

**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 abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea
- Persistent vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Disorientation
- Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in vomit, urine or stool
- Redness on the face

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

# JINDRAH IMAGES

DAILY | JAMMU | VOL NO: 11 | ISSUE NO: 214 | PAGES: 12 | PRICE: Rs 2/- | RNI NO: JKENG/2013/49471 | POSTAL REGD. NO. JK-497/22-24 | dailyjindrahimages.com/Epaper.php | jindrahimages123@gmail.com

## Gandhi-Abdullah Families Advocating for Terrorists & Separatists in J&K: Anurag



J NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 11

Jammu & Kashmir: Former Union Minister and Member of Parliament, Shri Anurag Singh Thakur, stated that the Gandhi-Abdullah families are advocating for terrorists and separatists in Jammu & Kashmir.

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### Will further vitiate Valley politics: BJP's Ram Madhav slams Er Rasheed

J NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, SEPT 11

Senior BJP leader and election incharge for Jammu and Kashmir, Ram Madhav on Wednesday slammed Er Rasheed for his remarks after he was released on interim bail from Tihar jail after almost 5 years.

In a post on X, as per news agency Ram Madhav reacted to Er Rashid's remarks where he said he will defeat Modi's idea of "Naya Kashmir". "This rank separatist, in jail for last 5 years under UAPA for indulging in anti-India activities, is out on bail to further vitiate Valley politics. Look at d language... anti-Modi rants, restoring Art 370, freeing terrorists from jails," he said.

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### BJP to start 'Rath Yatra' Campaign, assigns duties to leaders

J NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 11

To take forward its campaign, the BJP has appointed leaders to manage the 'Rath Yatra' Campaign of the party for the upcoming Assembly elections.

Narinder Singh will be Incharge of the Rath Yatra' Campaign, while Lt. Col. (Retd) DV Sharma, will be the Co-Incharge.

Balvinder Singh, Sub. (Retd) Kamal Netar, CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

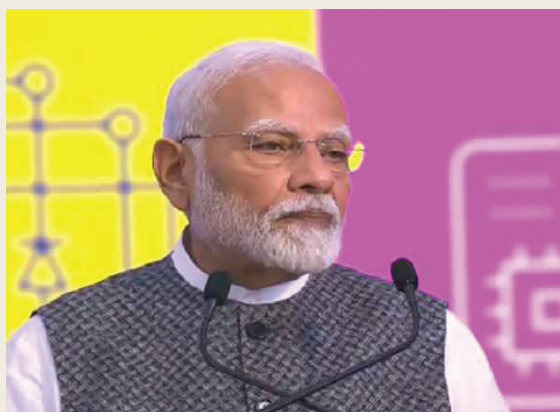
## India set to play big role in semiconductors: Modi

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEPT 11

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Wednesday that India is set to play a big role in driving the global semiconductor industry and reiterated India's ambition to become a semiconductor powerhouse.

Inaugurating SEMICON India 2024 at India Expo Mart in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, Prime Minister Modi said, "India is the eighth country in the world to organize an event related to the global semiconductor industry."

"This is the right time to be in India. You are at the right place at the right time", PM Modi told industry representatives.



PM Modi said, "In 21st-century India, the chips are never down. India of today assures the world, 'When the chips are down, you can bet on India'."

Informing that India's contribution to the world of designing is 20 per cent and is growing

continuously, PM Modi said, " India is creating a semiconductor workforce of 85,000 technicians, engineers and R&D experts. India is focused on making its students and professionals industry-ready."

PM Modi underlined that such initiatives are

bound to increase the scope of semiconductors and innovations in the science sector and also highlighted the government's emphasis on the semiconductor infrastructure.

Because of these policies, he said, "India has attracted investments worth more than Rs 1.5 trillion in a very short time and many more projects are in the pipeline."

Pointing to the numerous steps taken by the government to promote semiconductor manufacturing, Modi highlighted that the government is offering 50 per cent financial support for setting up semiconductor manufacturing

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## 2 Terrorists killed in gunfight with security forces in Udhampur; Operation On



J NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 11

Two terrorists affiliated with Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) outfit were killed in an ongoing operation in the upper reaches of Bas-

antgarh in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district on Wednesday, the Army said. This was the first successful operation against the terrorists in the dense forest

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## Anantnag Assembly Seat: A four-cornered contest in the offing

J NEWS SERVICE  
ANANTNAG, SEPT 11

The main Anantnag assembly segment in south Kashmir is set to witness a close contest between four candidates, including one independent who was previously associated with the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and People's Conference (PC).

According to the news agency, the four candidates in the running include National Conference-Congress Alliance candidate Peerzada Mohammad Sayed, Dr Mehboob Beigh of the PDP, Hilal Ahmad Shah

of Apni Party, and independent candidate Peer Mansoor.

### Peerzada Mohammad Sayed

Peerzada Mohammad Sayed is a prominent politician from Jammu & Kashmir, affiliated with the Congress party. He has served as the President of the Jammu & Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee and has been elected four times as an MLA from the Kokernag constituency. Sayed, who has held several ministries, is contesting elections from another constituency as his own seat is ST-reserved

Larnoo. However, the backing of NC makes him a strong contender.

### Dr Mehboob Beigh

Dr Mehboob Beigh, son of Mirza Afzal Beigh, was associated with NC for a long time but later joined PDP. Beigh has been elected to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Legislative Council, and the Indian Parliament multiple times. He has also served as the Cabinet Minister for Health, Family Welfare, and Medical Education. With the political influence his family, especially his father

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## Er. Rashid walks out of Tihar jail after 5 years for election campaigning



J NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, SEPT 11

President of Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) and Member Parliament, Baramulla, Er. Rashid on Wednesday walked out of Tihar jail, a day after

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## 'Remain vigilant, avoid vote division': Mehbooba Mufti on Er Rashid's release

J NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, SEPT 11

"The people of Kashmir must remain vigilant and avoid a divided vote as (Awami Ittehad Party chief) Er Rashid is being released to split votes," People's Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti said on Wednesday.

Speaking to reporters after addressing party workers in Watchi and Shopian, the former chief

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4



## Kharge said in Jammu and Kashmir - BJP got upset after seeing the alliance of Congress-National Conference

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 11

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, while campaigning in Anantnag, Jammu and Kashmir, said that the BJP is stunned after seeing the Congress-National Conference alliance. That is why BJP is repeatedly changing the list of candidates in Jammu and Kashmir. From this it can be guessed that BJP is scared of seeing the unity of India alliance.

The Congress President was addressing a huge public meeting in Anantnag, Jammu and



Kashmir. After this he also addressed a press conference in Srinagar.

Amidst the huge crowd gathered in the public meeting, Mallikarjun Kharge alleged that cor-

ruption is taking place under the Governor's rule in Jammu and Kashmir.

Former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satyapal Malik said that instead

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## ACB unearths another custodian land scam of hundreds of kanals in J&K

J NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, SEPT 11

While continuing its tirade against the unholy nexus of revenue officers and land mafia, J&K Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) achieved yet another major success in extracting the land scam, where in around 310 kanals of Custodian land in Asarwan, Mishriwala and Bhalwal area of Jammu district has been found usurped by the land mafia in connivance with the officers/officials of Custodian, Revenue and Police department.

Earlier, the ACB had unearthed land scam

involving around 210 kanals of Custodian land, in respect of which five FIRs were registered. A statement issued to the news agency reads that inputs were received that Custodian land in thousands of Kanal situated at Asarwan, Mishriwala and Bhalwal Jammu, has been fraudulently grabbed by the land grabbers/gangsters in connivance with the Revenue and police officers/officials.

The revenue records have been tempered and land has been sold to various persons, it said. ACB conducted a formal verification wherein it was found that in furtherance

of the criminal conspiracy, FORM 3-A (Form AIF) along with power of attorneys (POAs) were obtained from various POK Refugees, alluring them of additional lands and providing them instant money ranging from Rs 5000 to Rs 50,000 by the conduits of land grabbers, and thereafter insertions/additions regarding additional chunks of custodian lands were made in the revenue records by the officials/officers of the Revenue and Custodian department, by sheer abuse of their official positions, and these lands were sold by the conduits and

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## Border area development is a must to deal with different kinds of challenges: Rajnath

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEPT 11

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday said that India's geo-strategic position is such that it is exposed to different kinds of challenges and the best way to deal with them is to ensure border area development.

Addressing the Border Area Development Conclave here, Singh said, "Our aim is to ensure infrastructure and socio-economic progress in border areas".

He added that the government is fully commit-



ted to the holistic development of border villages by describing them as the country's first villages, and not remote areas.

Describing roads CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## Focus on providing comprehensive primary healthcare to patients visiting PHCs: Chief Secretary

J NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, SEPT 11

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Wednesday took a meeting of National Health Mission (NHM) to take appraisal of the progress achieved under different programmes run under this mission.

Besides Secretary Health and Medical Education and MD, NHM, the meeting was attended by Director SKIMS; Principles of Medical Colleges; Director, Health Services, Jammu/Kashmir and other concerned officers.



During the meeting, the Chief Secretary impressed to make the primary healthcare more robust and comprehensive as there are around 4000 such facilities in the UT.

He asked for verifying

the modalities whether the increased number services, free drugs and diagnostic tests are available in these Sub-Centres and Primary Health Centres across J&K. He asked for submitting a report shortly

to him on this regard.

Dulloo also enquired about the status of the screening of population for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) as set under the programme. He called for pacing-up this process to meet the targets.

While taking note of the tele-services made available to the population he asked for creating necessary awareness among masses besides checking the quality of such services extended to the beneficiaries.

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## Paralympic Archery champions from J&K Sheetal Devi, Rakesh Kumar team up as ECI's National PwD Icons for voter awareness

J NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 11

Paralympic archery champions Sheetal Devi and Rakesh Kumar team up to inspire voters nationwide as ECI's national icons for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

In an event organised on Wednesday at Nirvachan Sadan here, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar along with Election Commissioners (ECs) Gynaesh Kumar and Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu felicitated Arjuna Awardee and ECI's



National PwD icon, Sheetal Devi and her mixed doubles team partner Rakesh Kumar, in recognition of their outstanding achievement in winning a bronze

medal in Archery at the Paris Summer Paralympics 2024.

On the occasion, the Commission also announced Rakesh Kumar,

renowned paralympian as the ECI National icon for PwDs.

The Commission while emphasising its CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4



## 2nd phase of Election Trainings for Poll Personnel concludes at Srinagar

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 11

In run-up to the General Elections to Legislative Assembly-2024, the 2nd phase of Election Trainings for Poll Personnel to be deployed in all Eight Assembly Constituencies of Srinagar District concluded here today.

The Training Sessions which are a part of the District Election Office's Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program were carried out on the directions of District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat at Eight different locations across the District.

While paying visits to training venues, Dr. Bilal applauded the efforts of Master Trainers in equipping the Election manpower with required skills during elections and stressed on intensifying the training sessions to leave no scope for errors



during the process of upcoming Assembly Elections. Dr. Bilal further said that the Administration is fully geared up with all machinery for smooth conduct of the Elections and is making significant arrangements for the welfare of poll personnel before and on the day of Polling.

The Master Trainers deputized by the DEO delivered exhaustive training sessions to equip the participating Employees with skills and knowledge to

operate polling machinery on the day of elections.

During the sessions, the participating Employees were given hands on experience to operate and manage Poll Machinery on the day of Polls and were also trained how to handle emergencies, manage crowds and to address issues of security.

While delivering his exhaustive session, Coordinator Trainings for Srinagar, Dr. Manzoor Reshi ensured that the Employees have a clear under-

standing of the Election Laws, Rules and Regulations which, as the Election Staff, have to follow in the Election process.

The special instructions were conveyed by Dr. Reshi to the participating Employees for strictly following the Poll guidelines for ensuring free and fair Assembly Elections in Srinagar.

Besides, the Employees were also oriented towards the proper management and the adherence to the Model Code of Conduct

enforced by the Election Commission of India.

The trainings and hands-on experience sessions were conducted in different sessions with the objective to lay a strong base of well-skilled manpower for the smooth and hassle-free elections in 8 Assembly Constituencies in district Srinagar.

The trained staff will be deployed to man 932 Polling Stations in Srinagar for which, 26 Nodal Officers, 40 Assembly Constituency Nodal Officers, 23 Zonal Magistrates and 112 Sectoral Magistrates are working tirelessly to ensure smooth conduct of scheduled elections.

Moreover, 25 Flying Squad Teams (FST), 26 Static Surveillance Teams (SST), 13 Video Surveillance Teams (VST) and 8 Video Viewing Surveillance Teams (VVST) have been put on the job as an extra layer of security and monitoring for the elections.

## Election Observer conducts 2nd EVM randomization

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
POONCH, SEPTEMBER 11

The second round of randomization of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs) for the upcoming General Assembly Elections 2024 was successfully carried out today at the District Election Officer's office in Poonch.

The process was conducted under the supervision of General Election Observers Solai Bharathi Dasan and District Election Officer Vikas Kundal in strict adherence to the guidelines set by the Election Commission of India (ECI), ensuring transparency and fairness in the electoral process.

A total of 724 EVMs have been designated for the three Assembly constituencies in Poonch district, including 226 EVMs for Surankote, 213 for Mendhar, and 285 for Haveli. These alloca-



tions correspond with the number of polling stations in each constituency: 142 in Mendhar, 151 in Surankote, and 190 in Haveli. The randomization process, conducted through the ECI's EMS Software/Portal, determined which specific machines would be assigned to each polling station. An additional 33

% of EVMs will remain in reserve to address any contingencies on Election Day.

Officials and representatives from various national and state-recognized political parties attended the event, with their presence ensuring the impartiality and transparency of the randomization. Lists of randomized

Control Units (CUs), Ballot Units (BUS), and VVPATs were distributed to the party representatives, providing them complete insight into the process. The entire procedure was videographed in line with ECI regulations to further ensure transparency.

District Election Officer Vikas Kundal remarked, "We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of fairness and integrity in the election process. The successful randomization of EVMs and VVPATs reflects our dedication to ensuring that all voters and political parties have complete confidence in the system."

The randomization process was also attended by Joint Director/DIO NIC, Parvinder Singh, Returning Officers of Haveli, Qadeer Ul Rehman, RO Mendhar and Surankote Assembly constituencies, and other district election authorities of Poonch district.

## Second Randomization of EVMs, Polling Personnel held in presence of General Observer at Rajouri



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 11

The second randomization of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) for the General Election to the Legislative Assembly 2024 in Rajouri District was successfully conducted today at Dak Bungalow, Rajouri.

The process was carried out in the presence of Mani Ram Sharma, General Observer for Nowshera & Kalakote-Sunderbani Assembly Constituency; Tikam Chand Bohra, General Observer for Thanamandi Assembly Constituency, and Anurag Jayanti, General Observer for Rajouri & Budhal Assembly Constituencies.

Representatives from all major political parties were in attendance to witness the transparent procedure, ensuring fair and free elections. The second

randomization of EVMs is an essential step in the election process, ensuring that the machines are distributed fairly across polling stations. This stage was completed smoothly, with a strong emphasis on adherence to the guidelines set by the Election Commission of India. During this process, the allocated EVMs were finalized for each polling station within the five Assembly constituencies of Rajouri District.

Following the completion of the EVM randomization, the General Observers proceeded to the VC Room at the Deputy Commissioner's office, where the second randomization of polling personnel was conducted. The personnel selected during the first randomization were assigned to different Assembly Constituencies. This

second randomization involved a computerized process that ensures polling officials are randomly placed, preventing any bias and reinforcing the credibility of the electoral process. As part of the election preparations, the General Observers also inspected the functioning of the Control Room and the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) cell. The MCMC cell is tasked with monitoring media-related activities, ensuring compliance with election guidelines, and preventing the spread of misinformation during the election period. Returning Officers (ROs) from all five constituencies - Nowshera, Kalakote-Sunderbani, Thanamandi, Rajouri, and Budhal, DIO NIC, Muzaffar Mir were also present throughout the proceedings.

## DEO Baramulla inspects designated Strong Room for Pattan AC



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BARAMULLA, SEPTEMBER 11

Ahead of the 2024 General Assembly Elections in district Baramulla, the District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa carried out a detailed inspection of the Receipt/Dispatch (Intermediate Strong Room) designated for the 13-Pattan Assembly Constituency (AC).

The visit aimed to evaluate the infrastructure, logistics, and security measures established for the secure storage of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines, and other critical election materials.

The DEO thoroughly examined the compre-

hensive security protocols in place for the Strong Rooms, including CCTV cameras, provision of uninterrupted power supply, 24/7 security, and other measures, all in line with Election Commission of India guidelines.

During the visit, the DEO stated that these Strong Rooms have been set up with robust security measures, including continuous monitoring by armed personnel.

Minga Sherpa further informed that CCTV cameras have been strategically placed throughout the facility to improve surveillance and emphasized the need to uphold these security measures at all times, in strict compliance with ECI guidelines.

## SVEEP Programme ignites Electoral Awareness in AC 48-Inderwal

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 11

Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) campaign took centre stage today across Mughal Maidan, Drubeel, and Marwah areas of Assembly Constituency (AC) 48-Inderwal.

The SVEEP programme at Mughal Maidan was marked by an energetic Nukkad Natak performance by the students of Government Higher Secondary School (HSS) Mughal Maidan. Through a creative and engaging street play, the students conveyed vital messages about the importance of voting, the power of each vote, and the responsibility of every citizen to participate in the democratic process.

The performance drew an enthusiastic response from the local community, raising awareness on voter rights and responsibilities, and highlighting the necessity of increased voter turnout in rural areas.

Meanwhile, a seminar on voter awareness was held at Government High School Drubeel, which saw active participation from both students and



local residents.

The seminar was followed by a rally, where students, teachers, and community members marched through the streets, chanting slogans encouraging people to vote. The rally not only spread the message of electoral participation but also fostered a sense of civic duty among the younger generation. Participants held placards and banners promoting the importance of voting in free and fair elections, stressing that every vote counts towards building a stronger and more representative democracy.

At Marwah headquarters, an impressive SVEEP programme was organized, focusing on engaging grassroots health workers, including Anganwadi Workers (AWW) and Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs). Recog-

nizing their influential role in rural communities, the event sought to empower these women leaders to act as ambassadors of voter awareness within their localities.

During the programme, detailed sessions were held to educate AWWs and ASHAs about the electoral process, voter rights, and the importance of encouraging rural women and marginalized sections of society to cast their votes.

This effort is seen as pivotal in addressing voter apathy in remote and hard-to-reach areas of the constituency.

As part of the continuing SVEEP campaign, more such programmes will be organized in other parts of the district to ensure that every eligible voter is well-informed and motivated to exercise their right to vote.

## DEO B'la holds interactive session with Zonal/ Sector Magistrates

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BARAMULLA, SEPTEMBER 11

In view of the General Assembly Elections 2024, District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa Wednesday held an interactive session with all the Sector/Zonal Magistrates of the district at Dak Bungalow, here.

During the session, the DEO emphasized the critical role that Sector and Zonal Magistrates play in the electoral process, particularly in ensuring that all pre-poll responsibilities like verification of polling stations, identification of route maps and other crucial duties are diligently fulfilled. Minga Sherpa directed the designated Zonal/Sector officers to visit the designated polling stations in their zones to inspect the facilities and ensure that all Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs), including safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, ramps, and other arrangements, are in place for the convenience of voters and polling staff.



Meanwhile, the DEO highlighted the role of Zonal/Sector officers on the day of the poll in assisting polling parties, replacing EVMs and VVPATs if required, sending various reports to the Returning Officers from time to time including voter turnout and incidents, ensuring the return of polling parties along with EVMs and VVPATs as per the prescribed movement plan etc.

He further instructed the magistrates to work in close coordination with the district election office to promptly resolve any issues that may arise in the run-up to the elections.

The session was attended by the Deputy District Election Officer, Baramulla, Abdul Rahman, designated Zonal/Sector magistrates, and other officers involved in the conduct of Assembly Elections in district Baramulla.

## 110 female staff trained for Women Managed Polling Stations in Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
POONCH, SEPTEMBER 11

In an effort to encourage women participation in the election process and management, the District Election Authority Poonch has trained 110 female employees for women-managed polling stations, aimed at increasing women's involvement in the electoral process. The initiative will introduce all-women-managed polling stations for the upcoming assembly elections on September 25th.

Under the leadership of District Election Officer (DEO) Vikas Kundal, a comprehensive training session was conducted today for these 110 women, who will run the women-managed polling stations across three consti-

tuencies: Haveli, Mendhar, and Surankote. The training focused on equipping the participants with skills in electoral management, including the operation of polling booths, voter assistance, and the handling of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).

Addressing the trainees, DEO Vikas Kundal emphasized the importance of their role in the electoral process: "Your participation is crucial. I urge you to perform your duties with dedication and ensure a seamless, voter-friendly experience, particularly for women voters."

The women-managed polling stations will be entirely staffed by women, fulfilling roles such as Micro Observers, Presiding Officers, Poll-

ing Officers, and Multi-Tasking Staff. This initiative is designed not only to empower women but also to create a welcoming atmosphere that encourages more women to vote.

Guneet Kour, a trainee from the Haveli constituency, reflecting on her experience said "This initiative is truly empowering. For years, I have been a voter, but now I feel I am actively contributing to our democracy. It's about more than just managing a polling station; it's about inspiring other women to come forward and make their voices heard."

The initiative covers 42 women for Haveli, 32 for Mendhar, and 36 for Surankote, ensuring that each constituency is well-represented by female staff.



## Expenditure Observer conducts checks Election Expenditure Registers at Kishtwar

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 11

The Election Expenditure Observer for Kishtwar district Sameer Kumar Jha on Wednesday conducted the second review of the expenditure registers for all contesting candidates in the ongoing General Assembly elections at VC room, DC Office Complex Kishtwar. The review meeting was held in the presence of Nodal Officer of the Expenditure Monitoring Cell/DTO Kishtwar and representatives of contesting candidates, ensuring transparency and adherence to election expenditure norms.

This review is part of the district's ongoing efforts to ensure accountability in the electoral process.

Expenditure Observer along with a team of senior officials, including Nodal Officer Expenditure Monitoring Cell, Liaison Offi-



cer Hitesh Kumar Loona examined the records submitted by candidates to ensure compliance with the guidelines established by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

The primary focus of the review was to confirm that all election expenditures remain within the prescribed limits.

The Expenditure Monitoring Cell is responsible for real-time tracking of expenditures, including costs related to political advertisements and public rallies. The Observers emphasized the impor-

tance of strict adherence to the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and the financial regulations laid out by the ECI. Contesting candidates were reminded that compliance with these norms is essential as per Election Commission norms.

The District Administration remains committed to conducting a free, fair, and transparent election process. Polling for the Assembly Constituencies in District Kishtwar is scheduled for 18th September as part of the first phase of polling in Jammu and Kashmir.

## GDC Marheen organizes Signature Campaign to promote Voter Awareness



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 11

The Voter Literacy Club of Government Degree College (GDC), Marheen organized a Signature Campaign to raise awareness among students about their right to vote.

The initiative was held under the patronage of the esteemed the College Principal, Prof. Anupama Gupta, with the objective

of encouraging active participation in the upcoming J&K Legislative Assembly Election 2024.

Prof. Gupta addressed the students personally, sharing her insights on the importance of voting in a democracy. She urged the students to cast their votes with full enthusiasm, emphasizing the power of their voice in shaping the future. The Principal also

took time to respond to students' queries on the spot, providing valuable guidance on the electoral process and its significance.

The programme witnessed active participation from the students, who eagerly engaged in the signature campaign, showcasing their commitment to becoming informed and responsible voters.

## Inter-District Divisional Level Girls Athletic Meet starts in Reasi



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
REASI, SEPTEMBER 11

An Inter-District Divisional Level Girls Athletic Meet, hosted by the Department of Youth Services and Sports, started here today.

Deputy Commissioner (DC), Vishesh Mahajan was the chief guest at the inaugural event. He hailed the commendable performance of girl athletes and said by their athletic skills reflect the true essence of "Nari shakti" and "Yuva Vikas."

The athletic meet, held for the U-14, U-17 and U-19 girls, witnessed participation of 250 girl athletes

from 10 districts of the Jammu division.

The meet was a true showcase of competitive spirit and athletic skill, with participants displaying remarkable sportsmanship. The event also displayed a message of Voter awareness Under SVEEP and urged people of Reasi to vote in upcoming elections. Event also set a strong foundation for students for future success in sports. The event was graced by the presence of DYSSO Reasi Tarsem Singh, physical education teachers, and field staff of DYSS from various districts of Jammu division.

## General Observers for Srinagar inspect MCMC, Election Control Room

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 11

The General Observers on Legislative Assembly Election-2024 for Srinagar, Sandhya Bhullar, Chandresh Kumar Yadav and Akhilesh Kumar Mishra Wednesday visited Media Certification and Monitoring Centre (MCMC) established at DC Office Srinagar and reviewed its functioning.

District Election Officer, Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat accompanied the General Observers during the visit.

During the visit, the team of Observers sought details of action taken to ensure free, fair and transparent elections with respect to media coverage in Print, Electronic and Social Media.

The Observers also interacted with the team of Officers and officials of MCMC and enquired about various activities carried out during the current Legislative Assembly Elections.

On the Occasion, Nodal Officer MCMC briefed the Observers regarding



Certification of Political Advertisements, Monitoring of Paid News and other election related content shared on local TV Channels, Social Media channels and on different platforms which is being monitored by the MCMC team. Nodal Officer, MCMC informed that the team has taken suo-moto cognizance of various MCMC & MCC violations and served notice to media platforms in various cases and got the content removed.

They were apprised that the team is scanning local Newspapers daily and submitting daily reports to the concerned authorities.

The Observers also checked the sample videos uploaded on Social media platforms which had been

categorized under MCMC/MCC violation.

On the occasion, the Observers appreciated the work done by the MCMC team to ensure a level playing field in the media.

Meanwhile, the officers also inspected the Integrated Election Control Room to take stock of calls and grievances of voters received by the officials and the number of grievances addressed.

They were informed that more than hundred grievances from voters were received which were promptly addressed.

The General Observers later also visited other offices set up by the District Administration for the smooth conduct of elections.

## Election Awareness Campaign in Remote Areas of Dharmari and Mahore in Reasi

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
REASI, SEPTEMBER 11

An extensive election awareness campaign was conducted in the far-flung areas of Dharmari and Mahore, District Reasi, with active participation from local residents, including senior citizens, students, and women.

The initiative was held under the overall supervision of DEO Reasi, Vishesh Mahajan and aimed to foster informed and engaged voter participation in the upcoming elections.

The campaign featured a series of impactful events, including a pledge-taking ceremony and a vibrant rally. Students from Government Degree College (GDC) Dharmari played a significant role in the activities, delivering speeches, performing songs, and leading the pledge to emphasize the



importance of voting and civic engagement.

Special focus was placed on interaction with local tribal masses and informing them about the election process.

The Team also informed the public about the availability of home voting for senior citizens aged 85 and above, Pink polling station, ensuring inclusivity in the voting process. Additionally, Persons with Disabilities (PwD) were introduced to the Saksham-ECI app, which features a range of accessibility options to assist in voter registration, locating

polling stations, and casting votes.

Nodal officer SVEEP Sachin Sharma highlighted that this proactive outreach effort sought to ensure that even the most remote communities are aware of their electoral rights and responsibilities, reinforcing the democratic process through grassroots involvement and education.

Others present at the event were Principal GDC Dharmari Dr. Shabir Ahmed, Professor Ajay Kumar, women of SHGs, local tribal masses and others.

## NCC Cadets host Awareness Session on electoral participation at GHSS Durang



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 11

An engaging SVEEP awareness session on Electoral Participation was held today at GHSS Durang under the guidance of ANO NCC Ajay Sharma.

The event targeted to promote voter awareness and encourage active electoral participation among students and the local community. The session witnessed the enthusiastic involvement of approximately 250 participants,

including students, staff, and local residents.

Highlights of the event included a painting competition and a rally conducted by the NCC Cadets, which helped spread the message of the importance of voting and civic responsibility.

The School Principal Yash Paul Gupta delivered an insightful lecture on electoral participation, emphasizing the power of each vote in shaping the future of the nation. His address motivated stu-

dents to exercise their right to vote conscientiously in the upcoming elections and to inspire their families and peers to do the same.

The event was attended by AC Nodal Officer SVEEP for 64-Billawar Mohinder Gupta.

The programme concluded with a rally led by the NCC Cadets, which traversed through key areas of the locality, further spreading the message of the significance of every vote in a democracy.

## Mega SVEEP event held at Hazratbal- AC

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 11

A significant mega Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) event was conducted on Wednesday at Baghe-Shagufa Park, Nigeen in Hazratbal Assembly Constituency (AC) with an aim to enhance voter awareness and encourage the participation of residents in the electoral process, emphasizing the importance of every eligible citizen casting their vote.

The primary goal of the event was to spread mass awareness about the importance of voting among the residents of Hazratbal constituency. The event underscored the need for all eligible voters, particularly those over the age of 18, to actively participate in the electoral process and avoid wasting their votes.

The event was presided over by Dr Akhilesh Kumar Mishra, Election Observer 19-Hazratbal AC and was attended by Returning Officer Hazratbal AC, Syed Ahmad Kataria; Chief Education Officer, Nodal Officer SVEEP Hazratbal AC, Principals of Various Constituent Higher Secondary Schools, Heads of Constituent Schools, Officers from Civil Administration and police and National



Awardee Teachers.

The mega SVEEP event was a resounding success, with over 15,000 participants across the constituency of Hazratbal including students, teachers and local residents came together to promote the crucial message of voter participation.

The event commenced with a lively 'Run from Democracy', starting from the lawns of BHSS Hazratbal, passing through the streets of Hazratbal, and concluding at Nigeen Park. This run symbolized the journey and importance of participating in the democratic process.

On the occasion, cultural programs including indigenous art form Nukad Natak, traditional dance (Rouf) and Kashmiri Chakker were presented, which were aimed to highlight the significance of voting and encouraged the audience to participate actively in elections.

Among sports events, Kho-Kho, Freestyle Martial Arts, Kite Flying, Tug of War and Human

Chain were performed by students from various schools emphasizing teamwork, discipline, unity, freedom and dedication and community spirit, paralleling the unity needed for effective electoral participation.

The event witnessed key speeches by the students on the importance of elections, these speeches served as powerful reminders of the impact of voting on the community and the nation.

The event concluded with heartfelt gratitude from the Nodal Officer SVEEP Hazratbal AC, Fayaz Ahmad to the district administration for their support, to all participants, including principals, heads of institutions, students, and teachers, for their contributions in making the event a grand success.

Chief Education Officer Srinagar also addressed the audience, urging students and participants to engage actively in the upcoming assembly elections.

## Dy. SP Aman Thakur Memorial GDC Kastigarh organizes 3-Day Voter Awareness Workshop under SVEEP



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
DODA, SEPTEMBER 11

Dy. SP Aman Thakur Memorial Government Degree College Kastigarh conducted a three-day voter awareness workshop under the SVEEP initiative, aimed at engaging students and the local community in the electoral process.

Led by the College Principal, Prof. Koshal Kumar Mangotra, the workshop ran from 9th to 11th September 2024, offering a variety of activities to educate participants on the importance of voting and civic responsibility. Faculty members, Dr. Sumit Kotwal and Dr. Anupam Lata, delivered comprehensive presentations on voter registration, electoral procedures, and the significance of active citizen participation.

The second day of the event centered on a Slogan Writing Competi-

tion, where participants creatively expressed the importance of voting. Their efforts highlighted the power of communication in promoting electoral engagement, with winning entries chosen for their originality and impact. This activity not only inspired critical thinking but also fostered a deeper connection with the democratic process.

The final day featured a lively Voter Awareness Quiz, testing participants' knowledge on different aspects of voting rights, electoral history, and civic duties. Two student teams, Team A and Team B, competed, with Team B emerging as the winner. This interactive session, led by Dr. Kotwal and Dr. Lata, provided a fun yet informative conclusion to the workshop, reinforcing the key lessons of voter awareness and participation.

## Show cause notices issued to employees absent from election training in Jammu

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 11

District Election Officer Sachin Kumar Vaishya has initiated action against government employees who failed to attend election duty training sessions scheduled for today.

Show cause notices have been issued to Controlling Officers and employees demanding explanations for their

absence. Disciplinary action would follow after a thorough review of the responses received.

"The conduct of Assembly Elections will be carried out with the highest standards of professionalism and diligence," the DEO emphasised. He further stressed the importance of strict adherence to Election Commission of India guidelines throughout the electoral process.



## FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

**Gandhi-Abdullah Families...**

Anurag Thakur said, "During the rule of the three families, Jammu & Kashmir became synonymous with conflict, terrorism, and instability. But today, we are living in a Jammu & Kashmir that is progressing on the path of peace, development, and prosperity. This story of transformation is not just a result of political change, but of the determination & dedication of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi towards the people of Kashmir, which has brought Jammu & Kashmir to this point. PM Modi's commitment to stand with the people of this region at every step is well-known. Under his leadership, Kashmir has found a new direction. But now, the Gandhi-Abdullah families are saying they will repeal the Public Safety Act (PSA) in Jammu & Kashmir. They want to release prisoners, separatists, and terrorists from jails. They want to strip the people of Jammu & Kashmir of their rights. The BJP will not let this happen! The Modi government has consistently worked against terrorism and separatism. Why do they want to release enemies of the country who are locked in jail? Why do they want to disturb the peaceful Jammu & Kashmir again? Why do the Gandhi-Abdullah families have so much sympathy for drug traffickers, terrorists, and stone-pelters?"

Anurag Singh Thakur further added, "The three families who deprived Jammu & Kashmir of its rights and acquired luxuries for themselves, it's time that their candidates will certainly lose in elections for the misdeeds. Omar Abdullah, who previously said he wouldn't contest the elections, is now running from two constituencies, and in both places, his condition is really weak. By revoking Article 370, the BJP has provided relief to the people of Jammu & Kashmir. After the abrogation of Article 370, Valmiki communities, Gurchas, refugees from West Pakistan, and Gujjar-Bakarwal communities have gained rights and reservation benefits. The National Conference, Congress and PDP want to snatch these rights from these communities and the agenda of the National Conference, Congress, and PDP is the same."

Adding further, Shri Anurag Singh Thakur said, "Even after 60 years of Congress rule in the country, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi never came to play in the snow of Kashmir. It was only after Hon'ble Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi ji abrogated Article 370 that the Gandhi family is able to enjoy holidays in the valleys. And now, the Congress, National Conference and PDP want to reinstate Article 370 and push Jammu & Kashmir back into the fire of anarchy, terrorism, and separatism. Jammu & Kashmir has suffered for decades due to the mistakes of the Gandhi-Abdullah families; many families were devastated, numerous soldiers martyred, and the region fell behind in economic development. Under the leadership of PM Modi Ji, Jammu & Kashmir has now witnessed development and peace, and hence, will no longer fall for the false promises of the Gandhi-Abdullah families. BJP will form the government here once again!"

**Will further vitiate...**

He said that this is no different from what Omar or Mehabooba or even others like Lone, of NC, PDP or PC-the Gupkar Gang - is saying. "He wants to defeat Modi's dream of Naya Kashmir. We accept d challenge. Naya Kashmir's March will go on unrelenting," Madhav said. Er Rasheed walked out of Tihar jail today a day after Delhi's Patiala House court granted him interim bail for election campaigning in Jammu and Kashmir till October 2 in a case linked to terror funding. KNO

**BJP to start...**

and Jatinder Singh have also been appointed as Co-Incharges.

These appointments aim to ensure a well-organized and impactful election campaign by 'Rath Yatra' which will be a key part of BJP's outreach to the public and making the people aware about party's manifesto.

**India set to play...**

facilities, with state governments also playing a key role in this effort.

With India's electronics sector now valued at over \$150 billion, the Prime Minister outlined a larger goal to expand the country's electronics sector to \$500 billion and create 6 million jobs by the end of this decade.

He said, "This growth will directly benefit India's semiconductor sector. Our goal is that 100pr cent of electronic manufacturing should happen in India. India will make semiconductor chips and the finished product too."

The three-day conference from September 11 to 13 will showcase India's semiconductor strategy and policy which envisions making India a global hub for semiconductors.

**2 Terrorists killed...**

which witnessed over half-a-dozen encounters in the past six months, claiming the lives of a village defence guard on April 28 and a CRPF inspector on August 19. Officials said one more terrorist is believed to be trapped in the operation area at Khandara top and efforts are on to neutralize him.

The operation was jointly launched by Army's first para and police and the first contact with the terrorists was established at around 12.50 p.m., the officials said. "Two terrorists neutralized in the ongoing operation at Khandara by troops of Rising Star Corps. Operations in progress," the Army said in a post on X.

**Anantnag Assembly...**

Afzal Beigh had, Dr Beigh is also a main contender for the seat.

**Hilal Ahmad Shah**

Hilal Ahmad, who was associated with the Indian National Congress for a long time, joined the Apni Party a few years ago. Shah, who also served as Municipal Corporation Anantnag Chairperson, secured around 11,000 votes against former chief minister Mufti Mohammad Sayed in 2014 and may turn the tables

this time.

**Peerzada Mansoor Hussain**

Peer Mansoor Hussain, a former MLA of the Shangus constituency, is fighting the election as an independent candidate after having been associated with the PDP and Apni Party. Mansoor has a good voter base in the area and can pose tough competition to the other three candidates, who are backed by their respective parties.

Others

The Democratic Progressive Azad Party's (DPAP) Mir Altaf Hussain and BJP's Syed Peerzada Wajahat Hussain can also secure a good share of votes, further dividing the vote share among the main four contenders.

Political analysts believe that the NC-Congress alliance candidate Peerzada Mohammad Sayed's non-residency in the constituency may be a weak factor, but NC candidate Peer Mohammad Hussain's full support could help Sayed win. According to them, Dr Mehboob Beigh's and his father's long representation of the constituency may help Beigh regain the seat.

Analysts add that Hilal Shah, who secured around 11,000 votes against Mufti Mohammad Sayed on a Congress ticket in 2014, can once again attract a good number of votes. Furthermore, Peerzada Mansoor, who represented the Shangus constituency on a PDP ticket in 2014, could leverage the fact that villages formerly part of Shangus are now part of Anantnag, and boost his vote share and help him win.

In the 2014 Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Elections, JKDP leader Mufti Mohammad Sayeed won the seat with a margin of 6,028 votes. He secured 16,983 votes, with a vote share of 51.20%. He defeated Congress candidate Hilal Ahmad Shah, who garnered 10,955 votes (33.03%). NC candidate Iftikhar Hussain Misger came third with 2,403 votes (7.24%), and BJP candidate Mohd Rafiq Wani was in fourth place with just 1,275 votes (3.84%). A total of 33,200 votes were polled (39.71%).

In the 2008 Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Elections, PDP leader Mufti Sayeed won the seat, polling 12,439 votes with a vote share of 39.49%. NC candidate Mirza Mehboob Beigh got 7,548 votes (23.96%) and was the runner-up. Sayeed defeated Beigh by a margin of 4,891 votes. A total of 31,501 votes were polled (41.23%). Independent candidate Liyaqat Ali Khan came in third with 1,895 votes (6.02%), and another independent candidate, Hilal Ahmad Shah, was in fourth place with 1,683 votes (5.34%).

AC 44-Anantnag contains 61,070 voters (30,645 males, 30,425 females) with 70 polling stations (43 urban and 27 rural). AC 45-Srigufwara-Bijbehara has 1,02,081 voters (50,728 males, 51,353 females) with 125 polling stations (16 urban and 109 rural).

Historically, the Anantnag seat was represented by Mirza Afzal Beg of the National Conference in 1951. In 1962, 1967, and 1972, it was represented by Shamasuddin of the Indian National Congress. Beg held the seat in 1974 and 1977, followed by Mirza Mehboob Beg in 1983. In 1987, Mohammad Syeed Shah, an independent, won the seat, followed by Safdar Ali Beg of NC in 1996. Mehboob Beigh won the seat in 2002, followed by Mufti Sayeed in 2008 and 2014, and Mehbooba Mufti in the by-elections of 2016. KNO

**Er. Rashid walks...**

he was granted an interim bail by a Delhi court for campaigning in J&K polls.

After walking out of Tihar jail where he remained incarcerated for more than five years, Rashid said that he will fight against the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's narrative of Naya Kashmir and the peaceful resolution of Kashmir issue till his last breath.

"Let me tell you that PM Modi's narrative of Naya Kashmir has miserably failed. That has been proved by the people of my constituency on June 4. The vote for me was actually a referendum against Modi's narrative of Naya Kashmir that has failed," he said.

Rashid said that he will fight against PM Modi's narrative of Naya Kashmir and for the peaceful resolution of Kashmir issue till my last breath.

To a question about National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah, Er Rashid said Omar was fighting for the chair. "My fight is for my people. My fight is much bigger than what Omar Abdullah is fighting for. There is a difference between spending five years in London and spending the time in Tihar jail where prisoners are craving for medical attention," he said.

In the recent LS polls, Rashid defeated Omar Abdullah by over two lakh votes.

The North Kashmir MP said that he will work for uniting people and not to divide them. "If that's a crime, I am proud to commit this crime again and again. If I will have to spend my entire life in Tihar for this crime, I am ready," he said. "I won't exploit my people. Let youth study, businessmen do business, leave politics to us," he said.

Later, addressing a news conference, Rashid said that he has nothing to do with politics or separatist politics till 2008. "I was a gazetted officer working as assistant engineer in the Jammu & Kashmir Projects Construction Company (JKPCC)," he said. KNO

**Remain vigilant...**

minister called for unity among voters. "People of Kashmir must stay alert as Er Rashid's release seems aimed at dividing the vote," she said.

While Mufti welcomed Rashid's release, she raised concerns about its timing. "He should have been released earlier, so he could have represented the people of J&K in Parliament," she remarked. "I wish Er Rashid had been freed during the Parliamentary elections, allowing him to seek votes for himself. Now, with his release on bail, the timing is suspicious," she added.

Mehbooba further questioned the apparent funding behind AIP's campaign activities. "I am surprised to see AIP carrying out huge rallies with vehicles. Who is financing AIP? PDP candidates are short of funds for rallies, but AIP has fielded candidates everywhere, which makes it seem like agencies have chosen their candidates," she said.

When asked about Jamaat-e-Islami's (JeI) participation in the elections, she expressed uncertainty. "JeI is banned, isn't it? I'm not sure if it's really JeI contesting or if it's agencies. Jamaat must clarify this," she said.

The PDP chief also highlighted the "unfair treatment" of families unable to visit their jailed loved ones. "There should be an unbiased approach in such matters," she said. KNO

**Kharge said in...**

of investigating the people whom he accused of corruption worth hundreds of crores, government agencies are raiding his house under dictatorial orders. This was said by Satyapal Malik, who was made the Governor by the BJP itself.

The Congress President said, BJP is trying to divide the people here in the name of religion, but it will never succeed. The Congress government had brought the Food Security Bill. Earlier 11 kg rice was available in Jammu and Kashmir, today only five kg is available. This shows who is the sympathizer of the poor. This is the difference between Congress and BJP. A market was going to be built in this area of Anantnag ten years ago, which was also inaugurated. But, it remained the same under Modi government. No one is going to see this. He further said that unemployment and inflation are increasing in Jammu and Kashmir, there are problems of many things including electricity and water.

Attacking the central government over terrorist attacks, Kharge said, today attacks are taking place everywhere in Jammu and Kashmir, yet Prime Minister Modi does not shy away from telling lies. Because he is the lord of lies. Narendra Modi had said that everyone will be given Rs 15 lakh each. Will provide two crore jobs every year. Will bring back black money from abroad. But they did nothing, just misled people.

The Congress President further said that the Modi government is running on the strength of TDP and Nitish Kumar. Earlier Narendra Modi used to speak more than 400 seats, but BJP got only 240 seats. If India Alliance had got only 20 more seats, the corrupt people sitting in the government would have gone to jail.

Kharge reiterated the promise that Congress will ensure statehood for Jammu and Kashmir. Along with the Assembly, the Legislative Council will also be restored. Every effort will be made for the rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits. Enumerating Congress's guarantees for Jammu and Kashmir, Kharge said that if the Congress-National Conference coalition government is formed, the female head of the family will be given Rs 3,000 every month. One lakh vacant government posts will be filled. Every member of the family will get 11 kg rice. Health insurance of Rs 25 lakh will be given. Women involved in self-help groups will get an interest-free loan of Rs 5 lakh. Thousands of government schools have been closed here, they will be reopened. As soon as the coalition government comes, the focus will be on tourism, production, jobs and education.

During this, former Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, Congress Organization General Secretary KC Venugopal, Jammu and Kashmir Congress in-charge Bharat Solanki, Congress General Secretary Ghulam Ahmed Mir, State President Hamid Karra,

Nasir Hussain MP, Former P CC President & INC candidate Peerzada Mohd Sayeed, AICC secretaries Dr Shakeel Ahmed, Manoj Yadav, All India Mahila Congress President Alka Lamba, Senior Vice President & Chief Spokesperson JKPC Ravinder Sharma S S Channi, Shameema Raina, AICC media Coordinators Abbas Ahmed & Amreesh Ranjan & other Senior leaders were present.

**ACB unearthen...**

attorney holders to various persons including their own gang leaders and members, by resorting to fraudulent means, thereby causing a huge loss to the Govt.

"Owing to the establishment of, prima facie, nexus of the criminal elements/ land grabbers and the Revenue/ Custodian officers/ officials in alienation of Custodian land through fraudulent means, ACB has registered 10 formal case FIRs in PS ACB Central for investigation under the provisions of Prevention of Corruption Act, criminal conspiracy, cheating, forgery and fraud," it said.

During the course of investigation, after obtaining the search warrants from the Ld. Special Judge Anti-Corruption Jammu, search teams comprising ACB officers, Independent Witnesses, Magistrates were dispatched to around twelve locations throughout Jammu and its adjoining areas, the statement said.

"In addition to 10 FIRs registered, verification is still in progress to unearth the remaining usurped custodian land by land mafia in connivance with officers and officials of Revenue, Police and Custodian department," the statement reads. KNO

**Border area development...**

and electricity as basic facilities that form the foundation of development of any region, Rajnath reiterated the Government's unwavering resolve to ensure progress in every corner of the country.

The Defence Minister stated that the ongoing efforts have not only ensured prompt military deployments in sensitive regions, but have also connected the people residing in border areas with the rest of the country.

He also underlined the fact that building roads, bridges and tunnels in border areas is imperative for national security, it is also important in making the lives of the people in these regions better, in collaboration with the state governments.

Singh said that promoting tourism in border areas is being given special emphasis by the Government as it acts as a catalyst for the development of the region.

He threw light on 'reverse migration', which he termed as one of the positive outcomes of economic development in border areas. He also made special mention of Huri village in Arunachal Pradesh, a unique example of development through civil-military collaboration.

Rajnath stated that while the central and state governments focused on economic progress, BRO and Indian Army laid emphasis on infrastructure development, which resulted in reverse migration.

Speaking about the vibrant village programme which aims to highlight the possibilities of border villages and ensure their development, the Minister said, "Our

objective is to transform the villages along the Northern borders, especially in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh, which are suffering from limited connectivity and infrastructure, into a 'Model Village'. We aim to connect them to the mainstream of development".

He also commended the contribution of the Indian Army in the development of border areas. Singh said the Army is connecting the border areas with the rest of the country through roads and bridges, and is also working for the future of the youth by running schools in the region.

In his address, Minister of Culture and Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat spoke on 'Tourism A Catalyst for Growth in Border Regions'.

He stated that through joint projects it is being ensured that tourism growth in border regions goes hand-in-hand with security and infrastructure development.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi described Border Area Development as a core component of national security.

He stated that Indian Army's efforts in the past have contributed immensely towards model villages in border areas, border tourism and developing infrastructure support including medical support and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief operations.

The border area development vision is bold, ambitious and deeply rooted in the principles of inclusivity, sustainability and security, the Defence Minister said, adding that there has been a 'Whole of Nation Approach' with renewed impetus.

Gen Dwivedi added that infrastructure development; smart borders comprising communication networks and power supply; economic development with employment generation; border area tourism and empowerment of next generation by providing skill enhancement and education opportunities are key pillars of the vision of border area development.

**Focus on providing...**

He also directed for having critical analysis of the services offered and the kind of beneficiaries availing them.

The Chief Secretary further observed that the DNB seats offered in different institutions should be optimally utilized and in no case should these be left vacant. He asked for taking measures to stop the practice of leaving these courses halfway by the admitted candidates.

Moreover, he noted the progress made in generation of ABHA ids of the population here and its desired utilization. He enquired about the status of tendering of 102/108 ambulance services and the training of ASHA workers for provisioning of quality health services at the grassroots level.

Secretary H&ME, Dr Syed Abid Rashid Shah informed the meeting about the status of different projects taken up under this mission and those in pipeline. He also threw light on the monitoring mechanism in place to ensure the smooth implementation of the mission here in the UT.

While giving detailed performance made under this Mission, the MD NHM, Nazim Zia Khan informed the meeting that several health indicators had taken a quantum leap with the initiation of this mission here.

Besides the budget part, the meeting had discussion over the progress made in programmes like Maternal Health, Child Health, RBSK, Anemia Mukht Bharat, Prevention & Control of NCDs, JK e-SAHAJ, National Dialysis programme, Tele-MANAS, Tele-Radiology besides others implemented under the umbrella of NHM. KNO

**Paralympic Archery...**

commitment to accessible and inclusive elections said that as a young future voter from Jammu and Kashmir, Sheetal Devi motivates both youth and PwDs to engage in the democratic process.

CEC Rajiv Kumar in his address said that like in their game, the archers who belong to Jammu and Kashmir, will also team up to enhance voter participation in the election process, especially in the upcoming Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

While lauding the champions for their courage and determination, CEC said that when principles of equality and equity are upheld, disability is not seen as an obstacle but as an opportunity for developing additional strengths to overcome challenges.

He added that Sheetal Devi at such a young age is an inspiration for youth and PwDs, encouraging them to engage in both sports and participation in the festival of democracy.

EC Gyanesh Kumar while congratulating the paralympians, said that their journey is an inspiration for PwDs and being ECI national icons would help in encouraging voter participation.

EC DR S.S Sandhu lauded the champions for their dedication and determination, encouraging them to continue being a role model for many, particularly youth and PwDs.

Meanwhile, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), J&K, Pandurang K Pole, also lauded the ECI for recognising Sheetal Devi and Rakesh Kumar for their extraordinary journeys from the small towns of Jammu & Kashmir union territory.

Pertinently, Sheetal Devi was announced as ECI National Icon just before the announcement of General Elections to Lok Sabha 2024 on 16 March, 2024. At just 17 years old, Sheetal Devi became India's youngest Paralympic medalist. Her accomplishments include gold medals in both Individual and Mixed Team events at the 2023 Asian Para Games, a silver medal at the 2023 World Archery Para Championship, and multiple accolades at the Asian Para Championship.

Rakesh Kumar who was announced as the National Icon for PwDs today has represented the country twice in archery in the Paralympic events at Tokyo and Paris. He has won Gold medal in the mixed team event at the 2023 World Archery Para Championship and in Asian Para Games 2022-23. He also clinched a silver medal in the Individual and Men team at Asian Para Games 2022-23.



## General Observer oversees Training to Micro Observers at Ganderbal

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
GANDERBAL, SEPTEMBER 11

As part of the preparations for the upcoming Assembly Elections-2024, the Ganderbal Administration today organized a comprehensive one-day training session for Micro Observers at the Conference Hall of the Mini-Secretariat Ganderbal.

The training session was presided over by R. Lakshmanan, the General Observer for district Ganderbal, and facilitated by District Level Master Trainers (DLMT).

During the session, participants were thoroughly briefed on the various polling procedures and their specific roles and responsibilities as Micro Observers to ensure a smooth, free, and transparent electoral process.

While interacting with the Micro Observers, Gen-



eral Observer emphasized their critical role in maintaining the transparency and fairness of the elections. He underscored the importance of their responsibilities, urging them to diligently monitor polling activities and ensure adherence to electoral guidelines.

The District Level Master Trainers reiterated the significance of

equipping polling staff with the necessary skills and knowledge for the successful conduct of the elections. The training session aimed to ensure that the Micro Observers are well-prepared for their crucial roles during the election, guaranteeing that the democratic process is conducted with the highest standards of efficiency and impartiality.

## Home Voting commences at Shopian; DEO flags-off polling parties



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SHOPIAN, AUGUST 11

In compliance with the guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI), the District Election Officer, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar today early morning flagged-off polling parties from Mini Secretariat, Shopian to different locations of the Assembly Constituency, Zainapora and Shopian to undertake home voting.

During the process, polling parties visited homes of Senior Citizens

and PwDs totalling 138 voters in twin ACs of the district, across 51 locations. 87 voters of Shopian AC and 51 voters of Zainapora AC had registered for the Home Voting facility.

Eight (08) parties were constituted for Shopian AC and four (04) parties for Zainapora AC for conducting the home voting process smoothly. The polling parties consisted of PO, PO-I, Micro-observer and Cameraperson and were accompanied by security staff and BLOs for security and local facilitation.

The parties were equipped with all mandated polling materials to ensure the smooth voting process, under proper security, magisterial and Observer arrangements. The process was also videographed.

The voters registered their vote through Postal Ballots in the voting compartment in a secret manner and the polling process was conducted under the supervision of recognised agents of political parties and contesting candidates.

## 2nd Randomisation of EVMs and Polling Staff successfully conducted in Srinagar District

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 11

In view of General Elections for Legislative Assembly in Srinagar, the 2nd Randomization of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Polling Staff for all the (08) Eight Assembly Segments of Srinagar District was conducted in accordance with the guidelines of Election Commission of India (ECI) on Wednesday at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex, here.

The 2nd Randomization process was held under the supervision of District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat in presence of the General Observers for Srinagar District.

The representatives of Political parties, Contesting Candidates of all 08 Assembly Constituencies, Returning Officers, Deputy DEO, Nodal Officer EVMs, Nodal Officer ETPBS and other Officers of District Election Authority Srinagar.

The 2nd and final Ran-



domisation of Ballot Units, Control Units and VVPATs for Eight (08) Assembly Segments of Srinagar District were carried out through a dedicated software-EVM Management System. The reserve EVMs were also allotted to polling stations for use.

Besides, 2nd randomisation of Polling Staff was also conducted through the software to create Polling parties and assign them Polling Stations.

Pertinently, District Srinagar has a network of 932 Polling Stations established at 407 locations.

The Assembly Constituency wise randomized list of EVMs were attested by the Candidates and rep-

resentatives of Political parties and copies of the list of respective constituencies were shared with them.

Earlier, the candidates and representatives were briefed about the EVMs ensuring their confidence in the uprightness of the process and encouraging that all requisite measures have been enacted to uphold the sanctity of the polls in free, fair and transparent manner as per the guidelines of Election Commission of India.

All the representatives of Contesting Candidates/ Political parties expressed their satisfaction over the entire randomisation process.

## Nukkad Natak, Voter Pledge held in Jakhbar as Part of SVEEP Initiative

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 11

As part of ongoing efforts under the SVEEP (Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation) programme, a vibrant Nukkad Natak and voter pledge-taking event was hosted today in Jakhbar and its surrounding areas. The event was held under the guidance of AC Nodal Officer SVEEP Jatinder Sethi.

The key highlight of the programme was the powerful street play performed by local artists.

With compelling performances and a clear message, the play captured the attention of the audience, conveying the crucial role of each vote in strengthening democracy. Through this engaging medium,

the community was sensitized to the importance of informed voting, overcoming voter apathy, and ensuring robust participation in the electoral process.

BDO Nagri Parole Javed Iqbal was the Chief Guest at the event. In his address, he emphasized the duty of every eligible voter, stating, "Voting is not just a right; it's a responsibility that upholds the pillars of democracy."

Following the street play, a voter pledge was administered by Ravinder Singh, where the attendees vowed to cast their votes conscientiously. This pledge reinforced the event's key message: that voting with full awareness and responsibility is vital to preserving the democratic process.

## Mobile medical unit organises medical camp under SVEEP at Village Dadaan

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 11

A Mobile Medical unit camp was hosted today here at Village Dadaan by the District Election team under the guidance of District Election Officer, Saloni Rai, as part of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation initiative.

The camp not only provided free medical services to the villagers but also focused on raising awareness about the significance of voting and electoral participation. Through this camp, the villagers were encouraged to exercise their right to vote, especially those residing in remote areas, thus empowering them to contribute to the democratic process. This initiative is a part of the broader efforts aimed at enhancing voter awareness and ensuring increased participation in the electoral process in the region.

## SVEEP: GDC Ajas organises Rally to raise Voter awareness



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 11

Government Degree College (GDC) Ajas on Wednesday organised a SVEEP discussion and rally.

The event aimed to raise voter awareness among students and the polling community, emphasizing the importance of electoral participation and informed voting. The rally featured engaging sessions on the voting pro-

cess and rights to promote electoral involvement.

The Nodal Officer SVEEP for 14-Sonawari Assembly Constituency, Ashiq Hussain highlighted the crucial role of young voters in shaping the democratic future and encouraged all participants to be proactive in the electoral process.

This initiative is part of a broader effort to ensure a well-informed electorate and boost voter turnout in upcoming elections.

## Government Officer suspended in Srinagar for dereliction of duties

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 11

In view of dereliction of the Election related duties, the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar has ordered suspension of a Government Official with immediate effect.

The order issued in this regard by the DEO Srinagar, a Government Officer namely, Sarfaraz Ahmad Dar, Assistant Director erstwhile Gazetteers Unit (presently posted in the National Register of Records Office, Srinagar in Department of Archives, Archaeology & Museum Kashmir) had been appointed as Zonal Magistrate for Barzulla Zone falling in 23-Chanpora Assembly Constituency.

The order also reads that "the Officer despite repeated intimations refused to perform his

duties is hereby placed under suspension with immediate effect and attached with the Additional Deputy Commissioner (K), Srinagar till further orders.

The order further stated that 'the Additional Deputy Commissioner (K), Srinagar shall conduct the detailed enquiry into the dereliction of duties and misconduct of the Officer. He shall submit the comprehensive report to the DEO Srinagar within a week. Meanwhile, the DEO Srinagar has warned all Officers and Officials deployed for General Elections to Legislative Assembly-2024 to be careful and perform their duties diligently. He said the action against the Officer has been taken to ensure the smooth conduct of the ongoing Election process in the District.

## SVEEP: District Bandipora Tennis Championship concludes

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 11

The District Bandipora Tennis Ball Cricket Championship 2024, encompassing both junior and senior categories for boys and girls, concluded today at Govt. Boys Higher Secondary School Nadihal Bandipora. The event held under SVEEP was organized by the Bandipora District Tennis Ball Cricket Association.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from 26 teams over two days, celebrating local talent, fostering sportsmanship among the youth and raising awareness regarding civic responsibilities.

Speaking on the occasion, Padmashree Faisal Ali Dar, known for his outstanding contributions to sports and youth development, expressed his enthusiasm for the role sports can play in shaping a positive future for the youth. He emphasized the vital role of young voters in the democratic process, particularly first-time voters, urging them to understand the power of their vote and actively



participate in the upcoming elections.

Faisal Ali Dar highlighted the importance of using such platforms, not only to foster sportsmanship but also to spread awareness about civic responsibilities, ensuring that the youth remain engaged in both physical and societal

development.

He said that the successful conclusion of the championship sets the stage for the selected teams to advance to the upcoming state championship, promising further opportunities for showcasing talent and sportsmanship.

## Rangoli for Democracy: SVEEP Organises Colourful Event in Poonch to Encourage Voting

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
POONCH, SEPTEMBER 11

The District Election Authority, under the aegis of District Election Officer (DEO) Vikas Kundal, organized a Rangoli competition here today at Shri Dinanath Rafeeq Memorial Government Model Higher Secondary School Girls as part of the ongoing voter education campaign under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program.

The students, through their Rangoli designs, showcased the SVEEP logo and various symbols of democracy, such as the Indian flag, EVM, and slogans emphasizing the importance of voting. These creative expressions not only beautified the event but also reinforced the core messages of civic responsibility and democratic values.

Anjuman Shaheen, the School Principal, (Nodal Officer SVEEP, Haveli Constituency) highlighted the range of activities being organized in the area to reach out to voters, including painting competitions, rallies, and cultural programs. "These initiatives are



geared towards ensuring that every eligible voter understands the importance of casting their vote and actively participating in the democratic process," she said.

DEO Vikas Kundal, who was the chief guest on the occasion, commended the proactive efforts of the students and the school faculty. "The involvement of young citizens and educational institutions plays a key role in promoting informed voting, and it is heartening to see such enthusiastic participation," Kundal remarked. He also distributed certificates among the participants.

Kaneez Fiza Jafri, a first-time voter at the

event, expressed her enthusiasm, saying, "Participating in events like this makes the election feel like a true celebration of democracy. There is a lot of excitement in the air, and it feels great to be part of this important process for the first time." She emphasized how such initiatives underscore the value of every vote and inspire confidence in the electoral process.

The Rangoli competition is one of many initiatives aimed at voter education ahead of the assembly elections in Poonch district, which will be held on September 25th in the three constituencies of Haveli, Mendhar, and Surankote.

## DC Kulgam visits Ziyarat Shareef Mir Syed Ali Hussain Simnani (RA) & Ziyarat Shareef Sheikh Noor Din Noorani at Qaimoo



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 11

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today visited Ziyarat Shareef Mir Syed Hussain Simnani (RA) at Kulgam and Ziyarat Shareef Hazrat Sheikh Noor Ud Din Noorani (RA) at Qaimoo to take stock of arrangements made for smooth celebrations of Eid Milad-un-Nabi SAW and Annual Urs Mubarak

of Hazrat Noor Din Noorani (RA).

During his visit, the DC interacted with the management Committee members and took stock of arrangements.

He instructed the concerned to ensure proper arrangements for smooth celebrations of Eid Milad-un-Nabi and Urs Mubarak at both the places.

The DC was accompanied by ADC and other officers.



## EDITORIAL

## India-UAE relations reach new heights with landmark energy pacts

The recent talks between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the UAE's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan mark a significant milestone in the strategic partnership between India and the United Arab Emirates. Their discussions culminated in landmark energy agreements, further solidifying the two nations' commitment to deepening their economic, political, and cultural ties. These deals, particularly in the energy sector, are set to not only redefine bilateral relations but also position both countries as key players in the global energy landscape.

India and the UAE have enjoyed a robust partnership for decades, but recent developments show that the relationship is now evolving into something much more profound. The newly signed energy pacts represent a paradigm shift in how these two nations approach mutual cooperation. By strengthening collaboration in areas such as renewable energy, oil and gas, and green technologies, India and the UAE are laying the foundation for a sustainable and mutually beneficial future. The focus on clean energy reflects a shared understanding of the urgent need to combat climate change while ensuring energy security for both nations.

For India, these agreements come at a pivotal time. As one of the world's fastest-growing economies, India's energy needs are skyrocketing. The country is actively seeking to diversify its energy sources, reduce its dependency on oil imports, and transition to more sustainable and renewable energy options. The UAE, with its vast reserves of both traditional fossil fuels and increasing investments in clean energy, offers an ideal partnership for India. The energy pacts between the two nations will ensure a steady and reliable supply of energy to fuel India's growth, while also giving India access to advanced technology and expertise in the renewable sector.

On the UAE's side, the strategic partnership with India aligns with its broader vision of diversifying its economy away from oil dependency. India, with its large and dynamic market, offers a vast opportunity for the UAE to expand its investments and trade. The UAE has been keen to explore opportunities in India's infrastructure, technology, and renewable energy sectors, and these agreements will likely open the door to more collaboration in those areas. By deepening its relationship with India, the UAE is securing a key partner in its economic diversification strategy and strengthening its role in the rapidly changing global energy landscape.

Beyond energy, these agreements reflect a broader geopolitical alignment between India and the UAE. Both nations have shared interests in maintaining regional stability and ensuring the free flow of trade, particularly in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf region. With both countries playing increasingly influential roles on the global stage, their enhanced cooperation signals a shift toward a more multipolar world order where regional powers like India and the UAE assert greater agency in global affairs.

The energy pacts are also emblematic of India's growing influence in the Middle East. Over the past decade, India has significantly expanded its diplomatic and economic footprint in the region, recognizing the Gulf's strategic importance not only for energy security but also for trade and investment. The UAE, which is home to a large Indian expatriate population, has been at the heart of India's engagement with the Gulf. The recent agreements are likely to deepen this already strong relationship, with the two nations moving toward a more comprehensive partnership that goes beyond energy and trade to encompass technology, security, and cultural exchanges.

These developments come at a time when both nations are navigating complex global challenges. The ongoing transition to clean energy, rising geopolitical tensions, and economic uncertainties all underscore the need for strong and reliable partnerships. The energy pacts between India and the UAE are a timely reminder that bilateral cooperation remains a powerful tool for addressing these challenges. By working together, India and the UAE can not only safeguard their own energy and economic security but also contribute to broader global efforts to build a more sustainable and stable future.

In conclusion, the talks between Prime Minister Modi and Crown Prince Al Nahyan have elevated India-UAE relations to new heights. The landmark energy pacts are a testament to the strategic foresight of both leaders, who recognize the importance of a forward-looking partnership that benefits both nations. As India and the UAE continue to deepen their cooperation across various sectors, this relationship is set to become a cornerstone of regional and global stability in the years to come. The energy deals are just the beginning of what promises to be an even more dynamic and mutually beneficial partnership.

## A roadmap for boosting India's agri-export

A S MITTAL

In a bid to give impetus to strengthen the supply chain from farm to fork, foster collaboration among global and Indian food sector stakeholders, and support food processing units near farm gates to ensure better profits for farmers and reduce post-harvest losses, The Ministry of Food Processing Industries is taking the lead by hosting 'World Food India' from September 19-22 in New Delhi. In addition, the Union Budget for 2024-25 has allocated Rs 1.52 lakh crore to prioritise agricultural sector development. This funding will focus on climate resilience, productivity, innovation, and processed food exports.

This is crucial as agricultural product exports saw an 8% decline to \$48.9 billion in 2023-24 from \$53.2 billion in 2022-23. The average annual growth rate of agri-exports was just 2% during 2014-23. Notably, five products – rice, wheat, meat, spices, sugar and tea/coffee – account for over 50 per cent of total agricultural exports and sometimes face restrictions to match the domestic demands and supplies to control inflation. Only 25 per cent of our agro-exports are processed or value-added, a figure that has remained virtually

unchanged over the last decade.

This is significant due to a need for more tech-based operational size and production capacity and for meeting international standards to tap the global market. However, the success of global giants like Nestle (Switzerland), with an annual turnover of \$111 billion in the processed food and beverages sector, shows us what is possible with technology and research. Notable Indian firms in domestic processed agriculture, such as AMUL, with a turnover of \$9 billion, are far behind in operational size, production capacity, and meeting international standards. Still, they can achieve similar success with the proper support and approach.

The Global exports of processed agricultural products are nearing \$1 trillion, with Germany (\$63 billion) at the top, the US (\$58 billion), the Netherlands (\$57 billion), China (\$53 billion), and France (\$50 billion). Southeast Asian nations like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand are also major exporters of processed agricultural products. While, India's value-added exports increased by \$6.5 billion over the last five years since the agro-export policy was introduced to boost value-added agriculture exports,

taking the total to \$15 billion, it only marginally improved our global rank from 21 to 17.

This can be surely improved. The Economic Survey 2023-24, reveals that the annual output of fruits and vegetables in India is the world's second-largest at a substantial 300 million tonnes after China, yet the processing levels at 4.5 per cent for fruits, 2.7 per cent for vegetables, 21.1 per cent for milk, 34.2 per cent for meat, and 15.4 per cent for fisheries, compared to 25-30 per cent in China and 60-80 per cent in Western countries.

This deficiency in processing capacity leads to a substantial amount of produce going to waste in India. Estimates of post-harvest losses in the country vary from 18% to 25% across the entire supply chain, though they are thought to be much higher, at up to 45%, for fruit and vegetables. NITI Aayog estimated annual post-harvest losses of close to Rs 90,000 crore. To improve this situation, it is suggested to focus on proper sorting and grading near the farm gate and enhance processing capacity. Incentivizing Farmers: It's crucial to repurpose agricultural incentives to motivate farmers to reduce losses and waste on and near farms.

In 2020, the central government announced an agriculture infrastructure fund of INR 1 trillion to provide medium-to-long-term debt financing for establishing cold chains and post-harvest management infrastructure at farm gates and aggregation points. Tamil Nadu's recent unveiling of its food processing policy is a promising step toward reducing wastage and increasing the value of farm produce.

The policy encourages Farmer's Producers Organisations (FPOs) and the food processing industry to access financial support from central schemes.

However, it's important to note that Punjab has yet to make a similar move, despite the success of neighbouring states like Haryana with their dedicated Agri-business and Food Processing Policy. Revisit the PLI Scheme: The Production Linked Incentive Scheme for the Food Processing Industry (PLISFPI) will be Rs 10,900 crore (\$1.25 billion) from 2021-22 to 2026-27, precisely to attract large globally competitive firms to produce in and export from India. This scheme aims to expand processing capacity, grow strong Indian brands, increase global market presence, create jobs, and boost farmer incomes. As of May 2024, 90% of the PLISFPI

funds still need to be utilised. The government has disbursed only Rs 1,073 crore among 158 SME beneficiaries, using only 10% of the funds over half of the timeline expired.

This underutilisation highlights the need for more focused policy intervention. To achieve the twin objectives of the PLI scheme – global competitiveness and increased exports – these SMEs must form joint ventures with globally established 'anchor' firms. Over the past decade, India has attracted Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) worth Rs 500 billion, with 100% FDI being permissible. The Way Forward: Food processing is considered India's sunrise industry and plays a crucial role in the transformation to benefit farmers effectively, a multi-pronged approach combining MSP, value addition and industry integration is essential for agricultural development due to its strategic importance in providing food security.

As the world's most populous country, we exert significant environmental pressure on Earth, resulting in ecological issues such as soil degradation, loss of biodiversity, and water depletion. Within the broader food systems, waste reduction stands out as one of the leading climate change mitigation solutions, con-

tributing to reduced emissions throughout the food supply chain from farm to fork. By incorporating cutting-edge food processing technologies, establishing globally recognized quality standards, and opening up access to international markets, this focused strategy to attract anchor global firms will help achieve our goals. Apple serves as a prime example of the success of this targeted approach in the electronics sector; it manufactures 14 per cent of the world's i-Phones in India. Electronics exports, mainly intelligent mobile phones, have surged from under \$3 billion in 2020 to \$15.6 billion in 2023 and have led to the creation of over one lakh jobs. This same model should be replicated across various industries. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries should roll out a time-bound outreach program to attract anchor global firms and facilitate their partnerships with Farmer's Producers Organisations (FPOs) and SMEs.

(The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika TTL Group, Vice-Chairman of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council. Views expressed are personal)

## Ravenshaw University renaming: A step toward decolonising India's education system

PADMALOCHAN DASH

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's proposal to rename Ravenshaw University in Odisha has sparked a much broader discussion about India's education system. Though the suggestion might seem symbolic on the surface, it indicates a larger governmental intent: reclaiming India's educational heritage and aligning it with Bharat's civilisational knowledge. The renaming is part of a wider effort to challenge the enduring influence of British-established institutions and the colonial educational framework that has shaped the country for over a century.

The proposal is not without complexity. While a name change may grab headlines, the true challenge lies in the comprehensive realignment of India's education system—a goal that can only be achieved

through the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The success of this shift hinges on integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into modern educational practices, ensuring that India's rich intellectual heritage takes its rightful place at the core of the system.

Colonial Legacy in India's Education: India's education system continues to carry the imprint of its colonial past. British institutions like Ravenshaw University were not designed to foster intellectual growth or cultural preservation but to serve the Empire's administrative needs. The British created educational institutions to produce clerks and bureaucrats who could operate within the colonial system. Unfortunately, this utilitarian approach to education persisted even after India gained independence. The leaders of the newly formed nation failed to envision an alternative

model that could replace the colonial framework with a system aligned with India's civilisational goals.

As a result, the Indian education system has remained tethered to its colonial roots, prioritizing skills for a global market over intellectual, spiritual, or scientific growth. This narrow focus undermines India's holistic knowledge traditions, reducing them to exercises in skill development rather than the broader pursuit of knowledge and self-reliance. The debate over renaming Ravenshaw University, therefore, becomes symbolic of a larger struggle: breaking free from the colonial mindset that continues to shape India's educational and intellectual landscape.

The British Model: A Tool for Control: The British education system in India was never intended to develop the intellect or spirit of the Indian people. Instead, it was designed to produce a

workforce literate in English and skilled enough to support the colonial administration. Lord Macaulay's infamous education reforms focused on turning India's vast and diverse traditional knowledge systems into utilitarian skills that could be exploited for colonial profit. As a result, India's once-thriving intellectual and cultural traditions were marginalized, forced into obscurity to serve the needs of the British Empire.

Even decades after independence, the colonial model remains entrenched. India's education system continues to prioritize skill development over fostering creativity, innovation, and intellectual growth. While skill development is undoubtedly important, the singular focus on it raises concerns about the broader vision and purpose of India's educational objectives.

Moving Beyond Skill-Building: To truly break

free from its colonial past, India must shift its focus from mere skill-building to fostering holistic individual growth. Education should nurture creativity, intellectual curiosity, and the inherent potential of every individual, paving the way for self-reliance. A system that prioritizes intellectual vibrancy over skill production will help India reclaim its rightful place as a leader in global thought and innovation.

The British colonial mindset has left a lasting impact on Indian society, one that is deeply embedded in the psyche of its educational institutions. The British aimed not only to advance their economic interests but to reshape the very thought processes of the Indian population. Their goal was to replace India's ancient knowledge systems with Western paradigms, thus weakening the cultural and intellectual foundation of the nation.

In this context, renaming institutions like Ravenshaw University becomes a step toward decolonizing the Indian mind.

A Forgotten Imperative: Decolonizing Indian Minds

The question arises: has India taken sufficient steps to decolonize its education system? The colonial indoctrination of Indian minds has lasted for generations, and its effects are still visible today. If India is serious about reclaiming its intellectual sovereignty, what concrete steps are being taken to dismantle the remnants of this colonial education system?

The ultimate goal should be to create an educational framework that aligns with India's civilisational values and promotes intellectual independence.

(The author is an ICSSR-Post Doctoral Fellow, School of National Security Studies, Central University of Gujarat. The 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

tranquillity 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 tranquillity 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)



# NHA, IIT Kanpur partner to revolutionise AI in health research

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 11

The National Health Authority (NHA) on Wednesday announced a partnership with the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) Kanpur to revolutionise artificial intelligence (AI) in health research.

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), IIT Kanpur will develop a federated learning platform across a variety of machine learning model pipelines, a quality-preserving database, and an open benchmarking platform for comparing and validating AI models.

The institute will also create a consent management system for research under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM).



"This very important MoU under the ABDM will provide an open public benchmarking platform for comparing and validating AI models," said Apurva Chandra, Union Health Secretary.

The platform will be operated and governed by NHA and use the data for improving health outcomes in the country.

"It will use the data

available under the ABDM to create a public benchmark for AI models for quantifying and diagnosing diseases against which other AI models can be benchmarked," Chandra said. The health secretary added that "one of the biggest issues related to AI models in the healthcare sector is the availability and efficacy of disease diagnosis data which will

be tackled by this collaboration. In a clinical setting, the availability of reliable data will lead to better outcomes and result in better diagnosis."

Launched in September 2021, ABDM aims to establish a robust digital health ecosystem and integrate various healthcare entities -- hospitals, clinics, labs, pharmacies, health insurance companies, and more -- to improve patient care, accessibility, and affordability.

AI has the potential to revolutionise India's healthcare ecosystem and when coupled with ABDM's offering of a digitised health ecosystem, it can lead to significant advancements in disease diagnosis, treatment planning, and patient outcomes.

Further, the new plat-

form will offer numerous benefits, including trustworthy AI models, improved data access, and statistical quality preservation.

"This partnership marks a significant step forward in harnessing the power of AI for our country's healthcare," said L. S. Changsan, Addl. Secretary, Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare & CEO, NHA.

"It will help provide researchers with access to high-quality data and a platform for collaboration with other stakeholders of the health ecosystem while taking into account all aspects of data privacy. It will also accelerate the development of AI-powered health solutions that address critical health challenges," Changsan added.

## New Zealand responds to confirmed mpox cases with vaccine approval

AGENCIES  
WELLINGTON, SEP 11



The New Zealand government has responded quickly to two newly confirmed cases of mpox and approved the use of the vaccine.

The mpox vaccine Jynneos has been given provisional approval by Medsafe, New Zealand's medical safety authority.

Jynneos has been used in New Zealand since 2023 to prevent mpox for those at greatest risk, under a specific provision in the Medicines Act, Health Minister Shane Reti said on Wednesday.

New Zealand has confirmed two new cases of mpox, likely to be linked to the Queenstown Winter Pride event in August. These are cases of clade II mpox, the more common variant, rather than the more severe clade I, researchers said.

"Investigations are continuing which may result in other cases, but the overall risk of mpox to New Zealand remains low," Reti said, adding mpox is obviously a global public health concern at present, and it's important New Zealand has monitoring and resourcing in place.

Health New Zealand has asked attendees of the August event to watch for symptoms, as they may have been in contact with people who have since tested positive for mpox overseas. The World Health Organization (WHO)

declared an international public health emergency last month, triggered in part by the emergence of a new strain, called clade 1b, which is spreading mainly in central and east African countries and isolated cases have also been reported in Sweden and Thailand.

More than 100,000 mpox cases have been reported globally so far, according to the WHO. New Zealand has had 54 diagnosed mpox cases since 2022, with at least five cases already this year, statistics show.

## Suffering chronic pain? Blame that belly fat

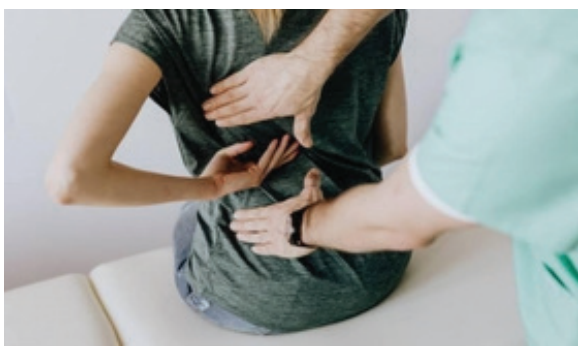
AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 11

If you are suffering from chronic pain in your body, it may be time to actively work towards losing that belly or abdominal fat, suggests research on Wednesday.

Reducing belly fat may help reduce chronic musculoskeletal pain particularly if it's at multiple body sites, especially in women, revealed the study, published in the open-access journal Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine.

Musculoskeletal pain, which affects about 1.71 billion people globally, affects bones, joints, ligaments, tendons or muscles.

Previously published research has shown that obesity is associated with musculoskeletal pain, but



it's unknown if excess fat tissue is linked to chronic musculoskeletal pain at multiple body sites, said researchers from the universities of Tasmania and Monash in Australia.

"Abdominal adipose tissue was associated with chronic musculoskeletal pain, suggesting that excessive and ectopic fat depositions may be involved in the pathogenesis of multisite and widespread chronic mus-

culoskeletal pain," said the team.

They suggested reducing abdominal adiposity for chronic pain management.

The study analysed data from 32,409 participants -- half (51 per cent) were women, and their average age was 55.

All participants underwent MRI scans of their abdomen to measure the amount of fat around the abdominal organs (viscer-

al adipose tissue or VAT) and the amount of fat just under the skin that can be pinched (subcutaneous adipose tissue or SAT).

About 638 people were assessed again after two years.

The team found a significant link between the number of chronic pain sites and VAT, SAT, the ratio of the two, and weight (BMI).

The findings showed women were two times more affected compared to men.

Sex differences in fat distribution and hormones may be the reason why women are more affected, the researchers explained.

However, they noted, "This is an observational study, and as such, can't establish cause and effect".

## Health Secretary Apurva Chandra highlights HMIS Integration with RCH, portals

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEPT 11

Union Health Secretary Apurva Chandra on Monday highlighted the potential of integrating the Health Management Information System (HMIS) with the Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) and other health portals to enhance data efficiency.

He was sharing his views during the release of the annual report '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 report released at the event showed that as of March 31, 2023, As of March 31, 2023, the country has a total of 1,69,615 Sub-Centres (SCs), 31,882 Primary Health Centres (PHCs), 6,359 Community Health Centres (CHCs), 1,340 Sub-Divisional/District Hospitals (SDHs), 714 District Hospitals (DHs), and 362 Medical Colleges (MCs) serving both

rural and urban areas.

These healthcare infrastructures are supported by 2,39,911 health worker (male and female) at SCs, 40,583 doctors/medical officers at PHCs, 26,280 specialists and medical officers at CHCs, and 45,027 doctors and specialists at SDHs and DHs. Additionally, 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, according to the report.

"This data is crucial for the stakeholders in the health sector as it supports effective planning, monitoring and management of the health infrastructure across the country," said Chandra.

By providing a clear snapshot of the current state of healthcare infrastructure and human resources, the publication serves as a foundational tool for identifying gaps and addressing needs in various areas, including in rural, urban and tribal regions, he added.

## Chronic cough & throat clearing post-Covid? It may signal heart attack, stroke risk

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 11

People suffering from common laryngopharyngeal dysfunction like chronic cough, hoarseness, recurrent throat clearing, especially after Covid, may be at significant risk of developing a heart attack or stroke, warns a study on Wednesday.

Researchers from the University of Southampton observed a reduction in baroreflex sensitivity -- a measure of how much a person's heart rate changes in response to changes in blood pressure -- in patients with throat symptoms.

The team noted that the findings could be explained by the Vagus nerve -- which controls the autonomic nervous system -- prioritising protection



of the airways over less urgent functions, such as blood pressure regulation.

"Our immediate survival depends on the throat being able to separate air and food passages each time we swallow," said lead author Reza Nouraei, Professor of Laryngology and Clinical Informatics at the University of Southampton.

"The throat does this using delicate reflexes, but

when these reflexes are disturbed, for example, due to a viral infection like Covid or exposure to reflux affecting nerves in this region, the control of this critical junction becomes compromised, giving rise to symptoms like the feeling of a lump in the throat, throat clearing, and coughing," Nouraei added.

The study, published in JAMA Otolaryngology,

showed that "in patients with a faulty throat, the heart, specifically a function called baroreflex, is less well controlled".

This can "likely impact long-term survival, as patients with reduced baroreflex function are more likely to die of a heart attack or stroke in years to come," Nouraei said.

In the study, the team involved 23 patients admitted to ear, nose, and throat (ENT) surgery with aerodigestive symptoms like choking episodes, chronic cough, and difficult or painful swallowing. These patient's heart rates, blood pressure, and baroreflex sensitivity were compared with 30 patients admitted to Gastroenterology with digestive (esophagogastric) symptoms.

The aerodigestive tract involves lips, mouth,

tongue, nose, throat, vocal cords, and part of the oesophagus and windpipe,

While reflux was a common cause of symptoms in both groups, people in the aerodigestive group were found to have a higher resting heart rate and lower resting blood pressure. They also had lower baroreflex sensitivity than those in the digestive group.

"Now, and especially since Covid which damages nerves, we are seeing more patients with throat symptoms," Professor Nouraei said.

"This study helps us to think about patients more holistically.

As a clinician, if you can fix a problem in the throat that is potentially taking away bandwidth from the Vagus, then it frees up the nerve to give to the rest of

## Brain Stroke emerges as an Alarming Health Concern in India: Experts

AGENCIES  
BHUBANESWAR, SEP 11

The incidence of brain strokes has become a pressing health issue in India, with approximately 2,000 cases reported daily across the country.

A recent study published in The Lancet revealed that the rate of strokes in Odisha is higher than the national average, with nearly one in seven residents at risk.

This growing health issue, once primarily associated with older adults, is now increasingly affecting younger populations due to factors such as sedentary lifestyles, poor dietary habits, rising stress levels, and the growing prevalence of diabetes and hypertension.

These concerns were discussed at the Indian Association of Neurology

(IAN) Stroke Subsection Midterm Conference, organized by the Department of Neurology at AIIMS Bhubaneswar here recently.

Themed "Code Stroke to Stroke Intervention," the conference featured in-depth discussions on early stroke detection, advancements in treatment, and the critical importance of stroke prevention.

Renowned neurologists from across the country participated in the event.

Dr. Ashutosh Biswas, Executive Director of AIIMS Bhubaneswar, noted that the Neurology Department treats over 500 stroke patients every month, providing comprehensive care that includes intravenous thrombolysis, mechanical thrombectomy, stroke neurosurgery, neurocritical care, and advanced

neuro-rehabilitation services.

Dr. Sunil K. Narayan, Chairman of the IAN Stroke Subsection, Dr. Nirmal Surya, President of the Indian Stroke Association, and Dr. Kameshwar Prasad, Dr. P. Vijaya, and Dr. S. P. Gorthi, all spoke extensively on stroke management at the conference.

A poster session on stroke was also organized for resident doctors and faculty members. The event concluded with the felicitation of Dr. R. N. Sahoo, a veteran neurologist, who was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his dedicated service to the field.

Other dignitaries who spoke at the event included Dr. P. R. Mohapatra, Dean (Academics), and Dr. D. K. Parida, Medical Superintendent at AIIMS Bhubaneswar.

## No National TB guidelines for healthcare workers despite 2025 elimination goal: Study

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEPT 11

Despite India's ambitious goal to eliminate Tuberculosis (TB) by 2025--five years ahead of the global target--intriguingly there are no national guidelines for routine TB screening and surveillance among healthcare workers deeply involved in treatment, placing medical staff at a

significantly higher risk of contracting multidrug-resistant TB strains than in the general population, flags a study. It reached this disturbing conclusion after analysing data from ten separate studies conducted between 2004 and 2024. It found an average prevalence of 2,391.6 cases per 100,000 healthcare workers in India, starkly contrasting with the 300

cases per 100,000 in the general population. The study "Prevalence of Tuberculosis Among Healthcare Workers in India: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis," also noted that inadequate ventilation, insufficient personal protective equipment, and frequent exposure to MDR among others are severely affecting the well-being of medical staff with the infection.

## Mpox patient admitted to LNJP hospital in stable condition: Health Minister

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEPT 11

Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj on Tuesday said that the mpox patient admitted at Lok Nayak Jaiprakash (LNJP) Hospital is in a stable condition.

Bharadwaj conducted a surprise inspection of the hospital to assess preparations for dealing with mpox and dengue and also spoke to the

mpox patient.

"This patient of mpox has a travel history. So, it is believed that he got this infection when he was outside the country. Right now, the patient has been kept in isolation in the disaster management ward here. His condition is said to be stable," said the minister.

Bharadwaj emphasised that there was no need to panic over mpox, as it spreads through contact,

not through the air. "We have reviewed that how the doctors will identify a dengue patient if they come in emergency and then how will they be shifted to a different ward. Similarly, surprise inspections will be conducted in other hospitals as well so that if the need arises, all facilities are available in the hospitals," said the health minister.

The senior AAP leader

talked to the hospital administration and assessed the arrangements made in the hospital for the patients of mpox and dengue.

"The patients as well as their attendants expressed their satisfaction in terms of cleanliness. Similarly, the patients and their family members expressed satisfaction about the quality of food provided in the hospital," a party leader

said. While LNJP has been designated as the nodal facility, two other hospitals are on standby. The LNJP Hospital has a total of 20 isolation rooms for the patients, including 10 for confirmed cases.

The Guru Teg Bahadur (GTB) Hospital and Baba Saheb Ambedkar will have 10 rooms each for such patients, with five rooms each for suspected cases.



## Overhauling policy to make industrial landscape investor-friendly in Rajasthan: Minister

AGENCIES  
JAIPUR, SEP 11

Rajasthan Minister of Industries and Commerce Rajyavardhan Rathore on Wednesday said that the state government is overhauling the policies to make the industrial landscape investor-friendly in the state.

"We are undertaking massive policy overhaul to make industrial landscape investor friendly and bringing down the cost of doing business and cutting regulatory red-tape is high on our priority," said the minister while addressing media persons ahead of the 'Rising Rajasthan' Global Investment Summit 2024, scheduled to be held in Jaipur in December this year.

He said that the government is aiming to double the state's GDP from the



current Rs 15 lakh crore to Rs 30 lakh crore in the next five years.

He said that garnering investment in the 'Rising Rajasthan' Global Investment Summit 2024 is the topmost priority of the government, adding, that the government is working towards facilitating ease of doing business.

Speaking about the 'Rising Rajasthan' Global Investment Summit 2024,

the minister said that for the first time in Rajasthan, the summit is being organised on a global scale for which the patchwork has been laid by tying up with partner nations and partner international organisations.

He added that several new policies are going to be launched by the government to ensure that all major sectors of the economy are in sync with the

investor-friendly vision of the government.

He also highlighted the recent decision taken by the government to allocate specific IAS officers as Point of Contacts (PoCs) to specific countries to take routine follow-up on the investment proposals from the respective country/state and ensure its on-ground implementation.

"We are committed to generating jobs and helping the Rajasthan's economy through this summit. We are trying that several MoUs, which have been signed, become operational even before the main summit is held in December.

We have scaled up the international outreach for inviting the business leaders to Rajasthan to unprecedented levels and doing investor' meets in different countries and in different

cities of the country," the minister said.

He added that in the Delhi Investors' Meet, the government is going to organise a roundtable with ambassadors of many countries. We have the desired political will to make the 'Rising Rajasthan' Global Investment Summit 2024 a resounding success.

As part of the planned investors' meetings at these commercial centres, the minister will lead a high-level delegation to the UAE and Qatar from September 16 to September 20.

The delegation will impress upon the investors and business organisations in the two West Asian economies to invest in Rajasthan and invite them to the 'Rising Rajasthan' Global Investment Summit 2024.

## LoP Gandhi is frustrated after losing for third time: Giriraj Singh

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 11

Union Textiles Minister and BJP leader Giriraj Singh on Wednesday criticised Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi following his meeting with US Congresswoman Ilhan Omar in the US, and said he is frustrated after losing for the third time.

"He continues to associate with anti-national elements and attends events hosted by individuals and groups that undermine national unity," he added.

He praised former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and said, "He used to be the LoP. When he used to go out of the country, he used to say 'one country, one leader'. But today whenever Rahul Gandhi goes out, he meets opposition forces like Ilhan Omar. It is high time

that there should be legal action against people who speak against the country."

Giriraj Singh also condemned the LoP for his derogatory remarks against PM Modi and called for ending his membership in Parliament.

"In 1976, when Indira Gandhi was PM, one MP spoke against her while abroad. The MP's membership was ended and they had given a statement that parliamentarians cannot speak against the PM in other countries. Today, Rahul Gandhi is not only speaking against PM Modi but also abusing India's democracy. India's democracy is very strong," he added.

Giriraj Singh also criticised the Congress MP's remarks on China and said, "Late PM Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's decisions left a lasting scar,

with Kashmir and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK), and the effects of that unresolved issue still linger within India today. He handed over 34,000 square kms of land to China. When Ram Manohar Lohia protested, he replied that it was just pebbles and stones. Today, Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi should apologise for the mistakes of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru."

Dwelling upon Sikhs For Justice expressing support for the Congress leader's recent remarks about religious freedom of the Sikh community in India being under threat, Giriraj Singh said, "He meets people like Pannun (Khalistani). He used to abuse and insult Sikhs earlier. The LoP always meets anti-national forces like Pannun. The country will give an answer to it."

## AAP holds key to next govt formation in Haryana, says Raghav Chadha at Pawan Fauji's roadshow

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 11

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MP Raghav Chadha joined the roadshow of Pawan Fauji, the party's candidate from Uchana constituency in poll-bound Haryana on Wednesday and sought public support for his victory.

With less than a month to go for single-phase polling in Haryana, the electioneering is reaching a feverish pitch with big faces of respective parties entering the poll fray and seeking support for their candidates.

Chadha, also a close aide of AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal, while throwing his weight behind Pawan Fauji, said that the next government in Haryana can't be formed without support from AAP.

"AAP holds the key to the next government for-



mation in Haryana. The party will emerge as a key pivot in the upcoming elections," Chadha asserted, addressing the public gathering.

Chadha also took potshots at Dushyant Chautala-led Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) and claimed that its legislator from Uchana indulged in public loot and betrayed its residents and henceforth,

urged the electorate to vote for AAP in impending elections.

The AAP lawmaker said that he was convinced over the change of guard in Haryana this time and stated: "The end is obvious from the beginning."

He said that the state was yearning for change and the huge outpouring of support at the AAP candidate's public rally shows

that people are ready to put a stamp on the 'historic innings' of AAP in the state.

"The faith in Arvind Kejriwal and the tremendous enthusiasm of the people of Haryana towards the Aam Aadmi Party shows that this time the broom will sweep Haryana. This time there will be change," Chadha posted on X.

Meanwhile, the AAP released its fourth list of candidates for Haryana elections, announcing 21 names in the new list. This takes the party's number of nominees to 61.

It has fielded Kavita Dalal from Julana seat, against Vinesh Phogat of Congress.

The Julana constituency has become a hot seat and is garnering everyone's attention because of the star wrestler making her electoral debut from there.

## MP govt inks MoU with NDDDB for promoting milk production: CM Mohan Yadav

AGENCIES  
BHOPAL, SEP 11

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said on Wednesday that the Madhya Pradesh government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Dairy Development Board (NDDDB), aimed at increasing the milk production in the state.

CM Yadav made this announcement after a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who also holds the portfolio of the Ministry of Cooperation in New Delhi.

"MP government has signed an MoU with NDDDB on Tuesday. This step will help to increase milk production in the state," CM Yadav said, adding that NDDDB and the state government would set up dairies for milk production as a pilot project.

Chief Minister said with this step, more than 11,000 villages would be able to get a fair milk price.

"During the meeting, the Union Cooperation Minister assured that the MP government will get full support and the milk project will be



expanded across the state in future," he added.

On the other hand, the opposition Congress has alleged that the attempt was being made to promote Gujarat-based Amul milk products in Madhya Pradesh.

Congress Rajya Sabha MP and senior advocate Vivek Tankha said, "Sanchi is being taken over through the backdoor. Amul has been trying to expand in Madhya Pradesh for a long time, it even set up a big plant, but could not find a way."

However, the MP BJP unit responded to Tankha's claim, saying the Congress leader was making a "false and baseless" allegation about

the BJP-led MP government.

MP BJP said the NDDDB is an undertaking of the Union government, which has been given the task of operating and efficiently managing Sanchi.

"There is no mention of Amul in this. There is talk of handing over Sanchi to the National Dairy Development Board for modernisation and production.

Since the BJP government is determined to make the state a leader at every level, this step has been taken to make the state a leader in milk production in the country by providing facilities," the MP BJP said in a statement on Wednesday.

## Amid standoff, Bengal CS sends fresh talks offer to protesting junior doctors

AGENCIES  
KOLKATA, SEP 11

The West Bengal government on Wednesday issued a fresh appeal requesting the protesting junior doctors holding a sit-in outside the Swasthya Bhavan, the headquarters of the state Health Department in Salt Lake, since Tuesday to send a delegation for discussions on their demands.

The medics protesting the rape and murder of a junior doctor at the R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata last month are demanding the suspension of the Health Secretary, Director of Health Services, and the Director of Medical Education.



A similar appeal for talks was sent on Tuesday evening by Health Secretary Narayan Swarup Nigam, but it was rejected by the protesting doctors who questioned the rationale behind the appeal coming from the same person whose suspension is one of their primary demands.

"One of our main demands is the suspension

of Health Secretary Narayan Swarup Nigam. Yet, the email for a meeting on our demands came from the same Health Secretary's office, which is insulting," a protesting junior doctor had said on Tuesday.

Keeping that in mind, the appeal on Wednesday was issued by Chief Secretary Manoj Pant.

"We value your open-

ness to dialogue, as constructive discussions are essential for addressing concerns and working together to improve our healthcare infrastructure," read the appeal by Pant.

The Chief Secretary requested the protesting junior doctors to send a 12 to 15-member delegation for discussions at Nabanna by 6 p.m. on Wednesday.

However, till the time of filing of this report, the West Bengal Junior Doctors' Forum (WBJDF), the banner under which the protest is being held, has not announced its next move.

"We will communicate our decision soon after discussing the matter," said a protesting doctor.

In his letter to the junior doctors, the Chief Secretary also reminded them that the common people are being deprived of medical services for the past 32 days.

On Monday, the Supreme Court had said that doctors in West Bengal protesting against the R.G. Kar rape-murder must resume their duties by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, failing which the state government will be authorised to initiate disciplinary action against them.

However, unmoved by the Supreme Court ultimatum, the junior doctors vowed to continue their agitation and gave a call to march to the Swasthya Bhavan on Tuesday afternoon.

## Congress anti-reservation face exposed: Devendra Fadnavis on Rahul's remarks in US

AGENCIES  
NAGPUR, SEP 11

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Wednesday launched a scathing attack against the Congress, saying that the grand old party's anti-reservation has been exposed with its leader Rahul Gandhi's remarks in the US.

The senior BJP leader said: "It is regrettable that on one hand, the Congress set up a false narrative during the Lok Sabha elections, and on the other, they go abroad and speak the language of ending reservation. Congress never honoured Babasaheb Ambedkar but

defeated him twice."

He said that BJP has a clear pro-reservation policy and it will not allow the end of the reservation.

"Rahul Gandhi speaks about saving the Constitution in the country, and during his visit abroad, he speaks about ending reservation. It turns out that all their talk is false. Congress never honoured the Constitution and stopped Babasaheb Ambedkar from going to the Lok Sabha," the BJP leader claimed. Meanwhile, state BJP spokesman Ram Kulkarni also criticised Rahul over his anti-reservation statement and questioned whether the Maharashtra Pradesh

Congress Committee agrees with the Leader of Opposition in the Parliament's remarks in the US.

"Congress cheated the common man by spreading a fake narrative that the BJP will change the Constitution. Rahul Gandhi has always taken an anti-India stand during his visits abroad," he said.

Earlier, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde also slammed Rahul, saying that the MahaYuti will not allow the end of reservation. "It has been proved that Rahul Gandhi has a foreign mentality. Many ordinary Indian students have won the hearts of people globally with their intelligence.

## 2013 serial blasts: Patna HC commutes death sentences of four accused to life imprisonment

AGENCIES  
PATNA, SEP 11

The Patna High Court on Wednesday commuted the death sentences of four accused, involved in the 2013 serial blasts case, to life imprisonment.

The blasts took place at Patna's Gandhi Maidan during an election rally being addressed by Narendra Modi who was the BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate for the 2014

Lok Sabha elections. The judgment was delivered by a single bench of Justice Ashutosh Kumar, who reviewed the earlier ruling of the Special NIA Court.

Imran Ghani, the defence lawyer representing the accused, confirmed the High Court's decision to convert the death sentence to life imprisonment.

"In the Gandhi Maidan bomb blast case, the Patna High Court revised

the verdict originally given by the Special NIA Court, which had sentenced four of the accused to death. The High Court, under the single bench of Justice Ashutosh Kumar, converted these death sentences to life imprisonment for a term of 30 years. The life imprisonment sentences for two other accused were upheld," Ghani said.

The serial blasts, which occurred on October 27, 2013, had caused wide-

spread panic and resulted in several casualties.

The explosions, which also targeted the Patna railway station, resulted in the deaths of six people and injuries to over 80 others.

The case, initially investigated by the Patna Police, was later handed over to the National Investigation Agency (NIA). The NIA identified 10 individuals involved, nine of whom were found guilty.

## Central team in flood-hit Andhra Pradesh to assess damages

AGENCIES  
AMARAVATI, SEP 11

The Inter-Ministerial Central Team on Wednesday began a visit to flood-affected districts of Andhra Pradesh to assess damages.

The team began its visit with a meeting with the officials of various departments at the office of Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority at Tadepalli in the Guntur district.

Officials of various departments made a PowerPoint presentation to explain the damages

caused by heavy rains and floods in seven districts.

They said that the heavy rains and floods impacted the NTR, Krishna, Guntur, Bapatla, Palnadu, Eluru, and West Godavari districts. The state government officials also explained the damages caused due to the flooding of Vijayawada city following breaches in Budameru Rivulet.

The Central team was also briefed on the rescue and relief works undertaken by the state government. It was told that people under the limits of

32 wards and 161 village secretariats were affected. Thousands of people from inundated areas were shifted to relief camps.

The team headed by Dr A. L. Waghmare, an officer in the Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, was shown videos and photos highlighting the damages. The state government officials informed the Central team that over one crore food packets and water bottles were distributed among affected people. Drones and helicopters were used for distribution of food,

milk, biscuits, candles and matchboxes.

The Central team was told that emergency medical services were provided by opening medical camps in flood-hit areas. The officials said the rescue and relief works were undertaken with the help of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), the Indian Air Force and the Navy. The team was informed that electricity has been restored in the affected areas while the sanitation works were undertaken.



# KYIV WILL BE ALLOWED TO MAKE LONG-RANGE MISSILE STRIKES: RUSSIA

AGENCIES  
MOSCOW, SEP 11

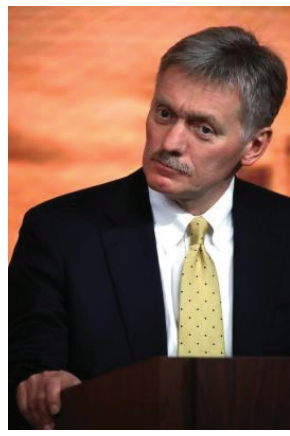
Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov announced on Wednesday that if the United States allowed Ukraine to conduct long-range missile strikes then Russia would respond accordingly.

Peskov's comments came as the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and British Foreign Secretary David Lammy arrived in Kyiv on Wednesday - a visit that Russia alleged was part of giving the Ukrainian authorities the permission to strike

Russia using American long-range ATACMS missiles.

"Most likely, of course, all these decisions have already been made. This can be assumed with a high degree of probability," Peskov commented during a media briefing on Wednesday while responding to reports of potential strikes by Ukraine on Russian soil.

"At the moment, the media is simply conducting an information campaign to formalize the decision that has already been made," Peskov was quoted as saying by Russia's TASS news agency.



At a news conference in London on Tuesday, Blinken emphasised the critical juncture in the

Russia-Ukraine conflict as Kyiv continues its counteroffensive amid heightened Russian aggression.

"It's a critical moment for Ukraine in the midst of an intense fall fighting season," Blinken said.

Ukraine has been pressing its allies to provide advanced weaponry capable of striking deeper into Russian territory. Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal reiterated this appeal during his meeting with Lammy, expressing hope for Western support.

"We hope that long-range equipment for strikes on the territory of our enemy will be reached, and we will have it," Shmyhal said.

At a news conference on Tuesday, Shmyhal argued that Ukraine should be allowed to target military installations in Russia, stating that such actions would enhance the "safety of Ukrainian civilians."

US President Joe Biden has also confirmed that his administration is working on lifting restrictions on Ukrainian strikes deep within Russian territory, further indicating Western alignment with Kyiv's military objectives.

# Three senior Hamas militants killed in attack on Gaza humanitarian zone: Israel

AGENCIES  
JERUSALEM, SEP 11

The Israeli military has said it had killed three senior Hamas militants in strikes on a designated safe zone in southern Gaza.

The strikes targeted a crowded tent camp housing displaced Palestinians in the Mawasi area of Khan Younis, killing at least 19 people, with more being trapped under the rubble, according to Gaza-based health authorities.

Video footage on social media showed dozens of tents caught on fire and large craters resulting from the strikes.

The Israeli military confirmed in a statement on Tuesday that it attacked the location, describing it as an intelligence-based "precise strike" targeting "senior Hamas terrorists operating within a command and control centre embedded inside the humanitarian area in Khan Younis", Xinhua news agency reported.

According to the Israeli military, the strikes killed Samer Ismail Khadr Abu Daqqa, head of Hamas's aerial unit in the Gaza Strip, Osama Tabesh, head of the observation and targets department in Hamas's military intel-

ligence headquarters, and Ayman Mabhouh, a senior Hamas militant.

The three militants were "directly involved" in the Hamas attack on southern Israel on October 7, 2023, and had been "recently planning terror activities against the Israel Defense Forces and the State of Israel," the military said.

Later, the Israeli army conducted another attack on the Al-Farouq Mosque in the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza.

The army said the attack aimed to destroy another Hamas command and control centre located within the mosque.

# US maintains 'unfriendly attitude' towards Russia: Kremlin

AGENCIES  
MOSCOW, SEP 11

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov on Wednesday slammed the United States for continuing its "unfriendly attitude" towards Moscow and using Russian President Vladimir Putin's name "as a tool in the domestic political struggle" during the ongoing Presidential election campaign in the country.

Addressing media in the Russian capital a few hours after the conclusion of the much-anticipated US presidential debate between Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump, the Russian Presidential spokesperson highlighted the seemingly not much difference amongst the major US political parties with regard to Washington's current stance on Moscow amid the ongoing



war in Ukraine.

"Unfortunately, we were unable to follow the debate live as it was nighttime here. However, in the morning, we reviewed news reports and saw various statements made during the debate. The position remains quite clear: the US, irrespective of the candidate's party, continues to maintain an unfriendly attitude towards Russia," said Peskov.

He noted that Russian President Vladimir

Putin's name was frequently invoked by both US Vice President Kamala Harris and Republican candidate and former US President Donald Trump in their exchanges during the debate "as a tool in the domestic political struggle in the United States".

Peskov hoped that the American candidates would refrain from using Putin as a tool in their campaigns, reported Russian daily Izvestia.

He also mentioned that it is ultimately up to the

American voters to assess the content and speeches of the candidates, stressing that "Russia has its own concerns, achievements and problems".

In addition, Peskov addressed Republican candidate Trump's claim that President Joe Biden could resolve the Ukraine conflict with a "direct call" to Putin.

The Kremlin spokesperson dismissed the notion, saying, "Such a call could not resolve the conflict. The end to the conflict is contingent on the US abandoning its policy of using Ukraine as a tool to suppress Russia".

Peskov reiterated Russia's longstanding stand that the US and European Union have "direct involvement" in the Ukraine conflict. He warned that if the US provides Ukraine with long-range missiles, Russia will "respond accordingly".

# Thousands protesters rally outside Australia defence industry expo



AGENCIES  
CANBERRA, SEP 11

Thousands of anti-war protesters gathered on Wednesday morning to rally outside a defence industry exposition in Melbourne in Australia's state of Victoria, local media reported.

Demonstrators began to gather at 6 a.m. local time on Wednesday outside the Land Forces International Land Defence Exposition in Melbourne's CBD, waving Palestinian flags and banging drums while chanting "free Pal-

estine" amid the ongoing conflict in Gaza.

City roads were blocked and public transport was disrupted on Wednesday morning.

Police clashed with protesters and used capsicum spray as projectiles were thrown at mounted officers, said local media.

Running from Wednesday until Friday at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, the biennial conference has attracted hundreds of companies and organisations displaying lethal technology.

# U.S. launches new mission featuring first civilian spacewalk

AGENCIES  
NEW YORK, SEP 11

SpaceX launched a new fully-commercial human spaceflight mission on Tuesday, featuring the first-ever commercial spacewalk. The Dragon spacecraft carrying four civilian astronauts lifted off at 5:23 a.m. Eastern Time Tuesday from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

The mission, dubbed Polaris Dawn, is the first human spaceflight for the crew, consisting of Mission Specialist Sarah Gillis, and Mission Specialist and Medical Officer Anna Menon.

It is the 14th human spaceflight mission of SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft. The mission is headed for an altitude three times higher than the International Space Station, the

furthest that humans have been from Earth in over half a century, according to Elon Musk, founder of SpaceX.

The crew is preparing for the first-ever commercial spacewalk scheduled on Thursday, Sept. 12.

The crew will also conduct science during their multi-day mission to orbit, including essential health and human performance research for NASA's Human Research Program.

The research will help NASA scientists better understand how exposure to space conditions affects the human body. The crew will test new medical approaches and technology on telemedicine capabilities, gather data on space motion sickness, and better characterize flight-associated injury risks, according to NASA.

# UK SET TO RELEASE NEARLY 1,700 PRISONERS EARLY AMID CAPACITY CRISIS

AGENCIES  
LONDON, SEP 11

Around 1,700 prisoners in England and Wales are set to be released early, as part of a government scheme to reduce overcrowding in prisons.

This is in addition to the around 1,000 prisoners normally released each week.

According to official figures from last week, the prison population in England and Wales surpassed 88,500, reaching a record high while leaving only about 1,000 free spaces in prisons.

The early release policy is one of the short-term measures in the government's plans to ease pressure on prison capacity, especially following the recent riots in the wake of the Southport stabbing in July, which had further



strained prison resources, Xinhua news agency reported.

Those being released early are prisoners serving sentences of less than five years. They are now eligible for release on license after serving 40 per cent of their sentence, down from 50 per cent under the previous law.

Although the policy does not apply to those serving sentences for

certain sexual, violent, domestic abuse, terrorism and national security offences, it has raised some worries.

Baroness Newlove, the victims' commissioner for England and Wales, said that the situation is "distressing for many victims who rightfully expect offenders will serve the sentence handed down by the court."

"I am concerned about

the impact of these early releases on victims' confidence in our justice system," he said, adding that some victims have been left "unaware" of their offender's early release.

Despite the government's pledge to exclude certain domestic abusers from the scheme, some victims have been notified of their abusers' release.

"I worry that it might not be possible for every victim to be notified of their abuser's release and I fear they may be left blindsided, without the time to seek vital support and guidance," the Domestic Abuse Commissioner Nicole Jacobs said, adding that there is "no justice" in allowing such offenders to be released early.

Justice Secretary Shabana Mahmood said this was "the only option left

on the table" as the alternative would have been to "allow the prison system to collapse and therefore to allow law and order in this country to collapse."

She blamed the last government, saying they "dodged difficult decisions and left our prisons in crisis."

According to the government's short-term measures to quickly free up prison spaces, around 5,500 offenders will be released in two tranches over two months, with the second batch scheduled for release on October 22. The government has also planned to accelerate the building of new prisons.

However, even with new prisons being built, the Institute for Government has projected there could be a shortfall of 8,000 prison places by 2028.

AGENCIES  
GAZA, SEP 11

The Israeli Army said that it has killed Mahmoud Hamdan, commander of Hamas's Tel al-Sultan Battalion, in the southern Gaza Strip city of Rafah, media reports said on Wednesday. Drone surveillance detected several Hamas cells, which were then attacked by the Israeli air force, and during the raid, Hamdan, together with three additional company commanders from the same battalion, was killed, Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adrae said in a statement on social media platform X.

Hamdan played a crucial role in planning the October 7 attack on Israel last year and other operations against Israeli forces in Rafah, he said. Adrae announced that



the leadership chain of the battalion and dozens of others associated with it have been eliminated.

There has been no immediate comment from Hamas on this matter.

In a separate statement, Adrae said fighter jets targeted a Hamas-affiliated group inside a command and control complex hidden in a building that was previously a mosque in the Al-Bureij area of central Gaza. The complex was used for planning and

executing attacks against Israeli forces, he said.

Meanwhile, Palestinian security and medical sources reported that Israeli warplanes had targeted the al-Farouq Mosque and the youth club in the Al-Bureij refugee camp.

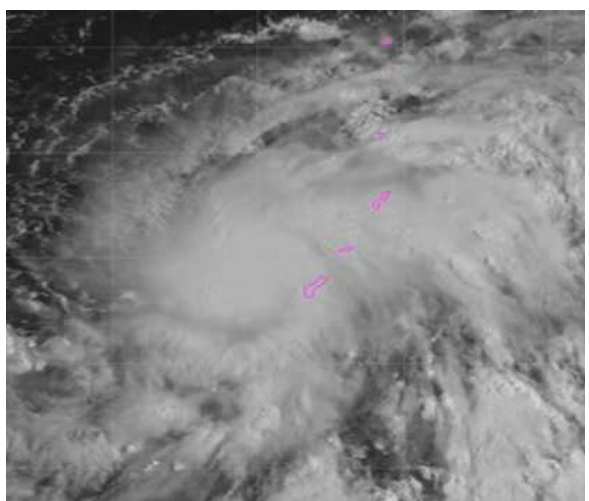
The Israeli offensive has so far killed 41,020 Palestinians and injured 94,925 others in the coastal enclave, reported Gaza-based health authorities on Tuesday.

# Typhoon to approach southwest Japanese islands over weekend: JMA

AGENCIES  
TOKYO, SEP 11

Japan's weather agency on Wednesday issued a warning as Typhoon Bebinca is expected to approach the country's southwestern island chain, including Okinawa and Amami regions over the weekend, bringing severe weather conditions.

The 13th typhoon of the year, which formed near the Mariana Islands on Tuesday night, is moving northwest at a speed of 20 kilometers per hour, reported the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA).



As of 9 a.m. local time

on Wednesday, the tropical storm had a central pressure of 990 hPa and a maximum wind speed of 25 meters per second.

The storm's strong wind zone, with a speed of at least 15 meters per second, extends within a radius of 220 kilometers from the center, said the JMA.

The JMA warned that the typhoon, expected to hit between Saturday and Sunday, may bring heavy rains, strong winds, and high waves to the affected regions, urging residents and visitors to take precautions.

# Vietnam: Typhoon Yagi leaves 141 dead, 59 missing in northern region

AGENCIES  
HANOI, SEP 11

As of Wednesday morning, Typhoon Yagi and the consequent landslides and floods had left 141 dead and 59 missing in Vietnam's northern region, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development announced.

Among the fatalities, 29 were from Cao Bang Province, 45 from Lao Cai Province and 37 from Yen



Bai Province. Local authorities of Tuyen Quang province

confirmed on Tuesday night that the dyke of Lo River running through

Quyet Thang commune has broken due to rising river water, Vietnam News Agency reported.

Flood levels on the Red River in the capital Hanoi have surpassed warning level 2 out of three levels and is forecast to reach the highest level on Wednesday at noon, according to the National Center for Hydro-Meteorological Forecasting on early Wednesday.



# EXPLAINER: HOW INDIA'S AMBITIOUS SEMICONDUCTOR JOURNEY IS TAKING SHAPE

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 11

As India begins its semiconductor electronics manufacturing journey amid Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "it is right time to be in India" call, the reformist government, a growing manufacturing base in Bharat, and a huge aspirational market can help realise the mega chip dream.

To begin with, about Rs 1.52 lakh crore (nearly \$18 billion) worth of investments have come in India's semiconductor manufacturing space in a short span of time and several projects are already in the pipeline.

The construction of two semiconductor units is in full swing (Micron's plant in Gujarat and Tata Electronics' unit in Assam) and the work will soon commence on the three more units in the country.

According to industry experts, the country could receive up to \$30 billion investment in the sector in the next three-four years



which would further bolster its position in the global supply chain.

In March this year, PM Modi laid the foundation stone of three semiconductor projects worth Rs 1.25 lakh crore.

As per reports, India's semiconductor-related market will reach \$64 billion in 2026, nearly triple the size in 2019.

Towards achieving this goal, the 'Semicon India' initiative allows financial support for front-end fabrication units, display fabs, semiconductor packaging, compound semiconductors, sensors, and display manufacturing.

Semiconductors is a foundational industry. With the advent of artificial intelligence (AI),

chips are being used in medical instruments, mobile phones, laptops, cars, trucks, trains, televisions and practically every device on earth India is a major consumer of chips and has built the world's best digital public infrastructure (DPI) on this chip.

This small chip is playing a significant role in ensuring last-mile delivery in Bharat. Whether it is the unified payments interface (UPI), RuPay card, Digi Locker, or Digi Yatra, various digital platforms have become part of everyday life. The demand for data centres in the country is continuously rising and these run on chips.

Experts say that by expanding production

capacity, the country is poised to become a major player in the sector. National initiatives, such as the Semicon India Programme and the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), are focused on capturing a significant share of the global market, driving innovation, and stimulating economic growth through job creation and technological advancement.

The government is working on setting up a semiconductor research centre at the Indian Institute of Space Sciences, along with partnering with IITs so that engineers not only develop high-tech chips for today but also research next-gen chips.

In his speech, PM Modi

said India has been elected Vice Chair of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework's Supply Chain Council.

The country is also a significant partner in the QUAD Semiconductor Supply Chain Initiative and has recently signed agreements with several countries including Japan and Singapore.

India is also continuously increasing its cooperation with the US in this sector. The first indigenously-developed chip is set to arrive in the country soon.

According to PM Modi, the country has the potential to fulfil the dream of developing a 'Made in India' chip for every piece of equipment.

At the moment, the chip fabrication facility in Dholera, Gujarat, is being set up by Tata Electronics with an investment of over Rs 91,000 crore. The Semiconductor Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) facility in Morigaon, Assam is being set up by Tata Electronics

for about Rs 27,000 crore. The Maharashtra government has approved a chip manufacturing project, to be jointly set up by Israel's Tower Semiconductor and the Adani Group.

The project will be set up in Panvel in Raigad district with a proposed investment of Rs 58,763 crore in the first phase and another Rs 25,184 crore in the second phase, creating at least 15,000 jobs.

The Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) facility in Sanand, Gujarat is being set up by CG Power and Industrial Solutions Ltd for about Rs 7,500 crore.

The Cabinet has also approved the proposal of Keynes Semicon to set up a semiconductor unit in Sanand, Gujarat, with an investment of Rs 3,300 crore that will produce nearly 60 lakh chips per day.

The first chip plant in the country was the Rs 22,500 crore US-based Micron's semiconductor plant in Gujarat announced last year.

## Adani Ports to develop berth at Gujarat's Kandla Port for multi-purpose cargo

AGENCIES  
AHMEDABAD, SEP 11

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) on Wednesday announced it will develop a multi-purpose berth at Kandla Port in Gujarat.

The Berth No 13 at Deendayal Port in Kandla will handle multipurpose cargo and is expected to be commissioned in FY27, India's largest port developer-cum-operator said in a statement.

"Berth No 13 will diversify our presence at Deendayal Port. We will now handle multipurpose clean cargo at the port, in addition to dry bulk cargo that we already handle," said Ashwani Gupta, Wholesale Director and CEO, APSEZ. Berth No 13 is 300-metre long and offers 5.7 MMT (million metric tonnes) capacity annually.

"The berth will further consolidate our position on the western coast and enhance our ability to service customers in Gujarat and north India," Gupta added.

Adani Ports has incorporated a wholly-owned subsidiary, DPA Container and Clean Cargo Terminal Ltd (DPACCCTL), that will carry out operations at the berth.

In July, Adani Ports had received the letter of intent (LOI) for the development, operation and maintenance of the berth for a 30-year concession period. The company said it will develop the berth under the DBFOT (design, build, finance, operate and transfer) model for multipurpose clean cargo, including container cargo.

Adani Ports recently announced it would acquire an 80 per cent stake in global offshore support vessel operator Astro Offshore for \$185 million in an all-cash deal. Astro will enhance Adani Ports' global marine portfolio and help add new Tier-1 customers. The transaction, implying an enterprise value of \$235 million, is expected to be value accretive from the first year itself, said the flagship company of the Adani Group.

## SEMI, IESA join hands to boost India's position in global chip value chain

AGENCIES  
GREATER NOIDA, SEP 11

In a bid to bolster India's position in the global semiconductor value chain, industry association SEMI on Wednesday announced a strategic agreement with the India Electronics and Semiconductor Association (IESA).

IESA will become part of the global SEMI family and represent SEMI in India. It will continue to use its current brand while beginning to implement SEMI's processes and select initiatives, it was announced during the 'Semicon India 2024' event.

"India holds immense potential in the semiconductor space, and many global companies are already exploring the opportunities within the country's semiconductor industry," said Ajit Manocha, President and CEO, SEMI.



The partnership will help SEMI grow a strong presence in this critical emerging market and enable both organizations to identify tangible strategies that leverage our combined strengths to enhance supply chain resilience, he added.

Additionally, SEMI members will now have

direct access to India's growing semiconductor market, tapping into new growth opportunities.

Dr Veerappan, Chairperson, and Ashok Chandak, President, IESA, emphasised the strategic significance of the partnership.

"This milestone is a major win for India, SEMI, and IESA. It positions India to become a global

semiconductor powerhouse, accelerates economic growth, and fosters innovation," they noted.

This agreement will also pave the way for joint policy advocacy efforts, with IESA and SEMI working closely with both central and state governments to drive incentives for product development and manufacturing, leveraging key programmes such as the production-linked incentive (PLI) and design-linked incentive (DLI) models.

The three-day 'Semicon India 2024' is being attended by over 600 exhibitors and more than 100 global companies. Organised by SEMI in partnership with Messe Munchen India, MeitY, India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) and Digital India, the event underscores India's emergence as a global semiconductor powerhouse.

## ONDC's new Saarthi app to help businesses to create multilingual buyer apps

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 11

The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) on Wednesday launched Saarthi, a reference application designed to assist businesses in creating customised multilingual buyer apps.

Developed together with Bhashini -- an AI-driven language translation tool -- Saarthi will offer advanced multilingual features for a more inclusive digital commerce experience to ONDC participants.

The application initially supports 5 languages -- Hindi, English, Marathi, Bangla, and Tamil. It plans to scale up to all 22 languages provided by Bhashini.

This will ensure that businesses can offer a personalised and localised shopping experience,



breaking down language barriers and enhancing accessibility for users across India.

"The launch of Saarthi is a pivotal development in our journey towards a more inclusive digital commerce landscape. By providing a reference application that enables businesses to create multilingual buyer apps, we are breaking down language barriers and opening up new avenues for engagement and growth," said T Koshy, MD and CEO at

ONDC. "This initiative aligns with our commitment to democratise access to e-commerce, ensuring that businesses of all sizes can connect with customers across India's diverse linguistic spectrum," Koshy said.

Further, the multilingual features of Saarthi, including real-time translation, transliteration, and voice recognition will allow businesses to expand market reach, enabling companies to

tap into new regions and increase customer acquisition.

Personalised user experiences enhance customer engagement and loyalty, while the application's competitive features provide a unique value proposition.

"Collaborating with ONDC on Saarthi underscores Bhashini's dedication to overcoming language barriers in digital commerce," said Amitabh Nag, CEO at Bhashini.

The intuitive, localised experience can also lead to higher conversion rates and reduced support costs, streamlining operations and boosting revenue. Overall, these features are particularly beneficial for reaching underserved regions and communities where language barriers have historically hindered e-commerce adoption, ONDC said.

## SEMICON INDIA 2024: TOP SEMICONDUCTOR CEOS LAUD PM MODI'S VISION

AGENCIES  
GREATER NOIDA, SEP 11

Leading figures from the global semiconductor industry praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership and vision for advancing India's semiconductor sector during their addresses at SEMICON India 2024, held here at the India Expo Mart on Wednesday.

Among those who spoke were Ajit Manocha, President & CEO of SEMI; Randhir Thakur, CEO & MD of Tata Electronics; Kurt Sievers, President & CEO of NXP Semiconductors; Hidetoshi Shibata, CEO of Renesas Electronics; and Luc Van Den Hove, CEO of IMEC.

Ajit Manocha, President & CEO of SEMI, began his address by expressing admiration for the scale of the event.

"I would start with the word WOW... based on the size and scale of this event. This is unprecedented and exponential," Manocha said.

He lauded PM Modi's exceptional leadership,



noting, "His leadership has inspired not just India but the entire world." Manocha highlighted India's rapid progress in the semiconductor sector, referencing PM Modi's pivotal role in kickstarting the industry.

"We were walking earlier, now we are running... Opportunities are there,"

he added.

Randhir Thakur, CEO & MD of Tata Electronics, thanked PM Modi for making the exhibition possible and noted India's strides in establishing its first commercial fab in Gujarat and an Indigenous semiconductor plant in Assam.

"Both projects received

approval from the Government of India in record time, setting a global benchmark," he said, emphasising Tata's collaboration with Taiwan's Powerchip Semiconductor, which provides access to proprietary technology to address markets such as AI, automotive, and data storage.

Kurt Sievers, President & CEO of NXP Semiconductors, emphasised the importance of collaboration, ambition, and trust.

"This is a big milestone on the transformational journey of India," Sievers said, noting that NXP has been in India for 50 years and praised the country's combination of innovation, democracy, and trust, which attracts businesses like his to work in India.

Sievers reiterated NXP's commitment, stating, "NXP is here to stay and committed to boosting the semiconductor ecosystem in India."

Hidetoshi Shibata, CEO of Renesas Electronics, spoke about the company's partnership with CG

Power to establish one of India's first semiconductor assembly facilities in Gujarat. Shibata added that Renesas is expanding its operations in India, including doubling its headcount in Bengaluru and Hyderabad by next year.

He shared insights into Renesas' role in bringing sophisticated semiconductor technologies to the global market and praised India's potential in the sector.

Luc Van Den Hove, CEO of IMEC, emphasised the importance of a long-term R&D strategy for semiconductor development, calling it a marathon rather than a sprint. He praised India's commitment to semiconductor manufacturing and expressed IMEC's readiness to form strategic partnerships with India.

"The world needs a reliable supply chain, and who can be a better-trusted partner than the world's largest democracy," Van Den Hove said, pledging IMEC's support for India's ambitious plans.

## India moving in right direction to become global chip hub: Industry players

AGENCIES  
GREATER NOIDA, SEP 11

Semiconductor industry leaders on Wednesday hailed India's chip vision, saying the country can become a global hub with a long-term vision and PM Narendra Modi's government is moving in the right direction.

Rutger Wijburg, COO and Member of the management board at Infineon Technologies AG, told IANS that India offers a fantastic opportunity for chip companies.

"The discussion with Prime Minister Narendra Modi has enlightened me about the work the country is doing in the field of semiconductors. There is an enormous need for semiconductors in India and companies like us can help build the local supply chain," Wijburg said on the sidelines of the 'Semicon India 2024' event here which was inaugurated by PM Modi in the presence of industry stakeholders.



The country aims to become a \$110 billion semiconductor industry by 2030, targeting 10 per cent of global demand.

Wijburg said there is enormous potential for chips not only to be used in the country but also for the global markets.

"India can become a global semiconductor hub with a long-term vision and I am convinced that the Indian government is taking this goal very seriously," he added.

According to Koji Wada, Managing Director of FUJIFILM India, the government policy around semiconductors is very amicable and with the right kind of support, the chip industry in the country can flourish.

"We wish to work and grow together in India," he said.

Win Chan from AGM Group says the Semicon India event is very impressive, with so many companies participating and a lot of customers visiting. "This event truly brings great value to the companies involved," he mentioned.

The three-day 'Semicon India 2024' is being attended by over 600 exhibitors and more than 100 global companies. Organised by SEMI in partnership with Messe Munchen India, MeitY, India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) and Digital India, the event underscores India's emergence as a global semiconductor powerhouse.



# Asian Hockey Champions Trophy: Korea keep semis hope alive with 3-2 win against China

AGENCIES  
MOQI (CHINA), SEP 11

Korea registered a narrow 3-2 win against China in their third match of the Champions Trophy here in Moqi Hockey Training Base in Hulun Buir, here on Wednesday.

It was a thriller of a match with both teams coming up with a nail-biting finish but it was eventually goals by Hyeonhong Kim (21'), Jungwoo Kim (53') and Jihun Yang (55') that ensured Korea watched away with the winning points.

At the end of day's play, India remains on top of the table and have become the only team to make the semifinal cut with three consecutive wins, while Korea is now placed second ahead of Pakistan due to goal difference and China are placed fourth.

In the start of the match, however, it was China who got off on positive note.



Backed by tremendous home support, they controlled the ball well, made difficult forays into the Korean circle. They even earned as many as two PCs, and converted in the 14th minute.

It was their PC specialist Jiesheng Gao who came

up with a perfect dragkick to give his team a 1-0 lead early in the game and put pressure on Korea. Though Koreans too created three PCs in the first quarter, Chinese defence held strong with their goalkeeper Caiyu Wang making some desperate

saves. In the following quarter, Korea opened their scoresheet with a brilliantly-struck PC by Hyeonhong Kim. The equaliser meant that China would have to work their way into building a compact and effective attack to regain the

lead. The crowd, with their loud chants, buoyed them to surge ahead. They managed hard-fought circle penetrations, but couldn't convert any. In the meantime, Korea created two more chances from PCs but the Chinese defence held sway. The third quarter ended in a stalemate with both teams trading chances in the circle. Though China won a PC in this quarter, they unfortunately could not convert it. Korea, nearly gave in their all with defending as they made some incredible saves in the goal mouth to stop the hosts from taking the score to 2-1.

There was plenty of action in the final quarter with Korea scoring two goals. Under pressure to keep the lead, China made errors in the circle while defending which cost them dearly.

They ended up conceding PCs and Korea scored

two of the three PCs they created in this quarter. First it was Jungwoo Kim who scored Korea's second goal in the 53rd minute and two minutes later Jihun Yang struck another one in the 55th minute.

To the home crowd's delight, China scored in the 60th minute to narrow down the lead to 2-3. It was Ziyang Huang who nicked this one in after Korean goalie Jaehan Kim make a great save off the shot taken by Benhai Chen. Huang had waited patiently in front of the post to pick up the deflection. With 11 seconds to go, China won a PC but couldn't manage to convert it, handing Korea a 3-2 win.

Hero of the Match, Jungjun Lee of Korea said, "We are very happy about this win. We worked very hard to beat China and hopefully still keep our chances of playing the semifinals alive."

# Irani Cup to be played in Lucknow from Oct 1-5

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 11

The 2024/25 Irani Cup game, which was supposed to be held in Mumbai from October 1 to 5, has been shifted to Lucknow. The match will be played between current Ranji Trophy winners Mumbai and a Rest of the India side selected by the national selection committee. Several officials in the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association (UPCA) have confirmed to IANS on Wednesday that they will be hosting the Irani Cup game, which will be played at the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow. As of now, the venue is hosting second season of the six-team UPT20 League.

IANS also understands that the Irani Cup match being moved from Mumbai to Lucknow is due to the extended monsoon in the city, leaving no time for the ground staff to prepare pitches and outfield

in time for the proceedings to take place.

As per Accuweather, there is rain forecasted in Mumbai till early October, while it shows sunshine in Lucknow for the same time period. Players from the Indian Test team won't feature in the Rest of India squad, as it clashes with final day of second match against Bangladesh, to be held at the Green Park Stadium in Kanpur.

Ajinkya Rahane-led Mumbai defeated Vidarbha by 169 runs in the 2023/24 Ranji Trophy final at the Wankhede Stadium to win their 42nd title. Last year, Rest of India won the Irani Cup after beating Saurashtra by 175 runs in Rajkot. The inaugural edition of the Irani Cup was played in March 1960, and is named after Zal R Irani, who served as Treasurer and President of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). Rest of India has won the trophy 26 times, while Mumbai has emerged victorious 14 times.

# Moeen expects McCullum bring the best out of white-ball captain Buttler

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 11

Former England all-rounder Moeen Ali said he expects Brendon McCullum to bring the best out of white-ball captain Jos Buttler following his appointment as limited-overs head coach.

McCullum has been England's Test team coach for the last two years and will take over white-ball role from January next year following the departure of Matthew Mott, as the side failed to retain its white-ball World Cup titles. "I think Brendon, it helps the fact he has been there, done it, and the way he played. I think it can be quite difficult if a coach says 'go do this', but they never did. Brendon brings that sort of energy and I think it will be great for Jos more than anything."

"Jos has so much on his plate with batting, wicket-keeping, captaining. I think Brendon will just take the pressure off and



he can just play and captain on the field. Brendon will be more in control I think," said Moeen to Sky Sports.

Moeen, who played 68 Tests, 138 ODIs and 92 T20Is for England, served as vice-captain to Buttler following his appointment to the leadership role once Eoin Morgan retired. He expects plenty of potential leaders to come to the fore in England team who can be great vice-captain to Buttler.

In Buttler's absence for the T20Is against Australia

starting at Southampton, Phil Salt will be captaining England for the first time. "I think even when Morgs initially took over he didn't have a right-hand man. I think a good captain, or a top captain produces leaders."

"I think over time (Buttler) will get that. Obviously at the minute he has Sam Curran and these guys who can lead. Sometimes as a vice-captain you can talk too much and give too much advice and sometimes, I look back and think I did that."

# Punjab FC announce squad for Indian Super League 2024-25 season

AGENCIES  
MOHALI, SEP 11

Punjab FC, the only representative from North India in India's top-flight football league, announced their 26-member squad for the upcoming Indian Super League (ISL) season, their second season after being promoted to ISL last year.

The squad announcement was made in a press conference, and the team's home, away, and third kits were also unveiled at the event.

Punjab FC will start their ISL campaign against Kerala Blasters on September 15 in Kochi and will play their first home game on September 20 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi.

Head coach Panagiotis Dilmperis, has picked a squad, that has a balance of youth and experience. Luka Majcen, Mushaga Bakenga, Ezequiel Vidal, Ivan Novoselec, Asmir Suljic and Filip Mrzljak are the foreign signings of the squad.

The new Indian signings include Vinit Rai, Nintho-



inganba Meetei, Muheet Shabir, Nihal Sudeesh (on loan) and Likmabam Rakesh Singh (on loan). Mohammed Suhail F. and Shami Singamayum from the academy have been promoted to the senior side, which already has Tekcham Abhishek Singh, Manglenthang Kipgen and Ayush Deshwah from the academy.

"We have named a squad that can challenge for the top spots in the league this

season. The foreign signings have plenty of experience and we have an exciting pool of Indian players. We have also maintained the core of our Indian players from last season. Our pre-season has been good, and we hope we start our season well and perform to our best capacity," Dilmperis said.

The head coach will be supported by assistant coach Konstantinos Katsaras and Indian

Nongmeikapam Suresh Meitei

Midfielders: Nikhil Prabhu, Ricky John Shabong, Samuel Kynshi Lyndoh, Vinit Rai, Manglenthang Kipgen, Ashis Pradhan, Filip Mrzljak (Croatia), Shami Singamayum

Forwards: Asmir Suljic (Bosnia & Herzegovina), Mushagalusa Bakenga (Norway), Ezequiel Vidal (Argentina), Mohammed Suhail F., Leon Augustine, Ninthoinganba Meetei, Nihal Sudeesh, Luka Majcen (Slovenia)

Coaching and Support Staff-

Head Coach: Panagiotis Dilmperis

Assistant Coach: Konstantinos Katsaras

Indian Assistant Coach: Sankaral Chakraborty

Strength & Conditioning Coach: Papaioannou Ioannis

Goalkeeping Coach: Manish Timsina

Team Doctor: Dr. Sidak Dhillion

Physiotherapist: Levin Vinod

Team Manager: Kashif Kamran

# 2023 cricket World Cup generates Rs 11,637 Cr economic boost for India

AGENCIES  
DUBAI, SEP 11

The 2023 Cricket World Cup, hosted by India, had a significant economic impact of Rs 11,637 Cr on the Indian economy, according to a report released by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Wednesday.

The report was based on an Economic Impact Assessment conducted by Nielsen, a New York-based firm, using data provided by the ICC and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

"A new economic report released today by the International Cricket Council (ICC) reveals that the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023, the biggest Cricket World Cup ever, generated an incredible total economic impact of USD1.39 billion (INR 11,637 Crores) for the economy of India," said ICC in a statement released on Wednesday.

The tournament, which saw Australia defeat India in the final, was held from October 5 to November



19, 2023, across ten host cities: Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Dharamsala, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, and Pune.

The ICC highlighted the substantial direct investment from both the global governing body and the BCCI, along with stadium upgrades by state cricket associations, which delivered economic benefits to various Indian businesses across sectors.

A record-breaking 1.25 million spectators attended the matches, with 75% of them attending a men's

50-over World Cup match for the first time. The tournament also attracted a large international audience, with 19% of international attendees making their first-ever visit to India.

This influx of foreign visitors contributed significantly to the economy, with international travellers spending USD 281.2 million, and the overall pan-India impact amounting to USD 253.9 million.

"A record-breaking 1.25 million spectators attended the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 of which

nearly 75% were attending an ICC Men's CWC 50-over match for the first time ever. Nearly 55% of the international respondents had previously visited India regularly, whilst an injection of new visitors thanks to the World Cup saw 19% of international attendees making their first ever visit to the country," the statement added.

The ICC also revealed that over 48,000 full and part-time jobs were created as a result of the World Cup, not only through direct involvement in the tournament but also across industries such as hospitality.

This sector alone contributed USD 18 million in economic value. Furthermore, media exposure for host cities, through city shots, team kit branding, and mentions, generated a media impact worth USD 70.7 million for businesses and stakeholders.

# Asian Hockey Champions Trophy: Rajkumar scores hat-trick as India thrash Malaysia 8-1

AGENCIES  
MOQI (CHINA), SEP 11

Rajkumar Pal's sensational hat-trick helped the Indian men's hockey team beat Malaysia comprehensively by an 8-1 margin in their third match of the Hero Asian Champions Trophy on Wednesday.

Besides Rajkumar Pal (3', 25', 33'), Arajjeet Singh Hundal (6', 39'), Jugraj Singh (7'), Captain Harmanpreet Singh (22') and Uttam Singh (40') also contributed to India's third consecutive win of the tournament.

With this win, they have consolidated their lead at the top of the points table, with nine points in three matches. Meanwhile, for Malaysia, Akhimullah Anuar (34') scored the lone goal.

Riding high on momentum after back-to-back wins, India started the game aggressively. They put Malaysia on the back foot in no time as they scored as many as three goals in the opening seven minutes of the match.

The first goal came from



Rajkumar Pal (3'), who showcased remarkable stickwork. The second was scored by Arajjeet Singh Hundal (6'), who found the top corner from the far post, shooting past the left shoulder of the Malaysian goalie, while the third goal came through Jugraj Singh's powerful drag-flick during a penalty corner routine in the next minute of the opening quarter.

Malaysia, on the other hand, took time to settle in. They survived multiple penalty corners in the following minutes of the opening quarter and began the next quarter on a positive note. They earned their first penalty

corner of the match in the 18th minute, but Suraj Karkera, who was under the bar, made an easy save. India launched an immediate counterattack and earned yet another penalty corner, but the Malaysian first rusher averted the danger.

India continued to make attacking forays into the Malaysian half. They earned a series of penalty corners, with the last one being converted by captain Harmanpreet Singh, making it 4-0 by the 22nd minute.

Rajkumar added a second goal to his name in the 25th minute, finding the back of the net on a rebound off the Malaysian goalie after a shot taken by Uttam Singh inside the circle. While Malaysia made errors in defence, India were clinical in their attack, thus ending the first half with a dominant 5-0 lead.

The third quarter continued in a similar fashion, with the Indian team maintaining control of the game through relentless attacks. Rajkumar went on to complete his hat-trick as he scored on a rebound off Malaysian goalkeeper Adrian, who had blocked Vivek Sagar Prasad's initial shot in an open play.

Meanwhile, Malaysia sneaked into India's circle and pulled a goal back through Akhimullah Anuar (34') in the next minute.

However, India went on to add two more goals to their tally as Hundal scored his second goal in the 39th minute, while Uttam slotted the ball home after a chaotic penalty corner routine in the 40th minute, ending the third quarter with a massive 8-1 scoreline.



## SVEEP Activities in AC Hiranagar highlight 'Each One Reach Fifty' initiative to boost Voter participation

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 11

Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Kore Punnu today organized a series of voter awareness activities under the SVEEP (Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation) programme. These activities aimed to educate and encourage voter participation ahead of the upcoming elections.

The event featured a variety of engaging activities, including a skit on the Importance of Voting, a signature campaign, a quiz competition, and a mega awareness rally with 200 students. Booth awareness groups from the surrounding area also joined the rally, enhancing the outreach and impact of the initiative.

In a special initiative



titled 'Each One Reach Fifty', GHSS Kore Punnu and GMS Salalpur encouraged students to personally engage with voters in their communities. Each student was tasked with approaching 50 voters in their neighborhood to remind them about the upcoming poll day and encourage them to vote. This grassroots initiative is designed to create a ripple effect of voter awareness and participation through direct interaction with the community. Additionally,

400 students from GHSS Kore Punnu took a Voters' Pledge, reaffirming their commitment to the democratic process and their responsibility as future voters. Other schools also contributed to the voter awareness efforts: GHSS Marheer created a Wall of Democracy where students posted messages promoting voter participation, while GHS Mela organized its own signature campaign to further strengthen voter awareness.

## General Election Observer oversees 2nd Randomisation of EVMs in Ganderbal



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
GANDERBAL, SEPTEMBER 11

In preparation for the upcoming Assembly Elections-2024, the General Election Observer for district Ganderbal, R. Lakshmanan today oversaw the second randomisation of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) here in the V.C Room of DC office.

This important step in the election process is designed to ensure impartiality and transparency by randomly assigning EVMs to different polling

locations across the district.

Speaking at the event, the General Election Observer highlighted the significance of the randomisation process in maintaining the integrity of the electoral process.

He expressed confidence that the transparent and fair assignment of EVMs will further strengthen the credibility of the elections, contributing to a successful democratic exercise in the district. The randomisation process was attended by

Returning Officers (ROs) of Ganderbal and Kangan Assembly Constituencies, District Informatics Officer, as well as representatives of various political parties, who witnessed the procedure firsthand.

Using advanced software, the randomization process ensured complete fairness, eliminating any potential for bias in the allocation of EVMs. This key measure is integral to the preparations for conducting free, fair, and transparent elections in Ganderbal.

## Training for Micro Observers hosted at Doda

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
DODA, SEPTEMBER 11

The District Election Authority, in the run up to the Assembly Elections-2024, organized a training program for Micro Observers of Assembly Constituencies (AC) 52-Doda and AC 53-Doda West, here today.

The training session, held in the Conference Hall, DC Office, was graced by the presence of the General Observer Aditya Negi.

In his address, he highlighted the pivotal role of Micro Observers in ensuring the smooth conduct of elections. Aditya Negi emphasized that Micro Observers serve as the "Eyes and Ears" of the Election Commission of India, entrusted with responsibilities such as monitoring polling stations for readiness, verifying the implementation of



Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF), supervising mock polling, and submitting post-poll reports in accordance with the Election Commission's guidelines.

A total of 130 Micro Observers are being trained to oversee 338 polling stations—171 in AC 52-Doda and 167 in AC 53-Doda West.

Dr. Akhter Hussain Akhoun, District Nodal Officer for training and human resources led the training with a detailed presentation on various aspects of the election process, covering essential guidelines and procedures.

## Police Observer takes security review for J&K Assembly Elections 2024 in Doda District

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
DODA, SEPTEMBER 11

A crucial meeting was held in the Conference Hall DC Office Complex Doda to review Security arrangements for Assembly election. The meeting was chaired by Police Observer Dharmveer Singh, overseeing AC-51 Bharderwah, AC-52 Doda, and AC-53 Doda West and attended by District Election Officer (DEO) Harvinder Singh, SSP Mohammad Aslam, and officers from the police, army, BSF, and other security forces. The focus was on finalising the security arrangements for the smooth and peaceful conduct of the upcoming general assembly elections. SSP Doda presented a comprehensive plan detailing the deployment of forces, law and order management, and the establishment of checkpoints and control rooms.



The strategy also included specific provisions for the deployment of BSF, force allocation on an AC-wise basis, and the setting up of strong rooms. Discussions also touched on critical topics such as the current militancy scenario, de-induction plans post-elections, and the establishment of key locations for security forces to ensure seamless operations on polling day.

Speaking at the meeting, the police observer emphasized the need for heightened alertness in sensitive polling stations and urged officers to maintain strict discipline and coordination with their respective forces. He directed that forces remain stationed at least 100 meters away from polling stations to avoid potential conflicts. Further, he instructed

security personnel to refrain from using mobile devices in sensitive areas and to stay vigilant, especially in light of the recent militancy activities. Ensuring high morale among the forces was highlighted as a priority to maintain a secure environment.

District Election Officer Harvinder Singh, along with the police observer, addressed any concerns raised by security personnel. They assured the forces that all necessary measures were in place to handle any challenges. The DEO stressed the importance of collaboration between security and election officials to guarantee the safety of both voters and election staff, aiming for a smooth and transparent election process.

## Kishtwar hosts Democracy Mini-Marathon to promote Electoral Education

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 11

A Democracy Mini-Marathon themed "Matdan ma Bhagidari, Kishtwar Ki Zimmadari" was organized here today under "Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program

The winners were felicitated by District Election Officer (DEO), Rajesh Kumar Shavan and encouraged to spread community awareness about importance of casting vote on 18th Sep 2024- the Assembly Election polling day in District Kishtwar.

Earlier, District Nodal officer SVEEP/DIO Kuldeep Kumar in Bhaderwah, presence of Nodal Officer AC-50 Padder Nagseni Dr. Riaz-ul-Hacq and other officials flagged



off the Democracy Mini-Marathon, comprising participants drawn from various schools, besides enthusiastic athletes.

The mini marathon started from DC Office Complex Kishtwar, passed through Zellna Police Check Point and reached Berwar Saffron

Park on Kishtwar Padder Road, and culminated back at DC Office Complex. District Election Officer, Rajesh Kumar Shavan felicitated the 1st three winners in Boys and Girls category. Commandant 610 Adhoc ITBP Sanjay Kumar and Station House Officer

were also present. In the Boy's category, Sahil won first place, Suraj Prakash ended up second and Sakasham Bhagat stood third. In the girl's category, Supriya Shan got first place, Radhika Gupta was first runner up and Poonam bagged third position.

## J&K Forest Deptt observes 'National Forest Martyrs Day'

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 11

The Jammu and Kashmir Forest Department today observed the 'National Forest Martyrs Day' to pay homage to the brave forest officers and frontline staff who laid down their lives while protecting the forest wealth in Jammu and Kashmir.

Senior forest officers, regional heads of allied wings and frontline staff offered floral tributes and prayers to the martyrs at Forest Memorial located at Shankaracharya forests, Srinagar to mark their respects.

The J&K Forest Department commemorates 11th of September to pay tribute to the bravery of its fallen members. In J&K, around 100 forest officers/officials have laid their lives for the protection of the rich forest wealth of the Union Territory.

The J&K Forest Department organized various events in all the Forest Divisions of UT to honor the forest martyrs. Ceremonies included wreath-laying, tributes, and speeches from officials, educational programs and workshops were also conducted to engage the community in forest conservation. Speaking on the



occasion, B.K. Singh, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and HoFF highlighted the importance of the day and exhorted the officers to face the emerging challenges with all foresightedness and dedication. He spoke in detail about the need for the protection of forests and their future role given increasing pressures - urbanization, development, rise in population, and the changing climate. This third pillar of survival requires not only devotion of ours but society in all.

He said forest personnel encounter numerous threats, including poaching, illegal logging, encroachment and forest

fires while climate change and environmental degradation further exacerbate their challenges. Despite these difficulties, they remain dedicated to preserving forest ecosystems. He further said that Community participation is crucial in the efforts to protect forests and wildlife.

PCCF & HoFF said that the observance of Forest Martyrs Day serves as a call to action for better protection measures and enhanced training and resources for forest personnel are necessary for their safety. It is the Day for re-dedicating ourselves to the core cause of ecological security of J&K.

## Advisor Bhatnagar chairs Governing Body meet of J&K Medicinal Plant Board

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 11

Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar chaired the Governing Body meeting of the J&K Medicinal Plant Board (JKMPB) at Civil Secretariat here today.

During the meeting, the Advisor held detailed deliberations with the Governing Body regarding strengthening of medicinal plants sector in Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting also focused on advancing the medicinal plants sector in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing the officers in the meeting, the Advisor called upon the members and other stakeholders to develop an appropriate mechanism for coordination between concerned departments for implementation of support policies and programs for overall (conservation, cultivation, trade and export) growth of medicinal plants sector. While reviewing the progress of various ongoing projects of the National Medicinal plants Board, the Advisor called upon the concerned executing agency to speed



up the pace of works for timely completion of the project. He also instructed the concerned officers to ensure optimum utilization of the Post Harvest Management Unit at Bhaderwah. Regarding registration of farmers, Advisor Bhatnagar stressed on simplifying the process of registration so that interested farmers do not face difficulty in registrations.

During the meeting, CEO JKMPB presented detailed account of various ongoing activities of the board. He highlighted that the Board remains committed to promoting conservation, cultivation, trade, and export of medicinal plants through strategic and coordinated efforts.

He apprised the board members about over-

view of Central Sector Scheme of Conservation, Development and Sustainable Management of Medicinal Plants and its components like Conservation of Medicinal Plants, Establishing Herbal Gardens (Institutional, Community and School Herbal Gardens), IEC Programs, Seminars (State/National/International), Training /Capacity Building Programs for Farmers, Research and Development (Research in Medicinal Plants/Quality Assurance), Forward and backward linkage in supply chain management of medicinal plants (Integrated component), Establishment of nurseries for Supply of Quality Planting Material (Promoting Cultivation), Infrastructure for Post-Harvest Management

General Observer Gulabgarh AC inspects strong room, poll stations; interacts with zonal & sector magistrates, general public

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
REASI, SEPTEMBER 11

General Observer for Assembly Constituencies (AC) 56-Gulabgarh (ST) Saroj Kumar Sethi today inspected the strong room established in Gujjar hostel Kansooli Mahore.

The Observer also held a meeting with contesting candidates in the RO-56 office to address their concerns and grievances. Later, he chaired a meeting of zonal & sectoral magistrates and instructed them to perform the assigned duties diligently and as per the procedural conduct laid by the Election Commission of India.

The Observers also visited different polling stations including Pink booths and blue booths to review the preparations there. He also planted trees at 2 polling stations, interacted with local people and motivated them to participate in the electoral process.

Other officials present included RO-56 Mazahir Hussain.