from various Departments, Organizations and Senior Engineers along with Members of the Committee of IEI, Jammu Local Centre.

On this occasion, Vijay Kumar Surendra, Additional Director General, Department of Telecom, J&K, Jammu was the Chief Guest & Prachish Khanna, Deputy Director General,

Department of Telecom, J&K Jammu was the Guest of Honour & Key Note Speaker whereas Ravi Chanyal, Past Chairman, IEI Jammu Centre presided over the function. Er. Sachin Tickoo, Honorary Secretary, IEI Jammu were among distinguished audience in attendance.

At the outset, Ravi Chanyal while welcoming the guests stated that World Telecommunication & Information Society Day 2024 underscores the pivotal role of digital innovation in advancing sustainable development across the globe. In this era, technological advancements offer transformative solutions to pressing societal and environmental challenges.

Vijay Kumar Surendra, Additional Director General, Department of Tele-

com, J&K, Jammu said human mind has to innovate keeping in view the sustainability and excess of everything is bad. Starting from fighting climate change to eliminating hunger and poverty, digital technologies can help achieve targets under the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Now more than ever, building a sustainable future demands innovative thinking and action in the digital world.

Prachish Khanna, Key Note Speaker on the occasion said, World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2024 offer the chance to explore how digital innovation can help connect everyone and unlock sustainable prosperity for all.

During the seminar, Er. B. L. Rawal, MIE; Er. Ranjeev Sawheny, MIE; Er. Joy

Ganjoo, AM Technologist and Er. Akash Dusgotra, AMIE presented their papers on the theme.

Er. Sachin Tickoo, MIE, Honorary Secretary conducted the proceedings of the event, while speaking on the occasion he said With 2.6 billion people still unconnected, glaring digital gaps hinder innovation across much of the world. Many countries - lacking key policies, investments, and digital skills - are struggling to keep up in today's fast-changing digital landscape.

WTISD 2024 reminds the world of the progress yet to be made to ensure that everyone can benefit from digital technologies. He further presented the Vote of Thanks to the august gathering and media personnel for active participation.

IFC extends US\$500 Million to HDFC Bank to Ramp Up Microloans to Underserved Women Borrowers in India

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Women, especially microloan borrowers in semi-urban and rural areas, will have increased access to finance with IFC financing of up to US\$500 million to HDFC Bank—the largest private sector bank in India—aiming to support lending for income generation purposes, fostering financial inclusion and socio-economic growth in the country.

The Bank, with a long-standing history of lending to women, will use IFC's financing for on-lending as microloans to Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) enrolled in the Sustainable Livelihoods Initiative (SLI). SLI is the Bank's business line responsible for micro-finance lending programs exclusively for women borrowers. IFC's loan will further enable the Bank to grow its microcredit and microlending to women, especially allowing SHG and JLG borrowers to graduate to individual lending schemes.

"As a Bank we

have been committed to empowering women especially by targeted lending to Self -Help Groups (SHGs) and Joint Liability Groups (JLGs), which further helps take banking to the under-banked and unbanked. This longer duration credit facility from IFC will further boost these efforts," said Arup Rakshit, Group Head, Treasury, HDFC Bank.

Non-banking financial companies, including microfinance institutions (MFIs) and small finance banks, are the major lenders to women seeking loan for income generation purposes, accounting for nearly 65.7 percent of the total microfinance lending in India, and collectively reaching approx-

imately 47 million clients with an aggregate gross loan portfolio of US\$31.6 billion as of December 31, 2023[1].

However, MFIs are highly fragmented, have limited capacity, and face higher funding costs. In this context, the extensive distribution network of banks and lower funding costs, among others, can be leveraged to increase access to microloans for women, promoting self-employment. While banks account for 40 percent of the total microlending in the country, microloans constitute a small proportion of their total lending portfolios.

"Access to financial services is key to empowering women and strengthening the economy. IFC

aims to promote greater inclusiveness of underserved women borrowers by showing the viability of scaling up microlending to this segment," said Imad Fakhoury, IFC's Regional Director for South Asia. IFC's investment in HDFC Bank will encourage the wider industry of lenders and investors, with an aim to spur microfinance lending in India."

IFC plays a major role in creating efficient micro-finance markets and is the largest international funder in the sector. Over 20 years, IFC has delivered significant global impact with more than 650 microfinance investments totaling \$6.2 billion and 330 micro and digital finance advisory projects in 95 countries.

NORTHERN RAILWAY					
E-Tender Notice					
Sr.DEE/G/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders (www.reps.gov.in) against below titled Tenders. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only.					
Tender No.	Name of work	App. Cost. (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Completion period	Opening of tender Website particulars
251-Elect-T-11/2024-25	Electrical work in c/w Repairing, maintenance and replacement of defective assets in service building over Firozpur division.	53,81,127.51/-	1,07,600.00	06 Months	07.06.2024 after 15:00 Hrs. www.reps.gov.in
251-Elect-T-13/2024-25	Electrical work in c/w Provision of covered shed over washing line and other allied works at BDMG on BAHL-BRML section.	1,43,17,326.21	2,21,600.00	06 Months	07.06.2024 after 15:00 Hrs. www.reps.gov.in
251-Elect/T Notice No. 08-Elect/2024-25 Dated:- 17.05.2024.					

Pakistan will have to wind down terrorism industry for normal neighbourly ties: EAM

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAY 17

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said today that Pakistan will have to "wind down its terrorism industry" to be treated like a normal neighbour and added that it was the Imran Khan government that downgraded ties with India post the 2019 abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir.

Answering questions at a CII event in New Delhi, the EAM said that in India the "tolerance for any kind of cross border terrorism is very low and there will be consequences for it", and added that this was the "message of Uri and Balakote" strikes on terror camps in Paki-



stan by India. He said that India has "struggled continuously with the fact that Pakistan has unrelentingly practiced terrorism, cross border terrorism", and after the Modi government came in 2014 India has given up its earlier attitude of tolerating the cross-border terrorism "as an eccentricity of a neighbour".

"Now the ball is in their court. If they wind down the industry (terrorism) which they have built up over many, many decades then people will treat them like a normal neighbour. If they make this their core competence, then obviously that will define their image," Jaishankar said.

"We've been very straight, that they have to make up their mind; and part of the problem is also that after 2019, the then Imran Khan government took a number of steps and actually downgraded the relationship. We didn't do it, they did it.

"So where Pakistan is concerned I think our

messaging has been very clear to them," adding that Pakistan has a new government, under Shehbaz Sharif.

"We have to see... they've also just had their elections; we have to wait and see what do the people who have now come into power, what do they decide," he added.

Modi's campaign has gone astray: Pawan Khera

AGENCIES

MUMBAI, MAY 17

Congress leader Pawan Khera on Friday panned holes into BJP's star campaigner's run in the ongoing election process severely criticising PM Narendra Modi's campaign that he said has lost steam and gone astray. The AICC's Chairman of Media and Publicity Department, Khera, did not mince words as he ridiculed Modi's campaign for lack of issue and direction and emphasised the prime minister's dire need to polarise on the basis of religion.

Addressing a press conference at Tilak Bhavan here, Khera said that Modi has created controversies whenever he has spoken in the last four legs of the Lok Sabha elections and in the run-up to the fifth phase, and that is only



because "there is no report card of 10 years of his work, BJP has nothing to tell people about their achievements".

Khera advised PM Modi to take proper medication as he is suffering memory loss from time to time. He said everyday Modi says he will not use Hindu-Muslim rhetoric during his campaign, but immediately next day his speech is laced with everything about pitting Hindus against Muslims.

Ridiculing, the PM's ongoing interview cam-

paigns across several media channels, Khera said: "Modi is currently on an interview spree but what he is saying in these interviews is making me roll out on the floor with laughter."

Comparing Modi's interviews to standup comedian Kapil Sharma's shows, Khera said Modi has made a laughing stock of the position of India's Prime Minister.

Taking a dig at the prime minister, Khera said: "Here speaks a man of ending the Gaza

conflict and the Ukraine Russia war, who could not go to Manipur.

"Even he did not dare to take the name of Manipur, but in his interviews make tall talks about stopping the war in Ukraine, and boasts momentary relief in the Gaza Strip during Ramadan."

Attacking PM Modi for making fun of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi as "Shahzade", Khera said while Rahul Gandhi is not a prince but a willing martyr, it is Union Minister Amit Shah's son Jai Shah who is the prince of the country.

He said: "BJP is a real piecemeal gang that has split two parties in Maharashtra and people have not liked it at all."

Khera said that INDIA Aghadi will win 35 seats in Maharashtra, where the fifth and final phase of the general election will be held on May 20.

AAP releases video; Maliwal says bid to save 'hitman'

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, MAY 17

A purported video about the alleged unruly incident that happened at Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejri-

wal's residence involving Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MP Swati Maliwal was released by the party itself on Friday prompting her to say it was an attempt by "political hitman to save himself".

In the released video Maliwal is purportedly having an argument with the security staff at Kejriwal's residence.

Hours after the video, Maliwal

posted on X, "Like every time, this time also this political hitman has started efforts to save himself."

"By getting his people to tweet and playing videos without any context, he thinks he can save himself by committing this crime," she said.

Maliwal further said that the truth will come out as soon as the CCTV footage of the house emerges and the room is checked.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

PM jabs Cong, INDIA Bloc...

equally sympathetic to terrorists," Modi said.

Intensifying his attack on the two INDIA bloc partners, Modi said, "The SP-Congress think that they will achieve what they want by dividing our society. The 'shahzade' of the Congress is dreaming of putting a lock on the Ram temple (in Ayodhya)".

He asserted that Senior SP leaders say the Ram temple is useless. "The people of this alliance say that after coming to power they will destroy Sanatan Dharma," Modi said.

On May 7, senior Samajwadi Party leader Ram Gopal Yadav had courted controversy with his remarks that the Ram temple in Ayodhya is "bekaar (useless)" as it has not been properly constructed, inviting sharp criticism from Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath who said that this shows the "reality" of the INDIA bloc.

Hitting out at the previous SP government in the state, Modi said, "UP used to be on top in crime during the SP government. But in terms of development, UP was counted as a backward state. But, today the BJP government has brought Uttar Pradesh at the top in terms of development."

"Today, Uttar Pradesh is at the top among the states with the maximum number of expressways. It is on top in terms of the number of airports. UP is on top with metros in seven cities. Not only this, Uttar Pradesh is also on top in welfare schemes for the poor that I run.

"Since the BJP government came to power in UP in 2017, houses under the PM Awas Yojana have started getting built rapidly here. Till now, the BJP government has provided 15 lakh houses to the poor in cities and 35 lakh houses in villages. And to those who have not got pucca houses till now, I am also giving them a guarantee that every poor person will definitely get a pucca house," the prime minister said.

Modi also said that the common man has "defeated the INDI Alliance" in the four phases of Lok Sabha polls.

"Currently, four phases of elections have been held in the country. But, the common man has defeated the INDI Alliance in these 4 phases only. Bhanumati's clan is falling apart, it has surrendered. No one wants to work hard in the remaining elections. The workers of INDI Alliance were already disappointed, (and) now they have stopped leaving their homes," Modi said.

The BJP has fielded Union minister Sadhvi Niranjani Jyoti from Fatehpur. She is pitted against the Samajwadi Party's Naresh Uttam Patel.

Fatehpur goes to polls in the fifth phase of the Lok Sabha elections on May 20. (AGENCIES)

Amit Shah wraps up...

Local BJP leaders had said Shah would hold a review meeting on the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir as the Lok Sabha elections will be followed by the annual Amarnath Yatra, which is scheduled to start on June 29 and conclude on August 19. However, there was no official word on it.

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will witness assembly elections after the yatra as the Supreme Court has given a deadline of September 30 to the Centre for holding these polls.

Pakistan occupied...

after four phases of elections, political analysts not only in India but across the world believe that the BJP is going to form the government by winning more than 400 seats.

Singh also launched an attack on INDIA bloc partners AAP, Samajwadi Party and the Congress and committed to implementing a uniform civil code.

"We will implement a uniform civil code, that is our

commitment. We do not work against any religion. Everyone living in the country – be it Hindus, Muslims, Christians or Jews – are our brothers. I am talking about a uniform civil code because it is one of the policy-making principles of the Constitution," he said.

Attacking the opposition parties over claims that Modi is seeking 400 seats in the Lok Sabha so that the BJP can change the Constitution, Singh recalled the Emergency period under the Congress rule and said, "You strangled democracy and are blaming us. No one can end democracy."

The defence minister also accused the Samajwadi Party and the Congress of making whatever allegations that come to their minds against the BJP.

"The bicycle's (the Samajwadi Party election symbol) chain has come off," he said.

He also compared the Congress with dinosaurs and said the grand old party will become extinct.

"The condition of the Congress has become so weak that if after 10 years you say 'Congress', people will ask 'who Congress?' Just as dinosaurs became extinct from the face of the earth, the Congress will become extinct from India," Singh said.

He also hit out at AAP supremo and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal over the alleged assault of party MP Swati Maliwal at his residence.

Salemur goes to the polls in the last phase of the elections on June 1. (Agencies)

SIA, Jammu files...

same to KandiBudhal area for terrorist acts, on the instruction of Pak handler. The main chargesheet of the case was filed before the Hon'ble Court on 29.12.2023 by State Investigation Agency Jammu.

On further investigation of the said case two (02) more associates of the said module of Laskar-e-Toiba (LeT) were taken into custody by State Investigation Agency Jammu, they were put under sustained interrogation, they too confessed their involvement in number of terrorist acts, shifting of automatic arms and its ammunition including other war like store items from Lamberi to KandiBudhal area in association of the accused person Talib Hussain Shah, who was earlier arrested along with sophisticated weapons and its ammunition. The duo has voluntarily joined the LeT outfit on the motivation of Pak handlers. They were also found involved in number of FIRs stand registered in KandiBudhal area for terrorist act/activities.

The deep rooted conspiracy of LeT modules to distended their terror activities in District Rajouri and waging the war against sovereignty and integrity of India has been exposed with the arrest of four (04) active terrorists. The investigation of the case is continued for the arrest of more associates of said Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) module. KNO

Shekhawat, Jugal...

achieved enviable milestones in every sphere, be it development, infrastructural upgradation, economic resurgence, growth and stability under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the past one decade. These have been the years of achievement and placing India on the global landscape as an inspiring nation that has made significant headway in facing the challenges and is set to become the third largest economy in the next five years, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, Member Parliament Mr Jugal Kishore Sharma referred to the BJP's commitment of upholding the principles of inclusivity and good governance, saying this will lead to India becoming Vishwa Guru.

Sharma expressed confidence that the third term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi will make the compatriots proud of being the third economy in the next five

years and Viksit Bharat by 2047. The world is watching India's growth story under Modiji with interest and attention, he maintained.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Devender Rana said that with a track record of transformative, inclusive, transparent and accountable governance and commitment to progress of the country, the BJP is all set to gain once again the trust of the people on June 4.

"The BJP's vision for a strong, prosperous, and inclusive Bharat resonates deeply with the aspirations of millions of Indians across the country", Mr Rana said, adding that from vibrant global reputation and robust economic reforms to decisive actions on national security, the BJP's agenda reflects its unflinching commitment to serve every segment of Indian society as per cherished agenda of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas. This mantra has already galvanized the people, with whose blessings, the nation has ushered in a new age of peace, progress and prosperity for the nation, he added.

Devender Rana said that the BJP has been tirelessly working for the welfare of every citizen, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or region and is committed to upholding the values of unity and diversity that forms the bedrock of the unique identity of the nation. This has earned the party immense public goodwill that will surely manifest in achieving the target of 400 plus by the National Democratic Alliance. Surely the BJP is going to touch the 370 mark on its own, he asserted.

Prominent among others who were present were former Minister Mr Rajiv Jasrotia, DDC Chairman, Jammu Mr Bharat Bhushan, former MLA Dinanagar Mrs Renu Kashyap, DDC Vice Chairman Jammu Mr. Suraj Singh, Mr. Jai Sharma, Mr. Amit Dubey, Mr. Ajay Gupta, Mr. Sanjay Gupta, Mr. Aditya Gupta, Mr. Dalbir Singh.

Protests in PoJK...

he added.

Two days ago, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar asserted that Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir was, is and will always be part of India.

"I have no doubt in my own mind that someone living in PoJK is comparing their situation with someone actually living in Jammu and Kashmir, saying that how is it that people today are actually progressing there," he said.

Earlier this month, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said India will never give up its claim of PoJK but it won't have to capture it with force because its people, on their own, would want to be part of India after seeing the development in Kashmir.

"I think India will not have to do anything. The way the ground situation has changed in Jammu and Kashmir, the way the region is witnessing economic progress and the way peace has returned there, I think demands will emerge from people of PoJK that they should merge with India," he said.

"We will not have to use force to take PoJK as people would say that we must be merged with India. Such demands are now coming," he said.

defence minister asserted that "PoJK was, is, and will remain ours". (Agencies)

Open bank accounts...

to 8th class of government schools for free uniform under Samagra Shiksha for year 2024-25.

The RTE Act mandates free and compulsory education for all children in government schools. The Scheme provides two sets of uniform to all girls, SC, ST and Below Poverty Line (BPL) boys at an average cost of Rs 600 per child per annum.

According to the news agency the project director in a communiqué said that the directorate was in process for making DBT on account of uniform for the year 2024-25

in favour of all eligible students.

"In this regard CEOs are requested to open the bank accounts of all such eligible students who have not opened a bank account yet within a period of 15 days," it reads.

The Samagra Shiksha official has further directed to submit the details of all eligible students to this office for further necessary action. KNO

ACB files case...

then Tehsildar Rajouri (now Retired), Mohd Rafiq, then Patwari Rehtal, private beneficiaries namely Kanwal Singh, Masood Anwar and others.

The statement reads that the case was registered on the outcome of verification conducted by ACB pursuant to a written complaint alleging therein that Balwant Singh after conspiring with Kanwal Singh just for extraneous considerations and with malafide intention passed order dated 25-03-2010 in mutation No 417 of Rehtal, whereby only Kanwal Singh was declared as tenant-at-will under order No LB-06/C of 1958, thereby leaving other legal heirs/successors of late Brij Lal etc.

It reads that during the course of verification, it surfaced that Balwant Singh and Mohd Rafiq illegally transferred land in favour of beneficiaries by effecting entries in favour of them.

"The revenue officers recorded & attested mutation No 417 under LB 06/C of 1958 and mutation No 419 under S-432 of 1966, both dated 25-03-2010 for land measuring 03 kanals under Khasra No 203, 01 Kanal 09 Marlas under Khasra No. 204 & 19 Marlas under Khasra No 201, (total 05 K 08 M) in favour of Kanwal Singh, thereby ignoring the right of Brij Lal, brother of Kanwal Singh," it reads.

It added that the officials, by abuse of their official positions and in lieu of criminal conspiracy hatched among themselves as well as with beneficiaries conferred undue benefits upon them just for their pecuniary gains.

The statement reads that further investigation in the case is going on. KNO

409 police personnel...

and directed to report to their parent units immediately.

The directive, issued by the Police Headquarters, prohibits any further attachment or deployment of police personnel in courts without prior approval. Furthermore, all unit heads are mandated to submit detailed reports on the work done by the detached personnel during their tenure in the courts within fifteen days.

Two fake call centres...

Additional DGP Cyber Crime V Neeraja said the intelligence inputs about these fake call centres were developed by Inspectors Gaganpreet Singh, Daljit Singh and their team along with technical assistance from the Digital Investigation Training and Analysis Centre (DITAC).

She said the police raided both the centres on Tuesday midnight and arrested all 155 employees, who worked as diallers, closers, bankers and floor managers.

ADGP Neeraja said 79 desktop computer units, 204 laptops and other accessories along with training scripts used for communicating with customers were also seized by the police during the raids.

She added that efforts are underway to arrest the two kingpins, who are accused in the case and absconding.

ADGP Neeraja said that of the 155 arrested, 18 employees were placed in police remand and the remaining individuals were sent to judicial remand.

Further investigation to ascertain the total extent of the fraud is ongoing with more arrests anticipated in the coming days, she said. (Agencies)

SMVDU Engineering Students gear up for SAE BAJA 2025 Competition



J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

In a gathering marked by enthusiasm and intellectual fervor, members of the Society of Automotive Engineers, Collegiate Club, SMVDU convened the meeting in the central workshop of the School of Mechanical Engineering to take review of the preparations for the upcoming SAE BAJA 2025 competition. Pertinently SMVDU has previously participated in such events like SAE BAJA 2014, ECO KART 2017 and SAE BAJA 2018 wherein the participating teams have to design and fabricate a vehicle in order to participate in a national competition. Apart from the innovation, uniqueness of the design, the robustness,

manoeuvrability and the ruggedness of the design is tested at designated tracks in a national level competition. The meeting was conducted by the Team Leaders, Divyansh Kale (Mechanical Engineering Student at SMVDU) and Amod Vaibhav (Electrical Engineering Student at SMVDU). The session commenced with an introduction to the exploration of the features encapsulated within the previously fabricated vehicle with an aim to get insights into the realms of design, engineering, manufacturing and material aspects of the previous design. Discussions related to the technical intricacies and scope for future enhancement was also held. Dr. Mir Irfan Ul Haq

(Faculty Coordinator, SAE Collegiate Club, SMVDU) briefed the participants about the various aspects of new product development and highlighted the challenges associated. Dr. Ankush Raina (President, BPA) also briefed the team and motivated them to work with enthusiasm to achieve success in the national level competition to be held very soon. Prof. Pragati Kumar (Vice Chancellor, SMVDU) has conveyed his best wishes to the SAE BAJA team. The team members thanked the Vice Chancellor SMVDU and the unwavering support by the SMVDU administration for the SAE BAJA Team aimed at giving a hands on experience to the students so as to make them industry ready.

KVK Kishtwar holds Training on Paddy Crop Management under FLDs



J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Krishi Vigyan Kendra Kishtwar SKUAST Jammu today organized one day training programme on scientific cultivation of Paddy at Pehalkala Sigdi which was attended by 24 farmers of the village. The programme was organized under the guidance of Dr Amrith Vaid, Director Extension SKUAST Jammu which aimed at demonstrating the yield potential of crop variety, protection

and management practices in paddy crop on the farmers' fields under the supervision of scientists. Dr Narinder Paul incharge KVK Kishtwar conducted the programme where in the participants were educated about the SKUAST Jammu package of practices for hilly areas. He said seed treatment, weed management insect pest and disease management needs to be done to prevent losses to the crop and get high yield. The farmers were also sensitized about

common paddy diseases and their management. During the programme critical production inputs were also distributed among farmers selected under Front Line Demonstrations (FLDs) under paddy crop. Om Prakash, Dewan Chand, Suresh Kumar, Krishan Lal, Nath Ram, Ram Krishan and others attended the programme. Om Parkash lauded the efforts of KVK in conducting the programme in far-flung village of the district.

SR&CO, Kistwar donates Nutrition items to Blind School, Roop Nagar

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Social Reform & Charitable Organisation Kishtwar took a project to donate Nutrition Items to different orphanages in association with Vichar Kranti Manch International, Confederation of Voluntary, Social & CO and Indian Yoga Association, this time the team of Representatives of NGOs visited National Federation of the Blind, Jammu Chapter Blind School, Roopnagar. Mr Sanjiv Parihar Founder Chairman SR&CO arranged Nutrition Items including Fruit Juice Packs, Tomatoes Purri, Toth Paste, Glucose & Truth Brushes from DABER INDIA, these were distributed among the students inmates and Staff. Dr Shreyansh Kumar Jain, State Yoga Commissioner, State Chairman Indian Yoga Association & President Vichar Kranti Manch International, gave some advisory to deal with the Blind Persons as :



Don't change the vocabulary when talking to a person with Blind or Visual impairment, # Just ask Don't grab -some non disabled people think it's OK to grab Blind persons & take them way they think they should be going to drag them, this can be very concerning for a Blind erson, # Give detailed descriptions # Add image descriptions on Social Media, # Don't be offended, if a Blind person doesn't accept your help, & Ask if a person need help, # Introduce yourself, # Don't assume, # Treat Blind person like you would any one else. Dr Jain proposed to start

a craft centre in home, for which he offered his services, and also offered to start a Monthly/ Fortnightly Yoga Session for students inmates in the Blind School. Sh KS Samyal Advisor VKMI, Mr Narinder Wadhwa, President Evening Walkers Association Trikuta Nagar Sec 2 & S Amarjit Singh Member SR & CO actively participated. Smt Nivedita, School Principal, Sh Ram Dass Dubey Retd Headmaster, DIET Jammu & Mrs Chandni School Music Teacher made the necessary arrangements for the event. Mrs Nivedita Presented Vote of Thanks.

Western command sponsors education of children from remote areas of J&K

J1 NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIMANDIR : 17 MAY 2024

Indian Army has been at the forefront of nation building and has undertaken a number of military-civic action programmes aimed at "Winning Hearts and Minds" of the people under 'Operation Sadbhavana'. These programmes are focused at development of remote areas, highlighting advantages of peace and development, and demonstrate the 'human face' of the Army. Western Command in its endeavour to reach out to the people of border areas, took initiative to sponsor quality education of 15 young deserving children of UT of J&K.

Five girls and ten boys hailing from low income group from remote villages of J&K have been provided admission in classes 6th to 8th and will continue their education till 12th class at Army Public School, Beas. Their educa-



tion and boarding facilities are being fully sponsored by the Indian Army. The highly motivated and energetic children are beginning their journey with an immense opportunity to achieve success in life, on way to be contributing members of the society. One young boy from Jammu District, lost his father early in life and his mother, a widow, is an ASHA worker in an Anganwadi Center. Another girl child is from a village in Saida Tehsil of Kathua district, where her father is a

daily wage labourer. This initiative by Western Command is aimed to offer these young promising children a platform to realize their dreams by providing them quality education and necessary skills for becoming responsible citizens of the country. The parents of the children have expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the Indian Army for providing a new lease of life to their children and helping their families through this noble initiative.

Indian Army interacts with Panch/Sarpanch for development of Panchayat Ghar of Badi Darhal at Rajouri



J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, MAY 17

Indian Army conducted a Panch/ Sarpanch meet at Panchayat Ghar, Badi Darhal, district Rajouri. During the interaction, the village Sarpanch were briefed about the latest development projects undertaken by Indian Army for the overall development of the remote areas. They

were also educated about various Govt initiated welfare schemes. The residents also discussed about water scarcity during coming summers, road conditions and also about the prevailing situation and Govt initiatives for their betterments. Indian Army assured them of their safety in all conditions and to support them during their needs.

Four Poultry farms gutted in Pangyari, Akhnoor, loss of lakhs reported

J1 NEWS SERVICE
AKHNOOR, MAY 17

Four poultry farms in the Pangyari village of Akhnoor were completely destroyed by fire on Friday afternoon. The estimated loss runs into lakhs. The exact cause of the fire is yet to be determined.

Poultry farm owner Pawan Sharma reported that three of the



destroyed farms had a capacity of 2,000 each and belonged to him, while one farm belonged to his associate Ram Ratan. Pawan Sharma mentioned that due to the intense heat wave in recent day, there were no chickens in the farms, but the maintenance equipment and feed stored there were completely destroyed.

Lecture on "Prevention of Lifestyle Diseases" At Nagrota

J1 NEWS SERVICE
NAGROTA, MAY 16

A health awareness lecture cum interaction was organisation at Nagrota Military station for educating women about Prevention of Lifestyle Diseases. The lecture was taken by (Dr) Aayush Khajuria, MD (Community Medicine). Dr (Mrs) Reena G Sachdev, Zonal President, Indian Army was the chief guest for the occasion. The event also included unveiling of a Bilingual Handbook titled- "Swasthya Parivar, Sukhi Pariwar". The handbook gives practical tips on dietary modifications, physical activity and lifestyle changes as per latest WHO guidelines. A copy of the handbook was handed over to each lady for their ready reference. Approx 150 families attended the event. A "Mobile Swasthya Vaahan" was also displayed on the occasion for creating awareness about the pertinent issue. The vehicle will be made to move around all RWAs of Nagrota Military Station to educate the families and increase their public health literacy on prevention of lifestyle diseases.

Škoda Auto India implements New Corporate Identity as part of its New Era

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

While Škoda Auto India has announced its all-new compact SUV and has a string of product actions in its pipeline, the company continues focusing on strengthening its network and customers as part of its New Era in India. After enhancing its digitalisation strategy, the brand has now announced the implementation of its New Corporate Identity in its physical assets like dealerships, service centres and other customer touchpoints.

Speaking on the announcement, Petr Janeba, Brand Director, Škoda Auto India, said: "Together with making world-class cars, our efforts have always focused on offering a wholesome, all-encompassing and enriching experience to our customers, our families and our fans. Digitalisation is of course, one of the many ways we reach out to customers. Just as crucial is our consistency with our messaging, our design language, our identity and the face we present to our customers and all other stakeholders. We have been steadily and consciously implementing our brand's New Corporate Identity in our communications and our marketing across 2023. Now, we are ready to take it to the next phase, which will include our dealerships and various customer touchpoints."



All in symmetry Škoda Auto India's new styling and typeface uses entirely new typography based on symmetry to convey solidity in combination with round shapes and borders conveying fluidity. The New Corporate Identity is a further extension of the Modern Solid dictum dictating the brand's designs and aesthetics since 2022. Moreover, Škoda Auto's iconic Winged Arrow imagery will make way for the Škoda wordmark ensuring a unison in communication and imagery across all of the company's customer touchpoints.

With colours and lights The New Corporate Identity also allows signages in dealership premises the freedom to use the time of the day or night to alter the tone of illumination. The symmetrical and solid lettering lights up sedate Emerald Green in the day and

vibrant Electric Green by night maintaining variety yet uniformity with the Škoda signature colours. This aesthetic extends into other finer details of the customer interface complex like the pylon, the dealer branding, the entrance portal and certain highlight walls within.

Truly and digitally yours These changes are in line with a series of non-product evolutions and engagements undertaken by Škoda Auto India in its endeavour to enhance its reach and get closer to customers. Following the brand's entry into the New Era with the announcement of its all-new compact SUV to make its world debut in India in H1 2025, Škoda Auto India also implemented a spate of digitalised strategies that led to a revolution in terms of customer engagement. It's fully digital Name Your Škoda campaign gar-

nered over 2,00,000 names for its upcoming compact SUV with over 24,000 unique names as of date. The company's Škodaverse India platform, after witnessing the uptake of 128 Non Fungible Tokens (NFTs) in 128 minutes of its introduction, implemented the Škoda Gearheads membership programme enabling customers and fans to avail of premium merchandise, VIP treatment and other exclusive benefits. Škoda Auto India also marked 24 years since its incorporation in the country with a 24-hour sale on 24 March 2024 garnering 709 bookings exclusively through its digital platforms.

Localisation beyond products India will become the fastest market to rebrand all its facilities with the new Corporate Identity. The implementation has commenced and the signages are as per Škoda Auto's global standards, leveraging local expertise in manufacturing world-class signage elements. All customer touchpoints shall be ready with the new Corporate Identity in time for the launch of the new compact SUV planned in 2025. This will ensure a consistent customer journey. All dealer partners are actively participating in the rebranding process, to ensure quick implementation of the new Corporate Identity.

Indian Army Conducted Painting competition on Kargil Vijay Diwas at Manjakote

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, MAY 17

Indian Army organised a vibrant painting competition on "Kargil Vijay Diwas" for children at GMS, Naili, Manjakote to remember the brave men of Indian Army and fostering creativity and unity in the region. Through colourful strokes of imagination, young artists express their dreams and aspirations, showcasing the beauty and resilience of their homeland. The event not only provides a platform for artistic expression but also promotes harmony and camaraderie among participants. Amidst the backdrop of scenic nature and lush valleys, children unleash their creativity, painting a picture of hope and peace for the future.

EDITORIAL

Electoral challenges for KPs, POJK refugees

The recent phase of Parliament elections has once again brought to light the significant issues faced by Kashmiri Pandit (KP) voters, particularly those residing in Jammu. Despite their enthusiasm and determination to participate in the democratic process, KP voters encountered numerous administrative challenges that marred their electoral experience. This situation underscores systemic inefficiencies and the urgent need for reform to ensure that all eligible voters can exercise their right to vote without undue hindrance. One of the primary concerns raised by KP voters was the lack of proper management at polling stations. Many voters endured long waits under the scorching sun, only to discover that their names were missing from the voter lists. This issue, reported across multiple locations, highlights a critical gap in electoral roll management. The frustration of possessing voter ID cards and having completed the required M-Forms, yet still being unable to vote, points to a significant administrative failure that demands immediate attention. The net result of these lapses was a disappointingly low KP voter turnout in Jammu. The emotional toll of being disenfranchised cannot be underestimated, as many voters felt ignored and marginalized. The modifications to the voter rolls, made as per instructions from the Election Commission of India (ECI), included preparing a draft roll from the actual roll. While these changes aimed to improve the process, the resulting confusion suggests that the communication and implementation of these modifications need to be more transparent and accessible. Amidst these challenges, it was heartening to see the resilience and determination of first-time voters. Despite the chaos, their enthusiasm underscores an enduring faith in the democratic process, even when the system falters. Ensuring the voting rights of the already-displaced KP community is paramount. The integrity of the electoral process depends on every citizen's ability to participate fully and fairly, and it is the responsibility of the authorities to make this a reality. In a related development, the POJK displaced persons have announced the compilation of fresh data on families displaced from POJK in 1947. This marks a significant milestone in their ongoing struggle for recognition and justice. By initiating this data compilation, they aim to empower the community members and ensure their voices are heard in the upcoming Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir. This strategic approach underscores the importance of accurate data in advocating for fair treatment and representation. The call for unity among displaced families, transcending differences based on caste, creed, and religion, emphasizes that a united front is essential in the pursuit of justice and equality. It is regrettable that despite their significant presence and contributions, POJK displaced persons continue to face neglect and indifference from political parties. The recent challenges faced by KP voters in Jammu serve as a stark reminder of the broader systemic issues that need addressing to ensure that all marginalized communities can fully participate in the democratic process. The administrative hurdles faced by KP voters during the recent elections highlight the need for urgent reform in electoral roll management and voter list accuracy. The authorities must take immediate steps to rectify these issues and restore faith in the democratic process. Additionally, the efforts of POJK displaced persons to compile fresh data and mobilize at the grassroots level should be supported and recognized as crucial steps towards achieving fair representation and justice. Ensuring the voting rights of all citizens, particularly those from marginalized communities, is essential for the integrity and health of our democracy.

RBI fortifies the nation's economy with gold

SHIVAJI SARKAR

In a strategic move reminiscent of Indian households safeguarding their wealth, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is fortifying the nation's economic resilience by actively acquiring gold reserves. This bold initiative mirrors the prudence of household savers, as the central bank positions itself to shield itself against potential economic turmoil and bolster the country's financial stability. The RBI now has accumulated gold reserves of 817 tonnes. This surge can be attributed to a combination of factors including escalating tensions in West Asia, Israel's assault on Palestine, the Russia-Ukraine war and persistent inflation, all of which have heightened the appeal of gold. Central banks worldwide are actively accumulating gold to diversify reserves and reduce dependency on the US dollar. China, in particular, has been on a gold-buying spree for the 17th consecutive month, aiming to hedge against currency depreciation and geopolitical risks. The world is unofficially going back to the gold standards it abandoned in 1971. India is also hit by a continuous six-day fall in the stock market. It wipes out a significant investment. The loss is estimated at Rs 7 lakh crore. The household savers, of course, got their savings dipped as unemployment

and rising prices hit them. The RBI in a clarificatory note on May 9, mentions that "they are putting their savings into real estate and the central bank is not worried of the phenomenon". The bank itself has stepped up gold purchases to "help diversify its foreign exchange reserves base amid US dollar volatility". The US inflation rate in February hit 3.2 per cent year over year. Since the Federal Reserve began raising rates in 2022, it has raised rates from 5.25 per cent to 5.5 per cent in July 2023. It's holding further raises given the US elections. The price of gold has surged over 10 per cent since the start of the year, cementing its status as a preferred hedge against inflation and a sanctuary amid political and economic uncertainty. This significant uptick is largely due to considerable purchases by central banks and a rising demand for safe-haven assets. Gold prices, in India, have been experiencing a significant surge in 2024, with a remarkable rally that has propelled them to an unprecedented all-time high of over Rs 73,000 per 10 gm two days before Akshaya Tritiya, when customary gold purchases reach a peak. This surge represents an impressive increase of approximately 21.1 per cent within just one year. On the day of Akshaya Tritiya on May 10, it has slightly dipped to Rs 72,788. Over six months,



domestic gold prices surged from Rs 54000 per 10 grams to a record high of Rs 73,958. One can realise that nothing can appreciate faster than gold and can't question the RBI's sagacity. One dollar is at Rs 83.88. Rupee is expected to rise to Rs 82.50 in six months, a gain of about 1.1 per cent and in a year it could rise to Rs 82 - a gain of 1.7 per cent. It means the RBI dollar reserves would lose about 2 per cent value in a year. So, the RBI has decided to buy more gold than dollars. Its investment would be less at even Rs 73000 for 10 gm and gains over 20 per cent. That's an intelligent economy. The RBI has increased gold purchases to diversify reserves, with gold value contributing to a \$3 billion rise in forex reserves to \$648.5 billion. RBI acquiring more gold

in early 2024, aiming for diversification and inflation hedging. The World Gold Council (WGC) says that RBI gold purchases touched 19 tonnes during January-March. This dwarfs the 16 tonnes of gold it bought in the whole of 2023. In terms of countries with the highest gold reserves, the USA leads with 8,133 tonnes, followed by Germany, Italy, France and the Russian Federation with 3,366.49, 2,451.84, 2,436.01 and 2,271.16 tonnes of gold, respectively, according to WGC. The surge in central banks' gold acquisitions stemmed from the aftermath of the US imposition of sanctions on Russia. These sanctions, triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, included freezing Russian reserve dollars and imposing restrictions on crucial commodity

trades such as crude oil. The global repercussions of these measures were profound, exposing vulnerabilities within Western financial institutions. The option of investments in the stocks has become riskier. In February, China divested an additional \$22.7 billion in U.S. Treasury securities, as per the latest Federal Reserve data, reducing its total holdings to \$775 billion. Despite this decrease, China retains its position as the second-largest foreign holder of U.S. debt. China is reducing its dependence on the dollar, as per US Federal Reserve data. According to ICICI Direct study, The RBI wants to diversify its foreign exchange reserves and reduce dependence on the US dollar. Gold offers stability and isn't directly tied to the performance of

any one currency. It can be especially valuable during times of economic uncertainty or fluctuations in the dollar's value. Gold is considered as a hedge against inflation. When the value of currencies weakens due to inflation, gold tends to hold its value or even increase. It protects the purchasing power of India's foreign reserves. The diversification of the portfolio to gold reserve, RBI says, can inspire confidence in the Indian economy from foreign investors. It signals a strong financial position and stability, potentially attracting more foreign investment. While less common today, gold can still be used for international transactions. Holding a gold reserve allows India to settle debts with other countries if needed, or if those countries aren't willing to accept rupee. The next few years can be times of turmoil and gold can be a stabilising factor in the international economy. It is particularly so as the IT sector, industry, markets are in a destabilised condition and would take time to calm. At such volatile times gold is likely to be more in demand than paper currencies. The RBI has resorted to the right move and lead the India economy, which has been striving to become one of the major world economies. (The author is a senior journalist; views are personal)

Reflections of an oncologist navigating imperfections in cancer care

PRASHANT MEHTA

As an Oncologist, my days are filled with facing the most dreaded and life-threatening cancers head-on, armed with an arsenal of anti-cancer treatments that range from mild to equally dreadful. But amidst the battle against this relentless disease, I've come to understand that medical science is far from perfect. Every time I sit down with a patient and their family to discuss treatment options, I embark on a delicate balancing act. Yes, I outline the potential benefits of the treatment, but I also dedicate ample time to explaining its imperfections and the associated risks - risks that can sometimes be massive, impact-

ing not only the patient's life but also their quality of life. These discussions are rarely brief; on average, I find myself engaging with 2 to 8 family members, ensuring that everyone understands the complexities involved. And in these conversations, I make it a point to acknowledge that success is not guaranteed. I've had my fair share of failures and I recognise that my clinical judgments aren't infallible. In the realm of oncology, the weight of responsibility is immense. The human toll of the disease, coupled with the emotional turmoil experienced by families, weighs heavily on me every single day. There are moments when the sheer gravity of it all threatens to overwhelm me,

but I gather my strength, reminding myself of the dignity, composure and compassion required to navigate through these turbulent waters. Recently, I stumbled upon an opinion piece penned by Mr. CY Gopinath, recounting the journey of a patient grappling with suspected pancreatic cancer. The patient felt as though his oncologist was pushing a cancer diagnosis onto him. Such situations are not uncommon, especially when dealing with cancers that are notoriously difficult to biopsy. Misdiagnoses and the fear of missing a fatal diagnosis loom large in the minds of oncologists. The widening trust gap between patients and healthcare providers is a cause for concern.

Patients and their families may perceive our actions and recommendations in various ways, sometimes attributing them to ulterior motives. But the reality is often far more nuanced than it appears. Having worked extensively in both private and Government healthcare settings, I've witnessed my fair share of diagnostic and therapeutic errors. These errors stem from the inherent imperfections of medicine and the challenges of navigating a complex healthcare landscape. In the modern era, doctors are acutely aware of the trust deficit that exists between us and our patients. The notion of a 'God complex' is a myth; instead, we recognise our limitations and strive to bridge the gap through

open communication and transparency. While drugs and surgeries aren't panaceas, alternative treatments aren't always the answer either. It's imperative to base our decisions on evidence-backed practices rather than succumbing to anecdotal allure. In the realm of healthcare, there's no one-size-fits-all solution. Each patient's journey is unique, shaped by their individual preferences and circumstances. As doctors, we must personalise our approach, empowering patients to be active participants in their healing process. It's crucial to foster an environment where patients feel empowered to question, learn and seek second opinions. After all,

informed decision-making is the cornerstone of effective healthcare delivery. In conclusion, amidst the cacophony of controversy and misinformation, the voice of expertise must prevail. Medicine is a science guided by evidence, not conjecture. Despite the challenges and uncertainties that lie ahead, I remain steadfast in my commitment to serve, echoing the words of my mentor: "Someone has to do this work and you've been chosen. Do it well." (The writer is a Senior Consultant and Program Director (Lymphoid Neoplasms and Cellular therapy) Department of Medical Oncology Amrita Institute of Medical sciences, Faridabad. Views are personal.)

Three SC verdicts that uphold democracy

HARESH JAGTIANI

Will Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal gain electorally with his interim bail? Did Prime Minister Modi take the wrong step with the ill-timed arrest of Arvind Kejriwal? Did the Supreme Court do the right thing by temporarily releasing the Delhi Chief Minister? The first two questions will be answered on June 4, 2024, when the results of the Lok Sabha elections are out. So, that leaves the third question, which is the issue of the Supreme Court order granting Arvind Kejriwal limited liberty to campaign for his party and poll partners until June 1, a decision that must be lauded. This decision of the Supreme Court is a proud moment for the country, for the rule of law, and above all, for democracy. Here's why: prior to this ruling, the Supreme Court had, in two watershed

judgements, spoken stridently to uphold our most fundamental value, democracy. The first such ruling may not have been nationally consequential when it struck down and removed the illegally elected BJP mayor of Chandigarh and described the process by which he was surreptitiously elected as a "murder of democracy." This utterance by the Chief Justice of India must resonate in the hearts and minds of everyone who values freedom. And the next judgement by the full bench of the SC was to declare the Electoral Bond Scheme unconstitutional, again thereby upholding the democratic principles of our polity and the fundamental right of Indian citizens to receive information vital to the governance of the country. So why should the temporary bail given to Arvind Kejriwal be bracketed with

the earlier two rulings? And do they have the same degree of significance and importance as the earlier two momentous rulings? It's simply because the foundation of the ruling is the same, namely in the interest of 'fair and free' elections', a principle that's inalienable to our liberty. Contextually, it's important to grasp the jurisprudence underlying bail. Every crime committed by a person is, in theory, a crime against society. The community in which a crime is perpetrated must be protected from a person with such a propensity. But arresting someone suspected of a crime is not the same as proving that the crime has been committed. The accused, however strong the suspicion and however grave the crime, is nevertheless presumed to be innocent until proven guilty at a trial. It's keeping the presumption of his innocence

in mind that the law allows him to be released on bail so that he's free to defend himself effectively. Denial of bail, irrespective of the nature of the offence, is to punish the accused without a trial. Thus, whether an accused is entitled to bail must necessarily depend on a variety of circumstances that the judge, in his discretion, evaluates to grant or deny bail. Even in suspected murder cases, bail may be granted where the judge feels that the totality of the material or evidence produced by the prosecution is riddled with contradictions, thus providing the accused with a probable defence at his trial. There's no formula that governs the exercise of a judge's discretion to grant or refuse bail. If this broad approach is kept in mind, then Arvind Kejriwal ought to have been granted bail earlier, till his case was ready for trial, and not just

as an interim measure. The charges against the Delhi CM have not yet been crystallised, even though the 'investigation' has been in progress for two years. He's been arrested ostensibly on the 'confession' of a would-be approver of dubious integrity who had given contradictory versions of his 'confession' previously. Then again, Arvind Kejriwal is not a flight risk. He cannot possibly tamper with evidence already supposedly gathered by the Enforcement Directorate or influence witnesses, especially if his liberty is vigilantly monitored. All these circumstances are compelling for a judge to set Arvind Kejriwal free to function and discharge his duties as the chief minister of Delhi. But the Supreme Court didn't get into these mundane, nit-picky details and gave Arvind Kejriwal his rightful liberty on the solid founda-

tion of democracy, the concomitant of which is ensuring a fair and free election. Arvind Kejriwal heads a national party, the Aam Aadmi Party. It is constitutionally recognised as such and is the ruling party in Delhi and Punjab. His absence will give the BJP an undisputed, unfair advantage and will deny the voters an informed choice of an alternative, desirable candidate to vote for without an important spokesperson canvassing against the ruling party. Surely, that's at the heart of the matter. If democracy does survive on this subcontinent, posterity will certainly hail these recently pronounced three judgements as the primary reason for its preservation. (The writer is a senior advocate who practices in the Supreme Court) (Syndicate: The Billion Press)

Study suggests texture of food affects perceptions of healthiness

A new study has demonstrated how food producers can change the surface textures of food products for changing the perception of people and for promoting healthy eating.

The study conducted by researchers of Anglia Ruskin University was published in the journal - Food Quality. Researchers investigated the perceptions of 88 people about identical oat biscuits in six different textures. They asked them to rate the biscuits on taste, healthiness, pleasantness, crunchiness, chewiness and the likelihood of purchase on the basis of only their visual appearance, and not on their taste or touch.

The new study looked at how a food product can be perceived differently depending on its appearance. It found that the surface texture of the biscuits communicated to people about how healthy it was and participants viewed the biscuits having explicit or non-explicit texture as healthy.

"The findings are really exciting as they give food manufacturers a means to design foods that can help consumers make healthier choices. A sweet



item, such as a biscuit, benefits from having an appearance as being less healthy as that increases the perception of tastiness and increases the likelihood of purchase," said the lead researcher, Dr Jansson-Boyd

"To guide healthier purchasing decisions, food producers can, therefore, look to use non-healthy looking, smoother textures to overcome this perception that healthy is not tasty," Boyd added.

Biscuits having less explicit texture were perceived to be crunchier, tastier and were more likely for people to purchase them. The study later concluded that the perceived tastiness of the food increases with the decrease of the healthiness as well as the likelihood of purchasing of biscuits increases with the lowering of perceived healthiness. This has implications for producers of many different food types.

"It's a disease that's becoming alarmingly common in Canada and approaching what many would consider epidemic levels," he says. "While Type 2 diabetes can be controlled with medica-

Ketone supplement may help control blood sugar levels

NEW research suggests that a ketone monooester drink - a popular new food supplement may help people with diabetes and pre-diabetes looking for strategies to control their blood sugar. Jonathan Little, associate professor at UBC Okanagan's School of Health and Exercise Sciences and lead author of the study says: "There has been a lot of excitement and interest in ketone drinks and supplements, which have really only been on the market and available to consumers for the last couple of years. Because they're so new, there's very little research on how they can influence metabolism and we're among the first to look at their use in non-athletes." Little says that Type 2 diabetes is a disease whereby the body is unable to control the level of sugar in the blood because of defects in the functioning of a hormone called insulin.

"There is mounting evidence that a low carbohydrate ketogenic diet is very effective in controlling blood sugar and even reversing Type 2 diabetes," says Little. "We wanted to know what would happen if artificial ketones were given to those with obesity and at risk for Type 2 diabetes but who haven't been dieting." To test the idea, Little and his team asked 15 people to consume a

ketone drink after fasting overnight. After 30 minutes, they were then asked to drink a fluid containing 75 grams of sugar while blood samples were taken.

"It turns out that the ketone drink seemed to launch participants into a sort of pseudo-ketogenic state where they were better able to control their blood sugar levels with no changes to their insulin," explains Little. "It demonstrates that these supplements may have real potential as a valuable tool for those with Type 2 diabetes." The researcher is quick to point out that ketone supplements are not a magic bullet in managing the disease.

"There are a number of problems that we still have to work out, including the fact that we still don't know what the long-term effects of consuming ketones are," he says. "And not to mention that the drink itself tastes absolutely terrible." "But for those that aren't able to follow a strict and challenging ketogenic diet or for those that are looking for a new way to control blood sugars, this may be another strategy in helping to manage Type 2 diabetes."



the natural fuel source of the body when it's in ketosis the metabolic byproduct of consuming a low carbohydrate, ketogenic diet.

Air pollution exposure in childhood linked to schizophrenia risk, finds study

AIR pollution affects physical health, and research results now conclude that it also affects our psychological health. Children who are exposed to higher levels of air pollution while growing up have an increased risk of developing schizophrenia, a study has found.

The study combined genetic data from iPSYCH with air pollution data from the Department of Environmental Science to show that the higher the level of air pollution, the higher the risk of schizophrenia. For each 10 mg/m3 (concentration of air pollution per cubic metre) increase in the daily average, the risk of schizophrenia increases by approximately twenty percent. "Children who are exposed to an average daily level above 25 mg/m3 have an approx. sixty percent greater risk of developing schizophrenia compared to those who are exposed to less than 10 mg/m3," explained Senior

Researcher Henriette Thisted Horsdal, who is behind the study.

The results of the study have been published in the scientific journal JAMA Network Open. To put these figures into perspective, the



lifetime risk of developing schizophrenia is approximately two percent, which equates to two out of a hundred people developing schizophrenia during their life. For people exposed to the lowest level of air pollution, the lifetime risk is just under two percent, while the lifetime risk for those exposed to the highest level of air pollution is approximately three percent.

"The risk of developing

schizophrenia is also higher if you have a higher genetic liability for the disease. Our data shows that these associations are independent of each other. The association between air pollution and schizophrenia cannot be explained by a higher genetic liability in people who grow up in areas with high levels of air pollution," said Henriette Thisted Horsdal about the study, which is the first of its kind to combine air pollution and genetics in relation to the risk of developing schizophrenia.

The study included 23,355 people in total, and of these, 3,531 developed schizophrenia. Though the results demonstrate an increased risk of schizophrenia when the level of air pollution during childhood increases, the researchers cannot comment on the cause. Instead, they emphasize that further studies are needed before they can identify the cause of this association.

Scientists working towards delivering full course of radiation therapy in less than a second

THE days are near when cancer patients would go through the whole course of radiation treatment in less than a second, rather than receiving doses over many weeks. In a new study published in the International Journal of Radiation Oncology, Biology, and Physics, researchers from Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania explained how they utilized proton radiation to generate the dosage needed to theoretically give a cancer patient their entire course of radiotherapy in one rapid treatment session.

It's known as FLASH radiotherapy, and it's an experimental paradigm that could represent a sea change for the world of oncology in the future. In this study, researchers also found FLASH demonstrated the same effect on tumors as traditional photon radiation while sparing healthy tissue due to the shorter exposure time. "This is the first time anyone has published findings that demonstrate the feasibility of using protons - rather than electrons - to generate FLASH doses, with an accelerator currently used for clinical treatments," said the study's co-senior author James M.

Metz, MD, director of the Roberts Proton Therapy Center.

The co-senior authors on the study are Constantinos Koumenis, Ph.D., the Richard H. Chamberlain Professor of Research Oncology, and Keith A. Cengel, MD, Ph.D., a



associate professor of Radiation Oncology, both in Penn's Perelman School of Medicine. Metz noted that other research teams have generated similar doses using electrons, which do not penetrate deep enough into the body to be clinically useful as a cancer treatment for internal tumors. Other

groups have tried the approach with conventional photons, but currently, available treatment devices do not have the ability to generate the necessary dosage. This study shows, that with

technical modifications, the currently available accelerators for protons can achieve FLASH doses with the biologic effects. The key for the Penn team was the ability to generate the dose with protons, and even in that setting, researchers had to specially develop the tools needed to effectively and accurately

measure radiation doses, since the standard detectors were quickly saturated due to the high levels of radiation. The Roberts Proton Therapy Center includes a dedicated research room to run experiments like these, allowing investigators to use photon and proton radiation side-by-side just a few feet away from the clinic. It's one of the few facilities in the world with such unique features, and Metz said this infrastructure is what made Penn's FLASH experiments possible.

"We've been able to develop specialized systems in the research room to generate FLASH doses, demonstrate that we can control the proton beam, and perform a large number of experiments to help us understand the implications of FLASH radiation that we simply could not have done with a more traditional research setup," Metz said.

Researchers said they are already beginning to optimize how they would use this down the road for clinical trials, including taking the necessary steps to translate the ability from the research room to clinical space, as well as designing a delivery system for FLASH in humans.

New study claims to have found root of fatal malaria infection

THE origin of Malaria infection has finally been revealed. A new study has come up with the data that can aggravate the treatment of the complex infection. According to Professor Ian Cheeseman from Texas Biomedical Research Institute, "We don't know what is inside malaria infections, or how many different genetically distinct strains of parasites there are.

We don't know how related they are to each other. We don't know how many mosquitoes they came from." He was the Principal Investigator of a three-year study which got published at the latest edition of Cell Host & Microbe, a high-impact peer-reviewed publication.

The common fact about the disease is that the parasites carried and spread by Anopheles mosquito bites are behind the infectious disease. But to know further, Cheeseman and his teammates used advanced technology

to create single-cell genome sequencing. As a result, a new scenario came to the forefront describing how frequent are the chances to get infected



the mosquito bites. The study was carried out on blood samples donated by Chikhwawa residents. The area is infamous for its high mosquito count. Surprisingly the researchers found that all the infections came particularly from a single mosquito bite. "Complex malaria

infections are majorly caused by a single mosquito bite transmitting many genetically diverse but related parasites into the bloodstream of a patient," Dr. Standwell Nkhoma, lead author on the study and a Malawian national, mentioned. This revelation would enable experts to restrict the mosquitoes from spreading the infection effectively and extensively. The major limitation of controlling malaria has been the defense against the spread of antimalarial medication. Efficient models to deal with such issues can be built on the basis of the newest addition to the available data.

Malaria afflicts more or less 200 million from across the globe per year and proves fatal to more than 400,000 people, of whom most are children, according to the World Health Organization. "Any of our initiatives to understand this fatal parasite will make an enormous impact," Dr Cheeseman concluded.

Sexual-arousal disorder can compromise mental health of individuals: Study

A study has revealed that persistent genital arousal disorder (PGAD) can compromise the mental health of an individual and can severely damage relationships with their partners. PGAD is experienced exclusively by females and is characterized by spontaneous and unwanted sexual arousal which is not related to desire. The study was conducted by researchers of Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and was published in the journal - PAIN Reports.

The results from the study suggest that PGAD can be caused by alteration of the firing of nerves that are known to carry sensations from genitalia or by damage caused to the lowest parts of the spinal cord. The

study also indicated that neurological treatments can benefit many patients suffering from these diseases.

"It's important that people know of this medical condition and that it is primarily a neurological problem, not a psychiatric one," said lead researcher Bruce Price.

"Many affected women are silent and undercover-it's in no way a fun condition, and it is difficult for patients to address their symptoms with their doctors, who have typically never heard of PGAD," added Price. The problem can be troublesome for adolescents and can cause shame, confusion, and fear. The study included ten females whose symptoms of PGAD started between the ages of 11 to 70

years. Spinal nerve-root cysts were detected in four patients and generalised sensory nerve damage in two of them. One patient that had symptoms since childhood was born with a defect in her lowest spinal cord while one had a lumbo-sacral herniated disc in her lower back and another one developed short-lived PGAD as she stopped taking prescribed antidepressant medication.

Every psychiatric and gynecological treatment was ineffective, and the injection of local anesthetics had no lasting benefit. In contrast, neurological treatments like treating nerve damage and cyst removal were effective in 80 per cent of patients.

Scientists reveal a molecular switch for stomach disease

ROUGHLY half of the world's population carry in their stomach the bacteria Helicobacter pylori (H. Pylori), known to be the most significant risk factor for ulcers, MALT lymphoma and adenocarcinoma. A research team has now revealed a new mechanism that controls the causes of infection due to H. Pylori that triggers the development of stomach diseases. It is hoped that these findings will lead in time to new therapies. The study was published in the journal Nature Communications.

A team of national and international scientists led by Prof. Dr. Steffen Backert from the Chair of Microbiology at FAU has investigated how the bacteria manipulate the host's immune system in order to ensure their long-term survival in the stomach. Chronic inflammation is

the most common cause of stomach illnesses such as these. The researchers have identified a 'molecular switch' which uses a previously unknown mechanism to regulate the inflammation reaction in the stomach. The interaction between H. Pylori and stomach cells activates a syringe-like pilus structure referred to as a type IV secretion system. A protein, CagL, is presented at the surface of this structure which allows the bacterial toxin known as CagA protein to be delivered into the stomach cells.

The injected CagA then reprograms the host cell so that stomach cancer can develop. It now appears that CagL also has another

important function, however. The protein is recognised by the immune system via the receptor TLR5.



Experiments in mouse models have demonstrated that TLR5 controls the infection efficiently. CagL imitates a TLR5 recognition motif in the flagellin protein of other pathogens, thereby controlling the human

immune response.

Interestingly, this signalling pathway can be both switched on and switched off by the type IV secretion system, which is not thought to be the case with other bacteria. Presumably, H. Pylori has exploited this signalling pathway over thousands of years of evolution to eliminate 'bothersome' bacterial competitors in the stomach. At the same time, CagL influences the congenital and adaptive immune system as well as the inflammation reaction in such a way that H. Pylori itself is not recognised and therefore cannot be eliminated - a mechanism which

is crucial for long-term infections with H. Pylori in the stomach and triggering stomach disease. Researchers also observed that TLR5 is no longer produced in healthy stomach cells and once an infection has been resolved. This indicates that the expression of this protein is a new indicator of stomach disease in humans triggered by H. Pylori. Prof. Backert hopes that these findings will help develop significant new approaches for anti-bacterial treatment, as CagL, CagA and TLR5 lend themselves well to treatment. The participating researchers have already started to test appropriate substances. "We hope that specific inhibitors can paralyse the function of the type IV secretion system, or partially or entirely prevent infection," reports Prof. Backert.

Life-saving medicine does not reach majority of patients, study reveals

A drug that can be life-saving is accessible to very few needy patients. Despite being recommended for opioids over-dose patients by physicians, less than 2 per cent really get the medication to save their lives, suggests a recent study. In the past few months, Naloxone, the highly efficient drug has failed to reach the majority of the patients who have a higher risk of losing their lives due to such overdoses. The medicine is crucial to reverse the effect of an opioid overdose. The recent study used data from the records of people who opted for private health insurance and was performed by a group of researchers from VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System and the University

of Michigan got published in the Journal of General Internal Medicine.

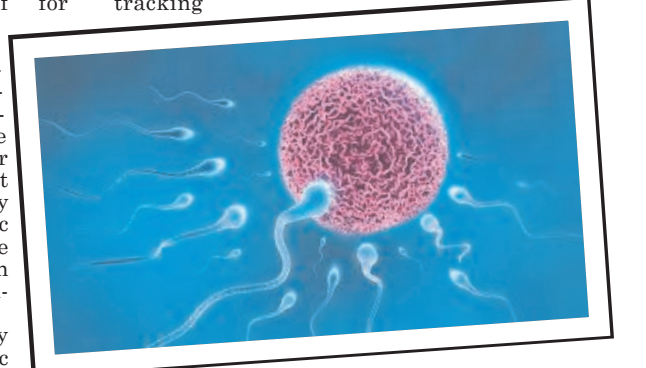
In 2016, the nationwide guideline by the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention called for physicians to prescribe the drug to patients with higher intake of the pain-relieving medicine, opioid. The risk factor hypes with a combination of opioid with benzodiazepine, a high

power sedative.

The two medicines have interactive capabilities and can end up being fatal. However, since 2014, the intake of the medicine by adults has increased comparative where earlier the percentage of the medicine intake was as low as 1.6 percentages.

"The major prescription of naloxone is to patients who have also been prescribed opioid, but there are other groups at high risk for overdose but do not receive recommendation of opioids, including people using only street drugs, that warrant further attention," says Allison Lewei Lin, M.D., M.Sc., an addiction psychiatrist at the U-M Addiction Center and the VAAHHS who led the research team.



pregnancy outcomes. Researchers did not find any significant differences in live births between the men who received the supplement which was 404 and the placebo group which was 416. Men in the two groups also had similar measures of sperm shape, sperm count and motility. Men who took the supplements, however, had a higher proportion of broken DNA in their sperm than they were in the

well-controlled, randomized study shows us that nutraceuticals like zinc and folic acid really don't improve the chances of a couple getting pregnant and actually can cause side effects that are not beneficial," said researcher C. Matthew Peterson.

"It's important for men of all ages to eat a healthy diet to maintain fertility, but you don't necessarily need to take something extra to help you achieve better sperm parameters," Peterson added.

Traders delegation led by Sham Langar meets MP Khatana

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

A delegation of members of traders community headed by Sham Lal Langar, Convenor BJP Trade Cell, J&K, met with Member of Parliament Gulam Ali Khatana and discussed the proposed design of the RCC Wall structure for the Expressway Flyover passing from Narwal to Sainik Colony, seeking modification of the proposed RCC Wall structure with Pier and Girder Wall structure.

Sham Langar apprised the Member Parliament that in 1965, Kunjwani was designated a Bypass with just 30 feet wide. Then, in 2000, the authorities widened it to 150 feet. But now due to heavy flow of vehicles, instead of making Kunjwani Bypass wider, the authorities are thinking of making it narrower, just 56 feet wide, by building a higher Expressway Flyover with blind walls.



Right now, from Narwal to Sainik Colony, a whole new city has grown up with 10 multi-specialist hospitals, 20 international schools, and 40 banquet halls along the stretch from Narwal to Sainik Colony. If the new Expressway Flyover will be constructed with blind walls, localities like Kunjwani, Greater Kailash, Marble Market, Sainik Colony, Deeli, Channi Himmat, Channi Rama, Sabzi Mandi, Fruit Mandi, Transport Nagar, Bathindi, Rajiv Nagar, Kalka Colony, Narwal Bala, Sunjwan, and

Trikuta Nagar Extension will be severely affected as well as will pose a great threat to the traders community of these areas. Sham Langer apprised the Member Parliament that the decision to construct walls on both sides of the mid-section of the flyover poses a significant threat to the local business community and the well-being of the residents. He said that the blind wall structure will disrupt vital connections between shops, businesses, and residences, causing inconvenience to residents,

hindering emergency services, and impacting the daily commutes of pedestrians. This design, witnessed in the Bari Brahmana flyover, has previously proven detrimental to local businesses and community cohesion.

Drawing inspiration from the successful Satwari to Vijaypur flyover, he urged the Member Parliament to consider a pillar-based design for the Sainik Colony - Narwal flyover, ensuring seamless movement and promoting thriving businesses alongside the expressway. Sham Langar mentioned that mostly the Expressway will be constructed out of city areas so that the populace as well as local traffic may not be affected. On one side, the government is making Jammu a Smart City and on the other the construc-

tion of Expressway flyover in the city areas seems not feasible. The senior BJP leader suggested that instead of constructing the Expressway flyover in the city area, the route of expressway should be linked/diverted with Ring Road right from Jagti to Vijaypur near Zamindara Dhaba.

The delegation requested the Member Parliament to intervene and mandate the construction of the Sainik Colony - Narwal flyover with a community-friendly pillar-based design. This modification would safeguard livelihoods, preserve community spirit, and contribute to the overall success of the expressway project, he added. The Member Parliament assured the visiting delegation that he will take up the matter with authorities concerned and hoped that the Expressway flyover will be constructed as per community-friendly pillar-based design.

Joint CEO, Ladakh launches voter awareness initiative for General Elections 2024

J I NEWS SERVICE
LEH, MAY 17

The Joint Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Sonam Chosjor, initiated a door-to-door initiative, towards enhancing voter awareness and mobilizing participation in the upcoming General Elections 2024 for the 1-Ladakh Constituency Lok Sabha on 20th May 2024.

The Joint Chief Electoral Officer, along with Sveep Ladakh Team visited several monasteries and villages including Thiksey Monastery, Hemis Monastery, and Thiksey and Shey villages.

During their visit, the team engaged with key religious and community leaders, including Ven. Nawang Chotak, Chakzod of Thiksey Monastery; H.E. Chosam Rinpoche, and Ven. Nawang Jigmet, Chakzod of Hemis Mon-



astery; Head Master (Mumtaz Hussain) and students of Government High School, Thiksey. Additionally, the team met with the Nambardar of Thiksey, (Tundup Targals), and the members of the Women's Alliance, (Jamyang Chuzin, Tsering Diskit, Skarma Rigzin, and Fatima Banoo) of Thiksey and Ranbirpura. As a symbolic gesture of encouragement, each voter was presented with an invitation to vote along with election-themed badges.

During the visits, the Joint CEO personally engaged with the voters, urging them to exercise their democratic rights in the forthcoming elections. He emphasized the importance of every vote in shaping the future of the nation. The initiative also aims to address voters' interest by making the electoral process more accessible and engaging for the residents of Ladakh, and the distribution of the invitation and badges is intended to raise awareness and create a sense of participation among the voters, he added.

PM Modi's visionary abrogation of Art 370 transforms J&K : Rana

J I NEWS SERVICE
BEHRAAMPUR PUNJAB MAY 16

Senior BJP leader Mr Devender Singh Rana today said that Jammu and Kashmir stands holistically transformed post abrogation of Article 370 during the past nearly five years with remarkable turnaround discernible in the overall situation, infrastructural development and implementation of the various welfare schemes.

"In the wake of unwavering dedication and strategic initiatives taken by visionary Prime Minister Yashasvi Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Mr Amit Shah, the Union Territory has ushered in an era of stability, development, and unity", Mr Devender Rana said while addressing a public meeting as part of the election campaign for the BJP candidate from Gurdaspur Punjab parliamentary constituency Mr Dinesh Singh Babbu along with former Minister Mr. Rajiv Jasrotia, DDC Vice Chairman Jammu Mr. Suraj Singh and Surinder Singh Gilli. He said the BJP's commitment to inclusive governance as per Prime



Minister's Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas has fostered a sense of belonging with renewed spirit of confidence among people. So much so that the political entities believing in separatism have also now realized the futility of their misadventure and shown intent to join the mainstream. This is a huge shift in the political landscape, all because of the firm leadership at the Centre and unflinching support of the people of Jammu and Kashmir to the initiatives for bringing lasting peace in once troubled state, he said, adding that the people are for the first time having a feel of being at the centre stage of various schemes aimed at ameliorating their lot.

He said the past decade has witnessed the Modi Government surmounting numerous challenges on domestic and global

fronts, and the next five years are going to be an unprecedented era of holistic development, economic growth and social harmony, leading the Nation to become Vishvaguru.

Rana explained the schemes and historic initiatives taken by the Prime Minister Modi led BJP Government in the past ten years with an objective to benefit and uplift the poor and downtrodden in the society by empowering them and equitably developing them. The growth and stability earned the country huge global attention, making every Indian proud of the state India has gained across the continents, he added.

Rana also made a mention of path breaking initiatives taken across Jammu and Kashmir with an avowed objective of ensuring development, creating infrastructural

facilities, strengthening utility services and giving fillip to growth as a result of massive investments. He said the investments are going to manifest in industrialization on a mega scale thus opening vistas of opportunities for economic empowerment and generation of jobs for professionals, technocrats, educated unemployed besides skilled and unskilled workforce. He said the Union Territory is at the threshold of a new era of peace and progress as per Naya Jammu Kashmir vision of the Prime Minister with tourism booming, gardens blooming, stone pelting becoming nightmare of the past and new hope emerging among the people about next five years focusing on sustaining the gains of the peace with development and economic prosperity getting new wings, he asserted.

Devender Rana said that encouraging turnaround in the Kashmir situation in particular post August 2019 has led to unprecedented tourist footfall in both the regions of Jammu and Kashmir. The people have now realized the futility

of alien gun culture and developed stakes in peace for development, progress, and prosperity. This has turned turtle the apple cart of those banking on boiling Kashmir and thriving on instability and unrest to further their nefarious political agenda for decades. But, seeing the peoples' preference for peace over disturbances and economic activity over shut-down syndrome, a new era of hope and promise is discernible across the Union Territory. He said the Prime Minister's mission of Naya Jammu and Kashmir is being carried forward in missionary mode.

Seeking votes for the BJP nominee for Gurdaspur constituency, Mr Rana said this will support the Prime Minister's vision of taking India to the highest pinnacles of progress and development. This will also strengthen his resolve to make Viksit Bharat by 2047, he maintained.

Among others who were present included Ashok Singh Manhas, Sanjay Gupta, Ajay Gupta, Aditya Gupta, Balbir Singh, Sangram Singh and Ajay Singh.

Role of BJP Mahila Morcha crucial in political landscape of J&K: Kavinder

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister, Kavinder Gupta today emphasized the pivotal role that the Party's Mahila Morcha have to play in shaping the political dynamics of Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking at a gathering of Mahila Morcha activists at Party headquarters here today, he underscored the importance of their involvement in engaging with the community and expanding the Party's reach. He stressed that the Mahila Morcha holds significant potential in influencing and mobilizing the electorate, particularly the youth and new voters. He urged the activists to actively connect and interact with nearly one lakh new and young voters across the Union Territory, fostering a strong bond between them and the Party.

"Empowering women in politics is not just about representation but about active participation and leadership. The Mahila Morcha has a crucial role in amplifying the voices of women and addressing their concerns," he stated.

Kavinder further



emphasized the need for Mahila Morcha activists to champion the BJP's agenda of development, progress, and inclusive governance, especially at the grassroots level. He encouraged them to proactively engage in community outreach programs, awareness campaigns, and social initiatives to strengthen the Party's grassroots presence.

He reiterated the BJP's commitment to promoting gender equality and empowering women in all spheres of life, including politics. He assured the Mahila Morcha of the Party's unwavering sup-

port and urged them to continue their dedicated efforts in advancing the Party's ideals and objectives.

The Mahila Morcha activists expressed their gratitude to Kavinder Gupta for his guidance and pledged to wholeheartedly contribute to the Party's endeavors in building a prosperous and inclusive Jammu.

Prominent among those who were present in the meeting including Sanjita Dogra, Reema Padha, Neha Mahajan, Vaishno Devi, Prerna Nanda, Usha Rajput, Santosh Sharma, Suman Raina and Sumita Raina.

Kavinder to inaugurate commemorative recitation of Bhagavad Gita at Lal Chowk on Jun 23

J I NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Manas Bhattacharya, Organizer of Akhil Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad, today met with Kavinder Gupta, senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister, to discuss the upcoming program planned for the recitation of the Bhagavad Gita at Lal Chowk, Srinagar, marking the death anniversary of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee on June 23, 2024. He extended an invitation to Kavinder Gupta to mark his presence as the Chief Guest and inaugurate the event.

Manas Bhattacharya said that this initiative is a joint effort by cultural associations from West Bengal and Kashmir, aimed at commemorating Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee's historic movement for "Ek Desh Ek Nishan" (One Country, One Flag). The program underscores the values of integrity and nationalism encapsulated in the Bhagavad Gita, and seeks to resonate with the rich cultural heritage of Kash-



mir, he added. He said the event will commence at 9 AM on June 23, 2024, at the historic Lal Chowk in Srinagar, where hundreds of participants will gather to recite Shlokas from the Bhagavad Gita. A statue of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee will be

installed to honor his profound contributions and sacrifice for the unity of Kashmir with the rest of India, he added.

The celebrations on June 23rd will honor Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, a revered son of Bengal and a prominent statesman of India, who

initiated his movement to enter Kashmir without a permit and laid down his life for the cause on June 23, 1953. Lal Chowk has been chosen for this event as it symbolizes the pride and spirit of Kashmir, reinforcing its integral connection to India. This initiative represents the collective efforts of three prominent organizations from West Bengal: Akhil Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad, Matilal Bharat Tirtha Seba Mission Ashram, and HelpAge Bengal Education Mission. Their collaboration aims to rejuvenate the historic memory of Dr. Mukherjee's movement and reinforce the unity of Kashmir with the rest of India under a uniform legal and constitutional framework. Kavinder Gupta gave his consent to participate in the event and said, "I am honored to be part of this significant commemoration. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee's dedication to the unity of our nation is unparalleled, and this event will serve as a powerful reminder of his legacy and the values he stood for."

Director General National Cadet Corps calls on LG

J I NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAY 17

Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh, Director General, National Cadet Corps today called on Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan. He was accompanied by Maj Gen Rajesh Kumar Sachdeva, ADG, NCC Directorate, J&K and Ladakh.

The DG NCC discussed with the Lt Governor various important matters pertaining to the expansion of National Cadet Corps in the UT of J&K.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor presented a citation to NCC Directorate for its excellent performance and well-organized training in Jammu Kashmir.

Sh Alok Kumar, Principal Secretary, Higher Education Department; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Dr Piyush Singh, Secretary, School Education and Sh Subash Chander Chhibber, Director, Youth, Services and Sports were also present during the meeting.

Shiv Sena warns against illegal extortion by liquor mafia

J I NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, MAY 17

Continuing its campaign against illegal extortion by liquor mafia, the Udhampur unit of Shiv Sena (UBT) held a strong demonstration in Udhampur and demanded in a warning tone to curb it and ban the sale of liquor near religious places.

The Shiv Sainiks gathered under the leadership of party district chief Sanjeev Sharma and deputy state chief Jatindra Arora demonstrated vigorously holding placards written "Take action against illegal extortion", "Tighten the noose on liquor mafia".

Sanjeev Sharma strongly criticized the open extortion by liquor sellers above the marked price and the silent attitude of the concerned department and accused them of collusion.

He said that despite the department having



concrete information, no strict action is being taken against the shopkeepers doing illegal extortion, the formality is being completed by imposing minor fines. He said that not just a few but most of the liquor sellers are charging more than the marked price, this illegal collection increases manifold in the outskirts of the city. He also raised the demand to ban the sale of liquor near religious places in the Devka Nagari

Udhampur. In a warning tone, he asked the Excise Department and the Police Administration to curb illegal collection or else the Shiv Sainiks will be forced to take action in their own way.

On this occasion, District Chairman Joginder Verma, District Youth Chief Sahil Gandotra, Youth Secretary Vishal Verma, Ankit Arora, Nikhil Singh, Nigesh Arora and other Shiv Sainiks were present.

Vomedh celebrates its 16th year with Terrace theater and musical evening

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Vomedh completed 16 years of its theatre and cultural group. Celebrating 16 years of tireless work by the entire team towards preservation and promotion of theater and cultural activities Vomedh, a non government organisation, organised a musical evening at its office on 16th of May 2024. Rohit Bhat, Founder and director of Vomedh expressed his deep gratitude to the efforts of his Brother Rakesh Roshan Bhat, Patron and Co Founder Vomedh for his commitment in promoting Kashmiri language through theatre and acknowledged the untiring support of Mrs Meenakshi Bhat, co founder Vomedh who was the chief guest for the celebrations.

Recognising the efforts of Vomedh team mates Rohit Bhat highlighted the efficiency of all the artists, and back hand support

writing team who vehemently put in their blood & sweat to meticulously make all shows a success. The 16 years of tireless activities by Vomedh include International Film Festivals, Theatre Festivals, Cultural Events, Nukkad Natak, Theater Activities across Country. Bharti kaul vice president Vomedh expressed happiness and gratitude over the proceedings of the event that was largely attended by the group of Vomedians and above all the presence of Mrs. Meenakshi Bhat, the co-founder, is an epitome of strength and elegance as Chief Guest of the day. Vomedh advisor Wing commander Ashok Kumar Saraf sent his good wishes and blessings for the team.

This year the annual celebrations included Terrace theatre performance of play Beti Hai To Kal Hai, the artist who performed are Shazi Khan, Irfana Banu, Ridima Kalsi, Muskan Chib, Jang Bahadur, Shank Singh Rajput, Nikhil

Khajuria, & Mahi Khan along with a gala musical performance by the nationally renowned Mother-Daughter duo performers of J&K Nirmala Koul and Pallavi Koul. The celebrations that concluded with cake cutting ceremony cherished the presence of national repute artists like painter, shaivite artist, sculptor, art director Veeji Sumbly, Senior Journalist King C Bharti, Ramesh Nirrash Kamakshya Dogra, Suman Bhat, Irfan Choudhary, Sunny Mujoo, Jatinder Jotshi, Vinay Pandita, Rahul Pandita, Shammy Dhamitr, Arvin Tickoo, Rakesh Tickoo, Vinod Bushan, Varsha Kumari, Sonia, Bindiya Raina, Ishu Bharti Pandit, Saachi Sandeep Bhat and various other Guests.

Vomedh co-founder Ms Meenakshi Bhat while concluding the celebration assured of taking Kashmiri Culture and Literature worldwide and focusing on innovative theatre by Vomedh in the near future.

6th Faizal Abbas memorial VolleyBall tournament concluded at GPJ

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

The 6th Faizal Abbas Memorial Volleyball Inter Department Tournament concluded today in the Govt. Polytechnic College, Bilkram Chowk, Jammu which was earlier inaugurated by the worthy Principal of the institute on May 13, 2024. In the Final match of the Tournament, Er. Arun Bangotra Principal Government Polytechnic Jammu was Chief Guest and Er. Inderjeet Singh, Workshop Superintendent was Guest of Honor who were warmly welcomed by the organizing committee. The tournament is held every year in the memory of an Ex. student Late Faizal Abbas who lost his life in an unfortunate accident and he was a very good player of Volleyball besides being good in studies.

The prize distribution function was organized in which Chief Guest Er. Arun Bangotra applauded

ed the students for taking part in Games & Sports, which he said, will instill new spark in their daily routine and will rejuvenate them with fresh zeal and vigor. He also hailed the efforts of the sports wing of Govt. Polytechnic for organizing such sports events and engaging the students in various sports activities. Er. Arun Bangotra congratulated the winning team and Shri Sanjay Koul (HoD of the Department) for winning the trophy. He also congratulated Shri Raj Shekhar HoD Automobile Engineering for winning the Runner Up trophy.

He also motivated all the other teams to work hard next time to clinch the trophy. Others who were present on the occasion includes: Er. Manjeet Singh (HoD Electrical Engg), Er. Akhil Kumar (Lecturer-I), Sh Ashok Verma (AA), Sh. Kamal Kumar (Demonstrator), Sh Rakesh Khullar and Sh Sandeep Kumar.

BJP neglected far-flung areas including Gurez: Omar

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAY 17

National Conference (NC) Vice President Omar Abdullah on Friday asked people to vote wisely and send a clear and categorical message to ruling BJP on its blunders and injustices committed with people of J&K. He made these comments while addressing a series of public gatherings in Gurez and Tulail. The meetings were organised by senior leader and In-Charge Constituency Gurez Nazir Ahmad Khan Gurezi. Among others party Treasurer Shammi Oberoi, Chief Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq accompanied the Vice President on the visit, a statement issued to the news agency reads.

Questioning Why A, B and C teams are silent on BJP's poison against Muslims, Omar said, "J&K is currently going through a critical period. While people are being evicted from their lands, our religion is being attacked daily. In some places, it is about uniform civil code, in some places a worshiper is being kicked while offering prayers. We

are being taunted repeatedly and our emotions are being played with and all this is being done by BJP for its nefarious political interests. Those who are fighting elections on the symbols of apple, bat-ball and bucket have to answer why they are not raising their voice against BJP? Are these people not seeing how BJP is oppressing minorities particularly Muslims? Are they not able to listen to the speeches of BJP leaders including the Prime Minister, in which the Hindus are being threatened that the Muslims will take away the ornaments of the Hindu women? Why are they avoiding speaking against the BJP?"

Omar further said the BJP's core ideology is that there should be no development in areas where Muslims are in the majority. "BJP cannot bear the upliftment and development of Muslims. BJP should explain why the tunnel to Gurez, where the road remains closed for three to four months - had not been made despite the party's tall claims of tourism promotion and development in the Valley."

SVEEP program held at Saint Joseph School Baramulla

JI NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, MAY 17

In view of Lok Sabha Election 2024 in I-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency on 20th of May, a mega SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) program under the campaign 'I Vote For Sure' was held at Saint Joseph School, Baramulla, to encourage and inspire the eligible voters to exercise their right to vote.

The event was presided over by District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa. Sapna Kotwal, UT Nodal Officer Media, Chief Education Officer, Shabir Ahmad Khan and others were present at the event.

During the program, students and newly eligible voters actively engaged in a variety of activities, all of which aimed to instill a sense of civic duty and enthusiasm among participants and raise awareness about the significance of voting. A signature campaign was also conducted during the event, with the participation from the Nodal Officer SVEEP, the DEO, and other eligible voters who pledged to exercise their democratic right on the polling day.

The DEO on the occasion highlighted the district administration's extensive efforts in conducting SVEEP activities on a grand scale to spread voter awareness and encourage maximum participation in the electoral process.

Minga Sherpa further urged the people to come out in large numbers on 20th of May, the day of Poll in I-Baramulla PC and vote to choose their representatives who will work on fulfilling their developmental aspirations.

Speaking during the event, Sapna Kotwal, emphasized on the significance of electoral literacy in empowering citizens and urged everyone, especially first-time voters, to exercise their democratic right responsibly on the poll day.

Police organises Drug De-Addiction Awareness Programme in Pulwama

JI NEWS SERVICE
PULWAMA, MAY 17

Police in Pulwama today organized a drug de-addiction awareness programme at Govt. Higher Secondary School Rajpora.

The event aimed to educate students about the spread of drug menace and its harmful effects on individuals along with society. During the program, students actively participated, sharing their thoughts and insights on the menace of drug abuse. The interactive session highlighted the importance of awareness and community involvement in combating drug addiction.

The participants appreciated the role of police for conducting such interactive programmes which further boost community policing and public confidence.

J&K Police remains steadfast in its commitment to eradicating drugs from the community.

Record voting in Srinagar testimony to success of Modi Govt's J&K policy: Parneesh

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Dr Parneesh Mahajan, Convenor Department of Training, BJP, J&K, commended Modi Government's Policy on J&K as Srinagar witnessed record breaking voting after a long span of three decades in Lok Sabha polls.

In a statement issued to media persons, Dr Parneesh said that in a remarkable demonstration of democratic spirit, Srinagar has witnessed a record voter turnout in the Lok Sabha polls, the highest in three decades. He categorically said that the historic participation of people in this democratic process has underscored the success of the Modi government's policies in restoring normalcy and strengthening democracy in the region. He expressed deep gratitude and commendation for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government's unwavering commitment towards J&K.

"The record voter turnout in Srinagar is a clear testament to the effectiveness of the Modi



of Srinagar have sent a powerful message of resilience and hope, showing that they are ready to engage in shaping their future through democratic means," he maintained while acknowledging the efforts of the Election Commission and security forces in ensuring a free, fair, and secure election process.

The senior BJP leader said, "As Srinagar marked this historic moment, the UT's BJP leadership has vowed to continue working towards the development and well-being of the people. The focus will remain on driving economic growth, improving infrastructure, and ensuring that the benefits of government schemes reach every corner of the region".

Dr Parneesh said that BJP in J&K is committed towards achieving positive momentum and ensuring that UT continues to move on the path of peace and prosperity. "The Modi government's policies have laid a strong foundation, and we will strive to realize the full potential of J&K," he added.

Gaurav meets LG, highlights transformative impact of govt policies on lives of valley residents



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Gaurav Gupta, former General Secretary of Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Jammu, held a significant meeting with Lt Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan Jammu.

During the meeting, Gaurav Gupta engaged in constructive dialogue with Lt Governor Sinha, focusing on matters crucial to the growth and development of Jammu and Kashmir.

Furthermore, he also extended his sincere appreciation to Lt Governor Sinha for the commendable voter turnout of 38 per cent witnessed in the Srinagar -2 Parliamentary constituency. Recognizing the signifi-

cance of this historic milestone, he highlighted the importance of robust civic engagement in shaping the democratic process.

Gaurav also highlighted that the absence of boycotts and strikes during the polling process in the Kashmir Province, for the first time, is a testament to the positive strides being made towards stability and inclusivity in the region.

Gaurav affirmed that Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory is witnessing unprecedented progress and development under the visionary leadership of LG Sinha. He expressed optimism about the future trajectory of the region, emphasizing the transformative impact of government policies on the lives of its residents.

Past two years saw historic transformation in Waqf Board: Andrabi



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Chairperson of J&K Waqf Board Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi today visited Dargah Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar and chaired an event organised by the Waqf Board at the shrine after completion of the new carpet laying initiative of the Board at the shrine. Speaking to the gathering, Dr Andrabi said that after 70 years, this important shrine of Dargah Hazratbal Srinagar is having fully new carpets and it was really a day of great satisfaction for us. "Waqf Board is now in a position to invest on the infrastructure development and other varied utility development projects at sufi shrines in J&K. Our reformative mea-

sures have yielded very good results. May our spiritual shrines remain our priorities, may spirituality strengthen us all", said Dr Andrabi. She expressed her gratitude to the people of J&K for their cooperation to the Board in achieving the success in streamlining Waqf management & financial system & making it transparent and progressive. "Board has utilized abandoned properties, ensured timely rent collection and transparent donation system thought JK which has strengthened the organization. But much more still needs to be done and the Board is working tirelessly to improve the working and create more facilities for the people", said Darakhshan.

Indian Army organizes Second edition of Lieutenant General PS Bhagat Memorial Lecture

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MAY 17

Second edition of "Lieutenant General PS Bhagat Memorial Lecture" was organised by the Indian Army and United Services Institution of India (USI) on theme "Armed Forces Contribution to Realise the Vision of a Rising India" at Manekshaw Centre. The lecture was conducted as part of "Lt Gen PS Bhagat Memorial Chair of Excellence instituted at USI, by the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) on 14th October 2022.

Lieutenant General KT Parnaik (Retired), Hon'ble Governor of Arunachal Pradesh delivered a Keynote Address, on the theme "Armed Forces Contribution to Realise the Vision of a Rising India". Covering a wide spectrum of tenants of rising India, the Hon'ble Governor outlined the

vital role and contributions of Indian Armed Forces in the Nation Building while also recollecting anecdotes from the rich legacy of Lieutenant General Bhagat's military career. The Hon'ble Governor acknowledged the noteworthy contribution of the Indian Armed Forces in Out of Area Contingencies and Defence Diplomacy initiatives. He also shared his thoughts on the Changing Face of Warfare Evolution, Modernisation of the Armed Forces, Self-Reliance & Technology Infusion, Net-Centric and Grey Zone Warfare. General Manoj Pande, the COAS, delivered a Special Address during the event. He reminded the audience about the raw courage of Lieutenant General Bhagat, who was awarded the Victoria Cross during the World War-II, wherein he cleared minefields under



enemy fire, encountered mine explosions thrice, and suffered an ear drum puncture, yet executed the assigned task leading his men continuously for 96 hours at a stretch. The COAS while talking about the vision and foresight

of Lieutenant General PS Bhagat, said, "General Bhagat, being a progressive thinker and futurist, had written about the essence of Transformation, almost seven decades ago, as part of his insightful strategic writ-

ings in the three books - 'Forging the Shield', 'The Shield and the Sword' and 'Wielding of Authority in Emerging Countries'. The event was attended by a large number of dignitaries including the former Chiefs General JJ

Singh (Retired), General Deepak Kapoor (Retired) and General MM Naravane (Retired). A large number of senior serving officers, veterans and civilian dignitaries were also present. The event was an occasion to draw inspiration from

the legacy of Lieutenant General PS Bhagat, whose charisma has left an indelible mark on the history of the Indian Army. During the event, a book titled "The Victoria Cross Icon: Vision and Legacy" on the rich legacy of Lieutenant General PS Bhagat, authored by Major General Shashikant G Pitre (Retired) was released. The book was eloquently introduced by the author giving out a meticulous account of General Bhagat's military contributions, aptly delving into his military appreciations, concept papers, and his critique of the 1962 War. The book elucidates General Bhagat's prowess as a brilliant military leader with deep strategic vision and insights, exceptional administrative abilities, astute leadership qualities and his intimate connect with the men he commanded.

DDG NCC Directorate (AP&TG) Visits Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Camp



AGENCIES
HYDERABAD, MAY 17

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat-I, an all-India camp, is currently underway at CMR College of Engineering & Technology, Medchal, from May 14 to 25.

The Deputy Director General, AP & Telangana Directorate, Air Commodore V M Reddy, addressed six hundred cadets from the AP & Telangana and Rajasthan Directorates on Friday.

At the outset, the DDG welcomed the cadets, especially those from the Rajasthan Directorate, to the EBSB All India Camp.

He expressed hope that the cadets would enjoy their stay, learn about the various customs, traditions, and languages of AP & Telangana, and exchange their customs and traditions.

While interacting with the cadets, Air Commodore V M Reddy shared unforgettable experiences from his tenure in Rajasthan, highlighting the cultural and traditional similarities between Rajasthan and Telangana. He noted several similarities in the cultures, clothing, and lineage of many tribes in Rajasthan and Telangana. The Air

Commodore also spoke a few sentences in the Rajasthani language, which was met with cheers from the Rajasthan cadets.

After his speech, Air Commodore V M Reddy joined a tea party with the cadets and interacted with media personnel in detail. He emphasized the significance of the camp during his discussion with the media and provided a few glimpses of the training activities conducted at the camp.

Air Commodore V M Reddy also inspected the cadets' living quarters and expressed his satisfaction with the facilities provided.

Ambrose bullish on West Indies' chances at T20 World Cup

AGENCIES
NEW YORK, MAY 17

West Indies great and ICC Hall of Famer Curtly Ambrose believes his former team have enough talent to win an unprecedented third ICC Men's T20 World Cup title next month. While the West Indies are just one of the two sides to have won multiple men's T20 World Cup titles, the Caribbean team will need to overturn some poor form at recent ICC tournaments, if they are to become the only three-time winner of the event.

The West Indies didn't make it out of the first round of the most recent T20 World Cup in Australia in 2022 and failed to even qualify for last year's ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in India.

But Ambrose thinks the West Indies' fortunes are turning under skipper Rovman Powell and pointed to T20I series successes over powerhouses South Africa, India, and England in the last 14 months



as evidence of this. These returns have the legendary fast bowler confident of a strong showing from the West Indies in the ninth edition of the T20 World Cup, an event they will co-host with the USA, an ICC report said.

"We have a very, very good team," Ambrose claimed when speaking at the launch of the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York earlier this week.

"As we speak they (West Indies players) are in Antigua at a camp preparing themselves for the start of the T20 World Cup which

is a couple of weeks away," he said.

"I believe once the guys start playing consistent cricket and smart cricket, I believe we can take the trophy," Ambrose said.

"It is not going to be easy, but we are one of only two nations to have won it twice so we are going to try and make it three," he said.

"And no other nation has ever won it on home soil, so all that is motivation for the guys to do well and I am hoping they can do it," Ambrose said.

The West Indies are drawn in Group C at the

T20 World Cup and face the champions of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup East Asia-Pacific Qualifier Papua New Guinea first up in Guyana on June 2, before their remaining opening round fixtures against Uganda, New Zealand and Afghanistan.

Ambrose expects to see some upsets at this year's edition of the T20 World Cup as he knows every side has plenty of talented players at their disposal.

"I admire a lot of cricketers (at the T20 World Cup) and I am looking forward to them doing well," he said. "As a proud Antiguan and being from the West Indies, I want the West Indies to win," Ambrose said.

"It is not going to be easy because in T20 cricket every team has an equal chance of beating any other team and that is just the nature of T20 cricket," he said.

"It is going to be exciting, but I am going to be rooting for the West Indies," Ambrose added.

Brazil selected as host of 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup

AGENCIES
BANGKOK, MAY 17

Brazil will host the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup following a vote at the 74th FIFA Congress here on Friday.

Brazil got 119 votes from the Congress, beating the joint bid of Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany, which took 78 votes.

Brazil's successful bid means the 10th edition of the tournament will be held in South America for the first time.

FIFA had earlier received two other initial expressions of interest to host the 2027 event, namely a joint bid by the United States and Mexico, and a single bid from South Africa. However, they withdrew to focus on bidding for the tournament in 2031.

The 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup was held in Australia and New Zealand, where Spain clinched the title.

Assault on Maliwal shameful, shocking: Sitharaman

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAY 17

Stepping up its attack on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on the Swati Maliwal alleged assault case, the BJP on Friday termed the treatment meted out by the Aam Aadmi Party to one of their own as "shameful and shocking" as it questioned the CM's silence on the episode.

Maliwal is AAP's Rajya Sabha member and headed the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW).

Demanding an "apology" from Kejriwal, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman addressing a news conference here, said, "If a woman MP is not safe in the CM residence, then what about women security in Delhi?"

"There cannot be any whataboutery. This happened inside Arvind Kejriwal's residence while he was present (and) by his right-hand man," she thundered.

Lashing out at the AAP notional convenor terming his response in the entire episode as shocking, Sitharaman said: "Swati Maliwal did not register a complaint with the police for three-four



days after the incident, it means that there was pressure on her from high-level."

Sitharaman said, "Since May 13, the CM has not once spoken even a single word on the act of violence by his PA against his own party's Rajya Sabha female member. It is unbelievable and unacceptable."

She questioned, how Kejriwal managed to mute himself and "did not even say a word about it" when his party's female member who was the chief of the Delhi Commission for Women was assaulted.

She slammed the Delhi CM for "shamelessly" moving around with Bibhav Kumar (Kejriwal's aide, and main accused in the alleged assault) at a joint opposition press conference in Lucknow this week.

"When the first Wom-

en's Reservation Bill was passed in the new Parliament building, AAP leader Sanjay Singh said 'Mahila Bewakuf Banao Bill'. Today, who is making fools of women?"

It's not the BJP. Our party has two Lok Sabha candidates from Delhi -- Bansuri Swaraj and Kamaljeet Sehrawat. Whereas, AAP does not have a single female candidate in Delhi," she said.

On Thursday, the Delhi Police registered an FIR in connection with the alleged assault case after Maliwal filed a police complaint. Bibhav Kumar who is Kejriwal's private secretary has been named as an accused.

The FIR was registered after Maliwal's statement was recorded by a Delhi Police team at the Rajya Sabha member's residence.

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, MAY 17

Amid swirling speculations surrounding Mahendra Singh Dhoni's retirement from cricket, Chennai Super Kings' batting coach, Michael Hussey, voiced his desire for the coolest legend to extend his illustrious career. Hussey's remarks came during his recent visit to the Super Kings Academy at Karaikudi in Tamil Nadu.

"I hope he keeps playing on next year and maybe another year and another year after that," Hussey expressed, underscoring his optimism for Dhoni's continued presence in the cricketing arena, on Friday.

Addressing the speculations around retirement plans, Hussey reflected, "Is he retiring? I have not heard about his retirement. He keeps it very close to himself. He has not announced anything yet."

The ambiguity surrounding Dhoni's future has kept fans and cricket



enthusiasts on the edge, awaiting an official statement from the cricketing maestro. As anticipation mounts, the cricketing world remains poised for any developments regarding the future of MS Dhoni's illustrious career.

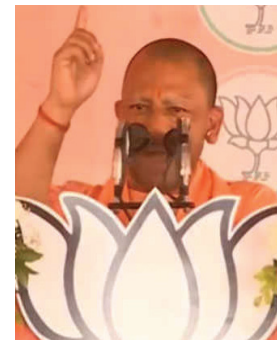
In addition to discussing Dhoni's future, Hussey also emphasised Chennai Super Kings' determination ahead of their highly anticipated clash against Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) on Saturday.

"We play RCB in our next league game. Obviously, we have to try and beat RCB first and if we do that, we will go into the Playoffs," Hussey stated, highlighting the team's focus on securing victory. Acknowledging the broader impact of cricket beyond the field, Hussey commended the efforts of the Super Kings Academy in nurturing talent and promoting the growth of cricket in Tamil Nadu. He emphasised the

importance of character development, stating, "Cricket is a great sport in making friends, teaching you about life skills, and character that will hold you in good stead for the rest of your life in whatever you do."

Hussey's visit to the Super Kings Academy reaffirmed the team's commitment to fostering cricket talent and nurturing the next generation of cricketers in the region.

Public confident about results on June 4: Yogi



AGENCIES
BARABANKI (UP), MAY 17

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said that the slogan 'Abki baar, 400 paar,' which echoing across the country, has now become a public declaration.

Addressing a public meeting in Barabanki Lok Sabha constituency on Zaidpur Road, the CM said, "With three phases of elections remaining, the entire public is already confident about the results on June 4."

He said, "The slogan is the clarion call of the common people across the country against the divisive, appeasement, and anarchic policies of Congress and the INDI alliance."

Yogi appealed to the public to vote in favour of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidates from Barabanki Rajrani Rawat and Union Minister and party nominee from Mohanlalganj seat Kaushal Kishore.

The CM welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the land of Mahadeva and Siddheshwar Mahadev on behalf of the people of Barabanki. He said the slogan of 'Abki Baar 400 Paar' is also a new proclamation of the victory of PM Modi's vision of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat', 'Atmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat'.

He said seeing the development in the last 10 years, people have once again connected themselves with the victory of the Modi government. He urged the public to contribute to realising the vision of PM Modi's self-reliant and developed India by making the 'lotus' bloom in all 80 Lok Sabha seats of UP, including Barabanki and Mohanlalganj.

SC reserves verdict on Kejriwal's plea challenging arrest by ED

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAY 17

The Supreme Court on Friday reserved its verdict on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's plea challenging his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case stemming from the alleged excise policy scam.

A bench comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta after hearing the arguments from both sides reserved its judgement.

The Additional Solicitor General SV Raju told the court that the Enforcement Directorate has also filed a complaint against the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the probe is in the pipeline.

There is direct evidence of its national convenor Kejriwal "demanding" Rs 100 crore as kickbacks in the case, the ASG alleged.



Kejriwal was arrested on March 21, hours after the Delhi High Court, refused to grant him protection from any coercive action against him.

He was granted interim bail by the Supreme Court on May 10 to campaign in the Lok Sabha polls till June 1. The apex court ordered him to surrender on June 2.

The eight-page bail order had rejected an argument by the ED that releasing the Delhi CM on interim bail for canvassing would create an impression among the public and set a judicial precedent,

that politicians were a separate class, higher in status than the ordinary citizens and immune from arrest.

In the last hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta accused the Delhi CM of making public utterances, which amounted to a "slap on the system".

The SG referred to a speech reportedly made by the Delhi CM wherein he had urged the public to vote for the AAP's 'broom' symbol so that he would not have to go back to jail on June 2.

Justice Khanna said Kejriwal's remarks were

'Spiritual neighbours' India, Mongolia enhance defence ties

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, MAY 17

India and Mongolia reviewed progress on various bilateral defence cooperation initiatives and identified means to further enhance cooperation.

They exchanged views on the current geopolitical situation at the 12th Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting between the Defence Ministries of India and Mongolia that took place in Ulaanbaatar on May 16-17, a Defence Ministry statement said here.

The meeting was chaired by Joint Secretary, MoD, India Amitabh Prasad and State Secretary of MoD, Mongolia Brigadier General Gankhuyag Davagdorj. India's Ambassador to Mongolia Atul Malhari Gotsurve also attended the meeting.

The Joint Secretary highlighted the potential of the capacity and capability of the Indian defence industry and looked forward to a fruitful partnership with the Armed Forces of Mongolia, which the Mongolian side acknowledged. The Joint

Secretary and the Indian Ambassador also called on Deputy Defence Minister of Mongolia B Bayarmagnai, and discussed bilateral cooperation issues. The delegation visited a training establishment in Ulaanbaatar and reviewed the ongoing engagements.

India enjoys age-old historical, cultural and civilisational ties with Mongolia. Both countries regard each other as 'Spiritual Neighbours'. In the modern times, values like democracy, freedom and market economy hold the two nations closer.

Justice Tashi interacts with Children on the ill effects of Substance Abuse

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAY 17

The J&K Legal Services Authority in collaboration with District Legal Services Authority, Srinagar and with the support of Delhi Public School (DPS), Srinagar today organised an impactful awareness program for students on the topic "Substance Abuse: Consequences, Prevention, and Challenges" at DPS, Athawajan, here. The event brought together esteemed dignitaries, experts, and passionate students.

Justice Tashi Rabstan, Senior-most Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority was the Chief Guest on the occasion. On his arrival, Justice Tashi accompanied by Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary and Muzamil Hayat Kabli, Under Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority was warmly received by Vijay Dhar, Chairman and Shafaq Afshan, Principal, Delhi Public School, Srinagar as well as Dr. Arshid Hussain, Professor, Psychiatry Department, GMC Srinagar, Dr. Majid Shafi,



Psychiatrist, JLNH Hospital Srinagar and Jahangir Ahmad Bakshi, Secretary, DLSA Srinagar.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation of students, faculty members, administrative staff of DPS Srinagar, advocates, law students, staff of J&K Legal Services Authority and DLSA Srinagar as well as Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs).

In his opening address, Vijay Dhar extended a warm welcome to the Chief Guest and expressed gratitude to Justice Tashi for short listing DPS Srinagar for interacting with the students on drug abuse. He further emphasized the significance of conducting such programs which go a long way in raising awareness

and diverting the children towards positive societal change.

Delivering the Presidential address, Justice Tashi highlighted the need to raise awareness regarding ill effects of substance abuse especially among the young adolescents and urged all the stakeholders especially the teachers to come forward and extend a helping hand in eradicating this menace from the society. Justice Tashi further emphasized that a collective and concerted effort is needed both at institution and family level to tackle this evil which is driving our youth towards destruction.

Both the eminent resource persons on the occasion namely Dr. Arshid Hussain and Dr.

Majid Shafi, explained in detail the causes behind the increase in substance abuse especially in Valley and also revealed that the data suggests that the Kashmir valley has surpassed the State of Punjab as far as involvement of young generation in drug abuse is concerned. Dr. Shafi also highlighted the initiatives of UT Government in establishing a 24x7 helpline no. 14416 for the benefit of those affected by substance abuse and need care and counselling. He also informed the gathering that in every hospital a de-addiction center has been established for the benefit of such persons.

Dr. Arshid Hussain narrated his experiences to the audience to educate

them about the ways and means required to be adopted to stay away from drug addiction.

The program was enriched by a compelling skit performed by law students and advocates, illustrating the detrimental effects of substance abuse. In appreciation of their efforts, Justice Rabstan presented certificates to the participants, acknowledging their active involvement and contribution to the success of the event.

Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, Jahangir Ahmad Bakshi proposed the formal vote of thanks and expressed gratitude to the management of DPS Srinagar for extending support in organizing awareness program on such an important issue. He further expressed appreciation to all the contributors for encouraging the Legal Services Institutions to raise voice in fighting the menace of Substance Abuse. The event concluded on a high note, with a commitment to continued education, inspiring action, and nurturing a healthier, safer community on the path towards a substance-free society.

'World Telecommunication & Information Society Day' observed by IEI Centre

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAY 17

The Institution of Engineers (India), Jammu & Kashmir UT Centre, Srinagar, hosted a one-day seminar to celebrate 'World Telecommunication & Information Society Day'. The event, themed 'Digital Innovation for Sustainable Development,' brought together a distinguished group of participants. Attendees included corporate members of IEI, Executive Committee Members, academicians, students from NIT Srinagar and Kashmir Government Women's Polytechnic College, as well as other engineers and faculty members.

The seminar was conducted under the patronage of Er. Iftekhar Ahmad Hakim, Chairman of the Institution of Engineers

(India), J&K UT Centre. In his address, he expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all attendees for their valuable presence and contributions.

Dr. Jahangeer Ali, the Honorary Secretary of the institution, coordinated the programme, ensuring its seamless execution.

The event was honored by the presence of distinguished figures in the fields of engineering and telecommunication. A panel of esteemed speakers, including the Registrar of NIT Srinagar, provided deep insights.

Dr. Janib ul Bashir, Head of the IT Department at NIT Srinagar, having vast research in the field of ICT in modern times, delivered a compelling PowerPoint presentation that underscored the significance of the seminar's theme.

Additionally, Er. Henna Khan, JTO at BSNL, offered valuable perspectives on engineering within the telecom sector. Her contributions were particularly insightful, reflecting the crucial role of telecommunications in sustainable development.

This seminar not only facilitated a rich exchange of knowledge but also fostered collaboration between the institutions and shall go a long way in inspiring the students.

The discussions and presentations underscored the critical importance of digital innovation in achieving sustainable development goals, making the event a significant milestone in promoting awareness and action in this vital area. The seminar emphasized the digital divide needs to be addressed.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024 Final Arrangements for Home Voting process reviewed at Anantnag



JI NEWS SERVICE
ANANTNAG, MAY 17

In preparation for the upcoming home voting process scheduled to commence from May 19 in 3-Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary Constituency, a comprehensive review meeting was convened under the chairmanship of Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) for postal ballots today at the VC Hall of DC Office Complex Anantnag.

The meeting was informed that this historic initiative, marking the first instance of home voting in a Lok Sabha Election, aims to extend the franchise to the elderly and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Eligible voters above 85 years of age and Persons with Dis-

abilities (PwDs) with a 40% benchmark disability are entitled to avail the optional home voting facility.

This progressive step underscores the commitment to inclusivity and accessibility in the electoral process, thereby fostering greater democratic participation.

The meeting deliberated extensively on the home voting process. Key arrangements have been meticulously put in place to facilitate a seamless voting experience, with a particular emphasis on catering to the needs of those with special requirements.

Stringent measures have been instituted to uphold the integrity of the voting process.

Lok-Adalat settles 104 cases at Ganderbal; awards Rs.33k as settlement amount

JI NEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, MAY 17

On the directions of Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, the Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief J&K Legal Services Authority), and Justice Tashi Rabstan, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority, the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Ganderbal today

organized Lok-Adalat for amicable settlement of consumer cases.

The Lok-Adalat was held under the supervision of Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority and Ritesh Kumar Dubey, Chairman DLSA (Pr. District & Sessions Judge) Ganderbal, and under the guidance of Nusrat Ali Hakak, Secretary DLSA Ganderbal.

DC Anantnag chairs DRSC meeting

JI NEWS SERVICE
ANANTNAG, MAY 17

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Syeed Fakhruddin Hamid in a District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) meeting convened, here today emphasized the critical need to identify and address blind and black spots on roads to prevent further accidents in the district.

SF Hamid highlighted the ongoing road safety initiatives, including the installation of crash barriers, road signage and parapets aimed at enhancing commuter safety across the district.

He urged executing agencies to submit plans promptly for implementation in the current finan-

cial year to ensure swift action on road safety initiatives, emphasizing the importance of road widening and parking spaces for public convenience and safety.

The meeting witnessed discussions on accident data analysis using the I-RAD platform, with particular attention to month-wise mishaps for comprehensive action. The measures taken by the Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) for traffic decongestion and against traffic violators were also reviewed.

Active participation from committee members led to extensive discussions on various road safety matters, with strategies proposed to enhance road safety across the

district. He also directed stakeholders to conduct rigorous road safety awareness programs, form road safety clubs, involve NGOs, and engage young people in spreading the message of safer roads.

The DC urged all the stakeholders to take responsibility and pledged to follow traffic rules while encouraging others to do the same. He emphasized the importance of collective effort in saving lives lost to accidents, calling upon all to be road safety brand ambassadors.

Given the significance of the subject, SF Hamid announced plans to convene quarterly meetings to review progress and ensure the effective implementation of decisions taken.

Inter-School Zonal Level Competitions ignite passion among students across Ganderbal

JI NEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, MAY 17

As part of inter-school Zonal level sports competitions, the Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Ganderbal successfully organized a diverse range of sports activities across the district.

In Zone Kangan, an exciting Kabaddi competition for boys under 14 years of age was held at GHS Preng Kangan ground. The event saw participation from 147 enthusiastic students. Later trophies were distributed to the meritorious teams.

Simultaneously, Zone Tullamulla hosted the final match of the inter-school Zonal level Handball competition for boys under 14 years at Tehsilbagh Ground Khrabihama. The final match between PHSS Watlar and MS Banpora ended in a thrilling victory for PHSS Watlar.

Both the winner and runner-up teams were appreciated and felicitated.

Similarly, Zone Gander-



bal organized two inter-school Zonal level sports competitions in Football and Handball for girls under 14 years at GCOPE Gadoora Ganderbal. The event witnessed the participation of 310 student players.

The best teams are being identified and trained by field officials with the aim of achieving

success at the district level and bringing laurels to YSS Ganderbal.

Zone Hariganwan also contributed by organizing intramural sports activities, including Cricket at HS Hayan and Kabaddi and Kho-kho at MS Yachihama. A significant number of enthusiastic students participated in these events.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024:

SVEEP program held at Saint Joseph School Baramulla

JI NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, MAY 17

In view of Lok Sabha Election 2024 in I-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency on 20th of May, a mega SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) program under the campaign 'I Vote For Sure' was held at Saint Joseph School, Baramulla, to encourage and inspire the eligible voters to exercise their right to vote.

The event was presided over by District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa. Sapna Kotwal, UT Nodal Officer Media, Chief Education Officer, Shabir Ahmad Khan and others were present at the event.

During the program, students and newly eligible voters actively engaged in a variety of activities, all of which aimed to instill a sense of civic duty and enthusiasm among participants and raise awareness about the significance of voting.

A signature campaign was also conducted during the event, with the partici-



ipation from the Nodal Officer SVEEP, the DEO, and other eligible voters who pledged to exercise their democratic right on the polling day. The DEO on the occasion highlighted the district administration's extensive efforts in conducting SVEEP activities on a grand scale to spread voter awareness and encourage maximum participation in the electoral process.

Minga Sherpa further urged the people to come

out in large numbers on 20th of May, the day of Poll in I-Baramulla PC and vote to choose their representatives who will work on fulfilling their developmental aspirations.

Speaking during the event, Sapna Kotwal, emphasized on the significance of electoral literacy in empowering citizens and urged everyone, especially first-time voters, to exercise their democratic right responsibly on the poll day.

Pr. D&S Judge inspects District Jail Kupwara



JI NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, MAY 17

In accordance with the directions of NALSA and J&K Legal Services Authority, Shazia Tabasum, Chairperson, District Legal Services Authority/Pr. District & Sessions Judge, Kupwara today conducted the inspection of District Jail Kupwara.

The objective of the inspection was to take stock of health and hygienic conditions of jail inmates, condition of barracks, washrooms and other related issues required for the wellbeing

of the inmates.

The Chairperson was accompanied by Chief Prosecution Officer, Kupwara, Chief Administrative Officer, Assistant LADC Kupwara and other officials of DLSA Kupwara.

During the visit, the Chairperson inspected the jail premises to review the prevalent condition and the state of prisoners lodged therein. The quality of food and water, medical facilities, conditions of washrooms, and spacing within the barracks was also inspected.

The Chairperson also interacted with the pris-

oners placed in different barracks and inquired about their health and the quality of food and water provided to them. She also inspected the facilities available at Video Conferencing Hall, Medical Clinic, Legal Aid Clinic and cooking area of the jail.

She also inquired about the condition of jail inmates whose trial is pending outside the District and stressed upon the Jail Visiting Lawyers and PLVs to record the grievances of jail inmates for early redressal and timely action.

SVEEP Team interacts with NCC Cadets at GDC Rajouri

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, MAY 17

SVEEP team Rajouri, headed by Prof. Mohd Iqbal Raina conducted an interactive session with NCC Cadets of Government PG College Rajouri.

The event was held under the guidance of District Election Officer Om Parkash Bhagat.

The team engaged with the NCC cadets, emphasizing the significance of voting and their role in raising awareness among the public and assisting the elderly and physically challenged individuals during the electoral process. Nodal Officer Raina highlighted the importance of active participation in elections, particularly for the youth. He urged the cadets to spread the message of responsible voting and encourage their peers to register and



cast their ballots.

The NCC cadets were enthusiastic and expressed their commitment to fulfilling their role as electoral ambassadors. They pledged to work towards increasing voter turnout and fostering a democratic spirit in society.

ANO Major Tanwir Ahmed Choudhary commended the NCC cadets

for their efforts and assured them of all necessary support in their endeavors. He expressed confidence that the cadets would play a pivotal role in promoting electoral literacy and ensuring a smooth and fair electoral process in Rajouri.

Team members Dr. Khalid Rayaz and Prof. Ajaz Nazir were also present during the event.

Shailendra reviews implementation of HADP, CAPEX, CSSs

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, MAY 17

Principle Secretary, Agriculture Production Department (APD), Shailendra Kumar, today convened a meeting with Department of Agriculture and Horticulture to review the physical and financial achievements under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), CAPEX (APD), Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs). The meeting had detailed assessment of implementation of projects under HADP besides different centrally sponsored schemes being executed by the department of agriculture and horticulture including RKVY, MIDH, ATMA, NFSM, PM KISAN, Soil Health Card Scheme and KCC Scheme.

Mission Director HADP, Yasha Mudgal, was also present in the meeting.

Addressing the meet-



ing, Shailendra Kumar highlighted the importance of expeditious and judicious expenditure of funds under different projects under HADP and CAPEX. He asked the officers that funds allocated under HADP projects, different components of centrally sponsored schemes must be expended in a time bound manner. He reiterated the importance of maintaining the highest level of transparency and accountability during all the expenditures.

The Principle Secretary asked the concerned officers to work in close coordination with the dis-

trict administration and farmers as well for effective implementation of different initiatives at district level. He directed the officers to reach out to the farmers of every area and make them aware about HADP, viz-a via latest farmer friendly technologies in agriculture and horticulture sectors.

Director Agriculture Kashmir, Director Agriculture Jammu, Director Horticulture Kashmir, Joint Directors, Deputy Directors and other senior officers of the department of agriculture and horticulture were present in the meeting.

DC Doda inspects water treatment facility at Beoli Filtration Plant

JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, MAY 17

Deputy Commissioner Doda Harvinder Singh, visited the Filtration Plant in Beoli (Doda) and inspected the working of Filtration Plant.

Accompanied by a team of PHE officials & epidemiologists, the DC Doda inspected the testing procedures. He interacted with the staff assigned the monitoring of the water quality at the Filter Plant. He stressed the need for strict adherence to highest quality standards and directed the officials to take immediate corrective measures if any discrepancies are found during testing. The DC emphasized the importance of regular testing and monitoring of water quality indicators to prevent any health hazards due to contamination. During the visit, DC

Doda was accompanied by CPO, XEN PW (R&B) Doda, XEN PHE Division Doda, District Epidemiologists and other officials of PHE Department Doda.

Later, the DC also inspected the under construction site of the new DIET complex at Beoli (Doda). He asked to ensure completion as per set timeline.

The complex is expected to provide much-needed resources and facilities for the teaching community. He also inspected polytechnic college building construction. The inspection was conducted to evaluate the extent of the damages to the road leading to the complex and sought a report from the Engineering department showcasing necessary steps to repair and improve the infrastructure surrounding the college.

Rs 2.18 lakh penalty imposed on traders for FSS Act violation

JI NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, MAY 17

The Adjudicating Officer and Additional District Magistrate (ADM) Kathua, Ranjit Singh, has imposed Rs 2.18 lakh penalty on erring Food Business Operators (FBOs) operating in the district.

The penalties were imposed for the sale of misbranded and substandard food items, in violation of the Food Safety and Standards Act-2006.

This enforcement action targeted multiple manufacturers, wholesale dealers and retailers found to be contravening the provisions of the

FSS Act-2006. The ADM, acting as the Adjudicating Officer, emphasized the necessity of compliance with the legal standards governing the food industry.

Ranjit Singh issued strict warnings to the erring FBOs, urging strict adherence to the Food Safety and Standards Act and its associated regulations. He warned that future violations would attract even harsher penalties.

The ADM instructed the Enforcement Agency to take decisive actions against the violators under the directives of the FSS Act-2006.

DLMC meeting discusses formation of FPOs in Samba District

JI NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, MAY 17

District Level Monitoring Committee (D-MC) on Central Sector Scheme for Formation and Promotion of Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs) met here today. District Development Commissioner Abhishek Sharma chaired the meeting which was attended by DDM NABARD Champa Thakur, ADDC Samba, Mehmood Riaz Khan, Officials from Agriculture and allied departments and DDM NABARD. At the outset, the DDM NABARD gave a brief introduction on the scheme for formation & promotion of FPOs under CSS along with its objectives & benefits. The house was also informed that National Cooperative Development Cooperation (NCDC) has been assigned the task to form an FPO in Sumb block for which



Jammu Central Cooperative Bank (JCCB) has been appointed as its Cluster Based Business Organisation (CBBO). The DDC underscored the need to encourage the farmers of Aspirational Sumb block to avail the golden opportunity by coming together to form an FPO and get benefitted in terms of quality, timely and hassle free input requirements along with better marketing facility for their produce and returns.

As mushroom is being cultivated by a good number of farmers and also tagged as ODOP prod-

uct of district Samba, it was proposed to take mushroom as primary crop along with Citrus fruits for formation of FPO to generate the round the year income cycle for farmers of the block Sumb.

Later, the DDC and D-MC members visited Seed Multiplication Farm at Balore in Nud block. The team of officers reviewed the functioning of mushroom compost unit & cropping unit and advised the officials to extend the benefit of the mushroom unit to maximum number of farmers.

Gyan Vatika- Book Reading Club established in GDC Samba



JI NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, MAY 17

To empower students by providing a vibrant platform to learn and share knowledge, Government Degree College Samba has established a Gyan Vatika-Book Reading Club on the College Campus.

District Development Commissioner Abhishek Sharma inaugurated the vital facility also marked by screening of documen-

tary on Shaheed Bhagat Singh.

The DC complimented the college for starting the Gyan Vatika and exhorted that the book club should inculcate a fashion for book reading and facilitating creative and insightful discussions.

The creation of Gyan Vatika (Garden of knowledge) evokes a sense of relaxation and serenity and implies a place where book lovers can gather and

explore literature together. Gyaan Vatika aims to fashion a vibrant platform where book enthusiasts can share knowledge, ideas, and literary enjoyment over insightful discussions while fostering personal and collective growth. Gyan Vatika highlights fortnightly activities such as Book Talks, Author Spotlights, Genre Exploration, Guest Speakers, Lit Quiz, Book Swaps, Filmclips etc.

J&K Resident Commission holds workshop on Emotional Wellness, First Aid for employees

JI NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 17

The Jammu and Kashmir Resident Commission, New Delhi, under its "Hello J&K" initiative today organized a proactive emotional wellness workshop, in collaboration with Sleepwell foundation.

Commissioner Secretary Hospitality and Protocol, Dr. Rashmi Singh, who is also the Principal Resident Commissioner chaired the sessions of the workshop.

The workshop was conducted in hybrid mode and attended by the officers and officials of J&K Resident Commission, New Delhi besides its sub offices in Chandigarh, Amritsar, Mumbai and JK government employees from Hospitality & Protocol department in Jammu and Srinagar.

Dr. Singh stressed on the importance of forging constructive connect between various segments of society especially the youth as part of the recently launched Hello J&K initiative of Resident Commission. She focused on the purpose of this workshop for helping all employees



and team members in H&P Department for navigating any kind of pressure or challenges in work environment through better connect with the self and achieving a balance of mind, body and soul. This, she said, would resolve internal conflict besides equipping them better in facing the challenges of

external environment. She appreciated the speakers for highlighting the crucial role of emotional first-aid and mind management in our daily lives.

Namita Gautam, Managing Trustee of Sleepwell Foundation, elaborated on the context and introduced the experienced counsellors Neelam Agar-

wal and Marul Khanna Parashar, who conducted an enriching interactive session covering topics like emotional hurt/injury, emotional first-aid, myths around emotions, consequences of neglecting emotions, steps for emotional first-aid and tools for self care.

Pragati Chauhan from

the Art of Living, talked about the importance of having a calm and stable mind. She started by mentioning how our mind tends to oscillate between the past and the future which brings stress and tension in the body. She illustrated how breath and meditation can be used to calm our mind and body. She gave an experience of pranayam and meditation in the workshop as experiential learning. Anupma Bindra, a Chakra Healing Practitioner, spoke about how Colortherapy, aligned with the seven chakras, offers a holistic approach to emotional wellness. She explained the importance of Chakras as energy centres and how one can keep their chakras balanced using various methods including colors as each chakra corresponds to a specific color, influencing various aspects of our emotions and well-being.

"By harnessing the power of color therapy and chakra healing, individuals can restore balance, release emotional blockages, and promote inner harmony, contributing towards overall emotional wellness", she maintained.

JI NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, MAY 17

The Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kathua, part of the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology-Jammu (SKUAST-J), celebrated the Golden Jubilee of KVKs today.

This milestone event was marked by the arrival of the symbolic Golden Jubilee Torch, which was ceremoniously handed over by Dr. Hema Tripathi, Associate Director Extension, SKUAST-J, from KVK Samba to Dr. Vishal Mahajan, Chief Scientist and Head of KVK Kathua.

The event was organized under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Prof. B. N. Tripathi and the able guidance of Director Extension Prof. Amrith Vaid of SKUAST-J.

The Golden Jubilee celebration, initiated by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), features a torch rally that commenced in Ladakh and will culminate at the ICAR-KVK Golden Jubilee Conference 2024 in New Delhi.

Dr. Vishal Mahajan highlighted the signifi-



cance of the Golden Jubilee, commemorating 50 years of KVKs' dedicated service to agricultural development. He emphasized that the torch symbolizes the spread of knowledge from KVKs to districts across India.

Reflecting on KVKs' pivotal role since their inception in 1974, he called for intensified efforts during the 'Amrit Kaal' to meet farmers' evolving needs.

Dr. Mahajan shared that the KVK movement began 50 years ago with the establishment of the first KVK in Pondicherry under Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore. Today, there are 731 KVKs across the country, serving as comprehensive support centers for farmers. He noted that KVKs have significantly contributed to increasing food grain production and

act as hubs for technology transfer, capacity building, vocational training, skill development, market information, and agribusiness development.

Dr. Vishal Sharma, Scientist at KVK Kathua, also spoke about the crucial role KVKs play in rural transformation, highlighting their impact on improving agricultural practices and livelihoods.

Following the celebrations, the ceremonial torch was handed over to Dr. Narinder Deep Singh, Head of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Pathankot, at Lakhnampur. Dr. Narinder Deep Singh expressed confidence that the torch relay would inspire transformative changes within KVKs, turning them into convergence hubs for Indian agriculture, aligning with the nation's vision for 2047.