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DENGUE WARNING SIGNS

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

Watch out for dengue warning signs!

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

- Severe and continuous headache
- Joint pain
- Present vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Dizziness
- Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool
- Redness

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

JINDRAH IMAGES

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Congress run by 'Tukde Tukde' gang and urban naxals, it hates even Ganpati Puja: PM Modi

JI NEWS SERVICE
WARDHA, SEPT 20

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the "ghost of hatred" has entered the Congress and dubbed it as the "most corrupt" party which he alleged was being run by the "tukde tukde" gang or divisive elements and urban Naxals.

Further targeting the main opposition party, Modi maintained the 138-year-old outfit has come to hate even Ganpati puja, remarks coming days after he offered prayers to Lord Ganesh's idol at Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud's New Delhi home, drawing criticism from political opponents.

"The Congress which you see today is not the party with which a great man like Mahatma Gandhi was associated," the PM noted, addressing a public meeting at Wardha in Maharashtra organised on completion of one year of the launch of Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Yojana.

"The ghost of hatred



has entered the Congress. In today's Congress the soul of patriotism has breathed its last," the BJP stalwart asserted. Modi also spoke of "anti-India agendas" of Congress leaders in their speeches abroad, without naming that party's MP Rahul Gandhi, who is facing flak from the ruling dispensation for his remarks in the US on scrapping the reservation system and on the Sikh community.

"If there is a corrupt party it is the Congress and the most corrupt family is its 'shahi परिवार' (royal family)," Modi said, without naming the Gandhi family. "The Con-

gress hates Ganpati puja as well," Modi said.

"I went to a Ganesh puja programme and Congress criticised it for appeasement politics. Ganpati Bappa was put behind bars in Karnataka (ruled by Congress).

A Ganpati idol was put in a police van," he pointed out. The PM noted Congress allies in Maharashtra, which include the Shiv Sena (UBT) and the NCP (SP), kept mum and did not take a stand on Ganpati Bappa's insult.

In an apparent reference to the ensuing state assembly elections, Modi said, "In Maharashtra, CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

4 BSF soldiers dead, 36 injured as Bus ferrying them skids off road in Budgam

JI NEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, SEP 20

At least four Border Security Force (BSF) personnel died while several others were injured after a bus they were travelling in for poll duty skidded off road and fell into a gorge in Brell Waterhail area of central Kashmir's Budgam district on Friday, officials said.

An official told the news agency that the bus with 36 BSF troopers skidded off road in Brell village and fell into a deep gorge.

He said that in the incident four BSF troopers died while more than two dozen were injured. The official said that the injured have shifted to Srinagar hospital. Police have taken cognisance of the incident.

Meanwhile, the Director General of Police (DGP) R.R. Swain has expressed deep sorrow over the tragic road accident of a vehicle in which three BSF personnel lost their lives while several were injured.



In a statement issued to KNO, DGP has expressed profound sadness over the tragic loss of three Border Security Force (BSF) personnel and injuries to several others in a tragic road accident in Brell Waterhail area of Budgam district.

On behalf of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, DGP J&K has extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families, colleagues, and loved ones of the deceased personnel. "We mourn the loss of these dedicated soldiers who tirelessly served the nation. We pray for the speedy recovery of the injured and assured all

necessary support and assistance by the J&K Police," he added.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Zone, alongside the IG BSF Kashmir Frontier, visited the injured BSF soldiers at the SMHS Hospital today.

"They were joined by the Divisional Commissioner of Kashmir, SSP Srinagar, SSP Budgam, DC Budgam, and other senior officers. This visit comes in the wake of a tragic bus accident in Waterhail area of Budgam district, which resulted in the death of four

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

NC-Cong following Pak agenda, want to snatch books & give stones in youth's hands: G Kishan Reddy

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

Union minister and J&K Election Incharge, G. Kishan Reddy, on Friday said that NC-Cong have been working on the agenda of Pakistan and they want to revive militancy and snatch books from the youth and give stones in their hands.

"Before 2019, there used to be 128 working



days in schools in J&K, which have now increased to 210," Reddy said, while talking to reporters

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

BJP synonymous to dev, peace in J&K: Chugh



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEP 20

Senior BJP leader and former minister, Sham Chowdhary, on Friday took command of the election campaign in Suchetgarh Assembly Constituency in favor of party candidate Gharu Ram Bhagat.

Sham Chowdhary has represented Suchetgarh constituency in last Assembly elections. It has now been reserved. Sham said that he leave no stone unturned to ensure victory of Gharu Ram.

A massive public rally was held today in Suchetgarh, where BJP National General Secretary and in-charge of J&K, Tarun Chugh, also participated.

Addressing the rally, Tarun Chugh, highlighted the need for the people to vote for BJP for the security and development of Jammu and Kashmir. "This vote is for the security of Jammu and Kashmir,"

he said and added, "BJP has ensured stability and peace in the region by abrogating Article 370".

He also pointed out how 1.50 lakh Kashmiri Pandits were forced to flee Kashmir, and blamed the NC and Congress for this.

"The National Conference and Congress are the root cause of the sufferings of the people of J&K and the Abdullahs, Muftis, and Gandhis have ruined J&K for their vested interests," Chugh said.

Chugh termed the abrogation of Article 370 by the BJP as a pivotal step towards the development of Jammu and Kashmir.

"By abrogating Article 370, BJP has liberated Jammu and Kashmir from the clutches of political dynasties that have exploited the people here for decades," he said adding, "Now, Jammu and Kashmir is on the path of peace, development, CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

J&K Election Poll body revises voter turnout to over 61% in Phase 1

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 20

The Election Commission of India Friday revised voter turnout to over 61 per cent in the first phase of Jammu and Kashmir assembly election that was held on September 18.

In a statement, issued to news agency a spokesperson said that turnout of 61.38 per cent has been recorded in phase-1 for 24 constituencies in J&K.

The statement reads that voting turnout trends at the polling stations on the poll day was facilitated by the Commission through its voter turnout App, every two hours starting 9:30 am.

It added that CEO J&K has confirmed that all polling parties have returned safely and final votes polled will be available post-counting with counting of postal ballots.

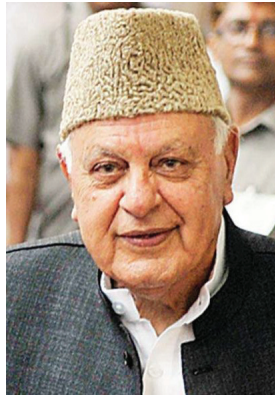
It reads that postal ballots include service voters, absentee voters (85+, PwD, Essential Services etc.) and voters on election duty. "Daily account of such CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Real agents of Pak blaming us for implementing neighbouring countries agenda in J&K: Dr Farooq

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 20

National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah on Friday said that the real agents of Pakistan are blaming them for implementing the neighbouring countries' agenda in Jammu and Kashmir.

Talking to reporters here at Dargah Hazratbal shrine, Dr Farooq as per the news agency said that they have never implemented Pakistan's agenda in Jammu and Kashmir.



However, he said that those who are the real agents of Pakistan are

blaming them for implementing the agenda of the neighbouring country here.

He said those who were getting money from Pakistan and chanting slogans in their favour have now joined them and have been released.

He further said that he prayed for an end to the prevailing situation in Jammu and Kashmir. Besides, prayed to Almighty to show the right path to the enemies as well. KNO

My fight not against NC, PDP but their ideologies: Er Rashid

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 20

Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) president Engineer Rashid on Friday said his struggle is against the ideologies of the National Conference (NC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP), rather than against the parties themselves. He accused these groups of neglecting the Kashmir issue in Delhi.

Addressing a public gathering in north Kash-



mir's Sopore, Er Rashid, who is the Member of Parliament (MP) for Baramulla, said he aims to represent the people's sentiments.

According to the news agency, the AIP chief criticised the NC and PDP for acting as "intermediaries" for the central government instead of advocating for Kashmir's interests.

"My fight is against their ideology because they cannot speak about the Kashmir issue out of fear in Delhi. Here in Kashmir, they serve Delhi's interests," he said. "We are neither stone-pelters nor anti-national elements. CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Rahul Gandhi to meet professionals from various sectors in Jammu next week

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is set to meet with professionals from various sectors here on September 25 that will provide a platform for open dialogue on challenges faced by them in Jammu and Kashmir and allow their voices to be heard at the national level.

Head of the Jammu and Kashmir unit of the All India Professionals' Congress (AIPC) Sanjay Sapru said the meet titled 'Dogri Dham' will



take place during the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha's campaign trail in the union territory.

Gandhi will also hold professional meets in Srinagar to better understand the

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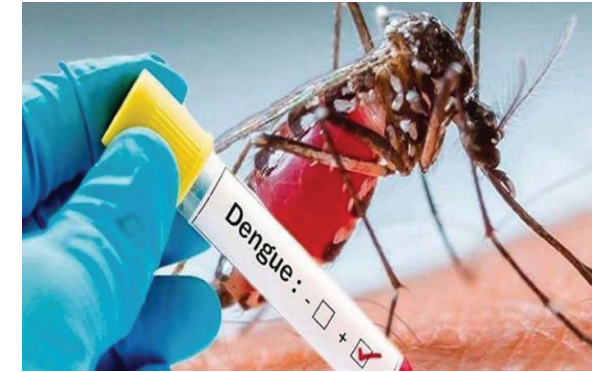
Dengue cases rise in J&K; 934 cases confirmed

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 20

Jammu & Kashmir is witnessing an increase in dengue cases this year, with 934 cases confirmed so far, officials said. They added that the union territory recorded a steady rise in cases over the past week, with daily counts ranging from 19 to 83.

State Malariaologist Dr D J Raina, speaking with the news agency, said while the number of cases is increasing, the situation remains under control. He said that out of the 934 cases, 592 are from Jammu, followed by 103 from Samba, 87 from Kathua, 44 from Udhampur, 21 from Reasi, 20 from Rajouri, 23 from Poonch, 20 from Doda, six from Ramban, one from Kishtwar, nine from Kashmir, and eight from other states.

A total of 10,644 tests have been conducted this year, with 934 returning positive results, he said. Comparatively, last year saw 1,300 positive cases out of 10,935 tests con-



ducted. Of the 934 confirmed cases this year, 167 required hospitalization, with 99 patients discharged and 62 still undergoing treatment.

Dr Raina called for preventive measures, given the lack of a dengue vaccine. "Eliminating mosquito breeding sites, such as stagnant water, and avoiding mosquito bites are crucial steps to prevent the spread of dengue," he said. Assuring the public that effective measures are being implemented to minimise the spread of the disease, he urged people to remain vigilant without panicking.

Medical professionals

have advised the public to use mosquito repellents and wear long-sleeved shirts to protect themselves from mosquito bites, as these mosquitoes primarily breed in stagnant water, especially during the monsoon season. They also recommended using mosquito nets during daytime sleep and spraying them with insect repellents.

Common symptoms of dengue include fever, headache, pain behind the eyes, muscle, joint or bone pain, rash, nausea and vomiting. The advisory further warns that anyone experiencing severe symptoms such as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Encounter breaks out in Reasi

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEP 20

An encounter broke out between terrorists and security forces in Reasi area on Friday evening.

A senior police officer informed the news agency that a team of Police and security forces launched a Cordon and Search Operation in Reasi on a specific input. The official further added that as the joint team approached towards the suspected area, the hiding terrorists fired upon them, leading to an encounter.

Meanwhile, District Police Reasi in a post on X wrote, "On the receipt of specific intel, an operation was launched around 1300 hrs today. Contact has been established at the Shikari area of PS Chassana, Reasi."

Had Abdullah family implemented Pak agenda, J&K would have been part of Pakistan: Mufti

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEP 20

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president and former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti on Friday said that Jammu & Kashmir might have been part of Pakistan or an independent nation if the Abdullah family - referring to the National Conference - had pursued Pakistan's agenda.



Speaking to reporters, news agency, said the Mufti, according to the

(BJP) should be grateful to the Abdullah family for their role in J&K.

She was responding to BJP's allegations that J&K's dynastic political families promoted Pakistan's agenda. "If the Abdullah family had pursued such an agenda, Jammu & Kashmir would either be part of Pakistan or an independent nation," she added.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Justice Tashi Rabstan inspects construction works on Courts in Ladakh

JNEWS SERVICE
KARGIL, SEPTEMBER 20

In an endeavor to give impetus to Judicial Infrastructure in the UT of Ladakh, Acting Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Justice Tashi Rabstan today inspected the ongoing construction works on various courts at Drass, Kargil and Khatlasi.

During his visit to Drass and Kargil, Justice Tashi was accompanied by M K Sharma, Principal Secretary to Chief Justice and Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, Juvenile Justice Committee, High Court of J&K and Ladakh.

The acting Chief Justice was accorded ceremonial guard of honour and

warm reception by the Deputy Commissioner/CEO LAHDC Kargil, Shrikanth Balasaheb Suse, Shree Ram SSP, Fariqa Nazir CJM, Wangiyal Tsering Special Mobile Magistrate, Chemet Yourgyal Secretary DLSA and Deldan Angmo Munsiff Sankhoo, Skalzang Superintending Engineer, President along with members of Bar Association Kargil and officers from civil administration and police.

Sadiq Ali, Executive Engineer PWD (R&B), gave a detailed presentation about the ongoing projects, the progress made so far and the timeline fixed for completion of the projects.

Justice Tashi expressed satisfaction over the progress registered on



various works, so far and impressed on the officers of the executing agency to optimally utilize the working season ensuring

completion of construction works well in time.

Justice Tashi Rabstan was informed that the District Court complex Kargil

is being constructed over 45 Kanal of land at Kurbuthang plateau at a cost of Rs 61.680 crore and 60% of the work has already been completed. The executing agency further informed that every endeavor is being made to complete the ongoing works within the timeline fixed.

Justice Tashi instructed all heads of the departments associated with the projects to work in tandem and ensure that the quality is maintained at all costs.

The Bar Association Kargil raised some issues regarding the Lawyer's chambers which were addressed by the acting

Chief Justice on the spot by issuing necessary directions to the concerned officers. Enroute to Leh, the Chief Justice also inspected the under construction building of the Court of Munsiff and hoped that the same shall be completed within a couple of months. Justice Tashi Rabstan interacted with the Judicial Officers and took stock of the pendency of the cases in their respective Courts and urged upon them to ensure speedy disposal of the cases specially those pertaining to senior citizens, women and the children. He also emphasized upon the Principal Magistrate JJB Kargil to fast track the pending enquiries of the juveniles in conflict with law.

DC Shopian takes stock of restoration work, traffic clearance at Dachno, Heerpora



JNEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, SEPTEMBER 20

Deputy Commissioner, Shopian Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar today inspected the Dachno-Heerpora village and took stock of the ongoing work at the Bridge Collapse site.

The DC accompanied by Executive Engineer R&B Shopian and other officers, monitored ongoing diversion work for

alternate connectivity to the village. The DC was apprised that the diversion work for traffic restoration shall be completed by today.

A Bailey Bridge has to be completed within days, DC stressed upon R&B Shopian while reviewing the progress of the ongoing works aimed to provide immediate connectivity to the village residents.

Expenditure Observer conducts first inspection of Election Expenditure Registers for Ramgarh, Samba, Vijaypur ACs



JNEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, SEPTEMBER 20

The Election Expenditure Observer for Samba District, Karthick Manickam M, conducted the first inspection of the Election Expenditure Registers of candidates contesting for the 69-Ramgarh, 70-Samba, and 71-Vijaypur Assembly Constituencies. The inspection took place today in the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex, Nandani Hills, Samba.

The inspection aimed to ensure that all election expenditures for the three constituencies remain within the prescribed limits set by the Election Commission of India (ECI). Karthick Manickam M, IRS

thoroughly examined the records submitted by candidates to verify compliance with ECI guidelines.

During the inspection, the Expenditure Observer emphasized the importance of strict adherence to the ECI's financial regulations, urging candidates to maintain accurate and transparent expenditure records. He underscored the critical role of such measures in ensuring free and fair elections, urging all candidates to follow the ECI's standards to uphold the integrity of the election process.

The inspection was attended by key officials, including Nidhi Gupta, Nodal Officer for Election Expenditure Moni-

toring, Sunaina Saini, Returning Officer for the 69-Ramgarh Assembly Constituency, Kusum Chib, Returning Officer For 70-Samba Assembly constituency, and Umesh Sharma, Returning Officer, 71-Vijaypur Assembly constituency along with representatives of the contesting candidates and other concerned officials.

This inspection is part of the Election Commission's ongoing efforts to monitor election expenditures and ensure that all processes in the 69-Ramgarh, 70-Samba, and 71-Vijaypur constituencies are conducted within the legal framework, promoting transparency and fairness in the upcoming elections.

Div Com, IGP visit SMHS Hospital to enquire about well-being of injured BSF Jawans



JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 20

The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri accompanied by IGP Kashmir VK Birdi, DIG BSF, SSP Srinagar visited SMHS Hospital to enquire about the well-being of BSF Jawans who were injured in an accident at village Brell, near Waterhail of Budgam, after a Bus with 36 BSF jawans of G/124 Adhoc 404 BSF fell in a Nallah.

On the occasion, Medical Superintendent of SMHS and other medical

staff briefed about the treatment being provided to the injured jawans. He informed that the specialist physicians along with other staff are monitoring the condition and treatment of all jawans for their fast recovery.

On the occasion, Div Com and other senior officers of police and BSF interacted with the injured and enquired about their well-being.

Div Com directed MS SMHS to provide all medical help to the injured BSF Jawans and also assured full assistance from the Divisional Administration.

Home Voting begins in all six assembly segments in Kathua District



JNEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 20

The process of Home Voting for the Assembly Elections commenced today across all six constituencies of Kathua District, utilizing postal ballots to ensure accessibility. This initiative, a first for the J&K Assembly Elections, specifically targets voters aged 85 and above, as well as individuals with benchmark disabilities, as per the provisions set by the

Election Commission of India (ECI).

The Home Voting process will continue until September 21, 2024. To ensure smooth operations, dedicated staff members, including polling personnel, micro-observers, and reserve teams, have been deployed in various clusters within the constituencies. A significant number of eligible home voters, including those categorized as AVSC (Absentee

observers ensuring transparency and accountability. The administration is focused on maintaining stringent security measures and upholding the integrity of the electoral process throughout this initiative.

Earlier today, special polling teams visited the homes of eligible voters, enabling them to cast their votes from the comfort of their residences while maintaining proper procedure and secrecy.

4th Global Renewable Energy Investment Meet



JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 20

The Union Ministry for New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), has recognized Jammu and Kashmir with highest achiever award in Hydro Power Capacity and overall Renewable Energy Capacity besides the third highest achiever certificate in Solar Power Capacity among the UTs in its contribution towards India achieving the milestone of 200 GW of Non-Fossil Power Capacity.

The award was conferred by the MNRE,

during the three day 4th Global Renewable Energy Investment Meet and Expo (RE-INVEST) organized at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Commissioner Secretary Science & Technology Department J&K, Saurabh Bhagat, Chief Executive Officer, Jammu and Kashmir Energy Development Agency (JAKEDA), Dr. P. R. Dhar along with other officers from JAKEDA attended the expo on behalf of J&K, which had been selected as one of the stakeholders to be recognized during the RE-INVEST.

2nd randomisation of Polling Staff conducted in Samba

JNEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, SEPTEMBER 20

The 2nd randomization of polling staff for the Assembly Elections was conducted for Samba district by District Election Officer (DEO), Rajesh Sharma, here today. This process is a crucial step in election preparations for the three Assembly Constituencies (ACs) of 69-Ramgarh, 70-Samba, and 71-Vijaypur. The randomization event took place in the Video Conference Room of the DC Office Complex, Nandani Hills, Samba.

General Observer for Ramgarh, Vishwashree Boga and General Observer for Samba and Vijaypur C.G. Rajini Kaanthan were also present to oversee the process, ensuring transparency and impartiality.



The polling staff were assigned their respective locations through advanced software developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC), which guarantees fairness.

District Informatics Officer, Manish Kumar Sharma, explained the randomization process in detail, demonstrating how the software ensures unbiased staff assignments.

This procedure follows guidelines set by the Elec-

tion Commission of India to promote free and fair elections.

Other officials in attendance included ADC Jagdish Singh, Returning Officer (RO) for 70-Samba, Kusum Chib, RO for 71-Vijaypur, Umesh Sharma, and other key staff.

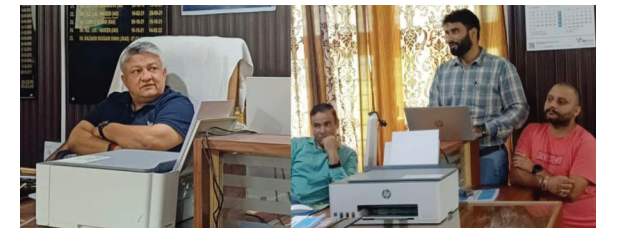
DEO Rajesh Sharma emphasized that the process is vital for maintaining a free and transparent election.

DEO Reasi reviews election preparedness for Gulabgarh (ST)

JNEWS SERVICE
REASI, SEPTEMBER 20

District Election Officer (DEO) Reasi, Vishesh Mahajan chaired a crucial meeting at Mahore to review the election preparations for Assembly Constituency- 56 Gulabgarh (ST). The DEO directed concerned departments to ensure all facilities are available and appropriate arrangements are put in place.

During the meeting, the DEO reviewed the deployment of polling staff, transportation plans, and voter facilitation measures, emphasizing the importance of flawless execution on Election Day. He instructed essential services



department to ensure all basic facilities are available 24/7.

Returning Officer-56, Mazahir Hussain, presented a detailed briefing on the preparations, highlighting the steps taken to ensure a smooth and fair election.

The DEO directed health officers to provide ASHA workers with healthcare kits at polling stations on polling day. He also instructed that vehicles display-

ing party flags should have their permissions checked. Additionally, the DEO emphasized the need for Booth Level Officers (BLOs) to work closely with polling staff to ensure smooth operations at polling stations on Election Day.

Other officers present during the meeting were RO AC-56 Mazahir Hussain, SDM Dharmari Tariq Aziz, XENS of various departments and other concerned officials.

Expenditure Observer reviews election expenses of candidates

JNEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 20

A meeting was held at DIET Basholi with representatives of various political parties and independent candidates.

The meeting was chaired by the Expenditure Observer, Tanay Sharma.

Returning Officer, Basholi-65, Anil Kumar Thakur, along with representatives from political parties and independent candidates of the Bani, Basholi and Billawar consti-

ties were present. After introducing the representatives, the observer asked for the details of the election expenditures incurred so far. All representatives submitted the necessary documents related to the election expenses up to 18th September, which were thoroughly examined by the officials.

It was given out in the meeting that further meetings to review the election expenses will be held on 24th September and 28th September. During these meetings, all candidates

from Basholi, Bani, and Billawar constituencies will be required to present their election expenditure details before the Expenditure Observer. The Expenditure Observer emphasized that candidates must submit the complete details of their total election expenses to the Election Cell in Kathua within 26 days of the conclusion of the elections, as per the Election Commission's guidelines to ensure transparency and accountability in campaign financing and election expenditure.

Saint-Gobain Gyproc India backs Gowhar Bilal to champion the 2024 World Skills Competition

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

Skilling the youth of India remains at the forefront of Gyproc India's mission, as part of its ongoing commitment to shaping the future of the construction industry. As part of its dedication to the Skill India initiative, Gyproc India is thrilled to sponsor Gowhar Bilal, a talented young professional from Baramulla, Kashmir, who will proudly represent India at the 2024 World Skills Competition in Lyon, France. As part of the Skill India initiative, Saint-Gobain Gyproc India is dedicated to transform the landscape of skill development in the construction sector. Partnering with government bodies and industry leaders, Gyproc India is pioneering efforts to nurture talent and create opportunities for a brighter future. Since its establishment in 2013, Gyproc Gypsum Academy has consistently

driven skill development in the drywall and plastering sectors. The Academy has trained over 1,800 candidates, facilitated 1,400+ placements within India and 25+ internationally, and has empowered 52 individuals to become entrepreneurs. From a small town in Baramulla, Kashmir, Gowhar's ambition led him from civil engineering studies at Government Polytechnic College in Anantnag to a transformative experience at Gyproc's Academy. His introduction to the World Skills Programme was a turning point, opening doors to exceptional training and international exposure.

Gowhar's training at the Gyproc Academy in Wada, Maharashtra, included a rigorous 9-month program focusing on agility, strength, finishing, measuring, and quick thinking. The holistic support provided by Gyproc, including accommodation, nutri-



tion, and health care, has further enhanced his skills and overall well-being. Reflecting on his experience, Gowhar expresses, "Gyproc has not only equipped me with technical skills but has also given me the confidence to pursue my dreams. I am determined to bring modern construction techniques to my community in Jammu & Kashmir and to inspire others to follow their passions."

Sudeep Kolte, Managing Director - Gyproc Business, expressed his enthusiasm for this initiative, stating, "We are incredibly

proud to support Gowhar Bilal as he embarks on this remarkable journey. His dedication and passion exemplify the values we hold dear at Gyproc India. This sponsorship not only highlights our commitment to developing world-class talent but also demonstrates our belief in the power of local talent to drive global standards. Gowhar's journey is an inspiring testament to what can be achieved when talent is nurtured with the right resources and support, and we are thrilled to stand behind him as he represents India

through such opportunities.

Gyproc India is leading the charge in nurturing talent and creating opportunities for a brighter future. Our commitment is to empower individuals with the skills they need to excel. Discover Gyproc India's extensive skill development programs by visiting our website <https://www.gyproc.in/about-gyproc-skill-initiatives> or reaching out directly at [7666692307, 9967229071] for more information. Interested candidates can apply for skill courses and schemes through the Skill India digital portal or register for an NSDC course by filling out the online application form provided by an authorized training center. Prospectuses are also available for purchase at authorized centers. Don't miss this chance to enhance your skills and make a significant impact on the global stage.

Shiv Sena warns Pakistan to keep quiet and not interfere



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit chief Manish Sahni has strongly reacted to the statement of Pakistan's Defense Minister Khawaja Asif regarding the ongoing assembly elections of Jammu and Kashmir and advised them not to interfere in our internal matter and to keep quiet.

Along with this, Sahni has appealed to the Indian

Foreign Ministry to issue a warning to Pakistan not to interfere in India's internal matters.

Sahni said that Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, including Jammu and Kashmir, is an integral part of India and Pakistan has no right to make statements on it. At the same time, Sahni strongly condemning the statement of Pakistan Foreign Minister regarding 370, 35A, advised them to keep quiet and take care of their own house.

DMO seizes 2 JCBs in Kathua, tipper driver escapes



JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

In Kathua district's Hiranagar region, specifically in the Pansar Manyari area, an illegal soil excavation case has surfaced. Responding swiftly, District Mining Officer (DMO) Naveen Kumar, along with his team, reached the spot to stop the unlawful activities.

Upon receiving information, the DMO and his team inspected the area and discovered that two JCB machines were being used for illegal soil excavation. The DMO promptly seized both JCB machines on the spot. However, the driver of an empty tipper managed to escape from the scene.

DMO Naveen Kumar

emphasized that illegal mining will not be tolerated in any form in Kathua district. He also mentioned that public cooperation is crucial to curb such illegal activities. The vast area poses challenges for surveillance, but the administration is making every effort to completely eradicate illegal mining.

He further stated that the government is closely monitoring illegal mining and strict legal action will be taken against anyone involved in such activities.

Illegal mining not only causes financial loss to the government but also severely damages the environment. The administration aims to clamp down on illegal activities and ensure strict adherence to the law in the region.

People anxiously waiting to teach BJP a lesson: Solanki

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

Lambasting the BJP for brazenly trying to attack the identity and uniqueness of Jammu and Kashmir, Deputy Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh and special AICC observer for J&K Mukesh Agnihotri on Friday said that people will teach a lesson to the Safron Party for its deceitful tactics.

"After meeting different sections of the society in Jammu region, I came to the conclusion to the people of this part of the State are anxiously waiting for the polling to give a befitting reply to the BJP for demonizing and disempowering them socially, culturally, and economically", Agnihotri said while interacting with media persons at Jammu along with All India Congress Committee (AICC) Incharge J&K Affairs Shri Bharatsinh Solanki

"The people of Jammu

and Kashmir will not be fooled by the deceitful tactics of the BJP.

Despite their efforts, we will form an alliance government that truly represents the wishes and aspirations of all sections of society through a Common Minimum Programme", he said.

"The BJP leadership is frustrated, and it shows in their actions. From the Prime Minister to MLAs, they're roaming in different parts of J&K, trying to salvage their dwindling support, the Deputy Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh said, adding, "But the fact remains, the BJP has tried to erase J&K's identity by downgrading it from a state to a Union Territory and stopping the Darbar Move, which not only boosts the economy but is also an integral part of J&K's heritage".

Seeking the support of the people to develop a prosperous and peaceful Jammu and Kashmir,



he said, "It's high time to teach the BJP a lesson for their misdeeds".

Recalling the situation in J&K from 2004 to 2014 during the UPA government at the Centre, he said, "Congress has a proven track record of controlling terrorism in J&K, achieving a terrorism-free state from 2004 to 2014". The BJP-led government, on the other hand, has seen attacks on security forces escalate, even in new areas".

Countering allegations of BJP, Mr Agnihotri said it was during Congress regimes that Pakistan was taught lessons for its misdeeds.

"We recall the strong leadership of late Prime

Minister Indira Gandhi, who gave a befitting reply to Pakistan, resulting in the creation of Bangladesh", he said.

"The era of Rahul Gandhi has begun, and the people are rallying behind him. The BJP's vicious campaign against Rahul Gandhi won't deter us", he said.

Criticizing BJP for raking up irrelevant issues to divert peoples' attention from real issues, he said, "The real issues facing J&K are statehood, corruption, Darbar Move, employment, and militancy".

He recalled that in the late 1980's a mass agitation was started when the traditional practice of Darbar

Move was stopped. "The then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had intervened to get the Darbar Move practice restarted and pacified the agitating people", he recalled and assured the people that Congress is committed to restoring the Darbar Move practice as it will boost the economy of Jammu province.

On the issue of statehood, Mr Agnihotri reiterated Congress's commitment to restore statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. He mentioned that these two issues are prominently incorporated into the Election Manifesto of the Congress party.

"The BJP's proxy rule has led to rampant corruption, stalled development, and unemployment. The leaking of question papers in recruitment exams and the CBI's investigation into Police Sub-Inspector recruitment scams are just the tip of the iceberg"

"We will form a government in Haryana

and restore democracy in J&K. The people will not be swayed by irrelevant issues. We demand answers on the real concerns facing our state", he said. Speaking on the All India Congress Committee (AICC) Incharge J&K Affairs Shri Bharatsinh Solanki said that brisk polling in the first phase of the Assembly elections is a clear indication that residents of J&K have made up their mind to teach BJP a lesson.

"You will see a similar pattern of voting in the second and third phases and people will J&K will teach BJP a lesson for its misdeeds and misconducts", he said.

JKPCC senior vice president and chief spokesperson Mr Ravinder Sharma, AICC Coordinators Incharge Jammu Dolly Sharma, Onika Mehrotra, General PCC Media Namrata Sharma, spokesperson Kapil Singh were present.

Prof. R. K. Uppal receives prestigious "Commendable Contribution to Changing the Education System Award-2024"

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

The prestigious "Commendable Contribution to Changing the Education System Award-2024" has been presented to Professor Emeritus Dr. Rajinder Kumar Uppal, Principal of Guru Gobind Singh College of Management and Technology, Gidderbaha. It recognizes Dr. Uppal's exceptional contributions to the field of education, particularly in the specialist genre of literature, as presented by the Preethvi Educators Association-India (PAAI). One of the most prestigious awards in the field, given to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding contributions to education and research. Under the dynamic leadership of Dr. Harshwardan Singh, the founder of PAAI, this organization motivates educators and works to improve the education system. Uppal's illustrious career spans multiple roles, including Principal at GGS College of Management and Technology and MTC Global Chair Professor in Banking and Finance. As a Research



Professor in Finance at the Indian Institute of Finance in New Delhi, he shapes national and international discourse on banking and finance. Dr. Uppal has won awards in academia and research for his scholarly eminence, leadership acumen, and unwavering commitment to excellence. Inspiring generations, transcending disciplinary boundaries and charting an exciting course for the future, his work continues to inspire generations. PAAI's recognition demonstrates Dr. Uppal's towering presence in academia and his far-reaching influence on the field of education. Currently, he is a member of an advisory board of editors for national and international research journals

of repute. As chief-in-editor of a reputable research journal, he expanded his skills in other areas as well. Over fifty articles on current social and economic issues were written by Dr. Uppal for leading Indian newspapers. He was invited to give expert talks by various government agencies, and private TV Channels and All India Radio, Jalandher. He designed syllabi of UGC job oriented courses such as e-banking and e-commerce from Certificate level up to advance Diploma. He also mentors young teachers to yield quality research under faculty development programme. He, truly, is the embodiment of mission and vision of critical thinking, professionalism, excellence and innovation.

Samsung India's AI-powered 'Big TV Festival' gets bigger this festive season

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

Samsung, India's largest consumer electronics brand, is set to make this festive season more delightful with the launch of its 'Big TV Festival' promotion. Offering unparalleled deals on premium AI-powered big-screen televisions like Neo QLED 8K, Neo QLED 4K, OLED and Crystal 4K UHD TVs, the limited period offers runs from September 14 till November 10, 2024, bringing exciting freebies, cashback, a 3-year warranty and special EMI offers.

Samsung Big TV Festival is about to set a new standard in visual immersion and sound quality with AI-enabled features. The offers are available across the Neo QLED, OLED and Crystal 4K UHD TV range on select models.

Customers can also avail free Samsung TV models worth up to INR 290000, and free sound bar worth INR 100000, with select purchases. Samsung is also offering irresistible cashbacks up to 20%, 3-year comprehensive warranty and Easy EMIs starting at INR 2777 on its ultra-premium Big TVs, with a long tenure EMI up to 36 months.



These attractive deals will be available across Samsung.com, and select Samsung retail outlets across India.

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The Neo QLED 8K range comes powered by the NQ8 AI Gen2 Processor, which enables AI-powered content viewing experi-

ence, providing life-like picture quality. The NQ8 AI Gen2 Processor is powered by 256 AI neural networks that help transform both picture and sound to deliver an 8K experience, whether its streaming OTT services, playing video games or watching live sports. Samsung's Neo QLED 8K TVs also come with Motion Xcelerator Turbo Pro for creating consistently crisp visuals and blazing-fast speeds for high-speed gaming.

The 2024 Neo QLED 4K line-up is powered by the NQ4 AI Gen2 Processor, which breathes life into almost any content, rendering it in stunning 4K resolution. Enhanced by Quantum Matrix Technology, the screen ensures impeccable contrast even in complex scenes. With the world's first Pantone Validated display for colour accuracy and Dolby Atmos for an immersive audio experience, the Neo QLED 4K range of TVs raises the bar for an ultimate 4K experience. The world's first glare-free OLED TV eliminates unnecessary reflection while preserving deep blacks and clear images under any lighting condition. Powered by the same formidable

NQ4 AI Gen2 Processor, Samsung's OLED TVs boast features like the Real Depth Enhancer and OLED HDR Pro, bringing picture quality to new heights. Additionally, with features such as Motion Xcelerator 144Hz ensuring smooth motion and quick response rates, Samsung OLED is the ultimate choice for gaming. Complemented by sleek designs, these OLED TVs elevate the viewing space.

Samsung's QLED TV provides stunning picture quality with Quantum Dot technology. Boasting 100% colour volume, this TV ensures that colours remain true and vibrant at any brightness level. Its ultra-slim design blends seamlessly into any home, adding a touch of elegance to living spaces. Samsung's UHD TV brings colours to life with Dynamic Crystal Colour technology, offering lifelike variations and subtle details in every shade. The 4K upscaling technology brings the picture on screen up to near 4K quality, offering a captivating screen experience. Motion Xcelerator keeps fast-moving action smooth and clear, making every game, movie, or show, more immersive and enjoyable.

Sham Sharma hails heavy voter turnout in Kashmir

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

Expressing satisfaction and happiness over the brisk polling percentage in the first phase of elections, senior BJP leader and party candidate for Jammu North constituency, Sham Lal Sharma has said that the current elections will write a new chapter in the history of Jammu Kashmir. The higher poll percentage, particularly in Kashmir Valley is a healthy sign of stronger democracy and it could be possible with the hard and serious efforts of the BJP Government headed by Pradhan Mantri, Narendra Modi in Centre, Sham asserted.

Addressing a series of public gatherings in Jammu North segment, Sham said that top leadership of National Conference (NC), Congress and PDP are desperate to see the high percentage and peaceful polling in Kashmir valley for the first time after the three long decades of militancy. Earlier, the elections were being held under the shadow of militancy in Kashmir, without any enthusiasm and dismal involvement of people and only selected people and agents of NC, Congress and PDP used to cast their votes with a symbolic percentage and representatives were being elected even with 5



to 10 percent polling. The elections were marred with blasts, threats and violence, but it is for the first time after the eruption of militancy that the polls have been held in a very peaceful and cordial atmosphere and without any incident of violence in any party of Jammu Kashmir, Sharma observed.

Sham said that those who were shedding the tears of crocodile after the abrogation of Art-370 from Jammu Kashmir and saying that there will be bloodshed and no one would pick the national flag in Kashmir must have got the appropriate answer of their questions after witnessing the huge participation of voters in the election. This is also an acknowledgement of people in favour of abrogation of Article 370, which was used as a tool to befool the Kashmiri people. The higher poll percentage could be a sign of danger for these

which spoiled the future of thousands of young children and shattered the economy. Now, after the abrogation of Article 370, the entire situation has substantially been changed, people are leading a peaceful life, developmental activities are going apace normally, educational institutions are functioning normally, tourist flow has increased many-fold and there is no takers for the hollow slogans and false promises of the parties any more. Now the people have understood the reality of NC, Congress and PDP who are again talking about restoration of Article 370 and bringing back the era of militancy, but they will not succeed in their design and people will defeat them badly in the current elections, Sham asserted.

Urging the people to reject these dynastic parties in the current elections for misusing the power and playing with the sentiments of voters for decades together, Sham sought wholehearted support for BJP to form the next government for a strong, secured and prosperous Jammu Kashmir.

Those who spoke and present in the meetings included Mandal Adhyakshs Ravish Mengi, Suresh Khajuria, Ex Corporators Yashpal Sharma, Subhash Sharma, Er Dilbahadur Singh, Zorawar Singh.

NC-Congress deprived marginalized sections for decades in J&K: Arvind

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEP 20

Senior BJP leader and candidate for the Jammu West constituency, Arvind Gupta, today accused the NC-Congress alliance of depriving marginalized sections of society for decades in Jammu and Kashmir. He made these remarks while addressing a gathering at Guru Ravi Dass Sabha, Krishna Nagar, Jammu, as part of the ongoing campaign for the upcoming Assembly elections. He also paid obeisance to Guru Ravi Dass Ji and sought blessings for his victory in the upcoming elections.

Addressing the gathering, Arvind Gupta emphasized how Article 370, before its abrogation, was used as a tool by successive governments to deliver step-motherly treatment to various communities in the region. He pointed out that this controversial Article not only isolated Jammu and Kashmir from the mainstream but also hindered the region's development by denying equitable opportunities to marginalized groups.

The senior BJP leader praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the historic decision to abrogate Article 370, which he said has brought equal opportunities for all, especially the weaker sections of society. "The policies implemented by the Modi government have empowered the marginal-



ized, providing them with the means to uplift their socio-economic status," he added.

Arvind further highlighted that the welfare schemes initiated by the Modi government, which have been instrumental in improving the quality of life for the underprivileged sections in Jammu and Kashmir. He appealed to the people to support him and the BJP in the upcoming Assembly polls, assuring them that the party's policies are dedicated to their development and prosperity.

Prominent members present during the event included President of Guru Ravi Dass Sabha Shri Piran Datta, General Secretary Shri Raja Kumar Rasa, Om Prakash, Bhawnesh Gupta, Ajay Jandial, Suraj Sharma, Anil Chopra,

Sunil Chopra, Raju Baba, Ashwani Gupta, Sonu Gupta, and Ashok Gandhi among others.

Later, Arvind Gupta conducted a series of meetings with the residents of Shanker Vihar, Interrogation Lane, Jain Nagar, and Ajeet Colony, followed by a door-to-door campaign in Jain Nagar, Rehari.

Prominent among those who attended were District General Secretary Rajesh Gupta, Mandal Presidents Keshav Chopra and Atul Bakshi, Prabhat Singh, Brijesh Gupta, Arun Dubey, District President SC Morcha Chaman Lal Bhagat, Rajesh Saini, Lovkesh Gandhi, Balwant Kumar, Vipin Luthra, Gyan Nandan Jain, Raman Jain, Rajnish Jain, Anup Jain, Arun Jandial, Harcharan Singh, and Bhushan Lal Koul.

Tahir Fazal Choudhary qualified for Award of Ph.D. in Economics

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

Tahir Fazal Choudhary S/o Mr. Fazal Hussain and Mrs. Sayeeda Begum, has been declared qualified for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in the School of Economics by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) Katra, J&K. The candidate has worked on the topic "Agriculture under Climate Change: A Study of the Western Himalayan Region of India" under the supervision of Dr. Meenakshi Gupta, Assistant Professor, School of Economics, SMVDU, Katra. Mr. Tahir Fazal Choudhary has published his research work in various peer-reviewed ABDC, SSCI, and Scopus-indexed journals and presented papers at international conferences. The candidate thanked Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University for providing institutional fellowship, as well as the necessary support and facilities for carrying out the research work. Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Kumar (Vice-Chancellor, SMVDU), Dr. Ashutosh Vashishtha (Dean Faculty of Management), Dr. Meenakshi Gupta (Supervisor, SOE) and other committee members congratulated Mr. Tahir Fazal Choudhary and wished him a bright future ahead.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

4 BSF soldiers dead..

(four) BSF soldiers and injuries to many others," a statement issued here said, adding that "During his visit, the IGP Kashmir expressed deep concern for the well-being of the injured soldiers. He interacted with the medical staff to ensure they were receiving the best possible care. Additionally, the IGP offered words of encouragement to the injured and assured them of full support during their recovery.".. KNO

Rahul Gandhi to...

issues confronting these communities. "We are organising an exclusive meeting of professionals from Jammu and Kashmir with LoP Rahul Gandhi on September 25 in Jammu," Sapru told PTI. He emphasised that the event is a pivotal opportunity for professionals to engage in an open dialogue about significant challenges in the region, offering a platform for their concerns to be raised at the national level.

"For the first time, a political platform like AIPC is offering professionals the chance to directly share their concerns, aspirations, and ideas," Sapru added.

Gandhi's involvement underscores the growing recognition of the professional community's importance in shaping Jammu and Kashmir's future, Sapru said.

He said professionals will have the opportunity to discuss issues related to economic development, employment opportunities, industry-specific challenges, and innovation, while collaborating on potential solutions.

"We have invited professionals to join this critical conversation and contribute to shaping the future of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Following the Jammu event, similar gathering will be organized in Kashmir, Sapru said adding the date is being finalised.

Gandhi is also scheduled to campaign for Congress candidates in Srinagar and Jammu, addressing public rallies in the twin cities over the next few days.

On September 23, Gandhi will address a public rally in support of J-K Congress unit president and former minister Tariq Hamid Karra in Shalteng constituency in Srinagar, and another in the Surankote constituency in Poonch district during the second phase of the Jammu and Kashmir elections, a party leader said.

He is also expected to address a public rally in Jammu on September 25.

Earlier this month, Gandhi kick-started the Congress party's campaign for the Jammu and Kashmir assembly polls with two public rallies on September 4 in Ramban district's Gool area and Anantnag district's Dooru area.

These rallies were held in support of former J-K Congress chief Vikar Rasool Wani and AICC General Secretary and former Minister G A Mir.

The assembly elections in the union territory are being held after a gap of 10 years.

Congress run by 'Tukde'...

"we have to be aware of their duplicity." "Falsehood and betrayal are the hallmark of the Congress and the people of Maharashtra should beware of the party," he

insisted.

The Congress used farmers only for politics and corruption, Modi alleged. "We should not give another chance to the Congress, which destroyed farmers," the PM cautioned, adding the party did not fulfil its pre-election promises in Telangana after coming to power in the southern state late last year.

Modi noted SC, ST and OBC communities are the biggest beneficiaries of the Vishwakarma Yojana, which seeks to empower traditional artisans and craftsmen across by providing them with financial support, skill training and modern tools.

"The Congress did not allow SCs, STs and OBCs to prosper. Our vision is to ensure the beneficiaries don't remain just artisans, but also become entrepreneurs," he noted. The PM insisted his Government wants to take the textile industry to the global market and restore its past glory.

Modi said the British rulers had conspired to finish off India's traditional skills. Mahatma Gandhi gave a boost to rural traditional skills, but governments after Independence did not give justice to the Vishwakarma community, leading to decline in the sector, Modi said.

In the last one year, more than 20 lakh people from 18 professions were linked to the Vishwakarma scheme, and more than 8 lakh craftsmen and artisans got skill training, he told the gathering.

Modi, who released a commemorative postage stamp to mark one year of the scheme, also visited an exhibition at the National PM Vishwakarma programme and met some of the beneficiaries. During the visit, he launched the "Acharya Chanakya Skill Development Centre" scheme of the Maharashtra government, and the state's Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Women Start-up Scheme for support to women-led startups.

He laid the foundation stone of a 1,000-acre PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel (PM MITRA) Park at Amravati in Maharashtra. The PM said Vishwakarma Yojana was not just another Government programme, but a vision to make use of age-old traditional skills as a roadmap to propel India into the club of developed countries.

Pointing out age-old traditional skills were the basis of many glorious chapters of India's prosperity, he said its art, engineering, science and metallurgy were unmatched in the entire world. "We were the world's largest textile manufacturer.

There was no match to pottery and buildings designed back in those days," the PM emphasised. Carpenter, blacksmith, goldsmith, potter, sculptor, cobbler, carpenter-mason and many such professionals used to be the foundation of India's prosperity and spread this knowledge and science to every home, Modi recalled.

More than 700 districts, 2.5 lakh gram panchayats and 5,000 urban local units are giving momentum to the Vishwakarma scheme, Modi added. Skill training and upgradation have been provided to more than 8 lakh artisans and craftsmen with the introduction of modern machinery and digital tools.

More than 60,000 people have received skill training in Maharashtra alone, the PM told the gathering. He spoke about initiatives like One District One Product and Ekta Mall where traditional products are being marketed to make Vishwakarma a part of the supply chain of big companies.

The PM touched upon platforms like ONDC (open network for digital commerce) and GeM (government e-marketplace), which he pointed out, have become

a medium for artisans and craftsmen to expand their businesses.

Underlining that India's skills are being recognized around the world, Modi noted the country won multiple awards at an event held in France earlier this year. (Agencies)

Had Abdullah family...

Mufti said the National Conference vice president and former CM Omar Abdullah, during his tenure as Union Minister, had framed the Jammu & Kashmir issue as one of terrorism that could be addressed by combating Pakistan.

"Omar Abdullah was utilised to convey Jammu & Kashmir's narrative after being given a cabinet position," she said, adding that the BJP owes a debt of gratitude to the Abdullah family.

Mehbooba accused the BJP of targeting J&K's political families to distract from its own failures. KNO

My fight not against NC...

But if the Government of India genuinely wants peace in Kashmir, they must resolve the Kashmir issue."

Rashid said he is not scared of imprisonment or any consequences and that he will continue to fight for Kashmir's rights.

Reflecting on Sopore's history, the Baramulla MP said the town had received "unjust" treatment, particularly because it is the hometown of the late Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Geelani. He also recalled how Geelani was buried in secrecy during the night, saying such actions cannot suppress the truth.

The AIP chief also recalled the tragic 1993 Sopore massacre, where 57 civilians lost their lives and a huge property was destroyed. "Sopore's mistreatment is evident," he remarked, criticising the lack of attention given to the region's suffering.

He criticised the lack of attention given to the killings and "sacrifices" in Kashmir, saying that those who raise their voices against atrocities are often labelled as anti-national, Pakistani agents or stone-pelters. "This labelling will not continue in the future," he asserted, adding that he will keep speaking out for the rights of the Kashmiri people.

Rashid took a dig at Omar Abdullah, saying that if the former chief minister had effectively represented the Kashmir issue in Delhi, he wouldn't need to "beg for votes" for an MLA seat in Ganderbal.

In his address, Er Rashid promised that 500 students from north Kashmir would be admitted to universities outside the region each year. "My true fulfilment comes from serving the people of Sopore rather than holding a high political office," he said, adding, "The chief minister's post is not as valuable as addressing the people of Sopore at its historic main chowk."

The MP assured the people that he would meet their expectations, and set a standard that would make other parliamentarians say, "MP Ho Toh Aisa (MP should be like him)." Rashid concluded by pledging that Sopore would once again reclaim its status as "our crown". KNO

BJP synonymous...

and prosperity". Chugh said that NC-Cong are trying to bring back Article 370, which could once again plunge Jammu and

Kashmir into the darkness of militancy and separatism.

"These parties want to take us back to that dark era, but I assure you, BJP will never let that happen," he said.

Article 370 is now a part of history and will never return," Chugh said.

He urged the people to vote for BJP to ensure the continuous development and prosperity of Jammu and Kashmir and to establish a double-engine government, where both the central and state governments can work together to push forward development projects.

Sham Chowdhary urged the people to reject NC-Cong in these elections and vote for BJP so that it forms stable government on its own.

NC-Cong following...

after attending the meeting of BJP workers at Reasi. He said that BJP has established peace in J&K but NC-Cong want unrest and revive militancy in Kashmir. "NC-Cong have been working of Pak agenda which became crystal clear after the statement of Pakistan's Defence Minister," he said, while adding, "people want peace will reject these parties in the elections".

Historical voter turnout was recorded in the first phase of Assembly elections with 80.14% in Kishtwar, 71.34% in Doda, 70.55% in Ramban, and 62.60% in Kulgam, with an overall turnout of 61.13%, he said.

The high voter turnout has disturbed the NC-Cong and Pakistan as well, he said adding that people have voted for peace and development and BJP will form next government in J&K on its own.

While campaigning for the party's candidate Kuldeep Raj Dubey in the Reasi Assembly constituency, Reddy appealed to the people to come out in large numbers and reject the divisive politics of NC-Cong.

He also held an important meeting at the party office in Reasi to discuss election strategy.

The meeting was attended by Mandal Presidents, former BDC members, former Sarpanchs, and Shakti Kendra Pramukhs, and local leadership.

Uttarakhand Minister Dhan Singh Rawat was also present in the meeting.

They emphasized that workers must reach out to the general public and inform them about the welfare measures taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.

After the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, J&K is moving on the path of development, prosperity, and peace.

J&K Election: Poll body...

Postal ballots received, as per established guidelines, are given to all candidates," it added. KNO

Dengue cases rise...

stomach pain, vomiting, bleeding, or extreme fatigue should seek immediate medical attention.

Last year, Jammu & Kashmir reported around 6,403 dengue cases, while 2022 saw a record high of 8,269 cases with 18 fatalities. The authorities have urged the public to take proactive steps to curb the spread of this vector-borne disease and protect themselves and their communities from the ongoing dengue threat. KNO

Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, VSM GOC-IN-C Northern Command inaugurates Him Tech Symposium 2024

JINNEWS SERVICE
LEH, SEPT 20

Him Tech Symposium 2024 was inaugurated at Leh by Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar, PVSM, AVSM, YSM*, **VSM, GOC-IN-C, Northern Command.

Him Tech Symposium 2024 has been organised by the Indian Army in coordination with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). Military and civil dignitaries including Mr SP Shukla, Chairman FICCI attended the event. Lt Gen Hitesh Bhalla, SC**, SM, VSM, GOC Fire and Fury Corps delivered the welcome address. The symposium provided a platform for Indian Defence Industry to showcase their products. This year the theme of the symposium is "Harnessing Defence Technology for High Altitude Areas".



Severe cold, low oxygen levels and low humidity present significant challenges for troops stationed in High Altitude Areas. Equipment maintenance and personnel survivability become increasingly difficult in these conditions. Road disruptions caused by avalanches and landslides, along with rugged terrain and adverse weather conditions complicate road and air movement. The symposium aims to leverage technology to tackle these challenges and enhance combat readiness. This event underscores India's commitment to strengthening its military capabilities with indigenous technology following the principles of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

More than 90 vendors from various parts of India showcased their products on autonomous systems, green energy, human sustainability, equipment sustenance, waste disposal, communication, sensing and infrastructure development. The symposium provided an opportunity to interact with the soldiers deployed in High Altitude Areas.

During the inauguration ceremony, the Him Tech 2024 compendium was unveiled. Senior military officers and dignitaries visited the Expo Stalls set

up at Rinchen Auditorium in Leh and interacted with the Indian Defence Manufacturers. Indian Army organised a display of ideas and innovations to highlight the advancements and modifications made by its personnel based on the day-to-day challenges being faced by them and their ingenious solutions. This was a valuable opportunity for Indian defence manufacturers to gain insight into real challenges and requirements. Him Tech 2024 offered a crucial platform for defence forces, industry leaders and technology innovators to collaborate and tackle the challenges of high-altitude warfare. The event exemplified the spirit of self-reliance embodied by the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives. The symposium is open to the public from 3 PM from 21 Sep 2024 onwards.

Indian Army promotes Border Tourism, Pedals to World's Highest Village



JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

A 18 member Army team of Lightning Streaks Regiment of Tiger Division has set out to establish a record of its own, undertaking a cycling expedition to the world's highest village connected by a motorable road, Komic in Himachal Pradesh situated at an altitude of 15,100 feet.

The Tiger Prowl Cycling Expedition 2024 from Jammu to Komic, Himachal Pradesh via Yol exemplifies the indomitable spirit and resilience of Indian Army. This expedition consisting of 18 members was flagged off by Major General Mukesh Bhanwala, General Officer Commanding, Tiger Division, Jammu on 20 Sep 2024. The team will navigate challenging route and varying weather conditions throughout Himachal Pradesh covering approximately 988 kms with majority of it being off road.

This expedition route is considered one of the most treacherous routes in the world by virtue of weather extremities and landslide prone areas, offering the unique adventurous experience for the participants. The expedition will touch base with 26 border villages including five Vibrant Villages as declared by Government of India and Himachal Pradesh State Government. The cycling team will traverse through the Vibrant Villages of Chitkul, Chango, Pooh, Leo and Nako and will also pass through Hurling, Tabo and Kaza, culminating their expedition in Kaza on 16 Oct 2024.

Pavneet Kour, the contesting candidate from Jammu South representing the Jammu Kashmir Apni Party, has reaffirmed her commitment to uplift the most vulnerable sections of society by declaring that one of her core agendas is to raise the old-age pension from the current Rs 1000 to Rs 5000.

Enhancement Of Pension from Rs 1000 up to Rs 5000 In Core Agenda: Apni Party Candidate, Pavneet Kour

JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 19

Speaking at a large public gathering in Rampura, Ward No. 23, she emphasized that this move is critical to ensuring dignity for the elderly, widows, and people with disabilities.

"This increase in pension is not just a promise; it is the core agenda of my campaign and the Jammu Kashmir Apni Party. I belong to a common family, and I feel the pain of the common man," said Pavneet Kour.

"Unlike the BJP and Congress, who have neglected the needs of the vulnerable, I understand their struggles. Our goal is to bring the government directly to the people."

Kour further assured that if given the mandate, ward-wise camps will be organized to ensure that beneficiaries of old-age, widow, and disability pensions receive their dues without the need to visit government offices. "Under my leadership, the administration will come to the people, setting up camps in every ward to ensure that pensions are delivered efficiently to those who need them," she stated.

She strongly criticized her political opponents, accusing the BJP and Congress of creating unnecessary hardships for the common man. "These parties have only focused on their political agendas, ignoring the real struggles of the people," Kour said. "With the support of the people, we will bring about real change."

Pavneet Kour called on the people of Jammu South to support her and the Apni Party in the upcoming elections, stressing that this pension reform is a crucial step in addressing the region's most pressing issues.

Slathia extends support to Dr. Devinder Manyal, BJP candidate from Ramgarh

JINNEWS SERVICE
RAMGARH, SEPT 20

Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, BJP MLA Candidate for Ramgarh, continues his election campaign today with village-to-village rallies and door-to-door outreach in Ramgarh Assembly Constituency, covering areas like Bandaral, Keso, Kamor, Rangur, Babral, Nanga, Abtal, Dag, Chauni, and Mahalshah.



Former Minister J&K, Surjit Singh Slathia, has extended his full support to Dr. Manyal, joining him in the campaign. Today's highlight is the massive joining of 1000 Mahila Morcha members and 500 youth, demonstrating the growing momentum of Dr. Manyal's campaign.

Village-to-Village Rallies, Engaging with voters in remote areas, Door-to-Door Outreach, Personal connect with constituents, Mahila Morcha Support 1000 women join the campaign, Youth Support 500 young voters pledge their support Dr. Manyal's campaign focuses on development, women empowerment, and nationalism. As a former Health Minister of J&K and MLA from Samba, he brings valuable experience to the table. With Surjit Singh Slathia's support, Dr. Manyal's campaign is gaining traction.

With Surjit Singh Slathia's support, Dr. Manyal's campaign is gaining traction.

SMVDU Students and Faculty visit IIT Jammu for Educational Tour



JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

A group of PG and UG students of the School of Biotechnology, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) visited the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Jammu as part of an educational tour, aimed at fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing, and hands-on learning. The visit provided an invaluable opportunity for the students to interact with leading academicians, researchers, and innovators at IIT Jammu. During the visit, the SMVDU students were

given a guided tour of the state-of-the-art facilities at IIT Jammu, including the advanced laboratories, research centers, and innovation hubs. They were introduced to ongoing research projects and technological innovations in various areas. The students were accompanied by Dr. Ratna Chandra (Associate Professor & Head, School of Biotechnology), Dr. Rakesh Kumar (Assistant Professor), Mr. Arvind Kumar Yadav (Assistant Professor), and Dr. Indu Bhushan (Assistant Professor). Dr. Chandra, expressed the significance

of such visits in broadening students' intellectual horizons. The students also had the opportunity to explore potential avenues for future collaborations, including internships, joint research projects, and workshops between SMVDU and IIT Jammu. Such exchanges are part of SMVDU's ongoing efforts to provide students with exposure to top-tier institutions, fostering a culture of innovation and excellence. The students also engaged in interactive sessions with IIT Jammu faculty members Dr. Mithu Baidya (HOD, Bioscience and Bio-

engineering), Dr. Vinay Sharma (Assistant Professor), and Dr. Shirsha Bose (Assistant Professor). Students had the opportunity to ask questions and receive valuable advice from these distinguished faculty members, further igniting their passion for scientific research and innovation. HVC, SMVDU, Prof. Pragati Kumar complimented the School of Biotechnology for consistently organising such visits and also encouraged the faculty members and the students to further pursue such interactions for academic enlightenment.

Khelo India Volleyball Tournament organizes at Bhatt Dhurian Poonch



JINNEWS SERVICE
POONCH, SEPT 20

The recent volleyball tournament organized by the Indian Army for the youth of the southern Pir Panjal region concluded in an exhilarating finale on 19 Sep 2024. Aimed at promoting sportsmanship and community engagement, the event attracted significant participation and local enthusiasm. The tournament kicked on 08 Sep at Govt Higher Secondary School, Bhatt Dhurian, which became a hub of activity as six teams from various villages competed. The initiative was part of the Indian Army's outreach program, designed to engage with young people in remote areas, where access to organized sports is often limited. The Indian Army recognized the potential of sports to build community ties and foster essential life skills among youth. The teams were awarded trophies and medals emphasizing the importance of recognition in fostering continued participation in sports. Following the final match, a ceremony celebrated all participants and highlighted outstanding individual performances. Awards for categories such as "Best Player" and "Best Setter" showcased the talents of

players from all teams, reinforcing the tournament's commitment to personal growth. Overall, the volleyball tournament was a resounding success, leaving a lasting impact on the community and its youth. Many participants expressed renewed enthusiasm for sports, and discussions about establishing regular sports programs in the area have begun. The Indian Army's engagement with local youth has set a precedent for future initiatives, ensuring that the spirit of teamwork and competition continues to thrive in the Pir Panjal region.

The event held at Malviya Shiksha Bhawan, was coordinated by Dr. Arvind and brought together an intellectually stimulating discussion on the theme "Jammu and Kashmir State Elections: Strengthening the Prospects of Hope and Democracy."

CUJ organizes 2nd Swami Vivekananda Youth Parliament

JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

The Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu successfully organised the second session of the debate cum discussion activity as part of the Swami Vivekananda Youth Parliament under the esteemed patronship of Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. Sanjeev Jain and the insightful guidance of the Head of the Department Prof. Asit Mantry.

The session witnessed the active participation of students, including Eklavya, Rashmi, Alok, Prangya, Ritik, and Talib, who engaged in a deep and insightful discourse. The discussion revolved



around the pivotal role of elections in restoring political stability, ensuring governance, and upholding democratic values in Jammu and Kashmir, a region often at the heart of national attention.

The speakers emphasized that elections serve as a cornerstone for fostering democratic hope in a conflict-sensitive state like Jammu and Kashmir, where political representation is critical to bridging regional aspirations and promoting peace. They discussed how free and fair elections can instil a sense of empowerment among citizens and enhance trust in democratic institutions. Through well-argued perspectives, participants analyzed the challenges faced by the electoral process in Jammu and Kashmir, ranging from logistical concerns to political complexities. They also offered potential solutions for making elections more

inclusive and representative. The session concluded on a high note, with the participants unanimously agreeing that democratic elections are key to ensuring long-term peace, development, and hope in the region. The contribution of the students, combined with the academic leadership of Central University Jammu made this event a meaningful platform for constructive political dialogue.

The meeting was attended by students, scholars, and faculty of the Centre. In the meeting, the director of the Centre for Molecular Biology, Dr. Narendra K Bairwa encouraged students to advance their knowledge and raise awareness.

Centre for Molecular Biology, Centre University of Jammu hosts Journal Club Seminar

JINNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPT 20

The Centre for Molecular Biology at Central University of Jammu under the patronage of Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. Sanjeev Jain, hosted

a weekly journal club meeting. In the meeting, 2nd-year M.Sc Biotechnology students Ms Anushka and Ms Ankita brought to light their innovative research on Helicobacter pylori resistance conducted during

their summer internship at the Tata Institute for Genetics and Society (TIGS), Bengaluru under the guidance of Dr. Shivranjani C. Moharir. Anushka and Ankita explained the concept of metagenomics, a method

that allows researchers to analyze genetic material from environmental samples without culturing organisms. They then discussed antimicrobial resistance, detailing how H. pylori develops resistance to antibiotics. The presentation included a vibrant

Question & Answer session, where students and faculty engaged in discussions about the research methods and implications. This interactive component added depth to the session, allowing for a

broader exchange of ideas. Anushka and Ankita's presentation was met with enthusiasm and praise. Their research not only provided valuable insights into H. pylori resistance but also highlighted the importance

of ongoing research in combating antibiotic resistance. The meeting was coordinated by Dr Swarkar Sharma, Associate Professor, and Dr Sudhir Singh, Assistant Professor, CMB CUJ. The meeting was attended

by students, scholars, and faculty of the Centre. In the meeting, the director of the Centre for Molecular Biology, Dr. Narendra K Bairwa encouraged students to advance their knowledge and raise awareness.

EDITORIAL

One Nation, One Election: A Bold Step or Democratic Setback?

The idea of "One Nation, One Election" (ONOE) has been gaining significant attention in India's political discourse. Advocates argue that synchronizing national and state elections will bring efficiency, save costs, and reduce the perennial election cycle that disrupts governance. Critics, however, view it as a potential threat to the federal structure and democratic diversity. The proposal raises profound questions about the balance between administrative efficiency and the foundational values of India's democracy.

The primary argument for ONOE revolves around financial and administrative efficiency. India, as one of the world's largest democracies, witnesses an election nearly every year, either at the national, state, or local levels. The constant election cycle consumes massive resources, with significant expenditure on security, logistics, and personnel. Moreover, frequent elections often lead to the imposition of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), which restricts government initiatives, delaying crucial projects and policies. Proponents of ONOE argue that consolidating elections could allow uninterrupted governance, enabling long-term policy implementation and better focus on governance rather than electioneering.

Additionally, proponents believe that simultaneous elections would enhance voter turnout. Currently, national elections tend to garner higher voter participation than state or local ones. Holding both on the same day may engage voters more fully in the democratic process, reducing the apathy often associated with state elections.

Despite its appeal, ONOE faces significant logistical and constitutional challenges. India's elections are staggered for a reason: they allow for the orderly management of a complex and diverse polity. Conducting simultaneous elections across 28 states and 8 Union territories, each with its own local political dynamics, requires a massive logistical operation. Ensuring free and fair elections for all levels simultaneously might overwhelm administrative capacities and security apparatuses.

The more fundamental challenge, however, is constitutional. India's Constitution allows for flexibility in state and national election timelines. If ONOE were to be implemented, it could potentially require amending the Constitution, altering the terms of legislatures, and even imposing President's Rule or delaying elections in states to align them with the national schedule. This raises questions about the erosion of state autonomy and the centralization of power, potentially undermining India's federal structure.

ONOE also runs the risk of nationalizing state issues. State elections serve as a platform for addressing regional concerns, providing citizens an opportunity to hold their local governments accountable. In a simultaneous election, national narratives could overshadow regional issues, reducing the democratic space for state-specific debates. It could, in effect, lead to a scenario where voters are swayed more by national leaders than their local representatives, undermining the diversity of political thought at the grassroots level.

At the heart of the ONOE debate lies a deeper philosophical question about democracy. Elections, by their very nature, are meant to be a check on power. Regular elections keep political parties and leaders accountable, forcing them to remain responsive to the electorate. By reducing the frequency of elections, ONOE might inadvertently reduce the periodic feedback loop between the government and its citizens.

Furthermore, frequent elections contribute to political plurality. They allow regional parties to emerge, ensuring that governance reflects India's linguistic, cultural, and political diversity. ONOE, by centralizing election cycles, could weaken the position of smaller, regional parties, giving disproportionate influence to national parties. This could risk diluting the multiplicity of voices in Indian politics.

"One Nation, One Election" is an ambitious idea that promises efficiency but comes with deep democratic and federal concerns. While the potential for cost savings and streamlined governance is attractive, the challenges it poses to India's federal structure and regional political autonomy cannot be ignored. Instead of rushing toward a simultaneous election model, a more nuanced debate is needed to address the deeper concerns of democratic representation, electoral fairness, and regional autonomy.

ONOE, if it is to be pursued, must be grounded in an inclusive conversation that carefully weighs the pros and cons. The true test of this policy will not just be its efficiency, but its ability to uphold the democratic ideals that lie at the core of the Indian republic.

Sri Lanka's pivotal presidential election

NILANTHA ILANGAMUWA

Sri Lanka faces a pivotal moment in its political history as it prepares for the presidential election this Saturday, 21 September. This election, the ninth for the executive presidency, unfolds amid severe political polarisation, sharply contrasting with the last election in November 2019. The decline of traditional political parties and the rise of various political alliances are prominent features of this election, with three main candidates competing in a manner distinct from the two-horse races of previous presidential contests. The fragmentation of political parties, the absence of anti-defection laws, and the formation of new alliances driven more by personal interests than by cohesive agendas pose significant risks to democratic stability and governance. The 2019 presidential race featured two main candidates and a notable but relatively minor third-party candidate. It saw a record voter registration of 15,992,096 and a turnout of 83.72% (13,387,951), surpassing previous highs of 81.52% in 2015 and 81.06% in 1982. Despite this high turnout, 135,452 votes were invalid, leaving 13,252,499 votes as valid. Gotabaya Rajapaksa of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna won with 52.25% of the valid votes (6,924,255), while his main opponent, Sajith Premadasa of the National Democratic Front, received 41.99% (5,564,239). Anura Kumara Dissanayake of the National People's Power secured a mere 3.16%

(418,553 votes). In the subsequent general election on 5 August 2020, Premadasa and Dissanayake faced off again for parliamentary seats. Premadasa won 305,744 votes, while Dissanayake received 49,814 votes.

In the 2015 parliamentary elections, Premadasa garnered 112,645 votes from Hambantota, whereas Dissanayake, contesting from Colombo, secured 65,966 votes. Ranil Wickremesinghe, one of main three main contenders, in this year's race but absent from the 2019 presidential election, leads the United National Party. His party received 249,435 votes (2.25%) in the general elections, including 30,875 from Colombo and 28,282 from Gampaha. Although his party did not win a parliamentary seat, Wickremesinghe was appointed to a national list position. Amid severe social upheaval caused by economic mismanagement, which resulted in the resignation of both the President and Prime Minister, Wickremesinghe, a seasoned politician and six-time Prime Minister, capitalised on the moment to make his comeback. After Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa was forced to resign, Wickremesinghe was appointed as Prime Minister.

However, protests demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa led to his dramatic escape, first to Trincomalee by navy ship, then back to Colombo by air force chopper, and finally to the Maldives by air force cargo flight. Rajapaksa officially resigned on 14 July 2022. Subsequently, Prime

Minister Wickremesinghe was appointed as President by the constitutional process. Wickremesinghe's appointment highlights the complexities of Sri Lanka's political system.

According to the constitution, the President must appoint a Prime Minister who commands the majority's confidence in Parliament, illustrating the considerable unchecked powers inherent in the executive role. Rajapaksa's assumption that Wickremesinghe, who came to Parliament through the national list, was the candidate who earned the majority's confidence reflects the intricate dynamics of Sri Lankan politics. However, Wickremesinghe has effectively stabilised the situation after the social upheaval. In this context, Wickremesinghe has emerged as a major candidate, yet the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna has nominated its candidate, Namal Rajapaksa.

Reports suggest that Rajapaksa's ambitions to secure the prime ministership were opposed, leading a faction of his party to break away from Wickremesinghe. Rajapaksa's candidacy appears more focused on maintaining his family's political lineage rather than presenting a genuine bid for leadership. Nonetheless, his endorsement of supporting Sajith Premadasa, where he appeals to supporters to cast their second vote for Premadasa, could be a decisive factor in the election outcome. Meanwhile, the NPP, initially opposed to the public uprising that led to Rajapaksa's removal, has become a significant political

entity. Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who ironically led his political party into alliances with traditional parties to secure ministerial positions over the past few decades, has skillfully capitalised on widespread dissatisfaction with corruption and the growing anger towards conventional politicians to bolster his standing. His alliance's emotionally charged propaganda has infiltrated every corner of society, despite its lack of deep ideological substance. The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), his original party, has skillfully harnessed this discontent to challenge the status quo.

However, Dissanayake's path to victory remains uncertain, especially with three major candidates in the race. Voter statistics reveal additional obstacles: with 17.1 million registered voters and an anticipated 80% turnout (13.7 million), a candidate would need approximately 7 million votes to secure the presidency in the first count.

The NPP's past performance shows limited success, receiving 418,553 votes (3.16%) in 2019 and 445,950 votes (3.84%) in parliamentary elections in 2020. The party faces challenges in Tamil-majority districts like Nuwara-Eliya, Jaffna, Wannai, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee, and in areas with lower voter counts, such as Polonnaruwa and Matale. To succeed, the NPP must secure substantial votes from Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara, Kandy, and Kurunegala, requiring an estimated 700,000 to 800,000 additional votes.

Given these dynamics and the competition among three candidates, the NPP or JVP may struggle to achieve significant success in this election. However, the election remains crucial in determining the country's social and governance structure.

Conversely, Sajith Premadasa appears to have significant potential to garner a majority of the votes, while Wickremesinghe has also gained substantial ground. Therefore, it is unlikely that any candidate will secure over 50% of the vote in the first round of counting, which may necessitate counting the second votes.

This uncertainty could trigger a new wave of political instability if major alliances and key candidates fail to manage the results effectively and refuse to accept the people's verdict. Despite flashy manifestos and hefty campaign budgets, none of the candidates have provided a clear plan to tackle the staggering \$100 billion national debt. They all parrot the same old IMF rhetoric, yet almost none offer a concrete strategy beyond this worn-out solution.

The situation in the island nation is dire, and there's no straightforward path for the incoming leader to steer the country out of its deepening crisis. As of 1 July 2024, about 24.8% of Sri Lanka's population lives in poverty, with rates varying dramatically between districts—3.5% in Colombo versus 44.2% in Nuwara-Eliya.

Poverty in rural areas has surged from 15% to 32%, while urban poverty has tripled

from 6% to 18%. A recent survey revealed that 31% of the population is impoverished, with 33% skipping meals and 47% cutting back on meal sizes. Malnutrition affects nearly one-third of children under five, and over 40% of women aged 18-60 are overweight or obese, reflecting severe economic and health issues.

Regardless of the election's outcome, Sri Lanka's entrenched political divisions threaten to entrench a fragmented legislative body, where effective governance and decisive action may become increasingly elusive.

Such divisions risk entrenching a cycle of delays and inefficiencies, potentially leading to a state of perpetual gridlock that hampers national progress. Antonio Gramsci's notion of passive revolution becomes pertinent here, warning of significant changes that merely preserve existing power structures. Hannah Arendt's insight that "The most radical revolutionary will become a conservative the day after the revolution" cautions against decisions driven by emotion over reason.

Thus, the question looms: can this election transcend emotional politics to instigate genuine reform, or will it simply entrench the status quo? Regrettably, the candidates' manifestos seem to hint at the latter.

(The writer is a journalist and author. Views expressed are personal)

Sri Lankans want change. They deserve continuity

MIHIR SHARMA

For decades, power in Sri Lanka alternated between two main parties. The fact that there are now three candidates with a legitimate shot at victory in Saturday's election underscores how thoroughly the old political system has fractured. The winner's first task must be to maintain some semblance of stability.

Once a model of development, Sri Lanka has suffered a turbulent few years. In 2022, it fell into default for the first time thanks to some seriously questionable economic policies. Protests in Colombo forced the then-president out of office. His prime minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe, was eventually appointed his successor.

Wickremesinghe moved swiftly to stabilize the economy and reach an agreement with Sri Lanka's lenders,

including the International Monetary Fund. He can claim some success: Inflation declined to 1.3% in September 2023 compared to 69.8% a year earlier, while foreign exchange reserves rose to \$3.1 billion, or over two months of imports, from \$500 million during the crisis.

While the human cost has been high, and the economic turnaround is not complete, the relatively swift return of economic normalcy should logically make the incumbent the front-runner. Instead, the 75-year-old Wickremesinghe, who heads the venerable, center-right United National Party, is running an increasingly distant third.

As the US learned this year, voters don't always look kindly on septuagenarians unwilling to leave the political scene. Wickremesinghe's desire to hold onto power — he was first elected prime

minister in 1993, but had never previously been president — has proved to be fatal for the UNP.

The question is whether the economy can survive his departure. His administration has built a platform for recovery and even growth. Even so, the country remains heavily indebted. Any fresh shock could tip it back over the edge.

The two leading candidates have cast themselves as change agents. The frontrunner, Sajith Premadasa, was long Wickremesinghe's rival for power within the UNP and is the son of a former president. (Wickremesinghe is the nephew of another. Sri Lanka is a country with long-lived political dynasties.)

When he left the UNP in 2020, Premadasa seems to have taken most of its voters with him. Many worry he has also abandoned its economic liberalism. While he

may not scupper the reform plan entirely, relations with the IMF will undoubtedly become more complicated if he wins.

His closest rival, Anura Kumara Dissanayake, heads the left-wing Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna party. He's defined himself as an insurgent outsider, seeking to harness the energy of the anti-government protests of two years ago, and is running as the candidate of a coalition of parties and not of the JVP alone.

Typically for such makeovers, there is a dark past Dissanayake wants voters to overlook. The JVP platform is a classically Sri Lankan mixture of Maoism, ethnic supremacism, and economic populism. The island is dominated by the Sinhala ethnic group, and the left of its political spectrum has always had a tinge of Sinhala majoritarianism about it.

Dissanayake has sought to present himself as having moderated on economics and accepted the need to grow exports to pay for imports. But he has clearly sought the votes of those who blame Wickremesinghe's reforms for a decline in living standards — when, in fact, the rise in poverty is largely due to scarring from the crisis, particularly the lingering effects of high inflation.

Certainly, political reform is important. Wickremesinghe has had a hard time pursuing accountability for past corruption since he depends for support on the parties and personalities who were in power before the crisis.

But the end point of any reform program must be the restoration of general prosperity and growth. Achieving that will require both political and policy stability. The country has already seen

what instability and impulsiveness can deliver: The last crisis was entirely driven by ill-advised policy.

Sri Lanka has painstakingly managed this July to work out a preliminary deal on \$12.6 billion of its total foreign debt of more than \$40 billion. But that's now been put in jeopardy, and investors are worried about the increased political uncertainty.

Without a good deal on debt, investment and growth will not return to the island, and living standards will remain depressed. That will only feed the cycle of anger and disillusionment that leads to political crises.

Sri Lanka's new leaders must demonstrate they are more responsible than the old guard they revile. Otherwise, a presidential election that should bring years of turbulence to a close might precipitate a new crisis.

Apply Sports ethics in the Workplace

SAKSHI SETHI

Sports have since long been a crucial element of human culture, teaching participants important life skills and values. The discipline, teamwork and perseverance developed in sports can easily be translated into a professional setting, where these qualities often lead to success. Applying sports values to the workplace creates a healthier and more productive environment that benefits individuals and teams alike.

The term 'resilience' is one of the core values in sports, where athletes regularly face challenges, setbacks and failures. Whether it's losing a game, dealing with injuries or facing tough competition, athletes learn to recover, adapt and continue working toward their goals. The similar value is crucial in the workplace, where employees encounter

stress, failed projects and unexpected obstacles. Resilience helps employees bounce back from difficulties and maintain a positive attitude despite setbacks. It encourages them to see failure as an opportunity for growth rather than a reason to give up.

There is no denying the fact that athletes exhibit tremendous commitment and passion for their sport, dedicating hours of practice, maintaining a strong mental focus and striving to overcome challenges. At the workplace, too, similar commitment is essential for both personal as well as organizational success. Employees who are passionate about their work are more engaged, motivated and willing to go the extra mile. Just as athletes work toward improving their performance, committed employees consistently seek opportunities to learn, grow and contrib-



ute to their team.

When talked about the Paralympics, these athletes provide a powerful source of inspiration when it comes to work ethics. They demonstrate exceptional dedication, resilience and perseverance—qualities that can directly inspire and shape one's approach to professional life. The lessons learned from their incredible journeys highlight the

importance of maintaining a strong work ethic, overcoming adversity and striving for excellence in any field. Passion fuels innovation and creativity, leading to breakthroughs and a sense of fulfillment in one's job encouraging professionals to remain committed to their goals even when facing challenges at the workplace. It teaches us that obstacles, whether personal or pro-

fessional, can be overcome with time, effort and persistence.

The values learned through sports are not only essential for athletic success but also for professional growth and productivity in the workplace. By embracing these values, individuals and teams can foster a work culture that promotes collaboration, perseverance and a drive for excellence.

Recognizing progress, no matter how small reinforces one's belief that effort pays off and celebrating these victories along the way keeps the individual motivated and energized to continue. Instead of shying away from difficulties, one must see them as opportunities to learn and grow. When an individual approaches obstacles with the belief that effort leads to improvement, they build resilience and perseverance.

As stated above, undoubtedly, Paralympians have to cope with significant adversity, whether it's learning to use a prosthetic limb or recovering from a life-altering injury. In the workplace, this means that failures, mistakes or even unexpected challenges are not the end but an opportunity to bounce back stronger. In the workplace, adopting a mindset that welcomes challenges rather than avoiding them is a key part of developing a strong work ethic. It pushes professionals to take on difficult tasks, expand their capabilities and evolve in their careers. Sports values do provide excellent lessons that can be transferred to the workplace, promoting personal growth, team cohesion and overall success.

(The writer is an educator; views expressed are personal)

Climate change a challenge for our global food systems: WHO

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 20

Climate change is a challenge for the global food system, said Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General, at the World Health Organisation (WHO) on Friday.

In a video message to the second Global Food Regulators Summit in Delhi, the WHO chief highlighted the important role of national food regulators in harmonising regulatory policies for the world.

In addition to climate change, "population growth, new technologies, globalisation, and industrialisation" are other increasing challenges to the global food systems, Ghebreyesus said.

Further, he said food regulators also play a critical role in combating unsafe food, which



causes 600 million cases of foodborne diseases and 4,20,000 deaths annually.

He also lamented that 70 per cent of fatalities from unsafe food occur among children under five.

"The food regulator community has a critical role to play in addressing

these global challenges," Ghebreyesus said.

Meanwhile, stressing the need for innovative regulatory solutions, Dr Samuel Godefroy, President, the International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST) stated that food science is vital for human survival.

He also applauded FSSAI for its contribution to strengthening the global food regulatory network.

Steve Wearne, Chairperson, Codex appreciated India's significant investment in Codex and food safety regulation.

He highlighted that India is one of the few

countries to host subsidiary commissions of Codex.

The Summit also launched the Food Import Rejection Alerts (FIRA) -- an online portal designed to notify the public and relevant food safety authorities about food import rejections at Indian borders.

The two-day Summit is expected to witness over 5,000 physical attendees and virtual participation exceeding 1,50,000. This includes 1,00,000 food business operators, 40,000 students and researchers, 6,000 exporters, 5,000 importers, and 3,500 food safety officers.

About 2,500 food safety trainees, 2,000 laboratory officials, and 800 Food Safety Mitras, apart from participation in Indian Missions in over 60 countries will also participate.

Study finds biomarkers to predict disability progression in multiple sclerosis

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 20

A team of researchers has identified critical biomarkers that can predict disability worsening in people with multiple sclerosis (MS) -- a chronic autoimmune disease that affects the central nervous system (CNS).

The findings can potentially transform treatment strategies for millions of people suffering from MS worldwide, and will also pave the way for more personalised and effective treatment plans.

The team from Hospital Universitario Ramon y Cajal in Spain conducted an observational study on 725 MS patients, across 13 hospitals in Spain and Italy.

They found that high levels of serum neurofilament light chain (sNfL) -- a protein indicating nerve cell damage -- at the onset of MS could predict both relapse-associated worsening (RAW) and pro-

gression independent of relapse activity (PIRA).

In addition, levels of serum glial fibrillary acidic protein (sGFAP) -- a protein derived from astrocytes that enter the bloodstream when the central nervous system (CNS) is injured or inflamed -- correlate with PIRA in patients with low levels of sNfL. High sGFAP levels indicated more localised inflammation driven by microglia in the CNS and are also known to be associated with progression.

Dr. Enric Monreal and his team at the Hospital analysed blood samples from the 725 MS patients collected within 12 months of disease onset.

Their findings reveal that higher sNfL levels are indicative of acute inflammation within the CNS in MS. These were associated with a 45 per cent increased risk of RAW and a 43 per cent increased risk of PIRA.

While people with high sNfL levels often did not

respond well to standard disease-modifying treatments (DMTs), they showed significant benefits from high-efficacy DMTs such as Natalizumab, Alemtuzumab, Ocrelizumab, Rituximab, and Ofatumumab.

Monreal, a researcher in MS, suggested measuring both sNfL and sGFAP levels at disease onset, which will help tailor treatment strategies for MS patients more effectively.

The researcher explained that this will mean people with low levels of both biomarkers, who show good prognosis, can be treated via injectable or oral DMTs.

Current DMTs primarily target the peripheral adaptive immune system without affecting CNS immunity. Thus, finding people "with higher levels of peripheral inflammation is crucial for preventing disability and improving patient outcomes," Monreal said

2 in 5 employees believe AI, machine learning biggest skill gap: Report

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 20

Over two-in-five or 43 per cent of employees acknowledge artificial learning/machine (AI/ML) learning as the biggest skills gap, which is crucial to elevate confidence and performance, according to a new report on Friday.

The report by Skillsoft, a platform for transformative learning experiences, explores the current state of workplace skills and talent development programmes.

The report, based on a survey of 2,500 full-time employees in India, the US, the UK, and Germany, revealed that 35 per cent of respondents lack confidence that they have the skills required to succeed in their roles.

Additionally, 41 per cent



expressed concerns about job security due to gaps in their skills.

Despite the proliferation of GenAI tools, 62 per cent of respondents said their organisation's AI training programme is average to poor.

"This data highlights a significant issue: one-third of the workforce is questioning if they have the right skills to excel

in their roles," said Ciara Harrington, Chief People Officer, Skillsoft.

Harrington said these skill gaps not only affect employees in reaching their full potential but also hamper organisations in achieving their key business targets.

"As workers face an increasingly complex set of responsibilities, ongoing change in the work-

place, and disruption spurred by generative AI, it's critical for organisations to proactively build their talent's skills. A skilled, agile workforce is inherently more confident, capable, and productive," Harrington said.

Just 25 per cent of employees rated their organisation's talent development programs as highly effective. The report showed that employees seek more dedicated time, new formats, and increased leadership support to meet upskilling needs.

The most common actions being undertaken by organisations are to provide skill- and role-based learning paths (28 per cent), perform skill gap analyses (16 per cent), and implement a skills taxonomy (16 per cent).

3-5 cups of coffee daily can beat diabetes, high BP, fatty liver risk: Expert

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 20

Consuming 3-5 cups of coffee daily can help lower your risk of diabetes, hypertension or high blood pressure, and fatty liver risk, according to a top neurologist.

While coffee is known to provide multiple health benefits, the expert suggested drinking the beverage without sugar and with less milk.

Taking to social media platform X, Dr. Sudhir Kumar from Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, Hyderabad, listed out some health benefits of coffee.

"Most notable benefits are lower risk of type 2 diabetes, coronary artery disease, stroke, fatty liver, hypertension, chronic kidney disease, depression, and certain cancers,"



he said.

"Coffee drinking increases longevity. 3-5 cups of coffee per day is considered safe and healthy. Avoid adding sugar to coffee," he added.

The expert also advised caution for people with insomnia to "avoid drinking coffee for about 5-6 hours prior to bedtime".

While "pregnant women should limit their coffee intake to 1-2 cups per day, people with severe hypertension

should switch to green tea or limit their coffee intake to 1 cup per day", Kumar said.

The beverage is safe "in people with high normal BP and Grade 1 hypertension".

The expert explained that the high levels of antihypertensive nutrients (that is, vitamin E, niacin, potassium, and magnesium) and polyphenols in coffee may be why coffee is associated with a higher risk of hypertension.

People suffering from severe hypertension can prefer green tea over coffee, suggested Kumar.

Several research have backed the health benefits of coffee, including for Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases.

A study, published online in the April issue of the journal Neurology, showed that the highest coffee consumers had a 37 per cent reduced risk of getting Parkinson's disease, compared to those who do not drink.

Another study, published in ACS' Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry, showed that, in preliminary in vitro laboratory tests, espresso compounds can inhibit tau protein aggregation -- a process that is believed to be involved in the onset of Alzheimer's disease.

Junior doctors end sit-in protest before Bengal health secretariat

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, SEP 20

The West Bengal Junior Doctors Front on Friday ended their sit-in demonstration outside the state health secretariat Swastha Bhavan.

They are set to partially withdraw their cease-work by resuming work at the Emergency Departments of state-run hospitals from Saturday, as per their announcement on Thursday night.

The WBJDF in a general body meeting on Thursday night decided to resume their duty in the Emergency Departments from Saturday in view of the current flood like situation in South Bengal districts where thousands of people were marooned.

The WBJDF, however, announced their movement would continue and they would stay away from



their duties at the Out Patients Departments (OPD) until justice was delivered to their 31 year old lady colleague, who was allegedly raped and murdered at her workplace R G Kar Medical College and Hospital (RGKMCH) on August 9.

The medics also said their demand for removing the

state health secretary N S Nigam was not conceded by the government.

The protest demonstration at Swastha Bhavan began on September 10 and cease work at the government hospitals from August 9.

A protesting doctor Debashish Halder said

they would start a protest rally at 3 pm on Friday from the Swastha Bhavan to the CGO Complex at Salt Lake, that houses an office of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) - the federal agency probing the alleged rape-murder of the post-graduate trainee doctor and corruption

and irregularities at the RGKMCH - to press for a fast inquiry into the case. He said after the rally the medics would return to their respective hospitals and start resuming their services at the emergency departments. The medics have also announced the setting up of Abhaya medical camps, in memory of the brutally murdered RG Kar trainee doctor, at flood-affected regions of the state from Friday. "We will wait for a week for the West Bengal government to implement all its promises and if unfulfilled, we will resume 'cease work'," Dr Aspafulah Naiya said.

Meanwhile, the college council of Kalyani JNM Hospital has suspended 40 medical students for six months for allegedly creating a problem, like issuing threats to fellow students and medics. .

AOI gives new lease of life to 7-year-old boy suffering from brain Tumour

AGENCIES
VILAYAWADA, SEP 20

American Oncology Institute (AOI) at Mangalagiri, near here, successfully treated a 7-year-old boy diagnosed with high-risk medulloblastoma, a fast-growing brain tumor that primarily affects children.

After thorough investigations, the medical team at AOI initiated an intensive treatment plan, which included craniospinal irradiation--a specialized form of radiation therapy targeting both the brain and spine to eliminate cancer cells and prevent the disease from spreading.

Following the completion of his treatment, the boy has been under close monitoring with regular follow-ups over the past five years. Today, he is cancer-free and thriving,

now in the 7th grade and living a healthy, active life.

Harish Trivedi, CEO, of CTSI - South Asia, expressed his immense pride in this achievement: "This journey serves as an inspiration, not only for this courageous young patient and his family but for everyone who is fighting the battle against cancer. The medical expertise at AOI and our relentless pursuit of patient-centered care have made this success possible. We are committed to expanding access to such advanced treatments across South Asia, ensuring that every patient, regardless of where they live, has access to the highest quality of Cancer Care."

Mahendra Reddy, RCOO, AOI, emphasized the collaboration and

innovation that led to this successful outcome. "The five-year journey of this young patient reflects the seamless teamwork between our doctors and support staff. Medulloblastoma is a challenging diagnosis, especially in young patients, and it is cases like this that highlight the value of our multidisciplinary approach. We are committed to ensuring that every child diagnosed with cancer has the same opportunity for a full recovery and a bright future." Dr Mani Kumar S, a Radiation Oncologist, said: "When we first saw the patient in 2019, we knew the road ahead would be tough. High-risk medulloblastoma in children requires aggressive, precisely targeted treatment.

Punjab Health Minister debunks Rs 600-cr arrear claim under Ayushman

AGENCIES
CHANDIGARH, SEPT 20

A day after Punjab's private hospitals stopped cashless services under Ayushman scheme alleging that the State Government failed to clear Rs 600 crore dues, the state's Health and

Family Welfare Minister Dr Balbir Singh on Thursday strongly refuted the claims made by the Private Hospitals and Nursing Home Association (PHANA) Punjab.

Dubbing PHANA's claims that the State Government owes over

Rs 600 crore for various treatments availed under the Ayushman Bharat Mukh Mantri Sehat Bima Yojna as "false and misleading", Dr Balbir revealed that the total pending amount for both public and private hospitals is just Rs 364 crores.

As per the official data, the breakdown of pending payments shows that Rs 166.67 crores are owed to public hospitals, while private hospitals are due Rs 197 crores.

The clarification comes a day after PHANA announced that it would stop all treatments under

the Ayushman Bharat Mukh Mantri Sehat Bima Yojna across empaneled private hospitals in the State.

Health Minister said that since April 1, 2024, the Government has disbursed Rs 101.66 crores to private hospitals and Rs 112 crores to public hos-

pitals, totaling Rs 214.30 crores.

Dr Balbir explained that technical glitches arose from February 2024 after switching to new software for claim processing launched by National Health Agency (NHA), which resulted in slowing down the claim

processing.

However, the State Health Agency (SHA) took prompt measures including deputing more staff and working on weekends and holidays, to address the issue.

To resolve the matter, the Health Minister has called a meeting with

PHANA representatives on Friday.

Additionally, a meeting with the Indian Medical Association (IMA) has also been fixed on September 25, 2024, at 3:30 pm to address any concerns regarding payments and SHA functioning.

DESTRUCTION, VIOLENCE ONLY IDEOLOGY OF NAXALISM: AMIT SHAH

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEPT 20

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said that Naxalism has only one ideology - destruction and violence - and their strategy has been to garner sympathy for themselves under the guise of human rights.

Interacting with the victims of Naxal violence from Chhattisgarh at his residence here, Shah said the wounds of these victims of violence in Naxal-affected areas are a living symbol of the inhumanity



and cruelty of Naxalism.

He said, "Naxalites have not only snatched away the rights of many people for their own benefit, but their violence, their IEDs,

their bullets and ammunition have killed many people or made them disabled for life".

"Those who advocate the human rights of

militants killed by security forces do not see the human rights of these people who are forced to live without eyes, hands and legs," Shah said.

"I am extremely emotional after talking to the sisters and brothers affected by Naxalite violence in Chhattisgarh.

I assure all of you that the Modi government is determined to completely eradicate Naxalism by March 2026, and establish peace in your region," Shah said.

He said due to the policies of the government,

Left Wing Extremism has now been restricted to just a few districts in Chhattisgarh.

The Home Minister appealed to the LWEs to abjure the path of violence and join the mainstream of society.

He expressed confidence that with the complete elimination of Left Wing Extremism by March 2026, Bastar will once again become beautiful, peaceful and developed.

Moreover, the victims of Naxalite violence also shared their plights with the Home Minister.

CBI files second charge sheet in NEET UG question paper leak case

AGENCIES
PATNA, SEP 20

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed a second charge sheet in connection with the NEET UG 2024 question paper theft case, before the Special Court for CBI cases in Patna against six accused including Principal of Oasis School Hazaribag appointed as City Coordinator by the NTA for the NEET UG 2024 examination.

CBI source informed here on Friday that the charge sheet has been submitted under various provisions of the Indian

Penal Code, including Section 120-B (Criminal Conspiracy), Section 109 (Abetment), Section 409 (Criminal Breach of Trust), Section 420 (Cheating), Section 380 (Theft), Section 201 (Causing Disappearance of Evidence), and Section 411 (Dishonestly Receiving Stolen Property).

Additionally, substantive charges have been invoked under Section 13(2) and Section 13(1) (a) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as Amended in 2018) against the Oasis School Principal who was appointed as the City Coordinator and the

Vice-Principal who was appointed as the Centre Superintendent by NTA for conduct of NEET UG-2024 examination.

According to the source the second charge sheet has been filed against six accused namely Baldev Kumar alias Chintu, Sunny Kumar, Ahsanul Haque (Principal, Oasis School, Hazaribagh and City Coordinator of Hazaribagh, Imtiyaz Alam (Vice-Principal, Oasis School and Centre Superintendent, Jamaluddin alias Jamal (Reporter of a Newspaper, Hazaribagh) and Aman Kumar Singh.

World Food India 2024: Chirag Paswan meets agriculture leaders of Liberia and Djibouti

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 20

Minister of Food Processing Industries, Chirag Paswan, met with the Regional Agriculture Coordinator for the Ministry of Agriculture in Liberia and the Agriculture Minister of Djibouti on Friday during World Food India (WFI) 2024.

"I had a meeting with Moses Gbanyan from Liberia, where we discussed potential collaborations and opportunities in the trade and food processing sector," Chirag Paswan wrote on X.

The minister also informed about his meeting with the Agriculture Minister of Djibouti saying, "I had a G2G meeting with Mohamed Ahmed Awaleh of Djibouti. We discussed potential areas for collaboration in the trade and food processing sector."

Recognising the potential of the food processing



sector in transforming India into the "food basket of the world," the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, has adopted measures to attract investments in various sub-segments of food processing. This includes backward linkages, food processing equipment, processing-related R&D, cold chain storage solutions, startups, and logistic & retail chains, covering the entire food processing value chain.

World Food India 2024 is underway in Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi scheduled which started on Thursday.

The WFI 2024 exhibi-

tion will have participation from major global players as well as Indian companies from Food Processing and allied sectors. The exhibition will have a sectoral focus, showcase country strengths in country pavilions, as well as have state pavilions where states of India will showcase their best in terms of products, Agri-Horti clusters, infrastructure and policies. In 2017, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries launched the first edition of World Food India to showcase India's rich food culture and attract investment in the country's diverse food processing sector.

Mamata writes to PM seeking substantial central funds to undertake flood management work

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, SEP 20

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday dashed off a letter to Prime minister Narendra Modi seeking substantial central funds to undertake extensive flood management work in the interest of the affected people.

In a four page letter to Prime Minister, the Chief Minister alleged that the state was facing worst flood since 2009 for the unplanned and unilateral release of huge volume of water by DVC.

Describing the flood as "man made flood" she sought substantial central funds to undertake extensive flood management work in the interest of the affected people.

"The state is now facing the biggest floods in Lower Damodar and adjoining



areas since 2009. I earnestly request that you give this matter serious consideration and direct the concerned Ministries to address these issues on top priority, including the sanction and release of substantial Central funds to undertake extensive flood management works in the interest of people, who suffer the most," she wrote to the PM after visiting the affected areas of South Bengal.

She blamed the Damodar Valley Corporation for releasing over 5.5 lakh

cusecs of water causing inundation of South Bengal's entire districts.

"If this unilateral approach continues, bringing hardship to the people of my state, we will be left with no option but to disengage entirely from DVC and withdraw our participation. We can not allow this ongoing injustice to affect our people year after year", Banerjee warned in the letter.

"Unplanned and unilateral release of an enormously huge volume of water at nearly 5 lakh

cusecs from the combined system of Maithon and Panchet dams owned and maintained by the DVC led to the devastation," the CM reiterated.

Meanwhile, essentials carrying trucks have been stranded on the Jharkhand-Bengal border since last evening after the Chief Minister ordered stopping of all vehicular traffic from Jharkhand.

Banerjee ordered the DGP to prohibit vehicular traffic from Jharkhand apprehending further damage to the highways and the villages in the marooned areas.

Truckers said they were from Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana carrying perishable goods like fruits and vegetables for delivery at the wholesale market in Bhubaneswar.

Banerjee alleged that DVC released water to save Jharkhand. She said

while DVC released 4 lakh cusec of water another 1.5 cusec was released from Tenughat" she wrote.

She also slammed the Centre for not dredging and desilting the depth to increase the capacity of DVC to hold more water, which now reduced to 36 per cent.

"Why don't they want to take up dredging and desilting? Why should Bengal sink? DVC doesn't dredge, and Bengal sinks," Banerjee said Thursday.

She said excess water from neighbouring regions, including rainwater from Nepal and Bhutan, enters Bengal, causing floods in North Bengal.

In South Bengal, water released by DVC led to severe flooding. She mentioned that Ganga erosion in Malda and other parts has worsened the situation.

Meditation provides stability and direction: Mansukh Mandaviya

AGENCIES
HYDERABAD, SEP 20

Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, emphasized that meditation offers stability, sustains us, and provides direction in life.

Speaking as the chief guest at the three-day youth summit "Raising with Kindness," organized by Heartfulness in collaboration with The Commonwealth, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Government of Telangana, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), and Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) at Kanha Shanti Vanam on the outskirts of Hyderabad, Dr Mandaviya stated, "To be successful, you need only two things: commitment and dedication. Study the lives of successful individuals, learn from them, and channel



your energies toward success."

He emphasized the importance of aligning the expectations of the government and youth to achieve a "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India).

He highlighted the government's efforts to support research, development, startups, and international exposure under initiatives like 'Make in India.' Dr Mandaviya also mentioned the creation of the 'My Bharat' platform, which provides access to

over 33 lakh Indian and international companies, and underscored that this year's budget is 100 per cent youth-centric.

Referring to the government's goal of making India 'Atma Nirbhar' (self-reliant) through the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, he noted that the COVID-19 pandemic inspired the country to manufacture Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) domestically.

Dr Mandaviya encouraged youth to channel

their enthusiasm and knowledge toward the nation's development and highlighted the government's vision of positioning India among the top five countries in the global sports arena over the next 25 years.

He mentioned the Keerti project, which empowers students to engage in sports with international exposure.

World Champion P V Sindhu, who joined the event virtually, spoke about the transformative impact of meditation on her life.

"Meditation has been essential in maintaining clarity and mental strength during intense moments," she said, thanking Daaji for his guidance and appreciating Dr Mandaviya for his efforts to boost sports performance in the country.

Rev. Daaji, the Guide of Heartfulness and President of Shri Ram Chandra

Mission, in his address, stressed the importance of kindness, saying, "Rising with Kindness are three important words. Life becomes glorious only if we are kind to each other and ourselves." He highlighted how meditation cultivates a contemplative and peaceful mind, which leads to happiness and harmony.

The second edition of the annual summit aimed at inspiring youth to adopt kindness and compassion attracted over 10,000 students from various fields of study across the country.

Other dignitaries included Dr Hamdan Al Shaer - Deputy Chairman of Zayed International Foundation for the Environment, Sushil Ram, Commonwealth Secretariat, Dr R C Agrawal - Deputy Director General Education ICAR, Brijesh Dholakia, CEO Hari Krishna Export also joined the summit remotely.

No one can scrap reservations given by Ambedkar: Maha CM

AGENCIES
WARDHA, SEP 20

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde without directly naming Congress leader Rahul Gandhi criticised him over his alleged anti-reservation remarks, saying that no one can scrap the reservations given by the architect of the Constitution Babasaheb Ambedkar.

"Some people are defaming the country by going abroad. They are talking about the cancellation of reservations. No one can scrap the reservations given by Babasaheb Ambedkar," the Chief Minister said in his speech in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the function to mark the one-year progress of the PM Vishwakarma initiative.

He added that as long as Prime Minister Narendra

Modi is in power, no one can cancel the reservations.

The Chief Minister last week said that Rahul Gandhi's alleged anti-reservation face has been exposed, adding that his views reflect his "petty mentality".

"The country can never agree with Rahul Gandhi's petty views. It has been Congress habit to do politics in the name of religion and caste," the Chief Minister said.

He also took a dig at the Congress and National Conference on the issue of reinstatement of Article 370 in J&K.

"Some people say let's restore Article 370. They are singing the tune of the terrorists. After the deletion of this clause, development took place in J&K. Do you want to prevent this development," the Chief Minister said.

He said that PM Modi

is working to increase the dignity of the common man and increase his power.

"That is why PM Modi has brought the 'One Nation, One Election' scheme," he said.

He also praised PM Modi for launching a slew of initiatives to boost the country's development. "Now it is the India of 21st century. PM Modi is the captain of the country and he gave self-respect to the women of the country. Nearly 10 crore women became independent in ten years," he said.

The Chief Minister said that the state government is launching the Ahilyabai Holkar Startup Scheme wherein the women will get financial assistance of Rs 25 lakh. In addition, the government is starting the Acharya Chanakya skill development programme in 1000 colleges.

Himachal govt to hand over Jangi Thopan Powari hydro project to state power corporation

AGENCIES
SHIMLA, SEP 20

The Himachal Pradesh Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu, on Friday approved to handover of 780 MW Jangi Thopan Powari Hydro Power Project to state-run HP Power Corporation Ltd besides filling 100 posts of Assistant Forest Guards in the Forest Department.

It was also decided to allot 1630 MW Renukaji and 270 MW Thana Plauin Pump Storage Hydro Electric Projects to HP Power

Corporation Ltd. The Cabinet approved a Cabinet sub-committee, chaired by Health Minister Dhani Ram Shandil, with members including Rural Development Minister Anirudh Singh, Technical Education Minister Rajesh Dharmani, and Ayush Minister Yadvinder Goma. It has been tasked to provide recommendations for strengthening the Rogi Kalyan Samitis.

The Cabinet authorised the Himachal Pradesh Rajya Chayan Aayog to announce the results for Post Codes 903 and 939

while keeping five posts under Post Code 903 and six posts under Post Code 939 vacant, pending the final outcome of the investigation and court proceedings.

It also approved the elevation of the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) in Solan as the apex institution for school and teacher training at the state level, aiming to enhance academic research and improve the quality of education.

Additionally, it decided to strengthen 12 District



Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) to provide professional development for teachers.

It was also decided to extend the benefits of Yashwanth Singh Parmar Rin Yojna to eligible meritorious students aspiring to pursue professional and vocational courses at overseas educational institutions.

Under this scheme, the government offers educational loans at an interest rate of one per cent.

The Cabinet gave its nod to the set up of 50-bedded Critical Care Blocks at the

Civil Hospital in Dehra in Kangra district and Civil Hospital in Paonta Sahib in Sirmour district, equipping them with modern care facilities.

It has also been decided to establish offices of Superintending Engineer of HPSEBL and Block Medical Officer in Dehra.

Nod was also given to fill 33 posts of various categories in the Department of Printing and Stationary.

The Cabinet also agreed to open a new police station at Sissu in the Lahaul-Spiti district along with filling 18 posts of different

categories to make it functional. It was also decided to create and fill six posts of various categories for the newly opened police post at Hatli in Chamba district.

It decided to fill six posts of medical officer (dental) in ESI Health Institutions, Shoghi, Shimla district and Kasauli, Jabli, Barotiwala, Nalagarh and Baddi in Solan district.

The Cabinet gave its approval to provide six mobile forensic vans to the Department of Forensics Services to enhance its operational capabilities.

S. Korea, Czech Republic will collaborate on nuclear reactor design, construction: Yoon

AGENCIES
PRAGUE, SEP 20

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has said that his country and the Czech Republic will collaborate on the design and construction of nuclear reactors if the Central European country picks a Korean consortium as the final winner for a nuclear power plant.

Yoon made the remark on Thursday after his summit with Czech President Petr Pavel, which is partly aimed at solidifying Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power (KHNP)'s bid to win a project to build two nuclear power plants near Dukovany, southern Czechia, after it was selected as a preferred bidder in July, Yonhap news agency reported.

"The new Dukovany nuclear power plant, to be constructed jointly by South Korean and Czech companies, will serve as a milestone in the mutual



economic development and energy cooperation of both nations, further strengthening our strategic partnership," Yoon said in a joint press conference at Prague Castle.

Pavel expressed his desire for a high level of localization in the nuclear power plant project to boost the domestic industry and create new jobs, aiming for approximately 60 per cent participation from Czech companies.

Yoon's trip comes at a time when the project

faces a legal challenge as US-based Westinghouse Electric filed an appeal with Czech authorities last month, arguing that KHNP's reactor designs are based on its technology.

The deal, estimated at around 24 trillion won (\$17.3 billion), will mark South Korea's second nuclear power plant export, following its 2009 project in the United Arab Emirates.

It is expected to be finalised by the first quarter of next year.

Yoon said Seoul and Washington both support a "smooth resolution" regarding the intellectual property rights issue, adding he is "confident" that the issue will be resolved similarly to the KHNP's export deal with the UAE.

"Both governments share a strong consensus on nuclear power cooperation regarding intellectual property rights, and our government is actively supporting the resolution of issues between South Korean and US companies," Yoon said.

In light of the nuclear project, Yoon said the two sides agreed to expand cooperation in various fields, including advanced technology, energy security and climate responses as well as bio, digital, transportation and infrastructure.

During the summit, Yoon and Pavel expressed concerns over the growing military ties between

North Korea and Russia amid the ongoing war in Ukraine.

"North Korea will gain nothing from its reckless and irrational provocations that threaten peace and stability," Yoon said. "We reaffirmed that the illegal military cooperation between Russia and North Korea, which violates UN Security Council resolutions, is a serious threat to international peace and security."

On the sidelines of the summit, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding on collaboration for humanitarian aid and reconstruction of Ukraine.

"Both governments will actively support the cooperation between companies from the two countries, including sharing business information, project development and attracting investment, as part of Ukraine's reconstruction efforts," Yoon said.

Qatar Airways prohibits pagers, walkie-talkies in Lebanon flights

AGENCIES
DOHA, SEP 20

Qatar Airways has prohibited passengers travelling from Beirut Rafic Hariri International Airport from bringing pagers and walkie-talkies on flights.

The move comes after several walkie-talkies and pagers exploded in Lebanon, post which the country issued a directive prohibiting such things on flights.

On Thursday, the airline, on social media platform X, said that the regulations would be in place until further notice.

"Effective immediately: Following the directive received from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation of the Republic of Lebanon, all passengers flying from Beirut Rafic Hariri International Airport (BEY) are prohibited from carrying pagers and walkie-talkies

on board flights," Qatar Airways posted on X.

Qatar Airways said that the ban applies to both checked and carry-on luggage, as well as cargo, and will be enforced until further notice.

Lebanese authorities on Thursday banned walkie-talkies and pagers from being taken on flights from Beirut airport, the National News Agency reported, after thousands of such devices exploded during a deadly attack on Hezbollah this week.

The death toll in explosions targeting pagers and handheld radios across Lebanon that occurred in two waves on Tuesday and Wednesday has risen to 37, whereas 2,931 were injured, Lebanese Health Minister Firas Abiad said on Thursday.

The recent explosions add a new layer to the ongoing 11-month clashes between Israel and Hezbollah, marked by deadly

Israeli airstrikes and Hezbollah's attacks on northern Israel.

The Lebanese Foreign Ministry described the explosions as a "dangerous and deliberate Israeli escalation" which it said had been "accompanied by Israeli threats to expand the war towards Lebanon on a large scale".

Lebanese internal security forces said several wireless communication devices were detonated across Lebanon, especially in Beirut's southern suburbs, a Hezbollah stronghold.

The pagers that detonated were the latest model brought in by Hezbollah in recent months, three security sources said.

No Israeli officials have claimed responsibility for the explosions, which Hezbollah attributed to Israel.

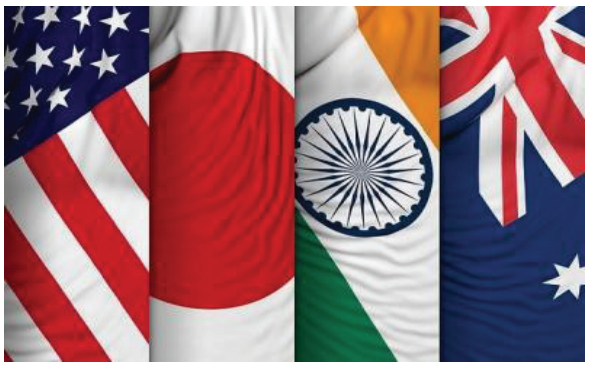
Quad still focussed on maritime security, says US

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON, SEP 20

The Quad group of India, Australia, Japan and the US may appear to have whittled down the security cooperation part of its remit but increased cooperation in maritime security had picked up pace out of public limelight as has defence cooperation bilaterally and multilaterally between them, the United States said ahead of a meeting of the leaders of the group here in the US on Saturday.

A senior White House official, Mira Rapp-Hooper, who is with the National Security Council, said on Thursday at a news conference to preview the meeting, that the leaders could discuss Bangladesh developments as a "plan to focus on each neighbourhood in the region".

US President Joe Biden is hosting a meeting with



foreign leaders for the first time in his hometown Wilmington, which Rapp-Hooper said, reflected how deeply invested the President is in the Quad personally.

Biden will also meet the Quad leaders in separate bilateral meetings.

This meeting of the Quad leaders was to be hosted by India, but because of scheduling issues India and the US decided to swap their turns. The US will host the summit now and India will

take the US' turn next year. Rapp-Hooper, who is a senior official in Biden's National Security Council, also said that the US sees India "as a leader within the Quad".

"There is incredible defence cooperation amongst the US and Australia, US and Japan, US and India, increasingly among those countries themselves," Rapp-Hooper said in response to a question if the member countries should do more on security cooperation.

'Perfect storm' looms for catastrophic loss of life in Sudan: UN

AGENCIES
UNITED NATIONS, SEP 20

The lethal combination of hunger, displacement and disease outbreaks in Sudan is creating "a perfect storm" for a catastrophic loss of lives, UN humanitarian workers warned.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said it sounded the alarm about a devastating cost to human life if the international community fails to act by providing aid funding, Xinhua news agency reported.

"To fight hunger in the country, the World Food Programme (WFP) is rushing to reach people in the grip of famine," OCHA said.

However, the office said that without consistent humanitarian access, it will be impossible to meet growing needs.

OCHA said WFP is working around the clock to reach 8.4 million people by the end of the year. So far, the agency has assist-



ed more than 5 million people, including 1.2 million in the western Darfur region.

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) reports moving life-saving nutrition supplies to treat 215,000 severely malnourished children in Sudan.

The agency and its partners also provided 6.6 million children and their families with safe drinking water this year, when disease outbreaks -- including cholera -- are worsening.

UNICEF said children account for about half of the more than 10 million people who have fled their homes since the conflict in Sudan erupted last year.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reports that 2 million of the displaced crossed into neighbouring countries, where it is delivering urgent support.

UNHCR said it is working to provide critical protection services and life-

saving assistance, including psychosocial support for survivors of gender-based violence, child protection, and helping move the vast numbers of new arrivals away from border areas to safer locations in the countries of asylum.

"Unfortunately, these efforts are severely hampered by the lack of funding, as well as flooding and insecurity," OCHA said.

"Eighty-six partners are mobilised to provide support through this year's

\$1.5 billion plan to support the regional refugee response in seven neighbouring countries, but the appeal is less than a quarter funded, with only \$347 million received."

The office said that in addition to humanitarian aid, development investments are significant in neighbouring countries, which are already stretched, and crucial to supporting host communities.

Meanwhile, the response inside Sudan is less than half funded, with the 2024 appeal receiving just \$1.3 billion of the 2.7 billion needed to reach 14.7 million people in the country through the end of the year.

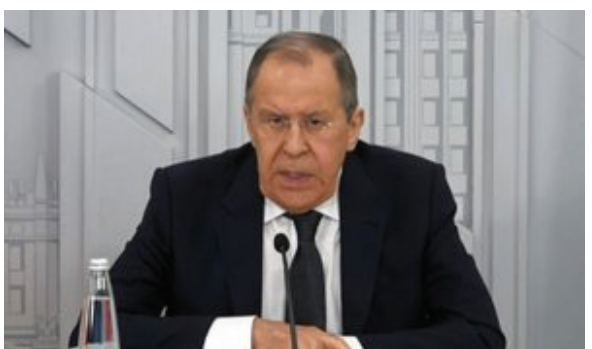
Next Wednesday, OCHA said, the agency and UNHCR plan to host a meeting of representatives of the world body and UN member countries on the sidelines of the General Assembly's annual VIP-rich General Debate to discuss the spiralling crisis in the Sudan region.

Russia ready to defend Arctic interests amid NATO drills: FM Lavrov

AGENCIES
MOSCOW, SEP 20

Russia is prepared to defend its interests in the Arctic, even through military means, as NATO increases its military exercises in the region, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was quoted by Russian news agencies as saying.

"We observe how NATO is escalating exercises related to potential crises in the Arctic. Our country is fully prepared to defend its interests on military, political, and military-technical fronts," Lavrov told an interview for the documentary series 'Soviet Breakthrough,' Xinhua



news agency reported. Lavrov's comments come amid heightened tensions in the Arctic, where NATO has been ramping up its presence.

In July, the US Department of Defence released an updated version of its Arctic Strategy, outlining plans for joint military

exercises with its allies to demonstrate combat readiness and operational compatibility. The strategy also highlights intentions to work with partners, local industries, and Alaska's native tribes to "strengthen integrated deterrence and increase shared security" in the

region.

According to the Pentagon's strategy, the US and its allies plan to introduce more than 250 modern multi-role combat aircraft that could be deployed for Arctic operations by the 2030s.

Earlier this month, Nikolai Patrushev, an aide to the Russian president and chair of the Maritime Collegium, said that the US and its allies are intensifying pressure around Russia's borders, constantly testing its Defence capabilities. Patrushev accused the US side of pursuing militarisation in the Arctic, seeking to hinder Russian economic activities in the northern regions.

S.Korean minister urges N.Korea to immediately return detained man

AGENCIES
SEOUL, SEP 20

Unification Minister Kim Yung-ho on Friday called on North Korea to "immediately and unconditionally" send a detained South Korean missionary and five other nationals back home, condemning the North's yearslong arbitrary detention as grave human rights violations.

South Korea's top point man on North Korea issued a rare statement marking 4,000 days after missionary Kim Jung-wook was arrested in Pyongyang in 2013, reported Yonhap news agency. He was sentenced to hard labour for life on charges of spying for



South Korea's spy agency.

In 2014, two other South Korean missionaries -- Kim Kook-ki and Choi Chung-il -- were also detained in North Korea on similar charges. Three former North Korean defectors, who had obtained South Korean citizenship, were held captive in 2016.

"The ROK government condemns North Korea's illegal and inhumane

human rights violations and strongly urges the North, which is a party to major international human rights instruments, to immediately and unconditionally release our nationals who are illegally detained," Kim said in the statement, using the acronym of South Korea's official name -- the Republic of Korea.

The minister strongly denounced North Korea for the unreasonable and excessive sentencing of the six individuals without a fair and public trial; its failure to provide basic procedural justice upon arrest and during detention; and the continued arbitrary detention.

"North Korea must not ignore our legitimate demands concerning the lives and safety of our citizens and must clearly recognize the seriousness of the issue, as well as the international community's strong warnings against its repeated violations of universal human rights norms," he said.

Kim also vowed efforts to bolster cooperation with the international community to resolve the issue of South Korean abductees, detainees and prisoners of war (POWs), and ensure that Japanese abductees and individuals from other countries no longer fall victim to the North's human rights abuses.

Japan: Probe underway to find out what caused two linked bullet trains to uncouple

AGENCIES
TOKYO, SEP 20

A Japanese bullet train operator is investigating what caused two linked Shinkansen trains to uncouple while moving at high speed, public broadcaster NHK reported on Friday.

A coupler on the Tokyo-bound two-train

service on the Tohoku Shinkansen line became unhinged while it was running between Furukawa and Sendai stations in the northeastern prefecture of Miyagi on Thursday morning, causing it to make an emergency stop and services on the line to be halted for hours, the report said, citing railway operator East Japan Railway.

The company, also known as JR East, said it was the first time its coupled Shinkansen trains had detached while in motion. However, no injuries were reported among some 320 people aboard and there were no derailments of the cars, Xinhua news agency reported, quoting NHK.

JR East said its investigation revealed that the

trains were travelling at a speed of about 315 km per hour when the uncoupling occurred.

The coupler was designed to detach only when the trains slow down to a speed of 5 km per hour or below, JR East said.

JR East said the cause of the incident is being investigated, but no external abnormalities have been

found on the coupler.

The company quoted the driver as saying emergency braking was suddenly applied and no unusual noise was heard or shaking felt shortly before the coupler became unhinged.

JR East is conducting emergency visual inspections of all its Shinkansen trains coupled with operations.

New Zealand passes tougher laws to tighten gangs

AGENCIES
WELLINGTON, SEP 20

New Zealand has passed tougher laws to ban gang insignia in all public places, and allow courts to issue non-consorting orders and police to stop criminal gangs from associating and communicating.

Legislation passed through Parliament on Thursday, to be effective from November 21, will provide police and the

courts with additional tools to crack down on gangs that "peddle misery and intimidation throughout New Zealand," said Justice Minister Paul Goldsmith.

Greater weight will also be given to gang membership at sentencing, enabling courts to impose more severe punishments, Goldsmith said, adding that gang membership has increased 51 per cent over the last five years, alongside violent

crime increasing 33 per cent, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Repeat offenders continually convicted of displaying their patches in public will be subject to a new court order, prohibiting them from possessing any gang insignia either in public or private for five years," the minister said, adding that gang insignia being displayed from inside a private vehicle will also be covered by the patch ban.

Adani Energy Solutions to see 20 pc CAGR revenue growth with over 100 pc upside for stock: Report

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 20

As India doubles down on electrification to connect more rural areas, Adani Energy Solutions Ltd (AESL) -- with its diversified portfolio that includes transmission assets, distribution assets and a smart metering business -- is poised to not only see robust growth over the next four years but also continue to outgrow peers for at least the next decade, according to a new report by global brokerage Cantor Fitzgerald. The report forecast the Adani Group company's total revenue to grow at a CAGR of 20 per cent from FY24 to FY27E and adjusted EBITDA to grow at a CAGR of 28.8 per cent. This compares to peers growing revenue at low single digits and EBITDA at mid-single digits, said Cantor in its research note. The global brokerage has set a price target of Rs 2,251 apiece against Rs 979



(as on September 19) for Adani Energy Solutions Ltd. On Friday, the stock of the company was trading high at Rs 1,011.75. With an enterprise value of \$18.5 billion, "we believe AESL to be a very attractive way to play the rapidly expanding energy markets in India", the report noted. AESL offers growth unlike any other publicly traded utility/energy company across the US, Europe, or Asia. "We expect its transmission business will see

strong growth as it completes the nine projects it has recently been awarded over the next 18-24 months (and we expect it to win more contracts over the coming years)," said the note. The company's distribution business should be able to grow at/near double-digit rates as it continues to add to its regulatory asset base (RAB) and its smart metering business is just about to start generating meaningful revenue/profits as it works through its 22.8 million smart meter backlog (to generate \$3.2 billion of

income), and it could win another 40 million smart meters (which will add another over \$6 billion of income), it added. As the country develops and uses/needs more electricity, AESL's transmission and distribution businesses will stand to benefit. Moreover, following a recent capital raise (which was meaningfully oversubscribed by 3x, the company is now well-funded to drive growth across all three major segments. As per the note, "we believe shares are attrac-

tive at current levels. On a growth adjusted basis, shares currently trade at a 60 per cent discount to peers, when in our view, it should trade at an in-line multiple (if not a premium)". On the transmission front, AESL is working on nine additional projects that it expects to complete over the next 18-24 months. These projects will help drive operational revenue from Rs 4,045 crore in FY24 to Rs 7,000 crore in FY27, representing a CAGR of 20.7 per cent. AESL's profitability is based on its regulatory asset base (RAB) which stood at Rs 8,485 crore (as of Q1 FY25). The company is expecting to add Rs 1,000 crore to its RAB, with targeted returns of high-teens to 20 per cent on additional RAB additions. "We believe this pace of investment, particularly in India's still developing economy, can continue

for many years to come. For each Rs 1,000 crore increase to RAB, AESL's distribution EBITDA should theoretically increase by Rs 200 crore," according to the Cantor note. Meanwhile, the government has mandated that 250 million households have a smart meter by the year 2025-2026. This is to help the government reduce energy loss by giving the utilities insights into peak consumer demand and consumption patterns. Adani Energy Solutions has been awarded nine projects to date totalling 22.8 million smart meters, which is 20.2 per cent of the total smart meters that have been awarded. "We believe AESL will be able to maintain its 20 per cent-plus market share, which would translate into 60 million smart meters and ultimately over \$9.5 billion of income over the next 8-9 years," the note said.

LIC MF launches new manufacturing fund, NFO available till Oct 4

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, SEP 20

LIC Mutual Fund on Friday launched 'LIC MF Manufacturing Fund', an open-ended equity scheme "following a manufacturing theme". This fund's objective is to achieve long-term capital appreciation by predominantly investing in equity and equity-related instruments of companies following manufacturing themes. There is no assurance that the investment objective of the Scheme will be achieved. The NFO (new fund offering) of the scheme has opened for subscription from September 20 to October 4. The units under the Scheme will be allotted on October 11. During the NFO, the minimum amount for application/switch shall be Rs 5,000 and in multiples of Re 1 thereafter. This NFO is categorised under the 'very high risk' category. The scheme aims to provide a diver-

sified portfolio of companies that come under the ambit of manufacturing theme, including but not limited to automobiles, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, heavy engineering products, metals, shipbuilding, and petroleum products etc. R.K. Jha, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of LIC Mutual Fund said: "India's robust GDP growth, rapid urbanisation, the growing middle-class population, the government's export incentives and policy initiatives like PLI scheme and 'Make-in-India' are driving demand for manufactured goods. Consequently, the country is largely being developed as a manufacturing hub for the world." "Manufacturing has a major role to play in making India a \$5-trillion economy by 2027. As a result, the investors in the manufacturing theme may benefit from the current positive outlook for the constituent sectors," he added.

Edtech firm Physics Wallah secures \$210 million at \$2.8 billion valuation

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 20

Edtech firm Physics Wallah (PW) on Friday said it has secured \$210 million in its Series B funding round, which takes the company's valuation to \$2.8 billion. The funding round was led by Hornbill Capital, with significant participation from Lightspeed Venture Partners, and existing investors GSV and West-Edge. Physics Wallah said it will use the funds to scale operations, with a key focus on consolidation in the education market. It plans to pursue inorganic expansion, enter the K-12 formal education segment, enhance its content and publication offerings, and explore mergers with community-driven education platforms across categories.



"This investment is not just a validation of our efforts to democratise education and make quality education accessible to every student in India, but also a testament to the impact we have created over the years," said Alakh Pandey, Founder and CEO of Physics Wallah. Physics Wallah produces 9,500 hours of educational content every week with a student base across 18,808 pin codes, account-

ing for almost 98 per cent of pin codes in the country. Prateek Maheshwari, Co-founder of Physics Wallah, said the focus has been on creating value for our students and ensuring their success. "This comes on the back of strong sustainable YoY growth. In fact, FY25 is going to be the year of largest absolute profitability for the PW Group," he mentioned.

Role of food regulators more crucial to protect consumers' health: JP Nadda

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEP 20

As the world is faced with challenges like foodborne illnesses, nutraceutical safety, novel foods and micro-plastics, the role of food regulators has never been more crucial and it demands continuous collaboration, relentless innovation and a commitment to constant improvement in the food safety systems, the government said on Friday. Inaugurating the second edition of the 'Global Food Regulators Summit 2024', Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare JP Nadda said the work is ongoing to harmonise food safety standards with international benchmarks. "This includes developing the National Action



Plan on AMR 2.0 and aligning maximum residue limits (MRLs) for pesticides with Codex standards, enhancing our position in global trade," said the minister. Minister Nadda informed that India is involved in strengthening regulatory capacity in countries like Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Highlighting the country's efforts in alternative measures to curb the increasing menace of plastic wastes, the minister said India is taking steps to reduce plastic wastes and adopting organic farming and organic pest control measures. Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public

Distribution, lauded the efforts of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for organising the one-of-its-kind global summit for the second consecutive year. "Our collaborative efforts between food regulators, research organisations, and consumer affairs departments will drive innovation, ensuring that policies reflect the dual priorities of consumer protection and environmental sustainability," said Minister Joshi. Underscoring the relevance of the summit for sharing best practices and knowledge, Joshi said that food security doesn't mean just having enough food. "It is also important to ensure the quality and safety of food that we consume".

He highlighted the 'Eat Right' campaign, the Pradhan Mantri Kalyan Yojana and the promotion of millets as important initiatives taken by the government to ensure safe and good food. "Setting the standards of the regulations is the primary duty and responsibility of the government. FSSAI and our department has a crucial role to ensure that safe food reaches the people", said Joshi. AI and machine learning are innovative solutions to strengthen the food regulatory system, said experts. Delegates from over 70 countries, including food safety regulators and those from risk assessment authorities, research institutes and universities are participating in the summit.

'Make in India' iPhone 16 hits market, thousands queue up to own new Apple devices

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI/MUMBAI, SEP 20

It was a 'wow moment' for thousands of Apple lovers in India on Friday as they started receiving 'Make in India' iPhone 16 at Apple BKC in Mumbai and Apple Saket in New Delhi and Apple -- along with at other Apple Authorised resellers stores amid long queues since early morning hours. At the both Apple Delhi

and Mumbai retail stores, hundreds of people who had pre-ordered the new 16 series -- iPhone 16, 16 Plus, 16 Pro and 16 Pro Max -- queued up early to get their devices. At Apple BKC, customers from various cities like Ahmedabad, Surat, Madhya Pradesh, Nagpur, Indore, Bengaluru, Goa, Nashik and Nanded waited overnight to make purchases. "I came from Surat spe-

cifically to buy iPhone 16 Pro. I come every year for the launch. Our entire family uses iPhones," an iPhone customer told IANS, saying he anxiously waited for this day after pre-booking the iPhones on Apple Online. Several users wished to get their iPhones in the 'Desert Titanium' colour, which was in high demand. "I have come to buy iPhone 16 Pro for my

entire family. Since the first-generation iPhone, we are used to iPhones and cannot switch to any other device," another user said, holding several iPhone boxes in his hands. Several buyers were also seen with iPhone 16 Pro Max boxes in their hands, again confirming the premiumisation trend that is now maturing in the country. Long queues were also seen at Apple Saket since

early morning, with retail staff cheering the first buyers of the new iPhones and Watch Series 10. A user who came to the Apple Store at 4 am, told IANS that he has been an iPhone user for five years "and it's always been my dream to upgrade whenever a new phone is released". "I'm happy to be doing that now. I've heard that this phone has some new features, including

an improved zoom and camera, and I'm especially excited about that," he added. The company saw a surge in pre-orders for its 'Make in India' iPhone 16 in the country. The new devices are set to break previous export records. The ongoing channel checks by industry suggested that iPhone 16 Pro models are also witnessing a strong traction from buyers, owing to its more

strategic and accessible pricing, in comparison to the 15 series. The analysts expect a healthy mix of upgrades this year for Apple in the country. The momentum is great with the government's thrust on local manufacturing as the iPhone 16 models are being manufactured/assembled in India with simultaneous availability along with the global market.

Apple's latest iPhone 16 is being produced and launched globally from the Indian factories. Driven by the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, the tech giant reached around \$5 billion in iPhone exports from India in the April-August period this fiscal (FY25). As per industry data, this is a growth of over 50 per cent from the same period of the first five months in FY24.

\$1.3 trillion opportunity for EV revolution in emerging Asia, India holds the future: Report

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, SEP 20

The mobility sector in the emerging markets of South and Southeast Asia could absorb up to \$1.3 trillion in green capital by 2030 and India holds the future, a new report said on Friday. In India, electric scooters and three-wheelers are currently around \$40- \$112 cheaper per year to own than petrol alternatives based on the total cost of ownership. The report, prepared by LeapFrog Investments, Temasek, Mahindra Last

Mile Mobility Limited and Battery Smart, mentioned that 70 per cent of electric three-wheeler buyers in India are low-income, first-time buyers. Mobility emissions represent 10 per cent of total GHG emissions across Asia, but 25 per cent of Europe's emissions and 30 per cent of the US, making rapid electrification critical to avoid a spike in emissions as incomes in emerging Asia rise, the report said. "The electric mobility revolution across high growth markets is gathering pace. We have identi-

fied a \$1.3 trillion opportunity for the private markets and impact investment community to transform our global transportation future," said Souleymane Ba, Partner and Co-Head of Climate Investment Strategy, LeapFrog Investments. An increasingly efficient network of battery swapping stations, supported by interoperable battery systems across vehicle manufacturers, has dramatically improved re-fueling infrastructure for EVs. Improved charging/refueling infrastructure is making EV ownership

particularly attractive for commercial users. In India, EVs now account for an estimated 20 per cent of three-wheeler last-mile transportation (passenger and cargo) fleets. Dr Steve Howard, Vice Chairman, Sustainability, Temasek, said that the technology improvements and business innovation they are seeing in emerging Asia's EV sector, when coupled with enabling policies and substantial investments, "hold tremendous promise for transformative impact at pace and at scale".

Rajasthan Atomic Power Project-7 goes critical, to start power generation this year

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, SEP 20

The Rajasthan Atomic Power Project's Unit 7 (RAPP-7) achieved the significant milestone of 'criticality', or the start of controlled fission chain reaction, at the indigenously designed plant, officials said here on Friday. The RAPP-7 - of the twin RAPP-7/8 units with a 2x700 MW capacity - attained criticality at 10.42 p.m. on Thursday, after clearing the First Approach to Criticality by the Atomic Energy Regu-

latory Board (AERB), the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) said. The RAPP-7 is the third in the series of 16 indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR) of 700 MW each, being set up by the nuclear plant operator NPCIL in the country. The first two 700 MW PHWRs are operational in KAPS 3/4 at Kakrapar in Gujarat, followed by the RAPP-7, coming up at Rawatbhata in Rajasthan. Criticality for the first time on the project time-

line marks the completion of the construction phase and commencement of the operation phase, the official said. Now, it will undergo various important experiments and tests before it is connected to the grid and the power level will be raised in steps to full power, as per the clearances from the AERB. After these steps, the RAPP-7 is expected to start power generation this year, followed by RAPP-8 during the next year. For the RAPP-8, the

erection of equipment and components is currently in progress, feeder erection is completed, and the start-up transformer is charged. The RAPP-7/8 are India's second pair of indigenous nuclear power plants of 700 MW unit size each. The successful Criticality of RAPP-7 - after the smooth operation of the first two 700 MW PHWRs in Kakrapar - demonstrates the maturity achieved by NPCIL in the design, construction and operation of the indigenous 700 MW PHWRs.

1st Test: Bumrah picks four as India bowl out Bangladesh for 149; take 227-run lead

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, SEP 20

Fast-bowling Jasprit Bumrah picked 4-50 as a relentless Indian bowling line-up bowled out Bangladesh for 149 in their first innings on day two of the first Test and take a lead of 227 runs on day two of the first Test at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on Friday.

As he does mostly, Bumrah was in just a different realm of his own to be the standout bowler for India.

Mohammed Siraj, Akash Deep and Ravindra Jadeja complemented him by keeping the pressure on to take two scalps each as Bangladesh crumbled in the face of baptism by fire from an exceptional Indian bowling attack in 47.1 overs.

After India's innings ended at 376, Bumrah struck in the opening over



as he changed his angle to come around the wicket and get one to nip back in and go past a shouldering Shadman Islam to hit the top of off-stump. With Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj bowling attacking lengths, there was no room to breathe easy for the Bangladeshi batters.

In the final over before lunch, Akash knocked down the middle stump of Zakir Hasan with a nip-backer coming in from

wide of the crease. On the very next ball, he castled Mominul Haque with a nip-backer going past the batter's forward defence to hit the off-stump.

Post lunch, Siraj got a ball to hold its line and take the outside edge off Najmul Hossain Shanto's bat straight to third slip. In the next over, Bumrah got the ball to move late and took a healthy edge of Mushfiqur Rahim's poke to second slip.

Despite relentless lines and lengths from the bowlers, Litton Das and Shakib Al Hasan ensured things went Bangladesh's way.

The duo brought out sumptuous drives off Bumrah, Siraj and Akash Deep, before Shakib latched on loose deliveries from Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja to get more boundaries.

The 51-run stand for the sixth wicket ended when Das tried to sweep off an outside off-stump ball from Jadeja, but it took the top edge to substitute fielder Dhruv Jurel at deep backward square leg, and fell for 22.

In Jadeja's next over, Shakib tried to reverse-sweep, but it deflected off his shoe and Rishabh Pant ran forward to take a comfortable catch. Hasan Mahmud and Mehidy Hasan Miraz hanged around for hitting

three boundaries, before Bumrah got the former to poke at an outside off delivery and the thick outside edge was grabbed by second slip at the stroke of tea.

The final session began with Mehidy and Taskin taking a boundary each off Bumrah, before the ace fast-bowler landed a perfect yorker to rattle middle and leg stumps of the latter.

Mehidy and Nahid Rana hit three boundaries collectively before the latter chopped on to his stumps off Siraj to end Bangladesh's first innings in just 1.5 sessions.

Brief scores: India 376 in 91.2 overs (Ravichandran Ashwin 113, Ravindra Jadeja 86; Hasan Mahmud 5-83, Taskin Ahmed 3-55) lead Bangladesh 149 in 47.1 overs (Shakib Al Hasan 32; Jasprit Bumrah 4-50; Ravindra Jadeja 2-19) by 227 runs

India Capitals set to face Toyam Hyderabad of LLC Season 3

AGENCIES
JODHPUR, SEPT 20

India Capitals are all set to start their campaign for Season 3 of Legends League Cricket (LLC) against Toyam Hyderabad (formerly known as Urbanisers Hyderabad), in their first match on Saturday at the Barkatullah Khan Stadium here.

The Capitals, who were champions in the inaugural season of LLC, are eager to start strong under the able leadership of their newly appointed captain, Ian Bell, a former English batting legend. The second game of LLC season 3 between India Capitals and Toyam Hyderabad will be broadcast LIVE on Star Sports Network on September 21 (Saturday) from 3 PM IST. Fans can also catch the match which will be streamed live on FanCode. In a major leadership change, Gautam

Gambhir, who captained the India Capitals to their maiden LLC title in 2022, has stepped down to take on the role of Coach for the Indian Cricket Team. Ian Bell, renowned for his stylish batting and exceptional cricketing acumen, will lead the team into Season 3, bringing with him over a decade of international cricket experience.

India Capitals boast a strong squad featuring Ashley Nurse, a powerful all-rounder, Dwayne Smith, known for his explosive batting and Colin de Grandhomme, a versatile player capable of changing the game with both bat and ball. Meanwhile, explosive opener Ben Dunk is expected to provide fast starts for the Capitals. The squad is further strengthened by former Indian stars and seasoned campaigners, including Naman Ojha, Parvinder Awana, Barind-

er Saran, Dhawal Kulkarni, and Iqbal Abdullah, all of whom will contribute significantly with both bat and ball.

India Capitals' opponents and last season's runner-up, Toyam Hyderabad, led by former Indian all-rounder Suresh Raina, are expected to pose a strong challenge. The Hyderabad team features a lineup of seasoned players, including Gurkeerat Singh, Isuru Udana, Nuwan Pradeep, Peter Trego, and George Worker, all of whom bring extensive experience from various T20 leagues and could be a potential threat to the Capitals. The 2024 edition of Legends League Cricket (LLC) will feature six teams: India Capitals, Toyam Hyderabad, Southern Superstars, Manipal Tigers, Gujarat Giants, and the newly-formed Konark Suryas Odisha, who replaced Bhilwara Kings.

American Gambits onboards 5C Network as Associate Sponsor ahead of their GCL Debut

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEPT 20

Newest entrant to the Global Chess League (GCL), American Gambits on Friday announced 5C Network, a Bengaluru-based leader in artificial intelligence-powered diagnostics, as their Associate Sponsor, bringing together AI's transformative power in chess and healthcare, ahead of the second season of the GCL (2024), scheduled to be played in London's Friends House from October 3 to 12.

A dominant name in the medical imaging and diagnostic sector, 5C Network will look to access their partnership with American Gambits to tap the U.S. market, leveraging the team's star player, American grandmaster, Hikaru Nakamura's popularity. This collaboration presents a unique opportunity for 5C to connect with the vast US-based

chess fan community and build a strong presence for the 5C Network's brand visibility.

American Gambits' ownership team, led by Indian cricket icon Ravichandran Ashwin and entrepreneurs and chess fanatics, Venkat K Narayana and Prachura PP who are Co-owners, shared their excitement: "We're excited to partner with 5C Network for the Global Chess League

2024 given our shared values of excellence and innovation. Their innovative approach to healthcare, focused on precision, problem-solving, and the use of cutting-edge technology, perfectly mirrors the strategic thinking and foresight that chess demands. Together, we look forward to showcasing the power of strategic collaboration."

As part of the partnership, the 5C logo will be

prominently displayed on the American Gambits' jersey during GCL 2024 and featured in the content created to promote the presence of the sponsor on the Team and Players' social media platforms in the course of the League.

Furthermore, Nakamura, with over 5 million followers across platforms like Twitch, YouTube, and Instagram, combined, will be creating exclusive visibility and value proposition for the Brand, helping them get acquainted to the broader U.S. audience that the Chess star enjoys.

Kalyan Sivasailam, CEO of 5C Network, echoed the enthusiasm: "Chess was one of the earliest fields where AI demonstrated its true potential. Today, we are bringing that same cutting-edge technology to diagnostics, where precision and strategy are equally crucial.

NZ'S DOMESTIC SEASON TO BEGIN WITH FORD TROPHY FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 2018

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, SEPT 20

The 50-over Ford Trophy will kickstart New Zealand's 2024/25 domestic cricket season for the first time since 2018. The move to start Ford Trophy from October 20 breaks a six-year tradition of starting the proceedings with the first-class Plunket Shield competition.

The Plunket Shield will instead start on November 11, with the first four rounds to be played in the lead-up to, and during New Zealand's three-match Test series against England. In total, 14 venues will host domestic cricket across the three competitions this season, from Cobham Oval in Northland to Queen's Park in Southland.

Defending champions Canterbury will start the Ford Trophy in an away game at Wellington on October 20. The Welling-



ton Firebirds will begin their Plunket Shield title defence against the Auckland Aces at the Basin Reserve on November 11.

The final four rounds of the Plunket Shield will then close-out the domestic summer as usual in March and early April.

"Anytime you make a few decent changes to the season schedules it certainly freshens things up. We consulted with the players, coaches and turf

managers around white-ball cricket starting the men's season instead of the Plunket Shield. "The change will see slightly different pitch conditions for both competitions, which will bring new challenges for both batters and bowlers. The fact the red-ball competition also now aligns with the England Test tour is an added bonus," said Richard Brewer, NZC Head of Cricket Operations.

The change is also reflected in the women's domestic cricket calendar - the 50-over Hallyburton Johnstone Shield competition will start on November 16, with six of the ten round-robin games scheduled in the lead-up to the ODI series between New Zealand and Australia at Basin Reserve on December 19.

Defending champions the Otago Sparks will open their campaign in an away game against Canterbury Magicians at Mainpower Oval in Rangiora on November 16.

The women's 50-over competition will follow the same structure as last season with five double-header weekends, in which teams play one another back-to-back on Saturday and Sunday. The top two teams will square off in the Grand Final on March 1.

"Similarly, it's great

to have the Hallyburton Johnstone Shield leading into the WHITE FERNS series against Australia before Christmas, which will allow many of our best female players quality one-day preparation and a chance to push their cases for selection.

"To have 14 venues hosting domestic cricket this summer means all fans across the country will have a chance to see our best men's and women's professional cricketers in action and for free," added Brewer.

Other features of the domestic schedule include a men's and women's white-ball finals weekend confirmed for Dunedin's University of Otago Oval across three days starting from February 28, 2025.

NZC also said the men's and women's Super Smash schedules will be announced in the coming weeks.

Women's UPL: Mussoorie Thunders beat Pithoragarh Hurricanes to enter final

AGENCIES
DEHRADUN, SEP 20

Mussoorie Thunders showcased their prowess across all facets of the game, securing a commanding eight-wicket victory over Pithoragarh Hurricanes in a crucial do-or-die showdown to book their place in the final of the Women's Uttarakhand Premier League on Friday.

The clash between Mussoorie Thunders and Pithoragarh Hurricanes had a knockout feel, with

the winner set to join Nainital SG Pipers in Saturday's final.

The cornerstone of Mussoorie's remarkable victory was established by their bowlers, who showcased a disciplined and unified effort, which was subsequently complemented by a strong Nandini Kashyap-led batting display.

Chasing 120, Mussoorie Thunders' openers Shagun Chaudhary and Anjali Goswami gave their team a composed start, capitalising on the powerplay overs

effectively.

By the sixth over, they had taken their team to 40 without loss. However, the 45-run opening stand was broken in the following over when Pithoragarh Hurricanes' Neelam Bhardwaj claimed the crucial wicket of Shagun Chaudhary, who departed after scoring 27 off 26 balls.

Anjali Goswami was joined at the crease by Nandini Kashyap as they aimed to maintain the momentum. Early in her innings, Nandini Kashyap



demonstrated her winning intent by striking three consecutive fours

off Neelam Bisht in a single over.

The duo stitched a solid

57-run stand before Anjali Goswami was dismissed for run-a-ball 32 in the 14th over. However, this wicket did little to hinder Mussoorie's momentum, as the target remained well within their grasp.

Nandini Kashyap sealed the victory in style, reaching her half-century with a boundary. She finished unbeaten on 50 runs from just 28 deliveries, featuring seven fours and two sixes.

Earlier, Pithoragarh Hurricanes, who were sent

in to bat first, suffered an early blow when opener Ananya Mehra was caught and bowled by Garima Bisht for a duck.

From there, Muskan Kumari batted sensibly while Neelam Bhardwaj took up the mantle of scoring at a brisk pace. Their 66-run partnership gave them the confidence to aim for a competitive total, but Mussoorie Thunders' bowlers struck back with regular wickets in the latter half of the innings.

Muskan Kumari was

dismissed in the 11th over, with Rudra Sharma trapping her leg before wicket for a 33-ball 32. In the last five overs, Pithoragarh Hurricanes lost five wickets, which affected their flow of runs.

Neelam Bhardwaj missed out on her half-century, falling short by just two runs. Her 44-ball 48 featured six boundaries. Mussoorie Thunders' captain Mansi Joshi and Prema Rawat stood out with two wickets each, restricting the Hurricanes to 119/7.

Sri Lanka include Ranaweera in Athapaththu-led squad for Women's T20 WC

AGENCIES
COLOMBO, SEP 20

Left-arm spinner Inoka Ranaweera has been named in Sri Lanka's squad for the 2024 Women's T20 World Cup, to be captained by their talismanic all-rounder Chamari Athapaththu.

Inoka was left out of Sri Lanka's victorious Women's Asia Cup campaign and their subsequent white-ball tour to Ireland. She last featured for Sri Lanka in T20Is in the Women's T20 World Cup Qualifier 2024, which they won in the UAE.

In 82 T20I games for Sri



Lanka, Inoka has picked 91 scalps at an economy rate of 5.86. She now joins a spin-heavy bowling lineup featuring Inoshi Priyadharshani, Sugandika Kumari, and Kavisha Dilhari, as well as Chamari's off-spin.

Udeshika Prabodhani, Achini Kulasuriya, and

Ama Kanchana will handle the seam-bowling duties for Sri Lanka. On the batting front, apart from Chamari and Kavisha, eyes will also be on Vishmi Gunaratne and Harshitha Samawickrama.

Sri Lanka are in Group A of the 2024 Women's

T20 World Cup alongside defending champions Australia, India, New Zealand, and Pakistan.

They will begin their campaign against Pakistan on October 3. Sri Lanka squad: Chamari Athapaththu (c), Anushka Sanjeevani, Harshitha Madhavi, Nilakshi de Silva, Inoka Ranaweera, Hasini Perera, Kavisha Dilhari, Sachini Nisansala, Vishmi Gunaratne, Udeshika Prabodhani, Achini Kulasuriya, Sugandika Kumari, Inoshi Priyadharshani, Shashini Gimhani, Ama Kanchana. Travelling reserve: Kaushini Nuthyangana.

Champions League: Raya's double save earns Arsenal goalless draw at Atalanta

AGENCIES
BERGAMO (ITALY), SEP 20

David Raya's brilliant double save earned Arsenal a draw from a hard-fought contest against Atalanta in the Champions League fixture.

Marco Carnesecchi kept out Bukayo Saka's free-kick and Charles De Ketelaere fired wide as the teams cancelled each other out before the break.

After it, Atalanta failed to convert a penalty - awarded after Thomas Partey had brought down Éderson - as Raya kept out

Mateo Retegui's attempt and follow-up header. Juan Cuadrado and Gabriel Martinelli had chances to win it late on but the game finished goalless.

The opening 20 minutes saw Arsenal creating some good chances. Saka whipped it low towards the bottom corner but Marco Carnesecchi made a good stop and did well to prevent Thomas Partey from sneaking in the rebound.

Martinelli fired a half-chance well over from inside the box on 17 minutes, but from that point

onwards the half became an error-strewn affair with both teams struggling to keep possession, which led to a scarcity of chances.

A Charles de Ketelaere attempt that flew over the angle of post and bar just before the half-hour mark was the only other incident of note before Clement Turpin blew his whistle for the interval.

However, the second half took two minutes to burst into life, but not in the way Arsenal would have liked when Ederson slipped past Partey into

the box and saw his heel clipped by the Ghana captain. Turpin pointed to the spot and after a lengthy VAR check, the decision was upheld.

Mateo Retegui stepped up confidently, but while Raya saved his low effort, the ball spun back to the striker. It seemed that the net was destined to bulge and produced a reflex save to claw the ball off his goal-line to keep us level.

Arsenal continued to struggle to impose on proceedings and the hosts continued to create opportunities.

Rajouri steps up surveillance to keep check on MCC violations, maintain Law & Order

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 20

To keep close check on violation of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and maintain law and order situation during the General Elections to the Legislative Assembly, the Election Authorities have asked enforcement departments and police to step up surveillance mechanism across the Border District Rajouri.

After thorough deliberation here at a meeting, the Sector Magistrates, Police Sector Officers, and FST heads were instructed to increase patrolling in their respective areas and hold regular meetings with local leaders to identify potential troublemakers. Any such persons must be identified at least 72 hours before polling day, with information shared with Returning Officers and



this office. The instructions were issued by Rajeev Kumar Khajuria, Additional Deputy Commissioner (District Nodal Officer for MCC/Law and Order), Rajouri, who was chairing the meeting.

Attendees included Sector Magistrates, Police Sector Officers and Heads of Flying Squads (FSTs) from the Assembly Constituencies identified as vulnerable due to past incidents of rigging, booth capturing and violence.

Besides this, the Sector Magistrates were directed to take immediate pre-

ventive actions, including executing bonds from individuals involved in past incidents of rigging, booth capturing, or violence. Officials were also tasked with raising awareness about the Election Commission of India's strict stance on duplicate voting. Persons indulging in Proxy voting practices will face severe consequences.

Sector Magistrates and Police Sector Officers were instructed to tour their areas regularly, ensuring no law and order breaches occur. "Any potential

threats must be addressed in advance, and timely reports must be submitted. Officials were also urged to be well-versed with the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Representation of People Act to handle complaints effectively and ensure peaceful elections.

Special attention was directed towards Sector Magistrates in border areas, including Nowshera, Laroka, Bhawani, Chowki Handan, and Ben Pattan. They were asked to maintain strict vigilance on vehicle movements near the Line of Control (LoC) through regular surprise checks. Sector Magistrates were asked to identify polling stations with approaches through nearby houses or shops, which may be prone to violence, and report these to the Returning Officer for necessary action.

EVM, VVPAT training imparted to Polling Staff at Handwara



J1 NEWS SERVICE
HANDWARA, SEPTEMBER 20

In order to ensure smooth polling, EVM, VVPAT training programme was organized by the District Election Officer Kupwara at Environment Hall, Handwara.

The training pro-

gramme was presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner, (ADC), Handwara, Aziz Ahmad Rather who is also Returning Officer, (RO) AC-05 Handwara.

The training was imparted in two sessions by Syed Mohammad Farooq Geelani and Syed Saqib Geelani DLMTs.

A total of 240 employees were given training in two sessions wherein they were made acquainted with the operation of EVM, VVPAT and documentation process.

Additional focus was laid on documentation so the staff doesn't face any problem while submitting the papers.

J&K secures 3rd rank in Food Safety Index 2023-24



J1 NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 20

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has attained third rank among the States/UTs in Food Safety Index 2023-24, being conferred by FSSAI to the states / UTs every year.

The award was presented by Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare, J P Nadda, in presence of Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Minister for New and Renewable Energy at Bharat Manda-

pam and CEO FSSAI, G. Kamala Vardhana Rao on the eve of second edition of Global Food Regulators Summit 2024 hosted by FSSAI alongside the World Food India, today in New Delhi.

The Food Safety Index is a dynamic quantitative and qualitative benchmarking model that provides an objective framework for evaluating food safety across all States/UTs. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) began the State Food Safety Index evaluation process for 2023-2024 by undertak-

ing correspondence with Food Safety Commissioners of all UTs/States to furnish the data for statistical evaluation.

The UT of J&K has been awarded 3rd position for performance in implementation of FSS Act, 2006 in the financial year 2023-24. Commissioner FDA, J&K, has attributed the award to the selfless and committed efforts put in by the functionaries of the department who are empowered to perform statutory duties under FSS Act, 2006 Rules and Regulations 2011, in the

Human Chain, slogans ignite enthusiasm for polling Day in Bani

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 20

An impactful awareness activity was today conducted at the Government Higher Secondary School Bani, as part of the Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative.

The event, hosted under the guidance of RO Giasul Haq (SDM), was aimed to raise voter awareness ahead of the upcoming election on 1st October 2024.

In a display of unity and enthusiasm, students of the school formed a human chain representing the date of voting, creatively urging the community to cast their votes. The students also raised impactful slogans, spreading the message of voter participation in a clear and resonant manner to sensitize the local elector-



ate. The event was graced by the presence of ARO Bani (63) Predhyum Atri and BDO Bani Rajesh Padha, who attended as special guests. Both commended the efforts of the students and staff in promoting this important democratic responsibility.

Speaking at the event, the ARO expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all participants and emphasized the significance of such activities in fostering an informed and responsible voter base. He highlighted the crucial role these initiatives play in enhanc-

ing voter turnout and strengthening the democratic fabric of society.

The event concluded with a resounding call to action, encouraging all eligible voters to exercise their right to vote on 1st October 2024.

Special SVEEP event held in Mohargarh Village to encourage voter participation

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, SEPTEMBER 20

In a significant outreach effort to encourage maximum Electoral Participation in the upcoming elections, the District Election Office organized a special event in the remote village of Mohargarh, located in Samba 70 constituency.

The event, a key part of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative, featured a Nukkad Natak in the local dialect, aimed at encouraging residents to vote on 1st October 2024.

The event targeted areas that recorded low voter turnout in the Lok Sabha elections. The focus was to raise awareness and ensure higher participation in the ongoing assembly elections.

The picturesque setting of Mohargarh, a village with a rich historical background, added to the significance of the event, drawing the attention and appreciation of the local community.

Present at the event were District Election Officer (DEO) Rajesh Sharma, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Vinay Sharma, and the



two General Observers, Vishwashree Boga and C.G. Rajini Kaanthan, all of whom interacted with the villagers and emphasized the importance of exercising their democratic right to vote.

The event was organized by SVEEP District Nodal Officer Ekshu Sharma and Assembly Constituency (AC) 70 Nodal Officer Sheetal, who have been spearheading efforts across the district to engage with communities and boost electoral participation.

Speaking at the event, DEO Rajesh Sharma said, "No voter should be left behind in this democratic process. We are committed to reach every corner of Samba District to encourage active participation, especially in areas like Mohargarh, where turnout has been

historically low." SSP Vinay Sharma echoed the same sentiment, stressing the importance of each vote in shaping the future of the region and ensuring security and fairness during the election process.

The local residents, moved by the interactive Nukkad Natak, pledged to actively participate in the upcoming elections and encourage their fellow villagers to do the same. The team of officials also visited the polling stations of Mohargarh and took stock of the facilities being provided at the station.

This event is part of a larger series of voter awareness initiatives being conducted by the district administration to ensure maximum turnout and a smooth electoral process on Election Day.

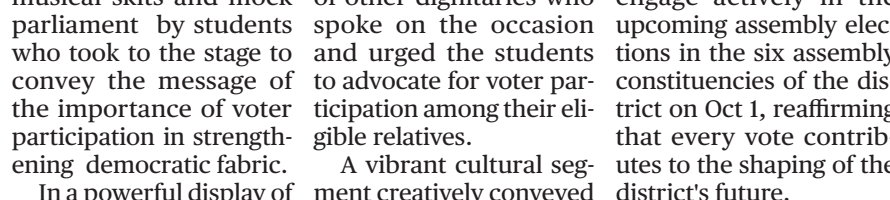
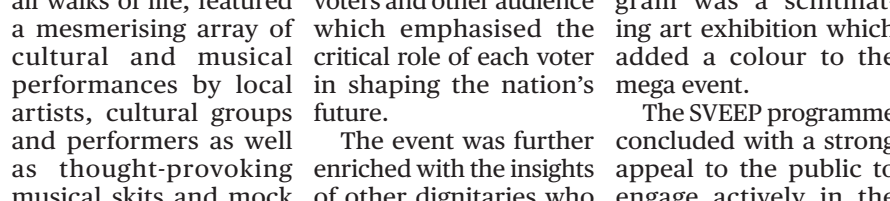
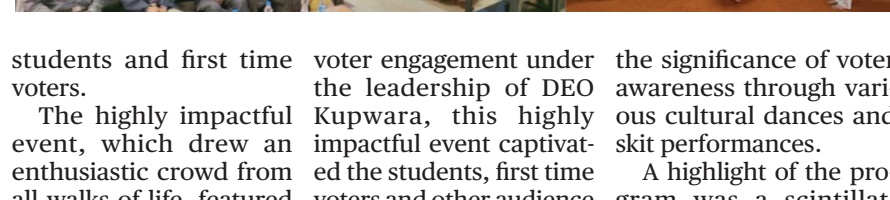
Jashn-e-Jamhooriyat event at GDC Kupwara ignites voter awareness, enthusiasm among first time voters

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, SEPTEMBER 20

The conference Hall of Govt. Boys Degree College Kupwara reverberated with the vibrant voices of democracy and voter awareness as a grand event themed "Jashn-e-Jamhooriyat" was held under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative. General election Observer Trehgam, Kupwara P. Hema Latha, General Observer Handwara, Pankaj K. Panday, General Observer, Karnah, Prakash Bindu, General Observer, Lolab, Tshewang Gyachho Bhutia and District Election Officer (DEO) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan graced the occasion and emphasized the vital role of youth in promoting voter awareness.

They urged students and first-time voters to become agents of change by educating others about the importance of exercising their fundamental right to vote.

The other officers present on the occasion were ADDC Kupwara, District Nodal Officer SVEEP, ROS, Deputy District Election Officer Kupwara, other officers, youth Icons,



students and first time voters.

The highly impactful event, which drew an enthusiastic crowd from all walks of life, featured a mesmerising array of cultural and musical performances by local artists, cultural groups and performers as well as thought-provoking musical skits and mock parliament by students who took to the stage to convey the message of the importance of voter participation in strengthening democratic fabric.

In a powerful display of

voter engagement under the leadership of DEO Kupwara, this highly impactful event captivated the students, first time voters and other audience which emphasised the critical role of each voter in shaping the nation's future. The event was further enriched with the insights of other dignitaries who spoke on the occasion and urged the students to advocate for voter participation among their eligible relatives.

A vibrant cultural segment creatively conveyed

the significance of voter awareness through various cultural dances and skit performances.

A highlight of the program was a scintillating art exhibition which added a colour to the mega event.

The SVEEP programme concluded with a strong appeal to the public to engage actively in the upcoming assembly elections in the six assembly constituencies of the district on Oct 1, reaffirming that every vote contributes to the shaping of the district's future.

SVEEP programme organised at GDC Ramnagar, GHS Bari & Ladana

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAMNAGAR, SEPTEMBER 20

A series of colorful awareness programmes under SVEEP were today organized at Govt Degree College Ramnagar and two other schools in the region under the guidance of Returning Officer Rafiq Ahmad Jaral.

At GDC, the programme was attended by the college students and local voters and BAG members. The students, through colorful and impactful performances, spread the message of informed and active electoral participation. The activities included Mehandi competition, poster making, Tug of war and skits. The students also delivered thought-provoking speeches on the importance of exercising their right to vote.

The programme concluded with the powerful speeches on the electoral participation by Dr Pankaj Saraswat and Dr Jeevan Kumar.

Meanwhile, a series of vibrant and voter engaging SVEEP activities were organized today at Government High Schools Bari and Ladana, under the supervision of the Returning Officer Rafiq Ahmad Jaral.

A team of officials comprising Dogri Artist and SVEEP icon Subash Brahamanu and Arvind Brahamanu headed by SVEEP Nodal Officer Lecturer Rakesh Kumar organised captivating activities and engaged the voters especially new and future voters through engaging cultural performances and powerful speeches.

These events saw the active participation of around 450 people including students and other local voters of Bari and Ladana.

First Scrutiny of expenses registers conducted for 11 ACs of Jammu District

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 20

Amidst the fervor of the ongoing electoral season, Jammu District Assembly Constituencies (ACs) witnessed first inspection of day-to-day expenses register of the contesting candidates by Expenditure Observers, Amaresh Kumar Tiwari, B.K. Vishnu Priya and Gayatri M, besides Nodal Officer for Expenditure Monitoring, Yasir Sharief.

All Assistant Expenditure Observers were also present during the inspection. Of the 109 candidates contesting for 11 Assembly Constituencies (ACs), only 61 candidates or their election agents were present for the first inspection.

The absence of the candidates was communicated to them through notices by the concerned Returning Officers.

In the course of inspection, the discrepancies were observed between day-to-day expenses register and the shadow observation register of 19 candidates. They same were communicated to the contesting candidates through notices by the concerned Returning Officers.