



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
- Persistent vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Disorientation
- Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool, urine or vomit
- Redness on the skin

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

JINDRAH IMAGES

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Held fruitful talks with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince: PM Modi

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that he had held fruitful talks with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan whose passion for establishing strong bilateral ties is clearly visible.

"It was a delight to welcome HH Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. We had fruitful talks on a wide range of issues. His passion towards



strong India-UAE friendship is clearly visible."

The Abu Dhabi Crown Prince is on an official visit to India from Sep 9-10, at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This is the Crown Prince's first official visit to India in this capacity. He was received on his arrival, on Sunday, in New Delhi by Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry, and was accorded a ceremonial Guard of Honour. He is accompanied by Ministers, senior officials, and a large

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J&K HC admits petition against rule prohibiting govt employees from engaging in electoral politics

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 9

A petition has been filed in the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in Srinagar, challenging the rule that prohibits government servants in the Union Territory from engaging in electoral politics.

According to the news agency, the petition, filed by Zahoor Ahmad Bhat, a senior lecturer in the School Education Department, challenges Rule 14 (1) of the J&K Government

Employees (Conduct) Rules, 1971, which prohibits government servants from participating in electoral politics.

Bhat, who intends to contest the upcoming assembly elections in 2024 from two assembly constituencies, 30-Charari-Sharief and 22 Lal Chowk District Srinagar, has argued that the rule violates his democratic right to stand as a candidate in the elections without resigning from his post as a Senior Lecturer in Political Science.

The petition states that Bhat sought an earned leave of 40 days from August 25, 2024, to October 5, 2024, to contest the elections, but was verbally communicated that his application was not maintainable due to Rule 14 (1).

Bhat's petition, represented by Advocate Shafiq Nazir, argues that the rule is unconstitutional and violates democratic principles. He also argues that it is illogical to allow government servants to participate in

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All is not well between alliance partners Congress-NC as Vikar Rasool Wani fires salvo at NC leadership

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEP 9

All is not well between the alliance partners Congress and National Conference (NC) over the salvo fired by former Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Vikar Rasool Wani, when he alleged that NC's red flag has blood on it.

The incumbent PCC president Tariq Hameed Harra had to intervene and disassociated himself and Congress party from Wani's remarks.

In a statement issued to the news agency, Karra strongly condemned the derogatory remarks and unparliamentary language



against the NC leadership used by Vikar Rasool Wani, who is also Congress party's candidate during a programme in Banihal last evening.

"NC has sucked the blood of people and their red flag symbolizes that it has blood of people on it and especially of people

of Banihal," Wani had said and told people to ask NC as to how much work they have done in Banihal. "They even denied us a college degree for 70 years," Wani added.

This hasn't gone well with NC and Congress leadership. Even though NC hasn't uttered a single word in reaction to Wani's remarks, Karra didn't mince any words to condemn Wani's statement.

"The Congress Party disassociates itself from such statements and condemns the use of such language. We have great respect for Late Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah and Dr. Farooq Abdullah, who

is one of the most senior and respected political leaders of J&K. The INC and NC are fighting the upcoming elections in alliance against the BJP and will continue to fight for the dignity and rights of the people of J&K," PCC Chief said.

"Such statements are unacceptable and go against the values of democracy and respect for political opponents," Karra added and urged all political leaders to maintain dignity and respect in their public discourse.

"We reiterate our commitment to the alliance and our joint fight

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Former Union Minister Anurag Thakur, along with BJP Working President Sat Sharma, BJP Chief Spokesperson Adv Sunil Sethi and others participated in the massive roadshow in support for the BJP's Jammu West Assembly Constituency Candidate Arvind Gupta.

Omar Faces Uphill Task in Shia-Dominated Budgam as PDP Candidate Threatens to Split 33K Shia Votes

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 9

As assembly elections approach in Jammu and Kashmir, Omar Abdullah, leader of the National Conference (NC), faces an uphill task in the Shia-dominated Budgam district.

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) has fielded Syed Muntazir Mehdi, a Shia candidate and cousin of NC MP Aga Ruhullah, raising the stakes in a constituency where Shia



voters hold considerable sway. The outcome of this battle may hinge on whether the Shia vote is divided or consolidated behind a single candidate.

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In J&K; BJP means 'Rahat' while NC-Cong means 'Aafat': Anurag Thakur



J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 9

The former union minister and star campaigner of the BJP, Anurag Thakur, on Monday said that only BJP can establish peace and ensure development

in J&K, while the NC-Cong alliance can only bring destruction and miseries for the people of J&K.

"In J&K BJP means 'Rahat' and NC-Cong means 'Aafat' for the people," Thakur said,

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With no development agenda Abdullachs, Muftis will revive terrorism: Chugh

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 9

BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh today debunked the wild propaganda raised by NC leader Farooq Abdullah holding BJP responsible for fear among Hindus.

Chugh, who is also the party Prabhari for J&K and Ladakh, said Hindus in J & K know the role of



Abdullachs and Muftis when extreme brutalities

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Minus PDP, all parties, independents supported by 'big wigs': Mehbooba Mufti

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 9

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) President Mehbooba Mufti Monday said that except for her party, all the political parties including National Conference as well as Congress are being supported and backed by the big wigs.

Mehbooba as per the news agency while addressing the media here, said, "I want to inform the people of Kashmir that except for PDP, all other political parties including NC, Congress, AIP and other indepen-



dent candidates are being backed and supported by big wigs."

"The independent candidates and AIP are being funded by the big political powers," she said. Lashing out at AIP, Mehbooba added, "Although

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J&K ASSEMBLY ELECTION 2024

27 candidates withdraw Nominations, 239 candidates remain in final fray for 26 Assembly Constituencies in Phase 2

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 9

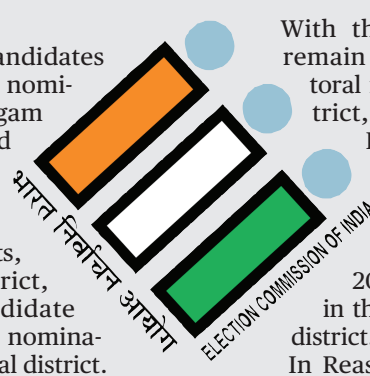
On the last day of the withdrawal of nomination papers for the second phase of the forthcoming Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Elections 2024 in the 26 Assembly Constituencies, 27 candidates withdrew their Candidature in the Office of respective Returning Officers across six districts on Monday, leaving 239 candidates in the final

poll fray.

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, J&K UT informed that out of the total 266 valid nominations, 27 candidates withdrew their Nominations by the last date of withdrawal i.e. Monday, 09 September, 2024.

With this, only 239 validly Nominated Candidates now remain in fray for the 26 Assembly Constituencies where polling will be held in the second phase of the J&K Assembly Elections on 25 September, 2024.

Highest 9 candidates withdrew their nomination in Budgam district, followed by 6 in Srinagar district, 5 each in Rajouri and Poonch districts, 2 in Reasi district, while no candidate withdrew their nomination in Ganderbal district.



With this, 93 candidates remain in the final electoral fray in Srinagar district, followed by 46 in Budgam district, 34 in Rajouri district, 25 in Poonch district, 21 in Ganderbal district, while 20 candidates remain in the final fray in Reasi district.

In Reasi district, 6 candi-

dates remain in the final electoral fray for election in 56-Gulabgarh (ST) AC; 7 candidates in 57-Reasi AC; while 7 candidates remain in the fray in 58-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi AC.

In Rajouri district, 11 candidates remain in the final electoral fray for election in 83-Kalakote - Sunderbani AC; 5 candidates in 84-Nowshera AC; 8 candidates in 85-Rajouri (ST) AC; 4 candidates in 86-Budhal (ST) AC; while 6 candidates remain in

the fray in 87-Thannamandi (ST) AC.

In Poonch district, 8 candidates remain in the final electoral fray for election in 88-Surankote (ST) AC; 8 candidates in 89-Poonch Haveli AC; while 9 candidates remain in the fray in 90-Mendhar (ST) AC.

Similarly, in Ganderbal district, 6 candidates remain in the final electoral fray for election in 17-Kangan (ST) AC and 15 candidates in

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Training imparted to zonal, sector magistrates at Reasi

J1 NEWS SERVICE
REASI, SEPTEMBER 09

The District Election Authority Reasi organized a training session for zonal and sector magistrates in the DC Office Conference Hall Reasi.

ADDC Sukhdev Samyal, Nodal officer training Mohammad Anwar Bandy, RO-57 Reasi Anshumali Sharma, Deputy District Election Officer Rakesh Kumar, besides other zonal and sector magistrates, attended the training program.

District Level Master Trainers gave a comprehensive presentation on the preparation and conduct of the General Assembly Elections 2024, highlighting the important role of the zonal and sector magistrates in ensuring a smooth electoral process. The participants were briefed on



their responsibilities and the importance of their role in maintaining the integrity of the election process.

The emphasis was laid on adhering to established rules and regulations to guarantee free, fair, and transparent elections in the district.

Nodal officer trainings Mohammad Anwar Bandy emphasized the need for strict compliance

to electoral procedures and engaged actively with the trainees throughout the session.

The training concluded with a query session where participants had the opportunity to clarify their doubts. Master Trainers responded to queries, providing satisfactory explanations and reinforcing the understanding of election procedures and rules.

Expenditure Observer reviews operational readiness of Monitoring teams in AC Budhal

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 9

In anticipation to the upcoming Assembly elections scheduled for September 25th, 2024, Expenditure Observer Sidharth Kumar today conducted a thorough review of the operational readiness of the Static Surveillance Teams (SSTs) in the Budhal constituency (AC 87). The observer inspected various Nakas (checkpoints) and provided comprehensive guidance to officials on their critical roles and responsibilities in ensuring a fair election.

During his review, Sidharth Kumar emphasized the importance of strategically placing Flying Squad Teams (FSTs) to monitor and control any illegal or unregulated activities related to election spending. He also visited the Returning Officer's (RO) office, where he held in-depth discussions with the officers and officials responsible for tracking and regulating campaign expenditures. In a detailed



briefing, Kumar instructed Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) and Assistant Expenditure Observers (AEOs) on the protocols for accurately recording and maintaining election expenditure records. He stressed the need for meticulous documentation of all expenses incurred by individual candidates, highlighting the importance of transparency in campaign financing.

The expenditure observer emphasized strict vigilance on the financial conduct of political campaigns, directing

officers to closely monitor rallies, meetings, and other political events. He underscored the need to ensure that all expenditures remain within legal limits and are properly documented.

Sidharth Kumar assured election officers of continued support throughout the election process. He warned that any deviations or violations of the financial code would be met with strict measures, underscoring the Election Commission's commitment to conducting a free, fair, and transparent election.

Voter awareness rally sparks enthusiasm in Rasligadheran, Ramnagar



through the village road before culminating back at the school.

The event was a vibrant display of voters' engagement, featuring cultural performances, skits and motivational speeches that highlighted the importance of voting in a democracy.

Jagan Nath, the School Principal, spoke on the critical role that each vote plays in shaping the future of the nation.

Zonal Education Officer Dudu, Ishwer Dass, emphasized that every vote is equal, regardless of background, and encouraged everyone to exercise their right to vote.

Nodal Officer SVEEP, AC 62-Ramnagar, Rakesh Kumar, urged students to take the message of ethical voting into their communities. He also spoke about the significance of SVEEP in making the electoral process accessible, easy, and transparent for all, ensuring inclusive participation.

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAMNAGAR, SEPTEMBER 09

Voter awareness rally was organized under the guidance of District Election Officer Udhampur Saloni Rai and under SVEEP initiative at Higher Secondary School Rasligadheran, AC 62-Ramnagar, with the aim of encouraging voter participation ahead of the upcoming elections on October 1, 2024.

A vibrant cultural

Election Duty Voters to cast Vote on Sept 10 & 11, preparations reviewed

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 09

To ensure inclusive participation in the upcoming elections, "Voters on Election Duty" including Civil Employees, Police personnel, Polling Agents, drivers, conductors, and cleaners deployed for election duties in Kishtwar district will have the opportunity to cast their votes via postal ballot.

Assembly Constituency Wise Facilitation Centres have been set up at DC Office Complex in line with Election Commission of India (ECI) guidelines and voting has been scheduled on 10th and 11th September, 2024.

The District Election Office, Kishtwar spearheaded by District Election Officer Kishtwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan has made comprehensive arrangements to ensure these essential polling personnel from Civil, Police Sectors, Transport etc. who are voters in the district but shall remain deployed



on election duty on 18th September, can cast their votes in advance.

Notably, training and orientation sessions for the polling staff assigned to Facilitation Centres were conducted today at the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex, Kishtwar.

The sessions, held under the close supervision of Deputy District Election Officer Kishtwar, Idrees Lone, were led by resource persons who provided detailed guidance on the roles, responsibilities, and guidelines to be followed.

The Facilitation Centre at DC Office Complex will cater to about 5,000 voters from 48-Inder-

wal, 49-Kishtwar and 50-Paddar Nagseni constituencies of the district, ensuring their participation in the democratic process.

It is pertinent to mention that the personnel, deployed with polling parties, nodal officers, field teams, and security forces can submit the Form 12 D to the respective Returning Officers till 10th September, allowing arrangements to be made for their voting at the Facilitation Centre.

All the voters will cast their postal ballot at the Facilitation centres under the equal, secure and transparent conditions on both the above mentioned days.

3rd round of Election Training for Polling Staff held in Kupwara

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, SEPTEMBER 09

In preparation for the upcoming Assembly Elections 2024, a comprehensive 3rd round of training session was today organized for polling staff in all the six assembly segments of the Kupwara district.

The training aimed at ensuring the smooth conduct of the electoral process, was organized under the Supervision of District Election Officer (DEO) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan and concerned ROs of the assembly constituencies.

The election training was conducted at different venues including Town Hall Kupwara, GDC Kupwara, Environment Hall Handwara, Townhall Handwara and Mini-Secretariat Tangdar.

The training focused on enlightening officers and officials about their pivotal roles and responsibilities during polling at their designated stations.

The officers were also briefed extensively on the Model Code of Conduct, emphasizing adherence to ethical and legal guidelines throughout the election period.

A significant highlight of the training was the detailed discussion on facilitating voting for



diverse groups of voters. Special attention was given to procedures for accommodating individuals such as Persons with Disabilities (PWD), elderly, and other groups requiring specific assistance.

Furthermore, to equip the polling officers with practical skills, demonstrations on the operation of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) was conducted where DLMTs and AC level MTs provided comprehensive training

on key aspects of EVM operation, common issues faced at polling booths, and effective management of the polling process.

The trainers also focused on troubleshooting procedures and the importance of maintaining transparency and accuracy in the electoral process.

The training program ensured that all poll staff were well-prepared to handle any potential challenges on Election Day, contributing to the effi-

General Observer Brajesh Kumar Visits Remote Polling Stations in Tral to Ensure Voter Facilities



J1 NEWS SERVICE
PULWAMA SEPTEMBER 09

Brajesh Narain Singh, the General Observer for Tral, conducted a visit to some of the most remote polling stations in the constituency, including Gulistan, Nargistan, and Hajinard, to assess the availability of basic facilities for voters ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections.

During his visit, Singh interacted with local

residents, emphasizing the importance of voter awareness and participation in the democratic process. He engaged in several interactive sessions during which he encouraged locals to actively exercise their voting rights.

The General Observer assured the public that all necessary arrangements would be made to ensure a smooth and accessible voting experience.

Home Voting, Postal Ballot Services launched for Senior Citizens, PwD Voters in Ramban

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, SEPTEMBER 09

District Election Officer Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary today officially launched Home Voting and Postal Ballot services for Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities (PwD) voters in the district.

The event saw the deployment of polling parties and was attended by Deputy District Election Officer Abdul Jabar, Returning Officer for AC-54 Ramban S. Harpal Singh, Returning Officer for AC-55 Banihal Rizwan Asgar, Assistant Returning Officers, Security Officers, and other key officials.

It was ensured that all polling parties complete the Postal Ballot voting process under stringent security measures. Comprehensive protocols were implemented to maintain the safety and integrity of the voting process.

Notably, out of the 175 eligible Senior Citizens and PwD voters, 168 cast their votes, including 109 out of 112 in AC-55 Banihal and 59 out of 63 in AC-54 Ramban.

"Our primary goal is to ensure that every eligible voter, especially Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities get the opportunity to participate in the electoral process without any hindrances. By adhering to the Election Commission of India's guidelines, we are committed to upholding fairness and efficiency in the elections, making sure that every voter's experience is smooth and equitable." District Election Officer Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary emphasized.

SVEEP Activities gain momentum across Hiranagar AC

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 09

The voter awareness activities continue to make a mark in Hiranagar Assembly segment where the epicenter of today's SVEEP activities was Panchayat Ladwal, along with local schools and ITI Hiranagar.

These initiatives focused on raising voter awareness and encouraging electoral participation ahead of the upcoming elections.

A highlight of the day's events was the participation of 300 students from ITI Hiranagar in a signature campaign. The students also created a Wall of Democracy, a visual symbol of voter empowerment aimed at spreading awareness about the importance of voting.

At the Government Girls High School Hiranagar,



students enacted a mock polling day, providing future voters with hands-on experience and understanding of the election process. This interactive activity was designed to familiarize students with the electoral system and encourage them to actively participate in the future.

In addition, BAG (Booth Awareness Group) members organized a sapling plantation drive at various polling stations. Senior citizens and school students joined hands to plant saplings, symbolizing the motto of a Green and Clean Democracy, where every vote contributes to

the empowerment of citizens and the sustainability of the environment.

As part of the outreach efforts, the BAG team also visited 200 households in Village Ladwal, where they encouraged residents to pledge to cast their votes on October 1, 2024. This grassroots campaign focused on ensuring maximum voter turnout and strengthening the democratic process.

Pertinently, the SVEEP program has gained significant momentum in the region, witnessing mass participation from the local population—including women voters, young voters, future voters, and senior citizens alike. These efforts underscore the collective commitment to building an informed and engaged electorate.

Jashn-e-Jamhooriyat Rajouri celebrated under SVEEP to Boost Voter Awareness for Assembly Elections 2024

JIN NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 09

In a unique and culturally enriching initiative to promote voter awareness ahead of the upcoming Assembly Elections 2024, a series of Mushairas titled 'Jashn-e-Jamhooriyat Rajouri' were organised across all five constituencies of the district Rajouri, under the guidance and supervision of District Election Officer (DEO) Abhishek Sharma. This voter education drive was conducted as part of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program to encourage greater voter participation in the Assembly Elections scheduled for 25th September 2024.

The culmination of these constituency-level



events took place today with a grand district-level Mushaira held at the Dak Bungalow, Rajouri.

The local poets came together to recite poems and sing songs in various languages, including Hindi, Urdu, Pahari, and Gojri whose performances were focused on the importance of voting, the power of single vote in a democracy, and the need for every eligible citizen to participate in the elec-

toral process.

DEO Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma, addressed the gathering and appreciated the participants for their creativity and dedication to the cause of voter education. He emphasized the role of cultural activities in motivating people to actively participate in elections, stating, "Through the medium of art, we are able to connect with people at a deeper level, making them aware

of the importance of their vote in shaping the future of the country."

The DEO felicitated several participants, especially students, with cash prizes to acknowledge their contributions to the event. He encouraged them to continue their efforts in creating voter awareness, particularly in rural areas where participation has historically been lower.

The event was attended by a number of dignitaries and officials, including Returning Officer (RO) Rajouri, Mohd Jahangir, Deputy DEO Shaheel Malik, Nodal Officer SVEEP Bishamber Dass, Cultural Officer, Alamdar Adam, Nodal Officer Control Room Sandeep Sharma, and Nodal Officer MCMC Ashiq Rafiq Malik.

DEO Samba leads inclusive Voter Awareness Drive for Commercial Vehicle Drivers



JIN NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, SEPTEMBER 09

District Election Officer (DEO) Samba, Rajesh Sharma, and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Vinay Kumar, led a collaborative voter awareness drive today in Vijaypur Market, aimed at encouraging commercial vehicle drivers to prioritize road safety and participate in the upcoming elections on 1st October 2024.

The event was organized under the Systematic Voters' Education and

Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative by District SVEEP Nodal Officer, Ms. Ekshu Sharma, JKAS, in collaboration with ARTO Samba, Sh. Ramesh Kumar Samotra.

In his speech, DEO, Rajesh Sharma emphasized the unique position of commercial drivers, stating, "Drivers who come in contact with hundreds of people daily are in a strong position to inspire others to step out and cast their vote, amplifying voter participation across the district." The

event highlighted the dual responsibility of commercial drivers to adhere to road safety regulations and take an active role in the democratic process. The drivers were encouraged to lead by example, ensuring that their voices, and those of their passengers and communities, are heard in the upcoming elections. The District Election Office continues its efforts to promote voter participation and ensure that all sections of society are included in the democratic process.

SVEEP: SWD Udhampur hosts awareness camp for Divyangjans, Senior citizen voters at Panchayat Sansoo-Neeli Nallah

JIN NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 09

An SVEEP program was organised today for Divyangjans and Senior citizen voters by the Tehsil Social Welfare Department Udhampur at Panchayat Sansoo.

Pooja Devi educated the general public on working of SAKSHAM Portal launched by ECI and other facilities provided by authorities such as wheelchairs at polling station, Ramps, provision of home voting so that no voter is left behind due to the reasons being handicapped or old aged.

TSWO Tilak Raj Attri also appealed to the public in general to cast their vote as it is the moral duty of every Indian.

General Observer, 48-Inderwal visits far off Polling Stations in Marwah, Warwan



JIN NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 09

General Observer for 48-Inderwal Assembly Constituency, Dr. A Arun Thamburaj on Sunday conducted an extensive tour to Marwah & Warwan area to assess the readiness of far flung polling stations across the constituency in preparation for the upcoming elections.

The visit focused on ensuring the provision of Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) and overall preparedness at each location.

Dr. A Arun Thamburaj emphasised the importance of voter convenience and accessibility, carefully inspecting arrangements

for essential services such as drinking water, electricity and sanitation at polling stations.

He interacted with election officials and local voters to assess the preparedness and ensure that all necessary arrangements are in place for a smooth and efficient voting process.

The visit underscored the administration's commitment to ensuring a free, fair and accessible election for all voters in the constituency.

General Observer was accompanied by SDM Marwah Dr Mohammad Ashraf, AERO/ Tehsildar Sir Marwah, Naib Tehsildar Marwah & SHO Marwah.

SVEEP Programme Conducted in AC-Tral to Raise Voter Awareness



JIN NEWS SERVICE
PULWAMA, SEPTEMBER 09

In a continued effort to promote voter education and awareness, a successful Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme was organized today at Lalapora Kahilil, a remote village in Assembly Constituency 33-Tral. The event was led by Mushtaq Ahmed Naik, Principal and Nodal Officer for SVEEP in the constituency.

A large emphasis was placed on encouraging voter turnout, with the programme focusing on the value of every vote and its critical significance in a democratic setup. Participants were educated on the importance of electoral participation to ensure free and fair elec-

tions. To engage the local community, a cultural performance was presented by students, designed to draw attention to the SVEEP initiative. A student rally was also held, where participants held placards illustrating the importance of voting and the impact of SVEEP.

Similarly, a SVEEP event was also organized by 33-AC Tral at the Awantipora Cluster Level Federation in Chersoo, where the focus was on voter education among the general public and Self Help Group (SHG) members.

The importance of voter turnout and the value of voting in the democratic process were emphasized besides detailed discussions about the role of SVEEP in strengthening electoral participation were also held.

Dangal hosted to promote voter awareness in Ramnagar

JIN NEWS SERVICE
RAMNAGAR, SEPTEMBER 09

Since the wheels of election to the legislative assembly in J&K have set in motion last month, the festive season of democracy has commenced with verve and vigor in Udhampur district.

District Election Officer Saloni Rai and her team are putting best of their efforts to educate and aware each and every voter as mandated by Election Commission of India under SVEEP. The innovative activities are being carried out in every nook and corner of the assembly constituencies in the district.

The Ramnagar Assembly constituency is one where the low voter turnout had been recorded in the past elections and mandated extra efforts to organize SVEEP events to educate the voters and motivate them towards their inclusive participation in the election.

SDM Ramnagar, designated as Returning Officer of the said AC is putting in extra efforts to reach out each and every voter by organizing different events and activities and involving voters across the age cohort.

A series of events are being organized as per the pre-designed schedule of SVEEP activities.



The local artists, social influencers, Govt officers and young voters are engaged to motivate and educate the voters.

A vibrant and ardent event that is traditional sports-Dangal (wrestling) was organized today at village Kirmoo, Ramnagar, in collaboration with the Dangal Committee Badoi Ramnagar. The event, organized as part of the SVEEP campaign, aimed to promote voter awareness and encourage maximum participation in the upcoming legislative assembly elections scheduled for October 1, 2024.

Over 1200 people from all walks of life gathered to witness the traditional sport of Dangal, an activity deeply rooted in rural culture.

The event was conducted under the patronship of Returning Officer and SDM Ramnagar, Rafiq Ahmad Jaral, who

clubbed the event with voter awareness.

The SDM Ramnagar while speaking on the Dangal delves into its historical journey to the contemporary resurgence with the world famous Bollywood movie Dangal, which catapulted this traditional sport to global fame like our democratic process.

He highlighted the parallels between Dangal sport and the democratic process, as both are our socio-cultural heritage symbolizing strength, honor, and discipline. He emphasized the importance of voter participation, likening the strength, resilience, and discipline shown by wrestlers in the Dangal arena to the responsibility of citizens to exercise their voting rights.

"Just as wrestlers fight with determination in the ring, we as citizens must display the same commitment in

protecting our democracy by voting in the upcoming elections. SVEEP is about ensuring that no voter is left behind and encourages all eligible voters to participate actively in this crucial democratic exercise," he remarked.

The Dangal event, infused with the spirit of unity and sportsmanship, served as a platform for educating the participants, the significance of the electoral process, ensuring that everyone, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and those in remote areas, have access to voting.

Taking the advantage of gathering assembled to witness the Dangal, the SDM Ramnagar spread a powerful message among the voters by appealing to participate in the upcoming election and make Ramnagar constituency no.1 in terms of voter turnout.

Police Observer Visits Pampore, Pulwama constituencies to review security arrangements

JIN NEWS SERVICE
PULWAMA, SEPTEMBER 09

Akhilesh Kumar, the Police Observer for Pulwama, conducted an extensive visit to the Pampore and Pulwama constituencies today.

During the visit, he inspected several security checkpoints (Nakkas) and reviewed the overall security preparedness in the district ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections. He conducted thorough examination of the 24x7 security nakas at Kandizal and Koil crossings, where he reviewed the operational readiness of the personnel stationed at these critical points.



Akhilesh Kumar also conducted briefings with Road Opening Parties (ROPs) deployed across Pulwama district, ensuring that all security protocols are in place and adequately followed.

The Police Observer emphasized the importance of maintaining high levels of vigilance and coordination among the security forces to ensure peaceful and secure elections in the district.

JIN NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 09

In order to amplify voter's awareness, the District Election Officer Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat Monday chaired a meeting regarding Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP), here today.

The meeting was attended by District Nodal Officer SVEEP; Nodal Officer MCMC; Nodal Officers SVEEP of all Eight Assembly Constituencies; District Social Welfare Officer; Chief Medical Officer, Nodal Officers of SVEEP NIT, University of Kashmir; Nodal Officer Colleges, Representatives of Colleges, Institute of Music & Fine Arts.

While addressing the meeting, DEO elaborated the dynamic role of Offi-



cers regarding SVEEP to amplify the message of voter's participation & awareness.

He underlined the need to craft qualitative messages and programs to encompass wide range of electoral process to celebrate the festival of democracy.

DEO emphasized on identification of places of prime importance with

historical, social, cultural, environmental & ecological importance to organise SVEEP programmes.

Dr Bilal urged all the concerned to understand the power and importance of Social Media to portray and promote SVEEP activities to enhance voter awareness and participation in electoral process.

He also maintained that the administration is com-

mitted to free, fair & transparent election and ensure impartiality in the entire process.

Further, DEO asked all the officers to channelize their resources and integrate their SVEEP activities to foster inclusive democracy.

Besides, the officers were directed to spread the information and significance

of special polling stations established for Women, PwD & Youth, and Green Polling Stations.

Moreover, DEO highlighted the importance that Srinagar holds in the Valley regarding SVEEP programmes, as a huge number of people from different Districts live here or visit the District for different works, jobs, education etc.

Ashish Sood releases Election Song of Yudhvir Sethi

Yudhvir vows to make Jammu East a Model Constituency

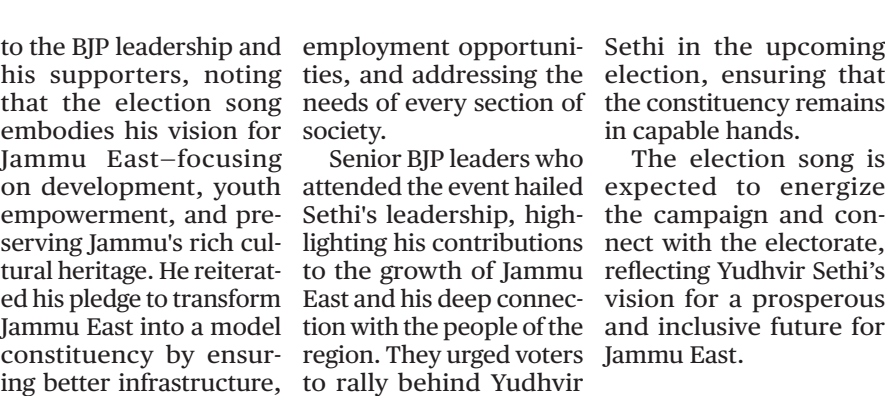
JNEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, SEPT 9

In a vibrant show of support and enthusiasm for the upcoming Jammu & Kashmir Assembly Elections, Ashish Sood, BJP Incharge for J&K, today officially released the election song for Yudhvir Sethi, senior BJP leader and contesting candidate from the Jammu East constituency. The event was held at Pt. Prem Nath Dogra Bhawan, Jammu, with the presence of senior party leaders and key supporters.

Addressing the gathering, Ashish Sood emphasized the importance of the song as a symbol of BJP's vision for a stronger and more developed Jammu under the leadership of Yudhvir Sethi. He praised Sethi's commitment to the welfare of the people and his long-standing dedication to the party's ideals, positioning him as a vital force in Assembly Election 2024.

In his remarks, Yudhvir Sethi expressed gratitude



to the BJP leadership and his supporters, noting that the election song embodies his vision for Jammu East—focusing on development, youth empowerment, and preserving Jammu's rich cultural heritage. He reiterated his pledge to transform Jammu East into a model constituency by ensuring better infrastructure,

employment opportunities, and addressing the needs of every section of society.

Senior BJP leaders who attended the event hailed Sethi's leadership, highlighting his contributions to the growth of Jammu East and his deep connection with the people of the region. They urged voters to rally behind Yudhvir

Sethi in the upcoming election, ensuring that the constituency remains in capable hands.

The election song is expected to energize the campaign and connect with the electorate, reflecting Yudhvir Sethi's vision for a prosperous and inclusive future for Jammu East.

NC guarantees Secularism, Brotherhood: Rattan Lal

JNEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, SEPT 9

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (NC) reaffirmed its commitment to secularism, brotherhood, and the overall development of Jammu and Kashmir.

In a significant function organized by Tejinder Singh, District President of the NC Youth Wing (Jammu Urban District), dozens of enthusiastic youth joined the party in the presence of dynamic youth leaders Zahir Abdullah and Zamir Abdullah at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan, Jammu. Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President of JKNC, was the chief guest at the event and welcomed the new members to the party fold.

Speaking on the occasion, the senior NC leader Rattan Lal strongly condemned the statement of BJP leader, accusing the National Conference of attempting to revive terrorism through its manifesto. He termed these allegations as baseless and an attempt to divert attention from the real issues.



“National Conference has always stood for peace, secularism, and democracy. We have sacrificed hundreds of our party workers to keep democracy alive in Jammu and Kashmir,” he said, adding that the NC manifesto is a commitment to the development and prosperity of the region, while the BJP's manifesto is nothing but a bundle of lies designed to mislead the public.

Earlier in the program, Naresh Kumar, a prominent youth leader from Bahu Fort, along with dozens of his supporters, officially joined the National Conference.

Welcoming him, Sheikh Bashir Ahmed, Provincial Secretary JKNC, called

upon all party workers to dedicate themselves to ensuring a resounding victory for the National Conference in the upcoming Assembly elections. He said youth is a future of J&K and should work unitedly to strengthen the party at gross root level.

Tejinder Singh also addressed the gathering, emphasizing the need for youth to play an active role in shaping the future of Jammu and Kashmir. He assured the youth that the National Conference will continue to fight for their rights and create opportunities for them to thrive.

On the occasion, Naresh Kumar was also nominated as Ward President 47, reflecting the party's trust

in his leadership and dedication to the cause.

The joining programme concluded with a strong sense of unity and commitment to the party's values of secularism and inclusive development.

Among those who joined the party fold included Goutam Kumar, Sumit Sagotra, Varun Patyal, Shubam Kumar, Kunal Patyal, Kartik Dalotra, Jug Pajgotra, Vansh, Pajgotra, Sikanter, Gagan, Sanjay Punia, Naresh Kumar, Anil Dalotra, Rocky Dalotra, Gourav Dalotra, Janu Poudwal, Veeru Poudwal, Rohit Mehra, Pammy Patyal, Sagar Goswami, Pardeep Kumar, Dev Singh and Tarun Kalsi.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

Held fruitful talks...

business delegation.

The Crown Prince held bilateral discussions with Prime Minister today. Prime Minister conveyed his warm greetings and regards to Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the President of the UAE, a statement said.

The two leaders expressed satisfaction over the substantial progress achieved in recent years in the India-UAE Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and discussed opportunities to further widen and deepen the partnership in all areas of bilateral cooperation. They acknowledged that the success of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and the recent entry into force of the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) will provide further impetus to the strong economic and commercial partnership between the two countries.

They also underscored the need to explore new areas of untapped potential, particularly in nuclear energy, critical minerals, green hydrogen, artificial intelligence and cutting-edge technologies.

The following MoUs/Agreements were signed during the visit, which set the stage for enhancing cooperation in traditional as well as new areas of cooperation -

- MoU on Nuclear Cooperation between Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC)
- Agreement for long-term LNG supply between Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited
- MoU between ADNOC and India Strategic Petroleum Reserve Limited (ISPRL)
- Production Concession Agreement for Abu Dhabi Onshore Block 1 between Urja Bharat and ADNOC.
- MoU between Government of Gujarat and Abu Dhabi Developmental Holding Company PJSC (ADQ) on food parks development in India

Sheikh Khaled also called on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Discussions covered the warm, historic, and comprehensive ties between the two countries and the several initiatives taken in recent years. President Murmu expressed her gratitude to the leadership of the UAE for hosting more than 3.5 million Indians.

The Crown Prince also visited Rajghat and paid tributes in memory of Mahatma Gandhi.

He became the third-generation leader from the UAE to plant a sapling at Rajghat, following Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, former President of the UAE in 1992; and Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE in 2016. This was a unique and rare occasion, showcasing the generational continuity of the strong relationship between the two countries. This is the first time in the history of Rajghat that leaders from three generations of a country have planted trees honouring the Mahatma.

Sheikh Khaled will visit Mumbai tomorrow and will participate in an India-UAE Business Forum. A soft launch on the commencement of work on the India-UAE virtual trade corridor (VTC) and MAITRI interface to facilitate VTC, will also take place in Mumbai.

J&K HC admits petition...

electoral politics by casting their votes but not to contest elections.

“It is the fundamental right of the petitioner not only to participate in the electoral politics by casting his vote but also to contest against a seat in the Legislative Assembly. It sans logic that a government servant is well within his rights to participate in electoral politics by exercising his right to vote, however, at the same time he is precluded from taking part in electoral politics by standing as a candidate for Legislative Assembly,” Bhat said in the petition.

The petition has been admitted by a Division Bench of Justices Atul Sreedharan and Mohammad Yousuf Wani and listed for hearing on October 21, 2024.

During the hearing, Advocate General D C Raina argued that Rule 14 must be read in conjunction with Rule 13, which bars government employees from criti-

cizing government policies publicly. However, the court found this provision irrelevant to Bhat's challenge of standing for election himself.

The petition further argues that the rule is inconsistent with the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951, and allows the participation of persons accused of involvement in heinous offences or antinational activities.

The court has issued notices to the respondents, including the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the J&K government, asking them to file their replies within four weeks.

The case has far-reaching implications for the political participation of government employees in the Union Territory. KNO

All is not well between...

against the BJP's divisive politics. We will continue to work together to protect the interests of J&K and its people,” he said.

The NC and Congress party are fighting Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir in alliance but on five seats including Banihal they have agreed for a friendly contest. KNO

Omar Faces Uphill...

As per the news agency, the Shia community, comprising 20-25% of the region's Muslim population, plays a crucial role in shaping election outcomes. In Budgam alone, 30,000 to 33,000 voters belong to the Shia sect, accounting for about 35% of the district's population. Previous records suggest that the Shia community tends to vote in higher numbers than their Sunni counterparts, making their support vital for any candidate in the region.

The Shia community in Kashmir is divided into two main sects: Mustafai and Mohammadi, both originating from the Syed lineage. Leading figures like Aga Syed Mustafa and Aga Syed Yusuf have historically guided the political and religious leanings of these groups. Aga Syed Mustafa's family, in particular, has long been involved in Kashmir's political landscape. His son, Aga Ruhullah, is currently an MP from the NC, while his other son, Syed Muntazir Mehdi, has now entered the electoral race under the PDP banner. This as per the political pundits can cause a potential split in the Shia vote.

Omar Abdullah's previous electoral success in Budgam could face new challenges with the emergence of Mehdi. The NC's decision to field Omar once again indicates its reliance on his personal charisma, but the inclusion of a strong Shia candidate from the rival PDP could complicate his campaign.

The broader history of the Shia community's political involvement in Budgam adds further complexity. The Mustafai sect has seen deep ties with Congress, with Aga Syed Mehdi, the father of MP Aga Ruhullah, previously aligned with the party. However, political realignments, especially within the Aga family, have created a competitive landscape, with candidates striving for influence across Shia-majority regions.

Adding to the intrigue is the fact that the Shia community, particularly in Budgam, still observes traditional methods of resolving legal disputes through Shariah courts, with many continuing to seek justice based on Islamic principles rather than conventional courts. The Aga family has historically been at the center of this practice, further cementing their influence over the Shia population.

The election in Budgam is shaping up to be one of the most closely watched contests in the region, with Omar Abdullah's path to victory possibly dependent on how well he navigates the complex dynamics within the Shia community and whether PDP's candidate can sway a significant portion of the vote. A split in the Shia vote could work in Omar's favor, but a unified Shia backing for Mehdi could pose a formidable challenge. KNO

In J&K; BJP...

while addressing a press conference, here today. BJP National Spokesperson, RP Singh, Incharge of BJP Media

War Room, Arun Gupta, BJP Chief Spokesperson, Sunil Sethi, Dr Tahir Chowdhary, BJP spokesperson and Dr Pardeep Mahotra, Media Incharge, were also present on the occasion.

BJP is guarantee to peace, prosperity and development in J&K, Thakur said.

Thakur said that whenever NC and Cong have come together they have brought destruction and miseries for the people of J&K. More than 45,000 people have lost their lives in Jammu and Kashmir due to NC and Cong, he said.

“The country suffered a lot for 70 years due to blunders committed by Nehru,” he said, while adding, “BJP government led Prime Minister Narendra Modi abrogated Article 370 brought peace and development in J&K”.

The NC-Cong, he said, “are talking of bringing back Article 370 but I must tell them that Article 370 is history and will never ever come back”.

The NC-Cong alliance wants to push J&K again towards terrorism and revive separatism, Thakur said, while adding, “People of J&K will teach NC-Cong a lesson in these elections as they want unrest here”.

NC-Congress have no issue for the people and now they are deviating people's attention by raising other issues, he said, adding, “Rahul Gandhi must make his stand clear about raising the issue of hanging of Afzal Guru, who attacked Parliament”.

The BJP Government invested Rs 25,000 for all round development of J&K and now we have AIIMS, IIM, IIT, Nursing Colleges and large network of roads here, he said.

Thakur said that NC-Cong are playing divisive politics. “They want to rename our revered Shankracharya as Takht-e-Suleman and Hari Parbat as Kohe Maran, which shows that NC-Cong are trying to divide people and spread hatred,” Thakur said.

There is 70% decline in terror related activities due to policies of the Prime Minister Modi, he said, adding, “We freed J&K from the clutches of terrorism by abrogating Article 370,” Thakur said adding that record number of tourists have been visiting J&K. since abrogation of Article 370.

Thakur said that the 25 point ‘Sankalp Patra’ of the BJP is people friendly and also presents a future roadmap for development of J&K, while other parties have nothing to offer to the people of J&K.

With no development...

were committed on them and Abdullahs and Muftis were the mute spectators.

He said Abdullahs and Muftis turned a blind eye when lakhs of Hindus had to leave the valley in the face of extremist violence. “Where were Abdullahs then?, Chugh questioned.

When asked about the allegations by PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti that the AIP party is a proxy for the BJP, Chugh dismissed the charges as baseless and figment of her imagination.

He said that “the PDP and NC have no agenda for the welfare of J&K and no plan to work for the betterment of the people in the future. Let them go through our ‘Sankalp Patra’ (Manifesto) and then speak,” he added.

When questioned about Farooq Abdullah's statement that the NC will never accept the concept of BJP's ‘Vishisht Bharat’ and his allegation that the BJP is instilling fear in voters, Tarun Chugh responded, “The high voter turnout in the recent Lok Sabha Elections, the restoration of democracy at grassroots levels, a 75% decline in terrorist activities, and a significant decrease in stone-pelting and organized strikes post-2022 are examples of the peace and democracy restored by the government led by Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Our party is committed to peace and progress in the region. It is not expected that the NC would support Bharat being Vishwaguru, and we cannot see any nationalistic view from the NC and their leaders. While the BJP speaks of nationalism, harmony, and national integration, the growing popularity and foothold of the BJP across the country exemplify how people have wholeheartedly accepted the BJP and its policies, and it is growing day by day. The BJP's electoral success can be attributed to its policies on economic develop-

ment, welfare schemes, and national security. Being the world's largest democratic party and having elected our Prime Minister Modi for a third term speaks of the choice people of our country have made. This is not out of fear but out of the love, affection and trust people have in their leader. Only BJP can drive the country on the path of development and welfare of its citizens.”

When asked about an ex-Sarpanch in Ganderbal, allegedly acting on behalf of Omar Abdullah, and threatened people by saying, “The person who does not support the National Conference will be killed,” Tarun Chugh condemned this and accused Omar Abdullah for spreading terror among voters.

He criticized Omar Abdullah for diverting the election narrative by questioning Afzal Guru's execution, which he said proves that the National Conference has no real issues to address, and this shows the pathetic state of the Abdullahs and their lack of an election agenda.

Tarun Chugh condemned Rahul Gandhi for praising China's manufacturing capabilities during his US visit, calling him a “desh drohi” (traitor) who lets down his own country on foreign soil. Tarun Chugh further stated, “Rahul Gandhi's actions are always against India and anti-national. It is expected that he will do such things. Rahul Gandhi should note that the country has progressed with the Make In India Initiative and we have become the worlds largest manufacturing hub. Today, the country is a leading manufacturer and exporter of mobile phones, toys, and other essential goods. We are now leaders in defense manufacturing and exports. In every sector, we are leading and our country will be the world's third-largest economy by 2047 under the vision of Viksit Bharat.”

He further accused the Congress and National Conference of misleading the public and having no roadmap for the development of Jammu and Kashmir.

Minus PDP, all parties...

Engineer Sheikh Abdul Rashid is in Jail, I wonder who is behind and supporting Awami Ittihad Party (AIP) financially.” “Yesterday, a PDP worker was beaten ruthlessly by some goons of AIP and no action is being taken. If the same would have been done by any PDP member or worker, I think all party members would have been sent to jail,” she said.

Mehbooba further said, “I want to tell the government that if they are making AIP a proxy party and if they are giving them full support financially and other means, they shall inform us directly so that we can plan accordingly.” “I urge the people of Jammu and Kashmir not to fall for the proxy political parties. I want to make people believe that a big power is backing them who want to divide the votes. Their main target is PDP and they are aware that PDP have been standing with those who have been sent to jails in past five years,” she said. KNO

27 candidates withdraw...

18- Ganderbal AC.

In Srinagar district, 13 candidates remain in the final electoral fray for election in 19-Hazratbal AC; 10 candidates in 20-Khanayr AC; 16 candidates in 21-Habbakadal AC; 10 candidates in 22-Lal Chowk AC; 8 candidates in 23-Channapora AC; 10 candidates in 24-Zadibal AC; 13 candidates in 25-Eidgah AC; while 13 candidates remain in the fray in 26-Central Shalteng AC.

Finally, in Budgam district, 8 candidates remain in the final electoral fray for election in 27-Budgam AC; 12 candidates in 28-Berwah AC; 10 candidates in 29-Khansahib AC; 10 candidates in 30-Chrar-I-Sharief AC; while 6 candidates remain in the fray in 31-Chadoora AC. It is worth mentioning here that a total of 309 candidates had filed their nomination papers before the respective Returning Officers in 26 Assembly Constituencies till the last date of filing the Nominations on 5 September, 2024.

Out of these, the nomination papers of 266 candidates were found valid during Scrutiny held on 6 September, 2024. And now with the withdrawal of 27 candidates, 239 candidates now remain in the final electoral fray.

Governor of Maharashtra C P Radhakrishnan inaugurates the iconic statue of NSE Bull and launches a Coffee Table Book

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, AUG 8

Governor of Maharashtra C P Radhakrishnan inaugurated the iconic statue of NSE Bull and launched a commemorative Coffee Table Book titled "The Journey of Empowering 1.4 billion Dreams," at NSE Headquarters today along with Ashishkumar Chauhan, MD & CEO, NSE.

The statue of NSE Bull represents strength, power, and resilience—qualities that are key to India's economic growth. The bull's strong legs, prominent hump, and formidable presence symbolize the nation's robust financial ecosystem. Surrounded by figures representing the People of India from diverse backgrounds—such as a school-going boy, a village woman, and professionals—the sculpture underscores the inclusivity and unity of India's investment landscape. This iconic creation reflects the collective efforts of the nation, working together towards a common goal of economic progress.

NSE's Coffee Table Book, "The Journey of Empowering 1.4 billion Dreams" is a reflection on NSE's evolution and its contributions to India's growth story over the past 30 years. In the last 30 years since the inception of its operations in



1994, NSE has revolutionized India's capital markets. The book chronicles NSE's pivotal role as a catalyst and a mirror to India's growth.

NSE's Bull sculpture and Coffee Table Book stand as symbolic milestones in India's Capital Markets journey. Today, India is the fifth largest economy and the fourth largest capital market while NSE has grown to become the largest stock exchange in the world by activity in terms of number of orders and trades. This achievement is a testament to India's ability to build and sustain world-class institutions that serve the nation's economic aspirations and progress towards a Viksit Bharat as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Governor of Maharashtra, C.P. Radhakrishnan on this occasion said: "I am happy to inaugurate the statue of NSE's Bull and the Coffee Table Book.

I would like to congratulate NSE for the Bull and the Coffee Table Book that are reflective of NSE's role in revolutionizing India's Capital markets and its contribution to the nation's growth. The Bull, a symbol of financial strength and upward momentum, has deep roots in stock market history. What makes this sculpture unique is the inclusion of figures surrounding it, each representing diverse participants and contributors to India's progress. NSE is not just a financial institution; it is a symbol of India's growth and aspirations. The confidence NSE has created on investors is immense. This is not just growth. This is a revolution. NSE has been able to attract investments from across the globe. Without NSE's Role there is no Viksit Bharat."

Ashishkumar Chauhan, MD & CEO, NSE said: "We are proud to inaugurate

the statue of NSE Bull and launch our Coffee Table Book today at the hands of Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra, Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan. The NSE Bull shows the symbiotic and virtuous relationship of Samaj and Bazaar. The bull is a symbol of Capital Markets while the common people showcase Samaj, at NSE Headquarters which is bazaar. 30 years ago in 1994, the stock market in India i.e., bazaar, was not accessible to the Samaj. With the advent of first-of-its-kind, automated, screen-based trading at NSE, the market reached all corners of the country and today, NSE has over 10 Crore unique investors registered with the exchange. The Coffee Table Book chronicles the story of this institution that is an inspiration for all of us. Looking 30 years back, with a lot of nostalgia, I am proud to say that despite a few hiccups, NSE has more than fulfilled its vision of creating a vibrant and growth-oriented stock market ecosystem to channelise savings of Indian households into productive capital in the most cost-effective, transparent, fair, efficient and orderly ways and help in job creation. In 30 years, NSE has played a revolutionary role in the financial landscape and technological evolution of the country."

Amway Invests \$4M in Four Research & Development Labs Across India

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU SEPT 9

Advancing its focus on strengthening scientific capabilities to provide cutting-edge, next-generation support in health and wellbeing, Amway, a global company, today formally introduced its four state-of-the-art Research & Development (R&D) labs across India with an investment of \$4 million[1]. By harnessing advanced technology, contemporary science and thought leadership, these labs are poised to redefine industry standards by developing safe, effective, differentiated and high-quality health and wellbeing products with the aim to support people in India and around the world. India is the location of one of the four Amway R&D hubs, worldwide. This strategic move is in line with Amway's efforts to cater to the evolving needs of consumers empowering millions to achieve optimal wellbeing and fostering a healthier future for all.

Amway's four state-of-the-art R&D labs in Gurugram, Chennai, Bengaluru, and Dindigul collectively total 24,700 square feet, creating a powerhouse of scientific discovery and breakthrough product development. Talking about the investment from Amway India's business perspective and describing the benefits to India, Rajneesh Chopra, Managing Director, Amway India, said "There is a need for a transformative approach to nutrition and wellness in India, as the health landscape here faces significant challenges related to nutrition, lifestyle and gut health. This investment accelerates Amway India's product development capabilities and positions



Amway to better serve the unique and evolving needs of its consumers and businesses in India and around the world. India stands as one of our top priority markets globally and this investment underscores the confidence of Amway Global in the country's expertise and potential to drive groundbreaking innovation in the health and wellbeing space."

"For over a quarter-century, Amway India has earned the trust of people by helping them lead a healthy way of life. Our commitment to a healthier nation envisions empowering our distributors to help transform the lives of millions of Indians by prioritizing healthspan over lifespan. As we continue to drive innovation to offer need-based recommendations, we've found that the most crucial element in your health and wellbeing journey is a strong gut that is also linked to improved mental health and immunity. The R&D labs will further support driving scientifically backed initiatives like 'Morning Nutrition' - a holistic campaign to support a healthy lifestyle that helps individuals start their day with optimal nutrition to maintain a healthier lifestyle. We are poised to foster a healthier future for all in

line with the Government of India's vision. This strategic investment strengthens our confidence in achieving our goals while solidifying our position at the forefront of the health and wellbeing industry," Mr. Chopra concluded.

Introducing the R&D labs in India, Dr Shyam Ramakrishnan, Director, Innovation and Science, India and Southeast Asia, Amway said, "In response to the rising awareness around health, wellbeing and nutrition worldwide, this investment in state-of-the-art R&D labs is well positioned to meet the evolving consumer needs across global markets. Importantly, it aligns with our global multi-year growth vision of consistently providing recommendations for overall wellbeing tailored to the evolving needs of various age groups. Having an innovation hub in India allows us to harness the incredible Indian talent pool and support the country's ambition to be a meaningful and significant contributor to overall wellbeing. For more than six decades, we, at Amway, have always prioritized a science-led approach to product development, consistently innovating for our distributors and their customers. We're

leveraging top talent in India and around the globe to develop differentiated nutrition, food, and beauty products. These products are focused on India and Southeast Asia and possibly for other global markets. Aligned with our vision of helping people live better, healthier lives, I believe this move will raise the bar of innovation, keeping science and technology at the forefront, thus showcasing our commitment to make Amway future-ready through aspirational, trendsetting products and solutions."

Amway is focused on delivering innovative, plant-forward formulations to meet modern nutrition, health and wellbeing needs around 4 key areas, namely - Healthy Weight, Healthy Beauty, Fitness and Healthy Ageing, emphasizing clean labels and sustainability. A team of expert researchers across various scientific disciplines will expedite the development of differentiated solutions. These contemporary R&D labs are equipped with advanced technology and instrumentation, botanical-driven innovation, the latest packaging technology, and more to ensure Amway's benchmark quality and safety standards.

The investment in the R&D labs in India will cater to domestic and global requirements, further augmenting the company's efforts around research, testing, and validation of innovative ideas, products, and technologies. These labs are equipped to develop product solutions in Foods, Oral solids, Beauty and Personal care segments with premium botanical ingredients for nutrition and skin applications.

SVEEP: Electoral Awareness Rally taken out by GHSS Kathera



JI NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 09

To promote electoral awareness and encourage active voter participation, a rally was taken out today at Government Higher Secondary School, Kathera under the SVEEP programme. The rally was organized under the guidance and supervision of AC Nodal Officer 66 Jasrota Mangal Singh and spearheaded by RO-66 Jasrota Akhil Sadotra (ACD), Kathua.

The students, teachers, and local residents came together to march through the streets of Kathera, carrying placards and raising slogans that highlighted the significance of voting

for a vibrant democracy. The rally also served as a platform to inform first-time voters about the registration process and the importance of casting their vote in the upcoming elections. Speaking on the occasion, different speakers stressed the vital role that every individual plays in strengthening democracy. They urged all eligible citizens to exercise their franchise and emphasized the importance of educating the youth about their constitutional rights and responsibilities.

The rally was met with great enthusiasm and is expected to inspire greater participation from the local community in future electoral exercises.

Second Randomisation of Polling Staff held at Shopian



JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, SEPTEMBER 09

The second randomisation of the polling staff, designated for deployment across the polling stations for the General Assembly Elections-2024 was held today at Shopian.

The randomisation took place in the presence of General Observer for 36-Zainapora Assembly Constituency (AC), Jeevan Babu K, and General Observer for 37-Shopian AC, Roohi Khan.

The District Election Officer (DEO), Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar, and respective Returning Officers (ROs) were also present along with other Nodal Officers.

As per the Election Commission of India's (ECI) guidelines, the randomisation was carried out using software to generate polling parties.

These parties were then allocated to their respective constituencies, ensuring fairness and impartiality in the deployment process.

Tarun Chug, Ram Madhav & other BJP leaders to launch 'Har Ghar Bhajapa Campaign'

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 9

Intensifying its campaign right upto grass roots level for the Assembly elections, the BJP will start 'Har Ghar Bhajapa Campaign' from tomorrow i.e 10th of September to connect to the people and make them aware about party's programmes and achievements.

The massive door to door campaign will be led by J&K Incharge, Tarun Chug in Kishtwar, Padder-Nagseni segment

Ram Madhav will lead the campaign in Kathua and Hiranagar along with large number of party workers.

At Baderwah, the campaign will be led by Trilok Jamwal, MLA of HP and Rajya Sabha MP, Gulam Ali Khatna, will lead the campaign in Ramban and Banihal.

In Udhampur West, the BJP's campaign would be led by Dhan Singh Rawat (Minister, Government of Uttarakhand), while in Udhampur East, Dhan Singh Rawat will also lead eh campaign.

In Chenani, the Union Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh will head the campaign. He will also lead the campaign in Billawar, Basohli and Jasrota.

In Ramnagar, the campaign will be held under the leadership Shamsher Singh Manhas, former Rajya Sabha member.

The campaign at Bani would be led by Ashwani Sharma (MLA Pathankot). MP Jugal Kishore Sharma will lead party's campaign in Gulabgarh, Reasi and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi segments.

Sat Sharma will lead BJP's campaign in Ramgarh and Samba, while in Vijaypur, the campaign will be led by Shrikant Sharma (MLA Uttar Pradesh).

In Bishnah, also Shrikant Sharma will lead the campaign. At Suchetgarh, Vikramjeet Singh Cheema will lead the campaign.

Ashish Sood will also lead party's campaign in Bahu and Jammu East, while G Krishna Reddy will head BJP campaign in Jammu West.

In Nagrota and Jammu North, the campaign will be led by Ashok Koul, while G Krishna Reddy will head BJP campaign in Marh.

In Akhnoor and Chamb, Madan Kaushik (MLA Uttarakhand) will lead the campaign, while in Kalakote - Sunderbani, Rajeev Bhardwaj (MP, Himachal Pradesh), will lead the party's 'Har Ghar Bhajapa Campaign'.

J&K swimming association flags off Team for 77th Senior National Aquatic Championship



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 9

The Jammu & Kashmir Swimming Association has flagged off the JKUT team for 77th Senior National aquatic championship to be held at International Swimming Complex Yemmekere, Mangalore-575001 from 10th to 13th Sept 2024 by Karnataka Swimming Association under the auspices of Swimming Federation of India.

The Chief guest Prof. Dr. Ashutosh Sharma President J&K Olympic Association and Vice-President, Indian Olympic Association flagged off the team of Jammu & Kashmir (UT) from the Gate of the MAM Stadium outside the offices of J&K Sports Council and Director Youth Services & sports in the presence of

President S.Ramandeep Singh Soodan and General Secretary Sh.Bharat Kumar Sharma along with other office bearers of the Association. The Chief Guest blessed and guided the players to attain ultimate targets so that they become national and international champions in the coming times and bring laurel to the UT of Jammu & Kashmir.

The Ten swimmers drawn from entire UT of J&K Team are five Males and five Females who are to participate in the 77th Sr. National Aquatic Championship are Messrs Mukhtar Ahmad Bhat, Showkat Ali Bhat, Rudraksh S. Gupta, Aayan Sharma, Pratul Singh Jamwal, Avnee Aethmea, Aditee Aditya Bargartra, Tanisha Jaggi, Chitrangna Sharma and Prajal Gupta.

Green SVEEP Campaign takes off in Doda



JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, SEPTEMBER 09

To promote environmental sustainability and Voter awareness, the Office of Chief Electoral Officer, UT of J&K, and District Election Officer Doda, Harvinder Singh, launched the Green SVEEP campaign as part of the General Elections to Legislative Assembly (GELA) 2024, here today. A series of activities under Green SVEEP were held at Polling Station-53, Assembly Constituency

51, HSS Berarru, aiming to plant 5610 trees across the district. District Nodal Officer SVEEP, Parkash Lal Thapa, (CEO Doda), Principal HSS Berreau, Anjeel Kumar Thakur, and BLO Mushtaq Ahmed participated in the plantation drive, setting an example for others to follow.

This initiative contributes to the Election Commission's ongoing efforts to make elections more environmentally conscious and sustainable for future generations.

SVEEP: Inter-House Painting competition on electoral awareness held at GHSS Pellan

JI NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 09

An Inter-House Painting Competition focusing on Electoral Awareness was successfully organized today at Higher Secondary School (HSS) Pellan under the SVEEP.

The event was held under the guidance of the School Principal who encouraged students to become informed and responsible future voters.

Four houses namely Eco House, Peace House, Wisdom House, Well Being House actively participated in the competition

The event aimed to engage students in meaningful discussions about the importance of voting and civic participation. Through various presen-

tations and performances, students showcased their understanding of the electoral process and the role of citizens in strengthening democracy.

In addition the event was inspected by the Returning Officer (RO) 64-Bilawar AC along with the AC Nodal Officer SVEEP.

The theme of the painting competition was "The Power of Every Vote." Students from all houses participated, using their creativity to depict the significance of voting and how every vote contributes to shaping the future of the nation. The vibrant artworks reflected the enthusiasm of the students towards the electoral process and the role of citizens in a democracy.

EDITORIAL

Internal revolt roils BJP's campaign

The BJP is grappling with internal dissent that threatens to undermine its election campaign in Jammu and Kashmir. As the party unveiled its sixth list of candidates for the upcoming Assembly elections, discontent has bubbled to the surface, exposing fractures within the party's ranks. The latest list has not only drawn eyebrows but also sparked protests among party workers, particularly in the Jammu division. The BJP's sixth list covered all 43 Assembly seats in Jammu, signaling the party's preparedness for the third phase of elections. The announcement, however, was marred by controversy and dissatisfaction. The selection of candidates such as R. S. Pathania for Udhampur East and Surinder Bhagat for Marh, among others, has caused significant unrest. Supporters of other aspirants, who had been led to believe they were in line for the party's endorsement, have reacted with fierce opposition. In Udhampur, the announcement of R. S. Pathania's candidacy triggered a strong backlash from the supporters of Pawan Khajuria. The latter's supporters staged a protest outside the BJP office, locking the District President inside and threatening mass resignations. This confrontation underscores the deep divisions within the party, as Khajuria's supporters, including local BJP office bearers and former Panches, expressed their frustration with the high command's decision. The unrest was so intense that Khajuria himself called for a meeting with his supporters to address their grievances, highlighting the internal discord. Similarly, in Marh, the selection of Surinder Bhagat has sparked dissent among the supporters of Choudhary Sukhnandan, a senior BJP leader. Sukhnandan, who was reportedly backing DDC Balbir Lal, has seen his supporters rally against the party's decision. The backlash has been so pronounced that Sukhnandan has publicly expressed his disillusionment with the party, even contemplating leaving politics. His statement, referring to himself as a "misfit in the politics of deceit," reflects the depth of his frustration and the potential repercussions for the party. This internal strife is not an isolated issue but part of a broader pattern of discontent that has plagued the BJP's candidate selection process. Earlier, the party faced protests over other candidate selections, which led to delays in announcements and even changes in previously declared candidates. The situation in Katra Mata Vaishno Devi, where a candidate change occurred post-announcement, exemplifies the volatility and dissatisfaction within the party ranks. The BJP's struggles in Jammu and Kashmir are emblematic of the challenges faced by political parties when managing internal factions and ensuring cohesive campaign strategies. The party's ability to address these grievances effectively will be crucial in maintaining its electoral prospects. As internal conflicts threaten to overshadow the party's campaign, it remains to be seen whether the BJP can unify its ranks and project a strong, unified front in the upcoming elections. In the context of Jammu and Kashmir's complex political landscape, where local dynamics and personal loyalties play a significant role, the BJP's handling of internal dissent will be a key determinant of its electoral success. The party's leadership must navigate these turbulent waters carefully, balancing the expectations of party loyalists with the broader goal of securing electoral victories. If the BJP fails to resolve these internal conflicts, it risks undermining its own campaign and potentially jeopardizing its position in the region.

Indian economy thrives amid global challenges

SUDHIR HINDWAN

India's economic landscape remains one of remarkable resilience and potential, despite the challenges it faces. Although the recent GDP data for the last quarter of the current year indicates a decline from the anticipated 8% growth to 6.7%, the country continues to lead among the fastest-growing global economies. This achievement is an indicator of India's gradual economic aggrandizement, positioning it as a global player in economic growth and development.

While major economies around the world experience slowdowns, India's economic growth has remained robust.

However, one of the key challenges facing the Indian government is the growing need to create more employment opportunities. The number of unemployed and underemployed citizens has increased over the years, and the problem has been exacerbated by rapid globalization. This has introduced a new era marked by the principle of "perform or perish," impacting public sector enterprises and businesses worldwide. India's public sector has not been immune to

this trend, but the abundance of cheap labor and a proactive push towards Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) have given the country a promising future.

Despite India's initially cautious approach to economic reforms, the government has gradually implemented a range of confidence-building measures. These initiatives not only promote economic growth but also aim to ensure the equitable development of various societal sectors. The framework of socio-economic justice that India has developed has helped build trust within the country and abroad, as has its progress with export-oriented special economic zones (SEZs). The share of India's global trade was just 0.7% in the early stages, but efforts to strengthen the country's medium-term export strategy between 2002 and 2007 have yielded positive results.

Additionally, the economic reforms of 1991 gave India a significant boost, marking the beginning of its economic liberalization. Although some East Asian economies and China receive higher levels of foreign direct investment, India's superior corporate governance and the high quality of its



commercially driven companies have allowed it to achieve better returns on investment.

India's success has also been driven by its business experts and investors, who have made their mark overseas, particularly in fields like information technology, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and healthcare. These sectors have become areas in which even advanced economies must catch up. Additionally, India's indigenous entrepreneurship and industries have provided the country with a significant advantage over other economies that rely heavily on foreign direct investment. A prime example of this is China, where the export-led manufacturing boom is largely fueled by FDI, which is not a substitute for home-grown entrepreneurship. India, on the other hand,

has focused on building strong internal markets.

The complexities of financial dealings are another challenge that India has handled well. For instance, Japan has faced severe economic issues due to a malfunctioning financial system in recent years, highlighting the importance of constant monitoring by competent authorities. India's mature financial markets and the robust regulations governing them have provided investors with confidence and stability. Additionally, while China may lead in savings rates, infrastructure, and manufacturing, India's services-driven growth and institutional stability, rooted in democracy and pluralism, set it apart.

A particularly promising development in India's economic landscape is the recent rise of startups. In

the last five years, the country has seen more than 10,000 startups emerge, creating over 100,000 jobs, both directly and indirectly. This success has been attributed to a robust strategy that has expanded operational and support networks from rural to urban areas. The National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) reported that these startups have significantly contributed to employment generation, further solidifying India's economic prospects.

Foreign investors have also recognized India's potential. Over the past two decades, more than \$60 billion has been invested in Indian stock markets. Additionally, over 600 investors have been granted permission to trade on Indian stock exchanges. This influx of investment has resulted in a 125% growth in the Sensex and a 148% rise in the Bombay Stock Exchange.

India's remarkable progress in the IT industry has opened new doors for Indian companies, which are now aggressively expanding into overseas markets. The country's compliance and regulatory authorities have ensured that foreign investments

are secure and that economic transactions are monitored thoroughly. Despite the challenges posed by a tough global economic climate, India's G20 Presidency has provided an opportunity to position itself as a key player in global manufacturing and as a reliable partner in various sectors. The cooperation among G20 nations has also fostered the development of new strategies to meet the needs of vulnerable countries, fostering a more inclusive global society. This cooperation could lead to a positive shift in international relations, promoting greater harmony and collaboration.

India's impressive progress is largely attributed to its immense talent and strategic foresight. However, the country must continue to navigate social and political pressures to maintain its growth momentum. By addressing these challenges, India can further solidify its position as a global economic powerhouse, capable of driving growth not only within its borders but also across the world.

(The author, recipient of Bharat Gaurav award, is a professor and expert on strategic affairs; views expressed are personal)

The United Nations' struggle for relevance in a changing global order

NAND KISHOR AND AMAL CHANDRA

The United Nations (UN), a symbol of global cooperation since its founding in 1945, now finds itself at a pivotal moment. Established to promote international peace, security, and development, the organization faces growing pressure to reform in response to the ever-changing global landscape. However, despite widespread recognition of the need for restructuring, numerous obstacles hinder the reform process. Political, institutional, financial, legal, and socio-cultural barriers make consensus among member states difficult to achieve, thus stalling efforts to enhance the UN's relevance and effectiveness. Three critical areas demand attention—representation, effectiveness, and operational efficiency. Without addressing these, meaningful reform remains elusive.

One of the most significant barriers to UN

reform is the veto power held by the five permanent members (P5) of the Security Council: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This power enables any of these nations to block resolutions, including those aimed at restructuring the UN. The P5's vested interest in maintaining their influential status has led to repeated failures to expand the Security Council to include new permanent members, such as India, which is the world's largest democracy.

India's exclusion from permanent membership, despite its growing global influence, highlights a major flaw in the UN's current structure. Similarly, other responsible powers, such as Japan and Germany, have long called for permanent seats on the Council. The reluctance of the P5 to share their privileged status stifles efforts to make the UN more representative of today's geopolitical realities.

Another complicating factor is the principle of state sovereignty enshrined in the UN Charter. Many member states, particularly smaller or less powerful nations, are wary of reforms that they perceive as infringing on their sovereignty. These states fear that in a restructured UN, their voices might be drowned out by larger, more powerful countries. This divergence in priorities complicates efforts to build the broad consensus necessary for substantial reform. While some states advocate for a more democratic and inclusive Security Council, others focus on regional issues or specific conflicts, making agreement difficult.

The UN's effectiveness in addressing global challenges has been called into question, further complicating the reform debate. Public opinion and trust in the organization are crucial to its ability to implement meaningful changes. However, repeated failures to

effectively address major crises, such as those in Afghanistan and Palestine, have eroded public confidence in the UN's capacity to respond to contemporary challenges.

UN peacekeeping missions, a cornerstone of the organization's efforts to maintain global peace, have also come under fire. Critics argue that these missions have often failed to prevent conflicts or protect civilians adequately. To enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, reforms must focus on improving the mandates, training, and resources available to peacekeepers. Additionally, addressing allegations of misconduct, including sexual abuse and exploitation by peacekeepers, is essential to restoring the organization's credibility and ensuring accountability.

These limitations highlight the urgent need for innovation and reform within the UN. Building and maintaining public trust is essential to secur-

ing the political and financial support necessary for any restructuring efforts.

Efforts to improve the UN's operational efficiency, such as those initiated by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, have demonstrated the institutional challenges of reform. While some administrative changes have been implemented, resistance from within the organization and differing priorities among member states have limited the scope of these reforms.

The UN's extensive bureaucracy presents a major obstacle to meaningful change. Established procedures and norms are deeply ingrained, making it difficult to implement significant reforms. Bureaucratic inertia often leads to resistance from within the organization, as staff and officials may be reluctant to change familiar processes and structures. Moreover, the UN's broad mandate, which covers peace and security, development, and human rights, adds

complexity to any reform effort. This wide scope can lead to overlapping functions and responsibilities among different UN bodies, resulting in inefficiencies.

Reforming the UN also involves navigating a complex web of international law. Any proposed changes must comply with existing legal frameworks and secure broad international support. This legal complexity adds another layer of difficulty, as reforms must be not only politically acceptable but also legally sound. While the need for reform is widely acknowledged, the path to achieving it remains fraught with challenges. Political dynamics, institutional inertia, financial limitations, and legal hurdles all contribute to the slow pace of change.

(Dr Kishor is the HoD of Politics and International Studies, at Pondicherry University and Chandra is an author, political analyst and columnist. Views expressed are personal)

Rest is essential for a balanced life

RACHNA LAKHPATI

In today's fast-paced world, many individuals believe that rest is limited to getting a good night's sleep. That is completely incorrect. Genuine relaxation is complex. Researchers highlight the importance of six different types of rest in maintaining overall well-being. By embracing each form of rest, individuals can achieve a more balanced and energised life. Our minds are constantly bombarded with information from various sources such as work, social media, and daily responsibilities.

With this ongoing situation, the mind will eventually succumb to fatigue and stress. To find peace of mind, it is important to detach oneself from an overwhelming fixation on the thoughts in one's head. Meditation, deep breathing exercises, or even taking quiet walks

are some of the simple practices that can assist in clearing the mind and enhancing cognitive clarity. Taking regular breaks can have a positive impact on your mental well-being, boost your creativity, and improve your ability to make decisions. Additionally, it involves allowing your body sufficient time to recuperate from physical exertion. Naturally, getting sufficient rest is crucial, and it complements well with gentle physical activities, stretching, or even methods to alleviate muscle strain. Physical rest can be achieved through various methods, including sleeping, engaging in yoga exercises, or taking warm baths.

It's important to prioritise injury prevention, muscle recovery, and maintaining energy levels throughout the day. We often overlook a crucial aspect: our emotional boundaries. We strive to



ensure the satisfaction of those in our vicinity. Emotional rest involves acknowledging and honestly addressing your emotions. It's important to listen to your body and prioritise self-care when you're feeling exhausted and on the verge of emotional exhaustion. Discussing your thoughts with close friends or a therapist can play a crucial role in

finding emotional solace.

This type of rest is essential for preventing emotional overwhelm and enables you to genuinely respond to any challenges that come your way. Interacting with others is essential, although it can be quite tiring. Emphasising the importance of quality over quantity, social rest involves stepping away from large gatherings and

focussing on personal well-being.

Spending time alone or with a few close friends can help you maintain a strong connection with your true self. This is about creating an environment that encourages solitude or meaningful conversations, rather than the shallow interactions that often occur in crowded places. Finding moments of spiritual rest allows us to re-establish a deep connection with the essence of life and the things that bring us fulfilment. For some individuals, this may have a religious connotation, while for others, it is more focused on nature, meditation, and mindfulness.

Experiencing spiritual rest doesn't always require a specific routine or ritual. It's more about feeling a profound connection to something larger than oneself, which can bring about a profound sense of

tranquility and harmony. In our modern society, it is rare for anyone to avoid the overwhelming amount of information and stimuli that bombard us through screens and notifications. Creating a peaceful environment for relaxation includes stepping away from electronic devices, dimming the lights, and enjoying some peace.

Reclaim moments of tranquility to rejuvenate your senses: indulge in a good book, immerse yourself in nature, or bask in the blissful absence of sound. Rest is incredibly important to minimise strain on the eyes, ears, and nervous system. Discovering the harmony among these six forms of rest will enable you to rejuvenate yourself comprehensively, leading a life that is both balanced and satisfying.

(The writer is a motivator and a freelance writer; views are personal)

Mpox in India: 'No need to panic, as chances of Covid-like pandemic is minimal'

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

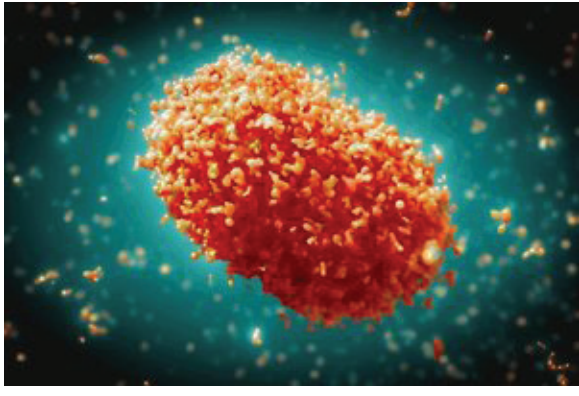
Amid one suspected case of Mpox detected in India, health experts on Monday advised not to panic as the monkeypox virus (MPXV) has minimal pandemic potential.

The government on Sunday informed a suspected case of Mpox in a young male patient in the country, who has been isolated in a designated hospital and is under investigation.

The patient recently travelled from a country currently experiencing Mpox transmission. "The patient has been isolated in a designated hospital and is currently stable," said the ministry.

"There is no need to panic. While fatality remains high, transmission is possible only among close contacts," Dr. Harshal R Salve, Additional professor, centre for community medicine at AIIMS, New Delhi, told IANS.

"Subliminal infec-



tions are all minimal, hence chances of widespread pandemic with monkeypox is minimal," he added.

Mpox is a viral disease identified as fever, rash, and lymphadenopathy -- a condition that causes lymph nodes to swell or become abnormally shaped or sized. It is a self-limiting disease and patients recover within 4 weeks, Salve said.

The suspected case of Mpox in India comes amidst a global outbreak that has spread to about 13 countries in Africa, forcing the WHO to declare it a global health emergen-

cy. The outbreak is driven majorly by a more deadly strain -- Clade 1b. Outside of Africa, Clade 1b has to date caused one case each in Sweden and Thailand.

It is immediately not clear whether the suspected patient in India is linked to the more deadly strain of Mpox.

"With the government's declaration of the first suspected case of Mpox, everybody is worried, but there is no need to panic. As the infection is being transmitted only through sexual or intimate contact, it will not become a big problem like Covid-19," Dr. Ishwar Gilada, a noted

HIV expert, told IANS.

However, he stressed the need to "educate and train the medical community for managing, diagnosing and detecting Mpox properly. And to increase the effectiveness of laboratories in number and their workload".

Gilada, a Consultant in HIV/STDs, Unison Medicare and Research Centre, Mumbai, urged to start manufacturing the Mpox vaccine, which may not only help India but also low and middle-income countries.

He also called on to "vaccinate people which are vulnerable to Mpox with smallpox vaccine on priority".

Salve said that MPXV is spread among humans by respiratory droplets and contact with the body fluids of patients. Hospital surveillance and isolation of cases remain the main interventions for the prevention and spread of Mpox.

Meanwhile, the Centre on Monday advised the states and union territo-

ries to screen, test, and trace contact of all suspect Mpox cases.

The states and UTs were also advised to identify isolation facilities in hospitals for both suspect and confirmed patients.

"No new case of Mpox has been reported in India in the current outbreak, and none of the samples in suspected cases have tested positive," said Union Health Secretary Apurva Chandra. He also emphasised the need to stay alert.

Last week, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) approved an indigenously developed RT-PCR test for the deadly infectious disease.

The IMDX Monkeypox Detection RT-PCR Assay, developed by Siemens Healthineers delivers results in just 40 minutes, significantly faster than traditional methods (which take 1-2 hours). This may help reduce the turnaround time for reporting, leading to quicker responses.

RSV vax beneficial, cost-effective in elderly with health conditions: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

Administering the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in older adults with underlying health conditions may be a cost-effective way to reduce disease, a modelling study showed on Monday.

While RSV infections are known to cause major illness, especially in infants, the rate of infection increases with age. It can be dangerous for older adults, especially those with certain medical conditions, and can cause serious complications like pneumonia, asthma, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

There are now vaccines available to prevent disease caused by RSV in adults, and vaccination campaigns may reduce the incidence in older adults and associated health care costs, said the team of researchers led by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

In the paper published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, the team created a model



to assess the cost-effectiveness of vaccine programmes in various age groups with different medical risks.

They focused on adults aged 50 and older. They analysed a combination of age-only, medical risk-only and age-plus medical risk-based vaccination strategies. The strategies focused on adults were found to be more cost-effective.

"We found that vaccination of older adults may be less costly and more effective than no vaccination and that vaccinating people aged 70 years and older with chronic medical conditions is likely to be cost-effective based on

commonly used cost-effectiveness thresholds," said Dr. Ashleigh Tuite, the Centre for Immunisation Programmes at the Public Health Agency.

RSV is likely to cause only mild symptoms similar to that of a common cold in the majority of people. However, for some at high risk, it can turn severe and even be life-threatening.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone ages 75 and older get an RSV vaccine.

The RSV vaccine is currently not an annual shot, meaning older adults do not need to get a dose every RSV season.

Integrating health management systems key to boost data efficiency: Health Secy

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

Integrating the Health Management Information System (HMIS) portal with Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) and other portals of the Health Ministry may help boost data efficiency, said Apurva Chandra, Union Health Secretary on Monday.

He said this during the release of the annual publication 'Health Dynamics of India (Infrastructure and Human Resources) 2022-23', previously known as 'Rural Health Statistics'.

"The annual publication is a valuable document furnishing much-needed information on manpower and infrastructure within the National Health Mission, helpful in policy-making, improving processes and problem-solving," said the Health Secretary.

"Need to integrate the



HMIS Portal with RCH and other portals of the Ministry to reduce the burden of work of health functionaries and to ensure that the data are uploaded timely and analysed carefully," he added.

Chandra said that the document gives a cross-analysis across the states on the availability and deficiencies in manpower and infrastructure.

"The data is immensely helpful in understanding the requirements of the

states, their priority areas, and formulating policies and targeted campaigns," he said.

He noted that the health statistics also aid in making a comparison of the performance of the states on different parameters.

It showed that as of March 31, 2023, the country has a total of 1,69,615 sub-centres, consisting of 2,39,911 health workers; and 31,882 primary health centres (PHCs) employing 40,583 doctors/medical

officers.

About 26,280 specialists and medical officers work at 6,359 community health centres (CHCs); and 45,027 doctors and specialists are deployed at 1,340 sub-divisional/district hospitals (SDHs), 714 district hospitals (DHs), and 362 medical colleges. These serve both rural and urban areas, according to the report.

In addition, there are 47,932 staff nurses at PHCs, 51,059 nursing staff at CHCs, and 1,35,793 paramedical staff at SDHs and DHs across the country.

The report, being released since 1992, provides detailed annual data on health infrastructure and human resources. It consists of comparative analysis, district-wise data, rural, urban, and tribal focus, classification of States/UTs, and guidance for stakeholders.

Doctors' group demands withdrawal of med school quota hike plan

AGENCIES
SEOUL, SEP 8

A major doctors' lobby group demanded on Sunday the government cancel its plan to raise the medical school admissions quota for 2025 and 2026 and discuss the possible quota adjustment for 2027 or afterward.

Officials of the Korean Medical Association (KMA) made the call after the government last week said it is willing to revise the plan for 2026 if the medical community presents a "reasonable" option, reports Yonhap news agency.

The Yoon Suk Yeol administration has vowed to increase the medical school admissions quota by 2,000 seats per year over the next five years or so to address a shortage of doctors and finalized in a June a quota hike of some 1,500 students for next year.

In protest, a majority of trainee doctors have left their workplaces since



February, causing serious disruptions to the national health care system.

"The government must nullify the plan to increase medical school seats for 2025 and 2026 and discuss the possible adjustment for 2027 or afterwards," a KMA official said.

"It is a precondition for our joining of a joint consultative body with the government and parties, but I don't think we

need to deliver the stance again to them as we've made it clear that a drastic increase is absurd," the official added.

The government and the ruling People Power Party have also proposed the establishment of a joint consultative body involving rival parties and the medical community to seek a breakthrough.

KMA chief Lim Hyun-taek said in an online post

Saturday that the government and rival parties need to come up with "a reasonable, unified proposal" to resolve the current medical crisis.

But the government has said it is not possible to revisit the quota hike plan for next year as procedures for college entrance are already under way.

In response to the KMA demand, a senior official at the presidential office said the issue of increasing medical school admissions for next year has already been decided, making it practically impossible to discuss.

The official, however, added the government is open to discussing potential increases from 2026 onward without being bound by specific numbers.

"While changes cannot be made for 2025, starting from 2026, if the medical community presents reasonable grounds, we can discuss the matter without any restrictions on numbers," the official said.

Centre confirms presence of Mpox virus in isolated patient, no widespread risk

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

The Centre on Monday said the suspected case of monkeypox (Mpox) has been verified in a patient as a travel-related infection, adding that there is no widespread risk to the public at this time.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said that laboratory testing has

confirmed the presence of the Mpox virus of the West African 'clade 2' in the patient.

This case is an isolated case, similar to the earlier 30 cases reported in India from July 2022 onwards, and is not a part of the current public health emergency (reported by WHO) which is regarding clade 1 of mpox, the ministry clarified.

"The individual, a young male who recently travelled from a country experiencing ongoing Mpox transmission, is currently isolated at a designated tertiary care isolation facility. The patient remains clinically stable and is without any systemic illness or comorbidities," it clarified.

The case aligns with earlier risk assessments and



continues to be managed according to established protocols.

Public health measures, including contact tracing and monitoring, are actively in place to ensure the situation is contained.

"There is no indication of any widespread risk to the public at this time," said the government.

Health experts have

advised not to panic as the monkeypox virus has minimal pandemic potential.

"There is no need to panic. While fatality remains high, transmission is possible only among close contacts," Dr. Harshal R. Salve, Additional professor, Centre for Community Medicine at AIIMS, New Delhi, told IANS.

Mpox is a viral disease

identified as fever, rash, and lymphadenopathy -- a condition that causes lymph nodes to swell or become abnormally shaped or sized. It is a self-limiting disease and patients recover within 4 weeks, Salve said.

The Centre has advised the states and union territories to screen, test, and trace contacts of all suspected Mpox cases.

Why night owls are at higher risk of diabetes

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

Night owls -- a person who is habitually active or wakeful at night -- tend to have a higher body mass index (BMI), larger waists, and more hidden body fat and thus are almost 50 per cent more likely to develop type 2 diabetes (T2D) than those who go to bed earlier, shows new research on Monday.

Previous studies have indicated that late chronotype -- people who prefer to go to bed late and wake up late -- live an unhealthy lifestyle, and are at higher

risk of obesity and metabolic disorders including type 2 diabetes.

The new study showed that a late chronotype had a 46 per cent higher risk of developing diabetes, which suggests that the increased risk of T2D can't be explained by lifestyle alone. "We believe that other mechanisms are also at play," said lead researcher Dr. Jeroen van der Velde, from Leiden University Medical Centre, in the Netherlands.

"A likely explanation is that the circadian rhythm or body clock in late chronotypes is out of sync with

the work and social schedules followed by society. This can lead to circadian misalignment, which we know can lead to metabolic disturbances and ultimately type 2 diabetes," van der Velde added.

To explore, the team studied the association between sleep timing, diabetes, and body fat distribution in more than 5,000 individuals who were divided into three groups: early chronotype (20 per cent), late chronotype (20 per cent), and intermediate chronotype (60 per cent).

The team measured

all participants' BMI and waist circumference, while visceral fat and liver fat were measured in 1,526 participants, using MRI scans and MR spectroscopy, respectively.

About 225 were diagnosed with diabetes after a follow-up of 6.6 years.

Late chronotypes were found to be at higher risk of developing diabetes, had a 0.7 kg/m² higher BMI, 1.9 cm larger waist circumference, 7 cm² more visceral fat, and 14 per cent higher liver fat content, compared with those with an intermediate chronotype.

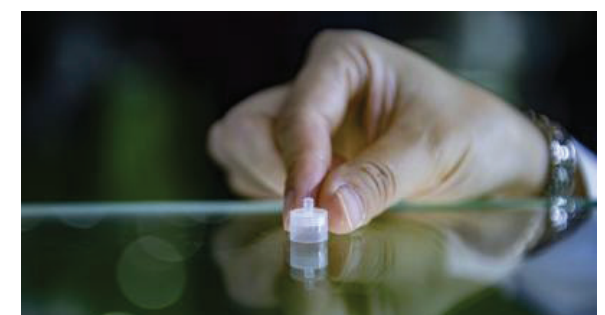
Insulin resistance linked to 31 diseases, and early death in women: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 8

Insulin resistance, now linked with 31 different diseases, has also been associated with higher odds of an early death in women, according to a new study.

The causes of insulin resistance aren't fully understood but it is thought that excess weight and lack of physical activity are the main contributing factors.

To find out more, Jing Wu of the Department of Endocrinology at Shandong Provincial Hospital in China and colleagues analysed data from the



UK Biobank, which holds genetic, medical and lifestyle information provided by more than 500,000 people in the UK.

Levels of blood sugar and fats, including cholesterol, were used to calculate each participant's TyG index -- a measure of

insulin resistance. The TyG index scores ranged from 5.87 to 12.46 units, with an average reading of 8.71 units.

Participants with a higher TyG score, and so a higher degree of insulin resistance, at the start of the study tended to be

men, older, less active, smokers and living with obesity, found the study published in the journal Diabetologia.

By tracking the participants' health for a median of 13 years, the researchers were able to link insulin resistance with 31 diseases.

Insulin resistance was associated with a higher risk of developing 26 of these, including sleep disorders, bacterial infections and pancreatitis, with a higher degree of insulin resistance being associated with a higher likelihood of the condition.

DEFENCE MINISTRY SIGNS RS 26,000 CR CONTRACT WITH HAL

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

In a major boost to Aatmanirbhar Bharat, Ministry of Defence (MoD) on Monday signed a contract with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for manufacturing of 240 AL-31FP Aero Engines for Su-30MKI fighter jets at a cost of over Rs 26,000 crore.

The contract was inked by senior officials of MoD and HAL in the presence of Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane and Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari here, an official statement said.

These aeroengines will be manufactured by the



Korapat division of HAL and are expected to fulfil the need of the Indian Air Force (IAF) to sustain the operational capability of the Su-30 fleet for the defence preparedness of the country.

HAL would supply 30 aero-engines per annum as per the contractual

delivery schedule. The supply of all 240 engines would be completed over the period of next eight years.

During the manufacturing, HAL plans to take support from the country's defence manufacturing ecosystem, involving MSMEs and public and

private industries. By the end of the delivery programme, HAL would enhance the indigenisation content up to 63 percent to achieve an average of over 54 percent. This would also help increase the indigenous content of repair and overhaul tasks of the aero-engines.

Haryana polls: AAP releases first list of 20 seats amid alliance talks with Cong

AGENCIES
CHANDIGARH, SEP 9

Amid talks over pre-poll alliance with the Congress, AAP on Monday released its first list of 20 seats for the Haryana Assembly elections slated for October 5.

The AAP's first list of 20 names includes 11 seats where the Congress has already declared its candidates. The seats are Uchana Kalan, Meham, Badshahpur, Naraingarh, Samalkha, Dabwali, Rohtak, Bahadurgarh, Badli, Beri and Mahendragarh.

During the pre-poll alliance discussions, the AAP was demanding at least 10 seats from the Congress, while the Congress didn't want to give more than three seats.

With the release of its first list, the possibility



of an alliance now turns dimmer.

The party has fielded Bijender Hooda from Rohtak, Anurag Dhandha from Kalayat and Vikas Nehra from Meham among its prominent candidates.

Earlier in the day, AAP's state unit chief, Sushil Gupta, said they have received no information regarding the alliance with

the party leadership.

Before the release of the list, Ranjit Uppal, the AAP district president from Panchkula, resigned from the party and joined the BJP.

Uppal said he joined the BJP as he was upset that the party failed to announce candidates for any of the Assembly seats and was instead seeking the sharing of seats with the Congress.

Party insiders said Uppal was keen to contest from the Kalka seat, which falls in Panchkula, but the BJP has already announced its candidate. Uppal met Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini here and joined the party. He was accompanied by Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament Kartikeya Sharma, whose mother Shakti Rani Sharma is the BJP's candidate from Kalka.

SC dismisses PIL for direction to cancel licences of Indian companies exporting arms to Israel

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking direction to the Union government to cancel existing licences and halt the grant of new permissions to various companies in India, for exports of arms and other military equipment to Israel, amid the ongoing conflict with Gaza.

A bench, headed by CJI D.Y. Chandrachud, said that the authority and jurisdiction to conduct defence and foreign affairs vests with the Union government as per the Constitution.

Apart from Article 162, the provisions of Article 253 of the Constitution

stipulate that Parliament has the power to make any law in respect of whole or part of the Union of India for implementing any international agreement, convention or treaty, added the bench, also comprising Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra.

"We cannot tell the government that you shall not export to country 'X' or you will cancel the license of all companies exporting military equipment to a particular company. It is a matter of national policy," the apex court observed.

Further, the SC held that the grant of injunctive relief sought in the petition would necessarily implicate a judicial direction for breach of international contracts

and agreements. It clarified that its observations are not intended to reflect any opinion on the conduct of foreign policy by the Union government or by any sovereign nation.

The PIL referred to a recent decision of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordering provisional measures against Israel for violations in the Gaza Strip of obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

"India is bound by various international laws and treaties that obligate India not to supply military weapons to states guilty of war crimes, as any export could be used in serious violations of international humanitarian law," the plea said.

Investigation on into collision of five boats with Prakasam Barrage: Minister

AGENCIES
VIJAYAWADA, SEP 9

Alleging a conspiracy behind the collision of five boats with the Prakasam Barrage during the recent floods, Andhra Pradesh's Minister for Water Resources Nimmala Ramanaidu on Monday said that investigations are on into the incident.

He told media persons that strict action would be taken against those who tried to harm farmers.

The minister said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has taken serious note of the incident and an investigation was on.

He said there was a conspiracy behind five boats hitting the Prakasam Bar-



rage in a crucial situation where 11.42 lakh cusecs of flood water were flowing. A thorough investigation is on to find out the facts about the incident.

Five boats weighing 40-50 tonnes each crossed gates 67, 69 and 70 of Prakasam Barrage during high flood and hit the counterweight. For-

tunately, the boats did not cause any damage to the main structure or the gates of the barrage.

It is difficult to imagine how much damage would be done to the five districts if the gates or the main structure had really been hit, he said.

The minister said a police complaint was filed

by the Irrigation Department. Farmers and farmers' associations say that this whole incident raises many suspicions.

Such heavy boats are usually anchored on the river bank. With each boat valued at Rs 40-50 lakh, tying 3 boats worth all that with a single plastic rope raises a lot of doubts.

Suspicion is being raised that such valuable boats were deliberately made to collide with the barrage.

The minister mentioned that the barrage served the combined Krishna, Guntur, Prakasam and West Godavari districts for about 100 years from 1854 to 1952. After the bar-

rage was damaged by the floods in 1952, the government reconstructed it and named it after former Chief Minister Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu.

Since 1957, about 13.8 lakh acres have been irrigated and drinking water has been provided to lakhs of people through the Prakasam Barrage.

Ramanaidu said out of the total five boats, one boat went down through the gate and three boats were stuck. Efforts were to find the fifth boat. The owner of the three identified boats is the same and he is a follower of a YSR Congress Party leader. He said the boats also have the colour of the YSR Congress Party.

Kolkata horror: SC questions autopsy process, tells doctors to end strike by tomorrow

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

Questioning the West Bengal government over alleged procedural lapses in autopsy of murdered woman doctor in Kolkata, the Supreme Court on Monday directed the protesting medics of the RG Kar Hospital to return to work by 5 pm on Tuesday.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud, Justice J B Pardiwala and Justice Manoj Mishra questioned the state government about a "missing" challan or formal request for autopsy when an advocate asked if the murdered doctor's clothes were produced during the autopsy.

The challan which is prepared at the time of the handing over a body for

autopsy carries a column to mention the clothes and articles sent along with the body.

The CBI questioned the West Bengal government how the autopsy of the junior doctor was conducted without a formal request. The government counsel said he was told that the magistrate who conducted an inquiry into the death filled the request form himself and sent it

On Monday, the apex court told the state government's advocate, Kapil Sibal, that it wanted to see this document and also noted that there was a delay of 14 hours in filing of the first information report (FIR).

The CBI also informed the court about its decision to send samples for forensic test to All India

Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi and submitted its status report on the murder probe in a sealed cover before the court. The court also directed the CBI to file a fresh status report by next Tuesday.

The probe agency's lawyer also brought to the notice of the Court that there was no information on who collected the forensic samples from the crime scene.

Meanwhile, the Court told RG Kar Hospital doctors to end their strike by Tuesday. The doctors are protesting in connection with the alleged rape and murder of their colleague in the hospital on August 9 and demanding safe working conditions for the medical professionals who work for long hours at a stretch.



The bench asked the protesting doctors that the state government has assured to provide security to them so they should join their duty on Tuesday.

CJI Chandrachud said that a total of three companies of security personnel have been deployed for the security of doctors.

Sibal informed the court

that provision for housing the Central Industrial Security Force personnel has been made by the state government.

He informed the court that to avert logistical issues, a senior officer of West Bengal home department along with senior CISF officer shall jointly ensure that all three companies are duly provided

accommodation in the vicinity.

Sibal said that in the event further need arises, the two officers shall ensure that all requisition needed by CISF is handed over.

He said the West Bengal government has also filed its status report in the court. He said 23 people have died as doctors weren't working.

Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta denied Sibal's claim and stated that he didn't receive the report.

The bench then examined the report submitted by the West Bengal Government in a sealed envelope.

The CJI asked what is the distance between the Hospital and the residence of the Principal of RG Med-

ical College and Hospital? The Solicitor General replied, 15-20 minutes maximum.

The CJI then said, "We want clarification on two aspects: We want to know the time at which UD (unnatural death) came to be registered."

Sibal said that the death certificate was given at 1.47 pm, entry of unnatural death was done at 2.55 pm at the police station.

Sibal then said Judicial Magistrate (JM) arrived at 4.10 pm, he conducted the inquest from 4.20-4.40 pm, it was videographed.

Sibal said, 8.30-10.45 evening, search and seizure was done, once the body was removed for post-mortem then photos were taken.

CJI said there is CCTV footage to indicate what

time the accused entered and exited, obviously there will be footage after 4.30 in the morning... has the CCTV footage in entirety been handed over to the CBI?

The Solicitor General replied, "Yes."

CJI said, "We will not comment on this... but please tell us on the course of further investigation... please furnish a status report and let CBI pursue the leads they are getting now."

CJI then dictated its order, "It appears the investigation is in progress. Let CBI furnish a fresh status report by next Tuesday. Let us see what happens from now till then. We are not asking what line of investigation they have to adopt," the CJI said.

UDAN scheme to be extended for 10 years beyond 2027: Minister

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

The government is planning to extend the regional connectivity scheme UDAN for 10 years beyond 2027 enabling more people to fly at affordable air tickets, Union Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu said here on Monday.

Addressing the Ministry of Civil Aviation and FICCI's India Regional Air Mobility Conference 2024, the Minister said, "We are imagining India being at a place where it can operate 350 to 400 airports in the coming 20 to 25 years."

"We are already preparing a new programme to make it even more impres-



sive, not only for the civil aviation sector but keeping in mind the common man of this country and making air travel more affordable for them," he further said.

The UDAN scheme, launched in 2016, has enhanced regional air connectivity in India. Naidu highlighted its success, stating, "By operation-

alising over 583 routes, we are connecting 86 airports, many of which were previously unserved or underserved. More than 1.4 crore passengers have benefited from UDAN flights, with over 2.80 lakh flights operated under the scheme and a viability gap funding support of more than Rs 3,700 crores."

Looking beyond national borders, the Minister outlined a vision for greater interconnectivity between Asia Pacific countries.

"It is time that we look beyond the international borders and prepare a roadmap for greater interconnectivity between the Asia Pacific countries," he stated.

The Minister proposed a hub and spoke model to connect more airports in the region, with major airports serving as hubs and smaller regional airports as spokes.

This approach aims to create a seamless network that reduces travel times and optimises resources.

Naidu highlighted the region's potential, noting that it is expected to become the world's largest aviation market by 2035, with 3.5 billion passengers annually.

He called for collaboration to address common challenges such as market imbalances, infrastructure gaps, and regulatory hurdles.

Delhi govt bans firecrackers till Jan 1 to combat winter air pollution

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

The Delhi government has issued a notification imposing a ban on firecrackers till January 1, 2025 to mitigate air pollution in winter.

Gopal Rai, Minister for Environment of Delhi, on Monday said, "As part of efforts to keep Delhi's air clean, a notification has been issued to mitigate pollution caused by firecrackers by banning their use in the winter months. The ban will remain in effect till January 1, 2025, to help curb winter pollution." The ban also covers online sales and deliv-

ery of firecrackers in the national Capital.

Pollution levels in Delhi have steadily decreased over the past 12 months said Gopal Rai and added, "However, pollution during the winter months, particularly in November and December, still peaks significantly."

The Delhi Government is working on various Winter Action Plans to address pollution issues. Different departments have been assigned responsibilities to implement the required measures.

"An action plan will be prepared in collaboration with Delhi Police, Delhi

Pollution Control Committee and the Revenue Department to strictly implement the cracker ban," he added.

Speaking about the people of Delhi bursting firecrackers despite the ban, the Minister remarked, "It is widely understood among the people of Delhi that the pollution we create ultimately affects us."

"I would like to appeal to all residents to follow the guidelines and if we unite in our efforts to reduce pollution, we can successfully lower its levels during the winter season," added the Delhi Environment Minister.

EAM JAISHANKAR SHARES INSIGHTS ON KEY GLOBAL ISSUES WITH GULF COUNCIL MEMBERS IN RIYADH

AGENCIES
RIYADH, SEP 9

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar held a series of bilateral meetings with the Foreign Ministers from GCC member countries at the sidelines of the First India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Saudi Arabia's Riyadh, on Monday.

The EAM began the day by holding talks with Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani at the headquarters of the GCC General Secretariat.

"Discussed taking India-Qatar bilateral ties forward. Appreciated his insights and assessments on regional developments," Jaishankar posted on X after a "good meeting" with the Qatari leader.

India and Qatar share historic and friendly relations which are marked by regular exchange of high-level visits.

In June, EAM Jaishankar travelled to Doha to discuss further enhance-

ment of bilateral relations and continued dialogue on issues of mutual interest between the two countries.

Earlier this year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Qatar on February 14-15 February and held discussions with Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

In the same month, on the sidelines of India Energy Week held in Goa, the two countries had signed an agreement for the supply of 7.5 MMtpa LNG from Qatar to India for 20 years, starting 2028.

EAM Jaishankar's next meeting on Monday was with Faisal bin Farhan, Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia which was also attended by the country's Deputy Minister for Political Affairs Ambassador Saud Al-Sati and Deputy Minister for International Multilateral Affairs Ambassador . Abdulrahman Al-Rassi. "During the meeting, they reviewed bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to develop them in various fields. They also discussed



enhancing bilateral and multilateral coordination on many regional and international issues of common interest," the Saudi Foreign Ministry said in a statement following the meeting.

In his meeting with Bahrain's Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Rashid Al Zayani, both sides agreed on early discussions of their Joint Commission.

The meeting was also attended by Bahrain's Chief of Legal Affairs and

Acting Chief for the GCC Affairs Sector, Ambassador Mohammed Abdul Rahman Al-Haidan, and the delegation accompanying the minister.

"During the meeting, they discussed the distinguished and longstanding relations between the two countries as well as aspects of bilateral cooperation in various fields and upgrading them to serve common interests. Views were also exchanged on several regional and inter-

national issues. They also discussed ways to enhance cooperation, consultation, and joint coordination in international forums," stated Bahrain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In his discussions with Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya, EAM Jaishankar asserted taking forward the bilateral ties through an early meeting of the Joint Commission. "The close bilateral relations between the two friendly countries

were reviewed, and various areas of cooperation between them and frameworks for enhancing them were discussed. The meeting also discussed regional and international developments and the developments witnessed by the region, most notably the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and frameworks for enhancing joint cooperation and mobilizing international efforts to maintain security and stability in the region," said Kuwait's Foreign Ministry after the meeting.

EAM Jaishankar's next meeting was with the Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira where discussions took place on G20, BRICS and the Ukraine conflict.

The First India-GCC Foreign Ministers' Meeting is taking place at the sidelines of the 161st Ministerial Council meeting chaired by Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, President of the Min-

isterial Council. The ministerial meeting is being attended by the foreign ministers of the GCC countries.

Besides India, the GCC Cooperation Council will also hold strategic dialogue with Russia and Brazil which will see participation of Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and the Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira.

Jasem Mohamed Al-Budaiwi, the Secretary General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, emphasised that the GCC Ministerial Council will discuss several reports regarding the implementation of decisions made by the Supreme Council of the GCC during the 44th Summit held in Doha in December 2023.

The Council will also review memoranda and reports submitted by the ministerial and technical committees and the General Secretariat, as well as topics related to dialogues and strategic relations between the GCC countries and various nations

and global blocs. Discussions on latest regional and international developments affecting the region will also be discussed.

"The joint meetings with the Russian, Indian, and Brazilian delegations reflect the GCC countries' commitment to exploring and opening new horizons for cooperation. These meetings aim to strengthen strategic relations with countries and organisations worldwide. Several topics will be discussed in various fields that serve the common interests of both sides and yield benefits for their peoples," said a statement issued by the Secretary General's office on Sunday.

After concluding his engagements in Riyadh, Jaishankar will travel to Berlin on a two-day visit starting September 10 which will be his third bilateral visit to Germany.

The External Affairs Minister will thereafter travel to Geneva, home to a large number of UN bodies and international organisations, on the last leg of his tour.

Nepal President confers rank insignia on new Army Chief Ashok Raj Sigdel

AGENCIES
KATHMANDU, SEP 9

Nepal President Ramchandra Paudel on Monday conferred the insignia of Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) on Lieutenant General Ashok Raj Sigdel in a special ceremony held at his office, Sheetal Niwas, in Kathmandu.

Sigdel is the 45th CoAS of the Nepali Army and his appointment was made in accordance with subsection (1) of Section 8 of the 2063 Military Act.

He was administered the oath of office and secrecy by President Paudel, who serves as the Supreme Commander of the Nepali Army.

Sigdel takes charge from General Prabhu Ram Sharma who has



retired after completing 42 years of military service and served as the Commander-in-Chief for three years.

The event was also attended by prominent figures, including Vice-President Ram Sahay Prasad

Yadav, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, Chief Justice Bishowambhar Prasad Shrestha, Speaker Devraj Ghimire, and National Assembly Chairperson Narayan Prasad Dahal, among others.

Sigdel had been serv-

ing as acting CoAS since August 9, following the provision that allows the outgoing CoAS to take a one-month home leave before retiring.

Last week, a delegation from the 64th course of India's National Defence College (NDC) comprising 21 senior officers from civil services and defence forces, had met Lt Gen Sigdel and discussed matters pertaining to bilateral military cooperation.

The visiting team, led by Rear Admiral Sandeep Sandhu, also visited the Nepali Army Headquarters at Kathmandu and Western Division Headquarters, holding various interactions on several aspects to promote defence ties between the two neighbouring countries.

Syria strongly condemns deadly Israeli airstrikes on central province

AGENCIES
DAMASCUS, SEP 9

Syria on Monday strongly condemned the overnight Israeli airstrikes on military sites in Hama, which have killed 16, including four civilians, and injured 36 others, six of whom remained in critical condition.

In a statement, the Syrian Foreign Ministry condemned in the strongest terms the Israeli airstrikes, slamming them as a continuation of Israeli "aggression" on Syrian territory, and accusing Israel of seeking to escalate tensions in the region through repeated violations of Syrian airspace and aggressive actions, Xinhua news agency reported.



The ministry also pointed to Israel's ongoing military operations in Gaza and the West Bank, accusing the Israeli government of committing "genocide" against Palestinians.

These actions, the statement noted, are pushing the region towards dangerous instability with unforeseeable consequences.

Syria attributed Israel's actions to the "unlimited

support" it receives from the United States and other Western nations, accusing them of complicity in the ongoing hostilities.

The ministry called on the international community to hold Israel accountable for its "crimes" and to take a firm stance against what it described as blatant violations of international law.

The Syrian Observatory

for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor, reported that the strikes, among the most intense in months, targeted the Scientific Research Center and other sites in the city of Masyaf, killing civilians and military personnel.

Local officials reported that the airstrikes caused significant damage to critical infrastructure, disrupting telecommunications, electricity, and water systems. Efforts are underway to repair the damage and restore water services as soon as possible, said Syrian Water Resources Minister Hussein Makhlof.

Syria's Ministry of Transport reported significant damage to the road connecting the provinces of Hama and Tartous.

Sanae Takaichi first female candidate to join LDP presidency race in Japan

AGENCIES
TOKYO, SEP 9

Japan's Economic Security Minister Sanae Takaichi, a firm supporter of late Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's vision of a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' (FOIP), relaunched her bid to become the country's first female PM on Monday by announcing her candidacy for the post of President of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

63-year-old Takaichi lost in the very first round during the LDP's 2021 election when current Prime Minister Fumio Kishida was elected.

Her decision to join the leadership race has given an interesting turn to the September 27 election which will witness a record number of candidates - seven, so far - including Takaichi's colleagues Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi and Digital Minister Taro Kono.

"I will pursue economic growth first and foremost and as much as possible," Japan's leading news agency Kyodo News quoted Takaichi as saying during a press conference

on Monday where she also noted the need for "strategic" fiscal spending for the economy.

Takaichi also stressed that Japan must ensure its ally, the United States, remains "engaged" in the region.

"The election will also feature another conservative lawmaker Takayuki Kobayashi, 49, who served as economic security minister before Takaichi. Their contest has brought into focus how much support each candidate can garner from the LDP's conservative base. Takaichi said she will push for revising Japan's pacifist Constitution at an early date to stipulate the existence of the Self-Defense Forces in line with the LDP's goal," reported Kyodo News.

"She also pledged to remove a buoy that China has installed in the waters around the Tokyo-controlled, Beijing-claimed Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea," the report added.

The LDP election is taking place following a slush funds scandal that rocked the ruling party and forced Kishida, whose three-year term ends late September, to step down.

"The election will also feature another conservative lawmaker Takayuki Kobayashi, 49, who served as economic security minister before Takaichi. Their contest has brought into focus how much support each candidate can garner from the LDP's conservative base," Kyodo News detailed.

Deaths by suicide among current, former Australian defence personnel 'unacceptably high': Inquiry

AGENCIES
CANBERRA, SEP 9

The number of deaths by suicide among current and former members of the Australian Defence Force is "unacceptably high", a landmark inquiry has found.

The Royal Commission into Defense and Veteran Suicide on Monday handed down its final report following a three-year inquiry, making 122 recommendations.

The report found that 1,677 current and former personnel died by suicide between 1997 and 2021, more than 20 times the number killed in active duty in the same period, according to Xinhua news agency.

Over the last 10 years,



it found that an average of 78 serving or ex-members have taken their own lives every year, the equivalent of three deaths every two weeks.

The number of deaths by suicide among those who serve or have served in the force is unacceptably high, the report said.

Addressing the Parliament, Prime Minister

Anthony Albanese said the government would thoroughly consider every recommendation made by the commissioners.

"Just as our veterans and defence personnel step up for our country, we have an obligation to step up for them," he said.

Among the recommendations is a proposal for a new agency to help force

personnel to transition into civilian life.

The report said the body should be staffed by people who have experienced military service and help veterans apply for compensation and rehabilitation support, connect them with health services and conduct ongoing monitoring of wellbeing.

The commission also recommended a formal inquiry into the prevalence of sexual violence within the force and a new national register of suicides among current and former defence personnel.

The inquiry was established in 2021, received almost 6,000 submissions and heard testimonies from hundreds of witnesses.

Commissioners Nick Kaldas, James Douglas and Peggy Brown said they had been forever changed by personal stories shared with the inquiry by serving and ex-members and their friends, families and supporters.

"We are inspired by your resilience, courage, and desire to change things for the better so that others do not experience what you have endured. We thank you for your faith in this Royal Commission," they said.

Defence Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles, who tabled the report in the parliament on Monday, said the government would work through the recommendations in a timely manner.

Vietnam: Typhoon Yagi leaves 59 dead in northern region

AGENCIES
HANOL, SEP 9

As of Monday noon, Typhoon Yagi and consequent landslides and floods have left 59 people dead and missing in Vietnam's northern region, the Minis-

try of Agriculture and Rural Development said.

The natural disasters also injured 247 people, including 157 in Quang Ninh province and 40 in Hai Phong City; sank 25 unmanned vessels, mostly

fishing boats; damaged over 113,000 hectares of rice and more than 22,000 hectares of other crops; damaged or swept away 1,500 aquaculture cages; killed 190,000 fowls; and uprooted or damaged nearly 121,700

trees, the ministry said.

A steel bridge in Vietnam's northern Phu Tho province collapsed on Monday morning, causing 10 automobiles and two motorbikes to fall into the Red River and leaving 13

people missing, Vietnam News Agency reported.

It also reported that 21 people in Cao Bang province were killed and missing by landslides, and 15 people in Lao Cai province faced the same fate.

iPhone production in India to reach 25 pc of global shipments by 2025: Jefferies

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

Buoyed by the 'Make in India' initiative and the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, iPhone production in India has gone up from less than 1 per cent in 2017 to 10 per cent in 2023 and plans are to scale it up to 25 per cent of global shipments by 2025, according to global investment firm Jefferies.

With the introduction of the mobile PLI scheme, alongside with global supply chain diversification, are driving the surge in Apple's local manufacturing in India, the latest report mentioned.

The tech giant was prepared for launching latest iPhone 16 Pro and Pro Max models in the country post the global debut on Monday. The company is set to make its 'Make in India' iPhone 16 Pro and 16 Pro Max models available in the country right after the launch.



Apple aims to manufacture more than 50 million iPhones in India per year, as it aims to shift some of the production out from China. The iPhone exports from India surged sharply to \$12.1 billion in 2023-24 from \$6.27 billion in 2022-23. Overall, the company's

India operations reached 23.5 billion dollars in value in the last fiscal (FY24).

According to Jefferies, electronics export trend from India is rising rapidly but still has room to grow from value addition perspective.

Also, the electronics

imports are still much more than double of electronics exports indicating much more potential for in-sourcing," the report added.

To promote manufacturing in other sectors, the government is providing PLI across 14 sectors

worth Rs 2 lakh crore and an additional Rs 70,000 crore to boost the semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem, according to the report.

According to industry experts, Apple is slated to build on its solid growth momentum in India with the upcoming Apple iPhone 16 series, driven primarily by increased 'Make in India' manufacturing, and backed by aggressive marketing.

Driven by Apple's aspirational appeal, consumers are increasingly prioritising the newest generation of iPhones, bucking the historical trend of purchasing old generation iPhones.

"At CyberMedia Research, our insights point to the new iPhones potentially growing 30 per cent in comparison to the previous iPhone 15 generation in the launch quarter," said According to Prabhu Ram, VP-Industry Research Group, CMR.

India at threshold of unshackling immense potential in chip ecosystem: Industry

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

India stands at the threshold of unshackling its immense potential in building a robust semiconductor ecosystem, industry experts said here on Monday.

Ahead of the 'Semicon India 2024' which is being organised in Greater Noida from September 11 to 13, the India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA) and SEMI announced a Semiconductor Executive Summit (SES), in collaboration with the IT Ministry and the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), at Bharat Mandapam in the national capital on September 10.

The two events are set to attract global leaders from semiconductor companies and their ecosystems, marking a pivotal moment for India to demonstrate its growing potential in the semiconductor sector. "India has all the right ingredients, including strong policy support



and the willingness to lead. These events are pivotal in charting a course for India's growth in semiconductor manufacturing, which will also significantly boost electronics manufacturing and our position in the global market," said Pankaj Mohindroo, Chairman, ICEA.

This event, which will be organised in collaboration with SEMI, Messe Muenchen India, and the Electronic Industries Association of India-ELCI-NA, aims to elevate India's semiconductor sector and establish the country as a significant global contender.

'Semicon India 2024' is being organised in collaboration with SEMI, Messe Muenchen India, and the Electronic Industries Association of India-ELCI-NA. Prime Minister Nar-

endra Modi will officially inaugurate the event on September 11, with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also in attendance.

With countries like the United States, Taiwan, Japan and Europe at the forefront of the global semiconductor industry, these events represent a significant step for India to join this influential league.

Ajit Manocha, President and CEO of SEMI, said that India's emergence as a key player in the semiconductor industry is a testament to its ambition and determination. "For SEMI, this is our first event of this magnitude in India, and we see tremendous potential. With the right mix of talent, policy support, and innovation, I am optimistic about India's future in the semiconductor ecosystem," he added.

Cost of EVs to match petrol, diesel vehicles in about 2 years: Nitin Gadkari

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

As the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) increase in the country, the cost of EVs will almost match petrol and diesel vehicles within the next two years, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, said on Monday.

Addressing an event here organised by the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA), the Minister also urged automobile companies to contribute to road safety initiatives, emphasising that road safety remains a significant concern for the ministry.

"Ten years ago, when I was pushing for electric vehicles, automobile giants in India didn't take me seriously. Now, they



tell me they may have missed the bus," Gadkari told the gathering.

The minister further said that he is not against any additional subsidy or incentive for electric vehicles and if the Finance Ministry and Ministry of Heavy Industries wish to give more EV subsidies, he has no problem.

The new electric vehicles (EV) manufacturing policy aims to attract global players to India but

also stress domestic value addition.

According to the ACMA, the EV policy marks another significant step towards accelerating the adoption of cutting-edge technology and fostering innovation in India's automotive sector.

The new policy sets the stage for a vibrant future-mobility global manufacturing hub in India.

As per the new policy,

a minimum investment of Rs 4,150 crore (about \$500 million) is needed to set up manufacturing facilities and production started within three years and reach 25 per cent DVA by three years and 50 per cent DVA within 5 years at the maximum.

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 two months, according to Minister of Heavy Industries, HD Kumaraswamy.

Last month, the number of EVs registered in FY24 increased significantly by 42.06 per cent as compared to FY23. Credit rating agency ICRA expects about 15 per cent of new car sales to be electric by 2030.

LIC's new business premium up 35 pc to Rs 19,309 crore in Aug

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, SEP 9

Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India saw a 35.1 per cent surge in its new business premium for the month of August to Rs 19,309.10 crore, from Rs 14,292.53 crore in the same month last year, showed data by the Life Insurance Council on Monday.

The LIC's new business premium collection for the first five months of FY25 rose by 27.73 per cent to Rs 95,180.63 crore, up from Rs 74,516.31 crore in the same period last year.

The individual premium segment saw collections of Rs 5,047.36 crore in August, representing a 4.60 per cent rise from Rs 4,825.52 crore in August 2023.

Meanwhile, the group premium segment expe-



of fiscal year 2025, LIC's individual premium segment accrued Rs 22,396.28 crore, marking an 11.75 per cent growth from Rs 20,041.36 crore during the same period in fiscal year 2024.

The group premium segment also saw considerable growth, up by 32.82 per cent to Rs 71,789.38 crore, from Rs 54,049.22 crore last year.

Group yearly premiums increased by 133.71 per cent, totalling Rs 994.97 crore in the first five months of fiscal 2025, compared to Rs 425.72 crore in the corresponding period of fiscal 2024.

The total number of policies and schemes issued by LIC in August experienced a slight decline of 4.45 per cent, reaching 16.36 lakh, down from 17.12 lakh in August 2023.

rienced a significant increase of 46 per cent, amounting to Rs 13,559.22 crore in August, compared to Rs 9,287.40 crore in August 2023.

Notably, group yearly premiums surged by 291.14 per cent to Rs 702.52 crore, a substantial increase from Rs 179.61 crore in the previous year.

Late last month, LIC

presented a cheque of Rs 3,662.17 crore to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as the government's share of the company's dividend, approved by the shareholders. LIC has completed 68 years since its incorporation and has an asset base of over Rs 52.85 lakh crore (as of March 31, 2024).

For the first five months

Gold jewellery retailers' sales to surge 22-25 pc in India after sharp duty cut

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

After the sharp reduction in import duty announced in the Union Budget, the revenues of organised gold jewellery retailers will increase 22-25 per cent this fiscal (year-on-year) - a solid 500-600 basis points (bps) more than the 17-19 per cent expected earlier, a report showed on Monday.

The incremental growth will be driven by higher

volumes even as retail gold prices come down from their lifetime highs, according to Crisil Ratings.

The sudden price decline could lead to some inventory loss on existing stock, though its impact would be partially mitigated as improved demand limits spending on marketing and promotional campaigns.

Operating profitability will moderate by 40-60 basis points (bps) to 7.1-7.2 per cent, the report noted.



Himank Sharma, Director, Crisil Ratings, said that duty cuts to their decadal lows have come at an opportune time for the gold jewellery retailers as they start stocking for the festive and marriage seasons from the latter half of August.

That said, reduced inventory due to lower prices will bring working capital benefits despite the significant store additions planned.

In the milieu, credit

profiles will remain stable, according to the analysis of 58 gold jewellery retailers, which account for a third of the revenue of the organised jewellery sector.

While profitability will be lower, the cash flows of retailers will improve with higher revenues, allowing them to take up store expansion - seen at 12-14 per cent of existing stores this fiscal.

Still, working capital requirements will likely

remain flattish as higher inventory requirements due to increased store counts will be partly offset by lower input prices, the report mentioned.

Gaurav Arora, Associate Director, Crisil Ratings, said that gold jewellery retailers will maintain comfortable financial metrics this fiscal.

These will be moderately better than our earlier expectations, keeping credit profiles stable, he added.

2 degrees Celsius increase could cut \$6 trillion from S&P 500 value: Report

AGENCIES
NEW YORK, SEP 9

A temperature increase of 2 degrees Celsius could cut \$6 trillion from the value of the S&P 500 index, in addition to the devastating environmental and social consequences, a report warned on Monday.

Slowing momentum on sustainability could come with a tangible cost, according to new research from Bain & Company, that pointed to a sharp decline in CEOs' relative prioritisation of sustainability, as AI, growth, inflation, and geopolitical uncertainty have risen to the top of their agenda.

"The transition to a sus-



tainable world is following a familiar cycle. As the challenge of meeting bold commitments becomes clear, many companies are rethinking what is achievable and on what timeline. But slowing progress would be a mistake," said Jean-Charles van den Branden, Bain's global Sustainability practice leader.

Companies are struggling to meet their existing commitments. Of the firms disclosing their progress via carbon disclosure project (CDP), 30 per cent are well behind on their Scope 1 and 2 emissions reduction goals, and almost half are behind on Scope 3.

The research shows many sustainable tech-

nologies are likely to reach their tipping point more quickly than expected.

Forward-thinking companies will stay the course and lead the way as a mix of new technologies, consumer and customer behaviour, and smart policy creates valuable opportunities for their industries, the report added.

Many companies are reassessing, adjusting, and, in some cases, retracting their climate commitments.

Even as CEOs deal with competing priorities, the message from consumers around the world is clear. In a global survey of nearly 19,000 consumers in 10

countries, 61 per cent of people said their concerns about climate change have increased over the past two years, often sparked by personal experience of extreme weather.

In India, 64 per cent of people surveyed say their level of concern about climate change have increased.

"Indian consumers prioritize health, price, and quality while shopping. When choosing sustainable options, they predominantly seek products with 'natural' attributes across various categories," said Ravi Swarup, Partner and India lead for consumer products practice at Bain & Company.

Taking aggressive steps to open offices in rural areas: Zoho chief

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

Zoho CEO Sridhar Vembu on Monday said the company is taking aggressive steps to open offices in rural areas.

Vembu said this, even as the Chennai-based SAAS company opened another office in a rural area of Tamil Nadu.

The new campus launched in Tharuvai in Tirunelveli district, adds to other major centres in southern districts: Mathalamparai in Tenkasi, and Kappalur in Madurai.

"I love this new campus!" Zoho chief posted on social platform X, while noting the company's expansion to the Kumbakonam area in Thanjavur district.

The Cloud software major also has "a significant presence in Palladam near Coimbatore".

"We have many smaller satellite offices too and I work out of a small satellite in a remote village. We are taking aggressive steps to direct our growth in Tamil Nadu towards rural offices so we don't further overcrowd Chen-

nai," Vembu said. Earlier in August, Vembu noted that in a first major rural expedition North, Zoho "is likely to mark its presence in eastern Uttar Pradesh this year".

"We are moving in that direction. It takes time to acquire land etc.," he posted on X.

Zoho last year surpassed 100 million users across over 55 business applications. In February, Zoho launched an industrial park and research and development centre in Kerala's Kottarakara.

Asian Hockey Champions Trophy: Dominant India crush Japan 5-1 to take top spot

AGENCIES
MOQI (CHINA), SEP 9

Defending champions India continued their winning ways at the Men's Asian Champions Trophy as they sailed past Japan with a 5-1 win here at Moqi Hockey Training Base on Monday.

Sukhjeet Singh (2', 60') scored a double in India's win while Abhishek (3'), Sanjay (17') and Uttam Singh (54') scored a goal each while Kazumasa Matsumoto (41') scored the lone goal for Japan.

India had defeated hosts China 3-0 in their campaign opener.

India were quick to get underway with a brilliant goal by Sukhjeet in the second minute of the game. It was Sanjay, hovering on the right side of the circle, to lob in a cross pass that was swiftly deflected



by Sukhjeet.

Indian forwards extended the lead to 2-0 in the following minute with Abhishek dribbling past multiple Japanese defenders to drive it around the goalkeeper to score.

The onslaught continued in the second quarter with Sanjay converting a

splendid penalty corner in the 17th minute. With a 3-0 lead on the board, India were in a comfortable position while Japan tried to shake off the early nerves and bounce back in the game. They made quick amends in their attack to fetch a PC in the 21st minute. But

Japan's dragflick was finely blocked by Indian rushers, enabling their team to launch a quick counter-attack.

Attacking from the right, Jugraj Singh got a nice turn, winning a free hit. After a flurry of swift short passes, Indian forwards miss the goal mouth

by inches. With one goal coming in the quarter, India completely dominated with 67 per cent ball possession that led to 11 circle entries and three shots on goal.

Returning from the 10-minute half-time break, India looked to keep up the momentum. They played patiently, with discipline, to launch their first attack in the third quarter but Japan did well in winning the ball back.

They did well to build on a structured attack that eventually led to a field goal in the 41st minute by Kazumasa Matsumoto. India goalie Krishan Bahadur Pathak could do little to stop Matsumoto from scoring that one.

Only minutes earlier, there was a brilliant opportunity for India but Vivek Sagar fell inches short of a

fourth goal.

A fourth goal eventually did come through for India, thanks to good stick work by Jarmanpreet Singh, who assisted Uttam Singh from the baseline to convert a fine field goal. This left India with a comfortable 4-1 lead in the 54th minute.

Sukhjeet added another goal to his name in the last seven seconds after a fine assist by Abhishek to end the match on a high and lead the points table from the front with consecutive victories.

Player of the Match, Abhishek of India said, "It was a complete team effort today and we stuck to basics.

We produced good attack and ensured we were on target. I am also happy to be recognised with the Hero of the Match award."

PKL 11: Telugu Titans to face off Bengaluru Bulls in season opener on Oct 18

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, SEP 9

Pro Kabaddi League Season 11 will kick off with a showdown between the Telugu Titans and Bengaluru Bulls in the opening match in Hyderabad on October 18, Mashal Sports, the organisers of the league, announced on Monday. The game will feature the home side Telugu Titans and their star raider Pawan Sehrawat against Pardeep Narwal, making his return for the Bengaluru Bulls.

The second match of the night will see U Mumba's Sunil Kumar - the most expensive Indian defender in PKL history after being bought for Rs 1.015 crore - take on the attacking prowess of Naveen Kumar, who is among the star raiders for Dabang Delhi K.C.

This time around, PKL will be returning to a three-city format, with the 2024

edition commencing at the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium in Hyderabad from October 18 to November 9. It will then move to the Noida Indoor Stadium for the second leg starting on November 10 till December 1. The third leg will begin at the Balewadi Badminton Stadium in Pune from Decr 3 to 24. The schedule and venue for the play-offs will be announced at a later date. Speaking on the schedule of PKL season 11, Anupam Goswami, Head of Sports Leagues at Mashal Sports and League Commissioner of the Pro Kabaddi League, said, "The match schedule of each PKL Season is a tremendously deliberated and painstaking effort to create and drive competitive relevance and engagement for the millions of kabaddi fans rooting for their respective Teams as well as the League overall."

Test series against Bangladesh will be an intriguing contest: Gill

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

India's top-order batter Shubman Gill believes the upcoming Test series against Bangladesh shapes up to be an interesting and intriguing contest. The first Test between India and Bangladesh will be played in Chennai on September 19, followed by the second Test in Kanpur starting on September 27.

Gill has been included in India's squad for the Chennai game, which sees the return of Rishabh Pant, KL Rahul and Virat Kohli into the Test scheme of things, while left-arm pacer Yash Dayal has been given a maiden call-up.

"I don't think you can underestimate any international side. The kind of cricket Bangladesh has played in the last couple of months, especially in Pakistan, has been impressive. Their fast bowlers and the way their middle-order batters have absorbed pressure shouldn't be dis-



regarded. So, I believe it will be an interesting and intriguing contest," said Gill to JioCinema.

In 25 Tests so far, Gill has made 1492 runs at an average of 35.52, with the last year seeing him transition into a number three batter. Asked about the challenges he's had in batting at number three in Tests, Gill remarked, "Quite often, when you're playing in a different position, everyone knows your potential, but you still have to prove yourself."

"In the initial matches

when I played as number three, I couldn't perform well - against West Indies and South Africa. I was getting good starts, scoring 20s and 30s, but I wasn't able to convert them. When I returned, I knew I had to turn these performances around. Moving forward, my goal is to convert my fifties into big hundreds," he added.

As a number three batter, Gill amassed 452 runs in nine innings during this year's 4-1 Test series against England, while averaging 56.50.

Smith and Nqaba earn maiden ODI call-ups for SA's games against Afghanistan, Ireland

AGENCIES
JOHANNESBURG, SEP 9

All-rounder Jason Smith and leg-spinner Peter Nqaba have earned maiden ODI call-ups for South Africa's matches against Afghanistan and Ireland, to be held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) later this month.

The duo have also been named in the South Africa squad which will face Ireland in T20Is. All-rounder Andile Simelane is another new face in the national set-up after being included in both the ODI squad against Afghanistan and the T20I side against Ireland.

Simelane, 21, has been identified as a high-potential talent and was part of the SA Emerging tour of Zimbabwe in August. Most recently, he represented South Africa A in the one-day series against Sri Lanka A. Seamer Lungi Ngidi has recovered from his right calf injury and has been named in all three squads.

With an eye on widening the player pool in white-ball cricket, Kagiso Rabada, Keshav Maharaj, Anrich Nortje, Marco Jansen, Tabraiz Shamsi, David Miller and Heinrich Klaasen have been rested from the entire tour.

Quinton de Kock is not in the T20I squad while Matthew Breetzke has been included, with no place for Donovan Ferreira. Young pacer Kwena Maphaka is missing out due to his final school examinations.

Aiden Markram and Reeza Hendricks are part of the ODI squad only for the Afghanistan series, while Rassie van der Dussen and Ryan Kruger are part of just the 50-over games against Ireland.

"We have decided to give opportunities to some of the fringe players as well as those who have impressed in recent weeks and months. This has been a deliberate move from management, in line with our goal of building



Temba Bavuma (captain), Otneil Baartman, Nandre Burger, Tony de Zorzi, Bjorn Fortuin, Reeza Hendricks, Aiden Markram, Wiaan Mulder, Lungi Ngidi, Andile Phehlukwayo, Nqaba Peter, Andile Simelane, Jason Smith, Tristan Stubbs, Kyle Verreynne, Lizaad Williams.

South Africa T20I squad against Ireland: Aiden Markram (captain), Otneil Baartman, Matthew Breetzke, Nandre Burger, Bjorn Fortuin, Reeza Hendricks, Patrick Kruger, Wiaan Mulder, Lungi Ngidi, Nqaba Peter, Ryan Rickelton, Andile Simelane, Jason Smith, Tristan Stubbs, Lizaad Williams.

South Africa ODI squad against Ireland: Temba Bavuma (captain), Otneil Baartman, Nandre Burger, Tony de Zorzi, Bjorn Fortuin, Reeza Hendricks, Patrick Kruger, Wiaan Mulder, Lungi Ngidi, Andile Phehlukwayo, Nqaba Peter, Ryan Rickelton, Jason Smith, Tristan Stubbs, Rassie van der Dussen, Kyle Verreynne, Lizaad Williams.

a wider pool of players to choose from, as we prepare for the major ICC tournaments taking place over the next 18 months, with a long-term view on the 50-over World Cup in 2027."

"There is no doubt that tours such as these offers us this unique opportunity to provide players with international exposure in differing conditions compared to what they are used to. I am particularly looking forward to seeing how some of the more experienced players step up, whilst keeping a close eye on who can grab this

opportunity and become more regular within the national set-up," said head coach Rob Walter.

South Africa will face Afghanistan in three ODIs from September 18 - 22 at Sharjah Cricket Stadium, with the squad's departure scheduled for September 14. They will then play two T20Is against Ireland on September 27 and 29, followed by three ODIs from October 2-7 against the same opposition, with all five matches taking place at the Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium.

South Africa ODI squad against Afghanistan:

Indians love beating Australia in any form of cricket, says Usman Khawaja

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

As the Border-Gavaskar Trophy (BGT) draws near, veteran left-handed opener Usman Khawaja has acknowledged the fact that the Indian team takes great joy in defeating Australia in cricket, while reflecting on historic rivalry that has only intensified over recent years.

India has won 2-1 in the last two Border-Gavaskar Trophy series happening in 2018/19 and 2020/21 in Australia. The visitors "will be aiming to make it a hat-trick of series wins in Australia when the five-match Test tour starts on November 22 in Perth, followed by games in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney.

"We're world number one, world number two teams really over the last two years. We were there at the last World Test Championship together. The rivalry has always been huge. I take it as a sign of respect and I know it that Indians love beating Australia in any sort of



form of cricket.

"And the tradition that Australia has had over so many years as being one of the dominating teams in world cricket has staked that reputation. I think, yeah, for Indians it's always been the case to beat Australia. And more recently, you know, since the rise of India and IPL and everything else that happened, it's the same way with Australia against India. And particularly since India's beaten Australia in Australia the last two times they've come out of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. It just means a little bit more," said Khawaja to Star Sports.

Fast-bowler Josh Hazlewood, who was a part of

Australia beating India 2-0 in the 2014/15 Border-Gavaskar Trophy series at home, said he is keen to get the trophy back for the hosts'.

"Yeah Probably sums it up there, toughest rivalry. It's always a great challenge playing against India, and they are so used to the conditions out here, they love it.

You know in Australia the challenge is huge. They're batting their top order, no matter who's playing, is unbelievable, their top six or seven. I played them in my debut series, obviously, and we got the win, that might have been the last time. A lot of the same players are still playing, I think I got

Virat that game.

"So a lot of our players, I guess, haven't beaten India in a test series. The guys were playing, such as Travis Head, Cameron Green, guys like that. So, yeah, huge summer for us coming up and hopefully get that trophy back," he said.

Australia's seam-bowling all-rounder Mitchell Marsh sees the upcoming series as another chance to grow the longer format. "I think it's just the cricket that's been played between the two teams. If you look at the history, the recent history, we've won stuff, they've won stuff. And I think that when it's back and forth like that, it builds that rivalry within yourselves.

"You know there's great friendships in the Indian team with our team, so there's no hatred. But it's a great on field rivalry, both teams want to win. And Australia versus India, it's another opportunity to grow the game of cricket. Not that cricket needs growing in India, but worldwide. People tune into these big series."

'We've built something special': Pant's encourages Purani Dilli 6 after rain dashes finals hopes

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 9

Indian wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant commended Purani Dilli 6 for their resilience and dedication in the Adani Delhi Premier League (DPL). Despite their semifinal match against South Delhi Superstarz being abandoned due to rain, which ended their opportunity to reach the final, Pant praised the team's efforts throughout the tournament. After the semifinal was washed out, as per the tournament rules, the team that is placed higher in the points table advanced to the final of the tournament. South Delhi Superstarz, having finished second in the points table, progressed to the Final and Purani Dilli 6, who finished third with 10 points, were eliminated.

Pant, who has been closely following the Purani Dilli 6 progress, said the team will come back stronger in the next season. The right-handed batter also shared an emotional post on his Instagram story captioning it as



"our team has won hearts".

"I've been following watching the team from the sidelines and admire their hard work, determination, and grit the boys have put in to get this far. It's unfortunate that rain ended our run, but I'm immensely proud of every player. We've built something special this season, and I'm confident we'll come back stronger next year, aiming for the title," said Pant in a statement.

Meanwhile, veteran Indian pacer Ishant Sharma praised Purani

Dilli 6 for their commitment and resilience during the season. He was disappointed of not being able to contest the semifinal but was quick to commend the players for their dedication throughout the Delhi Premier League.

"I've seen how much heart and effort the boys have given throughout the tournament. It's disappointing to go out this way, but the team can hold their heads high. We've shown great potential, and I know next season will be even better," said Ishant.

It was remarkable journey for Purani Dilli 6 in the DPL. From tough losses in close encounters to back-to-back wins leading them to the semifinals, the team showed resilience and determination.

The rain has played a spoilsport in the last few days in the Delhi Premier League. This has also highlighted the importance of having reserve day atleast for the knockout matches. If there had been a reserve day, Purani Dilli 6 would have gotten a chance to fight for the final spot.

General Observer, Zainapora AC takes stock of election arrangements

JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, SEPTEMBER 09

General Observer, Zainapora AC, Jeevan Babu K, held a comprehensive meeting with RO and Nodal Officers today at the Mini Secretariat to take stock and assess the preparations for the upcoming Assembly elections in the 36-Zainapora Assembly Constituency.

The meeting was attended by various constituency nodal officers and district nodal officers responsible for different election-related activities.

During the meeting, each Nodal Officer briefed the Observer on the preparations, especially made on Home Voting, Postal Ballot for Essential services, Receipt & Dispatch, Material management, SVEEP, Web Casting, Trainings, implementa-



tion of MCC, C-Vigil, Campaign permissions, Voter Guide & Voter Information Slip distribution, AMF at Polling stations, welfare measures for polling staff, among other election related activities were discussed elaborately.

The Observer asked for extensive use of Social media for highlighting

SVEEP activities across the Constituency by involving icons, students, influencers, posting election engagement creatives and content.

Additionally, the Observer gave specific instructions for Home Voting, directing the team to share a detailed plan with a schedule for Home

Voting and also desired daily reporting on the activities of Flying Squad Teams (FST), Static Surveillance Teams (SST), C-Vigil functioning, and campaign permission, etc.

Jeevan Babu further instructed the officers to ensure proper AMF facilities at all polling stations, focusing on sanitation, toilets, and proper lighting and highlighted the need for providing refreshments to polling staff and emphasized involving dedicated staff to assist Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and other vulnerable voters on polling day.

The meeting concluded with directives from the Observer to all officers to ensure meticulous planning and execution to facilitate the smooth conduct of the elections.

Voting Awareness campaign organized at GDC Katra, Reasi under SVEEP

JI NEWS SERVICE
REASI, SEPTEMBER 9

An awareness program for young voters was hosted today at Government Degree College Katra Reasi as part of the "Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation" (SVEEP) initiative. The event was a component of a broader campaign designed to boost voter turnout for the Assembly Elections 2024.

The event saw active involvement from both students and faculty, demonstrating a shared commitment to creating an informed and engaged electorate. The SVEEP team, led by Nodal Officer Sachin Sharma, provided detailed information on the electoral process and encouraged everyone to participate in the democratic process by voting on 25 September 2024.

A range of activi-



ties, including student speeches, a symposium, poster-making contests, and Singing Competitions were organized to further engage participants and raise awareness about the significance of voting.

The program concluded with a pledge from GDC Katra students and staff to actively promote voter participation within their communities, aiming to increase voter turnout in the upcoming elections. This initiative

underscores the importance of voter education and the crucial role of youth and educators in supporting a vibrant and inclusive electoral process.

Others present during the event was principal GDC Katra Dr. Rajni Bhagat, College SVEEP incharge Dr. Usha Sharma, BDO Panthal Mehak Chowdhary, faculty members GDC Katra and officials of College and social welfare departments.

General Observer for AC-57 and AC-58 inspect strong room in Reasi

JI NEWS SERVICE
REASI, SEPTEMBER 09

General Observer for Assembly Constituencies AC 57-Reasi and AC 58-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, Avi Prasad accompanied by DEO Vishesh Mahajan on Monday conducted the inspection of the strong room established here in Government polytechnic college. The inspection focused on the working of CCTV cameras, security of the strong room, maintaining of proper registers and the integrity of the EVMs. General Observer Avi Prasad expressed satisfaction over the arrangements and emphasized the importance of strict adherence to election protocols to ensure a free, fair, and transparent election process. He also interacted with officials and staff involved in the election duties, offering guidance and addressing any concerns related to the preparations.

SVEEP: Youth Parliament on compulsory voting held at GDC Kishtwar

JI NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 09

As part of the ongoing SVEEP campaign in the district in the anticipation of Assembly elections, an impactful electoral awareness program was conducted today at Government Degree College Kishtwar. The event specifically targeted young students and first-time voters, encouraging active participation in the democratic process.

The District Nodal Officer SVEEP Dr. Kuldeep Kumar in Collaboration with the Electoral Literacy Club/SVEEP and NCC Senior Wing of the College successfully organized a Youth Parliament on "Compulsory Voting in India".

The event was organised on the direction of District Election Officer/District Magistrate Rajesh Kumar Shavan and the guidance of the College Principal Prof. Basharat Iqbal. Nodal Officer SVEEP-GDC Dr



Yasir Ahmed and CTO NCC SW Dr Tabassum Saleem were pivotal in the success of the event.

The activities for the day included a "Mock Parliament" focusing on the issue of compulsory voting in India, followed by a Symposium and a song sung by College Student Shevata Sharma on the Importance of Voting.

Both activities aimed

to stimulate constructive debate and dialogue among students on the role of voting in a democracy and the potential benefits and challenges of making voting compulsory in the country.

Around 250 students actively participated in the event, engaging in discussions that reflected their awareness and interest in the electoral process. The

event provided a platform for these young minds to express their opinions and learn about the significance of voting as a civic duty.

At the end of the session, the voters pledge was administered to the all present in the event, followed by felicitation of participants with certificates as a token of appreciation for their active involvement.

The organizers and faculty members expressed their pride in the students for their enthusiasm and contribution to the event.

District Nodal Officer, SVEEP Kuldeep Kumar, Nodal Officer SVEEP AC-49 Kishtwar Masood Hussain Qazi, NT Election Cell Angrez Singh besides Dr. Sehrish Gazal, Dr. Zahoor Din, Dr. Vijay Kumar, Prof. Esar ul Ayoub, Prof. Sonika Sen, Prof. Asma Javaid, Prof. S.M. Usman, Prof. Ashfaq Ahmed Wani and other Officials of GDC and District Administration were also present.

"Play Bandipora Vote Bandipora": Bandipora District Administration team Triumphs in Friendly Cricket Match held under SVEEP

JI NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 09

The Bandipora District Administration cricket team secured a victory in a friendly cricket match held under the Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative. The match, played at S. K stadium Bandipora, featured a thrilling contest between the District Administration team and the Bandipora Legends.

The event was inaugurated by the District Election Officer, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, who emphasized that the match aimed to enhance voter awareness and engage the community in the electoral process.

In his address, the District Election Officer encouraged the public to participate enthusiastically in the electoral process,



underscoring the importance of active civic engagement.

The Administration team, led by the Deputy District Election Officer (DyDEO), Mohammad Rafeeq Bhat comprised officers including the Additional District Development Commissioner Mohammad Ashraf Bhatt, Chief Education Officer (CEO), Kishore Kumar, DSWO Sahir Majeed, DIO Aadil Manzoor Wani,

DyCEO Dr. G. M Pujoo, SVEEP Coordinator Arsalan Habib, and Coordinator Man Power and trainings Mir Irfan Maqbool.

Padmashree Faisal Ali Dar, Brand Ambassador SVEEP activities, a key participant in the District Administration Bandipora team, took the opportunity to emphasise the critical role of youth in the electoral process. He underscored the importance of young voters in shaping

the future of democracy and encouraged their active involvement in the electoral system.

Later, a football match was also held under SVEEP at the same venue featuring first-time voters providing a platform for new voters to engage with the electoral process in a dynamic and interactive way. The participation of first-time voters highlighted the importance of involving youth and new voters in civic activities and electoral education.

The event successfully combined recreational activities with electoral education providing an engaging platform for new voters to participate in electoral activities and encouraged them to actively spread the message of voter engagement and civic responsibility.

CEO kick starts plantation drive under Green Election initiative in Jammu

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 09

In order to achieve the target of planting above one lakh plants under the 'Green Election' initiative of Election Commission of India (ECI) during the J&K Assembly Elections 2024, the Office of Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, in collaboration with J&K Forest Department organised a plantation drive in the premises of Model Higher Secondary School, Domana, in Bhalwal block of Jammu district on Monday.

The plantation drive was inaugurated by Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Pandurang K Pole, who was the Chief Guest at the event, whereas Deputy Commissioner Sachin Kumar Vaishya, (District Election Officer), Jammu, Director Forest Protection Force, J&K, Sandip Kujur; Akther Hussain Qazi, Nodal officer of SVEEP, J&K; Sapna Kotwal, Nodal Officer for Media; Dr Vikas Sharma, ACD Jammu (Nodal Officer SVEEP-Jammu), and officers from the District Administration and Forest Department were present at the event.

Speaking on the occa-



sion, CEO Pandurang K Pole reiterated the efforts being made to ensure the Environment-Friendly Plantation Drive along with the Assembly Elections to create a sense of responsibility towards the environment protection among the masses and those participating in the elections.

The CEO also informed that the directions were given to the officers to plant more than 100

plants in the premises of Polling Station identified as Green Polling Station in each Assembly Constituency, whereas rest of the Polling Stations must plant 10-15 plants each in the premises across J&K UT so that a target of planting 1 lakh plants can be achieved before 15 September, 2024.

Pandurang K Pole also asserted that a massive plantation is going to take place across the UT during

the Assembly Elections to foster environmental stewardship among the electorate, to compensate for the impact on the environment due to waste generated during the election process.

He also asked the stakeholders that plantation drives shall be organised at all Polling Stations across the UT on scheduled dates, expressing the significance of environmental responsibility.

Today's plantation drive was launched as a part of the SVEEP campaign during which above 100 plants were planted and nearly 200 students, NCC cadets and staff members including the Principal of the school also participated in the event.

The students also pledged to take the initiative of Green Election to every nook and corner of the UT.

CEO launches 'GreenSVEEP' app to capture Plantation Drive during Assembly Election 2024



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 09

In a significant stride towards fostering a culture of civic responsibility and environmental stewardship among voters and polling officials, Jammu and Kashmir Election Department on Monday launched a new application-'GreenSVEEP', to capture the plantation drive 2024 that would take place during the forthcoming Assembly Elections at all the polling stations of all the 90 assembly constituencies across the Union Territory.

The application was launched by Pandurang K Pole, Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu and Kashmir UT, in the presence of Akther Hussain Qazi, Nodal officer- SVEEP;

Sapna Kotwal, Nodal Officer -Media; Siddeshwar Bhagat, NIC Scientist; Namisha Abrol, IT Expert and others. To promote eco-friendly practices among voters and polling officials, and ensure vibrant and active participation of the electorate in the upcoming elections, the office of the CEO J&K UT has set a target of planting over 1 lakh plants across the Union Territory and 'GreenSVEEP' app will take this initiative further.

"It is a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based auto-tracking system which would capture pictures and videos of the plantation done by various forest officials during the forthcoming elections," a statement from the office of the CEO, J&K UT said.

In addition, various SVEEP activities at school, colleges and offices would also be uploaded by the respective nodal officers through this application, added the statement.

Additionally, the Block Level Officers will also ensure that video and photographs detailing the plantation drives and ensuring the nine Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs) at all polling stations are also uploaded on the 'GreenSVEEP' app.

The CEO also emphasized on transparency measures for home voting for the elderly and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and issued directions for uploading high-definition photographs and video on the 'GreenSVEEP' app.

It may be mentioned

that the mega plantation drive is a concerted effort towards environmental sustainability and community engagement through collaborative efforts with locals, youth and volunteers, along with polling officials.

"The plantation drive is a testament to our commitment not only to promote voter awareness and participation but also to address pressing environmental challenges. By integrating tree planting activities into our SVEEP program, we are leveraging the power of collective action to create a positive impact on both the electoral process and the environment," the CEO, J&K UT said.