

DENGUE WARNING SIGNS

Many people with dengue can be cared for at home with adequate rest and hydration. But, if you experience any warning signs, go immediately to the nearest medical center.

Watch out for dengue warning signs!

A drop in body temperature accompanied by any of the following symptoms:

- Severe and continuous headache
- Joint and muscle pain
- Stomach pain
- Present vomiting
- Future vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Disorientation
- Severe skin pain on touch, head or joint
- Redness

If you have any of these symptoms, go to the nearest medical center IMMEDIATELY.

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Our membership drive should be all-encompassing, all-inclusive: Amit Shah

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU/SRINAGAR, SEPT 4

The world's largest democratic party launched a national membership drive starting on September 2, with the first membership being taken by the PM Modi. The goal of this membership drive is not only to once again make the BJP the world's largest democratic party, just as it did in 2014, but also to make this campaign all-encompassing and all-inclusive.

All-encompassing means that no booth in the country, whether in a remote mountain, island, dense forest, or wilderness, should be left untouched. All-inclusive means that any citizen of the country, regardless of caste, religion, or creed,



should be connected to the ideology of the BJP. The BJP is the only party that does not consider its members and workers just as numbers. Every BJP worker is a living entity, a carrier of ideology. Here, the worker nurtures the work culture and acts as a link between the government and the organisation,

always keeping the government connected with the people.

Today, there are more than 1,500 political parties in our India. But there is no other party, except for the BJP, that conducts a membership drive every six years in a democratic manner, with trust and openness. It is well known that there

was a time when the BJP had only two members, and today, the BJP is not only the largest democratic party in India but also the largest in the world. This is a testament to the uniqueness of the BJP, which has endured numerous hardships, challenges, defeats, and setbacks during its struggle but never allowed its efforts to cease.

Today, under the leadership of PM Modi, over the past 10 years, 60 crore poor people have received homes, electricity, toilets, rations, gas, and free healthcare up to 5 lakh rupees. At the same time, under the BJP Govt, today's India envisions the construction of a developed, empowered, and prosperous nation. Whether it's

rural or urban development, energy or space, digitization or infrastructure, robust development has taken place in every sector under PM's leadership. This leadership has also strengthened internal and external security in the country, enabling India to achieve new heights every day.

After the completion of this membership drive, a new organisation will be formed, and once again, the campaign for India's victory and BJP's victory will begin. Therefore, it is essential that we all expand the BJP by reaching every village, every home, every city, every island, forest, and mountain, so that we can realise PM Modi's vision of a great and developed India.

Our first step will be to restore Statehood to J&K: Rahul Gandhi in Banihal

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEP 4

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and former Congress president Rahul Gandhi Wednesday kick-started Congress election campaign for the upcoming assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir from Banihal where he addressed a public rally.

Addressing a massive public gathering in Sangaldan areas of Banihal, which will vote in the first phase of the election



on September 18, Rahul Gandhi, as per news agency said the party's first step will be to restore

Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. "In the history

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CS Dulloo chairs high-level flood preparedness meet of J&K

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 4

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting at Civil Secretariat regarding flood preparedness and response review in the UT of J&K.

At the outset, Chief Secretary praised the Divisional and District administration for the steps they have already taken regarding flood preparedness and response review in all respects.

While chairing the meeting, CS called for devising an effective strategy to deal with any eventuality. He called for evolving proper SoPs to deal with the situation where every concerned individual is fully acquainted with his/her role and responsibility in the times of emergency. He directed the officers to remain in a state of alertness to combat any eventuality that may arise.

Asserting that zonal level Committees play a critical role in time of an emergency, CS said that they need to be trained and should not be found wanting in any respect. He said that flood response



manual should be circulated among all the concerned and should be studied deeply.

Regarding the Decision Support System, CS said that it should be upgraded and supported by Digital Risk Data Base which is an inventory of all the resources, infrastructure etc available in an area so that a proper and coordinated plan is framed and executed in time.

He further called for having a detailed flood mapping/inundation map of each area to act accordingly. He exhorted upon the concerned officers to have proper planning in place to deal effectively with the natural disasters and mobilisation of resources to be done in advance and flood duty charts issued.

Chief Secretary also inquired about the stock position of different flood mitigation items available

with the departments and urged for conducting mock exercises by involving all stake holding departments at ground level.

Administrative Secretaries from respective departments gave details about their preparedness and the steps they have taken to mitigate the possible disasters.

Secretary Health informed that they have prepared a comprehensive plan like shifting of vital installations, equipment, machinery to meet any contingency. SMC Commissioner informed that they have pre-positioned men, machinery, mobile and static de-watering pumps at the identified locations in Srinagar city. Fire and Emergency department has also kept fire tenders and portable pumps for the purpose as well.

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After Gbl, Omar Abdullah to file nomination papers from Budgam today

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 4

National Conference (NC) Vice President and former chief minister of erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state, Omar Abdullah is all set to file his nomination papers for the upcoming assembly elections from Budgam seat on Thursday.

NC's Social Media & Digital Platforms Incharge, Ifra Jan has confirmed it to the news agency, saying that Omar Abdullah will file his nomination papers for the second seat in Budgam tomorrow.

As per the sources, Omar will file his nomination papers at the Deputy Commissioners (DC) office in Budgam tomorrow at 12:00 PM.

He will be accompanied by the senior party

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ECI enforces exit poll ban during J&K Assembly Elections-2024

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 4

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has prohibited the conduct of any exit polls by media outlets during the Assembly Elections-2024 for Jammu and Kashmir under Section 126A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. The exit poll ban on election results, according to notification, starts from the beginning of hours fixed for poll on the first day of poll and continues till half an hour after the closing of the poll in J&K.

The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Elections are scheduled to commence from 18 September 2024 in 3 Phases across the Union Territory.

A notification issued today stated that the schedule for the ongoing General Elections to the Legislative Assemblies of Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir was announced by the Election Commission through Press Note No. ECU/PN/128/2024 dated August 16,

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Definition of Democracy doesn't fit for a place reduced to UT from a State: Rahul in Anantnag

JNEWS SERVICE
DOORU (ANANTNAG), SEP 04

Reiterating that J&K has to get back the Statehood, senior Congress leader and Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Parliament Rahul Gandhi said that definition of democracy doesn't fit with the J&K that has been reduced to a UT from being a State.

"Either BJP will announce restoration of Statehood to J&K or INDIA block will be doing



it as its first step after dethroning the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his party," Rahul said while addressing

a gathering at Dooru in Anantnag district where he kick-started the election campaign for the

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Thank God we are alive, BJP's plan was to kill us all after Aug 5, 2019: Dr Farooq in Anantnag

JNEWS SERVICE
DOORU (ANANTNAG) SEP 04

National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah Wednesday said that post abrogation of Article 370, it seemed as if BJP wanted to kill every Kashmiri but "thank God we are alive."

Criticising the BJP's policies, Dr Farooq said that the intentions of BJP were never clear since day one.

"Even today, a boy was killed for having a cow. What kind of thinking is this," he said addressing a gathering at Dooru, Anant-



nag as per news agency. He said that it's time to stay united so that a strong fight is put up against the BJP.

"An atmosphere of fear was created in entire J&K post Article 370 roll back. Every Kashmiri

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Will achieve our target of 45 seats; NC-PDP manifestos advocate revival of terrorism in J&K: Ram Madhav

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 4

Senior BJP leader and the party's former General Secretary Ram Madhav Wednesday lashed out at National Conference and PDP alleging that these parties are getting the support of former terrorists in the ongoing campaigning and their manifestos advocate "revival of terrorism."

Addressing the party workers at the residence of BJP candidate for Lal Chowk Assembly seat, Er Aijaz Hussain at Balhama Srinagar, Madhav, as per news agency, said that he has observed during his stay in Srinagar that NC



and PDP are enjoying the support of former terrorists.

"Now it is up to the people whether they want to revive the terrorism in J&K or continue with the peace. If people want peace to continue,

they have to vote for BJP. We will start our winning streak from Lal Chowk and people must ensure victory of Er Aijaz from Lal Chowk seat," he said. To a query about restoration of Statehood, he said the primary focus of the party

is to form a government in J&K.

"You will see for the first time in history, J&K will have a BJP government. A new chapter will be added to the history of J&K," he said. Mahav said that the party is hoping to get 45 seats-35 in Jammu and 10 in Kashmir. "We need people's support in getting at least 10 seats in Kashmir. If this happens and this should happen and has to happen so that those who ruined J&K for years are kept at bay," he said.

Madhav confirmed the visit of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to Jammu on September 6-7 stating

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Constituency Profile Kishtwar-49 AC: Direct fight between NC's Sajad Kichloo, BJP's Shagun Parihar

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEP 4

The biggest constituency in terms of votes, Kishtwar-49 Assembly constituency is all set to witness a direct fight between former Minister of State (MoS) Home Sajad Ahmed Kichloo and Shagun Parihar, a new face launched by Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP).

Historically the fight has remained between the NC and the BJP on this seat and at most of the time NC candidates have emerged victorious except 2014 when BJP's Sunil Sharma

defeated Kichloo.

As per the news agency, after delimitation of Assembly constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir, many areas like Marwah, Warwan, Dachan Nag-seni and Padder were cut from Kishtwar seat and a few were added to it like Drabshala and adjoining areas. According to the data issued by the chief electoral officer Jammu and Kashmir, 74466 electorates including 37838 male, 36625 female and three transgender voters will be eligible to cast their votes on September 18 during the first phase of Assembly elections.

This high profile seat has always remained in the news for wrong reasons like communal clashes between the communities, which some have attributed to handiwork of political parties and leaders for their personal benefits. But when it comes to daily routine, people from both the communities enjoy good rapport with each other and many do their business with each other.

Historically NC has remained a dominant force on Kishtwar seat and Kichloo family has controlled it since long. Since 1996, NC has been winning it since 2008 but

during the 2014 elections BJP won it and sent Sunil Sharma to the J&K legislative Assembly where he became a minister as well.

As this time, NC has repeated the candidature of Sajad Kichloo, BJP has brought a new face Shagun Parihar, daughter of Ajit Parihar, who alongwith his brother Anil Parihar were killed by unidentified terrorists in Kishtwar town on November 1, 2018. BJP has given the mandate to Shagun Parihar with an aim to fetch emotional votes associated with her family.

Whereas NC candidate

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ECI Observer presides over Mega Voter Awareness programme at Pahalgam

J1 NEWS SERVICE
ANANTNAG, SEPTEMBER 04

A mega voter awareness programme was today presided over by the Election Commission of India appointed Observer at Pahalgam.

The event was organized by the District Election Office Anantnag, and was attended by the Returning Officer 47-Pahalgam, Nodal officer SVEEP, Assistant Director Tourism, CEO Pahalgam Municipal Committee, District Information officer among others.

The programme saw enthusiastic participation from students, tourists, media representatives, locals, and officials from various departments.

The highlights of the programme were white river rafting rally and an All Terrain Vehicle rally.



Additionally, a cultural programme and a tug of war event were also held.

The primary objective of the event was to emphasize the importance of voting and to educate the public about the electoral process.

During the programme, cultural performances were presented by the different educational institutions. A highlight of the event was a 'Nukkad Natak' play presented by District Information Centre Anantnag which

effectively conveyed the significance of voter participation and home voting in the upcoming Assembly elections. Later, the observer flagged-off an ATV rally and a white river rafting rally which added an adventurous streak to the entire programme. The ATV rally went around in the market areas of Pahalgam and Participants in the rally enthusiastically raised slogans like 'I Vote for Sure, Nothing like Voting,' encouraging everyone to participate in the electoral process with zeal and enthusiasm.

Notably, this programme was a part of the SVEEP movement in Anantnag functioning under the overall guidance of the District Election Officer. The target of such intervention is to raise the electoral participation in the district.

Poonch ensures Easy Voting Access to 3,536 persons with disabilities

J1 NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, SEPTEMBER 04

To ensure maximum voter turnout and inclusivity in the upcoming Assembly elections, District Election Officer Poonch Vikas Kundal chaired an important meeting on Wednesday to review and finalize arrangements to facilitate the voting process for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). The District Election Officer (DEO) emphasized the importance of creating a hassle-free and accessible environment for all voters.

It was highlighted that the Poonch district has a total of 3,536 voters identified as Persons with Disabilities. In light of this, the election authorities have made comprehensive arrangements at polling stations in all three assembly constituencies of Surankote, Poonch, and Mendhar across the border district. These facilities include the installation of ramps for easy



access, provision of wheelchairs, and other necessary measures to accommodate the needs of PwD voters, ensuring that they can exercise their right to vote without any hurdle.

In a move to inspire and encourage voter participation among PwDs, some prominent Persons with Disabilities have been appointed as icons and ambassadors whose role is to motivate and empower fellow PwD voters, demonstrating that every vote counts and every indi-

vidual has a voice in the democratic process.

It is pertinent to mention here that as per these guidelines, PwD voters who are unable to visit polling stations due to severe disabilities will be provided the option of home voting. Election officials will visit their homes to facilitate this process, ensuring that every eligible voter can cast their vote.

The DEO emphasized the importance of the measures, stating, "Our

objective is to ensure 100% voting participation, particularly among Persons with Disabilities. It is our responsibility to provide an inclusive and accessible voting environment for every eligible voter in the district."

To further reinforce the efforts, the DEO issued directives to the Returning Officers (ROs) and Chief Education officer Poonch (Nodal Officer SVEEP) to make sure that all facilities are in place which will guarantee a seamless voting experience on the day of the election.

Mouvi Fareed, A prominent icon for Persons with Disabilities lauded the District Election Authorities during the meeting, praising their commitment to inclusivity. He states that the authorities' focused efforts have not only inspired PwD voters but also instilled a strong sense of responsibility and empowerment, affirming their vital role and rights in the democratic process.

Multifarious activities held across Assembly segments of Kathua under SVEEP

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 04

To promote voter awareness and participation, a series of activities were organized under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program across various assembly segments of Kathua district. These initiatives, guided by the Election Commission of India's flagship SVEEP program, aimed to engage voters, particularly first-time voters, in the electoral process ahead of the upcoming elections on October 1, 2024.

One of the key events was a cultural program conducted by the Electoral Literacy Club of GHSS Sananghat, 65-Basohli, under the supervision of District Election Officer (DEO) Kathua, Dr. Rakesh Minhas. The event featured interaction with people in Dogri language which saw enthusiastic participation from students, faculty members, BLO Supervisors, Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers, Sarpanchs, ward members, Lambardars, Chowkidars, prominent citizens, and BLOs from nearby polling booths. Alongside the cultural program, a slogan writing competition and debate were also organized, involving students from classes 11th and 12th.

The objective of these activities was to inspire young voters, especially those voting for the first time, to exercise their right to vote and contribute to forming a healthy government. The participants were urged to embrace the idea of "No Voter to be Left Behind" and ensure maximum voter turnout on October 1, 2024. The event featured interactions with Dr. Roshan Lal, Nodal Officer SVEEP 65-Basohli and



Ashwani Kumar, Member SVEEP Cell 65-Basohli, who encouraged the audience to leverage social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Snapchat to promote SVEEP activities and ensure every eligible voter participates in this democratic process.

The program concluded with a joint pledge-taking ceremony, where all attendees committed to vote fearlessly and without bias. Principal of GHSS Sananghat Suman Lata, presented a vote of thanks and distributed notebooks to participating students as a token of appreciation. The event was guided by Returning Officer (RO) 65-Basohli, Anil Kumar Thakur.

In AC 68 Hiranagar, SVEEP activities took the form of mobile awareness campaigns like "SVEEP on Wheels" and door-to-door voter engagement initia-

tives at Mela Panchayat. The BAG team visited 50 households, motivating voters to cast their votes on October 1, 2024. A discussion session with women voters emphasized their role as empowered citizens. Students from GHSS Hiranagar, Sallan, Kore Punnu, and GHS Mela performed various activities under SVEEP, including a "Tree of Commitment to Democracy," a signature campaign, slogan writing, nukkad natak and an awareness rally, all centered around the message that every vote contributes to the nation's progress.

The proceedings were held under the supervision of Nodal Officer-68 Hiranagar Priya Lakshmi (CDPO Hiranagar). At GLDM GDC Hiranagar, a Slogan Writing Competition and Poster Making Competition were held on the theme "Noth-

ing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure," with enthusiastic participation from a large number of students. In CHC Billawar, a detailed lecture on SVEEP was delivered by Mohinder Gupta, Nodal Officer SVEEP Block Billawar and Principal of Hr. Sec. School Kohag. A mega cultural program was also organized at Nagri Parole in the Kathua SC-67 constituency, led by Nodal Officer SVEEP, Jatinder Sethi. Highlights included a song promoting the importance of voting, composed and performed by Jatin Kumar, and a classical dance performance by Pooja, both of which emphasized the significance of voting in a democratic nation. Sethi commended Kavita Mahajan and her team for their exceptional efforts in organizing such a meaningful event to raise voter awareness.

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DEO Kishtwar reviews logistics preparedness

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 04

District Election Officer (DEO) Kishtwar Rajesh Kumar Shavan chaired a meeting of designated Nodal Officers in Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex here today to review the Polling Day arrangements scheduled on 18th September 2024 - the first phase of the Assembly Election 2024.

SSP Abdul Qayoom, RO of 49-Kishtwar Pawan Kotwal, RO 48-Inderwal Idrees Lone and RO 50-Paddar Nagseni Amit Kumar besides Nodal officers were present in the meeting.

At the outset, the DEO took a firsthand appraisal from all designated Nodal Officers with regard to tasks assigned to them for conduct of Assembly Elec-



tions-2024 in the district.

The DEO reviewed the preparations being made by the Nodal Officers related to key aspects of the Assembly Elections including Man Power Management, Traffic Plan, Communication Plan, Transportation of Polling staff/Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), implementation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC), Material Management, Collec-

tion & Distribution Counters, Intermediate strong rooms, AMF and Web-casting of Polling stations, Training programmes, SVEEP activities, functioning of Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC), Expenditure Monitoring Cell and Integrating Election Control Room and other related activities aimed at ensuring smooth and peaceful general elections in the District.

The DEO directed the

designated Nodal Officers to work with due diligence and dedication to ensure smooth, free and fair elections. He expressed confidence in the collective resolve and capability of the Nodal Officers to fulfill their role effectively and efficiently, thereby contributing to the successful conduct of the Assembly Elections-2024 in Kishtwar.

The DEO asked the Returning Officers (ROs) of the 3 Assembly Constituencies to ensure logistics and security arrangements including the technological interventions/ upgradation well in advance.

Earlier, the DEO was briefed by all the designated Nodal Officers about the preparations made so far for Assembly Elections-2024.

Randomisation of Polling Personnel conducted in Ramban

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, SEPTEMBER 04

In preparation for the General Elections to the Legislative Assembly - 2024, the first randomization of polling staff for deployment at 365 polling stations across the two Assembly constituencies in Ramban District was conducted today at the DC Office Complex.

The randomization



process was supervised by the District Election Officer (DEO) Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, in the presence of the relevant

officers. The process was carried out using dedicated software in accordance with the guidelines prescribed by the Election

Commission of India, ensuring fairness and impartiality in the selection of polling staff. Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh, Deputy District Election Officer Abdul Jabbar and ACD Shrinath Suman were also present on the occasion. The process was successfully completed by DIO NIC Parshant Kumar.

DEO Bandipora reviews Poll Preparedness

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 04

The District Election Officer (DEO) Bandipora on Wednesday convened a review meeting at the Mini Secretariat, here to evaluate the poll preparedness for the upcoming assembly elections in the district.

During the meeting, the DEO assessed preparations Assembly Constituency (AC) wise, receiving feedback from nodal officers on key elements, including welfare provisions, training, status of AC-level strong rooms, transport logistics, and SVEEP activities. The meeting also discussed counting arrangements, material management, and the functionality of the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) and control room.

Returning Officers (ROs) of the three assembly constituencies'



14-Sonawari, 15-Bandipora and 16-Gurez provided detailed updates on the publication of notifications and the establishment of facilitation centres. They assured that staff training and readiness for nomination procedures are on track, underscoring their com-

mitment to a seamless election process.

They apprised the chair that their teams are fully prepared to manage the election-related activities, and that all procedural requirements are met efficiently.

The DEO emphasized the importance of robust

preparation, stating, "Our goal is to ensure that all election-related processes are streamlined and held in an efficient manner." He stressed the meticulous handling of all poll activities to facilitate a smooth electoral process.

Qadri on the occasion highlighted the importance of coordination among various teams and stated that effective communication and collaboration between all stakeholders are essential for the successful conduct of the elections. Besides, he stressed on the need to address issues promptly to maintain the integrity and efficiency of the electoral process.

Among others, the meeting was attended by ADDC/Nodal Officer Law & Order Mohammad Ashraf Bhatt, ADC/Nodal Officer MCC Zaffar Husson Shawal, ROs of the three Assembly Constituencies, Nodal Officers, AROs, and other concerned officials.

District Election Office Bandipora conducts Training for POs, PIs

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 04

The District Election Office Bandipora on Wednesday conducted a comprehensive training session at the Mini Secretariat for Polling Officers (POs) and PIs designated for the upcoming Assembly Elections 2024.

The training session was aimed at equipping the officials with the essential skills and knowledge required for their duties.



As part of the training, participants engaged in hands-on exercises that simulated real elec-

tion scenarios, including the setup and operation of polling stations and resolving practical issues

that may arise on Election Day. The training ensured that all officers could handle election-related equipment and procedures efficiently and effectively. The session was attended by POs and PIs selected after the first randomization process, underscoring the importance of rigorous preparation for the electoral process to ensure a smooth and efficient election.

DEO, SSP co inspect polling stations, FST & SST in Assembly Constituency Nowshera

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 04

In preparation for the forthcoming Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Elections, District Election Officer (DEO) Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma, and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Randeep Kumar conducted a comprehensive joint inspection of several polling stations in Assembly Constituency Nowshera, here today.

The visit was aimed at ensuring the readiness of the polling stations and the security arrangements ahead of the elections.

The DEO inspected the polling station at Sehar Makri and assessed the

availability of Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) including ramps for differently-abled voters, drinking water, electricity, sanitation, and adequate lighting. Special attention was given to the security arrangements, with the DEO and SSP emphasizing the need for a secure and conducive environment for voters on Election Day.

In light of the area's proximity to the Line of Control (LoC), the DEO and SSP also inspected nearby bunkers, identified for use in case of any shelling incidents during the election period. They reviewed the contingency plans and directed the local administration to ensure that all necessary

measures are in place to protect the safety of the voters.

The DEO and SSP also conducted a surprise check of the Flying Squads (FST) and Static Surveillance Teams (SST) deployed in the constituency. The checks were aimed at ensuring that the teams are vigilant and fully prepared to monitor the election process and enforce the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

Accompanying the DEO and SSP during the inspection were ADC Nowshera, Babu Ram Tandon, Tehsildar Nowshera, and SDPO Nowshera. The officials collectively discussed the specific requirements of the constituency and the

steps needed to address any potential challenges on Election Day.

Speaking on the occasion, the DEO emphasized the importance of coordination between various departments to ensure the smooth conduct of the elections. He instructed the officials to remain alert and responsive to any issues that may arise during the election process.

SSP reiterated the commitment of the police to providing a secure environment for the elections. He assured that all necessary security measures are being taken to prevent any untoward incidents and to maintain law and order during the polling period.

DEO B'la inspects Strong Rooms, evaluates Infrastructure and Security for safe storage of EVMs & Election Material

JI NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, SEPTEMBER 04

In preparation for the upcoming General Assembly Election-2024, the District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, conducted a thorough inspection of Strong Rooms for 10-Baramulla and 12-Wagoora Kreeri Assembly Constituencies.

The visit was focused on assessing the infrastructure, logistics, and security arrangements in place for the safe storage of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines, and other essential election materials.

The DEO meticulously reviewed the multi-layered security protocols that have been implemented to safeguard the



Strong Rooms, including the installation of CCTV cameras, uninterrupted power supply, round-the-clock security, and other measures in accordance with the guidelines of the Election Commission of India.

During the visit, the DEO stated that these Strong Rooms have been fortified with robust security measures, including continuous monitoring

by armed personnel to ensure safety of the election material at all times.

Minga Sherpa further said that to enhance surveillance, CCTV cameras have been strategically installed at multiple points to ensure round-the-clock observation and stressed the importance of maintaining these security measures at all times in compliance with ECI guidelines.

District Election Cell organises yoga session under SVEEP at Sports Stadium Udhampur

JI NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 04

To encourage active participation in the upcoming Assembly Elections 2024, the District Election Cell under the overall supervision of District Election Officer Saloni Rai, organized a Yoga session here today in Sports Stadium, Udhampur.

This initiative was part of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation campaign and aimed to highlight the significance of a higher voter turnout and strengthen the democratic process.

The Yoga session witnessed enthusiastic participation from diverse sections, including first-time voters, youth and prominent citizens.

Additional District Development Commissioner Rajinder Singh, Nodal Officer SVEEP, Dr. Preeti Sharma and other officers were also present.

While briefing the media, the ADDC highlighted the importance of the SVEEP campaign in raising awareness among the masses about their voting rights and duties. Citizens were encouraged to turn out in large numbers and exercise their right to vote responsibly in the forthcoming Assembly Elections 2024.

The session included various yoga Asanas, breathing exercises and meditation techniques that promote mental and physical well-being.

Rajouri district promotes voter awareness with series of SVEEP initiatives

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 04

In a determined push to foster voter engagement and awareness, the District Election Office of Rajouri, under the esteemed guidance of District Election Officer, Abhishek Sharma and the vigilant supervision of District Nodal Officer SVEEP, Bishamber Dass (CEO Rajouri), conducted a series of impactful events across the district on 4th September 2024.

In AC-85 Rajouri, Nodal Officer, Rakesh Kumar Sharma (Principal) spearheaded a mega awareness program at Govt HSS Doongi and the surrounding village. The program featured an insightful lecture on voter importance, a rally with 350 participants, and a signature campaign on the "Democracy Wall." Participants, including students and staff, took a pledge to motivate and mobilize voters for the forthcoming election on 25th September 2024.

Himalayan Degree College, Thandi Kassi Rajouri also hosted a voter awareness event led by District



SVEEP Team members Mohammad Ayaz Raina and Aejaz-Ul-Haq. The event included a signature campaign and an Election Awareness Quiz, which engaged students across various semesters. The quiz saw the team of Vansh Sharma, Mohammad Kamran Musharaf and Abinav Sanjosh Khajoria secure the top spot. Certificates of appreciation were awarded to the winning quiz teams, and the program ended on a high note with a collective voter pledge emphasizing the significance of active electoral participation.

In AC-86 Budhal, a comprehensive voter awareness campaign unfolded under the guidance of Returning Officer, Dil Mir (ADC Koteranka) and Nodal Officer SVEEP Prof. Tahir Nadeem. The

day's activities included a slogan writing campaign at GHS Damote and an EVM awareness camp at Higher Secondary School, Tralla, where participants received hands-on training on the use of EVMs. This initiative aimed to empower voters with the confidence to cast their votes effectively.

At Thannamandi, a SVEEP event at the Child Development Project Office saw participation from local dignitaries and employees, including SDM Thannamandi Abid Husain Shah and Nodal Officer SVEEP Dr. Ather Aziz Raina. The event featured a signature campaign, voter pledge, and educational lectures on the importance of electoral participation, fostering a strong sense of civic duty among attendees.

AC-84 Nowshera witnessed a large-scale voter awareness event at NNPHSS Nowshera, attracting over 500 participants. The presence of Vinod Sharma, PwD icon of District Rajouri, added a notable dimension to the event, further emphasizing the importance of inclusive voter participation. The event concluded with an inspiring rally and a vote of thanks delivered by Chairman P.R. Khokhar.

In AC-83 Kalakote-Sunderbani, a quiz competition on Electoral Awareness was organized at HS Dharamsal under the guidance of Nodal Officer Babu Singh. Team C, comprising Himanshu Sharma, Radhu Sharma, and Sonakshi Sharma, emerged victorious. The event was well-attended by staff, students, and guests, furthering the district's commitment to informed voter engagement. These initiatives across Rajouri District reflect a strong dedication to fostering informed and active participation in the democratic process as the Assembly Elections draw near.

Community awareness rally held at GHSS Jakyas under SVEEP



JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, SEPTEMBER 04

A community awareness rally, under Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation (SVEEP) Programme, was organized today by the students and staff of Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Jakyas, under the supervision of Principal Gulshan Kumar.

The rally aimed to promote awareness about voting rights, besides social and environmental issues affecting the community, such as cleanliness, conservation, and health. Students and staff participated enthusiastically, carrying placards and banners with slogans and messages.

GDC Kastigarh hosts voter awareness, pledge drive under SVEEP



JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, SEPTEMBER 04

Government Dy SP Aman Thakur Memorial Degree College Kastigarh hosted a two-day voter awareness programme aimed at fostering civic engagement and encouraging responsible voting among students.

On the first day, an awareness lecture was delivered by Prof. Sat Pal, the Nodal Officer for SVEEP, who emphasized

the importance of voter participation. He discussed the critical role of each citizen in shaping the nation's future, the impact of informed voting on national policies, and the significance of civic duties beyond just casting a vote.

The second day featured a voter pledge drive, encouraging participants to commit to their civic responsibilities and pledge to vote in the upcoming legislative assembly elections. Prof. Koshal Kumar

Mangotra, Principal of the college, highlighted the institution's commitment to promoting democratic values and ensuring that students understand the power of their vote. The event saw active participation from students, faculty members and non-teaching staff, reflecting the college's dedication to fostering active and informed citizenship.

Strengthening Election Readiness: General Observer conducts comprehensive review in 36-Zainapora AC

JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, SEPTEMBER 04

In order to ensure comprehensive preparedness for the upcoming Assembly Elections 2024, the General Observer for 36-Zainapora Assembly Constituency, Jeevan Babu K today conducted an extensive visit to various polling stations across the constituency.

The General Observer visited polling stations at Nadigam, Nadigam Check, Kundalan, Manzimpora,

Kharwara, Nildoora, Hermain-A, Hermain-B and other polling stations.

During the visit, Jeevan Babu K meticulously reviewed the arrangements at each polling station, ensuring that all necessary facilities and infrastructure are in place for voters and polling staff.

He engaged with polling officials to reinforce the importance of adhering to the guidelines set by the Election Commission of India (ECI) and focused

on ensuring that the polling stations are accessible to all, including senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

In addition to the polling stations, Jeevan Babu K also visited the Strong Room and took stock of a three tier security grid in place for securing it.

He conducted a thorough inspection of the security protocols in place, ensuring the integrity and safety of the voting equipment.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice

Sr. DEN-IVFZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date-20.09.2024 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft Banker Cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information logon to www.ireps.gov.in

Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System	
Open	Works	Single Packet System	
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time	
28.08.2024	06.09.2024	20.09.2024/15:00 Hrs	
S.No.	Tender No.	Details of Tender	
1.	165-2024-25-BDGM-DRM-FZR	Miscellaneous P.way work for track maintenance in the section of SSE/P.way/BDGM from km 46.00 to 117.96 km in QG-BRML section under ADEN/BDGM.	
Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
44,98,906.46/-	90,000/-	60 Days	08 Months
Similar nature of work :- "NIL".			
Note 1. Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender. Tender Notice No:- 165-2024-25-BDGM-DRM-FZR Date: 03.09.2024			

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

EXTENSION OF TRAIN NO. 14034/14033 JAMMU MAIL UPTO SUBEDARGANJ

This is notified that Train No. 14034/14033 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Delhi Jn. - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra (Jammu Mail) will be extended up to **SUBEDARGANJ** w.e.f. 05.09.2024 as per the details given below:-

Stations	Train No. 14034	Existing Time		Revised Time	
		Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra		--	15:20	--	15:20
No change between Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan (Udhampur) to Ambala Cantt. Jn.					
Ambala Cantt. Jn.		00:28	00:35	00:25	00:30
Kurukshetra Jn.		01:05	01:07	00:59	01:01
Karnal		01:30	01:32	01:22	01:24
Panipat Jn.		01:54	01:56	01:44	01:46
Samalkha		02:10	02:12	01:58	02:00
Sonipat		02:53	02:55	02:17	02:19
Narela		03:09	03:11	02:31	02:33
Adarsh Nagar Delhi		03:28	03:30	02:54	02:56
Subzi Mandi		03:39	03:41	03:04	03:06
Delhi Jn.		04:30	--	04:05	04:20
Aligarh				06:08	06:10
Tundla				07:06	07:08
Govindpuri				09:25	09:30
Fatehpur				10:25	10:27
Subedarganj				12:35	--

Stations	Train No. 14033	Existing Time		Revised Time	
		Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
Subedarganj				--	10:35
Fatehpur				11:40	11:42
Govindpuri				13:10	13:15
Tundla				15:58	16:00
Aligarh				17:08	17:10
Delhi Jn.		--	20:05	19:55	20:10
Subzi Mandi		20:20	20:21	20:23	20:25
Narela		20:41	20:43	20:45	20:47
Sonipat		20:57	20:59	21:01	21:03
Ganaur		21:12	21:14	21:19	21:21
Samalkha		21:25	21:27	21:32	21:34
Panipat Jn.		22:02	22:04	21:48	21:50
Karnal		22:26	22:28	22:12	22:14
Kurukshetra Jn.		22:52	22:54	22:47	22:49
Ambala Cantt. Jn.		00:02	00:07	00:02	00:07
No change between Ambala Cantt. Jn. to Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan (Udhampur)					
Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra		09:15	--	--	09:15

Note:- Due to change in Superfast Category, New Train No. for 14034/14033 Subedarganj - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra will be Train No. 20434 Ex. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra w.e.f. 04.01.2025 and Train No. 20433 Ex. Subedarganj w.e.f. 04.01.2025.

For any kind of information, passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways Website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

BJP failed to bring 'Achhe Din' for people of J&K: Rattan Lal

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KALAKOTE, SEPT 4

Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President of Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (NC), has criticized the BJP for failing to deliver on its promises of "Achhe Din" (good days) for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking at a massive rally during the nomination filing of Yashu Vardhan Singh, the Alliance Candidate for the Kalakote-Sunderbani Assembly segment, the senior NC leader lambasted the present dispensation for depriving the Pir Panjal region of much-needed development. He stated, "The present government has completely neglected the Pir Panjal range, halting all major development projects initiated under the previous NC regime headed by dynamic leader Omar Abdullah. People across the region are suffering from a lack of regular water and electricity supply, insufficient government ration, and rampant corruption under BJP rule in the Centre. Instead of fulfilling its promises, the BJP has worsened the situation."

Rattan Lal Gupta emphasized that the BJP's failure to bring about real change has left the people of Jammu and Kashmir disillusioned. "The so-called 'Achhe Din' promised by the BJP has turned out to be a farce for the people of J&K. The development works initiated by the National Conference have been completely stalled, leaving the region in a state of despair," he added.

The Senior NC leader criticized the BJP-led government for its failure to contain militancy in the Pir Panjal zone, highlighting a troubling rise in terror activities over the past two years. He accused the BJP Govt of inadequately addressing the escalating security concerns, leading to an increase in violent incidents. He emphasized that despite numerous claims of improving security, the ground reality in

Pir Panjal remains dire. The rising trend in terror activities underscores the need for more effective and decisive measures from the government to restore peace and stability in the region. Highlighting the strong presence of the NC-Congress Alliance in the Pir Panjal region, the Provincial President stated that the Alliance is leading in all eight Assembly segments



in the Pir Panjal area. He reassured the people that the Alliance will work tirelessly to restore the region's dignity and prosperity. "The NC has promised one lakh jobs for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir, Rs 5000 financial assistance to elderly women for household expenses, 200 free power units to each household, free travelling for women in State transport, 12 LPG

cylinder per family in a year and many more for the welfare of poor and deprived sections of society," he announced. Alliance Candidate Yashu Vardhan Singh, in his address, invoked the legacy of his late father, Thakur Rashpal Singh, a two-time MLA who had served the people of Kalakote since 1983. He fondly recalled how his father dedicated his life to the upliftment of the remote and hilly areas of Kalakote, working tirelessly to address the challenges faced by the underprivileged. Yashu Vardhan Singh assured the people that he would continue this legacy of selfless service with the same dedication and resolve.

He emphasized that his focus would be on improving the quality of life for the people of Kalakote-Sunderbani through meaningful development initiatives. Urging the electorate to support the INDIA Alliance, Yashu Vardhan Singh stressed that the Alliance has com-

mitted to bringing equitable development and prosperity to Jammu and Kashmir, ensuring that every citizen, especially those in the marginalized regions, would benefit from growth and progress.

With a strong message of development and social justice, the rally marked a significant show of strength for the NC-Congress Alliance in Kalakote-Sunderbani Assembly segment.

Prominent among those who accompanied the nomination rally included Ashok Sharma District president, DDC Anita Thakur, DDC Rameshwar Singh, DDC Shaameem Begum, Vipin Pal senior leader NC, Shamsheer Singh Vice President, Sunita Kumari, Dinesh Singh Chouhan, Rakesh Singh Raka, Sunit Sharma, Lucky, Vikram Puri, Harshvardan, Ashok Sharma, Vijay Suri Ex Chairman MC Kalakote, Waqar Mir, Vivek Sharma, Adv Sajeen, Block President, functionaries of the Party.

Meanwhile, Arif Raja filed his nomination from the Eidgah constituency. He was joined by former MLC Charanjit Singh Khalsa, showcasing the party's collective stability and unity as it heads into the election.

BJP Candidates from Central Kashmir File Nomination Papers for Assembly Elections 2024



J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEPT 4

In a significant development ahead of the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly elections 2024, BJP candidates from Central Kashmir officially filed their nomination papers today, marking a vital step in the party's strong campaign for the region.

Ashok Bhat filed his nomination from the Habbakdal constituency in Srinagar. He was accompanied by Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh and BJP National President Tarun Chugh.

In the Lal Chowk constituency, Er. Aijaz submitted his nomination, denoting the BJP's commitment to ensuring a strong presence in one of the most pivotal areas of Srinagar. He was accompanied by BJP Senior Leader, Waqf Board Chairperson, and Minister of State Dr. Darakshan Andrabi.

Meanwhile, Arif Raja filed his nomination from the Eidgah constituency. He was joined by former MLC Charanjit Singh Khalsa, showcasing the party's collective stability and unity as it heads into the election.

Vijay Bakaya chairs important meet of migrant KP workers in Jammu ahead of LA polls

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 4

Apni Party's General Secretary, Vijay Bakaya has directed the leaders of the Party to mobilize the migrant Kashmiri Pandit voters across the Kashmir valley in the wake of the scheduled assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. The crucial strategic meeting of the Party was chaired by Vijay Bakaya here at the Gandhi Nagar, Jammu Office to take certain decisions to help the contesting candidates in their respective assembly constituencies in Kashmir valley.

Following threadbare deliberation and inputs received from the workers on ground, Vijay Bakaya, who chaired the meet with



migrant Kashmiri Pandit activists, advised them to mobilize KP migrant voters from various constituencies in Kashmir living in Jammu to vote for the Apni Party candidates, whose symbol is a cricket BAT.

He said that the Apni

Party has stood firm since its inception in its resolve to take the people of UT on the road of development towards a prosperous and peaceful destiny.

He stated that the Apni Party on its own shall contest elections in the UT to form a government to

implement its manifesto to restore democracy and ensure a better future for the youth, and all sections of people.

He asked the KP activists to set - up a Campaign Committee which shall be responsible for contacting the KP voters

Bakaya appealed to the KP voters to come out on voting day in large numbers to cast their valuable vote to the Apni Party.

Besides the campaign committee members, the meeting was also attended by the Additional General Secretary of the Party, Arun Kumar Chibber, General Secretary of Youth Wing / Spokesperson of the Party, Abhay Bakaya and others.

The following shall be the members of the

Campaign Committee that include Virender Sathu and Hira Lal Bhat for Pahalgam constituency; Pawan Koul for Gulmarg constituency; Ashok Bawnoo and Vaibhav Mattoo for Shangus - East constituency; G.L. Pandita for Kupwara constituency; Vinod Koul and Pinta Ji for Rafiyabad constituency; Ashwani Bhat for Sonawari constituency; Santosh Kumar and Rnkill for Shopian constituency; Bushan Bhat and Shivani Koul for Zainpora constituency; whereas Chand Ji Bhat and Rattan Lal Bhat for D.H. Pora constituency will mobilize the KP migrant voters in favour of the Apni Party candidates contesting from the above stated nine assembly constituencies.

Bali Bhagat slams Cong for compromising National Interests by aligning with NC

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 4

Bali Bhagat, senior BJP leader and former Minister, launched a scathing attack on the Congress party for its opportunistic and reckless alliance with the National Conference (NC) in the upcoming Assembly polls in J&K, accusing it of compromising the integrity and security of Jammu and Kashmir. He strongly criticized the Congress for betraying national interests by aligning with a party that has historically promoted divisive, anti-national agendas under the leadership of the Abdullahs.

In a statement filled with sharp rebuke, the former minister accused the Congress of supporting the re-emergence

of jihadist elements in the region, a move that emboldens separatists and terrorist sympathizers. By backing NC's agenda, Congress is tacitly supporting the release of dangerous terrorists and separatists, which not only threatens peace and stability but also undermines the sacrifices of security forces who have laid down their lives to protect the nation. This alliance also signals a dangerous promotion of Pakistan's sinister interests in Jammu and Kashmir, providing a platform for forces that have consistently sought to weaken India's sovereignty, he added.

Bali Bhagat denounced Congress for endorsing the rehabilitation of stone-pelters and offering jobs to the families of

separatists and terrorists, actions he said reward those who have worked against the unity of the nation. He also expressed grave concern over the coalition's likely attempts to repeal crucial laws like the Public Safety Act, which are vital for maintaining law and order in the region.

In a direct challenge to Jammu's demographic composition, the Congress-NC alliance appears intent on facilitating a demographic invasion of Jammu with renewed vigor, he warned. Moreover, their concerted efforts to restore the anti-national Articles 35A and 370 reflect their commitment to dividing India and pushing a radical agenda that is rabidly anti-Hindu and anti-Jammu, he added.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

Our first step will...

of modern India, we do not see such disempowerment of a state. Earlier, states were divided to create another state, we have examples of Telangana, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and UT like Arunachal Pradesh made a full-fledged state but BJP government demeaned J&K by making it UT," he said.

He added that they wanted to get the statehood status to J&K before elections, but BJP does not want this. Lashing out at the BJP, he said that the entire government is being run for two billionaires. "If you see, the status of the state which has been taken away from you, the aim was only to help the two billionaires," he said.

Exuding confidence that the NC-Congress will put up a good show in the assembly polls, he said one thing is for sure that the Congress coalition government is going to come here. "It is certain that this is going to happen. Our first task will be to fill all the government vacancies and make the age limit 40 years. We will regularise and make daily-wage earners permanent and increase their income".

Gandhi further said that BJP and RSS people are spreading hatred and violence in the country and are working to divide the country, but the Congress will unite it. KNO

Definition of Democracy...

party, as per news agency. Present on the occasion were National Conference chief Dr Farooq Abdullah, NC MP from South Kashmir Mian Altaf, and senior Congress leaders. Rahul said he wonders how the democracy term is fitted with the J&K by the BJP.

"J&K was a State, downgraded to two UTs and yet BJP claims democracy in J&K. Democracy term fits with the State that has its own Assembly where issues are discussed and laws are made. Here, all such things were snatched," he said. He said that in 1947, the then Maharajas' (Kings) were side-lined to pave the way for democracy and an elected government. "In J&K, we have a LG. I believe the LG word is wrong. It should be 'Raja' of 21st Century as he acts at his will," Rahul said.

Lashing out at the BJP, Rahul said that the Modi government is benefitting only two families—Ambanis and Adanis. "I was told that names of Ambanis and Adani can't be mentioned in a speech in the Parliament. I requested the Speaker there what I should call them then. I mentioned them as A1 and A2," said the LoP

said. He reiterated that wherever BJP opens the shop of hatred, Congress will open shops of love. "We will win this battle by promoting brotherhood and harmony," he said.

Rahul urged the people to support each other. "Wherever there is an NC candidate, Congress leaders and workers should support him and vice-versa," he said, adding that the NC-Congress government will come to J & K for sure.

He said that Kashmiri Pandits were exploited by the BJP for vote bank politics. "In lieu, KPs got nothing," he said.

Rahul asked party candidate from Dooru, Ghulam Ahmed Mir to invite him for two to three days to Anantnag. "You are inviting me for 45 minutes. Is say dil nahi bharta," he said. KNO

After Gbl, Omar...

leaders including the incumbent Member of Parliament Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi.

Pertinently, Omar will be first candidate from across Jammu and Kashmir, who will be contesting on two seats in the upcoming assembly elections. KNO

ECI enforces exit poll...

2024, and Press Note No. ECU/PN/132/2024 dated August 31, 2024.

Invoking Section 126A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (R.P. Act, 1951), the notification emphasized that "no person shall conduct any exit poll and publish or publicize by means of the print or electronic media, or disseminate in any other manner whatsoever, the result of any exit poll during such period as may be notified by the Election Commission in this regard."

The notification further clarified that for the purposes of sub-section (1), the Election Commission shall, by a general order, notify the date and time having due regard to the following, namely:

In the case of a general election, the period may commence from the beginning of polling hours on the first day of polling and continue until half an hour after the closing of the poll in all States and Union territories.

In the case of a bye-election or multiple bye-elections held together, the period may commence from the beginning of polling hours on the first day of polling and continue until half an hour after the closing of the poll.

If multiple bye-elections are held on different days,

the period may commence from the beginning of polling hours on the first day and continue until half an hour after the closing of the last poll.

The notification added that any person who contravenes the provisions of this section shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term that may extend to two years, or with a fine, or both.

Therefore, in exercise of the powers under sub-section (1) of Section 126A of the R.P. Act, 1951, and considering the provisions of sub-section (2) of the same section, the Election Commission hereby notifies the period between 7:00 A.M. on September 18, 2024 (Wednesday), and 6:30 P.M. on October 5, 2024 (Saturday), as the period during which the conducting, publishing, or publicizing of exit polls by any means, including print or electronic media, or dissemination in any other manner, shall be prohibited in connection with the aforementioned general elections.

Furthermore, it is clarified that under Section 126(1) (b) of the R.P. Act, 1951, displaying any election matter, including the results of any opinion poll or other poll survey, in any electronic media, is prohibited during the 48-hour period ending with the conclusion of polling in connection with the aforesaid general elections—(KNO)

Thank God we are...

thought that they will be killed given the nature and policies adopted by the BJP at the Centre." "To run the plough, there is a need of a hand. It is you who have to strengthen this plough and hand to defeat the parties like BJP," Dr Farooq said. He said that J&K is the first state that was downgraded to not only one UT but two UTs.

"This is for the first time in the history of Indian constitution. So let's stay united and defeat these forces who are hell-bent to take away J&K's identity." He urged people to stay vigilant about the people trying to create a division.. KNO

Will achieve our...

that after Shah's visit Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other leaders will also visit J&K for campaigning.

"Shah will release the party manifesto in Jammu," he said. The BJP leader accompanied Er Aijaz in the form of a rally from Balhama to Srinagar where the latter will be filing his nomination papers from Lal Chowk Assembly segment. Er Aijaz will face NC's Ehsan Pardesh and Apni

Party's Ashraf Mir in the Triangular contest. KNO

Constituency Profile...

is asking people to vote for him for the work he has done to uplift the area in general and Kishtwar constituency in particular.

Apart from NC and BJP, PDP has fielded former MLA Firdous Ahmed Tak, a lawyer by profession, whereas on candidate is from Bahujan Samaj Party and three other independents are also in the fray. There may not be much impact of PDP and other players on this seat as the fight is directly between NC and BJP. As NC is having alliance with Congress party, the latter hasn't fielded any candidate from here and also Ghulam Nabi Azad's Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) hasn't fielded anybody on this seat. KNO

CS Dulloo chairs...

Similarly, all Deputy Commissioners informed the meeting about the flood preparedness in their respective districts.

During the meeting, CS was informed that safety audit of embankments has been completed and temporary measures have been taken, wherever necessary. It was informed that divisional control room of Irrigation and Flood department at Ram Mushi Bagh is fully functional 24/7. It was also given out that information dissemination is going on and advertisements are flashed on social media, radio, TV etc.

It was given out in the meeting that 24/7 control rooms have been established to monitor the gauge sites and duty roster of officers along with their contact numbers have been prepared and circulated among all for information.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti, Principal Secretary, DMRRR, Department, Civil Secretariat, ADGP, L&O, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Director, Fire & Emergency, ADGP, Jammu Zone (through VC), Commissioner Secretary Housing & Urban Dev. Department, IGP, Kashmir Zone, IGP, Traffic, J&K, IGP, CRPF, Srinagar, Administrative Secretary Public Works Department, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu (through VC), Secretary to the Govt., Health & Medical Education and other senior officers. KNO

General Observer visits polling stations in Assembly Constituency 87-Thannamandi

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 04

As part of the ongoing preparations for the upcoming Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Elections, General Observer Tikam Chand Bohra conducted an extensive visit to several polling stations in Assembly Constituency 87-Thannamandi today.

The visit was aimed at ensuring the readiness of the polling stations ahead of the crucial elections, which are scheduled to take place in the Rajouri district during the second phase on September 25, 2024.

During the visit, Bohra meticulously inspected the polling stations located at Government Girls Middle School, Bimber Gali; Government Higher Secondary School, Dheri Ralyote; Government Middle School, Patrara; Government Higher Secondary School, Manjakote; and Government Middle School, Kakora. His inspection focused on assessing the availability of Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) at these stations, including the provision of ramps, drinking water, electricity, toilets and adequate lighting. Additionally, Bohra



reviewed the security arrangements at each location, emphasizing the importance of a safe and secure environment for voters. He also examined the vulnerability mapping and contingency plans developed by the local administration to address any potential challenges on the Election Day.

Bohra reiterated the Election Commission's commitment to ensuring a free, fair and transparent election process. He emphasized that all necessary measures are being taken to facilitate smooth and orderly polling in the region. For the duration of the election process, Bohra will be stationed at the PwD Guest House in Rajouri and will remain accessible to address any grievances or concerns from political parties or

the general public. He can be contacted directly at his local number 8491941856.

Accompanying Bohra during the tour were ARO Thannamandi, Mazhar Ali; Liaison Officer Rohit Kumar; SDPO Manjakote, Tousif Ahmed; Tehsildar Manjakote, Jazia Kazmi along with Sectoral Officers and Booth Level Officers (BLOs) from the respective polling stations. The District Election Officer (DEO), Abhishek Sharma directed all concerned officials to expedite the necessary preparations and ensure that any gaps identified during the visit are promptly addressed. He urged the officials to work in close coordination to guarantee the successful conduct of the upcoming elections.

General Observer for Pampore AC visits key Polling Stations

J1 NEWS SERVICE
PULWAMA, SEPTEMBER 04

The Election Observer for Pampore Assembly Constituency (AC), Vadarevu Vinay Chand today conducted an extensive visit to various polling stations in the area.

The Observer inspected polling stations 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 39, 40, 41, and 42 to review the preparedness and facilities in place for the upcoming elections.

During the visit, Vinay Chand assessed the readiness of each polling station, ensuring that all necessary arrangements, including voter accessibility, infrastructure and security measures are in accordance with the

guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI).

He also interacted with the staff at the polling stations, emphasizing the importance of smooth and efficient operations on Election Day.

The Observer's visit is part of the ongoing efforts to ensure that the electoral process in Pampore is conducted transparently and efficiently with all polling stations fully prepared to accommodate voters and facilitate their participation.

The Election Observer will continue to monitor the situation closely, providing necessary guidance and support to ensure a successful election process in Pampore.



General, Police observers assess election preparedness in Reasi



J1 NEWS SERVICE
REASI, SEPTEMBER 04

General Observers for Assembly Constituencies AC 56-Gulabgarh (ST), Saroj Kumar Sethi, AC 57-Reasi and AC 58- Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, Avi Prasad and Police Observer, Pradeep Kumar Yadav arrived in Reasi today to take stock preparations for Assembly Elections in the District. They were welcomed by District Election Officer Vishesh Mahajan and SSP Gaurav Sikarwar here at Katra where they convened an introductory meeting with DEO, SSP, ROs of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, Reasi and Gulabgarh (ST) constituencies.

The DEO briefed observers about steps taken by the District Election Authority to ensure the smooth conduct of the election process as per ECI guidelines. The Observers reviewed the functioning of the Flying Squad Teams (FSTs), Static Surveil-

lance Teams (SSTs), and other enforcement units deployed at different locations within the constituencies. During their visit, they closely examined the security arrangements and operational efficiency of the FST and SST teams. The Observers interacted with team members, providing essential guidance to ensure proper monitoring of all activities for a smooth election process.

They assessed the polling arrangements and enquired about the availability of Assured Minimum Facilities, with a particular focus on the convenience of elderly voters, women and persons with disabilities (PWDs). Instructions were issued to the concerned officers to address any deficiencies and ensure a voter-friendly environment.

The Observers were accompanied by DEO, SSP and Nodal Officer MCMC Kulbhushan Khajuria and other officials throughout the meeting.

First-level randomisation of polling staff held in Udhampur

J1 NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 04

The first-level randomisation of polling staff for the upcoming Assembly Elections 2024 was today conducted by the District Election Authority Udhampur under the chairmanship of District Election Officer, Saloni Rai here in the Mini Conference Hall DC Office Complex.

The randomization was carried out through dedicated software, following the prescribed guidelines of the Election Commission of India, ensuring fairness and impartiality in the selection of polling staff.

The process was overseen by key officials, including Chief Planning Officer Mohammad Iqbal, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Dr. Umesh Shan, Assistant Commissioner Development Dr. Ranjit Singh Kotwal, SDM Chenani Gurdev Kumar, ROs, and DIO NIC Anish Sharma.

DEO Kathua briefs media on election process in Kathua District

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 04

District Election Officer (DEO) Dr. Rakesh Minhas today briefed the media regarding the upcoming election process in the Kathua District, set to commence on 5th September 2024 with the issuance of the Election Notification for all its six assembly segments.

Dr. Minhas explained that the nomination filing process will begin with the issuance of notifications by the respective Returning Officers (ROs).

The window for accepting nominations will be open from 5th to 12th September, excluding government holidays.

"Candidates are encouraged to visit the offices of the relevant ROs to submit their nominations, adhering strictly to the guidelines set by the Election Commission of India (ECI)" he added.

The scrutiny of the nominations will take place on 13th September, and candidates can withdraw their nominations till 17th September.

The DEO provided an overview of the District Election Profile, highlighting that Kathua comprises six assembly segments: 63-Bani, 64-Bilawar, 65-Basohli, 66-Jasrota, 67-Kathua (SC), and 68-Hiranagar. The total number of electors across these segments is 502,978,



including 57,999 in 63-Bani AC, (30,751 Male, 27,247 Female, 1 Third Gender); 94,651 in 64-Bilawar AC, (49,500 Male, 45,151 Female); 69,282 in 65-Basohli AC (36,343 Male, 32,937 Female, 2 Third Gender); 86,753 in 66-Jasrota AC (45,355 Male, 41,398 Female); 108,666 in 67-Kathua (SC) (57,090 Male, 51,576 Female); 87,939 in 68-Hiranagar AC (45,781 Male, 42,158 Female).

To ensure safe and secure electoral environment, Dr. Minhas assured that sufficient security personnel will be deployed across all segments of the district.

For the smooth conduct of the polling process, a total of 704 polling stations have been established, including 36 special polling stations tailored for various groups—namely Pink, Youth, PwD-manned, Green, Unique, Model, and Along Border polling stations—each located within their respective assembly constituencies.

This initiative aims to make the election process more inclusive and participative, in line with ECI

guidelines.

The DEO also informed that the provision of Home Voting for 85 plus age voters is provisioned for which voters can apply to cast their vote on 20 and 21st September 2024 with the help of our Polling teams while maintaining the secrecy of voting.

The DEO also briefed the media about the District SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) plan, designed to raise awareness about the value of voting and its role in selecting representatives of the people's choice. He urged the citizens of Kathua to come out in large numbers to exercise their right to vote and actively participate in this essential democratic process. Dr. Minhas called on media personnel to play a pivotal role in disseminating the message of SVEEP through the intensive campaigns being conducted by the Nodal Officers across all six assembly constituencies.

Pertinently, the Kathua District is slated to go for polls on October 01st 2024 under phase iii of the Assembly Elections-2024.

Randomisation of polling personnel held in Kathua



J1 NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 04

In preparation to the General Election to the Legislative Assembly-2024, the first Randomization of Polling Staff to be deployed at 704 Polling Stations in the Six Assembly Constituencies across Kathua District was held today at VC Room of DC Office Complex.

The Randomization process was held under the supervision of District Election Officer (DEO) Dr Rakesh Minhas in presence of the concerned Officers.

The Randomization process was conducted through dedicated Soft-

ware as per the prescribed guidelines of Election Commission of India ensuring fairness and impartiality in the selection of Polling Staff.

A database of 3898 employees was randomized which includes around 40% of reserve staff in order to meet any exigency.

Deputy District Election Officer Nagesh Singh, Nodal Officer MCC Ranjit Singh (ADC), Nodal Officer Trainings (CPO) Ranjit Thankur, Nodal Officer MCMC, EMC, I/C Control Room Neeraj Bhargav (DIO) and other concerned were present during the Randomisation process.

General Observer for 37-Shopian visits Strong Room



J1 NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, SEPTEMBER 04

The General Observer for 37-Shopian, Roohi Khan today visited Strong Room of 37-Shopian Assembly Constituency at Mini Secretariat Shopian in order to review the arrangements being made for commissioning of EVM/VVPATs, to be done on 5th September (Thursday), 2024 and assess other election Plans.

During her visit to Strong Room, General Observer asked for making proper seating arrangements for agents of political parties and contesting candidates on

the date of commissioning of machines who shall be present for watching the entire exercise at the designated space. Video coverage of the entire exercise of Commissioning, captured through CCTVs, installed at Strong Room shall be fed into LED Displays to be installed at the venue for each of the Constituency for the viewership of agents, advised the General Observer, Roohi Khan. The Observer also reviewed the Layout Plans of EVM management and called for systematic and organised EVM Placement at the strong room for smooth conduct of process.

DEO Jammu reviews elections preparedness



J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 04

District Election Officer Sachin Kumar Vaishya today chaired a meeting of the Returning Officers of all 11 Assembly Constituencies of Jammu district, focusing on a comprehensive review of election preparedness. ADDC Jammu, the Nodal Officer for MCC and Law & Order, Sher Singh was also in attendance in the meeting, which was convened to assess the district's readiness for the upcoming elections. The DEO took detailed assessment of the functioning of Static Surveillance Teams and Flying Squad Teams. Security measures across the district were a significant point of discussion, with the DEO emphasising the need for a robust and coordinated approach towards maintaining law and order during the electoral process.

In addition to security concerns, the meeting thoroughly reviewed operational procedures, ensuring that all protocols are in place and efficiently executed. An exchange of

information among the officers was aimed at optimising coordination and addressing any potential challenges that may arise.

The course of nominations, the scrutiny process, and the special needs of certain voter groups were also discussed.

Addressing the officers, the DEO stressed the paramount importance of conducting the elections in a free, fair and transparent manner. He called for strict adherence to the guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India, underlining that the integrity of the electoral process must be upheld at all costs.

The DEO urged the Returning Officers to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and vigilance as the district prepares for the polls, ensuring that every aspect of the electoral process is executed smoothly and efficiently.

Nodal Officer ETPBS/IT, (Director IT and DIO Jammu) Sanjeev Kapoor and Deputy DEO, Rameshwar Kumar were also present in the meeting.

General Observer for Assembly Constituencies 52-Doda and 53-Doda West inspects polling stations in Marmat Tehsil, surrounding areas

J1 NEWS SERVICE
DODA, SEPTEMBER 04

In preparation for the upcoming General Assembly Elections-2024, the General Observer for Assembly Constituency (AC) 52-Doda and 53-Doda West Aditya Negi inspected election arrangements in different parts of the twin constituencies, here today. Aditya Negi conducted thorough

inspection of polling stations located in Marmat Tehsil and adjoining areas. During the visit, Aditya Negi assessed the readiness of the polling stations, ensuring that all necessary arrangements are in place to facilitate a smooth and transparent voting process. The inspection covered various aspects, including accessibility, security arrangements, and adher-

ence to the guidelines set by the Election Commission of India. Aditya Negi emphasized the importance of conducting free and fair elections and expressed satisfaction with the ongoing preparations. He also interacted with Officers and officials, providing necessary guidance to ensure that all logistical and operational aspects are well-managed.

SVEEP: Vibrant Voter Awareness Rally held at Dangiawacha Rafiabab

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, SEPTEMBER 04

A vibrant voter awareness rally was today organized in Dangiawacha, Rafiabab, as part of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative, ahead of the General Assembly Elections-2024.

The rally organized under the supervision of Returning Officer for 08-Rafiabab Assembly Constituency, Shabir Ahmad Hakak witnessed participation of hundreds of new voters, local residents, and officials.

The rally was organized to raise awareness about the importance of voting, particularly among first-time voters, and to promote maximum voter turnout in the upcoming elections. Participants marched through the streets of Dangiawacha, carrying banners and placards with messages emphasizing the significance of each vote in strengthening democracy.

Hakak, speaking at the event, underscored the importance of such voter awareness campaigns in promoting a fair and informed electoral process. He urged all eligible citizens to actively participate in the elections and exercise their democratic rights.

The rally is part of a broader SVEEP campaign that includes educational programs and interactive sessions aimed at making the voting process easier for the public. Officials at the rally also provided information on the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verified Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs) to ensure voters are well-prepared for Election Day.

The event concluded with participants expressing their commitment to taking part in the democratic process by casting their votes in the upcoming elections.

EDITORIAL

Congress faces crucial test

As the countdown to the third and final phase of Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir intensifies, the Congress party finds itself in a precarious position. With only a day left before the notification for this critical phase, the party is grappling with significant delays in releasing its list of candidates for major and crucial seats in the Jammu district. This delay is not merely administrative but highlights the deeper struggles within the Congress party. Despite high-profile interventions by senior leaders like Rahul Gandhi, who has energized the campaign with rallies in Ramban and Anantnag, the Congress is faltering on a key front: candidate selection. The delay, attributed to fierce internal competition and strategic maneuvering, underscores the party's ongoing struggle to balance ambition with unity. The third phase of elections, scheduled for October 1, will see 24 seats in the Jammu region, including 11 in Jammu district, go to the polls. The stakes are high, and the Congress's inability to finalize and announce its candidates for these crucial constituencies is a significant concern. The current situation reflects a broader issue of internal discord and competition among party aspirants, each leveraging their resources and influence to secure a ticket. Prominent candidates such as Raman Bhalla for Jammu South-R S Pura, Taranjit Singh Tony for Bahu Constituency, and Yogesh Sawhney for Jammu East are in contention. Additionally, the Jammu West seat has contenders like Rajneesh Sharma and Manmohan Singh vying for the position. The party's high command is reportedly wrestling with the decision of who will be favored, reflecting the complexity of internal dynamics and external pressures. The delay in candidate announcements is being seen as a strategic move by the Congress leadership to mitigate potential revolts and internal dissatisfaction. The party appears to be taking a page from the BJP's recent experience, where a misstep in candidate selections led to a retraction and revision of their list. By postponing their own announcements, Congress aims to avoid similar backlash and unrest among its ranks. This strategic delay has not only heightened the tension within the party but has also intensified the lobbying efforts of ticket aspirants, many of whom are camped in New Delhi, making every effort to influence the final decisions. The filing of nominations for the 40 constituencies going to the polls in the third phase will begin on September 5, with the deadline set for September 12. The Congress leadership faces a critical deadline to finalize and announce their candidate list to ensure a coherent and unified campaign. The Congress party's struggle to finalize its candidate list amid internal competition and strategic delays presents a significant challenge as the election day approaches. The party's ability to navigate these complexities and present a united front will be crucial in determining its performance in the upcoming polls. As the party leadership works to finalize its selections, the eyes of both the electorate and political analysts will be keenly watching to see if Congress can overcome its internal strife and seize the opportunity in Jammu and Kashmir's evolving political landscape.

ASHOK K MEHTA

A Tibet festival started on 3 September at India International Centre New Delhi to celebrate its rich Buddhist heritage, culture and identity. The Sikyong (head) of Central Tibet Administration, Penpa Tshering, will preside over various activities to highlight Tibet's geo-strategic, spiritual and cultural importance for India.

His Holiness Dalai Lama at 89, is in a New York hospital for medical treatment but is considered in good health. US Special Coordinator on Tibet, Uzra Jeyva met him which elicited "immediate (solemn) protest from China". Foreign Affairs spokesperson Mao Ning said: "we don't allow Dalai Lama to engage in political activities in the US". Back-channel talks between the Dalai Lama envoy and China have been going on for an undisclosed period though Beijing does not confirm them. Talks are being pushed by the US House Resolution Resolve

Tibet Act July 2024 which calls for restoration of its full autonomy. India needs to add its voice for Tibet's autonomy both internally and externally as part of a broader coalition. India's recognition of full Chinese sovereignty over Tibet was based on Beijing granting and implementing Tibet's autonomy. Instead, China has quashed Tibet's autonomy and trade treaties opening for India to take a more nuanced position.

Two issues require GoI's prompt attention: the Dalai Lama succession; and the border issue including restoration of peace and tranquillity and full disengagement in east Ladakh. The visit of a bipartisan US delegation of lawmakers to Dharamsala and Delhi and being received both by Dalai Lama and Prime Minister Narendra Modi was significant. China bairer Nancy Pelosi had some unpleasant things to say about President Xi Jinping that drew Chinese ire. On the ground, the sinicisation process of Xijiang (Tibet) started in the mid-1960s.

The time-tested method of injecting 7.5 mn Han Chinese into Tibet along with neutralization of Tibetan Buddhism by deploying Chinese monks in Tibetan monasteries was designed to change the heart and soul of Tibet. Soon militarisation and infrastructure construction began which has hurt the environment. USD 5.8bn was spent on the Sichuan to Tibet railways system which is being extended to borders with India, Nepal and Bhutan.

A new border law has led to the building of 628 well-off border villages close to or encroached into neighbouring countries. In 1965 Convenience Police Stations were constructed as a key security innovation: Big Brother is Watching. By 2011 Tibet Autonomous Region advertised for 2500 police stations with 458 designated for Lhasa alone. By 2016, this grid-style social management of Tibet had recruited thousands of Han Chinese and some Tibetan policemen.

A Chinese Communist Party (CCP) political sec-

retary has always kept a hawk-eye vigil over Tibet which is run by the CCP from Beijing. Internal policing has resulted in fostering a feeling of 'otherness' by the surveillance drive. There are reports that attempts are being made to recruit Tibetans into the PLA including some forcible intake.

The day is not far when some Nepalese might opt to join PLA for other than the South West Theatre Command in Tibet. This will be the result of the ill-conceived Agniveer policy. The Chinese Renaming Campaign has resulted in what Forum for Non-Violent Alternatives (FNVA) has called "Thread of Beads: an analysis of renaming 62 locations in India's Arunachal Pradesh since 2017". China claims that 90 per cent of Zangnan (Arunachal Pradesh) is illegally occupied by India. Chief Minister Assam, Himanta Biswa Sarma, has suggested renaming 62 locations in Tibet. This is not likely to irk the Chinese. The Chinese renaming drive was done in four

phases in 2017, 2021, 2023 and 2024. It had been supplemented by salami-slicing into Nepal and Bhutan by building Xiakong villages (well-off) in contested areas to strengthen their claims to them. While Nepal and Bhutan are pretending this has not happened or happening, India is building some 600 vibrant villages for which funds have been released. Numerous encroachments have taken place in India also. The strategic importance of Tibet for India cannot be overstated.

The root of the border problem and the Tibet issue is India's failure to comprehend its significance in time and act. In C Eastern Command, Lt Gen Sir Francis Tucker had foreseen in 1946 in a paper he wrote that India must prevent China from occupying Tibet and be prepared to occupy it. This did not happen for which we are paying now. The priority for now is to coordinate with Dalai Lama to articulate his succession. The Dalai Lama has been silent on it for some time

now but has spoken and written about it in the past.

The Chinese are bound to appoint their own Dalai Lama as they appointed a Panchen Lama (second to Dalai Lama) Gyaltzen Norbu. This must be preempted. The CTA is preparing a new map of Tibet with the help of cartographic experts from Princeton University in the US. The issue of the map and India announcing the contours of its Tibet policy including the border and full disengagement of PLA from its intrusions in east Ladakh have to be coordinated with CTA. A succession policy should also be outlined. With Tibetans migrating to the US and soon the majority of Tibetans residing there than in India, the Tibet issue may vanish leaving Delhi with no potential leverage against Beijing.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff; views are personal)

UPA: Addressing employee aspirations

BKSINGH

The old pension scheme (OPS) has been a big burden on the union and states' budget of the country. In one of the economic reforms, it was shelved for employees joining government services in 2004 and later. The new scheme was called the National Pension Scheme (NPS), where the employee had to contribute 10% of the salary during the entire period of service. Initially, the government too was to make a matching contribution of 10%, which was later increased to 14%. The corpus generated for pension this way was invested in government securities, shares and corporate bonds, which had daily net asset value like mutual funds. At the time of retirement, at least 40% of the corpus is to be used for purchasing an annuity. The NPS scheme does not guarantee a monthly pension equivalent to 50% of the last salary drawn.

This led to resentment among the government employees and opposition parties especially Congress saw an opportunity to keep the BJP-led central government in the dock. Among several freebies, Congress also promised in the elec-

tion manifesto to revert to OPS in states they came to power. Montek Singh Ahluwalia has gone on record to bring home the point that the economy of the country will be ruined if OPS is revived for employees who joined service in and after 2004. Many experts have also concurred with the views. Congress won the Himachal Pradesh Assembly election on the promise to revert to OPS but did not implement it. Subsequently in the Telangana election and also in the Lok Sabha 2024 election, the revival of OPS was not again brought up in the manifesto.

BJP having disappointed with the Lok Sabha results in Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh had to make a tightrope walk and find a middle ground between OPS and NPS. The central government now proposes a United Pension Scheme (UPS) for employees whose service lasts for 25 years or more to get a pension of 50% of the average of the preceding twelve months' salary before the super annulation. The pension amount will be inflation-adjusted in dearness allowance twice a year. It has also a provision for a 60% family pension, for all diseased employees. The

scheme does not benefit those who served for less than ten years. However, a monthly pension of Rs 10,000 has been guaranteed for employees who retired after serving for at least ten years. An additional sweetener has also been brought in the provision for the payment of a lump sum amount linking it with the duration of service in the government.

The scheme will come into effect from 1st April 2025 and will benefit 23 lakh employees of the central Government if they opt for it. Further, if all states also opt for the scheme, 90 lakh employees will be benefitted in the country. The Maharashtra government, where the Assembly election is due shortly, has already opted for the scheme. UPS is also a contributory scheme like NPS, where employees' contributions remain unchanged at 10% and the government matching contribution is increased from 14% to 18.5%. If the monthly salary of the employee is Rs 50,000, the annual increase in the corpus is 3%, equivalent to a compound annual growth of 8%. SBI, LIC and UTI ate three managers of corpus for employees' pensions. SBI offers 9.75% and LIC 9.56% interest on the fund.

Currently, in NPS, government employee has three options for investment and 95% of subscribers allow 65% investment in government securities, 15% in equities and the remaining 20% in corporate debt. Since the corpus is not large enough to earn 50% of the average of the last twelve months' salary, the government's matching contribution has been increased from 14% to 18.5%. Cabinet Secretary TV Somanathan on UPS said, "definitely fiscally more prudent." "It remains within the same architecture of contributory funded scheme.

This is the critical difference. The OPS is unfunded, non-contributory scheme, this is funded, contributory scheme. The only difference in the changes made is to give an assurance and not leave things to the vagaries of market forces. But otherwise the structure of UPS has best elements of both (OPS and NPS)", he said. Economists think that UPS balances the fiscal cost and the aspiration of the employee. The increased cost of living will be taken care of because the real pension would not change as it is indexed to inflation. In NPS, if inflation goes up real pension comes down.

Nevertheless, the scheme would put an extra burden of Rs 6250 crores on the government in the first year.

This has been done to satisfy 23 lakh beneficiaries, who are vocal political constituencies and no political party would easily ignore their demand. It is expected that most states would adopt UPS, without bothering for additional financial burden.

With the announcement of UPS, opposition parties are stepping up their demand for restoration of OPS. Economists have been consistently warning against the restoration; it has the potential to make the growth sluggish and hamper the progress of the nation. It also impacts the lives of the poor. Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister has suggested that reverting to OPS will be catastrophic for poor populations and would crowd out private investments in states that revert to it. Reserve Bank of India in January 2023 had flagged concerns about the government finances for states opting to revert to OPS last year.

RBI had already cautioned that the move would lead to accumulation of liabilities, which can become a major risk

in future. RBI had also said that states were expected to incur a 16% rise in pension expenditure at Rs 4,63,436 Crores as against Rs 3,99, 813 crores in the previous year. Pension outgo under NPS is Rs 4 lakh crores, which would be Rs 17 lakh crores if OPS is reverted. At present Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Punjab have reverted to OPS. Since then BJP has come back to power in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh and it is hoped that both governments will continue with NPS and opt for UPS with effect from 1st April 2025. Punjab is governed by AAP and their main agenda is to remain in power and not to be concerned about the state's finances. UPS itself is causing a financial burden on the Central government of Rs 6250 crores in the first year. If all the states opt for it, the total economic burden on central and all state governments would be of the order of Rs 25,000 crores in the first year. Let there be no politics and political parties be conscious of maintaining fiscal discipline.

(The writer is a retired Principal Chief Conservator of Forests-Head of Forest Force-Karnataka; views are personal)

Policy rollbacks: The unseen cost of ignoring stakeholder consultation

JAIDEEP VAIDEESWAR

Since the Modi Government 1.0, India has witnessed a series of high-profile policy rollbacks that highlight a critical issue in governance: the need for broader consultation and consensus-building before introducing significant reforms. The latest example is the rollback of the lateral entry scheme, which sought to bring professionals from outside the traditional civil services into government roles.

While the merits and demerits of such a policy can be debated, the rapid reversal following its announcement points to a deeper, more systemic issue—the lack of comprehensive stakeholder engagement. This pattern is not new. The government's attempts to implement sweeping reforms have repeatedly stumbled due to insufficient consul-

tation. The Land Acquisition Bill, the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) paired with the National Register of Citizens (NRC), and the Farm Laws all serve as prime examples. In each case, the policies were introduced with minimal input from those most affected—be it farmers, minority communities, or state governments. The predictable outcome has been an intense public backlash, forcing the government to either backpedal or face prolonged unrest. The trend is concerning. Policymaking in a diverse democracy like India requires not only a vision but also the patience to engage with a wide range of stakeholders.

This includes not just the obvious beneficiaries or those directly affected but also civil society, industry experts, and regional representatives. The lack of such engagement has led to a growing distrust

between the government and the public, where every new announcement is met with suspicion rather than optimism. Moreover, the need for broader consultation becomes even more pressing when considering the long-term impact of these policies. Short-term political gains or expedient decision-making may lead to swift policy announcements, but the absence of robust dialogue with stakeholders can result in policies that are unsustainable or unimplementable in the long run.

Take, for instance, the recent discussion in the media on potential additional restrictions on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the tobacco sector. While the government may have had reasons for this move, the absence of dialogue with stakeholders—particularly tobacco farmers—has exacerbated concerns.

Tobacco provides liveli-

hood to 36 million people including 6 million farmers and 20 million farm labour engaged in tobacco farming. Since the huge scale of investment of \$4 trillion that the finance minister pointed to at the recent Voice of Global South Summit, it is clear that the FDI is the only way to protect farmers. Similarly, both the ill-conceived Tax Collection at Source (TCS) on foreign travel and now the introduction of the new Tax Clearance Certificate requirement for Indians travelling abroad are poorly thought through and have virtually no machinery to provide certificates on an emergency basis. The repeated lack of consensus-building not only undermines the effectiveness of policies but also erodes public trust in governance. It creates an environment where even well-intentioned reforms are viewed with scepticism, and the potential benefits

are overshadowed by the immediate backlash. This is particularly damaging in a country as diverse as India, where the success of any policy hinges on its acceptance across different regions, communities, and economic strata. Furthermore, these repeated rollbacks damage India's international reputation, as global investors and partners begin to view the country as an uncertain policy environment. This uncertainty not only affects domestic stakeholders but also risks deterring foreign investment, which is crucial for driving economic growth and development in a rapidly globalizing world.

Moving forward, the government must adopt a more inclusive approach to policymaking. This means going beyond the corridors of power in New Delhi and engaging with stakeholders at the grassroots level. It means recognizing that

the voices of citizens, small business owners, and regional leaders, are not just peripheral—they are central to the success of any reform. It also means being open to feedback and willing to make adjustments before policies are finalized, rather than being forced into a retreat after the fact. India's growth story is too important to be derailed by avoidable missteps in policy formulation. By fostering a culture of consultation and consensus, the government can ensure that its reforms not only achieve their intended goals but also enjoy the support and trust of the people. The lesson from recent rollbacks is clear: no matter how well-conceived a policy may be, it cannot succeed without the buy-in of those it is meant to serve.

(The writer is a former consultant to MyGov. Views expressed are personal)

Godrej Interio Elevates Learning Environments in India with Innovative Educational Furniture Solutions

JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 4

Godrej Interio, one of India's leading home and office furniture brands and a part of Godrej & Boyce, a company of Godrej Enterprises Group, is significantly expanding its presence in the Indian education sector. The company is introducing a range of innovative and customized furniture solutions designed to enhance the learning environment across educational institutions in both private and government sectors.

With a strategic focus on ergonomic design, technology integration, and sustainability, Godrej Interio aims to capture an 18% market share in the educational furniture sector by FY25. The company's latest offerings cater to the dynamic needs of modern classrooms, providing flexible,



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to rearrange furniture to suit individual needs and group discussions, while 94% of teachers who can change classroom layout agree they can teach more effectively.

Godrej Interio had collaborated with several state governments, including Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, and Jammu & Kashmir, to enhance the quality of educational infrastructure. In fiscal year 2023, Godrej Interio delivered almost 200,000 school furniture units through these partnerships.

The brand is at the forefront of integrating technology into its educational furniture solutions. They offer tech-enabled furniture that supports a seamless blend of physical and digital learning with customizable tech integration features such as built-in microphones and wire management systems.

One Day Awareness Programme Organized by Civil Defence, Jammu



JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 4

One day Awareness-cum-demonstration programme held at NCC Camping Ground Nagrota Jammu, which was organized by Civil Defence Jammu under the supervision of Dy. Controller Civil Defence Jammu. In the awareness Camp NCC cadets were made aware about the basic knowledge of First Aid, CPR, Chocking, Fire fighting and other Emergency rescue methods by the Civil Defence Instructors.

The programme was organized in the premises of NCC Camp, Nagrota where 500 NCC cadets of Kashmir Province have

attended the said programme. During the programme demonstration on first aid, fire fighting was presented by the Civil Defence team. The Camp Commander Col. Saurabh Saxena 1st J&K Bn. NCC Srinagar and Col. Ramendra, Adm. Office, NCC camping ground Nagrota appreciated the role of Civil Defence organization and thanked the Civil Defence team for organizing such important awareness-cum-demonstration programme. Paramjit Kumar, Chief Warden Civil Defence, Jammu, SI Ram Dayal, In charge Trainings, Civil Defence Instructors Jammu & staff of NCC Nagrota also present on the occasion.

NILM J&K organizes School Level Painting Competition At Ever Green Hr. Sec. School



JAMMU

National Incredible Literacy Mission organized school level painting competition to aware school children about the importance of our environmental and natural resources. Students of Ever Green Higher Secondary School Lower Roop Nagar Jammu took part in this painting competition. This competition was organized by NILM NGO to aware the school children about green wealth and need of conservation of forest, water and other need full environment resources. "This year hundreds of students actively participated in this competition and has evaluated their approach for environment and water conservation through painting" Kavita Bali Secretary NILM said. During the painting competition Subash Singh Chairman of Ever Green Higher Secondary

Lower Roop Nagar along Rekha Jamwal Principal of said school remain present during the event. School teacher Seerat Sharma along with Neeraj Bali Field Officer of NILM actively participated in the painting competition. At end of painting competition certificates were distributed among the participants by the Rakeshwar Singh Project Director NILM J&K. Rakeshwar Singh Project Director NILM said, "This type of competitions are specially designed by our NGO to make a positive attitude among the children to love their surrounding and environment. He further added that students are passionately participating in the competition. This way they are getting aware with inner talent as well as the students develop environment friendly attitude in them.

Cong-NC alliance is expired injection, will cause harm to people: Tarun Chugh

JINNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEPT 4

The BJP National General Secretary, Tarun Chugh, who is also the party incharge of J&K, on Wednesday said that PDP and NC-Congress alliance will meet fate like the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

"Both Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti lost elections in 2024 Lok Sabha polls," Chugh said, and added, "These leaders will meet the same fate like in 2024 Lok Sabha polls".

In a sarcastic manner, Chugh said, "Cong-NC alliance is like an expired injection and will benefit no one except causing harm to the people".

He said that 3 families brought unrest in J&K and made it a terrorist capital while PM Modi made "J&K a tourist capital".

Congress is dancing to the tunes of Pak's ISI, he said.

Chugh was addressing the people at Habbakadal. Chugh said that the Congress, in league with the NCP and PDP, has been waging a proxy war in J&K to spread violence and disturbance to deprive the youth employment opportunities.

"It has been a calculated design of the Congress to support divisive forces and to let down the Kashmiri pandits", Chugh said, adding that there have been signals that the Congress is mostly speaking the language of the cross border forces led by ISI.

Reacting strongly to the statement of senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for misleading the people on statehood issue, Chugh said the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already promised to restore the statehood as soon as law and order situation improves.

We will work hard to bring Baderwah on tourist map, he said.

Earlier, a rally was taken out by the BJP in Srinagar led by Tarun Chugh in favor of Ashok Kumar Bhatt for Habbakadal Assembly constituency after which Bhatt filed his nomination amid heavy sloganeering by BJP workers.

Samman Diksha: GDCW Kathua NCC Army Wing honours Its Rising Stars

JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 4

Government Degree College for Women (GDCW) Kathua witnessed a momentous event as the NCC Army Wing hosted the "Samman Diksha" felicitation cum rank ceremony for its cadets of the 2023-24 session. The ceremony, held at 11:30 AM, was graced by the esteemed presence of Colonel Kuldeep Kachru, Commanding Officer of the 4 J&K Battalion NCC Jammu, who served as the chief guest.

The event kicked off with a warm welcome to Colonel Kachru by Principal Dr. Savi Behl, CTO Dr. Gurpreet Kour, the NCC committee members, and the cadets. The highlight of the day was the rank ceremony, where several deserving cadets were recognized for their leadership and commitment. The following cadets were appointed to new positions: SUO Muskan Thakur, JUO Komal Sharma, JUO Janvi Sharma, Senior Ser-



geant Bharti Devi, and Junior Sergeant Meghali Abrol. A special moment of the ceremony was the felicitation of SUO Muskan Thakur by Colonel Kachru and Principal Dr. Savi Behl for her exceptional performance and dedication to the NCC. Muskan has had an illustrious journey, marked by participation in prestigious national camps like the Thal Sainik Camp 2023, Republic Day Camp 2024, and the Youth Exchange Programme in Kazakhstan 2024. Her relentless commitment and achievements have not only brought pride to her institution and battalion but also set a new

benchmark for her fellow cadets.

In his address, Colonel Kuldeep Kachru encouraged the cadets to aim for more national camps and shared valuable life lessons. He also lauded Principal Dr. Savi Behl and the college staff for their dedication to providing quality education and opportunities for the cadets.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Gurpreet Kour, CTO NCC. The Samman Diksha ceremony was a resounding success, leaving the cadets inspired and motivated to reach even greater heights in their future endeavors.

First Joint Commanders' Conference commences in Lucknow



JINNEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPT 4

The maiden Joint Commanders' Conference (JCC) commenced at Lucknow on 4 September 2024, under the theme 'Sashakt and Surakshit Bharat: Transforming Armed Forces'. The conference is focused on shaping the future of India's military to adapt to the changing operational milieu. Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan alongwith Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Choudhary led the convocation which brings together the apex level

hierarchy from the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces.

Reviewing the current security situation and the defence preparedness of the Armed Forces, the CDS emphasized the importance of Jointness and future plans for enhancing integration across various domains, which is crucial for adapting to the contours of future warfare and conduct of effect based operations. Gen Anil Chauhan complimented the three Services for initiating numerous measures along the roadmap for integration. He stressed that it was a step by step process, beginning with Cross Service Co-operation leading to a 'Joint Culture' and finally achieving integration of

forces for conduct of joint operations.

Deliberations also focused on establishment of command and control centres with the requisite infrastructure to facilitate decision making. General Chauhan stressed the need for operational preparedness to meet emerging challenges, underscoring the imperative need of modernisation to stay ready and relevant and achieve strategic autonomy.

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, is scheduled to attend the conference on the second day where he will engage in detailed deliberations with the senior officials of Ministry of Defence and the apex leadership of Indian Armed Forces.

Central University of Jammu hosts Extension Lecture on Ecosystem Health



JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 4

The Department of Educational Studies at Central University of Jammu organized an Extension Lecture titled "Small Particles and Their Big Impact on Ecosystem Health" as part of the Seventh Shiksha Shashtrarth series. The event, held at the Malviya Shiksha Bhavan, was aimed at the students of the B.A. B.Ed. Integrated Programme.

The Shiksha Shashtrarth initiative, established by the School of Education, serves as a distinguished platform for intellectual discourse and academic enrichment. Dr. Shweta Yadav, Associate Dean of International Relations and Assistant Professor of Environmental Science at Central University of Jammu, was the keynote speaker for the event. Her presentation focused on the significant role of aerosols in ecosystem health and their broader implications for society. Dr. Yadav discussed the connection between aerosols and

climate change, as well as their impact on Sustainable Development Goals, including Climate Action, Good Health, and Sustainable Cities and Communities.

The session began with a welcome address by Ms. Shivali Khajuria, the Teacher Coordinator for the event, who later presented a token of appreciation to Dr. Yadav on behalf of the Head of the Department, Prof. Asit Mantry, Dr. Yad Ram, and Ms. Khajuria herself.

Following Dr. Yadav's insightful lecture, a Q&A session allowed students to engage with her on various pertinent topics. Dr. Yadav's discussion was informed by global research perspectives and aimed at fostering a deep understanding of the issues at hand.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Ms. Khajuria. The presence of faculty members including Dr. Kiran, Dr. Aman, Dr. Yad Ram, and Dr. Shashikant Mishra added to the significance of the occasion.

Indian Army conducts Amity Meeting for Gujjar, Bakarwals at Said Baker, Poonch



JINNEWS SERVICE
POONCH, SEPT 4

Indian Army organized an Amity Meeting with the local residents of Said Baker in Poonch District. The said meeting was organized to increase the outreach to locals and improve the coordination between Awam and Indian Army. The locals were informed of the prevailing situation and the ongoing army efforts in order to

negate militant activity in the remote area. It also provided an opportunity for residents to openly address various issues they face within their village. The role of Army and Awaam to fight Terrorism together in the region was the key highlight during the meet. All attendees expressed their appreciation for the Indian Army's efforts to reach out to the locals. A total of 23 locals were present.

Indian Army conducts Medical Patrol for Gujjar, Bakkarwal at Thamlot, Poonch

JINNEWS SERVICE
POONCH, SEPT 4

The professional and humane face of Indian Army is well known and is always praised and commended following its ethos and traditions, Indian Army has been at the forefront and working along with the Awam in their fight against Medical related issues. Setting another example of bonhomie with



the local Awam, Indian Army conducted Medical patrol in the area of

Thamlot Poonch district. The patrol addressed the population of far flung

areas of Thamlot. A total of 42 locals including 18 Women, 15 Children & 09 Men reaped the benefits of the medical facilities provided by the patrol. The local populace appreciated selfless efforts of the Army. People stated such events not only help in taking medical aid to the doorstep but also help in the synergy between the Army and the Awam towards development of the region.

Prez Murmu urges women to play a pivotal role in country's development

AGENCIES

UDGIR (MAHARASHTRA), SEP 4

President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday appealed to the women to take the benefits of a slew of schemes launched by the Centre and the Maharashtra government for economic independence and empowerment to develop as their development will play a crucial role in the country's development.

She also advised the women, who constitute almost half of the population, should not neglect their health while taking care of the family as they should remain healthy which is essential. "As the women play a leading role in the development of their family, they can play a crucial role in scaling up the country's growth," she remarked.

In her address at the gathering of beneficiaries of 'Shasan Aplya Dari' and 'Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana', the



President made a strong case for increasing efforts to promote women's further participation in the country's development. The role of self-help groups is quite encouraging in promoting women's participation. She hailed the Maharashtra government's Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana and similar other welfare and development schemes launched for women's development and empowerment.

The President said the Centre has set a target of covering the three crore women under the Lakhpati Didi scheme of which she praised Maharashtra for keeping a target of 25 lakh. She mentioned that Maharashtra has so far covered over 13 lakh women under the Lakhpati Didi scheme. She said that women are not alone but the Centre and state governments are helping them to further develop. She reiterated that

women should take advantage of such schemes for social, economic, educational and personal development. "They can become Atmanirbhar and contribute to the development of the society and the nation," she added. The President said that men should understand the potential of women and help them to achieve their dreams and aspirations. "Women have been progressing to achieve their targets by crossing all

hurdles. Any obstacles in their growth and prosperity will hamper the pace of development of the society and the country," she noted.

"In our culture, the country is known as Matru Bhoomi (Mother's land). So it is imperative to give women due respect and dignity as it is an integral part of our culture," said the President.

"In the development of the society and country, apart from a formal education to youth, they should be trained to become confident and strong," she said. President Murmu hailed the Maharashtra government's Mukhyamantri Karya Prashikshan Yojana to train youth with the help of private sector companies. Due to this training, the youth will be able to earn money and march in their life with further confidence. "The Development of youth will be crucial in achieving the ambitious target of Viksit Bharat," she opined.

Alarming that 45pc road accidents in India involve two-wheelers: Nitin Gadkari

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEP 4

It is alarming that 45 per cent of accidents in India involve two-wheelers, said Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, on Wednesday, stressing the need to boost road safety across the nation.

He was addressing the Safety 2024 conference, hosted by The George Institute for Global Health and co-sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) in New Delhi. "It is alarming that 45 per cent of accidents involve two-wheelers, and a significant number of deaths could have been prevented with proper helmet usage," Gadkari said, underscoring the government's unwavering commitment to significantly reduce road accidents and fatalities.

"Our efforts must extend beyond improving road infrastructure; we must focus on changing human behavior, particularly among vulnerable groups like two-wheeler



riders and pedestrians," he added.

Gadkari also released the 'Consensus Statement for Road Safety in India (Evidence-informed and Contextually Relevant 2025-2030),' calling on global and Indian civil society organisations to unite in making road safety a priority, particularly in school education for young people.

"We must prioritise education and awareness campaigns, starting from our schools, to instill a culture of road safety from a young age. Moreover, collaboration with industries, such as encouraging two-wheeler manufacturers to provide helmets with their vehicles, can be a crucial step in saving lives," he said. According to the annual

report on road accidents in India, in 2022 the country witnessed 4,61,312 road crashes, resulting in 1,68,491 fatalities and injuries to 4,43,366 individuals. On average, there are 1,264 crashes and 462 deaths daily, translating to 53 crashes and 92 deaths every hour.

The Minister also emphasised the importance of a collective effort to tackle road safety challenges. "It's time for a collective effort - government, industry, and citizens alike - to address this issue head-on. By implementing strategic measures, creating safer road environments, and fostering respect for the law, we can significantly reduce the number of accidents and make our roads safer for everyone," he added.

In Singapore, PM Modi flaunts drumming skills before Indian diaspora

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEP 4

Prime Minister Narendra Modi reached Singapore on Wednesday, as part of his two-nation tour and was given a warm welcome by the Indian diaspora on arrival.

PM Modi also shared some light moments with the Indian community, even as they came in large numbers to welcome him on arrival to the Southeast Asian nation.

PM Modi tried his hands at 'dhol' and displayed his drumming skills while the excited Indian diaspora cheered for him. A video of the heartwarming moment has also gone viral on social media.

Among other viral clips, PM Modi could be seen giving autographs to one of the individuals while others are trying to click selfies and photos with him.

A woman also tied rakhi to PM Modi's wrist, amidst



cheers from the excited crowd.

Notably, this is PM Modi's fifth official visit to Singapore. Prior to this, he wrapped up a visit to Brunei, the first visit by an Indian PM for a bilateral visit. Accompanied by Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar and National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and other officials, PM Modi will be holding key meetings with Singapore's top leadership including President Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Senior Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Emeritus

Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong. Earlier in a post on X, PM Modi wrote: "Landed in Singapore. Looking forward to the various meetings aimed at boosting the India-Singapore friendship. India's reforms and the talent of our Yuva Shakti make our nation an ideal investment destination. We also look forward to closer cultural ties."

PM Modi is set to receive an official welcome at the Parliament House on September 5 and call on President Tharman Shanmugaratnam.

Singapore PM Wong and Senior Minister Lee Hsien Loong will host separate meetings for PM Modi.

PM Modi will also participate in a business roundtable with Singaporean business leaders organised by the Singapore Business Federation, where he will interact with Singapore's semiconductor ecosystem players and engage students from Singapore in the India Ready Talent Programme, who did internships in India and the Odisha World Skills Centre interns in companies in Singapore.

12 accords signed, over 10,000 cadres of various militant outfits in NE surrendered: Amit Shah

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI/AGARTALA, SEP 4

Home Minister Amit Shah said on Wednesday that over 12 accords have been signed in the last five years with militant outfits and other organisations in the country's northeastern region, while over 10,000 cadres of various extremist groups have surrendered and joined the mainstream.

Home Minister Shah, Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha, officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and Tripura government were present at the agreement signing programme with two insurgent groups -- National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) and All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) -- in the national capital on Wednesday.

Chairing the signing ceremony, the Home Minister said that after 35 years of armed conflict, the cadres of the NLFT and the ATTF came to the mainstream,



and decided to join the development process.

Around 328 cadres of the two outfits would join the mainstream of life and take part in the developmental initiatives, HM Shah said, adding that a Rs 250 crore package has been sanctioned, and a special development initiative was undertaken for the tribals and their areas.

Amit Shah also said that the government would implement all the provisions of the agreement in toto.

"Through the Ashtalakshmi concept and Purvodaya vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, huge development has already

been achieved in road, rail and air connectivity in the eight northeastern states. Earlier, there was a gap between the northeastern states and Delhi but now with visionary leader PM Modi's initiatives, the region has achieved tremendous development," the Home Minister said.

Former Tripura Chief Minister and Lok Sabha Member Biplab Kumar Deb, Tipra Motha Party supremo Pradyot Bikram Manikya Debbarma, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, senior officials at MHA and Tripura government were also present at the agreement signing ceremony.

A Tripura government official said that earlier on August 10, 2019, a tripartite agreement was signed in Delhi between the Centre, the Tripura government and a faction of the NLFT.

After the pact, 88 NLFT cadres surrendered to the Tripura government and deposited arms and ammunition.

The official said that the surrendered cadres were given benefits as per the Surrender-cum-Rehabilitation Scheme, 2018 of the MHA.

The Tripura government helped the surrendered cadres with housing, recruitment for government jobs, education and skill development training.

Both the NLFT and ATTF have been banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act since 1997 as the outfits have been involved in violence, operating from their camps across the International Border.

Rajasthan IPS officer demands Ashok Gehlot's arrest in SI exam paper leak case

AGENCIES

JAIPUR, SEP 4

Following the arrest of 42 trainee sub-inspectors and two Rajasthan Public Service Commission (RPSC) members for their alleged involvement in the paper leak of SI recruitment exams held in 2021, IPS officer Pankaj Chaudhary said on Wednesday that prime facie, the main accused is former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot who should be arrested without delay.

The RPSC members arrested in the case are Babul Karata and Ramu Ram Raeka.

Speaking to IANS, Chaudhary, who's presently the Nodal Officer for Community Policing, said, "Over the past few months, we have seen RPSC members either being arrested or questioned. However, why are questions not being raised against Ashok Gehlot? Prima facie, he is an accused in the case and should be held without delay. He is the one who



appointed these people in crucial positions without checking their past records."

"These people were not appointed to Sabzi Mandis. Their actions have shaken the faiths of lakhs of students. Ashok Gehlot has ruined everything, and now it is difficult to compensate the losses he has caused," Chaudhary added.

The IPS officer also raised three demands in a post on X.

"First, considering the circumstances and conditions, SI recruitment should be cancelled in the larger interest. Second, Ex CM Shri Ashok Gehlot should be arrested immediately, so that the truth of the remaining #recruit-

ments comes out. Third, investigation of the ADGP posted in the SOG (Special Operations Group) from 2020 to 2023 should be conducted."

In another post, Chaudhary said, "There is a need to increase the scope and level of investigation. Complaints of many members were received during the Gehlot Raj but no investigation was carried out."

The IPS officer also shared an open letter in which he accused the former Congress Chief Minister of indulging in vendetta politics against him by transferring him to different locations, which, he said, was done because he was performing his duty honestly.

Assam: 68 arrested in Rs 2,200 crore online trading scam

AGENCIES

GUWAHATI, SEP 4

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Wednesday that at least 68 people have been arrested in connection with the Rs 2,200 crore online trading scam.

Talking to reporters, CM Sarma said, "Police have arrested 68 persons who were involved in the online trading scam. The investigation is on. Further details will be unearthed very soon. However, I want to appeal to citizens that they should not fall into the trap of fraudsters. Nobody on this earth can give anybody 25 or 30 per cent through trading."

"I hope the general public saw in TV footage that the fraudsters lived a king-size life with public money. I urge every citizen not to waste your hard-earned money," the Chief Minister said.

The Assam Police uncovered a large financial scam involving brokers who made false online stock market

investments by promising to double people's money, officials said on Wednesday.

The police have arrested Swapnil Das, a resident of Guwahati and Vishal Phukan, a resident of Dibrugarh in connection with the crime.

Several more arrests have been made and many other people are anticipated to be arrested soon.

According to the police, Phukan used his lavish lifestyle to entice people and assured his investors a 30 per cent return on their money within 60 days.

In addition to investing in Assamese cinema, he had established four fictitious businesses and bought other houses.

The police conducted a raid at his residence in Dibrugarh and seized documents linked to the multi-crore scam.

Meanwhile, police are now looking for Assamese choreographer and actress Sumi Borah, who is also reportedly connected to Phukan's network.

Use public transport to reduce pollution: Kailash Gahlot on launch of premium bus fleet

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEP 4

Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot on Wednesday introduced a new premium bus policy, highlighting the launch of a fleet of electric buses as a significant step towards promoting environment-friendly transportation in the national capital.

"I believe the long wait to introduce a premium bus policy is finally coming to an end. We have secured licences from two companies, with Uber launching the service. Today, we are inspecting the buses at the Rajghat depot," Gahlot told IANS.

Emphasising the initiative's importance, Gahlot said, "This marks a significant change and a great initiative for public transportation. This shows how public and private sectors can make transportation more efficient."

He also underscored the environmental benefits, stating, "Because these are electric buses, they will also help reduce pollution."



Gahlot mentioned that the government's involvement in this initiative is minimal, limited to issuing licences under conditions that the buses are modern, comfortable, and air-conditioned and that each operator deploys a minimum of 25 buses.

"Hopefully, we will flag off these buses in the next 10 days," he added.

He also urged the public to adopt this comfortable public transport option instead of private vehicles, which would help reduce traffic congestion and pollution.

The ticket booking

system for these buses will be fully online, enhancing convenience for the passengers.

In addition to the bus policy, the Transport Minister also discussed the extension of the Narela Metro corridor, which had previously been halted.

"Earlier, the Metro corridor was halted at Narela. It has now been extended to the Delhi-Haryana border and further to Kundli and Nathupur villages, connecting these rural areas with the entire city of Delhi. My best wishes to all the residents there," he said.

US military claims to destroy another Houthi missile system in Yemen

AGENCIES
SANAA, SEP 4

The US Central Command said on Wednesday that its naval forces had destroyed a missile system of the Houthi group in Yemen.

"In the past 24 hours, US Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed an Iranian-backed Houthi missile system in a Houthi-controlled area of Yemen," it said in a post on social media platform X.

"It was determined this system presented an imminent threat to US and coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region," it said without providing further details, according to Xinhua news agency.

This was the third



Houthi missile system destroyed by the US military strikes over the past two days, according to the USCENTCOM.

Meanwhile, residents in the Yemeni central province of Ibb reported on social media platforms that a fighter jet launched an airstrike targeting the Houthi-controlled Al-Hamzah military instal-

lation in the province on Tuesday.

The Houthi group, which controls Ibb and several other northern provinces, including the capital, Sanaa, has yet to comment.

Separately, on Tuesday the European Union's naval mission wrote on X that the burning Greek-flagged oil tanker Sounion,

which was attacked by the Houthis two weeks ago in the Red Sea, was still unsafe to be towed, and private companies responsible for the salvage operation are exploring alternative solutions to conduct the towing operation.

The Houthis have been launching missile and drone attacks targeting what it called "Israel-linked" ships in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden since November last year to show solidarity with the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

In response, the US-British naval coalition stationed in the waters has since January conducted regular air raids and missile strikes against Houthi targets to deter the group.

Thai King endorses new cabinet under PM Paetongtarn

AGENCIES
BANGKOK, SEP 4

Thailand's King Maha Vajiralongkorn has endorsed members of a new cabinet under the leadership of Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, a royal command said on Wednesday.

According to the official Royal Gazette, the king appointed 35 cabinet ministers as selected by Paetongtarn, including six deputy prime ministers and other ministers, after her endorsement as the new prime minister of the Southeast Asian country last month, Xinhua news agency reported.

The ruling Pheu Thai Party holds the largest share of 17 seats in the cabinet, with most of the appointees being existing ministers and deputy ministers who served



under the previous Srettha Thavisin administration.

Pichai Chunhavanjira retains his post as Finance Minister and Maris Sangi-ampongsa as Foreign Minister, while Phumtham Wechayachai is named Defence Minister and has been replaced as commerce minister by Pichai Nariphaphan.

Core partners in the Pheu Thai-led coalition, including the Bhumjaithai Party and Ruam Thai Sang Chart Party, command the remaining 19 portfolios.

The new cabinet is scheduled to take an oath of allegiance before the king on Friday, paving the way for its policy statement address to the par-

liament before officially assuming office.

Paetongtarn said earlier that the new cabinet should continue the unfinished initiatives from Srettha's administration, including her party's flagship policy, the digital wallet cash handout scheme, which will move forward with some adjustments.

The 38-year-old Pheu Thai Party leader and the daughter of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was elected Thailand's youngest and second female premier after winning a parliamentary vote in August.

Her appointment came after the sudden dismissal of Srettha by the constitutional court for breaching ethical standards under the country's constitution when appointing a cabinet minister earlier this year.

VISIT TO BRUNEI USHERS IN NEW ERA OF STRONGER TIES: PM MODI

AGENCIES
BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN (BRUNEI), SEP 4

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that his two-day visit to Brunei Darussalam - the first ever bilateral trip by an Indian PM to the south-east Asian nation - reflected New Delhi's deep desire to boost bilateral ties and will further boost action on India's 'Act East' policy and its vision for the Indo-Pacific.

"My visit to Brunei Darussalam was productive. It ushers in a new era of even stronger India-Brunei ties. Our friendship will contribute to a better planet. I am grateful to the people and Government of Brunei for their hospitality and affection," said PM Modi as he left for

Singapore - the second and final leg of his visit to the region.

Earlier, India and Brunei on Wednesday called for leveraging respective strengths - including in fields of technology, finance, manufacturing and processing - as PM Modi wrapped up a "historic" visit to the country.

During their extensive bilateral talks held at the Istana Nurul Iman in Bandar Seri Begawan, PM Modi and Brunei Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah witnessed the signing and exchange of several agreements, including a MoU on cooperation in the operation of telemetry, tracking and telecommand station for satellite and launch vehicles.

Prime Minister Modi

stated that the first ever bilateral visit by an Indian Head of Government to Brunei reflected New Delhi's deep desire to boost bilateral ties and highlighted that his visit was in keeping with India's commitment to strengthen its 'Act East Policy', now in its 10th year.

"We had comprehensive talks on various aspects of our ties to give a strategic direction to our partnership. We are committed to strengthening our cooperation in economic, scientific, and strategic sectors. We have decided to strengthen our cooperation in fintech and cyber security along with agri-industry, pharmaceutical and health sectors," said PM Modi at the banquet hosted by the Sultan of Brunei in his honour.



"Under the energy sector, we discussed the potential for long term cooperation in LNG. To strengthen our defence cooperation, we held con-

structive dialogue on possibilities of cooperation in defence industry, training and capacity building. To strengthen our cooperation in the Space sector,

we have agreed on cooperation in satellite development, remote sensing, and training.

To enhance connectivity between the two countries, direct flights will be commenced soon," he added.

The two leaders welcomed the elevation of bilateral ties to Enhanced Partnership and also exchanged views on regional and global issues, condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

They also reiterated their commitment to work closely together in mutually beneficial areas to further strengthen the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

In the Joint Statement that was released after the bilateral talks, PM Modi

expressed India's "deep appreciation" to Brunei Darussalam for continuing to host Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)'s Telemetry Tracking and Telecommand (TTC) Station, which has contributed towards India's ongoing efforts in the field of space.

The Brunei Sultan, on the other hand, appreciated the training and scholarship offered by India for Bruneian nationals under the various programmes including Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) and e-ITEC programmes.

"Both leaders reiterated their commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, stability, maritime safety and security, as well as respecting freedom of navigation and

overflight and unimpeded lawful commerce, consistent with international law, notably the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982. The leaders also urged all parties to resolve disputes through peaceful means in accordance with international law, particularly UNCLOS 1982," the Joint Statement mentioned.

Acknowledging that both countries share historical linkages that date back centuries and are facilitated by cultural interactions and trade, the two leaders also welcomed the planned direct flight connectivity between Bandar Seri Begawan and Chennai which will foster stronger people-to-people linkages and facilitate increased trade and tourism activities.

Authorities warn of likely early start to Australian bushfire season

AGENCIES
SYDNEY, SEP 4

Authorities have warned of a likely early start to Australia's bushfire season following the warmest August in recorded history.

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC) - the national council of fire and emergency service authorities in Australia and New Zealand - on Wednesday released the official seasonal bushfire outlook for the spring of 2024, Xinhua news agency reported.

It revealed that the state of Queensland and the Northern Territory (NT) in Australia's north as well as the southern states of Victoria and South Australia (SA) are facing an increased risk of fires during the season, which



began on September 1 and runs through the end of November.

The outlook, which was compiled by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), said there is an increased likelihood of unusually high spring maximum temperatures across most of Australia.

In northern Australia, it said that the increased fire risk is driven by dry grasslands caused by dry winds in the winter and unseasonal rainfall earlier in the year that has led to increased fuel loads.

In the south, the outlook said rainfall was in the lowest 10 per cent on

record for the first half of 2024, causing an increase in dead and dry plant material.

Releasing the report, AFAC Chief Executive Rob Webb urged communities across Australia to prepare for fires.

"Fire and emergency services are prepared for

the fire season ahead and are here today to encourage communities to do the same," he said in a speech at the AFAC annual conference in Sydney.

"Now is the time to make a plan. Understand your local risk, know where you will get your information, and talk to your family about what you will do."

The BoM on Monday confirmed that August was Australia's warmest on record, with the national average temperature for the month 3.03 degrees Celsius above the 1961-1990 long-term August average.

In its spring long-range forecast released late in August, the BoM said there was an increased likelihood of warmer-than-average temperatures in every Australian state and territory through the season.

Australia's two jurisdictions lagging behind in shift toward clean energy: Report

AGENCIES
SYDNEY, SEP 4

Two jurisdictions in Australia are undermining the national effort to cut greenhouse gas emissions and shift toward clean energy, a report said.

In the report published on Wednesday, Sydney-based NGO the Climate Council compared the progress of each of Australia's eight states and territories in the effort.

The report found that there has been impressive progress overall in recent years, with most jurisdictions making embracing renewable energy a top priority, but that the state of Western Australia and the Northern Territory are putting that progress at risk, according to Xinhua

news agency.

"Western Australia and the Northern Territory keep expanding and approving highly polluting coal and gas projects, seriously undermining our national efforts to cut climate pollution and protect Australians from worsening unnatural disasters," the report said.

According to the report, 18 per cent of Australia's electricity came from renewable sources in the 12 months to August, the second-lowest proportion of any jurisdiction ahead of only the Northern Territory at 7 per cent.

The Australian Capital Territory was the only jurisdiction where 100 per cent of electricity came from renewable sources followed by Tasmania at

98 per cent and South Australia at 78 per cent.

Overall, 40 per cent of electricity in Australia's main grid came from renewables in the year to August. "The amount of clean energy powering our homes and businesses has doubled in just six years," Greg Bourne from the Climate Council said in a statement.

In Queensland in Australia's northeast, 27 per cent of electricity was generated by renewable sources in the 12 months, but the Climate Council found the state has become the leader in rooftop solar uptake and clean energy investment. Over 50 per cent of houses in Queensland have installed rooftop solar systems, the report said.

Death toll from Philippine floods, landslides rises to 15, with 21 missing

AGENCIES
MANILA, SEP 4

The death toll from flash flooding and landslides triggered by typhoon Yagi and the monsoon in the Philippines has risen to 15, with 21 still missing, the country's Office of Civil Defense (OCD) said on Wednesday.

OCD Director of Operations Service Cesar Idio said 15 people were reported dead across the country due to the impact of Yagi, which has intensified from a severe tropical storm into a typhoon. Meanwhile, 15 were injured and 21 are still



missing, Idio said. Since the weekend, torrential rain dumped by Yagi and the southwest monsoon has triggered massive flooding in the Philippine capital and many parts of the archipelago, Xinhua news agency reported.

Idio said Yagi, which blew out of the Philippines on Wednesday morning, has affected nearly 450,000 families or 1.7 million people, mostly in the Bicol region. And almost 89,000 displaced people have had to stay in government-run shelters.

Senior Czech official confident about finalising nuclear power plant deal with South Korea

AGENCIES
SEOUL, SEP 4

The Czech Republic firmly believes it will finally conclude a nuclear power plant deal with South Korea, the country's National Security Advisor was quoted as saying during a meeting with President Yoon Suk Yeol on Wednesday.

The remark by Czech National Security Adviser Tomas Pojar came after Westinghouse Electric, a US nuclear energy firm, filed an appeal with Prague last month against the decision to select Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power (KHNP) as the preferred bidder for the project to build two nuclear



power units, Yonhap news agency reported.

"For the Czech Republic, we firmly believe that we will conclude a final contract with South Korea for the nuclear power plant construction in

Dukovany," Yoon's office quoted Pojar as saying, referring to the nuclear plant site in southeastern Czech Republic.

Pojar, who was in Seoul on a visit to prepare for Yoon's upcoming trip to

the European country, also said the Czech government is interested in enhancing comprehensive cooperation across various sectors, including nuclear energy, industry, investment, defence and

transportation.

Yoon said he will make sure to provide full support to ensure the nuclear project's success and asked for Pojar's cooperation in expanding "mutually beneficial cooperation," the presidential office said.

Yoon also said he aims to further advance the strategic partnership between the two countries during his upcoming trip, expected for later this month. The nuclear project, estimated at around 24 trillion won (\$17.3 billion), is expected to be finalised by the first quarter of next year. It will mark South Korea's second nuclear power plant export, following its 2009 project in the United Arab Emirates.

Govt to clear FAME 3 scheme for faster EV adoption in 1-2 months: Minister

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 4

The Centre is likely to clear the third Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid and) Electric Vehicle (FAME) scheme to further promote electric vehicle (EV) adoption in one or two months, Minister of Heavy Industries, HD Kumaraswamy, said on Wednesday.

The government is reportedly considering a proposal worth Rs 11,500 crore for FAME 3 with incentives over the two-year period. The scheme is likely to have incentives for electric buses, three-wheelers and two-wheelers.

At the Assocham's 'National Conference on Electric Mobility' here, Kumaraswamy said sev-



eral suggestions have been received for FAME 3 and the scheme "will be cleared" within the next two-three months. The FAME India) scheme was launched

Under Phase II of the scheme, claims of 16,71,606 electric vehicles for Rs 6,825 crore have been submitted for reimbursement of subsidy by the OEMs (EV manufacturers).

The Centre said that 6,862 electric buses were sanctioned for intra-city operations under the FAME-II scheme. Out of 6,862 e-buses, 4,853 e-buses have been supplied till July 31.

To further accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles, the government is now planning to launch FAME 3.0.

Meanwhile, the government has approved 50 of the 74 applications it received from automakers for the PLI schemes in the EV sector, and remaining 24 applica-

tions are under review. According to approved applicants under the main PLI scheme, investments reached Rs 17,896 crore and incremental sales crossed Rs 3,370 crore (up to March 31).

Among other key initiatives of the ministry are PLI Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) scheme with an approved outlay of Rs 18,100 crore for 50 GWh, the Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme (EMPS) scheme with an outlay of Rs 778 crore and the SMEC initiative is aimed at attracting global EV investments with a minimum commitment of Rs 4,150 crore.

Last month, the number of EVs registered in FY24 increased significantly by 42.06 per cent as compared to FY23.

Ola Electric shares continue to slide, lose over 30 pc from all-time high

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 4

Ola Electric shares continued to slide on Wednesday -- its sixth consecutive session of decline - as its stock lost more than 30 per cent from its recent all-time peak of Rs 157.40 apiece.

The Bhavish Aggarwal-run company's stock dropped 3 per cent to Rs 110 per share. It was, however, still up 45 per cent from its initial public offering (IPO) price of Rs 76 apiece.

Market experts said that the company's stock is not looking good and can even slip further from the current Rs 110 level over the near term. There are concerns as current valuation of the EV firm appears to be quite speculative.

Moreover, its rivals like TVS Motor and Bajaj



Auto have extended their market share by launching more affordable electric two-wheelers. Hero Moto-Corp also plans to launch its Vida EV motorcycle at a more affordable price point in rising competition in the electric 2W space.

According to market watchers, for new investors, it may be wise to wait for a more stable entry point or consider the stock as a long-term play with a high risk-reward ratio.

Ola Electric registered its lowest monthly sales

this year, dropping 34 per cent sequentially to 27,506 units in August, as its market share nosedived further to 31 per cent.

The company's retail sales of 27,506 units are lowest in the calendar year to date, down by 34 per cent compared to 41,711 units it sold in July.

Its stock made a muted market debut on August 9 but saw a strong buying after the listing. At present, the scrip has been under selling pressure after scaling lifetime high.

DGCA, IndiGo conduct validation flight of new navigation tech at Kathmandu airport

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 4

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday said it has successfully conducted a validation flight of the Required Navigation Performance with Authorisation (RNP AR) procedure at the Kathmandu airport which involved an IndiGo aircraft.

The RNP AR approach, which is a new navigation technology, offers several advantages, including enhanced safety through greater precision accuracy and more stabilised approach.

"Indigo successfully conducted its first flight utilising the RNP AR approach on an A320 aircraft. An all-women inspectors' team from DGCA and Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal were on board to oversee the



validation flight," said the aviation regulator.

The RNP AR approach reduces operational inefficiencies, such as the need for multiple step-downs in non-precision approaches, and lowers the landing minima.

Pilots must undergo specialised simulator training to operate and conduct RNP AR approaches, and the aircraft must be properly equipped and capable of executing this advanced approach.

According to the DGCA, the key benefits include increased safety in complex environments, enhanced operational efficiency, lower fuel burn and reduced carbon footprint and financial savings through minimised crew and flight time losses.

"This approval underlines DGCA's commitment to advancing aviation safety standards and operational excellence, ensuring safer and more efficient flights at one of

the world's most demanding critical airports," said the DGCA.

Late last month, budget carrier SpiceJet was placed under "enhanced surveillance with immediate effect" by the DGCA after passengers were not allowed to board the airline's flights in Dubai as it had not paid its airport dues.

Based on reports of cancellation of flights and financial stress being experienced by SpiceJet Airlines, a special audit of SpiceJet engineering facilities was conducted which has revealed certain deficiencies," according to the aviation regulator.

A SpiceJet spokesperson had attributed the cancellations to "operational issues" and said affected passengers were accommodated on subsequent flights or other airlines, or given a full refund.

Singapore's CapitaLand to double its India investment to Rs 90,280 crore by 2028

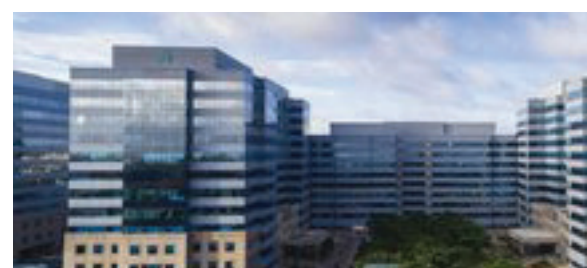
AGENCIES
MUMBAI, SEP 4

Global real asset manager CapitaLand Investment Limited (CLI) on Wednesday announced to more than double its funds under management (FUM) in its core market India to \$14.8 billion Singapore dollars (Rs 90,280 crore) by 2028 -- up from the current 7.4 billion Singapore dollars -- as Prime Minister Narendra Modi began his two-day official visit to Singapore.

The announcement will contribute to CLI's global target of achieving \$200 billion Singapore dollars in FUM by 2028, the company said in a statement.

Singapore's High Commissioner to India, Simon Wong, posted on X that it is "good to see Singapore companies doubling down on investments in India".

CLI entered India 30 years ago with the devel-



opment of its first IT park called the International Tech Park Bangalore (ITPB). Its footprint has since expanded to 14 business and IT parks, offering 23.5 million square feet of space strategically located across Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Pune, Mumbai and Gurugram, with more than 250,000 professionals working from these parks.

"India has been one of our fastest growing markets, where our investments have tripled in the last seven years. With India's GDP forecasted to grow 7 per cent in 2024

demand for premium office spaces across key metropolitan cities.

CLINT, the largest India-focused property trust listed in Singapore, will continue to develop and execute forward purchase acquisitions, securing prime assets to ensure a robust pipeline for sustained growth.

The real asset major will also seek joint development and joint venture opportunities with capital partners, along with commercial management partnerships, to expand in India.

"We will leverage our operational expertise to grow the value of our assets, further expand our logistics footprint under our established logistics platform, Ascendas-Firstspace (AFS) and scale up our lodging portfolio through CLI's lodging arm, The Ascott Limited," said Sanjeev Dasgupta, CEO, CLI India.

43 pc of WazirX customers to lose their money, demand grows for scrutiny

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 4

After a massive Rs 2,000 crore data breach, more bad news awaits WazirX customers -- including at least 4.2 million Indian users -- as nearly 43 per cent of them are likely to lose their money. According to industry and legal experts, this urgently requires further scrutiny of the crypto trading platform by the government regulators.

The company informed customers in a town-hall meeting earlier this week, attended by WazirX Co-founder Nischal Shetty, that customers will probably lose 43 per cent of the funds they had invested in the platform.



George Gwee, a director at restructuring firm Kroll working with WazirX, reportedly said that the best-case scenario is a return of "anywhere between 55 per cent and 57 per cent of the funds."

The Singapore High Court was set to hear WazirX's request for six months' protection while it restructures its liabilities.

The request was made by Singapore-incorporat-

ed Zettai, whose subsidiary Zannai India operates the exchange.

In the meeting, Shetty said the firm is in talks with 11 partners who can come in as potential white knights. Regarding the recovery of funds, Shetty said that the objective is to reduce the gap between the original assets of customers and the funds which will be recovered.

According to legal experts, a thorough investigation by state authorities is needed considering the magnitude of the cyber-crime.

The whole episode reiterates the increasing need for effective regulation and rules for crypto-trading in India which can help safe-

guard investors and broader national interests, they added.

Meanwhile, Indian cryptocurrency exchange CoinSwitch has sued WazirX to recover the funds stuck on Shetty-run platform.

Cumulatively, CoinSwitch has Rs 12.4 crore in Indian rupees, Rs 28.7 crore in ERC20 tokens, and Rs 39.9 crore in other tokens stuck on WazirX, amounting to about 2 per cent of all funds of CoinSwitch.

The WazirX breach highlights the critical imperative to have enhanced security protocols and robust risk management strategies to safeguard investor interest and assets, said experts.

Centre targets \$1 billion exports of alcoholic beverages as global demand grows

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 4

As part of the 'Make in India' initiative, the government on Wednesday announced it would promote both Indian alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages globally, with a target of \$1 billion in export revenue over the next few years, amid a surge in global demand for Indian spirits.

The Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority (APEEDA), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, said it has been targeting to increase exports of Indian spirits to major foreign destina-



tions.

The country currently ranks 40th in the world for alcoholic beverage exports. India's alcoholic beverages exports stood at over Rs 2,200 crore in 2023-24 to major destinations like the UAE, Singapore, Netherlands, Tan-

zania, Angola, Kenya, and Rwanda. Godawan single malt whisky is all set to launch in the United Kingdom as an artisanal single malt whisky made in Rajasthan. The ministry said that the initiative will support farmers of the Alwar region.

Sensex down by 202 points, Nifty drops below 25,200

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, SEP 4

Indian equity indices closed in the red on Wednesday due to negative global sentiments.

At closing, Sensex was down 202 points, or 0.25 per cent, at 82,352 and Nifty was down 81 points, or 0.32 per cent, at 25,198.

The biggest impact of the decline was seen in banking and IT stocks.

Nifty Bank closed at 51,400, down 288 points or 0.56 per cent, and Nifty IT closed at 42,450, down 400 points or 0.94 per cent.

Apart from this, PSU Bank, fin service, metal and energy indices were major losers. Pharma, FMCG, realty and media indices closed in the green.

In the Sensex pack, Asian Paints, HUL, UltraTech Cement, Sun Pharma, Bajaj Finserv, Reliance, HDFC Bank and Bharti Airtel were the top gainers. Wipro, M&M, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank, SBI, Infosys, L&T and TCS were the top losers.

According to experts, the warning signals from weak US manufacturing data added concerns

about a potential slowdown in the US economy, which dragged the domestic indices. Further, a sluggish Chinese outlook exacerbated the decline in oil prices to a nine-month low.

Due to a lack of major domestic triggers, the indices will take direction based on global cues, the experts added. The stock market trend was also negative.

On the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), at closing, 1,916 shares were in green, 2,035 shares closed in red, and 96 shares were unchanged.

India's fintech startups grow fivefold in last three years

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 4

India's financial sector is growing at a rapid pace as fintech startups have grown by about five times in the past three years, according to a report. The growth has been from 2,100 in 2021 to 10,500 in 2024. JM Financial said in a report: "At present time, India has 26 fintech unicorns with an estimated combined market value of \$90 billion."

India has one decacorn fintech (valuation of over \$10 billion) and 25 uni-



corns, whose valuation ranges between \$1 billion to \$10 billion and 37 minicorns, with valuations ranging from \$100 million to \$1 billion.

There are 87 soonicorn fintech startups in the country, with valuations ranging between \$60 mil-

lion to \$100 million.

The report said that the estimated combined value of all fintech companies in India is around \$125 billion. The estimated income of all these companies in FY23 was around \$20 billion. This was 5 per cent of the total revenue

of all banks, financial services and insurance (BFSI) companies in the country.

In India's fintech industry, payment and lending companies are getting a large chunk of funding. 85 per cent of the total funding raised by the fintech industry has been raised by these companies. Between 2014 and 2023, Indian fintech startups have raised about \$28 billion in 1,486 deals.

JM Financial said in a report: "Rising consumption, penetration and AI will lead to 150 fintech unicorns and \$200 billion in

fintech revenue by 2030." Fintech startups in India include merchant payments, wallets, consumer payments, loans, insurance and wealth management companies.

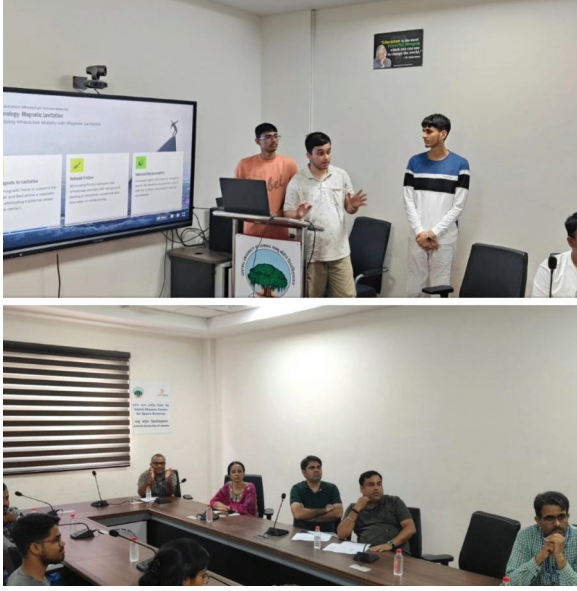
According to the latest report by Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and Z47 (fka Matrix Partners India), the Indian fintech ecosystem is in its "middle journey." "The ecosystem is poised for further exponential growth, as seen with incumbents that have created over \$600 billion in value over the past 3-5 decades," it added.

Internal Hackathon at Central University of Jammu's ECE Department for SIH 2024

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 4

The Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering at the Central University of Jammu, in association with IIC cell of Central University of Jammu has successfully hosted an Internal Hackathon (SIH) 2024. The event was held in the Conference Room on the Ground Floor of the Satish Dhawan Centre for Space Sciences. During the event, eight teams have been selected and recommended for Smart India Hackathon (SIH) 2024.

The evaluation panel consisted of distinguished professors and experts from the department. The event was headed by Prof. Rakesh Kumar Jha, (HoD, DOECE). Internal hackathon organizing



committee is also heartily thankful to Dr. Sachin Gupta, Dr. Sanjeev Yadav, Dr. Sunil Datt Sharma, Dr. Misbah Shafi, Dr. Harneet Kour, Dr. Praveesh Pal, Dr. Rajeev Malik, and Dr. Priyank Sharma for evaluation of innovative ideas presented by the students.

The event was coordinated by Dr. Sunil Datt Sharma along with other faculty members of the department under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Kumar Jha. The student coordinators, Mr. Mriganak Jaiswal (ECE, Semester III) and Mr. Kri-

tish Nagyal (ECE Avionics, Semester III), played a crucial role in ensuring the smooth execution of the hackathon.

All the experts carefully assessed the presentations, focusing on criteria such as innovation, feasibility, technical depth, and potential impact. They also interacted with the teams, offering insights and suggestions to further refine their ideas.

Lastly, Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Kumar Jha, HoD, remarked that, "The Internal Hackathon for SIH 2024 has given our students an excellent opportunity to challenge themselves and think outside the box. It is heartening to see such enthusiasm and talent among the first and second-year students. Events like these are vital in nurturing a problem-solving mindset and preparing them for larger platforms like SIH".

ICGS Sujay makes port call in South Korea as part of its ongoing overseas deployment to East Asia

JI NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPT 4

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Offshore Patrol Vessel Sujay, with an integral helicopter, made a port call at Incheon, South Korea on September 04, 2024, as part of its ongoing overseas deployment to East Asia. During the four-day visit, the ICG crew will engage in professional interactions with the Korea Coast Guard (KCG), focusing on Marine Pollution Response, Maritime Search and Rescue and Maritime Law Enforcement. The activities also include cross-deck training, joint yoga sessions, friendly sports events and Passage Exercises with the KCG. A total of 10 cadets from NCC aboard the ICG Ship will participate in an Environment Protection



Walkathon towards sensitising the community on the ill effects of marine plastic pollution with local youth organisations, in line with the Government's initiative 'Puneet Sagar Abhiyan' and enhancing international outreach. The port visit of the ICG ship, during the conduct of the 20th Head of Coast Guard Agency Meeting at Incheon, highlights ICG's resolve and shared concern towards

addressing maritime contemporary challenges for the common global good.

On March 13, 2006, ICG signed a MoU with KCG, towards enhanced maritime cooperation and institutionalised its cooperative engagements. Before the visit, ICG Ship Sujay had made port calls to Jakarta, Indonesia demonstrating a seamless continuation of diplomatic maritime engagements in the region.

Samsung TV Plus Expands its Channel Offerings; Debuts Aaj Tak HD and The Lallantop for Consumers

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 4

Samsung TV Plus, the brand's free ad-supported streaming TV (FAST) service in India, has announced the launch of Aaj Tak HD and The Lallantop on its portfolio. The partnership between Samsung TV Plus and TV Today Network underscores Samsung's commitment to deliver top-quality programming and meet the evolving needs of viewers in an increasingly connected world.

TV Today Network's FAST channel offering from The Lallantop and Aaj Tak HD, will meet audiences' need for compelling and premium free content on the biggest screen in the house. The connected TV base in India continues to grow as more households opt for internet-enabled smart TV options.

Army Public School Damana organizes Investiture Ceremony 2024-25



JI NEWS SERVICE
DAMANA, SEPT 4

The Investiture Ceremony of Army Public School Damana for the academic session 2024-25 was solemnised with all its grandeur on 4 September 2024 in a Special Morning Assembly held in the school premises.

Investiture Ceremony is one of the formal occasions of a school where the newly elected members of the esteemed School Council are formally vested with their powers and positions.

The ceremony advanced with the prime

custom of bestowing sashes by the Principal, Ms Pushpinder Kaur to the newly formed Council - Sr. & Jr. Head Boy & Head Girl along with Sr. & Jr. Vice Head Boy & Head Girl, Sports, Discipline, Co-curricular, Health, Student's English, Hindi and Sanskrit Editors, House Captains, Vice Captains, Prefect etc.

Kartik Kumar (XII B) & Pragati Sharma (XII D) were conferred with the title of Sr. Head Boy & Sr. Head Girl whereas Hitansh Rajput (V D) & Gaura Singh (V D) were given the title of Jr. Head Boy & Jr. Head Girl. Fur-

thermore, the selected incharge of various positions are Neeyati Sharma (XII D) and Hanshit Manhas (V A) as Sr. & Jr. Discipline I/Cs respectively; Smily Kumari (XII B) and Divyanshi (V B) as Sr. & Jr. Co-curricular I/Cs; Suhani Manhas (XII B) and Ayansh Sharma (V C) as Sr. & Jr. Sports I/Cs, Simran Choudhary (XII D) and Dhruv Panjalia (V C) as Sr. & Jr. Health I/Cs, Parul Bhau (XII C) & Kemron (V A) as Sr. & Jr. English Editor, Simran Choudhary (XII D) & Udvita Bhat (V B) as Sr. & Jr. Hindi Editor and Chehak Koul (VIII E) as Sanskrit Editor. The

House Appointees of various houses were also accorded with the titles of Captain, Vice-Captain and House Prefect. Gurpreet Kaur (XII D) & Rajvir Singh (V D) were chosen as Sr. & Jr. Captains of Amartya Kumar Sen House whereas Umika Sharma (XII A) & Vidya Gautamee (V B) were chosen as Sr. & Jr. Captains of Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman House. Vanshika Sharma (XII B) & Nitika Bhat (V B) were appointed as Sr. & Jr. Captains of Dr. Hargobind Khorana House whereas Bharti Sharma (XII A) & Aridhey Singh (V C) were

Indian Army distributes Raincoats, Ponchos to Underprivileged Communities at Chananser, Poonch

JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, SEPT 4

In a commendable display of community support, the Indian Army has recently distributed raincoats and ponchos to the underprivileged Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities residing in the remote and underdeveloped areas of Chananser, Poonch district. This initiative aims to provide much-needed relief and protection against the adverse weather conditions that these communities frequently face. The distribution saw the active involvement of local military personnel who travelled to these far-flung areas to ensure that the aid reached to those most in need. The Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities, known for their traditional nomadic lifestyle, often find themselves exposed



to harsh weather, making such initiatives crucial for their well-being. The Indian Army remains committed to contributing positively to the lives of those in need. "The distribution was met with gratitude and appreciation from the local residents, who expressed their relief and happiness at receiving the raincoats and ponchos. This initiative

not only offers practical assistance but also symbolizes the Indian Army's ongoing commitment to humanitarian efforts and community service. This outreach program is part of a broader set of initiatives by the Indian Army to support and engage with various communities across the country, especially in remote and under-served regions.

Indian Army unveils two landmark events; 'HIM-DRONE-A-THON 2' and 'HIMTECH-2024'

JI NEWS SERVICE
LADAKH, SEPT 4

Indian Army unveiled two landmark events; 'HIM-DRONE-A-THON 2' and 'HIMTECH-2024' landmark events designed to harness military technologies for operations in high altitude areas. Envisaged as an opportunity to the Indian Drone Industry to showcase the capabilities of their drone solutions for high altitude areas, HIM-DRONE-A-THON 2 will take place at Wari La, near Leh on 17-18 September 2024. It will be followed by HIMTECH-2024 on 20-21 September 2024, an event conceptualised to discuss, demonstrate and discover new avenues for development, incorporation and cross-pollination of technology, ideas and innovations with focus on harnessing military technologies for high altitude areas. Major General CS Mann, Additional Director General of the Army Design Bureau highlighted that the Indian Army is deployed from icy heights of the Siachen Glacier to the rugged Himalayas where its soldiers face unparalleled adversities daily. For drone operations, rarified atmosphere results in reduced lift and degraded engine perfor-



mance which are further accentuated by extreme cold temperatures and high wind speeds. These conditions are unique for Indian Army and demand systems that can adequately perform in these conditions. Since such altitude battlefields are not prevalent anywhere else, tailor-made, indigenous solutions are the way forward. If the indigenous industry succeeds here, it also opens vistas for them to international arena and establish India as a credible drone manufacturing hub.

HIM-DRONE-A-THON-2 will focus on drone solutions for Indian Army for high altitude areas. The event is planned to be conducted under actual terrain and environmental conditions at altitude of 4000-5000 meters. The event is open to all indige-

nous drone manufacturers and invites their participation for demonstration of Surveillance drones, Loitering munitions, Logistics Drones, Swarm Drones and drones with specific capabilities / role / payloads ie; Electronic Warfare, Synthetic Aperture Radar, Communication Intelligence and Electronic Intelligence. As of now more than 25 Drone manufacturing firms have registered for participation in the event. All the firms will be competing in a multifaceted competition at super high-altitude area for proving their suitability and capabilities.

HIMTECH 2024 is being held for the first time in Leh, to highlight and focus on development of technology and system for meeting operational requirements along the Northern Borders. The

event being held in collaboration with FICCI will not only showcase industry partners and new generation equipment developed for high altitude areas but will also project Leh as the new business destination for new technology developers, industry and academia. The event will provide a platform to Indian Industries to showcase a wide range of the equipment and technologies comprising modern unmanned systems, all terrain mobility solutions, autonomous systems and advanced soldier systems.

The technology being demonstrated by the Indigenous Drone Industry, can also be harnessed for civilian use especially in high altitude areas and areas akin to terrain/atmospheric conditions in Union Territory of Ladakh.

Indian Army extends Educational Support to Underprivileged Children of Gujjar, Bakkarwals at Chananser, Poonch

JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, SEPT 4

In a significant act of community service, the Indian Army has distributed essential stationery and books to underprivileged children belonging to the Gujjar and Bakkarwal communities in the remote villages of Poonch district. This initiative aims to address the educational challenges faced by children in these isolated regions. The distribution took place in several villages, where Indian Army personnel, along with local officials, personally handed over the materials to the children. The Army's gesture is a part of its ongoing commitment to improving the quality of life in rural and underserved areas, particularly in conflict-prone and geographically challenging locations. Local leaders and educators expressed their appreciation for the Army's support, noting that access to educational resources is crucial for the development and future prospects of these children. The initiative is expected to not only provide immediate relief but also encourage continued



educational engagement among the youth in these communities. In addition to distributing books and stationery, the Army also organized awareness sessions for parents about the importance of education and the opportunities available to their children. This effort aligns with broader goals

of community development and empowerment through education. The event received a warm response from the local population, with many expressing their gratitude for the Indian Army's role in enhancing educational access and contributing to the betterment of their communities.

Sashakt Sena, Samriddh Bharat' exhibition to be held in Ranchi to strengthen civil-military bond, motivate youth

JI NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPT 4

To strengthen the bond between the civil society & the Armed Forces and motivate the youth towards nation building, an exhibition, 'Sashakt Sena, Samriddh Bharat' will be held at Morabadi Ground in Ranchi, Jharkhand from September 06 to 08, 2024. Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Sanjay Seth will grace the event, which will be attended by many civil and military dignitaries. It would be open to all, providing the people with an opportunity to know about the Armed Forces and interact with the soldiers. The exhibition will feature a display of weapons & equipment, air show, daredevil motorcycle show, dog show and hot air ballooning. It will also consist of musical and cultural activities, including performances by various Army Bands, Kalaripayattu, Malkhamb, Bhanga & other martial arts performances, showcasing the diverse heritage of the country. In addition, motivational and awareness stalls will be set-up to provide career counselling to the youth about the process of joining and life in the Armed Forces.

General Observer reviews Election Preparations for Srigufwara Bijbehara Assembly Constituency

JNEWS SERVICE

ANANTNAG, SEPTEMBER 04

General Observer for Assembly Constituency 45-Srigufwara Bijbehara, Rishi Garg today conducted a review meeting of the polling staff of the assembly Constituency.

Returning Officer, Assistant Returning Officer, Zonal Magistrates and Sector Magistrates of the constituency and the Nodal Officers of the constituency attended the meeting. The Observer took stock of the preparedness of the election and also inspected the functioning of the Control Room.

The Observer imparted important instructions to the participants and deliberated upon almost all the issues pertaining to the upcoming Assembly Elections in the Constituency. It was impressed upon



the participants to ensure strict implementation of the Model Code of Conduct and be sufficiently vigilant while performing the duties. He also directed to be very serious about the C-Vigil and redressal of the other offline complaints pertaining to the election.

The Observer urged that all grievances registered on the C-VIGIL platform be resolved with utmost urgency, ensuring a transparent and fair electoral process. It was directed

in the meeting to pass on instructions to the SST, FST and VST Teams to perform their assigned duties and report on a daily basis.

He emphasized the importance of training officials on the use of the C-Vigil app, the Flying Squad Teams (FST), and the process of granting permissions through the ENCORE app. He instructed that all political party representatives must be adequately trained on these processes.

The Observer also took

the status of EVMs, strong room, barricading of the counting hall, Distribution & Collection of the EVMs and Election Material. It was also directed by the Observer to establish Voter Assistance Booths at all Polling Stations besides, Sector Magistrates must identify the 100 Meter and 200 Meter areas around the Polling Stations.

Notably, the polling for the Assembly Constituency is slated for 18th September, 2024 in the first phase of polling.

Returning Officer convenes meeting with Political representatives in Basohli

JNEWS SERVICE

KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 04

Returning Officer Anil Kumar Thakur (Additional Deputy Commissioner Basohli) today chaired a meeting of representatives of political parties.

SDPO Suresh Sharma, ARO Basohli Sagar Vishwakarma (Tehsildar), CDPO Rakesh Kumar and Sub Inspector Abhinav Kotwal were also present.

The Returning Officer provided crucial information regarding the upcoming election schedule. He announced that the notification for filing nomination papers will be issued on 5 September, with the deadline for submission set for 12 September.

It was given out in the meeting that candidates can file their nomination papers at the Returning Officer's office from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM.



The scrutiny of nominations will take place on 13 September, and the final date for withdrawal of nominations is 17 September.

The Returning Officer detailed the process for submitting nomination papers, emphasizing the importance of completing all required formalities. He also highlighted the necessity for candidates to open a new bank account dedicated to election expenses. The officer further elabo-

established in the Returning Officer's office to assist candidates with the nomination process and related formalities.

The Returning Officer also emphasized the importance of voter participation under the SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) program, urging citizens to fulfill their civic duty by voting in the upcoming assembly election. He called on all citizens to partake in this vital democratic process and help ensure a high voter turnout.

SDPO Suresh Sharma appealed to all party representatives to cooperate in maintaining law and order in the Basohli constituency. A help desk has been

SVEEP Cell organises voter awareness activities across AC 86-Budhal

JNEWS SERVICE

RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 04

To promote voter awareness, enhance electoral literacy, and ensure informed participation in the upcoming Assembly Elections, the SVEEP Cell for Assembly Constituency 86-Budhal (ST) organized a series of activities across the constituency.

These events were held under the guidance of District Election Officer Abhishek Sharma and Returning Officer for Assembly Constituency 86-Budhal (ST), Dil Mir (ADC Koteranka) and supervision of District Nodal Officer SVEEP Bishamber Dass (CEO), and Nodal Officer SVEEP for Budhal Assembly Constituency, Prof. Tahir Nadeem. The day-long activities commenced with a slogan writing campaign themed "The Importance of a Vote in a Democracy" at Government High School (GHS) Damote, where a large number of



students actively participated. This campaign was meticulously overseen by Headmaster, Babu Ram, with active participation from the SVEEP Cell members. Simultaneously, a comprehensive Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) awareness camp was held at Higher Secondary School, Tralla, in collaboration with the school's Electoral Literacy Club. The camp, which opened

with an informative voter awareness lecture by Dr. Nazia Bi, Women Nodal Officer (SVEEP) for Budhal Assembly Constituency, included a live demonstration session led by Abdul Razaq, Assembly Level Master Trainer (ALMT), with assistance from Shabnam Shabir, GRS. The camp, open to the general public but specifically targeting Anganwadi Workers, Helpers, ASHA

Workers, Lambardars, Chokidars and students, aimed to equip attendees with the knowledge and confidence to effectively use the EVMs.

The session provided detailed demonstrations on the functioning of the EVMs, step-by-step voting instructions, and troubleshooting guidance for common issues. Participants were encouraged to engage in hands-on practice and ask questions, ensuring that even those with minimal experience could confidently participate in the electoral process. The event received positive feedback from attendees, who appreciated the opportunity to learn about the EVMs in a supportive environment.

In a separate initiative, members of the SVEEP Cell for Assembly Constituency 86-Budhal (ST) interacted with local residents of the Peeri area, encouraging them to exercise their right to vote on September 25, 2024.

Series of SVEEP activities held across Ramban to promote voter awareness

JNEWS SERVICE

RAMBAN, SEPTEMBER 04

To enhance voter awareness and encourage electoral participation ahead of the 2024 Assembly Elections, the District Administration Ramban, under the leadership of District Election Officer (DEO) Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, organized a series of informative events across the district under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program. The aim was to educate and empower voters, ensuring that every eligible citizen exercises his right to vote.

The District SVEEP team, in collaboration with the Nodal Officer SVEEP-54 Ramban and the Nodal Officer Women Awareness 54-Ramban, conducted awareness



programs at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Batote, as well as in the marketplace and surrounding areas of Rajgarh. These events saw enthusiastic participation from a diverse cross-section of the community, including voters, teachers, Booth Level Officers (BLOs), and students.

The programs focused on educating first-time

voters, highlighting the importance of their participation in the democratic process. Through interactive sessions and informative materials, participants were made aware of electoral procedures, the significance of their vote, and the power they hold in shaping the future of their community.

The SVEEP team also

conducted outreach activities to engage with the local populace, particularly focusing on women. Nodal Officer Women Awareness 54-Ramban, Shalini Chandel, played a pivotal role in these activities, addressing the specific challenges faced by female voters and emphasizing the importance of their involvement in the electoral process.

SVEEP Activities intensified in Kishtwar

JNEWS SERVICE

KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 04

To encourage maximum voter participation in General Election to Legislative Assembly 2024, District Election Officer (DEO) Kishtwar Rajesh Kumar Shavan today launched a massive Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation (SVEEP) Programme in the district.

The programme held at Chowgan Ground included multifarious activities aimed at generating Electoral awareness among field functionaries and Students. The event attracted over 1,500 participants, including Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), ASHAs, students from Government Higher Secondary School Boys, GHSS Girls, Polytechnic College and NCC Scouts from Government Degree College (GDC).

The DEO along with Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Abdul Qayoom, besides District Nodal Officer SVEEP (DIO), Dr Kuldeep Kumar, Nodal Officer Training, Riyaz Ahmed Butt; Nodal Officer SVEEP 49-Kishtwar Assembly Constituency Masood Qazi and Principals GHSS Boys and GHSS Girls, among other officials from the Election



and SVEEP Cell were present at the event.

The programme began with a plantation drive, as the DEO along with SSP planted a Chinar tree to signify growth and the importance of environmental stewardship. A Voter Pledge was administered to all participants, emphasizing the significance of ethical voting and the right to vote.

In his address, the DEO highlighted the pivotal role of students, AWWs, and ASHAs as ambassadors in spreading electoral awareness. He encouraged them to engage with their peer groups and the general public, motivating them to exercise their right to vote and to do so ethically

in the ongoing Assembly Election. He further urged the participants to ensure maximum voter turnout on September 18, 2024, which is the designated polling day for the district.

The event concluded with a renewed commitment from all attendees to actively participate in the democratic process, ensuring that every vote is cast with integrity and responsibility, contributing to the strength of the nation's democratic fabric.

A cleanliness Drive was also conducted on the occasion. Later the participants took selfies on selfie points installed in the venue to empower the spirit of voting rights and ethical voting.

DEO Pulwama chairs comprehensive meeting with SVEEP Nodal Officers

JNEWS SERVICE

PULWAMA, SEPTEMBER 04

The District Election Officer (DEO) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom today chaired an extensive meeting with the SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) nodal officers of the district to review and enhance the implementation of voter awareness initiatives across all Assembly Constituencies (ACs) in Pulwama.

The DEO emphasized the importance of conducting awareness programs daily in the district, ensuring maximum participation of the electorate. It was highlighted that Halqa-wise SVEEP programs are scheduled, aiming to engage every Self Help Group (SHG), local body and electoral community within the district. Additionally, each Assembly Constituency has been directed to hold programs daily.

A variety of cultural and awareness activities, including Nukad Nataks, singing parties, boat rallies and bike rallies will be utilized over the next 4-5 days to mobilize locals and ensure widespread participation, urban local



bodies, youth clubs, traders' bodies and Aquaf committees to maintain momentum and visibility.

In a significant initiative, the DEO directed that a plantation drive be undertaken in all polling stations under the supervision of AC-level nodal officers. This drive will culminate in a mega event where around 300 plants will be planted, promoting the concept of green polling stations.

The DEO emphasized the importance of making

these polling stations environmentally friendly and accessible, with provisions for ramps, drinking water and proper toilets, ensuring any gaps are addressed immediately.

The meeting concluded with a call for coordinated efforts from all stakeholders to ensure the success of the SVEEP program across Pulwama, aiming to achieve maximum voter awareness and participation in the upcoming elections.

Election Observers inspect polling stations in Banihal



JNEWS SERVICE

RAMBAN, SEPTEMBER 04

General Observer Himanshu Kumar Rai, along with Police Observer Kunal Aggarwal and Expenditure Observer Sulekh Chand Jain, conducted a comprehensive inspection of various polling stations in Assembly Constituency-55 Banihal today.

The Observers visited their respective offices in AC-55 as scheduled, addressing concerns raised by political parties and voters regarding the election process. They also inspected several polling stations located in government buildings, including High School Kas-koot, UPS Zenihal, Middle

School Asher, Lower High School Nowgam, and Higher Secondary School Tethar. During the visit, the Observers assessed polling arrangements and verified the availability of Assured Minimum Facilities, paying particular attention to the needs of elderly voters, women, and persons with disabilities (PWDs). Immediate instructions were given to the concerned officers to rectify any deficiencies and to ensure a voter-friendly environment at the polling stations.

RO-55 Banihal Rizwan Asgar, ARO Imtiaz Ahmed, and other relevant officials accompanied the Observers throughout the inspection.