

**DENGUE WARNING SIGNS**

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

**Watch out for dengue warning signs!**

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

- Severe and continuous abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea
- Persistent vomiting
- A sharp rise in temperature
- Disorientation
- Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool, urine or stool
- Redness

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

# JINDRAH IMAGES

DAILY | JAMMU | VOL NO: 11 | ISSUE NO: 223 | PAGES: 12 | PRICE: Rs 2/- | RNI NO: JKENG/2013/49471 | POSTAL REGD. NO. JK-497/22-24 | dailyjindrahimages.com/Epaper.php | jindrahimages123@gmail.com

## IPS officer Lakshay Sharma relieved from J&K

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

The Home Department of the Jammu and Kashmir Government has relieved IPS officer Lakshay Sharma (2016 batch) from the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir following the approval of the Competent Authority and the Election Commission of India.

Sharma will return to his parent cadre after completing his deputation.

## Congress appoints Uday Bhanu Chib as new Indian Youth Congress President

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEPT 22

The Congress on Sunday appointed Uday Bhanu Chib as the president of the Indian Youth Congress (IYC), replacing Srinivas B V.

Chib was currently serving as the general secretary of IYC and is a former president of the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Youth Congress.

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge has appointed Uday Bhanu Chib as the president of the Indian Youth Congress with

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# BJP govt must in J&K to teach Pak lesson; no stone-pelter, terrorists will be released: Amit Shah

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

There will be no talks with Pakistan till terrorism is eliminated, Home Minister Amit Shah said on Sunday, asserting it is imperative that the BJP comes to power in Jammu and Kashmir to ensure peace and teach the neighbouring country a lesson.

Addressing an election rally here, Shah also slammed the Gandhi and Abdullah families claiming they have joined hands to end reservation but they will not be



allowed to do so. "After the counting of votes on October 8, your so-called 'Mohabbat Ki Dukan' is going to be closed," Shah said, taking a jibe at Con-

gress leader Rahul Gandhi's slogan of 'Nafrat Ke Bazaar Mein, Mohabbat Ki Dukan' which he often used during his Bharat Jodo Yatra.

The home minister castigated the National Conference, Congress and PDP over the issue of terrorism and said no stone-pelter or terrorist will be released from jail.

After forming a government in Jammu and Kashmir, the BJP will issue a white paper to expose the role of the three families who had 'biryani' with terrorists,

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## Congress-National Conference alliance will repeal 890 central laws applicable in Jammu and Kashmir: G Kishan Reddy

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

The anti-India mindset of the Congress party is now exposed to the country, and the many anti-India statements made by Rahul Gandhi during his recent visit to the United States are proof of this. The anti-national alli-



ance led by the Congress party has promised to restore Article 370 in its manifesto. It is clear from this that the Congress will repeal the 890 central laws implemented in Jammu and Kashmir and again create the same old situation in Jammu and Kashmir, where terrorist incidents used to happen every day and

separatist sentiment was at its peak in the state.

Will they now also repeal such laws that guarantee education to the children of the people of the state, and give farmers the right to proper compensation during land acquisition?

Omar Abdullah's  
CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## Modi put forward India's views, commitments to global peace and security in quad, bilateral meetings



AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON, SEP 22

In his meeting with Quad leaders both in multilateral and bilateral settings, Prime Minister Narendra Modi put forward India's views and commitments for global growth, development, peace and security.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri made these remarks at a special briefing in New York on Sunday.

Modi on Saturday had three separate bilateral meetings with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and US President Joe Biden along with the Quad Leadership Summit in Wilmington,

Delaware.

"All of these engagements today have given the opportunity to Prime Minister to put forward India's views and commitments for global growth, development, and peace and security," Misri told reporters in New York.

Prime Minister Modi reached New York on Sunday after wrapping up the Quad Leaders' meeting in Wilmington, hosted by President Biden.

In a rare gesture, Biden hosted Modi for a bilateral meeting in his home, and the Quad summit was held at the Archmere Academy in Wilmington.

"In a sense, the overarching themes that have

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## Pakistan feeling pain watching democracy flourishing in J&K: Rajnath

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
POONCH, SEP 22

Defence minister Rajnath Singh lauded the people of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday for overwhelmingly taking part in the first phase of polling in the Assembly election on September 18 and said Pakistan is feeling "pain in its belly" watching democracy flourishing in the Union Territory after the abrogation of Article 370.

The senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader accused the National Conference (NC), Congress and People's Democratic Party (PDP) of misleading people by talking about the restoration of Article 370 of the Constitution in their manifestoes and said these parties should stop working as "proxies of Pakistan".

"The first phase of the



Assembly election registered more than 61 per cent polling, the highest in 30 years and surpassing the record-breaking 58 per cent polling in the Lok Sabha election. The message has gone to the world that Article 370 was abrogated for the betterment of India.

"People have raised the flag of democracy so high that Pakistan is feeling pain in its belly. We do not want enmity with Pakistan as we want good rela-

tions with all our neighbours. Pakistan keeps doing unholy things against India to divert the attention of its people from its internal problems," Singh said, addressing a poll rally in support of BJP candidate Choudhary Abdul Gani here.

Referring to a reported statement of Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif that his country and the NC-Congress alliance are on the same page over restoration of Article 370, Singh wondered who has given the authority to the neighbouring country to interfere in Jammu and Kashmir's internal matters.

"I want to ask my friends in the NC, Congress and PDP, are you fighting elections as proxies of Pakistan?" he asked.

The defence minister said people in Pakistan-occupied

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## Pakistani intruder arrested along LoC in Poonch

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

A 35-year-old Pakistani intruder was arrested by Indian army troops guarding the Line of Control in Mendhar sector of Poonch district on Sunday, security officials said.

Hassam Shahzad, a resident of Tarinote village of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, was intercepted and taken into custody by the troops in Krishna Ghati sector of Mendhar sub-division when he tried to sneak into this side in the early hours of the day, the officials said.

Shahzad was found hiding in a burrow close to a river near Bravo check area, 100 metres inside Indian territory, by an area domination patrol party, the officials said.

They said Rs 1800 in

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## Assembly Elections Pre-poll alliance with Congress to avoid hung assembly: Omar Abdullah

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, SEPT 22

The National Conference's pre-poll alliance with the Congress for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections was formed to give people an option to avoid a hung House, party vice-president Omar Abdullah said on Sunday.

According to the seat-share agreement, the National Conference is contesting 51 seats, the Congress 32 and the CPI(M) one. The remaining six seats will witness a "friendly contest" between the Congress and the National Conference.

Abdullah - who spoke to reporters at a shikara rally in the Dal lake in support of



the party's Zaidil candidate Tanvir Sadiq - said, "Maybe they have something which allows them to see what has gone into the machines, we don't know what has gone into the machines. What we have heard from the people, there is no room for hung elections."

"We could have gone for a post-poll alliance but the alliance has been formed (before elections) to give people an option so that there is no hung assembly and there is no room for doubt that a government will not be formed," he added.

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## Encounter underway between security forces, terrorists in Chatroo area of Kishtwar



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, SEPT 22

An encounter is underway between security forces and terrorists in the Chatroo area of Kishtwar district, police said on Sunday.

The encounter continues after contact was established between the security

forces and terrorists on Saturday.

Taking to social media handle on X, the Kishtwar Police posted, "In continuation of the earlier joint search operation launched by security forces near the Danna Dhar forests in the upper reaches of

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## Modi Hai to Mumkin Hai, BJP will form next govt in J&K: Tarun Chugh

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

The BJP National general Secretary and J&K Incharge, Tarun Chugh, on Sunday said that after the 1st phase of Assembly elections it has become abundantly crystal clear that there is a strong wave in favor of BJP and it will form next government in J&K.

This was stated by Tarun Chugh, while addressing a public meeting at Chenani in favor of BJP candidate, Balwant Singh Mankotia.

"NC-Cong and PDP are misleading the people by promising restoration of Article 370," Chugh said, adding, "Article 370 is history and no power on earth can bring it back".

Chugh said that NC-Cong



want to snatch the reservation given to Paharis, Gujjars, Bakerwals and OBCs, Valmkis and appealed to the people to teach a lesson to the Assembly elections.

Chugh said NC-Cong and PDP are working on the agenda of Pakistan. "Remember these parties talked of

autonomy and Self-rule.

He said that peace has been established in J&K after the abrogation of Article 370 and record number of tourists are visiting J&K in the peaceful atmosphere. "People have now understood that NC-Cong and PDP are trying to implement Pak agenda

in Kashmir and they will reject these dynastic parties in these elections," he said, while adding, "People are fully behind the PM Modi".

Chugh said, "Modi Hai to Mumkin Hai and J&K will be the most developed State of the country under Modi's leadership".

Three families i.e. Abdullahs, Muftis and Gandhis looted J&K for many-2 years but BJP will make a 'Naya J&K', he said. These families gave stones and guns I the hands of youth but we will give laptops to youth.

"BJP is guarantee to peaceful and developed J&K," Chugh said, while adding, "NC-Cong want to bring back terrorism and unrest in J&K".

The statement of the  
CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## BSF foils infiltration bid by armed Terrorist along IB

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

The Border Security Force (BSF) on Sunday foiled an infiltration attempt by a terrorist along the International Border here, and recovered a large quantity of arms and ammunition.

The infiltration attempt was scuttled by the troops in R S Pura border area during the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday, a BSF spokesperson said.

He said BSF troops noticed suspicious movement of an intruder approaching the fence under the cover of darkness but his attempt was foiled by the BSF personnel.

A thorough search of the area was carried out this morning, leading to the

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## Natrang's 'Sunday Theatre' features hard-hitting satire 'Girgit'

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

Hindi play 'Girgit' directed by Neeraj Kant featured here today in Natrang's weekly Theatre series 'Sunday Theatre' at Natrang Studio Theatre, Jammu. Based on a Russian short Story by Anton Chekhov the play proved to be the hard hitting satire on the present socio-political system. The adaptation of the play was deeply rooted in the soil of Jammu and its dramatic structure made the audience feel as if they are watching their own story. Every time the play is staged, some highly contemporary and situational aspect is added to it which refines its beauty. Natrang has been endeavoring to showcase highly relevant political and social satires and today's play demonstrated to be the shining example of that.

The play Girgit revolves around a Dog and corrupt Police Officer, who changes colours like a chameleon, every time as the situation changes irrespective of right or wrong. The stage action starts when a Dog bites a pickpocket who



approaches the officers to help him to roundup owner but in vain. A passerby hints that the dog belongs to the local Minister as he saw a similar dog moving around his Bungalow. On getting his clue, the officer starts beating the pickpocket for teasing a respectable dog. The officer claims that a dog of minister cannot bite unless and until forced to do so. While he is beating the pickpocket, another man from the crowd observes that the local minister cannot keep such dog, as he is known to have pointer-hunting dogs only. On this, dog is thrashed and search continues for the owner of the dog to enable the pickpocket to claim the compensation. The beating of the dog continues until

a servant of the minister appears on the scene. At first he refuses to recognize the dog but later identifies him as the minister's brother's dog who has visited from Delhi. Here the dog is escorted back home with full official protocol.

Mihir Gujral as Police Officer portrayed aesthetically the changes of colours of the central character who was equally supported by Aadesh Dhar as his subordinate. Kananpreet Kaur as the senior officer successfully exhibited the complexities of the senior bureaucrats. Among others who gave impressive performances included Vishal Sharma as thief, Kushal Bhat as Minister's Servant, Lal Mohd. as Dog, Palshin Dutta, Vrinda Gujral, Vansh Pandotra, Pratibha Verma.

## Six SMVDU faculty ranked among top 2% scientists globally

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) is proud to announce that six of its distinguished faculty members have been featured in Stanford University's prestigious list of the Top 2% Scientists in the World. This esteemed global ranking recognizes researchers who have made significant contributions to their fields based on standardized citation metrics, emphasizing their scientific impact. Dr. Vineet V Tyagi has achieved a remarkable feat by featuring in this ranking for the fifth consecutive year (2020-24), recognized in the overall category. Meanwhile, Dr. Bharat Bhushan Jindal and Dr. Mir Irfan Ul Haq have maintained their ranks for the second time. The other SMVDU faculty members honored

in this year's list include Dr. Surendra Singh, Dr. Ankush Rain, and Dr. Vijay Kumar Sharma. These six faculty members have been recognized for their extensive research, high-impact publications, and significant contributions to advancing knowledge in their respective disciplines. This remarkable achievement not only elevates the global reputation of SMVDU but also highlights the university's commitment to fostering a thriving research culture. The recognized professors come from diverse fields such as Solar Thermal Energy Storage & Materials, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Artificial Intelligence & Image Processing and Electronics and Communication, showcasing SMVDU's interdisciplinary excellence. Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Pragati Kumar, expressed great pride in this recognition,

stating, "We are incredibly proud of our faculty members who have earned this global distinction. Their dedication to excellence in research reflects SMVDU's mission to advance knowledge and innovation for the betterment of society." The inclusion of SMVDU faculty in Stanford's Top 2% Scientists list reaffirms the university's dedication to academic excellence, groundbreaking research, and global collaboration. These faculty achievements continue to inspire both students and future researchers at SMVDU. Stanford's list is one of the most comprehensive evaluations of scientists worldwide, focusing on citation metrics and research influence. This ranking reinforces SMVDU's efforts to lead in cutting-edge research, contributing to solutions for real-world challenges through innovation.

## Mr. Rohit Kumar Singh qualified for the Award of Ph.D. in Management

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22



Mr. Rohit Kumar Singh, a research scholar in the School of Business at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU), has successfully completed his Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Management. Under the guidance of Prof. Supran Kumar Sharma, a faculty member at the School of Business, SMVDU. Mr. Singh conducted an empirical analysis on "Corporate Governance Practices and Performance of Banks: Empirical Evidence from India". His research has been published in high-impact journals ranked in the A and B categories based on the ABDC indexing and Q1 category under the SCOPUS indexing. Additionally, Mr. Rohit Kumar Singh has presented his research work at numerous national and international conferences. Currently, he is

working as an Assistant Professor (Management) at Manipal University Jaipur, Rajasthan. He extends his heartfelt gratitude to the School of Business at SMVDU for their essential resources and unwavering support throughout his research journey. Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Kumar, Vice-Chancellor of SMVDU, Professor (Dr.) Ashutosh Vashishtha, Dean, Faculty of Management, Professor (Dr.) Jyoti Sharma, Head, School of Business, and other committee members congratulated Mr. Rohit Kumar Singh and wished him a bright future.

## Women's contribution is crucial to building a strong and vibrant nation: Rekha Mahajan

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

Women's empowerment was not a political issue for the BJP but an idea that is intrinsic to its work culture, said BJP senior leader, District President Jammu South Rekha Mahajan made the remarks during the program of Muslim Mahila interaction with the community here today. Women, being the biggest beneficiaries of the Modi Government's flagship schemes like Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) and Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Scheme, have experienced freedom from financial dependency and day-to-day life. The love and support they have shown in return has been unprecedented. She highlighted key initiatives undertaken by the Modi government to uplift Muslim women. These include education and skill development, scholarship programs and vocational training to enhance employability and economic independence, healthcare and nutrition, improved healthcare facilities, sanitation, and nutrition programs.

Rekha emphasized PM Modi's unwavering commitment to Muslim welfare, citing notable achievements, including the Triple Talaq Abolition, as a significant step towards ensuring dignity



and equality for Muslim women. These initiatives have significantly improved the lives of Muslim women, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to their families and communities.

Rekha Mahajan recently engaged with Muslim women, emphasizing the numerous achievements of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government in empowering the Muslim community. Mahajan's outreach efforts aim to foster a stronger connection between the BJP and Muslim women, promoting inclusivity and development. She stated that women play a crucial role in the Modi-led government and are always committed to the empowerment and upliftment of women in India. Rekha highlighted the significant contribution of women in the Modi-led government, stating that they play a crucial role in shaping

policies and are always committed to creating a better future for women in India.

Rekha said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has moved rapidly towards becoming a developed nation. Today, there has been development in every field. The biggest companies in the world want to come to India. Due to this, India's economy has strengthened. She added that India is moving forward rapidly under PM Modi's leadership.

Rekha Mahajan's engagement with Muslim women marks a significant step towards fostering a stronger, more inclusive BJP. By highlighting PM Modi's achievements, Mahajan aims to build trust and promote a sense of ownership among Muslim women, ensuring their active participation in the country's development journey.

## Door to door campaign reflects changed security scenario, asserts Arun Gupta

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 22:

The National Conference and the Congress are busy these days, day in and day out hurling abuses at the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). They are able to campaign for much longer hours of the day, be it day or night. Some days ago, in Kashmir's Zadibal assembly segment, NC patriarch Farooq Abdullah sat in open auto-rickshaw along with his party candidate Tanvir Sadiq and roamed on the streets of downtown Srinagar freely. These were areas out of bounds for politicians and considered hotbeds of terrorism. Dr Farooq Abdullah was canvassing support for his party and talking ill about the BJP government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi accusing it of not doing enough for the locals.

If we just sit back, watch carefully and analyse closely, we will realise that something like this, door to door campaigning by top leaders, was happening in Kashmir in 2024 assembly elections for the first time after 1987. It was during Farooq Abdullah's tenure as CM when he led the NC-Congress coalition that terrorism started in late 1989 and early 1990. It was the rampant corruption, mismanagement and high handedness of his government that created fertile ground for terrorism, BJP spokesperson Arun Gupta said on Sunday.

We then need to go a step further into trying to make sense of all this



door-to-door campaign and lack of fear among the candidates as also common people. How is it that something like this has become possible and who is responsible for this pleasant change? On looking back into the recent past, we realise that all these positive changes have happened after August 5, 2019, abrogation of Article 35-A and 370, Mr Gupta pointed out.

In all elections held after 1987 when Farooq Abdullah was the CM, be it of the elections for the Lok Sabha, Legislative Assembly, or even panchayat or local bodies, rampant violence was witnessed. Killing of common people as also of contesting candidates of different parties was common, Mr Gupta pointed out. Stone pelting incidents and hartals were witnessed all over the Kashmir valley leading to repeated disruptions in all sectors. The hartals led to closure of educational institutions, businesses suffered, tourism and industry suffered too, he added.

These repeated closures harmed the economy tremendously and created a fear psychosis where no

investor was willing to put his money into Jammu & Kashmir. In 1997, Farooq Abdullah sought investments from all over India and even abroad but was rebuffed soundly. The potential investors were requested to invest hundreds or thousands of crores into J&K but could not own an inch of land in their names. They were told that they should create jobs for thousands of people of J&K but they could not own any houses and had to live as tenants permanently, Mr Gupta recalled.

This put off many would-be investors who said if they were being asked to invest in J&K, they should at least be allowed small patches of land for their personal needs also as residences. Since Article 35-A and 370 were in force, allotting land even for residential purposes to "outsiders" (as defined by the NC, Indians from other states) was not possible and would-be investors had to be turned away, Mr Gupta said. Today, investment proposals worth thousands of crores have been received and many industrial estates are being set up all over J&K, he said.

The NC should give up on its agenda of uselessly talking about restoration of these articles which have been buried forever. It should thank PM Modi and admit without hesitation that he has changed the ground realities and hence the perceptions about J&K, not only domestically, but also globally, he concluded.

## Apni Party continues campaign among migrant KPs in Jammu

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAGTI (JAMMU), SEPT 21

Continuing its aggressive election campaign, the migrant cell of the Apni Party organized a meeting with the migrant Kashmiri Pandits in the Jagti Camp to hold deliberation about the living condition and demands of the migrants living in the camps in Jammu.

Mohammed Dilawar Mir, Chairman of the Apni Party's Parliamentary Affairs Committee, General Secretary of the Party, Vijay Bakaya and others addressed the migrants living in the Jagti camp, while seeking their vote

and support for the Party candidate, Yawar Mir, who is contesting candidate of the Party from Rafiabad assembly constituency.

The Party leaders also sought support of the migrant community also in other assembly constituencies in Kashmir Valley.

In his address, Mohammed Dilawar Mir said that the Party is committed to work for the return and rehabilitation of the migrant Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley.

"We stand with the aspiration of the migrant Kashmiri Pandits, who have suffered, following their displacement and want to return back to their roots.



We want them to reunite with the Kashmiri culture," he stated, while making a plea to vote and support Yawar Mir, contesting from Rafiabad assembly constituency.

Meanwhile, General Secretary of the Party, Vijay Bakaya also

addressed the displaced Kashmiri Pandits at Jagti Camp in Nagrota (Jammu) and assured that the Party will fight for the enhancement of the relief for the displaced families.

"We also want to improve the living standard of the displaced com-

munity in camps by providing them basic amenities, 24/7 electricity, clean drinking water, and well equipped play ground for the children," he said.

He informed the migrants that the Party will constitute an apex committee to address the problems of the displaced Kashmiri Migrants.

He stressed upon to create awareness among the community members about the welfare schemes.

"These schemes will be launched by the Party if it forms the Govt in J&K. The displaced community shall be educated about the benefits to overcome the

sufferings they have faced all these years, while living in the camps," he added.

The meeting was also addressed by other leaders. Prominent among those who attended the meeting include Arun Kumar Chibber, Ex-MLA Faqir Nath, Bodh Raj Bhagat, Ajaz Kazmi, Dr Rohit Gupta, Abhay Bakaya, Viabhav Mattoo, Deepak Bradoo, Vishal Jyotshi, Neelam Gupta, Ritu Pandita, Shivani Koul, Ashwani Bhat, Chand Ji Bhat, Chand Ji Khair, Bhushal Bhat, G P Pandita, Santosh Kher, Pawan Kaul, RL Bhat, Subhash Kachroo, Satishti Raina, Devansh and others.

## Pavneet Kour Pledges to Establish Biggest Sports Academy for Youth

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22



Ajeet Nagar, September 22, 2024: During a meeting held at Ajeetnagar today, Pavneet Kour, the Apni Party candidate for Jammu South, reaffirmed her commitment to the youth of the region.

She announced her plan to establish Jammu South's biggest sports academy, which aims to provide a platform for young talents and promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

Speaking to a large and supportive crowd, Pavneet Kour emphasized the need for progressive leadership in the upcoming elections.

"This sports academy will not only promote physical fitness but also keep our youth away from

drugs, offering them the opportunity to excel in sports at both national and international levels," she said. She further appealed to the public to choose their representative wisely, asking, "What have your previous representatives done during their tenure? It's time to demand accountability and elect leaders who truly work for the welfare of the community."

The meeting at Ajeetnagar was marked by enthusiastic support from the local residents, who expressed their faith in Pavneet Kour's vision for a brighter future for Jammu South.



## BJP fails to divert public opinion towards divisive agenda: Manjit Singh

**JJ NEWS SERVICE**  
VIJAYPUR, SEPT 22

Apni Party's contesting candidate for Vijaypur assembly constituency, and Former Minister S. Manjit Singh has said the BJP has failed to divert attention of the people from local issues to divisive agenda.

"The BJP has tried its best in the ongoing election campaign in Vijaypur to create certain kind of division of votes on a set agenda that is against the secular fabric of the country, especially Vijaypur and Samba," said S. Manjit Singh, addressing a largely attended public meeting.

The Former Minister said that the people are not ready to forget the suffering of ten years; they faced in Jammu and Kashmir in the absence of an elected Govt, at the hands handful of bureaucracy.

"The bureaucracy worked as East India Company and took decisions against the public interest unilaterally. The houses



were dismantled, people were disposed from the property and land belong to the poor families was taken away making large numbers of people homeless. It was the period of inhuman approach that was adopted by the babus in J&K, especially in Samba, Kathua and Jammu," he said, cautioning the people from again falling into the trap of BJP that would leave them helpless for next five years without jobs and development.

He said that the BJP gave the slogan of development, employment, and prosperity. However, the party helped the divisive

agenda to spread its root that increased disharmony among the communities. "The Apni Party has commitment with the people that it would fight with the communal agenda of dividing society on regional or religious lines, and work for the unity in the society for the peace, development and progress of the country, especially Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

He recalled how the Jammu business, trade in Samba and Kathua has been affected adversely due to the increasing influence of the non-locals contractors, traders, hoteliers, transporters, contractors,

miners from Punjab, Himachal, Uttar Pradesh and other states.

"Our youth have become unemployed in last 10 years, and many families have been apparently facing starvation like situation. Hence, the time has come that the people should chose a right person as their representative from Vijaypur assembly constituency by casting their vote in favour of S. Manjit Singh, contesting from the said constituency," he added.

He remained to the people how he did development in Vijaypur's neglected areas and did not discrimination with any one on the name of region, religion, caste, and creed.

He appealed to the people to stand in unity and vote him to the legislative assembly so that he could become representative and address their long pending issues of development, employment, and protection of resources from the outsiders.

## BJP encouraging independents, smaller parties to create political uncertainty in J&K: Cong

**JJ NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

Seeking a decisive and full-fledged mandate for the coalition to provide a stable government in Jammu and Kashmir, Rajya Sabha member and Congress Working Committee Member Nasir Hussain on Sunday cautioned the people against the deceitful tactics of BJP.

Interacting with media persons after addressing a series of public meetings in different parts of Jammu in support of the party candidates, the Rajya Sabha member said that the BJP is neither in a position nor in the race to form government in Jammu and Kashmir. He said that the BJP leaders have realized that residents of J&K are going to teach them a lesson for their misdeeds during the last 10 years so the BJP has shamelessly indulged in nefarious designs and dangerous ploys to ensure a fractured mandate after the elections.

"BJP is encouraging Independents and smaller parties to create chaos and uncertainty after the elections. Such chaotic situations always suit the ruling party to form its own government through its fraudulent tactics", he said and urged the people to give a decisive mandate to the coalition to estab-



lish a stable government in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Only a stable government can ensure development and prosperity in J&K. We have to read and see through the tactics of the BJP", he said.

"It's only because of the Supreme Court's intervention that elections are being held in J&K", he said. Now, they're trying to manipulate the outcome by backing independents and smaller parties, aiming for a fractured mandate and an unstable government."

"This deceitful tactic will allow them to exploit the Governor's office for their own gain. We must see through their ploy" he said.

"The people of Jammu and Kashmir are finally getting a chance to exercise their democratic right after years of waiting", the CWC member said.

"The BJP, which has been ruling the state through its proxy, the Lieutenant Governor's office,

owes us answers. They're making tall promises now, but what about their track record?" he asked.

"Ten years ago, J&K was a leader in healthcare, education, and infrastructure development. Where's the report card for the past decade? How many people have they lifted out of poverty?" the Congress leader further questioned.

"The BJP's biggest achievement has been spreading the menace of drugs. Is there a link between the drugs recovered at Gujarat port and the rising addiction in J&K?" the Rajya Sabha member asked.

Quoting the report of the Parliament panel, he said, "The Standing Committee of Parliament reports that 13.5 lakh youth in J&K are trapped in drug menace" He asked the BJP to clear its roadmap to tackle this crisis.

"The BJP is indulging in empty rhetoric, or 'Jumbabazi.' They're attacking opposition leaders and

their families instead of facing the facts", he said.

"The BJP has failed to create jobs, despite promising 2 crore positions annually in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. Outsiders are getting lucrative contracts, while locals are left behind", he mentioned.

Pointing toward some scams recently exposed in J&K, Mr Nasir Hussain said that the Governor's House has become a hub of corruption, with scandals like the Jal Jivan Mission Scam, Recruitment Scam, mining scam, sand scam, and liquor scam.

"Congress will investigate these scandals and ensure locals receive contracts", he said.

"J&K's education sector is on the brink of collapse, with enrollment plummeting. Unscheduled power cuts plague our citizens", he said assured that Congress guarantees a better future, starting with a comprehensive social, economic, and caste census to ensure justice and equality for all.

AICC Coordinators Ms Dolly Sharma & Onika Mehrotra; JKPC Senior Vice President & Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma; Vice President PCC Ved Mahajan, AICC Social Media Pranab Ji; Kapil Singh, Neeraj Gupta were present in the press interaction.

## NC, Congress' make false promises, BJP does what it says: Nadda

**JJ NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

JP Nadda, BJP National President, on Sunday said that National Conference and Congress are working on the agenda of Pakistan and want to push J&K towards unrest and revive terrorism here and added that the BJP government is must to peace in J&K.

He attacked Congress, National Conference, and PDP for acting as Pakistan's agents and wanting to have 90s like situation when thousands died due to militancy.

JP Nadda was addressing public rallies at Barnai, Greater Kailash and Intellectuals meeting at Jammu.

"NC-Cong are misleading the people promising restoration of Article 370," Nadda said, adding, "These parties are following the agenda of Pakistan as has been stated by the Pakistan Defence Minister".

He said that Article 370 is history now and no one



can bring it back. "Today, there is one constitution, one flag and one PM," he said, while adding, "Shayama Parasad Mukherjee's dream has been fulfilled by PM Modi".

He said that BJP's victory in J&K is essential for the interests of the country and J&K as well and added that there is a strong wave in favor of BJP and it will form its next government here.

Under PM Modi's leadership, J&K will be the most developed State of the country an India will soon become world's 3rd

largest economy. He said that today, India's name is held in such high esteem globally that it no longer gets mentioned alongside Pakistan, which has remained stagnant.

Nadda said that PM Modi has crushed terrorism and any terrorist entering Jammu and Kashmir today doesn't survive for more than a week.

He urged the people of Jammu to vote for BJP candidates saying, "BJP is guarantee to peace and development".

He said that the first

movement to oppose Article 370 began under Syama Prasad Mukherjee's leadership.

The Jana Sangh was formed in 1952, and by 1953, the movement against Article 370 had started. In June 1953, Mukherjee was arrested in Lakhampur and martyred in a Srinagar jail, he said.

Nadda further said that under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, Indian politics has adopted the principle of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas" (inclusive development), establishing accountability and transparency in governance.

He said that rather than distributing money, the Modi government empowered people by supporting the weakest sections of society with investments worth Rs 1.25 crore.

Later in the evening, Nadda took out a road show in Jammu city, starting from Parade Ground and passing through Moti Bazaar, Old Mandi, and Raghunath Temple.

## Plantation drive at GMHSS Domana led by Director School Education Jammu to achieve government's target for greening initiatives

**JJ NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 21

In a significant step towards environmental conservation and in alignment with the government's green initiatives, the Government Model Higher Secondary School (GMHSS) Domana in collaboration with Forest Department conducted a plantation drive today. The event was graced by the esteemed presence of the Worthy Director School Education, Jammu Sh. Ashok Kumar Sharma who led the campaign, reinforcing the importance of eco-consciousness among students and educators.

The plantation drive is part of a broader governmental strategy aimed at increasing green cover across educational insti-



tutions in the region. This initiative seeks to promote sustainable practices and help achieve the set targets under the government's environmental conservation plan. Students and staff enthusiastically participated, planting a variety of saplings including medicinal plants, fruit-bearing trees and ornamental species.

During the event, the Director School Education praised the initiative undertaken by the school and emphasized the role of students in fostering environmental stewardship. "Our schools are not just centers of learning but also hubs for promoting sustainable futures. By involving our students in such green initiatives,

we are not only contributing to a greener planet but also instilling in them the values of responsibility and care for nature," said the Director.

Principal GMHSS Domana Mohinder Sharma thanked the Director for the continued support and leadership, noting that the school is committed to organizing similar activities in the future to contribute towards the government's vision of a greener and more sustainable Jammu.

The plantation drive concluded with a pledge by all attendees to actively participate in more such eco-friendly initiatives, reinforcing their commitment to preserving the environment for future generations.

## HearClear inaugurates a new clinic in Jammu to expand presence across the country

The launch underscores the brand's commitment to create a cohesive hearing care ecosystem across the country

**JJ NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 21

HearClear, a startup providing advanced hearing care solutions, has launched a new clinic in Jammu as part of its plan to provide advanced hearing solutions in the region. With the inauguration, the organization aspires to establish a world-class experience for facilitating hearing loss treatment for the elderly of the region.

The new state-of-the-art clinic is in alignment with the brand's larger goal of establishing an extensive retail network across the country. Acing its services, the clinic will offer top-class diagnostic solutions under the supervision of expert audiologists to promote ear health among the people of the region. At the same time, it will



support advanced services such as hearing training, after-sales services, reprogramming, and fine tuning of hearing devices.

The inauguration was facilitated by renowned neurologist Prof. Dr.S.K.Gupta and the emi-

nent dermatologist Prof. Dr. Jitender Arora, former heads of the departments of Neurology and Dermatology, respectively, of Government Medical College, Jammu.

The event was also attended by prominent

dignitaries, including Prof. Dr. J. Paul, Prof. Dr. Romesh Nargotra, Prof. Dr. Yudhvir Gupta, Prof. Dr. Dinesh Luthra, and Mr. J.B.S. Johar, ex-chief engineer among others.

Speaking on the occasion, Vineet Narang, the Founder & Managing Director of HearClear India, said, "The launch of the new clinic reinforces our commitment to create an integrated hearing care ecosystem across the country. It is a significant step towards strengthening our footprint in the region and addressing the issue of deteriorating state of hearing capability among the ageing population in Jammu. The new clinic will help us elevate geriatric care in the region with the inclusion of comprehensive hearing care solutions in the region."

## VC IUST inaugurates Geophysical Investigations in University's Campus

**JJ NEWS SERVICE**  
AWANTIPORA, SEPT 22

The Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction (CDRR), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), in collaboration with the Dean of Students, organized Geophysical Investigations at Campus-II of the University. The initiative aims to explore strategies to mitigate the impact of flash floods and manage water flow from the Wastoorwan Mountain to the nearby Jhelum River, while enhancing underground water recharge and ensuring sustainable water management.

The event was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, in presence of Registrar Prof. Abdul Wahid, Prof Shakeel Ahmad visiting professor



at CDRR, Finance Officer Mr. Sameer Wazir, Ex. Engineer, Gulam Nabi Bhat, Coordinator CDRR, Dr. Irfan Maqbool Bhat, Coordinator, Dean Students, Deputy Registrars, Deans, and Heads of various departments.

Prof. Romshoo emphasized the importance of devising disaster mitigation strategies and highlighted the significance of geophysical investigation for effective water

resource management. Experts from the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), Hyderabad, demonstrated geophysical survey methods to students from the Electrical Engineering Department, providing insights into subsurface geological formations up to 50 meters deep. These findings will aid in planning recharge pits to improve groundwater management.

## SSH to support clean candidates where party candidates not fielded: Kesri

**JJ NEWS SERVICE**  
ARNIA, SEPT 23

In a meeting organized in Arnia, Shiv Sena Hindustan J&K President Pt Rajesh Kesri in presence of prominent leaders of party unanimously decided that wherever Shiv Sena Hindustan has fielded its candidates in Jammu and Kashmir, it will support its candidates but wherever our candidates are not fielded good and clean candidates will be supported there. Kesri further said that Shiv Sena Hindustan will support Chaudhary Lal Singh, Raman Bhalla from RS Pura constituency, Bhushan Dogra from Suchetgarh constituency, Tarachand from Chhamb constituency, Surendra Choudhary from Nowshera constituency, Independent candidate Pawan Khajuria from Udhampur East constituency Vikar Rasool Wani from Banihal constituency.



## FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

**BJP govt must in J&K...**

he told the rally in support of J-K BJP president Ravinder Raina ahead of the second phase of elections on September 25.

Shah said he would like to talk to the youths of Jammu and Kashmir whom he referred to as "lions".

"The BJP government is a must in J&K for peace, prosperity and development besides giving a befitting reply to terrorism and teaching a lesson to Pakistan," Shah said, urging them to vote for BJP candidates, especially Raina whom he praised for strengthening the party in the region.

This was the sixth rally of the home minister in the Jammu region in the past two days after reaching the city of temples on a three-day visit Friday evening. He held five rallies – Mendhar, Surankote, Thanamandi, Rajouri and Akhnoor – on Saturday.

"They (NC-Congress alliance) want to release stone-pelters and terrorists (as promised in their manifesto). Farooq Abdullah is talking about a revival of terrorism in Jammu hills but I want to tell them that this is the Modi government and we will bury terrorism in 'patal' (deep inside earth). No terrorist or stone-pelter will be released," he said.

Shah, who started his speech by paying tributes to Guru Nanak on his death anniversary, said the NC and Congress are battling for talks with Pakistan and resumption of cross-border trade along the Line of Control.

"I want to tell Farooq Abdullah and Rahul Gandhi that there will be no dialogue with Pakistan till terrorism is wiped out. I will talk with my lions (youth of J-K) and not with Pakistan," he said.

Referring to underground bunkers constructed over the years by the government for the safety of border residents, he said there will be no need for such structures as "nobody has the guts to open fire" from across the border.

"Agar wo galti se bhi goli chalayenge to hum yahan se gola chalayenge (If they fire a bullet even by mistake, we will respond with a shell)," he said.

He also slammed the NC-Congress leaders' remarks on reservation, and said nobody will be allowed to touch reservation given to the deprived sections, including Paharis, Gujjars, Dalits, other backward classes.

"Rahul Gandhi is saying in America that there is now no need for reservation. I want to tell him that you will not be allowed to end reservation for the deserving communities," he said.

"Gandhi and Abdullah families have come together to revoke reservation, revive terrorism and are talking about terrorism from 'Mohabbat Ki Dukan'. After counting of votes on October 8, your so-called 'Mohabbat Ki Dukan' is going to be closed.

"I want to ask Abdullah who is responsible for 30 years of terrorism, death of 40,000 people, civil curfew for over 3,000 days... you were enjoying your holidays in London while Kashmir was burning," the home minister said, adding the Modi government came to power and "cleared terrorists".

"After elections when our government is formed, we will bring a white paper on terrorism and will fully expose the three families – Congress, Abdullahs and Muftis. We will see who brought terrorism to the Valley and under whose direction, who enjoyed 'biryani' with terrorists. We will expose everything," the home minister said.

Asking people whether the 2019 revocation of Article 370 was good or bad, Shah said Abdullah is talking about its restoration "but nobody can bring it back".

He said the tricolour is flying proudly in J-K and they want to restore the state flag of NC founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. "Abdullah do whatever is in your power! But except our beloved tricolour, no other flag will fly in Kashmir."

The home minister claimed the NC wants to rename 'Shankaracharya as Takht-e-Suleiman and Hari Parbat as Koh-e-Maran'.

Nobody has the power to make such changes and the two hills in Srinagar will be known by their names till eternity, he said.

Referring to the first phase of elections on September 18, he said the NC-Congress coalition is not going to form the government as they were cleaned up in the polling.

"They will face the same fate in the next round of elections on September 25," he said.

Shah referred to railway, road, power and health sector projects and said the Modi government will further speed up developmental works and ensure tourism promotion also in the Jammu region which was "ignored" by governments over the years.

**Congress-National...**

frequent U-turns show that he is completely scared. First his decision to not take part in the assembly elections and then his decision to contest from two seats, first his support to Jamaat and now his opposition to it - all these have led to him being called "Batoye Da" (Mr. Confused) in Dogri.

The people of Jammu and Kashmir have now understood that the BJP can establish peace there and open the path to development and the Congress party and its alliance partner National Conference will pay the price for their anti-India mentality. This time the voters of Jammu will teach a lesson to the Congress and its alliance partners.

**Modi put forward India's...**

been reflected across the multiple meetings...the overall messages that have come through in all of his engagements have been India's emphasis on minimising conflict and division, leveraging our democratic values even as we pursue our development objectives, and highlighting the role of technology and the digital revolution in ushering in good governance, essentially to turn the disruptive features of technology to good ends," Misri said.

"In the bilateral meetings, all these themes found reflection in the interactions with the other leaders," he added.

With the United States, a very special feature of the bilateral meeting was the return of 297 antiquities to India, a few of which were on display at Biden's residence during the bilateral meeting.

At the Quad Leadership Summit and others associ-

ated with it, Misri said the Prime Minister underlined India's approach of cooperation, contact, and engagement for growth with a variety of partners in the Indo-Pacific.

"It was striking to hear the other Quad leaders acknowledge India's actions and also at the same time hear their expectations of India, which really underlines the need to continue to work and sustain this enormous trust that India has earned from its partners," Misri said.

Aspects of technology were emphasised in both the bilateral and the plurilateral formats, he said adding the prime minister underscored the need to prevent the malign use of technology and to put technology to good use.

Prime Minister thanked President Biden profusely for hosting the summit for his leadership of the Quad in recent times and for his commitment to strengthen the Quad as a force for global good.

"In fact, the Prime Minister today referred to the Quad in a very, very evocative way. He called it in a very, very evocative way. He called it quick unified assistance delivery (QUAD). The other members of the Quad said that they finally understood what Quad signified and stood for," Misri said.

Modi also mentioned that at a time when the world is ridden with tensions and conflicts, the coming together of these four Quad partners with shared democratic values is important for humanity. He said the Quad was here to stay, to assist, to partner and to complement the efforts of the Indo-Pacific countries, Misri said.

"The leaders took stock of the progress that has been achieved by the Quad over the last year and set forth an ambitious agenda for the next year," he said adding that India will be hosting the Quad Summit in 2025.

Amongst the major announcements from the summit was the Quad Cancer Moonshot, which is a groundbreaking partnership to address the challenges posed by cancer and in this particular instance cervical cancer.

The partners also launched the first-ever Quad at Sea Ship Observer Mission.

This will take place in 2025 to improve interoperability and advance maritime safety between respective coastguards across the Indo-Pacific.

The Quad Indo-Pacific Logistics Network project will pursue shared airlift capacity among nations and leverage their collective logistics strengths to support civilian response to natural disasters more efficiently and more rapidly.

The Quad Ports of the Future Partnership will harness Quad's collective expertise to support sustainable and resilient port infrastructure development across the Indo-Pacific. Partners will share practices that ensure that our ports can maintain an acceptable level of service and infrastructure to ships, especially in the face of disruptions.

A memorandum of cooperation has been announced that would leverage the complementary strengths of the Quad partners to realise a diversified and competitive market and enhance Quad resilience in semiconductor supply chains, he said.

There was discussion of multiple regional and global issues, and amongst them the need for the reform of the multilateral system of governance, including the UN Security Council.

During the Prime Minister's meeting with Biden, both sides on the occasion of this meeting exchanged agreements on the deposit of the instruments of ratification for Pillar 3 and Pillar 4 of the IPEF and the overarching agreement thereof.

External Affairs Minister S Jayashankar and Secretary of State Tony Blinken also exchanged the agreement on a bilateral drug policy framework and the accompanying MOU. During the meeting, both sides discussed at length the ever-expanding agenda of the India-US comprehensive global strategic partnership, which has left no aspect of human endeavour untouched.

"They discussed ongoing cooperation in technology, in clean energy, in space, our engagement in defence and security, and, of course, the regional and global situation," he said.

Modi thanked Biden for his pioneering role in strengthening the India-US partnership over the last four years. In particular, he highlighted Biden's legacy initiative of the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies. Modi's meeting with Prime Minister Kishida was like a farewell meeting given the party elections that are scheduled later this month in Japan.

Modi appreciated in a very fulsome fashion the contribution to the bilateral relationship that has been made by Kishida. Next year is also the 10th anniversary of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership, and it was agreed that this should be marked appropriately.

Sharing details about the meeting with Albanese, Misri said 2025 also happens to be the fifth anniversary of the comprehensive strategic partnership between India and Australia.

"There was a reference to the progress made under ECTA and the impact that it was already having on trade between the two countries and the steps that the two sides were taking to conclude even more ambitious economic cooperation agreements such as the SICA," he said. There was discussion on cooperation in defence and security-related issues and the potential for cooperation in space and critical minerals. (PTI)

**Congress appoints...**

immediate effect, a party statement said. The party appreciates the contributions of the outgoing president Srinivas BV, it added. (Agencies)

**Pakistan feeling...**

Kashmir (PoK) are distressed and want to join India. "They are witnessing the change in Jammu and Kashmir and India's progress under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. They are considering joining India for their prosperity and they no longer want to live with them (Pakistan)," he said, adding that India has never differentiated among people on the basis of religion and considered the PoK residents as "our own".

Referring to a statement of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee – "hum dost badal sakte hai, humsaaye nahi (we can change friends but not neighbours)" – Singh said if Pakistan treads the right path, India is

willing to have good relations with all its neighbours. "We should not forget the words of Vajpayee," he added.

"The NC, Congress and PDP are making a lot of noise over Article 370 and have promised to restore it. How will you restore it as only a government at the Centre has the power to do so?" Singh asked.

He said real politics is to tell the truth to people by looking in their eyes, instead of misleading them for securing their votes. "The BJP is clear in its stand that we will not allow restoration of Article 370 come what may," the defence minister asserted.

On August 5, 2019, the BJP-led Centre abrogated the provisions of Article 370, which had bestowed special rights on Jammu and Kashmir, and bifurcated the erstwhile state into Union territories.

Holding Article 370 responsible for the death and destruction in Jammu and Kashmir over the last 35 years, Singh said 80 per cent of those who lost their lives due to terrorism were Muslims.

"If the NC-Congress alliance comes to power, people will start losing their lives (to terrorism). Article 370 was the reason why Jammu and Kashmir lagged behind," he said.

The veteran leader said if the BJP comes to power here, it will ensure that Jammu and Kashmir is the most developed region in the country in 10 years.

He said the revocation of Article 370 led to the implementation of the Constitution in letter and spirit in Jammu and Kashmir. "That time has gone when there was no tricolour at Lal Chowk, the nerve centre of Srinagar. Does anyone have the power now to stop someone from hoisting the national flag there?" he asked the gathering.

Singh also accused the NC, Congress and PDP of dividing people on the basis of religion and said "every-one born on Indian soil, belonging to any faith, is an Indian citizen".

He said the BJP is the only political party that can restore the pride of Jammu and Kashmir.

"After independence, Jammu and Kashmir, which was known as paradise on earth, got lost in the whirlwind of the past. We have to pull it out from this whirlwind and take it forward, unlike the past rulers who kept it backward and indulged in divisive politics," he said.

"You have witnessed the drop in terror activities. Jammu and Kashmir is now known as the country's tourism capital than being infamous for terrorism," Singh said, lauding the culture of Kashmir where people from all religions used to celebrate their festivals together.

He accused local politicians of destroying the region and said, "Modi's politics will not allow them to ruin Jammu and Kashmir anymore. Modi has a special place for Jammu and Kashmir in his heart."

Referring to Vajpayee's words – "Insaniyat, Jamhooriyat and Kashmiriyat" – Singh said this is the focus of the BJP, while political dynasts only want to grab power.

He said Modi has provided justice to the deprived sections of the society with the abrogation of Article 370 and the country is marching ahead to become the third-largest economy by 2027 and a developed nation by 2047. (Agencies)

**Pakistani intruder...**

Pakistani currency, an identity card and two mobile SIM cards were recovered from Shahzad who, during preliminary questioning, stated that he had inadvertently crossed the LoC.

**Pre-poll alliance with...**

Abdullah also claimed that the BJP would want a hung assembly as it would give it an excuse to extend the lieutenant governor's rule.

"The BJP will want to have a hung assembly so that they get an excuse to prolong the (lieutenant) governor's rule but people won't allow it to happen," he said.

Asked why top BJP leaders were not campaigning in Kashmir as much as they were in Jammu, the former chief minister said the saffron party was aware that it would not get anything from the Valley.

"The BJP has nothing in Kashmir, it won't get anything from Kashmir. We are also well aware of the BJP's attitude towards Muslims. Sixteen per cent population of the country is Muslim and they (BJP leaders) could not find even one who would be good enough to be made a minister at the Centre. When there is no representation for this population, we know what kind of thinking they have towards Muslims," Abdullah said.

The National Conference leader further alleged that the BJP was harping on the "rule of three families" in Jammu and Kashmir to hide its failures.

"Jammu and Kashmir has got nothing in the past five years. The BJP has nothing to show. So the prime minister and the home minister are forced to target the three families. If they had done something, they would not need to do this," he added.

Abdullah also said the government should give a thought to the lower voter turnout this year compared to the 2014 assembly elections in some areas of Kashmir.

"There were some areas where the voting percentage was lower than 2014. For example, the Noorabad (now D H Pora) segment, there was 80 per cent turnout in 2014 but this time it was 20 per cent lower (68 per cent). The present government has to think about why it has happened this time despite there being no boycott and everything, according to them, is normal," he said.

Asked about Rahul Gandhi's visit to Kashmir on Monday, Abdullah said it was good and suggested that the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha make a couple of more visits to take on the BJP.

"It is good that Rahul Gandhi is coming. I would want him to come more often to take on the BJP top brass. The prime minister has visited twice, the home minister has visited thrice, (Defence Minister) Rajnath Singh is not tired of visiting, there are other senior BJP leaders coming. Rahul Gandhi should come to boost the morale of party cadres wherever Congress candidates are contesting," Abdullah said. (Agencies)

**Encounter underway...**

Chatroo area (J/D of P/S Chatroo) district Kishtwar, firing has resumed as contact has been established. Fire exchanged from both sides."

Earlier on Saturday, District Police Kishtwar, in a post

**Assembly Elections-2024****Expenditure Observe Budhal, Thanamandi ACs conducts 3rd inspection of election expenses**

J I NEWS SERVICE

RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 22

The Expenditure Observer for AC 86- Budhal and AC 87- Thanamandi, Sidharth Kumar today carried out third review of election expenses of the candidates contesting for the twin Assembly Constituencies here at meeting held in Dak Bungalow, Rajouri.

Kumar examined the financial documents submitted by the candidates to assess compliance with the expenditure limits set by the Election Commission. The focus was on verifying the accuracy and transparency of the records.

Highlighting the significance of financial accountability, Kumar remarked, "Maintaining transparent and clean financial records is crucial. This inspection aims to ensure that all candidates are adhering to electoral laws and regulations."

Kumar was supported by Assistant Expenditure Observers (AEOs) and teams responsible for expenditure monitoring and accounting from Budhal and Thanamandi, who assisted in verifying the records and ensuring the inspection proceeded smoothly.

**SVEEP: Nari Shakti Choupal organized at Panchayat Chinkah, Thakrakote Reasi**

J I NEWS SERVICE

REASI, SEPTEMBER 22

Nari Shakti Choupal was held today at Panchayat Chinkah, Block Thakrakote as part of the "Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation" (SVEEP) initiative. The aim was to reach out to female voters and encourage them to exercise their right to vote and showcase true meaning of "Nari Shakti".

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from local masses including women of Self Help Groups, Anganwadi workers and first time young girl voters. The SVEEP team, led by Nodal Officer Sachin Sharma, provided comprehensive insights into the electoral process, encouraging all women to participate in the democratic process and cast their vote on 25 September 2024.

The SVEEP Team highlighted multiple measures taken by District Election Office to make voting accessible for women such as Pink Polling Stations ensuring inclusivity in the voting process.

Additionally, detailed information was also provided to the participants regarding Saksham-ECI app, which features a range of accessibility options to assist in voter registration, locating polling stations, and casting votes.

The program culminated with a pledge by women participants to actively promote voter participation within their communities, aiming for a higher voter turnout in the upcoming elections.

Local Women, First time girl voters, AWW's and Officials of the Social Welfare Department were present on the occasion.

**Lumberdar disengaged for MCC Violation in Uri Assembly Constituency**

J I NEWS SERVICE

BARAMULLA, SEPTEMBER 22

In a decisive step to uphold the integrity of the electoral process in Uri Assembly Constituency, Tehsildar Boniyar has disengaged Lumberdar of Pehlipora, Ubaid Ahmed Khan from his duties with immediate effect for the violation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC). This action follows the confirmed reports that Ubaid Ahmed Khan was actively participating in election campaigns for a political party, as a clear violation of the MCC.

Pertinently, Model Code of Conduct is enforced to ensure free and fair elections, and any breach of these guidelines is dealt seriously.

The administration remains committed to maintaining transparency and neutrality during the electoral process.

on X, said , "Exchange of fire has taken place between search teams of security forces and hiding terrorists near Danna Dhar forest area, upper reaches of Gurinal village under the jurisdiction of Police Station Chhatroo, District Kishtwar."(AGENCIES)

**Modi Hai to Mumkin...**

Pak Defence Minister has made it clear that NC-Cong and PDP are working on the agenda of Pakistan, which is very shameful, he said. Chugh also held a meeting of workers at Udhampur and Ramnagar and devised strategy for campaigning in the Assembly elections.

**BSF foils infiltration...**

recovery of an AK assault rifle, two magazines, 17 rounds, two pistols, four magazines and 20 rounds, the spokesperson said.

Official sources said the BSF fired a few rounds of light machine gun on observing the movement of an armed terrorist trying to intrude into this side from across the border late Saturday night.

However, the intruder fled back leaving behind the arms and ammunition, the officials said, adding a Pakistan made bag, a cigarette packet and some other articles were also recovered from the scene during search of the area this morning.



## BJP candidate Mohan Lal tours key villages in Akhnoor constituency

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
AKHNOOR, SEPTEMBER 22

In a significant outreach to the people of Akhnoor Assembly Constituency, BJP candidate Mohan Lal toured the villages of Ashram Colony, Sunail, Bharda Kalan, Gandarwan, among others, engaging with local residents and outlining his vision for a progressive and secure Jammu and Kashmir.

Accompanied by key party leaders, including DDC Sharda Bhau, Mandal President Sham Singh, Ex Chairman MC Sanjay Saraf, and senior BJP figures such as Sobha Ram Sharma, Bharat Bhushan Gupta, Ram Swaroop, and Dalbir Singh, Mohan Lal addressed multiple gatherings, reiterating the BJP's commitment to public welfare, development, and national security.

Lambasting the NC-Congress alliance, Mohan Lal called their manifesto "against the national interest" and accused the opposition of siding with sepa-



ratists and anti-national forces. He assured the people of Akhnoor that under the BJP's leadership, the region would be developed as a model constituency for the entire state.

Among his key promises, Mohan Lal pledged to expedite compensation for farmers whose land had been acquired by defense forces and to review the smart meter system to ensure that it is public-friendly. He

job opportunities for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir," Mohan Lal stated.

He also assured farmers that they would have access to adequate irrigation water to improve agricultural productivity and appealed to voters to choose BJP on October 1 for development, public welfare, and the protection of national integrity and security.

Sending a strong message to the opposition, Mohan Lal challenged the NC-Congress alliance, cautioning them against "playing with the sentiments of Hindus" by proposing any changes to the names of Hindu monuments, temples, or mountains.

The meetings were attended by several prominent local leaders, including Ex Sarpanch Parshant Sharma, Tilak, Ashok Sharma, Rakesh Sharma, and Deepak Sharma. The BJP campaign in Akhnoor continues to gather momentum as the constituency gears up for the upcoming elections.

highlighted BJP's efforts in ensuring women's welfare, youth employment, and the protection of the interests of farmers and deprived classes.

"BJP is the only party that genuinely cares for the women, youth, farmers, and the deprived sections of society. After the abrogation of Article 370, we have ensured citizenship rights for refugees and ownership rights for custodians. Under BJP, we aim to create 5 lakh

## Assembly Elections a battle between BJP & Congress-Pakistan-NC nexus: Bali Bhagat

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

Senior BJP leader and former Minister, Bali Bhagat launched a blistering attack on the Congress-National Conference (NC) Alliance, accusing them of aligning with Pakistan's narrative on Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a rally at Ward No 12, Krishna Nagar, Jammu West Constituency in support of Arvind Gupta, BJP's candidate for the West Constituency, Bali Bhagat said the upcoming J&K Assembly elections are a decisive fight between the BJP's vision of development and peace, and the Congress-NC alliance, which is allegedly working in sync with



Pakistan to destabilize the region.

Bali Bhagat strongly condemned the recent remarks by Pakistan's Defence Minister Khwaja Asif, who suggested that both Pakistan and the Congress-NC combine share a common stance on restoring Article 370. He stated, "The people of Jammu and Kashmir will not let their future be dictated by forces aligned with Pakistan's interests. The Congress-NC alliance has repeatedly shown its

intent to undermine J&K's sovereignty by pushing to reinstate a regressive Article 370, a move which only serves Pakistan's agenda."

He further criticized the Congress for its alliance with the National Conference, which explicitly mentions the release of political prisoners in Jammu and Kashmir in its manifesto.

Bali Bhagat underscored the transformative impact of the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's

leadership. He highlighted how this bold decision has led to an era of peace, development, and integration for Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of India. "The abrogation of Article 370 liberated J&K from decades of turmoil and stagnation. Today, we are witnessing unprecedented growth and stability because of this historic move," he said.

Appealing to the people of Jammu West, Bali Bhagat urged them to stand firmly with the BJP and elect Arvind Gupta as their representative in the upcoming Assembly polls. He emphasized that only the BJP can ensure continued progress, stability, and a secure future for Jammu and Kashmir.

## "Aapka Vote Aapka Adhikaar"-- a street play performed by Sangam theatre group

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
PATNITOP, SEPT 22

Ongoing series of the Street Theatre was performed here today by Sangam Theatre Group Reasi under SVEEP at various districts of J&K in which a street theatre play "Aapka Vote Aapka Adhikaar" performed at Patnitop. On the occasion Ms Saloni Rai (IAS) Deputy Commissioner Udhampur was the Chief Guest accompanied by other District level officials.

The street performances were expertly coordinated by District Nodal Officer SVEEP, Dr. Preeti Sharma.

Through captivating performance, the Sangam group artists effectively communicated the significance of ethical voting to the local populace, stressing the principles of responsible and informed voting. The messages resonated with audiences,



encouraging active and fair participation in the upcoming elections.

Officers of the District Administration, Youth, Locals, Senior Citizens and general public were present and witnessed the show. Artists stressed on new voters in the age of 18 years to cast the vote properly in fair and ethical manners. The play depicts rights of the voter and how to elect the right candidate. Through this play,

all the sections of society are prompted not to run away from their ultimate responsibility of voting for the stronger democracy of India.

The Actors who performed the street play were Anmika Devi, Nidhi Singh Thakur, M. Akram Khan, Himanshu Darshan, Raja Aamir Khan, J.R. Sharma, Prashant Khajuria, Anabia Khan, Shakir Abrar, Varsha kumari and Tanvi Sharma. The play

was written & directed by M. Akram Khan.

The main purpose to stage the play is to create a strong movement ensuring maximum participation of voters in the electoral process. This highly motivating electrifying theatre performance educated the masses in a highly effective manner about the importance of voting. The same play will be performed at Udhampur and Ramnagar for next two days.

## Uday Bhanu Chib appointed as President of Indian Youth Congress

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, SEPT 22

The Indian National Congress is proud to announce the appointment of Shri Uday Bhanu Chib as the President of the Indian Youth Congress, with immediate effect. This significant appointment reflects the Congress leadership's trust in the abilities and leadership potential of Shri Chib, a dynamic youth leader from Jammu & Kashmir.

Shri Uday Bhanu Chib, a native of the Paloura area in the Jammu North Assembly constituency, has always been dedicated to serving the nation and the people of Jammu & Kashmir. His father, Shri Hari Singh Chib, and mother, Smt. Rajni Bala, have been pillars of support in his journey of public service. Shri Chib holds a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering (BE) and an MBA, bringing a diverse educational back-



ground to his political career.

Throughout his political journey, Shri Uday Bhanu Chib has held various prestigious positions that have contributed to the growth and strengthening of the Congress party. His political career includes General Secretary, Indian Youth Congress, where he was in charge of Maharashtra and Mumbai; Former State President of J&K Pradesh Youth Congress (PYC); Former National Secretary, NSUI, where he was in charge of Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, and Delhi; In-charge of Delhi NSUI in

2017, when NSUI secured the President and Vice President positions in the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections and Former State President, NSUI J&K.

In addition to his political achievements, Shri Chib has actively contributed to social and cultural causes. He is currently the President of Shastri Judo Club, Jammu, where he plays a vital role in promoting sports and youth development.

With his deep-rooted connection to the people of Jammu & Kashmir and his experience in youth leadership across various regions of India, Shri Uday Bhanu Chib is expected to bring fresh energy and vision to the Indian Youth Congress.

The Congress Party congratulated Shri Chib on his new role and is confident that he will continue to work tirelessly for the betterment of youth and the nation.

## Indian army territorial unit organizes blood Donation camp to mark platinum jubilee

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEP 22

In a remarkable display of community service and dedication, the Indian Army Territorial Unit at Palma has organized a 'Blood donation camp' to mark the platinum jubilee of Territorial Army. This significant milestone, celebrating 75 years of the Territorial Army's service to the nation, was honoured with a compassionate and impactful initiative aimed at saving lives. The event organised under the theme "Rakat Daan Mahadaan" was not only to celebrate the historic achievement but also to address the pruning need for blood donations, which are crucial for medical emergencies and routine healthcare needs. The blood donation camp received overwhelming support from volunteer's donors which compromised of a healthy mix of Indian Army personal and volunteers from all walks of life.

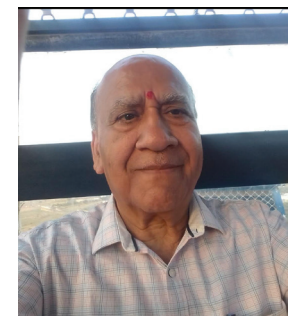
## 'Save J&K, Save Nation': Rattan Lal calls for support to National Conference in upcoming Assembly Elections

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President of the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC), has emphasized that only the JKNC can restore peace, stability, and prosperity to the region. Under the slogan "Save J&K, Save Nation," he highlighted the importance of these elections in reclaiming the lost dignity and rights of the people.

In a statement issued here today, Rattan Lal Gupta expressed deep concern over the deteriorating condition of Jammu and Kashmir during the past decade under BJP rule. "The last ten years have seen a manifold increase in the miseries of the people. Unemployment has skyrocketed, people have been deprived of their fundamental rights, and essential services like regular water and power supply have become scarce. The situation is made worse by inflated power bills, putting an additional burden on struggling households," he said.

The senior NC leader raised serious concerns over the rising incidents of terrorism in Jammu region, stating that the BJP has utterly failed to curb



the menace of terrorism. "Jammu was once a safe, secure, and terrorism-free region under the National Conference's regime. But today, under BJP's rule, not only have innocent people lost their lives, but our brave soldiers continue to be targeted and sacrifice their lives in the line of duty during encounters," he lamented.

Rattan Lal further criticized the BJP's hollow slogans of peace and development, pointing out that even during recent visits by the Prime Minister, Home Minister and Defence Minister to Jammu and Kashmir, encounters with terrorists were ongoing in the Union Territory. "On one hand, the PM, HM and DM were addressing election rallies, promising peace and prosperity, while on the other, security forces were battling terrorists. This contradiction exposes the BJP's failure to bring lasting peace to J&K," he

asserted.

The senior NC leader reaffirmed the National Conference's commitment to uplifting the general public, laying out key promises from the party's manifesto. He assured that if voted to power, the NC would prioritize providing one lakh jobs to the unemployed youth of J&K, ensure a monthly pension of Rs 3,000 for eligible beneficiaries, supply of 12 LPG cylinders per year to EWS, and grant of Rs 5000 per month to elderly women of households. He emphasized that the NC manifesto reflects the genuine needs, free 200 power units, free drinking water, free education upto graduation level and aspirations of the people, and the party is committed to bringing about real change and development in Jammu and Kashmir.

Rattan Lal Gupta made an appeal to the people of Jammu and Kashmir to support the National Conference in the Assembly elections. He emphasized that this is a critical moment in the history of J&K and the nation and that people must come together to Save J&K, Save the Nation, and restore the rights and dignity of the people by casting their votes for the National Conference.

## Shiv Sena (UBT) 'Mashal', guarantee to full stop on loot, restoration of rights



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 21

Despite the reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir, violation of rights of local people and loot of resources is continuing unabated, to put a full stop, press "Mashal" button, stated by Manish Sahni, president Shiv Sena (UBT) J&K unit. Shiv Sena (UBT) candidate from Jammu West Meenakshi Chibber today campaigned for herself through a public meeting in ward no. 28, while a huge public meeting was organized in Bishnah assembly constituency to promote party candidate Jai Bharat (Bharati).

State head Manish Sahni, who was present on the occasion, blamed the BJP for the present situation in Jammu and Kashmir said that, along with affecting our cultural identity, the rights of local people are being continuously violated. The involvement of outsiders in our jobs, business, government tenders is increasing day by day. On the other hand, despite being rich in immense water resources and power projects, the public is troubled by power cuts, smart meters, irregularities in bills, and an increase in rates.

In the name of a smart

city, the public's tax money is being wasted. On the land of sages, saints and prophets, there is a plethora of liquor shops and illegal collection of more than the fixed price is being done. Along with mining, crime, corruption and the drug mafia is dominant. Sahni said that every candidate of Shiv Sena is in the election field with the resolution of better health-education, free electricity-water, safe return of Kashmiri Pandits to the valley, unemployment allowance to the youth etc. Pressing the Mashal button is the only guarantee of restoration of your rights.

## Indian Army Celebrates World Peace Day with Community Outreach in Pir Panjal region

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 21

In a significant effort to promote peace and strengthen community bonds, the Indian Army marked World Peace Day by organizing a series of informative lectures in the southern Pir Panjal region. This initiative aimed to enhance relationships between military personnel and local residents while emphasizing the importance of harmony. The lectures attracted a diverse audience, including local leaders, students, and community members. Expert speakers discussed the vital role of peace in fostering development and stability, and how the Army contributes to these efforts. Key topics included conflict resolution, community development, and the importance of cooperation.

### FARGATI

I, Dhara Singh S/o Durga Dass R/o Village Chani Mansar Tehsil Majalta District Udhampur do hereby give FARGATI to my daughter namely Kanchan Devi R/o Village Chani Mansar Tehsil Majalta District Udhampur disinherit from all moveable and immovable properties through the Court of Notary Jammu City vide Certificate No. IN-JK17158574624472W, Dated 19-Sept-2024. Any person having any dealing with them will do so on their own risk and responsibility in future.

### NOTICE

I Anu Bakshi W/o Rajesh Bakshi R/o JK Colony, BSF Paloura Jammu. My name is wrongly written in daughter's School record i.e. Class 8th, Class 10th, Class 11th as Anu Sharma instead of correct name Anu Bakshi. My name is written in other documents as Anu Bakshi i.e. Aadhar Card. That I further declare that Anu Bakshi and Anu Sharma is one and the same person.



## EDITORIAL

## The Congress Conundrum in Chhamb

Congress party's national president Mallikarjun Kharge's visit to Jammu has brought the political dynamics in the Chhamb constituency into sharp focus, particularly in light of his decision to skip a much-anticipated rally in support of former Deputy Chief Minister Tara Chand. The Congress president's absence, despite his presence in the city, has raised eyebrows and illuminated the internal struggles facing the party as it seeks to regain its foothold in what was once a stronghold. Chhamb, a constituency steeped in historical significance for the Congress, is now a battleground with its electoral landscape more complex than ever. Tara Chand, who has represented Chhamb multiple times and held significant leadership roles in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, finds himself navigating an exceptionally challenging electoral environment. With the Congress party facing internal dissension and formidable opposition, Chand's campaign is not merely about regaining lost ground; it's about survival. The decision to address the rally via phone, rather than in person, is emblematic of the Congress's broader challenges. It raises questions about the party's commitment to its candidates and signals potential rifts in strategy and leadership. While Congress leaders may offer various justifications for Kharge's absence, the optics are undeniably poor, especially as Chand rallies to reclaim support amid a fractured party landscape. Chand's campaign strategy reflects his determination to connect with voters, employing modern methods such as door-to-door outreach and high-profile appearances in an Audi. Yet, this enthusiasm faces significant hurdles, particularly from rebel candidates. Satish Sharma's decision to run as an independent, fueled by grievances over the party's ticket allocation, has the potential to siphon votes from loyal Congress supporters. His familial ties and grassroots engagement resonate with voters who prioritize local representation over party loyalty. On the other side, the BJP is grappling with its own internal strife. Rajeev Sharma's nomination has not been without controversy, and the emergence of rebel candidate Narendra Singh could further complicate the BJP's strategy. The party's reliance on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's development narrative may be tested as local discontent grows. Tara Chand's past successes in Chhamb lend him a degree of credibility, but the shifting political tides require more than a legacy to secure victory. The historical context of Congress's dominance in the region—seven wins out of nine elections since 1962—seems distant in the current scenario, where every vote will count and every misstep may be costly. In this four-cornered contest, where each candidate embodies a different set of challenges and opportunities, the Congress party must reassess its strategy. If Kharge and his leadership are to reclaim Chhamb, they must first ensure unity and a coherent message that resonates with the electorate. The recent episode underscores the need for clear communication and steadfast support for party candidates, particularly in a constituency where the stakes are higher than ever. As the campaign unfolds, the Congress's performance in Chhamb will serve as a bellwether for its future in Jammu and Kashmir. Will they rise to the occasion, or will they falter under the weight of their internal contradictions? The answer may well define not just the fate of Tara Chand, but the very future of the Congress party in the region.

ARCHANA DATTA

Two recent episodes of sexual violence against women at the workplace, one, the brutal rape and murder of a resident doctor inside a Kolkata government hospital, and the other about the systematic sexual abuse of women in the Malayalam film industry, as revealed in the Justice Hema committee report, have once again confirmed that women are still unsafe, prone to violence, and suffer from an existential crisis. Amid a huge political uproar, a few years ago a global survey dubbed India 'as the most dangerous place for women', which, perhaps, had hurt the nation's collective ego that fostered a sentiment that 'India is a land where women are worshipped'. Following the prolonged public outrage in the state and across the country, the West Bengal government adopted an anti-rape bill, titled 'Aparajita Woman and Child Bill

(West Bengal Criminal Laws and Amendment) Bill 2024', seeking capital punishment for rape convicts. Earlier, in 2013, the gruesome Nirbhaya episode, brought in the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, with the introduction of a new clause (376 A) for the offences of rape that caused death or persistent vegetative state of the victim and the death penalty to the perpetrator.

While the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2018, which came in after the horrific incidents of Kathua and Unnao, specifically provided for capital punishment for offenders convicted of raping minors. States like Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Arunachal Pradesh also enacted amendments for enhanced punishment for sexual assaults. So far this has been an 'established political playbook', as the public demand for justice is high pitched. Studies also indicated that 'when ever society faces a prob-

lem with a burgeoning number of crimes, the public response is almost invariably to increase the criminal penalties'. A 2021 research study noted that a significant number of people believe that the death penalty has the potential to discourage others from committing crimes. However, a recent study (Michael Radelet & Traci Lacoock, University of Colorado) revealed that '88% of the leading criminologists do not subscribe to the view that the death penalty is an effective crime deterrent'.

In India, Justice J.S. Verma Committee was not 'inclined to recommend the death penalty for rape even for the rarest of rare cases' and observed that it would be a 'regressive step in the field of sentencing and reformation'. Earlier, the Justice Malimath Committee also rejected the idea of the death penalty for rape cases and called for procedural amendments which result in certainty of punishment rather

than a quantum of punishment as a real deterrent. The Constitutional Bench of the SC ( Mithu v. State of Punjab, 1983), proclaimed that Section 303, IPC, is violative of Constitutional rights, and deprives judges of their discretion in sentencing. In 2015, the Law Commission recommended that the 'legal system should move towards a restorative system of justice, based on human rights and criminal psychology'.

While, a feminist criminologist (Bibha Tripathi, Professor, Faculty of Law, BHU) remarked that a series of 'reactionary' amendments in India, might have temporarily responded to the 'collective conscience' of people, but, failed to prevent crimes against women, and for that, the law and society should evolve hand-in-hand'.

A prominent lawyer activist, also opined that 'public anger has done little to improve the lives of Indian women, the outside world still belongs

firmly to men, and the government has failed to enforce its laws, with only about a quarter of cases that go to trial result in a conviction'. Despite having several statutory laws and subsequent amendments to make them more stringent, the latest NCRB data, showed a rise of 20% in the reported cases of rape, an average of nearly 90 rapes a day, while, the conviction rates for rape ranged between 27-28% (2018-2022). A 2020 study on rape adjudication in the aftermath of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, of 2013, found that in Delhi trial courts, the rate of conviction (2013-2018), dwindled to 5.72% from 16.11% under the old law. 'Some judges are reluctant to convict since the tougher sentences came in, and if there is some doubt on evidence, which doesn't stand up to judicial scrutiny, then they are compelled to acquit, ....if there was some discretion, they could have lowered the sentence,

and ensured that he's convicted', a senior criminal lawyer commented.

As incidents of rape and sexual assault pour in day in and day out, reaffirming the reality that 'mere legal reforms, unaccompanied by governance and societal change, do not yield far-reaching results'. It is now high time to go beyond 'the belief that increasing penalties increases deterrence'. In a society that nurtures patriarchal social norms the deeply ingrained gender biases and prejudices can only be removed through a change in the mindset.

The education and grooming of boys and girls need a thorough overhaul to inculcate and respect the values of human rights and the rights of each other. The intervention and action should be at state, community, family and individual levels for mitigating risk factors.

(The author is former Director General, Doordarshan & All India Radio, views are personal)

## India-Bangladesh relations hit new low

HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

The harsh fact is that however much India may concede, it will not have cordial relations with Bangladesh's interim government. This may surprise many who believe that Muhammad Yunus, the chief advisor, whose position is analogous to a prime minister's, is neither an India hater nor a dyed-in-the-wool fundamentalist Islamist. He is a survivor with whom one can do business.

Even if one goes with this assessment, and believes that he wants good relations with this country, the trouble will be with those who call the shots in the interim government—the student leaders, the coordinators of the Anti-Discriminatory Students' Movement (ADSM) that caused Sheikh Hasina's exit. They reportedly elevated Yunus to his present position and, heeding the Bangladesh Nationalist Party's (BNP's) demand, also got Lt-Gen Jahangir Alam Chowdhury (Retd) to replace Brig-Gen Shakhawat Hussain (Retd) as advisor, Home Affairs, supposedly because the latter had made "pro-Awami" league remarks. Brig-Gen Hussain has been given the ministry of Textiles and Jute.

Most of the coordinators are intensely—and, to go by their conduct, incurably-hostile to India. The manner

in which they and multitudes of students sprang to blame India for the floods in the eastern districts of Bangladesh in August, 2024, clearly indicated their pathological hatred towards this country. Attributing the deluge to India opening the sluice gates of the Dumbur dam on the Gumti river flowing into Bangladesh, without warning to the latter's authorities, and thus providing them no time to prepare to deal with the consequences, they took out processions and held rallies condemning India and mouthing threats to it.

According to a report in The Daily Star (August 22, 2024) headlined "Students protest blaming India for flash floods," students of several public universities staged demonstrations, rallies and torchlight processions, blaming India for the flash floods and chanting slogans like "Bharatiya agrashon rukhe dao jonogon" ("People, halt India's aggression"). The report further quoted a coordinator, Golam Kibria Chowdhury Mishu, as saying, "For the past 53 years India has been torturing Bangladesh in different ways."

Similar slogans were shouted, and vituperations against India mouthed, in other processions and rallies in most of the important universities across Bangladesh. A report in the daily sun (August 22, 2024)

carried under the heading "Protest at DU [Dhaka University] blames India for the flash floods," quotes Hasib Al Islam, a coordinator of the ADSM, as saying, among other things, "Delhi, forget your dominance and aggression. The time of the Fascist Hasina is over."

According to a report in The Daily Star (dated August 22, 2024) carried under the heading "India has shown 'inhumanity' by opening the dam, says Nahid," Md Nahid Islam, a coordinator and an advisor holding multiple portfolios including Information and Broadcasting, said while briefing journalists in Dhaka at the end of an advisory council meeting, "We can see upstream water coming in and creating a flood situation. India has shown inhumanity and non-cooperation by opening the dam without prior warning."

He added, "We will urge, and hope that India will refrain from this kind of policy against the people of Bangladesh soon. We must find a solution on how we can protect the people of India and Bangladesh from this kind of natural disaster together." That the second sentence within the above quotation reflected a fraudulent effort to show a desire to do business with India, is clear from what else he said, "Students and people of Bangladesh are angry with

this policy of India" and that the people of Bangladesh are struggling for their share of the water for a long time—implying that India had been denying it to them.

India showed subsequently that the floods were triggered by unprecedented torrential rainfall in the contiguous areas of India and eastern Bangladesh and not any of its actions. No thunderous anti-Indian pronouncement on the deluge has since been heard from Bangladesh's student "revolutionaries" in shining armour. What they said and did, however, indicated two things. The first is a deep-rooted hatred for India which bursts forth in instantaneous accusations on the basis of suppositions and not verified information. Nahid Islam's outburst mentioned above is an example of this, which is particularly reprehensible because, his being an advisor, his pronouncements bear the stamp of the government's authority.

Second, the rallies and protests showed that there is either an organisational infrastructure for expressing anti-India sentiments through action, or an ability and intention to use the mobilizational mechanism deployed in the ASDM to condemn India. In other words, it showed a mindset that waits for any opportunity to condemn India, and which will be very difficult to

eradicate.

In any case, a serious effort to eradicate this mindset is unlikely to be forthcoming given the composition of the council of advisors, which is dominated by people hating this country.

Consider the case of advisor for home affairs, Lt-Gen Jahangir Alam Chowdhury (Retd). His intense hatred for India was in evidence a number of times when, as a major-general, he was director-general of Bangladesh Rifles (now Border Guards Bangladesh). During a visit to India for talks with the then director-general of the Border Security Force (BSF), Ajay Raj Sharma, he had, on September 28, 2004, mockingly dismissed the detailed information India had provided about the location of training camps of north-east India's secessionist rebel groups in Bangladesh, saying, "There is not a single camp in Bangladesh. We looked for the camps' locations given in the BSF list. Some of the addresses were of our cantonment area and our headquarters.... Some addresses even pertained to the Bay of Bengal." During the same visit, he had said in respect of illegal Bangladeshi entrants into India, "Why should people come from Bangladesh to India? Your economic situation is not better than Bangladesh's. There are 50,000 Indian in Bangladesh

who have entered the country illegally." He had added that if India's economy was better than Bangladesh's, "You would not have gone for work in (the) Middle East and the Arab countries."

Advisor, Religious Affairs, AFM Khalid Hossain, is a Nayeb-e-Ameer of Hefazat-e-Islam Bangladesh (Hefazat) and an advisor to Islami Andolan Bangladesh, both bitterly hostile to India. Thirteen persons were killed and scores injured in clashes between Hefazat's supporters on the one hand, and the security forces and Awami League activists on the other, during the violent protests it staged against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Dhaka on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence on March 26, 2024. Chief advisor Yunus had a cordial meeting with leaders of the Hefazat on August 31, 2024.

Given all this, India needs to deliver a simple message to the interim government: we want good relations with you, but do not mess with us and do things like resuming the sanctuary and support some of the earlier governments of your country gave to north-east India's secessionist rebels. And please remember that we can cause you far greater trouble than you can cause to us.

(The views expressed are personal)

## Boredom in the Age of distractions

SHAINY SHARMA

In a world where options are seemingly endless, from Netflix shows; and YouTube videos to social media platforms, one would expect that boredom would be a thing of the past. However, the situation is that the opposite is often true. With so many choices, people are frequently overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information, leading to a paradox of choice. This cognitive overload has started causing decision fatigue, making it difficult for an individual to enjoy or engage fully with any one activity. Instead of being satisfied, many people end up feeling detached, disengaged and ultimately 'bored'. The rise of social media and short-form content mainly on Instagram and YouTube has led to a consumption pattern that prioritizes brief and often superfi-

cial engagements. Scrolling through an Instagram feed, watching TikTok or browsing YouTube videos provides the users with momentary distraction but often lacks depth. The omnipresence of smartphones and the internet means that people are almost always "on."

The expectation to be constantly available for work emails, social media updates or even texts has eradicated much of the natural downtime that was once a part of everyday life. Ironically, while these technologies offer endless stimulation, they have also heightened the experience of boredom. The constant pressure to stay connected prevents people from truly resting or engaging deeply with meaningful activities, leaving them in a perpetual state of mental restlessness.

Many jobs involve repetitive tasks, long hours of screen time or tasks that



lack a sense of personal fulfilment. Even jobs with a high workload can leave individuals feeling mentally unstimulated or disengaged. In a world that seems more connected and stimulating than ever, it may seem paradoxical to say that boredom is increasingly becoming the new normal. The expectation that we should be constantly entertained or productive has reshaped the way we engage with the world, leading to a persistent feeling of boredom

despite the abundance of choices and distractions. In today's fast-paced, hyper-connected world, one might assume that boredom would be a rare occurrence.

With endless digital entertainment, social media platforms and work demands at our fingertips, the idea of being bored seems almost anachronistic. Yet, paradoxically many people report feeling bored more frequently than ever. The experience of boredom has shifted

from an occasional, fleeting state to a regular part of life. In many ways, feeling bored has become the new normal. This lack of true downtime fragments our attention and prevents us from engaging deeply with any activity. Despite its negative reputation, boredom can be a powerful catalyst for creativity and self-discovery. Many of the world's greatest thinkers and innovators have credited their breakthroughs to periods of boredom. When the mind is not distracted by constant input, it has the space to wander, reflect, and come up with new ideas. Boredom provides the mental downtime necessary for deeper thought and creativity to flourish. By reframing boredom as a chance to pause and explore deeper mental states, individuals can find fulfilment beyond the superficial distractions of the modern world, ultimately

creating a more meaningful and balanced life. It is no longer simply a temporary state but has grown into a regular part of modern life, exacerbated by an overload of choices, the attention economy, and the pressure to always be productive. Boredom can be an opportunity to cultivate mindfulness and self-awareness and avoiding the feelings may turn to escapism, often in the form of mindless social media scrolling, binge-watching shows or engaging in other passive forms of entertainment. While these activities provide short-term relief, they rarely address the root cause of boredom and can lead to a cycle of avoidance. Instead of being mentally enriching, these distractions can deepen the sense of dissatisfaction.

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



## J&K wants freedom from dictatorial Govt: Alka Lamba

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

Launching a stinging attack on the Narendra Modi-led Union government, All India Mahila Congress Chief and Congress national spokesperson Alka Lamba Sunday called BJP's nationalism "fake and a tool to benefit PM's crony capitalist friends". She was addressing an impressive election gathering in favour of JKPC Working President Raman Bhalla at Reen Palace in Gadigarh area of RS Pura Jammu South constituency. Lamba also targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi for allegedly neglecting important issues such as development, unemployment and inflation. "The people of Jammu and Kashmir have faced the worst under the dictatorial government over the years. Jammu and Kashmir wants freedom from this dictatorial government and we will ensure that," she said.

"You (BJP government) took away the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir, imposed President's rule, and run J&K from Delhi," she charged. Lamba also lauded the Supreme Court for ordering the government to hold assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. She attacked Prime Minister Modi for allegedly dividing people on religious lines and neglecting important issues. "The prime minister does not talk about development, unemployment, inflation, farmers or women, but only about religious issues to divert attention," she said. While claiming that the Congress will form a majority Government in Jammu and Kashmir on October 8, Alka Lamba stated today that the people of J&K have faced nothing but injustice over the last 10 years. "For the past 10 years, J&K has endured only injustice.



The announcement of elections marks a victory for the people of J&K and for democracy.

Alka Lamba claimed that Rahul Gandhi's five promises have resonated strongly with the women here. During his visit, he addressed issues like price rise, unemployment and women's participation. The women here voiced their needs for ration and job reservations, and we are committed to address these demands on priority," she said. Lamba, also said that people are eager to vote, elect their representatives, and have their issues resolved, stressing that there will be a significant change on October 8, and that Congress will have a full majority Government. She added: "Nobody is safe in this country. Securing the people is the responsibility of the Government. If they are unable to do it, then they do not have the right to govern." She said that if Congress is elected to power, they will establish Women's Police Stations in every district and resolve other day-to-day issues. "These stations will be manned by women, and recruitment will be conducted accordingly.

Bhalla in his address said that "People have to decide who they want to represent them, especially who can deliver. I can say on behalf of Congress that we will deliver. The moment we are elected, the first fight will be for the restoration of State-

hood." He said that BJP has lost its moral authority to approach the people of Jammu, citing a series of betrayals. The former Minister took a swipe at the BJP, highlighting the "trail of deception and a failed government". He said the Modi Government failed in the areas of the economy, foreign policy, communal harmony, inflation, farmers' income, national security, and the welfare of marginalised communities such as the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other backward classes.

Bhalla alleged the ten years of BJP rule has made the J&K "miserable". "The people of J&K have only seen the scene of devastation in ten years. The BJP government has thrown J&K into devastation. Deteriorating economic condition and rising unemployment have become the most pressing problems before the nation," he said, adding, "It is time for us to stand in the name of humanity against ideas of divisiveness and nefarious designs of perpetuating identity-based hatred by destructive forces in order to save this nation." "Our deteriorating economic condition and rising unemployment have become the most pressing problems before J&K. Anti-people policies of the government have made the everyday life of common citizen miserable," he added.

Coming down heavily on the BJP leadership for

indulging in a "misinformation campaign" against Congress, Bhalla said in Jammu and Kashmir, we initiated big infrastructure projects in J&K. You see hospitals, road connectivity, schools, Degree Colleges, University Campuses, Medical Colleges, widening of Jammu-Srinagar national highway, numerous drinking water supply schemes, power supply to all almost every village and remote belt of the state. It is not BJP but tireless efforts of Congress party that the people of the J&K are on the path of development and prosperity." He said Jammu people are now realizing their mistake committed in 2014 and 2019 as these people who were sent by the voters to raise their voice remained unheard for ten long years. It is hoped that the people of Jammu will surely correct the past mistake and reject such opportunists and exploiters and show them their place in the future elections. It seems they have no time and commitment for the welfare of the people & country, and that electioneering, not governance is a priority for the NDA Government at the Centre.

Extending full support to the cause of Punjabi speaking people for the introduction and promotion of Punjabi language in the schools, Bhalla criticized BJP Govt for its discriminatory attitude which has caused genuine resentment amongst the Punjabi speaking and other similar linguistic groups in J&K. Questioning the move of the Govt, Bhalla said that on one hand it has caused unnecessary and uncalled for burden on students community by introduction of and other compulsory subject besides causing great resentment and hurting the aspirations of Punjabi speaking community and other such

linguistic groups which have been recognized as per scheduled VI of the J&K Constitution. The Congress government will review the policy and respect the aspirations of Punjabi speaking people as well as other similar linguistic groups giving these languages their due place and recognition and equal chances of promotions.

Bhalla asked as to why the BJP governments at the Centre and in the state reduced the one-time settlement of POK Refugees to a paltry Rs 5.5 lakh per family instead of the recommended Rs 25 lakh per family by the Congress-led government and endorsed & enhanced to 30lacs. JKPC Working President charged the BJP Government with failure to address all the outstanding issues of the refugees from Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). "The present Government is not serious to address their long pending issues of PoK refugees," he said and reminded that Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, during his visit to Jammu before the Assembly elections in 2014, had assured the PoK displaced persons that their issues would be addressed and they must wait for the same. Bhalla said the Congress Government will re-examine the one-time package that was sent to the Centre by the previous Government and take a decision on it. He asked the DPs to keep full faith in Congress, which will provide them justice. Regarding their other issues like updating records, registration of left out families, ownership rights, reservation of their wards for getting admission in Government institutions, according backward status to them, Bhalla said that Congress Government would examine these issues afresh and take appropriate steps to address the same.

## Congress NC Candidate Jammu East Yogesh Sawhney Intensifies Campaign, Criticises Implementation of Property Tax

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

Congress-NC candidate for Jammu East, Yogesh Sawhney, Ex-MLA Jammu East and Former Minister J&K has ramped up his election campaign, raising several key issues of smart meters, property tax, surge in electricity bills etc as markers of economic exploitation by current regime. Addressing gatherings across the constituency, Sawhney particularly voiced strong opposition to the imposition of property taxes, stating that it is exacerbating the already dire economic situation of the people.

Sawhney highlighted that QR codes have been installed on houses as part of the taxation system, a move which he says is an attempt at further control by the current regime. "The people of Jammu are already under immense financial pressure, and these taxes are just another way to squeeze the middle class and poor. This must stop immediately," Sawhney asserted during a rally.

He further criticized the government for its series of unpopular policies, including the installation of smart electricity meters, and warned of the anticipated introduction of water meters. "It is evident that the present



government is not working for the welfare of the people, but to economically exploit them. We cannot allow this exploitation to continue," Sawhney added.

The former Minister further said, the property tax, along with the prospect of new charges for basic utilities, is hurting the middle class and working-class families the most. "People are struggling to make ends meet, and instead of providing relief, the government is burdening them further," he said, urging voters to push for a change in governance.

Sawhney said that the same feelings have resonated with many residents of Jammu East, especially those in the middle-income group, who have felt the brunt of the government's policies. We will continue to emphasize that change is necessary for the welfare of all citizens, and we want to form a wel-

fare based government instead of a tax based government. In addition to the property tax, then the anticipated water tax, there are several toll taxes people of Jammu pay. The nationally implemented GST is only the cherry on top. Sawhney said that this BJP led governance has left no stone unturned in extorting money out of public pockets in the name of taxation.

"Economic exploitation cannot and should not be the foundation of governance. The people deserve better," Sawhney said, calling for a decisive change in the upcoming elections to put an end to these burdensome policies. The Congress party remains committed to the cause, with property tax, smart meters, and the looming threat of water meters being few of the many concerns of people and to provide real, tangible relief to the people of Jammu East.

## Awareness cum field visit on potato cyst nematode (PCN) globodera spp. at potato seed multiplication farm, Nathatop & quarantine update

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

Under the auspices of SKUAST-Jammu and the guidance of Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. B.N. Tripathi, a field visit was organized for B.Sc. Horticulture II year students from the Faculty of Horticulture & Forestry. This initiative, led by the Directorate of Research, Prof. S.K. Gupta and Dean, Faculty of Horticulture & Forestry, Prof. Vikas Tandon aims to enhance practical skills in identifying the \*Golden Cyst Nematode (Globodera spp.)\* at the Potato Seed Multiplication Farm, Nathatop (District: Ramban).

As part of their PPE 212 course, focused on nematode pests and management, students actively engaged in hands-on learning by observing and identifying PCN both visually and under the microscope. This practical exposure will stimulate scientific temperament and reinforce their understanding of field symptoms related to nematode infestations. The visit was seamlessly integrated with the harvest of the ICAR-AICRP Nematode trial, allowing students to participate in data recording and analysis, thereby enhancing their research skills.

The \*Potato Cyst Nematode\* (PCN) or the \*Golden Nematode of potato\* is a



significant quarantine pest of temperate potatoes, first reported in India in 1961 in the Nilgiris hills (Tamil Nadu) restricted to about 4000 ha. It is believed to have been introduced into India from Europe about 200 years ago. Immediately after its interception there, this nematode pest was put under Domestic Quarantine by the Govt. of India. A massive effort was initiated to restrict/eradicate PCN in the Nilgiris. In 1971, the Destructive Insect Pests Act, 1914 was amended by the Tamil Nadu Govt. and Domestic quarantine was imposed in the Nilgiris whereby marketing of seed potatoes out of the Nilgiris was banned. During 1971-75, the Indo-German Nilgiris Development Project was rolled out. The project aimed to eradicate PCN through a massive and heavy chemical treatment that was made mandatory

and free under TN Pest Act 1971.

However, during 2010, potato cyst nematode was also detected in Himachal Pradesh. Subsequently, through sustained efforts made by All India Coordinated Research Project on Nematodes, jointly with SKUAST-Jammu, GBPUAT, Pantnagar, and HPAU, Palampur, PCN was intercepted in several locations in the states of Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh. The declining potato yields in the Govt. Potato Seed Multiplication Farms in these states was traced to the hitherto unknown potato cyst nematodes.

Following this, in 2018, restrictions were placed in specific hot spots identified during pest surveys and sampling conducted by AICRP Nematodes and SKUAST-Jammu, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture and

other state agricultural universities in \*Himachal Pradesh\* and \*Uttarakhand\*, due to its considerable impact on potato yields. This pest produces resilient cysts that can be challenging to manage.

Recent updates in \*2024\* have relaxed certain quarantine measures, including the requirement for \*sodium hypochlorite treatments\*, reflecting our commitment to balancing agricultural productivity with effective pest management strategies.

This field visit, organized in collaboration with ICAR-AICRP on Nematodes Voluntary Centre, SKUAST-Jammu in the Division of Plant Breeding was facilitated by Prof. Rajan Salalia and Prof. Vijay Bahadur Singh with support from Ms. Seema Bhat, Assistant Programmer who accompanied the undergraduate students. Students are gaining invaluable insights and contributing to the broader objectives of sustainable agriculture and effective pest control in our region. Through this engaging experience, students are empowered to apply their learning in real-world contexts, reinforcing the importance of integrated pest management in horticultural practices.

## Pathania's Vision Strikes Roots: Engaging with Communities, Delivering Progress in Udhampur East

JNEWS SERVICE  
UDHAMPUR, SEPT 22

In a dynamic push to solidify his connect with people, R S, Pathania, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate for Udhampur East, is hitting the ground running. Today, he engaged with enthusiastic constituents across the region, from Jalmara to Malhar, Barnekh, Rajpur, Aasi, Saral, and near the revered Kali Mata Mandir.

Pathania's message is clear: "I will leave no stone unturned in transforming Udhampur East into a model constituency." His vision encompasses state-of-the-art infrastructure, advanced healthcare facilities, and modern educational institutions that empower the community and elevate the quality of life for all residents.

During his interactions, Pathania highlighted the remarkable changes brought about by the BJP government in Jammu and Kashmir. "We have transformed this region from a terror ground into one of the most desired tourist destinations," he stated. Safety and security remain top priorities for the BJP, ensuring that every citizen can live and thrive without fear. Significant strides have been made in infrastructure development, healthcare, educational reforms, tourism, and the empowerment of marginalized communities across Jammu and Kashmir.

## NC Workers with complete population of Village Dharman in Budhal Constituency joined BJP under influence of Sunil Prajapati



JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 22

Sunil Prajapati, President BJP OBC Morcha and Star Campaigner for the Election, who is campaigning for the party in Peer Panchal Region of Poonch-Rajouri conducted series of meetings of OBC masses in the Area where he received very positive response from the public in favour of BJP. The people of every constituency of the peer panchal region are happy because of Pahari ST status being given to them and also appreciated the development and welfare schemes initiated by the Modi Govt and shown their complete faith in the BJP and rejected the National Conference (NC) ideology which has dominated the peer Panchal region for decades but neglected as no development taken places in region and many villages lacks road connectivity and the villagers use self-carved footpaths to reach their houses.

The Gujar Community in the peer Panchal region also rejected the ideology of National Conference (NC) which denied the political reservation to them though they fall

under ST Category. The NC and Congress parties have used the Gujar Community for vote bank only and kept away from the constitutional rights of political reservation, which has now been granted by the Modi Govt first time after abrogation of Article 370. The whole Gujar Community has shown great faith in the BJP and large number of NC workers from Gujar Community in many villages joined the BJP in presence of Sunil Prajapati and Shafeeq Chowdhary. The Program was organised by Ramesh Chander (District President OBC Morcha Rajouri).

All workers of NC of Gujar dominated Village Dharman in Budhal Constituency alongwith whole population of the village joined BJP with the influence of Sunil Prajapati.

Sunil Prajapati during last 5 days had conducted large number of meetings with OBC and Gujar community people of the twin Districts of Poonch and Rajouri in the region and highlight the Developments and Welfare Schemes initiated by the Modi Govt for the welfare and upliftment of the poor,

monetary relief to the small farmers and various schemes the betterment of Women including Beti Bachao and Beti Padoa, Sukanya Samridhi Yojna and Ladli Beti Yojana. He also mentioned that the youths which were being used for stone pelting in the valley by certain parties will now decide their future by casting their votes against the parties who have ruled the Jammu and Kashmir for seven decades and given deaths and terrorism due to their soft corner for the terrorists. But under the Modi Govt stone pelting has been stopped completely and the Jammu and Kashmir is leading towards the development and advancement after abrogation of Article 370.

Prajapati also expressed that the BJP will emerge as the largest party after election and will be going to form the Govt at its own and if needed with support of like minded parties. The people of the peer Panchal region are very impressed with policies and welfare measures undertaken by the Modi Govt and have expressed their complete support for the BJP in the Assembly election.



## NRIs recall PM Modi's early US visits: Visionary leadership and tech enthusiasm

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEP 22

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi is on his current three-day visit to the US to enhance India's connections with the US and other Indo-Pacific allies, various lesser-known incidents from his early visits to America in the 1990s continue to provide insights into his visionary leadership and character.

One such occasion was in 1993, when Narendra Modi, then a rising BJP leader and dedicated RSS pracharak, participated in the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Celebration organised by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) in Washington, DC.

The event marked 100 years since Swami Vivekananda's historic speech at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893.

Hasmukh Patel, an RSS pracharak who accompanied Narendra Modi on the trip, shared insights about the significance of the event.

He recalled how the "young BJP leader" organ-



ised a youth conference and led a grand symbolic march during the celebration.

"In 1993, through the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, there was an event in Washington, DC, to mark the centenary of Swami Vivekananda's speech, which he (Narendra Modi) delivered in Chicago in 1892. At that time, he was invited as a young politician by the US government, and he attended the event," Hasmukh Patel, who is an NRI based in the US said.

"As a young pracharak and worker, he organised

a youth conference in a large hall, where there was also a grand march," he added.

The event, attended by around 15,000 to 20,000 people, left a lasting impact, particularly due to Narendra Modi's ability to mobilise and inspire the youth, according to Patel.

"His participation in this event is a testament to his commitment to the values of Swami Vivekananda and his dedication to the Indian diaspora abroad," he added.

Narendra Modi's fascination with technology

Narendra Modi's forward-thinking approach and belief in the power of technology were evident even during his earlier visits to the US in the 1990s.

In 1997, during a stay at the home of Gokul Kunnath, an NRI businessman based in Atlanta, Narendra Modi's interest in technology was clearly showcased.

Kunnath recalled a moment when he asked Modi if there was anything he wanted to buy from the US. Narendra Modi's request was simple yet revealing as he wanted to purchase a microcom-

puter.

"When he was in the US back in 1997, I asked him if he would like to buy something. The only thing he wanted to buy was a microcomputer. He wanted to buy this microcomputer that could store about three to four thousand names, phone numbers, and addresses of people," Kunnath said.

"Even then, he was thinking of using technology to advance his work in the BJP, again illustrating his unique personality. He always had a vision and a missionary zeal to pursue that vision to its legitimate end and serve the people of India," Kunnath recalled.

Narendra Modi's focus on technology to improve efficiency and organisation within the BJP reflected his early understanding of how technological advancements could be leveraged for political work.

This foresight continues to define his leadership, making him a trailblazer in integrating technology for governance and administration in India.

## Bengal govt withdraws representation in DVRRC

AGENCIES

KOLKATA, SEP 22

The West Bengal government has decided to withdraw its representation in the Damodar Valley Reservoir Regulation Committee (DVRRC), as communicated by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The communication on this count has been through a letter dated September 21, which was made available to the media from the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Sunday.

The fresh communication was in response to a letter from Union Minister of Jal Shakti C.R. Patil on September 20, where the latter has argued that waters from DVC reservoirs are released on the basis of discussions of DVRRC, which has representation from the state government as well.

"As a protest against this apparent disregard for West Bengal's concerns and lack of cooperation regarding flood moderation, my government is withdrawing its representation from DVRRC immediately," her letter read.



diately," her letter read.

In the letter, the Chief Minister also claimed that she disagreed with the argument of the Union government that Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) releases flood water in West Bengal in consultation with the state government.

In the fresh communication to the Prime Minister, the Chief Minister has claimed that all critical decisions, including the release of flood water, are taken unilaterally by the Central Water Commission and Union Ministry of Jal Shakti without arriving at a consensus.

"Sometimes, water releases take place even without notice to the state government and the requests and views of

the Government of West Bengal (GoWB) are not honoured," the chief minister's letter read.

She claimed that the peak releases from reservoirs lasting for a prolonged period of nine hours are done only with three and half hours' notice, which, according to her, proves the absence of effective disaster management.

She said that in her understanding the peak release of 2.5 lakh cusecs of water from the DVC reservoirs could have been avoided, since according to her, evidence suggests that the Maithon and Panchet reservoirs of DVC are not allowed to encroach beyond the maximum flood management levels.

## BJP protests against AAP, demands 'Sheesh Mahal' opened for public viewing

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEP 22

The Delhi BJP on Sunday organised a protest at Connaught Place, less than a km away from Jantar Mantar where the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) was holding a 'Janata Ki Adalat, in support of their demand to open the official residence of the Chief Minister to the public.

Calling the residence 'Sheesh Mahal', where Arvind Kejriwal is living, the BJP leaders said that it was a perfect example of the AAP leader's luxurious life.

Speaking to IANS, Delhi BJP's media head, Praveen Shankar Kapoor, said, "We will show the people of Delhi and the nation the true face of Arvind Kejri-



al. He talks about simplicity, but we will expose how he lives in a lavish palace."

Kapoor further added, "We have only one demand - the 'Sheesh Mahal' should be opened for public viewing. This protest is being organised to raise awareness. We have set up an exhibition resembling Kejriwal's extravagant home right here. Additionally, we are raising our voices against the pollution scam that emerges every year, the

liquor scam, the shocking electricity bills affecting the people, and the PPRC (Power Purchase Agreement) issue. We will continue to expose all the corruption carried out by these people."

While talking about the exhibition and the public's response, Kapoor mentioned, "Today, we are not asking for feedback from the public. We have arranged this exhibition for them to see, and our youth leaders are sitting

in protest. The protest will continue until the afternoon, and we will show Delhi and the entire country Kejriwal's true nature. He preaches simplicity, but we will expose how he lives in luxury."

Regarding AAP's 'Janata Ki Adalat' event being held at Jantar Mantar, Kapoor said, "I don't know if it's truly a Janta Ki Adalat, but I do know that it's definitely a meeting of AAP leaders."

For some time now, the BJP has been protesting against AAP and Kejriwal, accusing them of corruption in Delhi. On Sunday, the BJP set up an exhibition at Connaught Place, showcasing a replica of Kejriwal's official residence, which they are calling the 'Sheesh Mahal.'

## Eastern Railway cracks down on illegal alarm chain pulling, arrests 393 people

AGENCIES

KOLKATA, SEP 22

Eastern Railway (ER) has cracked down on the misuse of alarm chains in trains and informed that they have arrested 393 people for illegal Alarm Chain Pulling (ACP).

"Between August 1 and September 15, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of ER arrested 393 people for illegal Alarm Chain Pulling (ACP). A total fine of Rs 1,35,800 has also been realised from offenders. The total number of cases registered by RPF and ER was 454," said Kausik Mitra, CPRO, ER.

He added that alarm chains are not installed inside train coaches for fun or to allow people to



get on or off wherever they choose, adding that the alarm chains are key to passenger safety and are to be used only during emergencies to stop the train.

"Illegal ACP not only hampers punctuality but also endangers passengers by forcing trains to make unscheduled stops

in busy sections. We have started this drive to send out a strong message that Indian Railways has zero tolerance towards such mischievous activities," he said.

He added that unauthorised pulling of the alarm chain is a punishable offence under Section 141 of the Railway

Act, adding that pulling the alarm chain without a valid reason is illegal and can result in a fine of up to Rs 1,000 and or imprisonment for up to one year.

ER has also identified trains in which there are a maximum number of illegal ACP cases. These include 13403 Ranchi-Bhagalpur Vananchal Express, 13071 Howrah-Jamalpur Express, 12510 Guwahati-SMVT Bengaluru Express, 13402 Danapur-Bhagalpur Intercity Express, and 13236 Danapur-Sahibganj Intercity Express.

"We have taken up this matter very seriously. ER urges all its passengers to cooperate and alert railway personnel if they spot any suspicious activity, such as illegal ACP.

## GST 2.0 will further ease tax compliances and boost economic growth

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEP 22

Goods and Services Tax (GST) is one of the major economic reforms in the last decade in India which replaced the Value Added Tax (VAT) system.

It paved the way for economic growth, lower logistics costs, and ease of doing for business.

Now the Union government is focusing on GST 2.0 which further eases tax laws, enhance tax simplification and adoption of technology.

In Budget 2024, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman emphasised further simplification of tax laws and the adoption of technology.

The Finance Minister

proposed some measures in the Budget to signal that new GST 2.0 will unlock trade potential and further ease compliances in the tax laws that foster further economic growth.

According to tax experts, GST 2.0 will be a big change for the tax system in India. This will not only be an update of



GST laws, but will also make the GST system more transparent, simple and business-friendly and boost the country's economic growth.

With GST 2.0, the long-standing demands of the industries like tax simplification can also be resolved.

The tax process will be easier with GST 2.0.

This will support a high growth rate and increase India's competitiveness at the global level.

GST collections stood at Rs 1.75 lakh crore in August 2024, around 10 per cent rise from Rs 1.59 lakh crore in GST revenue in August last year.

For the first five months of the fiscal year, collections were up 10.1

per cent at Rs 9.14 lakh crore. Net GST revenue till August was Rs 8.07 lakh crore, 10.2 per cent higher than the previous year.

The Gross GST collection in the FY 2023-24 was Rs 20.18 lakh crore. There was an increase of 11.7 per cent in comparison to the previous year.

## Haryana polls: Savitri Jindal unveils 'Sankalp Patra', vows to revive Hisar's development

AGENCIES

HISAR, SEP 22

Savitri Jindal, an independent candidate contesting from the Hisar Assembly seat in Haryana, released her "Sankalp Patra" on Sunday. In the Sankalp Patra, she expressed her commitment to the development of Hisar.

On the social media platform X, Jindal wrote, "Today, I unveiled my manifesto for the development of Hisar with media colleagues. The dream that my father, OP Jindal, envisioned for Hisar will be realised over the next five years. We will first

address the fundamental issues in Hisar, and then take the city to new heights of development."

Savitri Jindal, a former minister and one of the richest women in India, emphasised that her father's vision must be fulfilled, starting with resolving the basic problems of Hisar before moving on to broader development initiatives.

During the launch of the Sankalp Patra, she was accompanied by Madhusudan Agarwal, MD and Vice Chairman of Ajanta Pharma; Mahendra Arya, former president of the All India Transport Asso-

ciation; and Krishna Gorakhpuriya, Chairman of Darsel. Jindal expressed her gratitude to everyone who attended the event.

In her Sankalp Patra, Savitri Jindal prioritised local development and basic amenities, stating that resolving fundamental issues would be her first task, followed by advancing Hisar's growth.

It's noteworthy that Savitri Jindal has previously served as a minister in the Haryana government and was a sitting MLA for the Hisar seat. She faced defeat in the 2014 assembly elections.

For the upcoming elec-

tions, the BJP has fielded Dr. Kamal Gupta, while the Congress has nominated Ramniwas Rada for the Hisar seat.

Savitri Jindal, who has previously won five out of six elections, wields considerable influence thanks to her family's political legacy. Her decision to enter the race follows the denial of a BJP ticket to her, positioning her as a strong contender with a personal stake in reversing her 2014 defeat by Dr. Gupta. With a total of 21 candidates in the race, the main competition is primarily between Jindal, Rada, and Gupta.

## Centre okays Rs 2,603 crore for wildlife habitat development scheme

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEP 22

Reiterating the commitment towards tiger and wildlife conservation ensuring that economy and ecology grow together, the Cabinet has approved continuation of the Wildlife Habitat Development Scheme with Rs 2602.98 crore outlay.

It will benefit 55 tiger reserve, 33 elephant reserves and 718 protected areas and their zones of influence. The scheme has a livelihood generation of more than 50 lakh man days through direct engagement in addition

to indirect employment through eco-tourism and ancillary activities.

The scheme includes the critical Project Tiger sub component, along with Project Elephant and Development of Wildlife Habitat and was one of the items included in the 100-day action plan of the government, said Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in a statement.

"While strengthening the existing fundamental and core components of the scheme, the scheme envisages to boost technological interventions in different thematic areas

over the current and next financial year in our tiger and wildlife bearing forests," the ministry noted.

The Project Tiger uses technology in day-to-day management practices such as the M-STrIPES (Monitoring System for Tigers, Intensive Protection and Ecological Status) mobile application.

The app is in sync with the 'Digital India' initiative and was extensively used for collection of field level ecological data during the fifth cycle of the All-India Tiger Estimation in 2022.

Conservation genetics has also been significantly

used in the field of tiger conservation wherein a SOP for translocating tigers based on their genetic composition has been issued.

Further, genetics has also been used to determine tiger numbers in low density landscapes as well as for determining the food ecology of the species, informed the ministry.

The Project Tiger component also supports the ambitious Project Cheetah in the country which shall be continued under the umbrella scheme of Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats.



# INDIA, AUSTRALIA VOW TO DEEPEN COOPERATION IN MULTILATERAL FORA

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON, SEP 22

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese have reiterated their commitment to strengthening cooperation in the multilateral fora during their meeting on the sidelines of the sixth Quad Leaders' Summit in Wilmington, US.

The two leaders discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation across a wide range of areas such as political and strategic, defence and security, trade and investments, education and research, climate change and renewable energy, and people-



to-people ties, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement on Sunday.

"Held extensive discussions with PM Albanese. We seek to add even more momentum in areas like

trade, security, space and culture. India greatly cherishes the time-tested friendship with Australia," Prime Minister Modi posted on social media platform X after the meet-

ing.

The two Prime Ministers also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest. They acknowledged that the frequency of high-level contacts has imparted a strong momentum to bilateral relations. This was their ninth in-person interaction since May 2022.

Both leaders reiterated their commitment to take the India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP), established in 2020, to even greater heights.

The CSP is based on mutual understanding, trust, common interests and the shared values of

democracy and rule of law. Both countries share the vision of an open, free, rules-based Indo-Pacific region supported by inclusive global and regional institutions that promote prosperous, stable and sovereign states on the basis of shared interests.

Before his meeting with Prime Minister Albanese, PM Modi met his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida to review the various facets of the India-Japan relationship. They also exchanged views to deepen defence and security ties and business-to-business and people-to-people collaborations.

## Sri Lanka Presidential elections: Anura Dissanayake takes early lead; govt extends curfew

AGENCIES  
COLOMBO, SEP 22

Early results from Sri Lanka's Presidential election indicate that Anura Kumara Disanayake, 55, leader of the National People's Power (NPP), may become the country's first leftist head of state, as reported by local media.

If his lead holds, Disanayake is expected to be sworn in as Sri Lanka's 9th Executive President later on Sunday, following a formal announcement by the Elections Commission, according to Daily Mirror.

In light of the ongoing vote count, Sri Lanka has extended its curfew until noon on Sunday, according to Minister of Public Security Tiran Alles.

Initially, the curfew was

imposed from 10 p.m. on Saturday to 6 a.m. on Sunday.

Authorities took this measure to ensure public safety despite the peaceful situation following the 2024 Presidential election, the police said.

According to the police, the President invoked the curfew using powers granted by the Public Security Act.

Additionally, the government has declared Monday, September 23, 2024, as a special public holiday, as confirmed by Pradeep Yasarathne, Secretary to the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs.

The much-anticipated election, the first after the island nation's worst-ever economic crisis, saw a

total of 39 candidates in the fray with incumbent President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Leader of the Opposition Sajith Premadasa of Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) party and Marxist leader Anura Kumara Disanayake of Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna party being considered the front-runners to the election, the results of which will be keenly watched in the region.

Out of the total population of around 22 million, 17,140,350 Sri Lankans were eligible to exercise their franchise at this election. This included 1.2 million new voters.

On Saturday, polling began at 7 a.m. at 3,421 polling centres across the country and ended at 4 p.m.

## Mali celebrates 64th anniversary of independence, President Goita highlights security issue

AGENCIES  
BAMAKO, SEP 22

Malian transitional President Assimi Goita has said that the security issue remains the top concern of the Malian people.

President Goita made the remarks in a message to the nation delivered Saturday evening on the occasion of the 64th anniversary of his country's independence, which falls on Sunday, Xinhua news agency reported.

"The terrorist attacks that occurred on Tuesday, September 17, remind us once again of the urgent need to remain vigilant and maintain exemplary operational readiness in all circumstances," said Goita. Tuesday's terrorist attacks targeted the gendarmerie schools in Faldie and "Base 101" of the Air Force at Bamako International Airport, located on the outskirts of the Malian capital of Bamako.



The country's defence and security forces have conducted "stabilisation and reconstruction operations" in the reclaimed regions, allowing for the gradual return of public services, schools, and essential infrastructure.

Goita also took the opportunity to highlight the constant efforts of the Malian Armed Forces (FAMA) to secure the country in the face of the terrorist threat, and their professionalism in reclaiming strategic territories. "The armed and security forces have conducted stabilisation and reconstruction operations in the reclaimed regions," he added.

This year's national holiday is being celebrated in a "context marked by the large-scale strategic operation to reclaim territory" carried out by the FAMA, aimed at "restoring the country's territorial integrity and permanently eliminating the terrorist threat," said Goita.

These "remarkable successes" are the result of the coordination of military operations and the redeployment of forces in five cities Ber, Tessalit, Anefis, Kidal, and Aguelhoc. To maintain pressure on armed terrorist groups, President Goita pledged to continue efforts to equip the Malian Army. He also announced the establishment of increased regional cooperation, particularly through the pooling of resources with the Alliance of Sahel States. "Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger embody the rebirth of an Africa that is freeing itself and forging its unity and development on new foundations."

## Thousands travel from across US to attend PM Modi's diaspora event in Uniondale

AGENCIES  
NEW YORK, SEP 22

More than 16,000 people - many of them travelling from all corners of the US overnight - are expected to gather at the Nassau Coliseum on Long Island on Sunday to give a thunderous welcome to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and listen to his much-awaited speech at the community reception.

"After programmes in Delaware, landed in New York. Eager to be among the diaspora at the community programme in the city and to take part in other programmes," PM Modi posted on X after landing in New York early Sunday morning, India time.

This would be the second big event that Nassau County authorities will be handling in less than a week after former

US President Donald Trump held an election rally at the Nassau Coliseum on Wednesday.

On Saturday, immediately after his arrival in Philadelphia, the Prime Minister had shared his eagerness to meet the Indian diaspora and Americans from across the US at the New York event.

"The Indian community has distinguished itself in the USA, making a positive impact across diverse sectors. It's always a delight to interact with them. At around 9:30 PM India time on Sunday, 22nd September, I will address the

'Modi and US' programme in New York City. Let's celebrate the bonds that connect our nations!" he mentioned after landing in Philadelphia following a nearly 16-hour journey from New Delhi.

Preparations for the key engagement, sandwiched between the Quad Summit convened by US President Joe Biden in Delaware on Saturday and PM Modi's address to the United Nations Summit of the Future on Monday, have been going on for past many weeks with the organisers overwhelmed by the number of people who wanted to attend the event billed as 'Modi and US, Progress Together'.

"We are just so proud of Modiji, and we're proud to be part of this great celebration. Modiji, we love you, and we want you to be very successful in whatever you're doing for our country," said a lady who had arrived early at the venue on Sunday.

The multi-purpose arena, which is the home of the Long Island Nets basketball team, is in Uniondale, about 50 kilo-

metres from Manhattan. Avinash Gupta, the President of the tri-state chapter of the Federation of Indian Associations (FIA), told IANS that more than 25,000 applications were received and the organisers had a tough time, winnowing it down to about 16,000 to fit the venue.

Gupta said that 159 applications were received for participation in the cultural programme that will be held before the PM's speech and 15 were finally selected. Priority was given to children's performances as it would reflect the diversity of Indian culture.

"This is an event that's being organised by the community. As you know, we have about 4.5 million strong Indian diaspora in the United States, amongst the largest such groups there, and one that

has made a mark for itself and is contributing to the relationship between the two countries by acting as a vibrant living bridge between the two of us," Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said earlier this week.

For those who can't make it to the event, the organisers have planned to have the reception simulcast on giant TV screens at Times Square and in places like Edison and New Jersey.

"With PM Modi at the helm, the meeting will celebrate the Indian diaspora's achievements and reflect the people-to-people links between the US and India bringing the two nations closer," Gupta told IANS, adding that buses have been arranged to bring people from around New York, as well as from Washington and Boston.

## Iran, Cuba voice support for each other against US 'hostile' policies

AGENCIES  
TEHRAN, SEP 22

Iran and Cuba have reaffirmed mutual support for addressing US hostile policies and sanctions, said the Iranian Foreign Ministry on Sunday.

In a meeting on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi and his Cuban counterpart, Bruno Rodriguez

Parrilla, discussed bilateral ties as well as regional and international issues of common interest, the Ministry said in a statement as reported by Xinhua news agency.

According to the statement, Araghchi condemned the "unilateral and political" US move of putting Cuba on the list of the so-called "State Sponsors of Terrorism," which also includes Iran, North Korea, and Syria, and described it as being in

continuation of Washington's "hostile" policies.

He said Iran, one of the US sanctions' victims, completely understands the Cuban people's conditions and would support Cuba in the face of Washington's embargoes.

The Cuban Foreign Minister also said his country would back Iran against the US "hostile" policies.

Both Iran and Cuba are under US sanctions and have been promoting



cooperation to counter the embargoes for years.

Also in his remarks, Araghchi said that the crimes that Israel is committing in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon are acts of desperation caused by the regime's failure in its genocidal war on the besieged Gaza.

He further renewed an invitation by Iran's former President Ebrahim Raisi for his Cuban counterpart to visit Iran and voiced Tehran's readiness to

expand relations with Havana in all fields.

Rodriguez welcomed the development of Iran-Cuba ties in the economic, academic and scientific areas, and the holding of a joint economic commission in the near future.

The Iranian Foreign Minister also said that the support provided by the US and Western countries for the occupying regime is the main obstacle to a Gaza ceasefire.

During his meeting with United Nations Special Envoy for Syria Geir Pedersen, Araghchi announced Iran's support for UN efforts in Syria and underlined the need for the withdrawal of foreign forces and the start of the reconstruction process as soon as possible.

"Although the Zionist regime's crimes in Lebanon are being committed out of desperation, they will not go unanswered," he asserted.

## Harris accepts second debate invitation, Trump's response awaited

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON, SEP 21

US Vice President Kamala Harris has accepted CNN's invitation to a debate with former President Donald Trump, who has yet to confirm or reject his participation.

Harris and Trump had their first debate on September 10 and immediately after Harris proposed a second debate. Trump has not accepted it and has ruled it saying it's too late for a debate as early voting has already begun.

If Trump accepts the invitation, the second debate will take place on October 23 and it will be hosted by CNN, which also held the first presidential debate of the 2024 election cycle in June, between Trump and President Joe Biden, who dropped out



of the race shortly after in the face of mounting pressure from within the party and its allies were disappointed by his disastrous performance in the debate.

"The American people deserve another opportunity to see Vice President Kamala Harris and Donald Trump debate before they cast their ballots. It would be unprecedented in modern history for there to just be one general

election debate. Debates offer a unique chance for voters to see the candidates side by side and take stock of their competing visions for America," Jen O'Malley Dillon, the Harris campaign chair said in a statement Saturday.

She added that the Vice President is ready for another opportunity to share a stage with Donald Trump, and she has accepted CNN's invitation to a debate on October 23.

Donald Trump should have no problem agreeing to this debate. It is the same format and setup as the CNN debate he attended and said he won in June when he praised CNN's moderators, rules, and ratings.

Although Trump has ruled out more debates, he is famously prone to changing his mind. He said last week, "I did great with the debates, and I think they've answered everything. But maybe if I got in the right mood, I don't know."

If he agrees, the rules of the debate will remain the same as in the ones with Biden and Harris before - 90 minutes long, no audience, microphone muted for the candidate not asked to speak or respond by the moderators and no props.

## Zelenskyy says US, UK yet to allow Ukrainian forces to fire long-range missiles at Russia

AGENCIES  
KIEV, SEP 22

Volodymyr Zelenskyy claims that Ukraine has not yet received permission from either the United States or the United Kingdom to use long-range missiles on the internationally recognized Russian territory.

"Neither America nor the United Kingdom gave us permission to use these weapons on the territory of Russia, on any targets at any distance. We did not use long-range weapons on the territory of the Russian Federation," Ukrainian agency UNN quoted Zelenskyy as saying.

He added that Kiev's allies were thereby afraid of an escalation of hostilities.



In turn, as reported by the Ukrinform agency, Zelenskyy noted the readiness of three points of the so-called "Kiev peace plan" for resolving the conflict in Ukraine. Zelenskyy added that Kiev was ready to see Russia at the "second peace summit," because all Kiev's allies said that Russia should be there.

Zelenskyy added that there could be no end to the conflict without one of its parties.

In early July, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Galuzin told Sputnik, commenting on another Kiev's "peace

summit," that the Russian side did not accept ultimatums and did not intend to participate in such events. The previous conference on Ukraine was held in Burgenstock, Switzerland, on June 15-16. The Kremlin stated that looking for options for a way out of the Ukrainian conflict without Russia's participation was absolutely illogical and futile.

Russian President Vladimir Putin previously said that NATO countries were discussing not only Kiev's

possible use of Western long-range weapons, but are essentially deciding whether to directly engage in the Ukrainian conflict. Direct participation of Western countries in the Ukrainian conflict will change its essence, Russia will be forced to make decisions based on the new threats created for it, he added.

Russia believes that arms supplies to Ukraine directly involve NATO countries in the conflict. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov noted that any cargo containing weapons for Ukraine would become a legitimate target for Russia. According to Lavrov, the United States and NATO are directly involved in the conflict, including not only by supplying weapons, but also by training personnel.



## Centre facilitates refund of over Rs 1 crore to students of various coaching centres

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 22

The government of Sunday said it has facilitated a refund of more than Rs 1 crore to affected students from the total demanded refund of Rs 2.39 crore till date, who raised unfair practices by various coaching centres, especially related to refund of their enrolment fees.

Among those, over 656 aspirants and students of various coaching Institutes of UPSC Civil Services, IIT, medical entrance, CA and management courses claimed refund from coaching centres/private institutions by registering their grievance on the National Consumer Helpline (NCH).

These aspirants/students faced issues such as unfulfilled promises, inadequate teaching quality and abrupt cancellations of courses.

The Department of Con-



sumer Affairs (DoCA) said it has successfully intervened at a pre-litigation stage to ensure justice for students and aspirants who enrolled for the UPSC Civil Services, IIT and other entrance examinations.

"This action reaffirms our commitment to ensure that coaching institutions adhere to fair practices and honour the rights of

consumers," said Nidhi Khare, Secretary of DoCA. She emphasised that coaching institutes must present facts truthfully and honestly by clearly and prominently disclosing important information so that consumers can not only notice it easily but also take more informed choice.

Khare also under-

scored the significance of consumer rights and the responsibility of advertisers to ensure they provide accurate information.

Data revealed that during a short span of 12 months (2023-2024), 16,276 students reached out to NCH, once their requests were declined/rejected/ not specifically redressed to their satisfaction by coaching centres. The total numbers of

grievances registered by the students in the year 2021-2022 were 4,815, followed by 5,351 in year 2022-2023 and 16,276 in 2023-2024.

In 2024, 6,980 students have already reached out to NCH for speedy redressal of their grievances at a pre litigation stage.

This increase reflects growing confidence and trust of students in NCH as an effective grievance redressal mechanism before opting to knock at the door of consumer commissions, said the DoCA.

All the refunds were processed promptly at a pre-litigation stage after the intervention of the department to the affected students from all corners of the country who raised their grievances claiming their refunds against the coaching centres offering classes for "UPSC Civil Services", "JEE advance", medical entrance, CA exams and other courses.

## Aspirational India fuels auto loan surge as private consumption rises

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 22

As private consumption rises across the country, there has been a surge in auto loans for car ownership as people from tier 2, 3 cities and beyond opt for longer-tenure financing options to afford latest vehicles.

As per reports, auto companies like Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Mahindra and Tata Motors feel finance penetration to rise to up to 84 per cent this year from 75 per cent in the pre-pandemic era.

A leading digital marketing agency, Technagnate, recently revealed significant shifts in auto finance-related search queries, like an increased focus on affordability and transparency, demand for alternative financing solutions, interest in electric vehicle financing and personalised and streamlined experiences.

The consumers in the country are engaging in



informed auto finance decisions by conducting broader searches, using general terms like "car loan interest rates" or "auto loan eligibility".

About 80 per cent of car purchases in the country are financed through bank loans or non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).

As per Jato Dynamics data, the aspirational India is now driving the auto loan industry.

A continued momentum in discretionary spending of consumers, coupled with favourable price effect, helped private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) pick up by 12.4 per cent in India in the April-June

quarter this fiscal, as against 8.1 per cent in Q1 FY24, according to the Bank of Baroda (BoB) report. From two-wheeler sales to fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs), the overall consumption is surging. The total production of passenger vehicles, three-wheelers, two-wheelers and quadricycle reached 24,37,138 units in July.

Passenger vehicles sales were 3,41,510, two-wheeler sales were 59,073 units and two-wheeler sales reached 14,41,694 units. Two-wheeler segment posted a decent growth of 12.5 per cent in July compared to the same month last year, as per SIAM data.

## Adani Airport Holdings expands lounge access with major debit, credit cards amid Dreamfolks disruption

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 22

Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL) on Sunday said it was actively working with the banks to ensure a quick restoration of services at lounges at airports across the country and was accepting all major debit and credit cards from other access providers.

Passengers at airports across India have been experiencing disruptions in lounge access amid a Dreamfolks Services disruption.

"This is due to the unexpected suspension of services by Dreamfolks Services Ltd, a lounge access provider partnered with several banks, in violation of its service agreements with the affected airports,"



said an Adani Airport spokesperson.

"AAHL is actively working with the banks to facilitate the immediate resumption of services," the spokesperson added.

The company further said that despite its requests, "services through Dreamfolks have not yet been restored".

"As an interim alternative, lounges at Adani-operated airports are now accepting all major debit and credit cards from other access providers. We

are committed to fully supporting passengers during this period," said the company spokesperson.

Dreamfolks said in a statement that they "are currently addressing a temporary disruption in our services".

"We would like to clarify that all our contractual agreements remain in full force. We are fully compliant with our obligations and are executing our services accordingly. Our top priority is to minimise any inconvenience to passen-

gers and restore normal operations swiftly," said a Dreamfolks spokesperson.

Established in 2019, Adani Airports Holdings Limited (AAHL) aims to revolutionise airport experiences. Currently, AAHL oversees seven prominent airports -- Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Mangaluru, Jaipur, Guwahati, and Thiruvananthapuram.

The addition of Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIAL) to AAHL's portfolio in December 2024 will mark a significant milestone in India's aviation industry.

This expansion will increase AAHL's portfolio to eight airports, solidifying its position as the leading airport infrastructure company in the country.

## Centre approves 2 hydro pumped storage projects with 2,500 MW capacity

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 22

The government on Sunday said it has approved two more hydro pumped storage projects (PSPs) towards realising the country's renewable energy (RE) goals.

The Central Electricity Authority (CEA) greenlighted these PSPs in Maharashtra --1,500 MW Bhavali PSP being developed by JSW Energy and 1,000 MW Bhivpuri PSP being developed by Tata Power.

The hydro PSPs will collectively provide a storage capacity of more than 15 GWh (gigawatt hours), according to Ministry of Power.

"This large-scale energy storage is crucial for meeting the peak demand during non-solar hour in addition to inertia in the grid, leading to grid sta-



bility. It will help in faster renewable energy integration, and supporting the transition to a greener energy system," said the ministry.

CEA targets to approve at least two PSPs each month during the current year, depending upon the completion of the DPRs by the developers.

During FY25, CEA has targeted to incur 15 hydro PSPs of 25,500 MW capacity, out of this 4 PSPs of 5,100 MW capacity have already been concurred.

The approval of these projects, spearheaded by private developers, underscores the growing role of the private sector in driving India's energy transition, said the government.

In order to ensure ease of doing business, CEA has developed an online portal "Jalvi-store" which will bring more transparency in processing of the chapters at pre DPR stage of PSPs.

"This marks a shift towards a collaborative

energy ecosystem where public and private sectors converge to achieve national goals. This partnership will accelerate progress towards India's renewable energy targets," said CEA.

Last week, the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the revised scheme of budgetary support for the cost of enabling infrastructure for Hydro Electric Projects (HEP) with a total outlay of Rs 12,461 crore.

The modified scheme of the Ministry of Power for a cumulative generation capacity of about 31,350 MW would be implemented from FY2024-25 to FY2031-32.

The share of renewable energy, including hydro, in the country's power generation is projected to rise to 35 per cent by FY30, up from 21 per cent in FY24.

## US, India reveal roadmap to build secure global clean energy supply chain

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 22

The \$1 billion India-US initiative to build a safe and secure global clean energy supply chain aims to capture the benefits of the clean energy transition, including the creation of high-quality jobs, acceleration of clean energy deployment and achievement of global climate goals, the government said on Sunday.

The funding will support supply-side manufacturing capacity expansion

for key technology verticals, focusing on solar, wind, battery, energy grid systems, and high-efficiency air conditioner and ceiling fan supply chains.

"As an important aspect of our economic growth agendas, we are committed to working together to capture the benefits of the clean energy transition," said the government after the meeting between President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the sixth Quad Leaders' Summit in

Wilmington, Delaware.

Both the countries aim to expand manufacturing capacity for clean energy technologies and components and lay the groundwork for enhanced cooperation in third countries, with a focus on partnerships in Africa.

The effort will build on existing clean energy cooperation between the US and India, including clean energy initiatives launched during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the United States in 2023, the Strategic Clean



Energy Partnership led by the US Department of Energy and Government of India ministries, techni-

cal assistance provided by US laboratories, and novel financial platforms such as the Payment Security

Mechanism established to support the rapid deployment of electric buses in India.

The US and India are working to unlock \$1 billion in new multilateral finance through the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) for projects that include catalysing India's domestic clean energy supply chain build-

out. "Over time, we seek to mobilise additional financing into priority clean energy manufac-

turing sectors that harness public and private financial tools and pioneer innovative financial vehicles to meet the rapid demand for flexible climate finance solutions," the government informed.

Both the governments pledged to work with industry leaders, with initial focus on solar wafers and wafer manufacturing equipment and next generation solar cells, wind turbine nacelle components, power transmission line components including conductors, cabling,

transformers, and next generation technologies, energy storage components including batteries, battery packs for 2- and 3-wheel electric vehicles (EVs) and zero-emission e-bus and truck components and high-efficiency air conditioners and ceiling fan components.

They also committed to collaborate with the private sector to support an initial package of pilot projects, ideally including one project focused on clean energy deployment to Africa.

## South Korean, US space agencies join hands on research cooperation

AGENCIES  
SEOUL, SEP 22

The Korea Aerospace Administration (KASA) said on Sunday it has signed a joint statement with the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) for cooperation in various areas involving space and aerospace research. The statement was signed at the NASA headquarters in Washington, DC, on the occasion of talks held between KASA chief Yoon Young-bin and NASA Administrator Bill Nelson in the US capital.

The two sides discussed

cooperation across various areas of space and aerospace development, including deep space and lunar exploration, and agreed to strengthen their leadership on the international stage, reports Yonhap news agency.

They also committed to identifying innovative projects with high potential in fields such as space life sciences, lunar surface science and joint use of deep space antennas.

Additionally, they confirmed their intent to cooperate on space sustainability, including developing standards for information

sharing related to space debris reduction, space traffic management and space environment protection. The two agencies also signed a separate agreement to jointly design a mission concept for operations at the so-called Lagrange point L4, where the gravitational forces of the sun and Earth are balanced.

KASA also said it plans to discuss signing a separate research agreement with NASA to expand Korea's participation in the U.S. Artemis moon exploration programme.

Meanwhile, the South Korean space agency

recently unveiled an ambitious vision to develop a competitive space transportation system and a forward-looking exploration strategy, aiming to join the elite ranks in the global space race.

South Korea's current homegrown space rocket, Nuri, has a shipping cost of \$24,000 per kilogram, while SpaceX offers transport for around \$2,000 to \$3,000 per kilogram.

KASA is also mapping out a comprehensive road map for deep space exploration, including missions to Lagrange point L4, the moon and Mars.

## India has the potential to become \$10 trillion economy by 2032: Report

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 22

Driven by strong GDP growth and robust manufacturing and emphasis on building infrastructure, India is on its way to becoming the third largest economy soon and has the potential to add \$1 trillion to its GDP every 1.5 years to reach the \$10 trillion economy mark by 2032, a new report showed on Saturday. The country is expected to become a \$4 trillion economy in 2024-2025, which would make it the world's fourth-largest economy.



According to a report by IDBI Capital, the country is on track to become a \$10 trillion economy by 2032, positioning itself as the world's third-largest economy by 2030.

"By adding USD 1tn every 1.5 years going forward, India is forecasted to emerge as the third-largest global economy over the next six years," the report noted.

Ten years ago, India was the 10th largest economy in the world, with a GDP of \$1.9 trillion at current market prices.

Key initiatives such as "Make in India" are expected to play a pivotal role in bolstering the nation's manufacturing capabilities and positioning India as a global manufacturing hub.

On Thursday, a report by S&P Global projected that India is on track to become the third-largest economy by fiscal 2030-31, driven by a robust projected annual growth rate of 6.7 per cent.



## Rohit Sharma credits depth of Indian bowling unit after emphatic win over Bangladesh

AGENCIES  
CHENNAI, SEP 22

India captain Rohit Sharma lauded his bowlers for outperforming Bangladesh in the first Test and helping them register a massive 280-run win at MA Chidambaram Stadium on Sunday.

In the first innings, it was a pace battery of Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj and Akash Deep, who unsettled Bangladesh batters in the middle. In the second essay, the spin duo - Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja - shared nine scalps between them to the hosts a 1-0 lead in the two-match World Test Championship series.

"No matter what the conditions are, whether we play in India, whether we play outside, we want



to build the team around (bowling). Whatever the condition has to offer, we got to be ready for it. In the last few years, wherever we have played, we have managed to have that in our armory, whether it is seam bowling options or spin bowling options. You have to give credit to the guys, whenever there is a responsibility, they never shy away from it and they

want to put their hand up and get the job done for the team," Rohit said after the win.

Chennai posed a distinct challenge for the bowlers with its red-soil pitch, offering good pace and bounce during the first two days of the Test. Spinners, who only claimed five of the first 24 wickets, had to adapt to the conditions before

turn and bounce became prominent on the final day. Rohit emphasised the need for patience with both bat and ball.

"The red soil pitch always has something to offer. You need to have a little bit of patience as well. You don't see much happening straightaway. This was a pitch where we had to show a lot of patience whether we bat or bowl.

We were patient enough with the bat to get those big runs and then with the ball as well we were patient enough to hit the right areas and put them under pressure consistently," the opener said.

Rohit further reserved his praise for comeback man Rishabh Pant, who scored his sixth Test century to equal MS Dhoni's record of most tons by an

Indian wicket-keeper.

"He's been through some really tough times. The way he has managed himself through those tough times was superb to watch. He came back in the IPL, followed by a very successful World Cup and this is the format he loves the most," Rohit said.

"For us, it was never about what he is going to do with the bat, we always knew what he had with the bat and with the gloves as well. It was just about giving him the game time. Credit to him as well, he went on to play Duleep Trophy and got ready for this Test match and had an impact straightaway in the game," he added.

The second and final Test of the series will be played at Kanpur's Green Park from September 27.

## T10 is a great way to grow cricket, says James Neesham

AGENCIES  
HARARE, SEP 22

One of the most impactful and destructive batters in the shorter formats of the game, James Neesham from New Zealand, has hailed the new T10 format that is becoming popular in domestic leagues around the world.

Neesham, who is well known not only for his cricketing abilities but his witty social media activity, is not alien to the T10 format. The New Zealander explained that while the format has its challenges, he expects it to grow.

"The toughest aspect (of T10) is how short it is. There's no chance to find form or fix problems, you just have to go out and be aggressive and hope it comes off," he said.

"I think T10 is a great

way to grow the game of cricket. It's a festival atmosphere which makes it great to play in places that aren't traditionally cricket countries. I see it developing a bit like the global rugby Sevens series where you have competitions each weekend in different cities in the world. That'd be great," the all-rounder added. Neesham made his mark in his very first outing in season 2 of Zim Afro T10 as the New Zealander dug his team (Harare Bolts) out of a spot of bother in the chase against the Cape Town Samp Army, scoring 30 from 16, to clinch a thrilling win on the opening day.

Reflecting on the knock and the win, Neesham, who is no stranger to high-pressure situations at the highest level, said, "The atmosphere was good. Always an advantage playing in front

of a home crowd so hopefully that will be an advantage for us moving forward. The mood is good in the dressing room. It's very early in the tournament though so we're keeping our feet on the ground and looking forward to the next game tomorrow.

"T10 is about picking your moments to attack and making it count. We were lucky today that our bowlers kept the target down so there was never any real run rate pressure during the chase," he added.

For Neesham and the Harare Bolts, the aim is understandably to go all the way. "The Zim Afro T10 seems great so far. It's my first experience here but the games have been great and I'm looking forward to seeing how it develops," he concluded.

## ISL 2024-25: Mohun Bagan seek redemption against NorthEast United

AGENCIES  
KOLKATA, SEP 22

Mohun Bagan Super Giant will take on NorthEast United in the Indian Super League (ISL) 2024-25 season at the Vivekananda Yuva Bharati Krirangan here on Monday.

The Mariners will play their second home game of the season and aim to grab their first win after sharing spoils with Mumbai City FC in the opening clash. NorthEast United, meanwhile, earned a win in their first game, courtesy of a late goal by Alaeddine Ajaraja against Mohammedan SC. They will now take on the Mariners, whom they defeated a few weeks back in the Durand Cup 2024 final and will be upbeat to land their third successive win in Kolkata.

Mohun Bagan have



scored in 15 out of the 16 ISL games they have played in 2024. They have found the back of the net in 11 straight games and are now one short of their ISL streak of 12 matches (between March 2021 and January 2022).

NorthEast United FC have kept three clean sheets in the last four games, including two on a trot in the previous couple of matches. If they keep the Mariners at bay in the

coming match, it will be the first time they won't concede a goal in three consecutive encounters in the ISL. Mohun Bagan coach Jose Molina is cautious about his team conceding goals. His side led the Mumbai City FC match 2-0 at the break but after that, gave away two strikes to give up the lead and the three points. He is determined to turn things around in the upcoming fixtures.

## Hat-trick hero CH Sakip hands Karnataka Sub-Jr Boys' NFC Tier 1 title

AGENCIES  
BENGALURU, SEP 22

Karnataka emerged victorious on their home turf, to emerge champions of Sub Junior Boys' National Football Championship 2024-25 Tier 1, after defeating Manipur 5-1 at the Bangalore Football Stadium, on Sunday.

CH Sakip (7', 27', 65') was in form for Karnataka, scoring a hat-trick while Rishaan Chaudhuri (44') and Arvidrian Samwanki Lato (85') pitched in with a goal apiece. Khutheiphom Muktar Rehman (34') scored the only goal for Manipur.

While Manipur had put in an expansive display on their road to the final, the hosts turned up to the summit clash showing more initiative and took the lead through Sakip in the seventh minute. Sakip made a fine run at the far



post, where he found himself unmarked, as a cross was whipped in from the left. The fullback had to only touch the ball in from point-blank range.

Sakip scored his second of the afternoon when a Manipur defender handled Karnataka midfielder

Chaudhuri's shot from outside the box. The referee Harkomal Singh Duhra pointed to the spot. Sakip calmly slotted it home to double the home side's lead.

Manipur, however, would not give in that

easily and pulled one back through captain Rehman, who after receiving the ball from Laishram Mahesh Singh, belted it in from outside the box.

The hosts kept attacking in waves and looked in no mood to be complacent

with their one-goal lead. Chaudhuri scored their third a few minutes before the half-time whistle, to give Karnataka the two-goal cushion again.

Manipur came out with heavier momentum in the second half, but Karnataka managed the early onslaught well before they scored a fourth. Sakip ran onto a long ball hooved from the defence and found himself one-on-one with the goalkeeper and he calmly completed his hat-trick.

The fifth and final nail in Manipur's coffin was put in by Arvidrian, who was played through behind the defence. His shot took a deflection before looping into the goal.

The final played in Bengaluru on Sunday brought the curtains down on the three-week-long Sub Junior National Football Championships for boys' and girls' Tier 1 and Tier 2.

## WE DIDN'T BAT WELL IN FIRST INNINGS: SHANTO AFTER 280-RUN DEFEAT AGAINST INDIA

AGENCIES  
CHENNAI, SEP 22

Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto acknowledged that their first innings batting collapse including a lack of top-order partnership gave India the upper hand in the first Test to take a 1-0 lead at MA Chidambaram Stadium here on Sunday.

India crushed Bangladesh by 280 runs with over five sessions to spare. Ravichandran Ashwin's 6-88 combined with Ravindra Jadeja's 3-58 bundled out Bangladesh for 234 while chasing 515 in the opening session of the fourth day.

Earlier, Ashwin (113) and Jadeja (86) enabled India to post 376 runs in the first innings after being invited to bat first by Shanto. In



response, Bangladesh could only manage 149 as India's pace trio led by premier speedster Jasprit Bumrah (4-50), Akash Deep (2-19) and Mohammed Siraj (2-30) wreaked havoc on the visitors.

"We didn't bat well in the first innings. It was a very important phase of

the game. We could have been in a better position if we had at least one (big) top-order partnership.

There will always be a challenge for the top order to do well, especially in the first innings. It is important to see how we are coping with it. We are working towards it but we

are not getting the desired results," Shanto said after the match.

"It is important to spend the time in the wicket but it wasn't enough (today)," Shanto said. "Still, it will help for the second Test. It was very important for the openers to put on 62 runs. That's one thing we can look forward to in the next Test match," he added.

In the second innings, centuries from Rishabh Pant (109) and Shubman Gill (119\*) steered India to a 515 lead as captain Rohit Sharma announced a declaration at 287/4.

Shanto, who was at the crease at the start of play on Sunday, admitted that facing Siraj in the opening spell was challenging. Shanto along with Shakib

Al Hasan braved the first hour before drinks were taken. After that, Bangladesh lost their remaining six wickets inside 3.3 overs to hand India an emphatic win.

"The morning session was tough today. The way Siraj was bowling. They were all bowling really well. Shakib also batted well.

We tried to contribute for the team. We tried to bat as long as we could. Today's morning session was one positive thing. We didn't bat well after that," Shanto said.

"I think it was quite challenging to bat today. They were bowling in the rough. I don't want to use it as an excuse. These are challenges we have to take," he added.

## SAFF U17 C'ship: Sumit Sharma believes India's best is yet to come

AGENCIES  
THIMPHU (BHUTAN), SEP 22

Sumit Sharma Brahmacharimayum is a relatively fresh entrant in the India U17 men's squad, but has already made his name as one of the key and trusted players of head coach Ishfaq Ahmed.

And as a team, Sumit believes the best is yet to come in the SAFF U17 Championship.

"We can be better as a team. We didn't play to our potential in the first match. When they set up a mid-block, we were passing sideways a lot. We need to find spaces through the middle and on the wings as well," said Sumit to AIFF.

The 16-year-old centre-back wasn't part of India's SAFF U16 Championship

triumph last year. However, the start to his international career, which is a month old, has been nothing short of a dream.

He scored the winning goal in each of India's last two matches - first against Indonesia in a friendly last month, then against Bangladesh in the SAFF U17 Championship opener two days ago. Both coming off headers from set-piece situations.

"I cried at the final whistle. It was such an emotional moment I can't explain. Scoring the winning goal in the last minute is like a dream. My parents were also crying on the phone after the match," he added.

But Sumit isn't just about headers. Most of the team's build-ups start with him at the back as he scans

the pitch to find outlets, and is also not afraid of carrying the ball forward himself.

"But there's plenty of stuff I have to improve. My physical strength, speed and tactical understanding of the game. As a centre-back, we have to be a leader and guide the team. From the back, we see the entire pitch, so we have to carry the ball forward in the best possible way. We need to have constant communication," he said.

Already six feet tall at the age of 16, Sumit continues to grow in stature, and so do his dreams. "Of course, my next dream is to play for the senior India team," he wished.

India will face Maldives in their second and final Group A match on September 24.

## Laver Cup: Tiafoe upsets Medvedev, Alcaraz pulls Team Europe level with Team World

AGENCIES  
BERLIN, SEP 21

Frances Tiafoe caught fire on Saturday as he rallied past Team Europe's Daniil Medvedev to give Team World a lead in the Laver Cup tennis competition.

The brilliant form on Saturday from Tiafoe helped Team World rally past Team Europe's Medvedev 3-6, 6-4, 10-5 to give his side a 4-2 lead in Berlin. Carlos Alcaraz later lev-

elled for Team Europe with a victory against Ben Shelton.

Tiafoe, who said he felt that he was playing like Roger Federer, is playing some of the best tennis of his career, having just reached the US Open semifinals for the first time after making the final in Cincinnati.

The American entered the match facing a 0-5 ATP head-to-head deficit against Medvedev but did not let that intimi-



date him. He played freely in the critical moments and had a blast on court even when losing points.

After one Medvedev shot drew Tiafoe to his side of the court, the American did his signature sprinkling celebration to compliment his opponent.

"Honestly I just started having fun and laughing with my team, laughing with my team over there and here. Just having a bit

of fun and started finding my rhythm," Tiafoe said in an on-court interaction.

"The courts are obviously much slower than I'm used to playing on, so it's tough playing Daniil on this court.

But after the second set, midway into the second and in the tie-break, I felt like I was Roger Federer, honestly," he said.

Alcaraz performed nearly flawlessly to

defeat Shelton 6-4, 6-4, squaring the Laver Cup at 4-4.

The Spaniard fell in his Laver Cup debut Friday evening in doubles alongside Alexander Zverev but bounced back against the big-serving American.

In a high-quality clash, Shelton did little wrong. Alcaraz was just slightly better, saving all five break points he faced according to Infosys ATP Stats.



## Third & final randomization of polling staff held in Reasi



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
REASI, SEPTEMBER 22

The final/third randomization of the polling staff for deployment across 436 polling stations in AC 56-Gulabgarh (ST), AC-57 Reasi, and AC-58 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi was held here today in the Conference Hall of DC Office Complex.

The process of staff development was conducted under the supervision of General Observer AC-56 Gulabgarh (ST) Saroj Kumar Sethi and General Observer for

AC-57 & AC-58 Avi Prasad in the presence of District Election Officer (DEO), Vishesh Mahajan.

During the third randomization, as many as 2140 employees were assigned their final polling stations in Respective Assembly constituencies.

The randomization process was conducted through dedicated software as per the prescribed guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI), ensuring fairness and impartiality in the deployment of polling staff to three Assembly

constituencies of District Reasi. The whole process was video recorded as per the laid guidelines of the Election Commission of India.

The third randomization involved a computerized process that ensures polling officials are placed randomly, reinforcing the credibility of the electoral process and preventing any bias. Dy. DEO Reasi Rakesh Kumar, RO-57 Anshumali Sharama, Nodal Officer IT/ETPBS Asheesh, and others concerned were present during the randomization process.

## DEO Poonch holds meeting with Nodal Officers to review facility readiness

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
POONCH, SEPTEMBER 22

District Election Officer (DEO) Poonch, Vikas Kundal convened a crucial meeting with Nodal Officers from all three assembly constituencies of Poonch—Surankote, Haveli, and Mendhar—to review the final preparations for the upcoming elections. The meeting, which included Returning Officers (ROs), sector magistrates, and heads of surveillance teams, focused on strategies to maintain the integrity of the electoral process.

During the meeting, the DEO received detailed updates from

the ROs regarding the measures implemented to ensure a fair election environment. Key issues discussed included monitoring the potential influence of cash, liquor, and other inducements that could sway voter decisions. The DEO stressed the importance of vigilance and proactive measures to counteract any attempts at electoral malpractice.

In response to the presentations, the DEO issued strict directives to the ROs and sector magistrates, emphasizing the necessity of adhering to the guidelines established by the Election Commission of India (ECI). He

highlighted that following these protocols is crucial for upholding the principles of free and fair polling in the district.

Additionally, the DEO directed the Nodal Officers and ROs to personally visit the polling stations to ensure that all necessary facilities are in place, further reinforcing the commitment to a smooth electoral process.

The DEO encouraged collaboration among all stakeholders to enhance surveillance and enforcement efforts. He reiterated the administration's commitment to fostering a transparent electoral process that instills confidence among voters.

## DEO Poonch inspects Assured Minimum Facilities in Polling Stations ahead of Elections

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
POONCH, SEPTEMBER 22

District Election Officer (DEO) Poonch, Vikas Kundal conducted a thorough inspection of several polling stations, including those at High School Bandi Chechian, Shah Pur, Islamabad, and various locations in the interior villages, to assess preparations for the Assembly elections scheduled on September 25.

During the visit, DEO Kundal reviewed critical aspects essential for a smooth electoral process. He assessed the installation of CCTV cameras to enhance security and monitoring at the polling stations. Additionally, he evaluated the adequacy of water and power supply to ensure that voters have access to essential services on Election Day.

Kundal placed particular emphasis on the importance of ramps and



other accessibility features, striving to create a voter-friendly atmosphere for individuals with disabilities. He noted the significant efforts made to ensure that all polling stations are equipped with the necessary facilities to support a seamless voting

experience. Kundal highlighted the necessity of creating an inviting environment for voters, stating that a well-prepared polling station not only facilitates the voting process but also bolsters public confidence in the electoral system.

## Inter-District UT Level Chess Competition commences at Batote

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
RAMBAN, SEPTEMBER 22

The Inter-District Union Territory Level Chess Competition was inaugurated today in Batote by

Additional District Development Commissioner Ramban, Roshan Lal.

The tournament, organized by the Department of Youth Services & Sports (DYSS) under

## Inter District Division level Kho-Kho tournament for Girls kicks off at GDC Bhaderwah



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
BHADERWAH, SEPTEMBER 22

Additional Deputy Commissioner Bhaderwah Sunil Kumar today inaugurated the Inter District Division Level Kho-Kho tournament for Under 14 girls in an impressive and well attended function here at Govt. Degree College Bhaderwah.

Ten teams from Districts of Jammu, Udhampur, Samba, Reasi, Poonch, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Samba, Kathua, and host district Doda, comprising of 119 participants and 20 incharge contingent i.e. Managers

and coaches are participating in the tournament.

The tournament is being organized by the department of YS&S as a part of annual calendar of sports activities under the patronage of Rajinder Singh Tara, Director General Youth Services and Sports, under the guidance of Joint Director Ved Parkesh and overall supervision of Sunil Kumar, DYSSO Doda.

The morning session matches were exciting in which Poonch beat Kishtwar; Rajouri beat Ramban; Samba beat Reasi and Jammu beat Kathua.

## Walkathon-cum-rally held at Kulwanta to promote voter awareness



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
RAMNAGAR, SEPTEMBER 22

As part of the Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation initiative, the Sub-Divisional Administration Ramnagar organized a walkathon-cum-rally on Saturday to motivate citizens, especially the youth, to actively participate in the upcoming Assembly elections scheduled for October 1, 2024.

The event aimed to achieve a 100% voter turnout by raising awareness about electoral rights and responsibilities.

The programme, with a special focus on educating first-time voters, highlighted the importance of participating in the democratic process.

The rally was flagged off from Main Chowk, Kulwanta by Naib Tehsildar Prithavi Pal and passed through the main market before concluding at Government High School, Kulwanta.

The event featured cultural performances, skits, awareness speeches, a signature campaign and a voters' pledge to promote inclusive and ethical voting practices.

Rakesh Kumar, Nodal

Officer SVEEP for Assembly Constituency 62-Ramnagar, conveyed the message of District Election Officer Udhampur, Saloni Rai, urging all voters to participate in large numbers while being mindful of the environment by minimizing plastic use during the election campaigns. Kumar also conveyed the Returning Officer Ramnagar's call to honor the administration's outreach efforts by ensuring maximum voter participation on Election Day.

The rally saw the active participation of over 500 people, including students and local voters. Youth icon and Dogri artist Subash Brahmanu, alongside Daleep Singh, a fellow Dogri artist, engaged the audience through performances emphasizing the importance of voting.

In his motivational speech, Subash Brahmanu underscored the significance of each vote in shaping the nation's future and urged all eligible citizens to cast their ballots. He also highlighted the critical role of the SVEEP programme in promoting ethical and informed voting practices.

Chaudhary. As many as 170 students from across 17 districts are participating in this week-long championship in the Under-14, Under-17, and Under-19 categories.

## Police Observer Srinagar visits MCMC, ICR, reviews functioning

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 22

The Police Observer for Srinagar, Raghuvendra Suhas on Sunday visited Media Certification & Monitoring Centre, Srinagar and Integrated Election Control Room set up at DC Office Srinagar and reviewed the functioning of two pivotal offices for ensuring Free, Fair and Transparent elections in the District.

On the occasion, the Observer inspected the documentation of MCMC and MCC violations & complaints in the mainstream media & social media by the staff and the action taken report of the Violations.

He was informed that the teams of MCMC Srinagar during their scanning of various streams of media identified various cases of violations since the announcement of elections to the J&K Legislative Assembly which were pro-



cessed for redressal.

Besides, he was briefed regarding the other functions performed by the MCMC including Certification of Advertisements, and preparation of daily and weekly reports on Paid News and Political Advertisements in Media.

While interacting with the staff, Suhas expressed satisfaction with the overall functioning of centre and directed to remain more vigilant in view of the approaching poll day and report any content

immediately that has the potential of creating Law & Order issue during the election.

While reviewing the functioning of Integrated Control Room, Raghuvendra Suhas inspected the number of grievances registered by the electorate of the district and the measures taken for redressal of the complaints & grievances.

He was informed that the ICR has received 227 grievances so far, all of which stand resolved.

## Mega SVEEP awareness program organized at Patnitop to encourage voter participation

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 22

A mega SVEEP awareness program was held today at Patnitop, featuring series of events including Nukkad Natak, rap songs, folk dances, a music concert and a signature campaign aimed at igniting awareness and encouraging active participation in the upcoming general Assembly Election 2024.

The event was organized in collaboration with the Patnitop Development Authority to spread the message of the importance of voting.

District Election Officer Udhampur, Saloni Rai, graced the event as the chief guest.

In her address, she emphasized the power of every single vote in strengthening democracy and urged all citizens to come forward and exercise their democratic right. She lauded the efforts of the organizers in using cultural activities to engage the masses and foster electoral awareness.



The program saw enthusiastic participation from various stakeholders and was attended by ADDC Udhampur Rajinder Singh, PO Poshan, Subash Dogra, CPO Mohammad Iqbal, CEO PDA, Devendra Singh Bhau, SDM Chenani, Gurdev Kumar, DPO Dr. Preeti Sharma alongside large number of prominent citizens, adding to the festive atmosphere aimed at promoting elec-

toral engagement. The performances, which focused on the importance of voting and the power of each citizen's voice, were well-received by the audience, igniting a spirit of participation and responsibility.

The event concluded with a signature campaign, where attendees pledged to vote and encourage others to do the same.

