

**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:

- ↑ or ↓ body temperature
- ↑ or ↓ pulse rate
- ↑ or ↓ blood pressure
- ↑ or ↓ haemoglobin
- ↑ or ↓ platelet count
- ↑ or ↓ urine output
- ↑ or ↓ level of consciousness
- ↑ or ↓ level of alertness
- ↑ or ↓ level of activity

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

# JINDRAH IMAGES

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## Nation wants to know what your grandmother Indhira Gandhi used to call Sheikh Abdullah: Amit Shah asks Rahul in Udhampur rally

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
UDHAMPUR, SEP 26

Lashing out at the leader of the Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah Thursday asked Rahul whether he knew what his grandmother Indhira Gandhi used to call Sheikh Abdullah.

"Are you aware what Indira Gandhi would call Sheikh Abdullah? Do you know

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4



**Omar's statement clear indication that NC-Cong have conceded defeat: Smriti Irani**

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

BJP's star campaigner and former Union Minister, Smriti Irani, on Thursday said that the statement of Omar Abdullah is

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

**Vote for us in large numbers, PoK will be ours soon: Yogi Adityanath**

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and BJP's firebrand leader Yogi Adityanath Wednesday said that people of J&K must ensure BJP's victory

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**Kishan Reddy, Chugh, Sat review preparations for PM's rally**

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy, BJP National General Secretary, Tarun Chugh, and J&K BJP's Working President,

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

**Rahul to address 2 rallies on Sep 27, Priyanka on Sept 28**

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEP 26

Senior Congress leader and All India Congress Committee (AICC) incharge J&K, Bharatsinh Solanki, Thursday exuded confidence that the Congress-NC coalition is set to achieve a landslide victory in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a press conference, Solanki as per the news agency, attributed the BJP's desperation to their dwindling fortunes in the state. "The BJP has deployed its top leaders, including the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Defence Minister, and UP Chief Minister, to desperately cling to power by any means necessary."

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

**Pistol, five rounds recovered in Kathua**

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
KATHUA, JAMMU, SEPT 26

Police on Thursday seized a pistol and five rounds of ammunition from Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, officials said.

Acting on a tipoff, a police team found a packet lying at an isolated spot in the Khanpur village and seized it, they said.

A pistol and five rounds were found in the packet, the officials added.

**Assembly Elections Phase III**

## 11 ACs of Jammu District ready for polls on October 1

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 26

Eleven Assembly Constituencies (ACs) of district Jammu are all set for polls with over 12 lakh voters going to exercise their right to franchise on October 1, during the third and final phase of General Elections to the Legislative Assembly.

The district comprises eleven Assembly Constituencies namely Bishnah (SC), Suchetgarh (SC), R.S. Pura-Jammu South, Bahu, Jammu East, Nagrota, Jammu West, Jammu North, Marh (SC), Akhnoor (SC) and Chhamb, with a total of 12,00,977 voters; 6,19,066 male, 5,81,887 female and 24 third gender voters.

For smooth and hassle-free facilitation of voters, ECI has established 1,494 polling stations across the district with 609 urban polling stations and 885 rural polling stations.

To foster maximum voter participation and facilitate voters, dedicated polling stations have been established across district for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), Polling booths managed by women as Pink Polling Stations, Polling Stations manned by youths, Green Polling Stations and Unique Polling Stations.

Among all the eleven Assembly Constituencies of the district, 74-R.S.

## Borders in north Kashmir peaceful, hopeful of peaceful poll day: PK Pole

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, SEP 26

Chief electoral officer PK Pole on Thursday said that government is prepared with a plan-B in case of any disruptions in border areas of north Kashmir, expressing hope for peaceful election similar to the first and second phases.

Speaking with reporters in Bandipora, Pole, as per news agency, said that if any disruption happens during election in border areas of north Kashmir, they are ready with plan-B. "First two phases happened peacefully in the Valley because of the people and security forces maintaining peace," he said. He said

Pura-Jammu South AC has highest number of 1,30,107 registered voters, comprising 67,322 males, 62,782 females and 3 transgender voters. The constituency also houses 149 polling stations, 98 urban and 51 rural for smooth and hassle free voting experience for all registered voters.

75-Bahu AC comes next



that people now wait in long queues to cast votes and participate in the festival of democracy.

"We have set up 312 polling stations in Bandipora district, and the ECI has completed all formalities for polls on October 1. I visited the border areas today; people are waiting for election day," he added. "Our borders are peaceful, and we hope it will remain so on poll day," he said. KNO

with a voter population of 1,21,131, among which 61,963 are males, 59,159 females and 9 third gender voters. To facilitate the voters, 139 polling stations have been established in this constituency; 131 urban polling stations and 8 rural polling stations.

72-Bishnah (SC) Assembly Constituency

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

**Omar blames centre's 'normalcy' narrative for low voter turnout in Sgr**

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, SEP 26

National Conference (NC) Vice President Omar Abdullah expressed disappointment over the low voter turnout in recently held phase-II election in Srinagar, attributing it to the Centre's portrayal of high voter participation as a sign of "normalcy" in Jammu and Kashmir.

Omar, as per the news agency stated that despite no boycott call and no major incidents of violence, the turnout remained unexpectedly low, particularly in Srinagar.

He argued that the Centre's emphasis on high voter participation as an acceptance of the abrogation of Article 370 may have discouraged people from voting, as they did not want to send the "wrong message" to the world.

Omar also criticized the visits by international diplomats, suggesting that Srinagar residents felt used and misrepresented by the government's efforts to project normalcy in the region, which also contributed to voter apathy.

The former chief minister of erstwhile Jammu & Kashmir state pointed to Home Minister Amit Shah's confidence in the BJP securing more than 50 seats in J&K, suggesting prior knowledge of the EVM outputs.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## Alliance on the brink? NC-Congress rift deepens

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, SEP 26

A rift has emerged between the alliance partners, National Conference (NC) and Congress as the latter's candidate Tariq Hammed Karra finds himself in a precarious position for the Central Shalteng constituency. This follows NC loyalists rallying behind independent candidate Mohammad Irfan Shah, who has filed his nomination against Karra, the official alliance candidate.

According to the news agency, despite a formal seat-sharing agreement between the two parties, Shah's independent candidacy has raised serious questions about the stability of the alliance.

The situation became particularly evident during a major rally addressed by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi earlier this week, which aimed to boost support for Karra. Notably absent were NC leaders, unlike Gandhi's earlier rally in Surankote, where he was joined by NC president

Farooq Abdullah. This absence has led many to speculate about the potential collapse of the coalition.

Senior Congress leader G A Mir expressed disappointment over the NC's inaction regarding Shah's candidacy, saying Congress has always expelled members who defy party decisions. "We have acted swiftly in such cases. The NC's silence on Shah's move raises serious concerns about their commitment to this alliance," Mir said.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## For first time, Mehbooba reveals behind-the-scenes details of 2015 PDP-BJP alliance

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, SEP 26

In a fierce attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), People's Democratic Party (PDP) President and former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti accused the party of hypocrisy and political opportunism.

Speaking at a campaign rally in Bahu in support of PDP candidate Virendra Singh Sonu, Mehbooba claimed that Ram Madhav, a senior BJP

leader, made desperate attempts to form a coalition government with her party after the 2014 elections.

As per the news agency Correspondent, revealing behind-the-scenes details of the 2015 PDP-BJP alliance, Mehbooba Mufti stated, "For the first two months, Ram Madhav kept visiting my father, the late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, to strike a deal. Then for three months, he kept coming to me, practically begging to form the government. BJP

accepted all of PDP's conditions at that time, and only then did we agree to form a coalition."

Mehbooba Mufti issued a strong statement about her party's relevance in Jammu and Kashmir's political landscape, asserting that no government could be formed in the region without the PDP's support. Criticizing the BJP's rhetoric about making a Chief Minister from Jammu, she challenged their claims: "They've

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## Domestic violence act applicable to every woman irrespective of religious affiliation: Supreme Court

**AGENCIES**  
NEW DELHI, SEPT 26

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, is a civil code that is applicable to every woman in India irrespective of her religious affiliation or social background, the Supreme Court has said. A bench of Justice B V Nagarathna and Justice N Kotiswar Singh said the 2005 legislation was applicable to all women for more effective protection of their rights guaranteed under the Constitution.

"The Act is a piece of civil code which is appli-

cable to every woman in India irrespective of her religious affiliation and/or social background for a more effective protection of her rights guaranteed under the Constitution and in order to protect women victims of domestic violence occurring in a domestic relationship," the bench said.

The apex court delivered its verdict on an appeal filed by a woman challenging an order of the Karnataka High Court in a matter related to the grant of maintenance and compensation.

The woman had earlier



filed a petition under section 12 of the Act which was allowed by a magistrate in February 2015 granting Rs 12,000 as monthly maintenance and

Rs 1 lakh towards compensation to her.

The top court noted that the husband had filed an appeal against the order which was dismissed by

the appellate court on the ground of delay.

It noted that later, he filed another application under section 25 of the Act, which deals with duration and alteration of orders, before a magistrate but the same was dismissed.

The bench said thereafter, he filed an appeal before the appellate court, which allowed it and remanded the matter to the magistrate with a direction to consider his application by giving an opportunity to both parties to adduce their evidence.

It noted that aggrieved by the order, the woman approached the high court which dismissed her plea in April last year and directed the magistrate to consider the application filed by the man under section 25 of the Act.

In its verdict, the apex court referred to section 25 and said it was evident that an aggrieved person or a respondent as defined under the Act can seek for alteration, modification or revocation of an order made under the provisions of the Act if there was a change in the

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## LG chairs 20th University Council Meeting of SKUAST Jammu



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 26

Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha chaired the 20th University Council Meeting of SKUAST Jammu at Raj Bhawan, today.

The meeting was attended by Sh Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Sh Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary, Agriculture Production Department; Sh Santosh D Vaidya, Principal Secretary, Finance Department; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Dr. BN Tripathi, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST Jammu; Prof. Nazir A. Ganai, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST Kashmir; Prof. P.L. Gautam, Pro-Chancellor, Career Point University Hamirpur; Dr. M.C Sharma, former Director, Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar, Bareilly; Prof Anil Kumar,

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## Sikh Community & transporters extends full support to Apni Party's candidate for Jammu South, Pavneet Kour

JINNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

The Sikh Community and Transporters have come forward and extended their unshaken support to the Apni Party's Contesting Candidate for Jammu South, Pavneet Kour.

Addressing a press conference here in Jammu, the prominent people, Sikh Community, and transporters gathered to extend their full support to Pavneet Kour.

"It was a long-standing demand of the community to field Sikh candidates in some of the constituencies. But other political parties in J&K ignored legitimate demands raised by the Sikh Community, and they did not field any Sikh candidate. However, the Apni Party's President, Syed Mohammed Altaf Bukhari gave the Party mandate to a Sikh woman, Pavneet Kour,



and fielded her from Jammu South acknowledging the demands of the community that is being widely appreciated across Jammu and Kashmir," they said.

They said that it becomes the responsibility of women, and other members of the society to join hands, and support Pavneet Kour, who is approachable, and belongs to a humble

background so that she gets elected as MLA from Jammu South.

"Pavneet Kour is the voice of the poor people, and we shall give her an opportunity by casting our votes in her favour. We had trusted other political parties and voted many politicians to the Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha. However, they hardly return to these constituencies from where

they got elected," they added.

They further stated that the condition of roads and other infrastructure is miserable from Satwari Chowk, Miran Sahib, R.S. Pura, Gadi Garh, and other adjoining areas and no one takes care of the issues being confronted by the people.

While extending their support, they said that the people should vote and elect Pavneet Kour as an MLA from Jammu South, who can be approached any time, and should work for them.

They said that the transporters, and Sikh community have come forward to support the candidature of Pavneet Kour.

They appealed to the people from all the community to vote and support Pavneet Kour for Jammu South Constituency.

## District Election Office Kathua hosts special SVEEP Nukkad Natak in Jasrota, Hiranagar ACs

JINNEWS SERVICE  
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 26

As part of the ongoing efforts to raise awareness for the upcoming assembly elections, the District SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) Cell of District Election Centre Kathua conducted a series of Nukkad Natak in Jasrota and Hiranagar Assembly constituencies.

The renowned NATRANG group of Jammu, known for its impactful and socially relevant performances, was invited to stage these Nukkad Natak. The vibrant and captivating performances of the artists attracted large crowds at both the venues.

The first Nukkad Natak was held at Government Higher Secondary School Budhi in Jasrota Assembly Constituency. The school's open grounds provided a platform to the artists to spread the message about the power of voting, targeting particularly first-time voters and the general community members.

Through interactive and humorous skits, the NATRANG artists shed light on the significance of each vote in shaping a strong democratic process.

The second Nukkad Natak took place in the bustling Main Bazaar area



of Hiranagar Assembly Constituency. The performance attracted a diverse audience, ranging from students and local business owners to daily commuters and shopkeepers. The Nukkad Natak at Hiranagar focused on debunking myths about voting and explaining the voting process, encouraging voters to make their voices heard by participating in the democratic exercise.

The audience praised the efforts of the SVEEP Cell and the NATRANG group, emphasizing the role of such creative endeavors in spreading the message of electoral participation. "These street plays are not just performances but are tools to educate and engage the electorate", said a local youngster in Hiranagar.

The Nukkad Natak also incorporated messages of ethical voting, highlighting the dangers of malpractices such as vote-buying and

coercion. Artists interacted with the audience post-performance, encouraging them to spread the message to their families and friends and explaining the importance of casting an informed vote.

District Nodal Officer Neeraj Bhargav said "The District SVEEP Cell has lined up several more such initiatives in the coming days as the elections draw closer. These initiatives are a part of the larger mandate to make the election process inclusive and ensure that no eligible voter is left behind".

"The overwhelming response from the public in both Jasrota and Hiranagar shows that people are ready to be part of the change, and we are hopeful that this enthusiasm will translate into higher voter turnout in the upcoming elections" added District Nodal Officer, Neeraj Bhargav.

## Two Health & Wellness Centres of Kathua receive NQAS Certification

JINNEWS SERVICE  
KATHUA, SEPTEMBER 26

The AAM Sub-Centres (SC) Bannu Chak (Hiranagar) and Tarda have been officially certified under the National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS).

As per the Chief Medical Officer Kathua Dr Vijay Raina, these healthcare institutions underwent a rigorous multi-level assessment, culminating in the final external evaluations conducted on 9th and 10th September 2024, respectively. The formal results were uploaded today, 26th September 2024, on the Saksham portal.

Dr. Vijay Raina, while speaking at a brief gathering in his office, applauded the collective efforts of all stakeholders involved in this accomplishment. He extended his gratitude to the Secretary Health and Medical Education J&K, Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Mission Director NHM, Director Health Jammu, State Quality Team, and the entire Kathua team for their dedicated contributions in achieving this prestigious recognition.

## IUST NSS organizes Swachhata Hi Seva Pledge Event

JINNEWS SERVICE  
AWANTIPORA, SEPT 24

The National Service Scheme (NSS) unit of the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) organized a 'Swachhata Hi Seva' pledge event today at the University campus. The event, aimed at promoting cleanliness and environmental responsibility, was coordinated by NSS Program Officer Dr. Tariq Ahmad Ganaie.

The event saw active participation from several senior officials of the University, including Prof. Abdul Wahid, Registrar, Mr. Sameer Wazir, Finance Officer, and Dr. Rumaan Bashir, Controller of Examinations, alongside NSS volunteers. Prof. Abdul Wahid led the pledge-taking ceremony, where he read the 'Swachhata Hi Seva' pledge, encouraging all present to commit themselves to cleanliness and contribute towards the well-being of society.

Following the pledge, the NSS unit conducted a cleanliness drive at the Polytechnic wing of the IUST, reinforcing the importance of maintaining a clean and hygienic environment. The event reflects IUST's continued commitment to community service and the promotion of environmental sustainability.

## SVEEP activities held in various schools in Kupwara



JINNEWS SERVICE  
KUPWARA, SEPTEMBER 26

On the directions of District Election Officer Kupwara and as a key component of the ongoing Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) campaign, District Nodal Officer SVEEP (CEO Kupwara) today organized awareness programmes in various schools to educate the voters about their voting rights and responsibilities.

The SVEEP commit-

tee under the direction of District Nodal Officer SVEEP conducted a series of Awareness Campaign at BHSS Sanzipora, Boys High School Keegan, Hr. Sec. School Warpora and Hr. Sec. School Keran.

The events witnessed enthusiastic participation from new voters and disabled individuals. Awareness about regular broadcasts and publications to keep the public informed about key electorate its procedures and updates were also given.

## Pinwheel discussion on Importance of Vote organised at GCW Gandhinagar



JINNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 26

NSS Unit 2nd of PSPS GCW Gandhi Nagar JAMMU today organized a thought provoking Pinwheel Discussion on Importance of Vote in Democracy.

Event started with a welcome address by Saloni Kumari, Senior NSS Volunteer of B.Com sem 5th. The event aimed to educate and encourage students to exercise their Right to vote.

The Discussion highlighted the impact of voting on Democracy, personal freedom and community development. Students shared their

perspectives on voting challenges and electoral reforms. All the volunteers enthusiastically participated in the event.

Programme Officer NSS Unit 2 Prof. Anupama sharma expressed gratitude for the students' efforts by praising their diligence and support. NSS Volunteers Taniya Verma, Tania Sharma, Tanshu Sambhal and Rohini Bhagat and the fresher from sem 1st also actively took part in this Discussion by putting up their views.

Principal of the college Dr. S.P Saraswat applauded the efforts of volunteers.

## General Observer visits various polling stations in Karnah- AC



JINNEWS SERVICE  
KUPWARA, SEPTEMBER 26

General Observer for Assembly Constituency 1-Karnah, Parkash Bindu today visited various polling stations to review the arrangements made for upcoming Assembly election.

The General Observer also visited the first poll-

ing station of India located at Seemari area and Polling Station Amrohee which are located beyond the fences.

On the occasion, the General Observer stressed upon the officers and field staff to ensure proper arrangements in place to ensure smooth conduct of the polling in the area.

## Health Department bids farewell to retiring officials



JINNEWS SERVICE  
DODA, SEPTEMBER 26

The staff of CMO, Dy. CMO, and ANMT Doda on Thursday hosted a function to bid farewell to Anusuya Bhan, Principal ANMT and Ayaz Ahmed Butt, Community Health

Officer at PHC Gundna.

The event concluded with staff members wishing the retirees a happy and healthy post-retirement life, marking the end of a distinguished chapter in their careers while leaving behind an enduring legacy.

## Female poll staff imparted specialized training for managing Pink Booths in Kupwara



JINNEWS SERVICE  
KUPWARA, SEPTEMBER 26

In a significant step towards empowering women in the electoral process and adding a unique feature of inclusiveness in the upcoming assembly elections in Kupwara district on October 1st, the District Election Office, Kupwara today conducted the final phase of election training for female poll personnel whose services are being utilized at special Pink Polling Stations in the district.

Training session was chaired by the District Election Officer (DEO), Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan.

Addressing the session, the DEO emphasized the

vital role of Pink Booths in fostering greater female participation in the democratic process.

She said that Pink booths, staffed and managed entirely by women, are designed to promote inclusivity, gender equity in the democratic process and provide a comfortable and secure voting environment for female voters.

She also said that Pink polling stations are very crucial and there is no chance of any error on poll day and it should be ensured that these polling booths operate smoothly and efficiently on Election Day.

The DEO directed the female staff for pink Polling stations to get maximum benefits out of this

final training session and make these special polling stations more women-friendly which includes creating a welcoming and secure environment, ensuring privacy, and addressing any specific need which female voters might have.

The DEO highlighted the importance of these measures for boosting female voter turnout and empowering women to actively participate in the electoral process.

The session covered various aspects of election management, including voter verification, EVM handling, and maintaining transparency, impartiality and strengthening the team bond by contacting each other in advance.

The training concluded with an interactive Q&A, allowing participants to clarify their doubts and discuss potential challenges.

During the day-long session, Assembly level Master trainers (ALMTs) delivered exhaustive training and hands-on experience sessions to equip the participating female employees with skills and knowledge to operate poll machinery on the day of elections.

In the second session, training was also imparted to the poll staff of youth manned polling stations.

## IIMC students perform Nukkad Natak as part of cleanliness drive

JINNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPT 26:

The Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), Jammu, organized a two-day "Swachhata Hi Sewa Campaign," here today in which a thought-provoking theatre performance was held by enthusiastic participation from students across various departments, including English Journalism, Digital Media, and Hindi Journalism.

The event was aimed at spreading awareness

about cleanliness and hygiene.

The first performance was presented by the students of the Digital Media, titled "Pani Ki Pukar", which emphasized the critical importance of water conservation and maintaining water cleanliness. The play focused on the idea that clean water can positively impact society if water resources are regularly maintained and purified.

Participants in "Pani Ki Pukar" were Tamanna, Preety, Anuja, Netra,

Pranav, Adil, Aabhay, Nisha, Janvi, Madhuri, Anamika, Varun Vijay and Shruti. Following this, students from the Hindi Journalism department presented a play titled "Swachhata Ki Saudebazi". This play messaged as cleanliness should not be a superficial act or for mere display, but rather a committed effort to improve society. They emphasized the importance of genuine involvement in maintaining cleanliness at home, in the city, and throughout



the nation.

Participants in "Swachhata Ki Saudebazi" included Shivam Sharma, Shubham Pandey, Nikhil Nayan, Mohit Singh, Punita Kumari, Indra-

jeet Kumar, Prasaananta Gadhavi, Himanshi Bora, Himanshu Jat, Aman Singh, Suraj Kumar and Siddharth Maurya.

At last, English Journalism students performed a

play titled "Kahan Soch? Kahan Sochalya," which highlighted the critical importance of proper sanitation and the continued issue of open defecation in certain parts of the country. Students stressed the need for immediate action to address this persistent social problem.

Participants in "Kahan Soch? Kahan Sochalya" included Anjali, Aditya, English, Saloni

Haider, Puneet, Dixit, Binit, Maitrayee, Akshita and Stuti.

The event was moderated by Harshit and Chandrani Das, who skillfully guided the audience through the performances.

The Regional Director of IIMC Jammu, Dr. Dilip Kumar, played a pivotal role in planning the event, ensuring its smooth execution and success.

Prof. Anil Saumitra, course coordinator for Hindi Journalism, emphasized the importance of such activities in the holistic development of

students. He encouraged the students to continue organizing similar events that foster creativity and teamwork.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Vinit Utpal, Assistant Professor, Digital Media, who expressed gratitude to Dr. Ravia Gupta, Assistant Professor and convener of the event, as well as Mr. Gulshan Kumar and Mr. Madhusudan, Academic Associates and co-convenors of the event for their contributions.



## RMMC, Govt. Ayurvedic Hospital celebrates Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2024

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

In collaboration with Ramakrishna Mission Medical Centre, Udhewala, Jammu and Project Poshan ICDS, a holistic nutrition awareness and growth monitoring camp under Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2024 organized by Govt. Ayurvedic Hospital Jammu wherein Swami Yajnadharamanda, Dr. Vandana Dogra, Medical Superintendent GAH Jammu, Dr. Aruna Bhat Deputy Medical Superintendent GAH delivered awareness lecture on "the principles and practices of Holistic Nutrition and Ayush based dietetics".

Swami Yajnadharamanda, Secretary Ramakrishna Mission appreciated the initiative taken by ministry of women and child development and also promise to take part in the activities in future.



A team of doctors comprising Dr. Arun Gupta Medical Officer, Dr. Sukhpreet Medical Officer examined 106 children assessed their growth monitoring using Poshan Calculator.

Suvarn Prashan drops were also provided on the Pushya Naskhatra for physical and mental wellbeing of children. Free medicines and nutritional supplements were also provided to the pregnant women and children.

A yoga session was also organized for women wellness IEC material on Anemia Prevention Millets was also distributed among the beneficiaries. The ultimate goal of

Rashtriya Poshan Abhiyan is to achieve improvement in key nutrition parameters for both children and women, making it a people's movement, or Jan Andolan. By leveraging technology, targeted approaches, and convergence, the program aims to reduce stunting, under nutrition, and anaemia among young children, women, and adolescent girls. For other information contact us on number 9596984032. Ramakrishna Mission, Jammu provides cultural, educational and medical services following the ideals of Sri Ramakrishna Dev, Maa Sarada and Swami Vivekananda.

## Bhagwa Seva Foundation and Movement Kalki organize Grand Satsang in Ghagwal

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
GHAGWAL, SEPT 26

Bhagwa Seva Foundation and Movement Kalki, under the aegis of their esteemed leadership, organized a grand Satsang today at the ancient Hanuman Temple in Ghagwal. The primary objective of the Satsang was to promote the rich and divine Sanatan culture and spread its significance across the world. The event was successfully coordinated under the leadership of Ram Krishna Sharma.

The chief guest for the occasion was Maharaj Thakur Arjun, the Baridar of Vaishno Devi Temple in Katra. Several prominent saints from the Nath Panthi Sadhu Samaj were also present. In his address, Maharaj Thakur Arjun elaborated on the unique aspects of Sanatan Dharma and urged



the youth to refrain from blindly following Western influences. He emphasized that recognizing the greatness of one's own culture is crucial for individual and societal growth. He said, "The confluence of knowledge, devotion, and yoga forms the foundation of a true Satsang, and these three pillars guide society towards spirituality and righteousness."

Appeal for Awareness and Protection of Cows:

Maharaj Thakur Arjun highlighted the importance of Gau Mata (Mother Cow), noting that she embodies 64 pilgrimage sites and 33 crore deities within her. He encouraged everyone present to take a pledge to protect and revere Gau Mata and strive for her recognition as the National Mother of India. He stated that society must take strict action against any form of cruelty towards cows.

Emphasis on Meditation and Its Importance:

The event also featured guided meditation, with Maharaj Thakur Arjun explaining its profound significance. He remarked, "The meditation practices of Sanatan Dharma are ancient and magnificent, yet they are gradually fading away. Western countries are now realizing their importance, while we, from the very land of its origin, are forgetting it." He called upon everyone to understand the greatness of these traditions and pass them on to future generations.

Contributions from Movement Kalki Representatives:

Vikram Mahajan, a board member of Movement Kalki, spoke about the importance of worshipping one's Kuldevta (family deity) and emphasized not using bamboo incense

sticks at home, as they are considered inauspicious. Meanwhile, another board member, Rohit Bajrangi, stressed the need for societal unity. He said, "There are forces trying to mislead our society and create division. We must remain alert and united to counter such disruptive elements."

Purpose of Movement Kalki:

Deepak Singh, the founder of Movement Kalki, stated, "The core objective of Movement Kalki is to unify society and work towards the re-establishment of Dharma." He urged everyone to come together and actively contribute towards the protection and promotion of Sanatan culture.

The program concluded with all the attendees taking a solemn pledge to protect and restore the glory of India's Sanatan heritage.

## GDC Neeli Nallah Udhampur organizes activities for the celebration of Gandhi Jayanti 2024

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

To commemorate Gandhi Jayanti Celebration, GDC Neeli Nallah Udhampur organized a series of activities under the theme "Truth and Non Violence". The activities included Bhajan Singing, Poster making, Slogan Writing, Reels making and Essay Writing competition. These activities were organised under the able patronage of Prof. (Dr.) Seema Arora, Principal of the college to honour Mahatma Gandhi, Father of Nation for his significant contributions to the country.

The event started with bhajan singing competition in which about 6 participants participated and sang songs dedicated to Gandhiji's unbound love for music. Ms. Anju, of Semester 5th, Ms. Rushi Dogra of Semester



3rd, Ms. Sonam Rajput of Semester 3rd secured 1st, 2nd and 3rd position respectively. Further a poster making and slogan writing competition was organized in which about 15 students participated depicting their messages through posters and slogans. Ms. Madiha Mir of Semester 3rd secured 1st position in Slogan writing competition whereas Ms. Reeta Jamwal secured 1st position in Poster making competition. This was followed by a reel making competition in which students made a 30 second reel based on Gandhiji's principle of 'simple living

and high thinking. An essay writing competition was also a part of the event in which about 10 students participated and wrote essay on Gandhiji's Birth and life, philosophy, legacy, action, social reforms, truth, non-violence, simplicity, freedom etc.

Speaking on the occasion Dr. Seema Arora, Principal of the college honoured Mahatma Gandhi and said that he is known for his simplicity, self-confidence, truthfulness, and empathetic nature. He was a renowned freedom fighter and an authoritative & powerful leader who

played an essential role in India's struggle for Independence against British rule of India. He was also considered the father of the country. What took his status 'legendary' heights was how he decided to make simplicity a part of his being. Once Gandhi became an active part of the Indian freedom struggle, he changed many aspects of his own existence & lifestyle. He decided to lead from the front and set an example. In the end she praised the students for taking part in the activities with zeal and enthusiasm as well as staff too for organizing the event.

The convenor of the program was Dr. Sunil Tanoch, Assistant Professor in sociology. Others present in the event were Prof. Rekha Sharma, Assistant Professor in Dogri and Mr. Rajeshwar Singh Jamwal.

## BSF School Jammu felicitates Sports Winners



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

BSF School Jammu felicitated the sports champions who emerged victorious in Jammu Division Athletics Championship organised by Department of Youth Services and Sports, District Jammu held in Jammu University on 23rd and 24th September 2024.

The students took part in various track events and brought laurels to their Alma Mater by winning 6 gold and 4 silver medals.

In 400 mtr race, Wajid

Ali claimed the top spot and won Gold medal and in U-19 Boys (800 mtr) he bagged Silver medal. He also proved his mettle in 4x400 mtr Relay race and won Gold medal.

Another outstanding athlete, Momin Mirza won Gold medal in 4x100 mtr Relay race. In U-17 Boys (400m) track event and in 4x400 mtr Relay race, he got Silver medal.

Toiyab Shad won Gold medal in 4x100 mtr Relay race and Anshuman Aryan bagged Gold medal in U-17 Boys 800 mtr race .

Shaz Ali secured first

position in U-17 Boys 1500 mtr race and also bagged Silver medal in 4x400 mtr Relay race. Pratibha Singh won gold medal in Shot Put and Discuss throw in JK UT Level Athletic Championship held at Reasi on 12th & 13th September 2024.

Principal Dr S.K Shuka congratulated the winners for their stellar performance. He also appreciated the efforts of the Sports Incharges Mr. Veerji Pandita, Mr. Amarjit Singh and Ms. Rohini for nurturing the students for different Sports events.

## IT department to organize special drive in October to resolve taxpayer grievances in J&K

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, SEPT 26

The Income Tax Department, Srinagar has announced a special drive to address the grievances of taxpayers in Jammu and Kashmir. The initiative is aimed at providing a platform for taxpayers to raise their concerns and seek timely resolution to issues related to income tax matters. The drive will be conducted in two phases from October 3rd to 5th, 2024, and October 7th to 10th, 2024 at the Aaykar Sewa Kendra, Aaykar Bhawan, Rajbagh, Srinagar under the supervision of Shri Vikram Sahay, IRS, Principal Commissioner of Income Tax, J&K. Sahay informed that the Income Tax Department is committed to fostering a positive and collaborative relationship with taxpayers. By providing a dedicated platform for grievance resolution, the department aims to enhance taxpayer satisfaction and promote a smoother tax filing experience, he added.

## Fashion Show organized by CU Jammu as a part of Swachhata Hi Seva 2024 campaign



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

Central University of Jammu in collaboration with Student For Development (SFD) organized a unique and inspiring fashion show as part of the nationwide Swachhata Hi Seva 2024 (SHS 2024) campaign. The event highlighted the importance of sustainability and environmental conservation by showcasing creative outfits and accessories crafted from waste and discarded materials. The event was lauded by the Honorable Vice Chancellor, Central University of Jammu, Prof. Sanjeev Jain. He praised the creativity and dedication of the participants in promoting the message of cleanliness

and waste management. He stated that "This initiative reflects not only the talent of our students but also the university's commitment to sustainability and the larger mission of Swachhata Hi Seva 2024 campaign".

Dr. Neeta Rani, Dr. Kiran and Lt Dr. Pankaj Mehta coordinated the event, ensuring its success. The fashion show, which brought innovative designs to the runway, stood as a testament to the power of upcycling and the potential of turning discarded materials into something beautiful and purposeful. Prof. Ritu Bakshi and Dr. Nancy Mengi graced the event as judges. The nodal officer for the event, Prof. Richa Kothari, commended the

efforts of both the organizers and participants, noting how the show effectively merged fashion with an environmental cause. The designs, ranging from accessories to everyday wearable outfits, were all made from materials that would otherwise end up in landfills, including plastic bottles, paper, fabric scraps, and other non-biodegradable waste. The fashion show not only entertained but also delivered a powerful message of sustainability, echoing the principles of the Swachhata Hi Seva 2024 campaign and reinforcing the importance of waste reduction and environmental stewardship. The event was widely appreciated by students, and faculty.

## Block level Swachhata Abhiyan being organized by NYKS across UTs of J&K and Ladakh

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

The national cleanliness campaign has evolved into a grassroots movement, encompassing activities like spring cleaning, historic site preservation, discussions, and rallies. NYKS in J&K and Ladakh UTs are spearheading numerous initiatives across all district blocks in both UTs.

In Udhampur, Nehru Yuva Kendra in coordination with Govt Hr Sec School, Marta, to organize a cleanliness and plastic eradication drive. Prior to the event, Arya Youth Club on boarded the students on MY Bharat portal. Volunteers collected over 50 kilograms of plastic, which was later disposed of properly. All participants took the Swachhata Pledge. Additionally, poster making, wall painting, and tree plantation activities were held. A pad Yatra involving 100 participants carrying posters was conducted in Block Nagrota of Jammu, in collaboration with Sun Shine High School. The program was presided over by Mr. Parvez, SHO Nagrota, with Smt Shaveeta President and other members



of Mahila Mandal led the rally.

In the Kashmir Division, cleanliness drives were conducted in Fakir Gujri village by NYK Srinagar in collaboration with MY Bharat Volunteers. NYK Budgam organized a cleanliness drive at High School Khan Sahib with the support of the Education Department and other Youth Club Members . NYK Baramulla and NYK Pulwama identified neglected garbage points with the assistance of NGOs.

In the UT of Ladakh, Nehru Yuva Kendra, Kargil, partnered with the Rural Educational & Developmental Organization to organize a clean-

ness drive in Gascond village of Drass block. The initiative was part of the Swachhata hi Seva Campaign, which also included a cleanliness drive and Swachhata rally. NYK Leh conducted an oath ceremony and cleaned the campus of Gaymang High School, Leh. Smt Tajamal Ara, Deputy Director Leh, urged participants to implement regular cleanliness drives and manage waste effectively to mitigate environmental and health risks. Kits comprising of diaries, pens, and caps with the MY Bharat logo were distributed to participants in the Kashmir Division of J&K UT and Ladakh UT.

## Government of India takes action to protect Citizens' Data: Websites Exposing Aadhaar, PAN Details blocked

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

The Government of India is committed to have an open, safe & trusted and accountable internet. It has come to the notice of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) that some websites were exposing sensitive personal identifiable information including Aadhaar and PAN Card details of Indian citizens. This has been taken up seriously as the Government accords highest priority to safe cyber security practices and protection of personal data. In line with this, prompt action has been taken to block these websites.

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has lodged a complaint with the police authorities concerned for violation of the prohibition under section 29(4) of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 on public display of Aadhaar information.

The analysis of these websites by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has shown some security

flaws in these websites. The concerned websites owners have been provided guidance about the actions to be taken at their end for hardening the ICT infrastructures and fixing the vulnerabilities.

CERT-In has issued "Guidelines for Secure Application Design, Development, Implementation & Operations" for all entities using IT applications. CERT-In has also given directions under the Information Technology Act, 2000, ("IT Act") relating to information security practices, procedure, prevention, response and reporting of cyber incidents.

MeitY has notified the Information Technology (Reasonable Security Practices and Procedures and Sensitive Personal Data or Information) Rules, 2011, which provide for non-publication and non-disclosure of sensitive personal data. Any adverse-ly affected party can approach the Adjudicating Officer under section 46 of the IT Act for filing a complaint and seeking compensation. The IT Secretaries of the States are empowered as Adjudicating Officers under the IT Act.



## FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

## Nation wants to...

why Sheikh was arrested by Congress? Do you know about the white paper Congress once tabled in the J & K Assembly and withdrew shortly. Nation wants to know all this," Shah said addressing a massive rally in Udhampur. "You (Rahul) have forgotten about the white paper on Sheikh but we (BJP) will table it in the Assembly after polls."

He said whosoever will promote terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir will face the fate of Parliament convict Muhammad Afzal Guru who was sent to gallows in New Delhi's Tihar Jail.

Shah as per the news agency, lashed out at National Conference vice president for claiming that Afzal Guru shouldn't have been hanged. "Phir kya biryani khilani thi usko (Was I supposed to give him Biryani instead). Those who would promote terrorism will meet the same fate as that of Afzal Guru," Shah said.

Taking a dig at Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi for claiming the restoration of Article 370, but "I want to make it clear that Rahul's generations would not be able to restore the provisions again."

Shah said: "It is for the first time that the elections in Jammu and Kashmir are being held without Article 370 and a separate flag. The end to the culture of two constitutions has been ensured by PM Modi."

He said "the claims are being made by the NC and Rahul Baba about the restoration of Article 370, but the generations of Rahul won't have powers to restore the provisions again."

During the past 40 years, Shah said Congress, PDP and NC have brought terrorism, which led to the killing of 40,000 people and also 3000 days of curfew as well, besides the attacks, bombs being witnessed every day. "However, as PM Modi took over, the stone pelting and bullets have gone. The three parties want to revive the terrorism in J&K, but I want to tell Omar Abdullah that whatever would be your wish, terrorism will be eradicated from the soil of Kashmir forever. Nobody has the power to revive terrorism in J&K as there is PM Modi's government in the centre."

"I heard Rahul and Omar claiming they will bring Statehood, but let me make it clear that after the abrogation of Article 370, I had promised the restoration of Statehood soon after the elections in J&K. PM Modi too has made it clear that it will be restored. Statehood will be restored through the Parliament only and there is PM Modi's rule," he said.

J&K Statehood will get statehood back but only PM Modi can restore it, he added.

During the 70-75 years of rule, Shah said that the three families brought the situation here, which led to the closure of Cinemas. "I want to ask Dr Farooq Abdullah where he was when 40,000 people were killed? It was during his tenure when the terrorism took its shape in J&K. You were enjoying the holidays in London. You can do anything, but the terrorism will never get revived," he said.

Referring to the development in Udhampur, he said that Delhi and Gujarat like roads have been constructed here which is the outcome of PM Modi's rule.

Furthermore referring to situation in the commercial hub Lal Chowk, Shah said the place is now accessible to all where the tri-colour is being hoisted and Muharram is being observed, Ganpati and Janmashthami is being celebrated with an end to the bullets.

## Omar's statement...

a clear indication that NC-Congress are going to lose elections.

This was stated by Smriti Irani, while addressing a press conference at BJP media center, here today. BJP National General Secretary, Tarun Chugh, Working President, Sat Sharma, Chief Spokesperson, Sunil Sethi, Spokesperson, Rajni Sehgal, and Women's Morcha President, Sanjeeta Dogra were also present on the occasion.

"Omar has said that Cong campaign is lackluster and Gandhi should focus on Jammu, which clearly shows that NC-Cong have conceded defeat, Smriti said, while adding, "People are with the development agenda of PM Modi and BJP is all set to form next govt in J&K".

Following Omar Abdullah's remarks about Rahul Gandhi, it has become evident that the people of Jammu and Kashmir have shown their trust in the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, she said.

Irani said that after years of struggle, the BJP's leadership has transformed Jammu and Kashmir by abrogating Article 370, opening up new possibilities for the region.

She mentioned that after the removal of Article 370, an investment of Rs 24,000 crores has been made in Jammu and Kashmir. The Modi government has established major institutions like AIIMS, IIT, and IIM. Furthermore, 300,000 youths in the region have availed Rs 8,000 crores under the Mudra scheme.

Smriti Irani announced that once the BJP comes to power, each elderly woman in J&K will receive Rs 18,000 annually. One third of the seats will be reserved for women in Assembly. She noted that the BJP has made 25 promises for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections, which will be fulfilled after forming the government.

She highlighted that 84,000 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have been formed in Jammu and Kashmir. Additionally, the Modi government will provide two free gas cylinders annually to women in the region.

Five lakh youth will be given employment opportunities, and those taking the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission exams will receive Rs 10,000 assistance for two years, she said.

## Vote for us in large...

with a thumping majority to see Pakistan Occupied Kashmir's (PoK's) merger with Indian Union.

"You have to ensure BJP's victory in the ongoing Assembly polls with a huge majority. If we win with a majority, you will see PoK will be ours," Yogi said while addressing a rally in Ramgrah, Vijaypur in Jammu, as per news agency. Yogi is one of the star campaigners of BJP.

He said that the ongoing Assembly polls in J&K are historic in nature and the "results will be a slap on the faces of NC, PDP and Congress. "In 1990, these parties

supported Pakistan and terrorism. Now when Prime Minister Modi has eradicated terrorism from J&K soil, these parties are advocating revival of terrorism here again," said Yogi, who is the star campaigner of BJP for J&K.

He said Pakistan's condition at present is horrific. "The country is falling apart. Rate of one kg Atta in Pakistan costs Rs 500. On the contrary, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gives 80 Crore people of India free ration and 60 Crore are getting free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh which has been enhanced upto Rs 7 lakh. "Paksitan is a sinking ship," he said.

He said it was because of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts that the Kartarpur corridor was thrown open. "Today, J&K is known as the tourism capital instead of terrorism capital," Yogi said.

Yogi said that earlier, Amarnath Yatra was facing threats but today devotees all over the country are coming with the slogans of "Bham Bham Bholay" and taking the fragrance of Lord Shiva to all parts of the country. "Lakhs of people are coming to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine," he said.

Lashing out at NC, Congress and PDP for ruining J&K for 70 years, Yogi said that it was the PM Modi led government that gave voting rights to West Pakistan Refugees and Valmikis, who were deprived of these rights by those who ruled J&K. "These were the parties who supported terrorism in 1990 and enjoyed vacations in Europe and England when Kashmir was boiling," Yogi said in an obvious reference to National Conference chief Dr Farooq Abdullah and his son Omar Abdullah.

The UP Chief Minister, who is the chief campaigner of BJP for J&K, said that huge turnout in J&K is scripting a new history and those opposing BJP will be given a befitting reply. He sought votes for the BJP candidates in fray. KNO

## Kishan Reddy...

Sat Sharma, on Thursday reviewed the arrangements at MAM Stadium, where the PM Modi is scheduled to address a mega rally on 28th of this month.

The leaders inspected the event's preparations, security measures, and public facilities. They issued instructions to the concerned officials to ensure no lapses in the arrangements and people do not face any inconvenience.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Jammu on September 28, 2024, where he will address a grand public rally at Maulana Azad Memorial (MAM) Stadium. Prime Minister Modi will use this rally to campaign for BJP candidates from Jammu, Samba, Udhampur, and Kathua districts. The third and final phase of elections in these districts is set for October 1, 2024.

This rally is expected to have a significant impact on the electoral atmosphere in Jammu, Samba, Udhampur, and Kathua. The BJP leaders believe that Modi's address will be crucial for the party's candidates and will strengthen BJP's electoral position.

According to BJP leaders, all preparations for the rally have been completed, and the leadership in J&K is upbeat to welcome Prime Minister Modi.

G. Kishan Reddy, Tarun Chugh, and Sat Sharma expressed satisfaction over the arrangements and expressed hope that this will be a grand rally with massive public participation.

They emphasized that the rally will symbolize BJP's resolve for victory, with enthusiastic workers and the general public reaffirming their commitment to securing a majority for the BJP.

## Rahul to address...

He emphasized that this desperation stems from the BJP's awareness of their dwindling popularity. Solanki exposed BJP's hidden agenda including exploiting J&K's natural resources and allowing big businesses to loot the state.

"This startling revelation has raised concerns among J&K's citizens, who will not tolerate any compromise on their State's sovereignty and economic well-being," he said.

He stated that the people of J&K will not be swayed by BJP's tactics and will teach the Saffron Party a lesson for its misdeeds during the last 10 years in Jammu and Kashmir.

Solanki announced that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will address two rallies on September 27, while party leader Priyanka Gandhi will also address rallies on September 28.

"The people of J&K will decide their own future and they will reject BJP and its deceitful tactics," he said, adding that "We have presented a chargesheet, but BJP leaders have failed to respond, effectively acknowledging the allegations against them."

Lambasting the BJP for betraying the people of Jammu and Kashmir, he asked, "On what grounds do they now seek votes from the people? BJP has reneged on its 2014 promises".

"The people of J&K will reject BJP's tactics. Congress and NC are united in our determination to serve J&K's interests," he said.

Solanki questioned BJP's delivery to J&K since the Parliament elections, asking: What has BJP delivered to J&K since then? What additional packages have they offered? and Why have they failed to respond to the chargesheet presented by Congress?

Solanki lambasted BJP for betraying the people of Jammu and Kashmir, reneging on its 2014 promises. He emphasized that BJP's broken promises have eroded trust among the people.

He further said that Congress and NC are united in their determination to serve J&K's interests. "Congress leader Rahul Gandhi remains committed to protecting the wishes and aspirations of J&K's people."

He emphasized that Congress will prioritize the state's emotional integration and economic empowerment.

Solanki also condemned BJP Lok Sabha member Kangna Ranout's statement demanding the implementation of three farm laws previously repealed by the government. "This statement exposes BJP's anti-farmers mindset and disregard for the welfare of J&K's agricultural sector."

He expressed concern over BJP's silence on the Darbar Move issue, which promotes emotional integration and economic empowerment in J&K. "Their silence

is deafening, and we demand answers."

"As the state prepares for a new government, the people will not be swayed by BJP's tactics. Congress and NC remain united in their determination to serve J&K's interests, prioritizing the state's sovereignty, economic well-being, and emotional integration," he said. KNO

## 11 ACs of Jammu...

comes next with 1,19,988 registered voters; 63,385 males, 56,602 females and 1 third gender voter. To ensure smooth electoral process, 139 polling stations have been established across the constituency, of which 18 are urban and 121 are rural polling stations.

Similarly, 73-Suchetgarh (SC) Assembly Constituency has 1,13,449 voters, among which 59,727 are males, 53,720 females and 2 transgender voters. A total of 128 rural polling stations have been set up in the constituency for smooth and hassle-free voting process.

Likewise, 79-Jammu North AC has 1,11,811 voters; 57,213 males, 54,595 females and three third gender voters. To facilitate the voters of this constituency, 117 polling stations have been set up, including 87 urban and 30 rural polling stations.

76-Jammu East AC has a total of 1,07,213 voters; 54,021 are males, 53,189 are females and 3 third gender voters. In order to ensure a participatory voting process, 153 polling stations have been established in the constituency, including 131 urban and 22 rural stations.

Likewise, 78-Jammu West AC has 1,06,252 voter population, of which 53,811 are males and 52,441 are females. For smooth voting process, 118 polling stations have been established, including 112 urban and 6 rural polling stations.

82-Chhamb AC has 1,06,035 voter population; 54,295 are males and 51,740 are females. 165 polling stations have been set up in the constituency, with 8 in urban areas and 157 in rural areas.

77-Nagrota AC has 96,007 registered voters, with 49,735 males and 46,272 females. The ECI has set up 145 rural polling stations in this constituency.

81-Akhnoor (SC) Assembly Constituency has 95,386 voters, comprising 48,954 males, 46,430 females and 2 third gender voters. To facilitate voting, 127 polling stations have been established, with 12 in urban areas and 115 in rural areas.

80-Marh (SC) Assembly Constituency, with the lowest voter count, has 93,598 registered voters, including 48,640 males, 44,957 females and 1 third gender voter. The constituency has 114 polling stations, with 12 in urban areas and 102 in rural areas.

Interestingly, the upcoming elections are set to be a coming-of-age moment for 47,963 first-time voters. These young voices are spread across the district, with 82-Chhamb AC leading the pack with 5,647 new voters, while 78-Jammu West AC has the lowest count at 2,801.

Jammu's senior citizens, who comprise nearly 18% of the total electorate, are poised to play a pivotal role in the upcoming elections. These 2,15,338 voters, aged 60 and above, bring their wealth of experience to the polling booths. However, it is the centenarians who truly embody the spirit of enduring democracy. Jammu boasts 404 voters between 100-109 years old, 29 super-centenarians aged 110-119 and remarkably, six voters who have lived through over 120 years of India's history.

Meanwhile, all arrangements are being put in place for a smooth and peaceful polling in the district where voting is taking place on October 1. Currently, a number of voter awareness programmes are underway in various parts of the district to generate interest among the electorate regarding importance of exercising the franchise and to maximize the voter turnout.

## Omar blames centre's...

Omar accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of attempting to undermine his party by supporting independent candidates in the ongoing elections, claiming BJP is backing independents to fragment the NC's vote bank in the Kashmir Valley.

He also alleged that the BJP has been aligning itself with independent candidates and members of the Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) who support the August 2019 decisions that revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status.

He criticized Engineer Rasheed, who, after his release, claimed he would oppose Modi's "Naya Kashmir" slogan, stating that his mandate was aligned with BJP interests.

Criticizing BJP's National General Secretary Ram Madhav's active involvement in Kashmir, despite the party fielding few candidates in the region, Omar said the BJP's goal was to damage the NC's vote bank.

"I am thankful to those who cast their votes, and we are expecting a better turnout in the third phase of polling," he added.

He also urged voters to support the NC or the Congress (INC), wherever the NC is not contesting, to ensure a strong opposition in the region.

The third phase of elections is expected to see an increase in voter participation, with both parties hopeful for a stronger showing, Omar told reporters. KNO

## Alliance on the...

NC General Secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar told KNO that they have issued an 'explanation notice' to Shah for his actions that contradict party directives. "We will also send a copy to party president Dr Farooq Abdullah for any further action," he added.

Irfan Shah's participation as an independent has led to a split vote in Central Shalteng, with NC voters choosing to back him instead of the official alliance candidate, Karra. Notably, during another rally in Sopore on the same day, Rahul Gandhi again found himself without NC leaders in attendance, which further showcased the divide.

Former Congress legislator Haji Abdur Rashid voiced his frustrations regarding the alliance during Gandhi's presence. He claimed that NC workers had torn apart Congress flags and held a rival rally in Sopore.

"They (NC) tore apart our flags and planned a parallel rally at Sopore, despite knowing Rahul ji is coming here. Is this a coalition?" Rashid said.

Political observers say these incidents—both in Sopore and Central Shalteng—highlight deeper issues

## Govt hikes minimum wage rates for workers up to Rs 1,035 per day

## AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, SEPT 26

The Union government on Thursday announced a hike in minimum wage rates for workers up to Rs 1,035 a day by revising variable dearness allowance.

This adjustment is aimed at helping workers cope with the rising cost of living, a labour ministry statement said.

After revision, minimum wage rates in area 'A' for workers in construction, sweeping, cleaning, loading & unloading for unskilled work will be Rs 783 a day (Rs 20,358 per month).

within the alliance.

A political analyst remarked, "If the alliance were effective, it would be evident on the ground, but implementation appears shaky at best."

"According to the seat-sharing agreement, the Central Shalteng berth should have gone to Congress's Karra, but it has instead turned into a contentious battle with NC's Irfan Shah, who many believe may be a proxy candidate for the NC," he said.

The analysts said Shah has not been expelled from the party and his independent run is backed by loyalists aligned with NC headquarters.

"The divided outcome in Central Shalteng raises doubts about the viability of continued cooperation between the two parties. The alliance may be more formal than functional," he added.

Experts believe the focus is shifting from the alliance itself to potential government formation. "Discussions about a post-poll alliance may already be underway," a political expert speculated.

As these developments unfold, the NC-Congress alliance appears to be on the verge of collapse, with both parties facing their own challenges. Whether this rift will mend or lead to a permanent split remains uncertain, the alliance's future is increasingly precarious. KNO

## Domestic violence...

circumstances as per sub-section (2) of section 25. The bench said a magistrate, while exercising discretion under section 25(2) of the Act, has to be satisfied that a change in the circumstances has occurred, requiring to pass an order of alteration, modification or revocation.

It noted a change in the circumstances under the Act may be of either a pecuniary nature, such as a change in the income of the respondent or an aggrieved person, or it could be a change in other circumstances of the party paying or receiving the allowance which would justify an increase or decrease of the maintenance amount ordered by the magistrate.

"The phrasing of the provision is wide enough to cover factors like the cost of living, income of the parties, etc. Further, a change in the circumstances need not just be of the respondent but also of the aggrieved person," the top court said.

"However, for the invocation of section 25(2) of the Act, there must be a change in the circumstances after the order being passed under the Act," it said, adding, "Thus, an order for alteration, modification or revocation operates prospectively and not retrospectively".

The bench said the husband cannot seek its retrospective applicability so as to seek a refund of the amount already paid as per the original order.

The bench set aside the orders of the high court and the first appellate court and dismissed the application filed by the man.

"However, liberty is reserved to the respondent (man) herein to file a fresh application under section 25 of the Act, if so advised," it said. (AGENCIES)

## For first time, Mehbooba...

ruled for five years—what have they done for Jammu?" Mehbooba further lambasted the BJP for its governance post-August 5, 2019, when Jammu and Kashmir's special status was abrogated. She claimed that Jammu, in particular, has suffered severely since then, with rising unemployment and an increase in drug addiction. "After August 5, they didn't even appoint a Lieutenant Governor from Jammu, while under PDP, key positions like the Chief Secretary, IG, and advisor were held by people from Jammu," she added.

The PDP President urged voters to be wary of the BJP's promises, which she described as empty slogans, and reiterated that the people of Jammu and Kashmir deserve better governance. KNO

## LG chairs 20th...

Registrar, SKUAST-Jammu and other senior officers, in person and through virtual mode.

The University Council headed by Lt Governor deliberated on addressing key challenges in agriculture and allied sectors alongwith taking the research and innovation from Lab to the Field to increase productivity.

The Lt Governor stressed that the University should adopt modern and sustainable agriculture practices and put more focus on developing interface with the farming community and implementation of e-office.

The meeting also appreciated the performance of the University under National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP).

The Council gave in-principle approvals to various agenda points presented during the meeting including adoption of UGC based qualification for the post of the Assistant Registrar, Assistant Comptroller and ICAR norms for posts of Subject Matter Specialists.

Dr. BN Tripathi, Vice Chancellor SKUAST Jammu presented the progress report of the University. He apprised the meeting that the University has made significant improvement in research, patents and publications.



## Govt. College for Women Bhagwati Nagar Organizes Swachhata Rally and Reels Making Competition

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

Department of Punjabi and Department of Dogri in collaboration with NSS Unit of Govt. College for Women Bhagwati Nagar, organized a Swachhata rally under the theme of Swabhava Swachhata-Sanskaar Swachhata on 26th of September 2024. The rally was organized under the patronage of Dr. Meeru Abrol, Principal of the college, who flagged off the rally from the college campus.

The main aim of the rally was to raise awareness among the citizens of the nearby locality regarding the significance of cleanliness for improving the overall quality of life and preserving the environment. It sought to instigate behavioral change by motivating individuals to embrace responsible waste management, minimize



littering and actively contribute to the cleanliness of public spaces. Additionally the rally aimed to foster community engagement, encouraging a shared sense of responsibility and unity in collectively addressing environmental challenges.

Around 50 students

along with the staff of the college actively engaged in the rally marching through the key areas of New Colony of Bhagwati Nagar and Shri Amarnath Yatri Niwas Bhagwati Nagar. The students were carrying the placards, banners and colorful posters in their hands promoting cleanliness and

environment conservation. The public awareness and cleanliness rally stands as a powerful testament to the impact of collective action in promoting cleanliness and environmental responsibility.

Later on a Short Reels Making Competition was held in the college on the theme "Promotion of Gandhian Philosophy" wherein 12 students participated wholeheartedly. The students displayed their creativity by making versatile reels on the theme of Gandhian Philosophy. The competition was adjudged by Prof. Gagan Jyoti and Dr. Preeti Salathia. Ms. Tanisha Gupta and Ms. Simran and Ms. Vaishali of B.Com 3rd Sem were declared as 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively.

The programme was organized by Prof. Nisha Bhagat, Dr. Kamaldeep Singh and Dr. Poonam Kumari.

## Hindi Fortnight concludes in Central Sanskrit University

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

Hindi Fortnight, 2024 was celebrated from 14 to 26 September, 2024 under the aegis of the Official Language Cell of Central Sanskrit University, Shri Ranbir Campus, Kot-Bhalwal, Jammu. On the occasion of the concluding programme, Dr. Jaiprakash Verma, Director of IGNOU Regional Center Jammu, speaking on the occasion said that Hindi has been playing an important role in the development of the concept of Indianness since the independence movement till today. We can create Hindi folklore by identifying the factors hindering the development of this language. We should try to make Hindi global from local. Also, everyone should make collective efforts to ensure that Hindi is used more and more in office work. Prof. Satish Kumar Kapoor, Associate Director and Saraswat Guest of the



program said that

Language has an amazing power. It connects us to each other. Language is not just a language, it is also a medium of expression of society, culture, history, identity of the nation and its future goals. On this occasion, Campus Director Prof. Shreedhar Mishra, in his presidential address, congratulated all the winning students, teachers and employees, and while giving good wishes, called upon everyone to continuously strive for the prosperity and upliftment of Hindi, and participate in various competitions and activities held from time

to time. By taking part in different events helps in honing your expression, skills and talent. The concluding program was inaugurated by Dr. Anay Mani Tripathi with Vedic invocation. The guests were welcomed by Dr. Rishiraj, Head of the Department of Education. The report of Hindi Fortnight was read by Dogri Professor Kamal Kishore. He said that various types of competitions like essay writing, antakshari, speech, song, debate and writing etc. were organized in the university campus for students, teachers and employees.

## Essay writing competition on Life & Teachings of Mahatma Gandhi held at GCW Udhampur

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 26

As part of Gandhi Jayanti Celebration-2024, Cultural Committee of Government College for Women(GCW), Udhampur organized an online essay writing competition on "The Life and Teachings of Mahatma Gandhi" here today.

The program was conducted under the able guidance of the principal of the college, Dr Nalini Pathania. The program was begun with the welcome note by Prof. Swarna Devi, HOD Political Science. There after she assigned the topic for essay writing competition to the participants.

Total eight students participated in this competition with great enthusiasm and Vigor. Ishita Sharma scored the first position, Manvi Rathore secured the second position and Nazia Akhter stood at the third rank respectively.

Dr. Mool Raj HOD, Urdu, Prof. Shama Rani Department Dogri, Prof. Pooja Bharti, HOD Geography were the Jury members in this program.

The whole event coordinated by the members of cultural committee viz. Dr Seema Sharma HOD Music, Prof. Swarna Devi HOD Political Science, Prof. Yash Pal HOD History, Dr Shaluu Jasrotia Assistant Professor of Music, Dr. Om Prakash HOD Sanskrit, Prof. Meenakshi Jamwal Assistant Professor of Commerce, Prof. Shama Rani, Assistant Professor of Dogri, Prof. Pooja Bharti HOD Geography, Professor Yash Kumar, assistant professor of music.

## Bali Bhagat denounces Congress's betrayal of National Interests, Alliance with anti-national forces

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

Senior BJP leader and former Minister Bali Bhagat launched a scathing attack on the Congress party during public meetings held in Friends Colony and the Sehora area of Talab Tillo, supporting BJP candidate Arvind Gupta for the Jammu West constituency. He condemned Congress for its apparent alignment with anti-national elements and its recent alliance with the National Conference for the upcoming Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir.

"By forming an alliance with the National Conference, Congress has once again shown its willingness to support an anti-national agenda," he stated. He emphasized that this alliance undermines the efforts made by the BJP to bring peace and stability to the region.

The former Minister also recalled a contro-



versial statement made by Congress leader Haji Sagheer Saeed Khan, who purportedly said, "If Congress comes to power, we will end the violence caused by the BJP. The people who are jailed for terrorism would be released. Those who are killed in the name of terrorism, their families would be compensated with Rs 1 crore." He continued, "Furthermore, those BJP leaders who ordered the Indian Army to encounter people would be hanged under Congress rule."

"This is the mentality of Congress and its leaders," Bali Bhagat said, highlighting the troubling implications of such statements

on national security and communal harmony. "Under the leadership of the BJP, we are committed to protecting the interests of our nation and ensuring that those who threaten our peace are dealt with firmly. The Congress party's reckless rhetoric endangers the very fabric of our society," he concluded.

Prominent BJP leaders, including Mandal President Keshav Chopra, Chaman Lal Bhagat, Arun Dubey, Vikas Gupta, Babloo Chand, and Deepak Kumar, were present to show their support for Arvind Gupta and to rally the community against the Congress party's divisive politics.

## President of India visits Siachen Base Camp, interacts with troops

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
POSTED ON: 26 SEP 2024

The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu visited Siachen Base Camp today (September 26, 2024) and paid her tributes at the Siachen War Memorial, which is a symbol of the sacrifice of soldiers and officers who have been martyred since the Indian Army began Operation Meghdoot on the Siachen Glacier on April 13, 1984. She also addressed the soldiers posted there.

Addressing the soldiers,



the President said that as the supreme commander of the armed forces, she felt very proud of them and that all citizens salute

their bravery.

The President said that since the commencement of Operation Meghdoot in April 1984, the brave

soldiers and officers of the Indian Armed Forces have ensured the security of this region. They face severe weather conditions. In difficult situations like heavy snowfall and minus 50 degrees temperature, they remain deployed at their front with full devotion and vigilance. They present extraordinary examples of sacrifice and tolerance in protecting the motherland. She told soldiers that all Indians are aware of their sacrifice and bravery and we respect them.

## NIT Srinagar's Rajbhasha Cell organizes workshop for ministerial, teaching staff



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, SEP 26

The Rajbhasha Cell of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Thursday organized a workshop titled 'Use of Rajbhasha Hindi in technical institutions' for the Ministerial, teaching staff of the institution.

On the occasion, Dr. Sakina Akhter, Hindi Adhikari, Central University of Kashmir (CUK) was the main resource person for the workshop. She said that there is a need to work on Hindi language in Kashmir and break the taboos of the past.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath appreciated the Rajbhasha Cell for organising the workshop during the Hindi Pakhwada. We are putting its best efforts to make sure that all official orders come in bilingual form, he said.

Institute's Registrar, Prof. Atikur Rehman said various efforts are being taken to implement the Rajbhasha on the campus. All-important circulars and orders of the institute are being released in the bilingual mode so that its implementation target is achieved," he said.

Prof. Rehman appreciated the efforts of Dr. RP

Shukla, Hindi Officer NIT Srinagar for organizing the workshop on relevant themes. We will continue to provide support to such programs in future, he added.

In her key address, Hindi Adhikari CUK, Dr Sakina highlighted the brief history of Rajbhasha and its importance in technical institutions like NIT Srinagar. She said that the central government has taken steps to encourage the use and propagation of Hindi as Rajbhasha while also recognizing and supporting the diversity of languages in the country.

"Until we are not interested and have a lack of will power, it is not possible to implement Hindi at the Institution level. The staff should be loyal towards their job. IT tools are very important in implementation of Rajbhasha," Dr Sakina said. While sharing her 10-year professional experience, CUK's Hindi Adhikari Dr Sakina said there is no age bar in learning Hindi rather than it will prove more beneficial to the employees.

"Although there are some challenges in learning the new language, when there is curiosity and consistency, these chal-

lenges can be overcome" she said, adding that learning Hindi is easier as compared to other languages.

Dr Sakina further said at CUK, they are in process to get more IT Tools including some professional translating IT tools, that will help staff in a larger way.

"We need more such efforts for its implementation and the main aim of organizing such workshops is to raise awareness regarding the Hindi language," she added.

Dr. Prabal Verma, Dr. Ravi Kumar, Dr Pravan and Dr. Amandeep were the coordinators of the event.

In his inaugural address, Hindi Officer Dr. R P Shukla (Assistant Professor, Civil Engg) said the Rajbhasha cell of NIT Srinagar is working on a mission to implement official language on the campus.

Dr. Shukla expressed gratitude to Dr. Sakina Akhter, Hindi Adhikari for hosting the workshop session.

Hindi Translator NIT Srinagar, Dr. Sabzar Gani delivered a vote of thanks to the resource person and expressed his gratitude to the Hindi Officer, participants, coordinators, and ministerial staff members who contributed to the success of the event.

## Changing the outlook of Bahu Constituency is my priority: Randhawa



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, SEPT 26

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) senior leader, MLA Candidate for Bahu Constituency Vikram Randhawa, along with MP Rajya Sabha Gulam Ali Khatana, address the public outreach meeting with the Muslim community at Bhatindi, which falls under Bahu Constituency. The meeting was organized by Sarpanch Ch Noor Alam, BJP ST Morcha President Mohd Rafiq, Ch Razak Bhutto, Ch Ali Mohd, Ch Haroon and other prominent persons were present on the occasion. Randhawa engaged with the Muslim community in Bhatindi, fostering connections and outlining the party's vision. Mr. Randhawa assured the gathering that, if voted to power, he would fulfill the public's desires, upholding his personal creed of "justice to all segments of society." He reiterated his dedication to serving the community, echoing the BJP's mantra of inclusive growth and development.

Mr. Randhawa has accused the Congress party of causing distress in Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasized that these opposition parties, including NC, are responsible for the region's woes and that it's time for a change. Randhawa stressed that the BJP is fighting the elections on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of development for

Jammu and Kashmir. This vision prioritizes the well-being and prosperity of the region's citizens, who have been suffering due to the alleged misgovernance of the aforementioned. His emphasis on justice and equality resonated with the audience, aligning with the BJP's core values. He emphasized that changing the outlook of Bahu Constituency is my first priority.

As the assembly polls approach, Randhawa's popularity and the BJP's development agenda are poised to make a significant impact in Bahu Constituency. With the community's trust and support, Randhawa is well-positioned to deliver on his promise of transformative growth and progress.

The BJP's commitment to development and good governance offers a beacon of hope for Jammu and Kashmir. With Modi's vision guiding them, Randhawa and his party are determined to bring about positive change and ensure that the region reaches its full potential.

Randhawa asserted the resounding support from the Bahu Constituency's residents, which humbles me. My resolve to put forth endless effort for their welfare and development is fueled by their faith and trust in me. I promise to keep giving the Muslim community as well as all domains of segments my wholehearted and honest attention.

## Health Dept hosts heartfelt farewell for Anusuyan Bhan & Ayaz Ahmed Butt

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
DODA, SEPTEMBER 26:

A grand farewell party was organized by the staff of CMO, Dy CMO and ANMT Doda to bid warm farewell to Smt Anusuya Bhan, Principal ANMT Doda and Sh Ayaz Ahmed Butt, Community Health Officer posted at PHC Gundna District Doda after rendering more than 35 years of dedicated services, as a heartfelt gesture of gratitude & respect. Following many devoted years of service, this event honored their well earned retirement.

Smt Anusuya Bhan and Sh Ayaz Ahmed Butt, CHO the highly respected part of Health Department District Doda are going to retired in the month of September 2024 marking the end of their distinguished career characterized by dedication and integrity. Known for their honesty and commitment both the retiree have been a pivotal figure in the department.

During the ceremony, the staff of CMO, Dy CMO and ANMT Doda presented various gifts to both the



retiree as a token of their appreciation and love. The speakers which includes DIO Doda Dr Versha Sharma, BMO Ghat Dr Abdul Gafoor, Mohd Shafi Attu (HE) & others in their speeches, commended the outgoing officials for their unwavering commitment, dedication, and honesty towards duties. They also highlighted their sociable nature and praised them for shouldering responsibilities with utmost sincerity.

The staff took the opportunity to express their admiration for Smt Bhan's and Sh Butt's exemplary qualities and character. They spoke fondly of their dedication, passion, and sociability, empha-

sizing his significant contributions to their team during his service tenure in the department and the community.

Smt Anusuya Bhan, while speaking on the occasion, expressed her gratitude to her officers, colleagues and staff for organizing a grand farewell in his honor.

At the end of the programme, the staff members wished the retirees a happy and healthy post retirement existence.

The farewell party which took place with warmth & solidarity, represented the department's appreciation as well as the ongoing legacy these exceptional people left behind.



## EDITORIAL

## Need to engage voters in urban pockets!

The recent Lok Sabha polls have cast a long shadow over the political landscape of Jammu, particularly within urban pockets that are typically seen as bastions of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The alarmingly low voter turnout, especially in constituencies like Bahu and Jammu West, has raised concerns among local BJP leaders as they approach the critical assembly elections on October 1. With many of these seats traditionally viewed as strongholds, the potential for voter apathy to influence electoral outcomes is a pressing concern. The BJP insiders have expressed unease over the implications of low turnout, fearing that it may play into the hands of opposition parties, particularly the Congress. The statistics tell a stark story: constituencies within Jammu city failed to exceed a 70 percent turnout, with Bahu recording a mere 62.20 percent. Such figures signal not just disinterest but possibly a deeper disillusionment among voters, particularly in urban areas where one would expect higher engagement. As the BJP intensifies efforts to mobilize voters ahead of the assembly polls, one must ponder why urban voters appear disengaged. Congress workers succinctly captured the sentiment of many disillusioned voters when they pointed to the Modi government's "hollow promises" regarding inflation and unemployment. For urban populations that often face immediate economic pressures, these unmet expectations can translate into apathy at the ballot box. The stark contrast in turnout between urban and adjacent rural constituencies—where Nagrota and Marh saw participation rates of 74.42 percent and 77.3 percent, respectively—further highlights the disparity in voter engagement. This gap suggests that while urban voters may feel disillusioned, their rural counterparts are more motivated to engage with the electoral process, possibly driven by a sense of urgency over local issues. The BJP leaders are right to be concerned about these trends. High voter turnout has historically benefited their party, and the current climate presents a formidable challenge. If the party is to maintain its influence in Jammu, it must not only inspire urban voters to head to the polls but also re-establish a genuine connection with their concerns and aspirations. As the election date approaches, the onus is on all political parties, particularly the BJP, to understand and address the factors contributing to this disengagement. This includes actively engaging with communities, listening to their grievances, and crafting policies that resonate with their lived experiences. A mere call to action may not suffice; voters need to see tangible commitments and results from their elected representatives. In the lead-up to the assembly elections, the BJP's focus should not solely be on mobilization efforts but also on fostering a renewed sense of trust among urban voters. The stakes are high, and the party's future in Jammu depends on its ability to invigorate the democratic spirit within these crucial constituencies. As we move towards October 1, the path forward must prioritize not only turnout but also a revitalization of the political dialogue that connects leaders with the communities they serve.

## Empowering women and nourishing children: Fight against unhealthy snacks

SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

A couple of years ago, when CHETNA, a not-for-profit working on health and nutrition awareness among women, adolescents and children, was conducting a survey, it found a large number of children living in the urban slum of Vasna, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, almost addicted to packaged potato chips and other unhealthy snacks commonly found at grocery stores.

They often skipped home cooked meals, preferring to eat such ultra processed food. As a consequence, many of them became undernourished and anaemic. One of the strategies CHETNA adopted to wean children away from packaged food, was to demonstrate how traditional Gujarati snacks and complementary foods like shero, sukhiand lads could be tasty as well as nutritious. Cooking them

in the presence of mothers and caregivers helped them learn new ways of improving the nutrition levels of their children.

For five weeks the underweight children of 1 to 5 years were also fed supplementary food which had protein, fat and iron. The CHETNA team visited families thrice a week at a fixed time and followed a 30-minute approach. This meant ensuring that the child sat down for 30 minutes while caregivers fed them home cooked food. For each child, there were 36 home visits.

Within seven to nine months of the intervention, the children were eating only home-cooked meals. To increase their calorie count, recipes from a mix of wheat flour and Bengal gram were also added to their menu. Slowly calories along with the other nutrients the children were consuming increased. At the end of nine months 166 initially

underweight children were weighed of which 36% of children were found to be fully nourished. All 35 children who were eating only food packets started eating home-cooked food. To sustain this habit, CHETNA hit upon the idea of skilling the mothers and other women from economically marginalized communities living in these slums to also be able to gain financially from making such nutritious snacks. In August 2023, they began training women living in these slums to do both— wean their children away from unhealthy snacks to home-made goodies and become nutri-entrepreneurs at the same time.

The first batch of 25 women began with a few lessons on diets, the importance of healthy eating and adding nutrition to snacks. Besides enhancing their nutrition education, they were advised on packaging, marketing and business management. A

kitchen was set up in the slum and the women were told about the importance of being professional and maintaining hygiene. They learnt to make nutritious sweetmeats like date laddoos, traditional khadi made from millets like ragi and beetroot shakarparas as well as savoury puffed millet and nachos, Women began selling their products to neighbours as well as shopkeepers. In the first three months of 2024, the 25 women were able to sell about 60,000 kgs of home-made snacks. They are now earning Rs 4000 to Rs 5000 a month. For 35-year-old Champaben Makwana, a homemaker and mother of two, becoming a nutri-entrepreneur has made her dream of being financially independence come true. Her monthly income of Rs 5000 has given her the confidence to spread her wings and venture into online business through WhatsApp. She is not only able to contribute

to the family's financial stability but more importantly, also stop her son's recurrent stomach aches by substituting packaged snacks with homemade alternatives. Becoming a nutri-entrepreneur has turned around the life of 18-year-old Bhavna Sargara. After failing in English, Maths and Science in her 10th Board exam, Sargara lost hope and became directionless. The entrepreneurial training opened new doors and innovative culinary techniques and recipes have enabled her to earn Rs 5000 a month. This increase in income has given her the freedom to enrol in tuition classes to fulfil her educational aspirations. She is preparing to take her 12th Board exams. Additionally, she is also providing financial help to her family and encouraging her younger siblings to continue their studies. It is well known that ultra processed food such as chips and noodles

contain unhealthy levels of fats, salt and sugar. One of the reasons for this is that emulsifiers, additives, preservatives and stabilizers that are not usually used in home kitchens can be found in these products to prolong their shelf life.

Studies have shown that consumption of these contributes to increasing the risk of developing type -2 diabetes besides other lifestyle-related diseases. The biggest impact of aggressive marketing of unhealthy food products is among communities belonging to the lowest 20% income group who spend 5.5% on packaged foods, according to studies. However, the CHETNA initiative shows that all that is packaged does not have to be unhealthy. It can be nutritious and healthy. All it takes is will and nutrition education.

(The writer is a journalist writing on development and gender. The views are personal)

## Tourism for Viksit Bharat: Vision of our First 'Incredible Indian'

GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT, UNION MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Before a decade ago, it was very common to hear about Indian tourism needing a brand ambassador to position itself at par and above other nations in tourism. Much like how other countries were spending advertising money on attracting the most famous of film-stars and the best of sportspersons to promote tourism in their country, it was also felt that Incredible India needed a facelift.

Over the last decade and having held charge as the Union Minister for Tourism in India over the past 100 days, I have only heard everyone say how for the first time in the history of this country, that we have a Leader who is not only our Prime Minister but has also been Incredible India's biggest Global Brand Ambassador and champion. In every role that he plays for the betterment of Bharat, I have been amazed and inspired to see the extent to which the Hon'ble Prime Minister goes to ensure that tourism never takes a back seat.

As the Hon'ble Prime Minister, he constantly reminds us to work in a 'Whole-of-Government' for the overall growth and development of tourism in the country. As a result of around 1,50,000 kilometres of road network laid, -500 new air routes & -150 airports having opened up air connectivity, high speed Vande Bharat trains introduced, and completion of around 100 tourism infrastruc-

ture projects, India registered Domestic Tourist Visits (DTV) of 250 crores, almost double of the 128 crore Domestic Tourist Visits (DTV) India registered in 2014.

As the Nation's global representative, he never misses an opportunity to showcase the wonders of Incredible India to the world. Under his leadership, India's G20 Presidency was unique to the aspect that meetings were conducted at 60 different locations across the country. It was the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision to ensure that tourism offerings at these 60 destinations, along with their cultures, cuisines, and crafts become globally visible through the lens of India's G20 Presidency. Owing to the tourism boom set in by G20 last year, it is heartening to know that the tourism sector in India saw the highest amount of new hotel rooms added in 2023.

As the People's Leader, he has inspired the nation to Dekho Apna Desh - to explore and discover our very own Bharat before exploring the world. He has ensured that responsible tourism becomes second nature to all of us by instilling the importance of Swacchata in our minds. On every occasion, he constantly reminds the global Indian diaspora on their role in becoming Ambassadors of Incredible India by making their foreigner friends and acquaintances aware of how memorable a trip to India could be. As one of the most followed global leaders on social media, just the act of him visiting places like Lakshadweep, Kaziranga, Kanniyakumari, Srinagar,

and many others - have led to record-breaking interest amongst domestic and international tourists to visit such destinations and experience India's lesser-known tourism offerings.

To draw more light to the Hon'ble Prime Minister's personal interest and involvement in tourism, I fondly recall him saying that he was giving a piece of his heart to me, while giving me an opportunity to serve in the Tourism portfolio of his Cabinet. Since then, it has been my constant endeavour that we must develop a business plan for the tourism sector in India, while recognizing its importance in being a driver for inclusive socio-economic growth and development.

One of the most important components of this business plan is the aspect of developing new tourism destinations, by taking advantage of the rapid strides India is making in infrastructure growth. By representing New India and taking inspiration from our incredible past, these new destinations are envisioned to elevate the overall experience of tourists in an end-to-end manner. Since our independence in 1947 to 2014, India didn't have a single example of developing a tourist destination from scratch in a holistic and encompassing manner. This changed when the Hon'ble Prime Minister gave to the world Ekta Nagar and the Statue of Unity in 2018.

To develop tourism as a mainstay in Ekta Nagar based on the vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, various steps and measures

were taken. Last-mile connectivity was ensured along with setting up of a dedicated Statue of Unity Area Development and Governance Authority to oversee and manage the destination on a day-to-day basis. Skill Development Centres were set up to train locals and youth on tourism related services and tasks. Private investments were grounded to establish quality hotels, resorts, and other accommodation. Several new attractions, activities and experiences across various themes were introduced in PPP mode. Owing to all this and more, footfalls at Ekta Nagar increased from 4.5 lakhs in 2018 to 45 lakhs in 2023 - a 10x increase. Additionally, all these efforts have resulted in creation of new livelihoods for locals at Ekta Nagar through a tourism economy which didn't exist in the area prior to 2014. Through Ekta Nagar, the Hon'ble Prime Minister gave to us a model for tourism development and growth - a model which could be replicated and scaled up across the Nation to create such iconic tourist destinations.

Taking inspiration from the model established by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, through various schemes such as Swadesh Darshan and Development of Iconic Tourist Destinations, Ministry of Tourism is now spearheading tourism related destination development in the country by converging efforts to develop select destinations in 'Whole of Government' approach. Efforts are being placed on introducing high-impact interventions which can transform the overall

visitor experience in destinations. Special focus is being placed on enabling private investments to complement public investments, so that both can operate as a combined force for tourism related destination development in India. Through various Ministry initiatives in these destinations, action is also being taken on improving tourism enablers like skilling and digitalization, so that benefits of tourism remain within the destination and accrue to local communities and individuals.

Inspired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision for Jan Bhagidari (citizen partnership), the Ministry has launched Dekho Apna Desh People's Choice 2024 - a nationwide poll for citizens to provide their most preferred tourist attractions and destinations in India across 5 categories. To include the voice of the people in our efforts going forward, destinations which feature on top in the People's Choice 2024 will receive dedicated support and funding to be transformed into global tourism destinations representing the best of Incredible India to the world. Not a day goes by without the Hon'ble Prime Minister reminding us of his vision of Viksit Bharat. Tourism offers us a way to contribute to that grand vision in ways more than one. On this World Tourism Day, I call upon all of us to play our part in achieving the achievement of this vision, thereby making us worthy of the title 'Incredible Indians', like our Hon'ble Prime Minister already is.

## India moves closer to 'one nation one election'

KALYANI SHANKAR

The 'one-nation-one-poll' idea is moving towards Parliament and public debate, with the Modi government deciding to force the issue last week. The cabinet decided to bring a bill to Parliament in the coming session. The concept has been debated many times in the past, but no political consensus has evolved. The ruling BJP has been pushing to change the electoral system for a long time.

Congress rejected the idea when approached by former Prime Minister A B Vajpayee and later BJP leader L K Advani in the past. The timing of the move was excellent, as it was on the day Modi completed 100 days in office in his third term last week. This is one of the critical electoral reforms the BJP has suggested in its manifestoes for about two decades. While the idea

seems reasonable and doable, several questions have arisen. Is India ready for such a reform?

Does Prime Minister Modi have the required two-thirds majority to get the bill to amend the Constitution passed in Parliament? Is there a political consensus? These are a few questions that need answers. The primary and most important thing is that the bill can only be passed by mobilising two-thirds of the majority in Lok Sabha. In the recent 2024 polls, the BJP was 40 short of a majority in the house and could form the government only with the help of J.D. (U) and Telugu Desam. The BJP needs the support of the allies and also friendly parties. The BJP is for the reform as it would stop disruptions caused by the frequent changes in the election cycle. It would also help cut down on poll-related expenditures. Most Oppos-

ing parties reject the idea of simultaneous polls. They include the Congress, the Left parties, the Trinamool Congress, and regional and smaller parties. They reject it mainly to settle political scores and apprehension that they may benefit the BJP.

Former President Ram Nath Kovind's committee to go into the issue has unanimously endorsed the proposal after eliciting opinions from political parties. Thirty-two parties supported the problem, and 15 rejected it. The panel also indicated that the Centre formed a panel to oversee the implementation of this proposal. Also, there should be a joint electoral roll for all elections so that voters will use the same list for national, state, and local polls. It would reduce errors in voter registration. The panel plans to talk with all the stakeholders. They also suggest

having the votes in two parts. The first will be for Lok Sabha and Assembly votes, and the second for local groups. Historically, from 1952, the first election that was held, to 1967, it was a synchronised poll. But this changed when Indira Gandhi came to power. She began invoking Article 356 to dismiss the Opposition-ruled governments and thus started the independent election. It is continuing till today. However, the bill faces constitutional, legal, and political challenges. The panel has recommended amending the last five articles of the Constitution to hold simultaneous polls in the country. They are amendments to Articles 83 and 172. The BJP does not have a majority, while constitutional amendment requires a two-thirds majority. Also, the Constitution is silent over whether polls should happen simultaneously. The ultimate test is how

Modi would mobilise an adequate number of M Ps in Parliament. Second, a political consensus is yet to be made. The BJP has not tried to deal with or persuade the opposition parties to agree.

The Opposition is in an aggressive mood and has yet to come on board because they believe simultaneous polls would mean an advantage for the BJP. Significantly bigger parties like Congress oppose it. The Left parties, Trinamool Congress, Nationalist Congress Party and All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen have rejected the idea. The 15 opposing parties account for 205 MPs, while Modi requires 362 votes.

A legal framework is also needed to meet the necessary changes for simultaneous polls. It could address problems with the state governments collapsing in the middle of the term and

toppling games played by the Centre. Since the idea is good and checks the wastage of money and policy paralysis, as well as the occurrence of elections every two years, the Opposition must think twice before rejecting the idea. They should bring that for public debate if they have an alternate plan.

On the whole, Modi is bringing this legislation to Parliament with a game plan. Win or lose, Modi gets the benefit. If he wins, it is the fulfilment of the poll promise. He can always claim that he brought the reform with good intentions if the bill is defeated, but the Opposition sabotaged it. While the bill may be delayed, it is still worth debating and finding ways to do so eventually. After all, election expenditure is also taxpayers' money.

(The writer is a popular columnist; views are personal)



## 50 new pharma manufacturing plants under PLI scheme to be completed in 2 years: Centre

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

The upcoming 50 pharma manufacturing plants in the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme will be completed in the next two years, the Centre informed on Thursday.

According to Dr. Arunish Chawla, Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals, more than 50 new greenfield manufacturing plants for pharmaceuticals and medical devices have already been completed.

"The PLI plants have catalysed \$10 billion in exports from India to countries with the highest regulatory standards," said at the annual pharma summit 2024 organised by industry chamber Assocham here.

"Many reforms have been done in both the regulatory framework and in the schemes. We are working very hard to upgrade



the quality framework for all pharma and drug units. We want to make India not just a pharmacy of the world, but a reliable pharmacy of the world," the Secretary emphasised.

The all-big pharma companies, global and multinational companies are now expanding their

footprint and their business in India and also locating their value chains here, he added. Also, a huge number of contract research manufacturing and development organisations (CRDMO) are coming up in the country.

Chawla said that we are moving from the generics to the biosimilar space. "We are the third largest producer of drugs and pharmaceuticals by volume. Drugs and pharma and Meditech are the fourth largest merchandise export from India. Nine out of top 25 generic firms are located in India. And going for-

ward, our contribution to humankind will increase," said Chawla.

Last year, more than 50 per cent of the drug and pharma produced in the country was exported.

In the closing year, in the surgical and consumable space, the Indian Meditech industry exported more than what the country imported. In other rising sunrise sectors like imaging devices, body implants, in vitro diagnostics (IVDs), achieved double digit growth and exports grew more than double digits.

The Secretary mentioned that from April to August, the pharma and Meditech has become the fourth largest manufacturing export from India.

Ishteyaque Amjad, Chair, Assocham Pharma and Biotech Council, emphasised the need for affordable medicines while maintaining high standards at the event.

## AIIMS' AYUSH department holds health camp in Bhojpur village

AGENCIES  
BHOPAL, SEPT 26

AIIMS Bhopal's AYUSH Department organized a health camp in Bhojpur village today. This initiative was guided by Professor (Dr.) Ajai Singh, the Executive Director of AIIMS Bhopal. Professor Singh is a strong advocate for expanding health services to rural populations.

The health camp was organized at Bhojpur village, in which many patients came and took advantage of the health camp.

Medical Officer Dr. Ashish Kumar Dixit and Yoga Instructor Chanchal Suryavanshi were present on behalf of AYUSH. A special yoga session was also conducted for the children of Integrated Government High

School of Bhojpur village, in which the children participated enthusiastically.

In this camp, there were sessions on yoga consultation, AYUSH counseling, and free distribution of AYUSH medicines to patients.

The villagers were also educated about overall health awareness. People of all ages, from youth to elderly, participated in this event.

Many of them were suffering from diseases like diabetes, arthritis, anxiety, and high blood pressure.

The doctors from the AYUSH department advised them on preventive measures and remedies for these diseases, emphasizing that regular practice of yoga could greatly alleviate these conditions.

They also stressed the importance of balanced diet.

Professor (Dr.) Ajai Singh commended the efforts of the AYUSH department in organizing this health camp. He highlighted the importance of outreach activities like these in improving access to healthcare services and outcomes in rural areas. He emphasized the unwavering commitment for reaching remote rural populations.

Through such efforts, our goal is to provide essential medical care and health education, empowering rural communities to lead healthy lives. AIIMS Bhopal is dedicated towards extending quality healthcare services to remote areas as part of its mission.

## India's pharmaceutical sector projected to reach \$130 billion by 2030

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

India is on the cusp of a transformative era in its pharmaceutical sector which is projected to reach \$130 billion by 2030, a report showed on Thursday.

The world's third-largest drug producer by volume, India is currently exporting pharmaceutical products to over 200 countries, establishing its influence in the global pharmaceutical arena, according to a Deloitte's whitepaper launched at the Assocham's annual pharma summit here.

The paper highlighted India's potential to transform from a leading generic drug producer to a powerhouse of pharmaceutical innovation, driven by advancements in research, regulatory reforms, and strategic global partnerships.

Government initiatives



such as the production-linked incentive scheme aim to enhance domestic manufacturing and reduce reliance on imports.

"By fostering collaboration among academia, industry, and government, India can not only meet its healthcare needs but also position itself as a leader in global pharmaceutical innovation, driving economic growth and improving health outcomes," Ghosh added.

As per the paper, with a growing talent pool, rising investments in biotechnology, and an increasing number of clinical trials, India is becoming a credible destination for cutting-edge drug discovery and development.

Government initiatives, collaborations between academia and industry, and advancements in digital technologies further

bolster India's potential to lead in pharmaceutical innovation.

However, the paper identified critical challenges that must be addressed to fully realise India's potential as a global pharmaceutical innovation hub.

"Key issues include the need for increased investment in R&D, stronger intellectual property protections, and the closing of the talent gap in high-demand areas such as artificial intelligence and data science," the paper noted.

To foster a robust innovation ecosystem, it is crucial to develop a cohesive strategy that integrates research, technology investments, commercialization, skilling, and intellectual property, commented Neha Aggarwal, Partner, Deloitte India.

## India requires urgent investment in contraceptive spacing methods: Experts

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

More than 65 per cent of India's population falls in the reproductive age group, which requires urgent investment in contraceptive choices, especially birth spacing methods, said experts on World Contraception Day on Thursday.

World Contraception Day is observed every year on September 26 to raise awareness about the importance of family planning and reproductive health. The theme this year is: "A choice for all. Freedom to plan, power to choose."

Adequately spaced pregnancies can boost maternal and child health outcomes. This will lead to better maternal and child health, reduced unintended or unplanned pregnancies, and greater economic stability for families.

"India's young population, with over 65 per cent under 35, requires urgent investment in contraceptive choices, especially spacing methods," Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director Population Foundation of India, told IANS.

According to NFHS 5



(2019-21), 4 per cent of India's unmet contraceptive need is for spacing methods.

"Expanding access to these options will improve health outcomes, reduce healthcare costs, and enhance economic productivity by allowing women to better participate in the workforce," Muttreja said.

She called on improving the quality of care in family planning and reproductive health services.

"Policies must prioritise delivering respectful, high-quality care, as women who feel valued and respected are more

likely to use contraception effectively and adopt healthier family planning practices," Muttreja said.

In 2023, India integrated two new Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive (LARC) methods into its public health system: the subdermal implant and the subcutaneous Antara injection.

However, it comes after a 30-year delay, during which Indian women were deprived of crucial contraceptive options. At the same time it was adopted by many countries around the world, including our neighbouring countries, such as Bangladesh,

Nepal, and Sri Lanka, Muttreja said.

The Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Anupriya Patel recently stated that the acceptance of modern contraceptives in India has increased to over 56 per cent.

The country's National Family Planning Programme currently offers a variety of reversible modern contraceptives encompassing condoms, intrauterine contraceptive devices, oral pills, injectable contraceptives, etc.

Although contraception is an empowering tool, it is crucial to balance plan-

ning with the realities of reproductive health, Dr. Neha Khandelwal, Director of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Cloudnine Group of Hospitals, New Delhi, told IANS.

"While contraception is used by many couples to avoid unplanned pregnancies and to adequately space your pregnancies, they must not forget that the biological clock of a woman doesn't wait for the 'perfect time' to conceive," Khandelwal said.

She noted that "fertility declines after 30 and declines rapidly after 35 years of age. Timely planning a pregnancy will help escape infertility issues".

The doctor also advised couples to have open conversations not only about when they feel emotionally ready but also about the potential biological challenges that can come with waiting too long.

Meanwhile, Muttreja also urged for active male involvement in family planning programmes.

"By engaging men as equal partners in family planning, we may unlock a critical pathway to driving meaningful change in the country," the public health expert said.

## Out-of-pocket health expenditure declined to 39.4pc in 2021-22: NITI Aayog

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

The share of out-of-pocket expenditure out of total health expenditure has come down from 64.2 per cent in 2013-14 to 39.4 per cent in 2021-22, said Dr. V K Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog.

This decline in out-of-pocket expenditure "reflects a very positive indicator," said Paul, while releasing the Union Health Ministry's National Health Account (NHA) estimates for India 2020-21 and 2021-22.

"More than Rs 1 lakh crore savings have accrued from the Ayushman Bharat PMJAY and this has had a positive impact on the recent NHA estimates," he added.

He also stated that other schemes "like the free dialysis scheme, launched in 2015-16 have benefited 25 lakh people".

While calling the decline in out-of-pocket cost of health, "a good sign", Union Health Secretary Apurva Chandra said that "a substantial increase has been noticed in the health expenditure of the government".

This, he said, "reflects the



emphasis of the government towards health".

Further, the NHA estimates for 2021-22 highlight the efforts of the government to increase public investments in the health sector.

The share of Government Health Expenditure (GHE) in the overall GDP of the country has increased from 1.13 per cent in 2014-15 to 1.84 per cent in 2021-22.

In terms of share in the General Government Expenditure (GGE), it has increased from 3.94 per

cent in 2014-15 to 6.12 per cent in 2021-22, the estimates showed.

"In per capita terms, GHE has tripled, from Rs. 1,108 to Rs. 3,169 between 2014-15 to 2021-22. The government spending on health between 2019-20 and 2020-21 increased by 16.6 per cent, while between 2020-21 and 2021-22, it grew by an unprecedented rate of 37 per cent," the estimates showed.

The increase in Government spending on health has an impor-

tant implication for the reduction of financial hardship endured by households.

In the Total Health Expenditure (THE) of the country between 2014-15 and 2021-22, the share of GHE has increased from 29 per cent to 48 per cent. During the same period, the share of Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) in THE declined from 62.6 per cent to 39.4 per cent, the estimates showed.

Further, the Social Security Expenditure (SSE) on healthcare also increased during this period. This has a direct impact on reducing out-of-pocket payments, the health ministry said.

"The share of SSE on health, which includes Government-funded health insurance, medical reimbursement to Government employees, and social health insurance programs, in THE, has increased from 5.7 per cent in 2014-15 to 8.7 per cent in 2021-22," as per the estimates.

The current NHA estimate is the eighth and ninth in the series of reports released annually by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

## BSL drives Plantation and Anti-Dengue measures for a healthier township

AGENCIES  
BOKARO, SEP 26

Under the "Swachhata Hi Seva" campaign, a tree plantation program was organized near the Ispat Bhawan and Cricket Stadium in Bokaro on September 24. The event was part of the "Clean Bokaro, Green Bokaro" initiative, aimed at enhancing greenery and biodiversity. Executive Director (Projects & Additional Charge of Materials Management) C.R. Mahapatra, along with Executive Director (Mines) Jaydeep Dasgupta, led the plantation activity at the Steel Building premises. Following their lead, Chief General Manager (Human Resources) Harimohan Jha and other senior offi-



cials and staff from the HR division also participated in the campaign.

Similarly, another tree plantation drive was conducted near the Bokaro Steel City Cricket Stadium under the guidance of Chief General Manager (Town Services) Kundan Kumar and Chief General Manager (CED) Shaligram Singh.

In addition to the plantation drive, the Public Health Department of BSL Township launched a comprehensive campaign to protect the city from dengue. Regular fogging and anti-larvae treatments are being conducted across different sectors, markets, and town areas to prevent mosquito breeding.



# Congressmen live for their families, for BJP workers national interest is above everything: PM Modi

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday drew a sharp contrast between the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) 'nation first' policy and Congress' 'family over everything' approach and asserted that the party's victory in Haryana was certain as the people of the state have decided to bless it again.

In a direct interaction with BJP booth workers of Haryana through the NaMo App, PM Modi said, "National interest is paramount for every BJP worker, and the people of Haryana have decided to give BJP a chance to serve once again."

Launching a diatribe at Congress, he said, "The entire focus of those who are contesting against us is based on lies. Spread-



ing lies and canards, talking nonsense and vitiating the atmosphere has been their strategy."

"Most of their time is spent in factionalism,

group, such people can never win the trust of the people of Haryana," PM Modi further said.

He also said that Congress has failed as an Opposition in the past ten years and added that the party, despite its big boasts, is not making an impact on people.

The Prime Minister further highlighted the achievements of the BJP government in Haryana in the past decade and said that the corruption-free dispensation ensured that employment was being given without any slip or expenditure for the first time in the state.

"Therefore, the people of Haryana are with us, their blessings are with us, victory is certain," he said, exuding confidence.

"Congress people live only for their own families. Congress is not concerned

about anyone else's children," PM Modi told the booth workers.

The Prime Minister also took potshots at the Congress over its 'aversion' against any person from a backward caste taking up the highest offices of the country.

"They (Congress) are worried about how the country's PM came from a backward community, how the Haryana Chief Minister came from a backward community. That is why these people spread lies because they think that if the power of the backward communities increases, what will happen to them? I would also like to tell my brothers to ask the Congress for an account of how many lies it dished out regarding MSP," he said, addressing the gathering of booth workers.

# Andhra Pradesh to offer template for relief disbursal to other states

AGENCIES  
AMARAVATI, SEP 26

After disbursing Rs 602 crore in compensation to over 4 lakh flood-affected people in 15 days, the Andhra Pradesh government on Thursday said it has a template for relief efforts that it will offer to other states.

Minister for Education, Information Technology (IT) and Electronics Nara Lokesh said the state government designed and implemented a full stack app and database for the enumeration and verification of beneficiaries.

"Absolutely delighted that we could achieve the gigantic task of disbursing Rs 602 crores of compensation to over 4 lakh beneficiaries in a record time-frame of just 15 days from the recent devastating floods," posted Lokesh, who is the son of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu.

"In the process, we designed and implemented a full stack app + data-



base on handheld devices for enumeration and verification of beneficiaries. We also integrated into the AADHAAR / UPI data base for instant access to verified bank accounts to make the transfers. We now have a template for other such relief efforts, which we will offer to other states," he added.

Lokesh also slammed the previous government of the YSR Congress Party. "By comparison, the incompetent YSRCP government took 5.5 months to disburse compensation for the victims of Michaung cyclone last year," he said.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said on

Wednesday that flood relief for those who suffered heavy losses in a record time of just 15 days. He said Rs 602 crore was credited to the personal accounts of the affected people. Claiming that the relief paid to the flood victims is perhaps the highest in the country, he said those who have not received the compensation on Wednesday will be paid it by September 30.

"We will see to it that the last victim of these floods should receive the amount, as promised," he said and stated that the list of the affected was prepared in the most transparent way and was displayed at all the village secretariats.

Maintaining that the state has suffered a total loss of Rs 7,600 crore in the storms, Chandrababu Naidu said that this calamity that he never experienced in his life as 42 cms rain was recorded in certain areas and the Budameru too experienced record flash floods.

# No decision on Shimla vendors to display identity, says Himachal govt

AGENCIES  
SHIMLA, SEP 26

A day after Urban Development Minister Vikramaditya Singh courted a controversy by saying the government had decided to make it mandatory for all street vendors in Shimla to display their name, photograph and identification as per their ID cards, the Himachal government on Thursday clarified that no decision to display nameplates by the vendors had been taken.

A spokesperson for the government said numerous suggestions have been received from different sections of society regarding the street vendor's policy.

"So far, the government has not taken any decision to mandatorily display nameplates or other identification by the vendors on their stalls," he said, adding the government was committed to addressing the concerns of street vendors of the state and would consider all suggestions carefully before

taking any decision.

The spokesperson said a committee, comprising both Congress and BJP MLAs, has already been constituted to address the matter.

The committee was chaired by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Harshwardhan Chauhan and includes Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Anirudh Singh, Public Works Minister Vikramaditya Singh and MLAs Anil Sharma, Satpal Satti, Randhir Sharma and Harish Janartha.

The committee would review suggestions of various stakeholders, before submitting its recommendations to the state government. He said that once their detailed recommendations are submitted, the Cabinet would carefully evaluate them before making any final decisions on the matter.

On Wednesday, Minister Vikramaditya Singh said that all street vendors, especially those selling eatables, will have to display their identity.

# 'Very difficult' to hold no PMLA case against Senthil Balaji, says SC

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

The Supreme Court on Thursday said that it will be "very difficult to hold" that there is no prima facie case of money laundering against DMK leader and former Tamil Nadu Minister V. Senthil Balaji.

A bench headed by Justice Abhay S. Oka refused to accept the contention that the deposit of Rs.1.34 crore cash amount in his bank account was remuneration received as MLA and agriculture income.

The Bench, also comprising A.G. Masih, said, "It will be very difficult to hold that there is no prima facie case against the appellant (Balaji)" in the complaint filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

However, the apex court directed the DMK leader to be enlarged on bail, considering that he has been incarcerated for more than 15 months, when the maximum sentence for alleged offences may extend up to

7 years.

It noted that in three scheduled offences, there are more than 2,000 accused and the number of witnesses proposed to be examined exceeds 600.

The apex court said that "even in ideal conditions, the possibility of the trial of scheduled offences concluding even within a reasonable time of three to four years appears to be completely ruled out."

"Even if the trial of the case under the PMLA proceeds, it cannot be finally decided unless the trial of scheduled offences concludes.

In the facts of the case, there is no possibility of the trial of the scheduled offences commencing in the near future. Therefore, we see no possibility of both trials concluding within a few years," it added.

In its judgement, the Supreme Court said that when PMLA lays down a higher threshold for the grant of bail, an expeditious disposal of the trial is also warranted.

"Inordinate delay in the



conclusion of the trial and the higher threshold for the grant of bail cannot go together.

These stringent provisions regarding the grant of bail, such as Section 45(i) (iii) of the PMLA, cannot become a tool which can be used to incarcerate the accused without trial for an unreasonably long time," it said.

The Supreme Court said that when the trial of the complaint under PMLA is likely to prolong beyond reasonable limits, the constitutional courts will have to consider exercising their powers to grant bail.

"What a reasonable time is will depend on the provisions under which the accused is being tried

and other factors.

One of the most relevant factors is the duration of the minimum and maximum sentence for the offence," it said, noting that under statutes like PMLA, the minimum sentence is three years, and the maximum is seven years.

"The Constitutional Courts cannot allow provisions like Section 45(i)(ii) to become instruments in the hands of the ED to continue incarceration for a long time when there is no possibility of a trial of the scheduled offence and the PMLA offence concluding within a reasonable time," added the top court.

Under Section 45 of the PMLA, twin tests must be

met to obtain bail. First, the court should be convinced that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accused is not guilty of such an offence.

Second, the court should be convinced that the accused seeking bail is not likely to commit any offence while out on bail.

The Supreme Court recorded that the trial of the scheduled offences and the consequent PMLA offences are "not likely to be completed in three to four years or even more" and if Balaji's detention is continued, it will violate his fundamental right to speedy trial guaranteed under the Constitution.

It decided to impose stringent bail conditions, considering apprehension of tampering with the evidence by Balaji. As per the SC order, the DMK leader will have to furnish bail bonds for Rs 25,00,000 with two sureties of the same amount.

"The appellant (Balaji) shall not directly or indirectly attempt to contact or communicate with the

prosecution witnesses and victims of the three scheduled offences in any manner," it said, clarifying that even an attempt to contact any prosecution witness or victim will be a ground to cancel the bail granted.

Balaji will mark his attendance every Monday and Friday between 11 a.m. and 12 noon in the ED's office in Chennai and appear on the first Saturday of every calendar month before the investigating officers of the three scheduled offences.

Apart from the above conditions, he will have to surrender his passport to the Special PMLA Court.

The former TN minister has been ordered to "regularly and punctually remain present" before the trial courts for early disposal of cases.

"If the appellant (Balaji) seeks adjournments on non-existing or frivolous grounds or creates hurdles in the early disposal of the cases mentioned above, the bail granted to him shall be liable to be cancelled," the SC said.

# 'BJP has finished Haryana': Rahul Gandhi vows caste census, employment generation

AGENCIES  
KARNAL (HARYANA), SEP 26

Hitting the poll campaign trail in election-bound Haryana, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday accused the BJP government of finishing the state by failing to generate employment that is forcing the youth to immigrate and vowed to conduct a caste census and redress grievances of the farmers.

Addressing a rally in Assandh in Karnal where Sirsa MP and former Union minister Kumari Selja, who had been missing from campaigning so far, shared the dais along with senior party leaders, including two-time Chief Minister Bhupinder Hooda, Gandhi asked: "Why are the youth of Haryana going to the US?"

Narrating an experience from his recent visit to America, he said: "When I visited Dallas in the US, I saw 15-20 people sleeping



in one room. A youth told me that many of them took loans or sold their land to pay around Rs 30-50 lakh to come to the US."

"When I told them that they could use the same amount to start a business in Haryana, they said it was not possible to do so in the state. When I visited Karnal, I saw a child screaming at a computer asking his father to return from the US during a video call. The Haryana government has finished the state and its youth."

Expressing confidence that his party would sweep the elections as Haryana

will fight unitedly, Gandhi said: "Our government will be for everyone."

The Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha said a caste census aims at providing nearly 90 per cent of the country's population their "rightful due".

"If this much of the population does not get its due, the Constitution can not be preserved or protected," he said, adding that 90 per cent of the country's population remains "marginalised with little to no representation in the corporate world.

Gandhi maintained that

such a census would form a key policy framework for Congress.

Ahead of the rally, the BJP attacked the Congress leader for campaigning in Assandh from where Shamsher Singh Gogi is in the fray, alleging that Gogi has openly declared he will "fill his coffers" and those of people close to him, if the Congress formed the government in Haryana.

"Rahul Gandhi is starting his rally in Haryana for a Congress candidate who, just two days ago, openly declared that he will loot Haryana. Rahul Gandhi is coming to campaign for the candidate who has declared that if the Congress government comes to power, he will first fill his own coffers and then the coffers of his people," the BJP said in a post on X.

Haryana will go to the polls on October 5 with the ballot count on October 8.

# INDIA RISING ON DEFENCE INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE OF THE WORLD

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

As India's defence production surged to Rs 1.27 lakh crore in FY23-24, the exports have also soared from Rs 1,000 crore to Rs 21,000 crore, spanning across over 90 nations, further giving a push to the country's 'Make in India' programme towards achieving 'Atmanirbharta' in the defence sector.

According to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, the government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's astute leadership introduced 'Make in India' programme with a vision to make India self-reliant in every domain. "Ten years since then, many reforms have been made in every sector including the defence sector. India is rising on the defence industrial landscape of the world," said Defence Minister.

Indian Armed Forces are using weapons and platforms, which are manufactured on our own soil and we also exporting defence items to more than 90 friendly foreign countries, he informed in a post on X social media platform.

Last month, Rajnath Singh invited US defence companies to work with India, asserting that together, they will co-develop and co-produce for the world.



India is continuously moving towards self-reliance in the manufacturing of weapons, cannons, tanks, fighter ships, helicopters, missile systems, and more for the armed forces.

The Union Budget for 2024-25 has allocated Rs 6.22 lakh crore for the Ministry of Defence, the highest among all ministries.

According to Defence Minister, our forces are becoming more capable and self-reliant, with defence procurement receiving a larger share. In the past decade, around Rs 6 lakh crore worth of defence equipment has been procured from Indian companies, doubling the country's defence production.

As per reports, India's defence export is estimated to grow at 18

per cent CAGR (compound annual growth rate) from FY24-FY30, driven by the 'Make in India' initiative and thrust on local manufacturing.

Global investment firm Jefferies said this month that the government is also building bilateral relations to promote exports in the global market. Between FY24 to FY30 (estimated), the potential market opportunity for Indian defence companies is expected to rise at 14 per cent CAGR, the report said.

Defence companies will get opportunities worth \$90 billion to \$100 billion in the Indian market in the next 5 to 6 years. In 2022, India's defence expenditure was 10 per cent of the US expenditure and 27 per cent of China's expenditure.



## Macron backs India for permanent UNSC membership, calls for comprehensive reforms

AGENCIES  
NEW YORK, SEP 26

French President Emmanuel Macron has voiced strong support for India's inclusion as a permanent member of a reformed United Nations Security Council (UNSC), along with Germany, Japan, Brazil, and two African nations.

"Germany, Japan, India and Brazil should be permanent members, as well as two countries that Africa would designate to represent it. New elected members should also be admitted," Macron said while addressing the general debate at the 79th session of the UN General Assembly in New York early Thursday, India time.

The French President stressed the need for reforms within the UN to make it more effective and



representative, particularly in light of the challenges posed by the current structure of the Security Council.

"The United Nations should not be discarded, but rather reformed to reflect today's realities," he said.

He said that the current Security Council, often blocked by conflicting interests, needs to evolve.

"Is there a better system? I don't think so. So let's just make these United Nations more effective, first by perhaps making them more

representative. That is why France and I repeat here, is in favour of the Security Council being expanded," Macron said.

The French President said that he hopes that "this reform will also make it possible to change working methods, to limit the right of veto in the event of mass crime and to focus on operational decisions that are necessary to maintain international peace and security. This is what we must have the courage and audacity to do and that we must carry forward with the current permanent members."

Earlier, Chilean President Gabriel Boric Font also advocated for India's inclusion, proposing a deadline for the reform to align the UNSC with modern geopolitical realities by the UN's 80th anniversary.

The call for India's permanent membership has also been echoed by other global leaders, including US President Joe Biden, who reiterated Washington's full support for India's bid during his recent bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Russia, too, continues to back India's aspiration for a permanent seat, with the country's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov emphasising the need for greater representation of developing countries in the council during the ongoing annual UN event.

The growing consensus among world leaders highlights the urgency of reforming the UNSC to reflect the contemporary global order and ensure more inclusive and effective international governance.

## Cambodian experts continue to restore laterite wall of Angkor Thom temple in Angkor park

AGENCIES  
PHNOM PENH, SEP 26

Cambodian experts are currently engaged in the restoration of a 25-metre portion of the Angkor Thom temple's laterite wall in the famed Angkor Archaeological Park, said an APSARA National Authority (ANA) news release on Thursday.

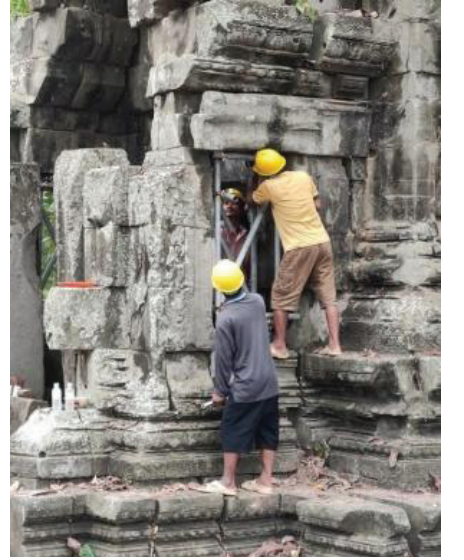
ANA technical officer Mao Sokny said the wall of the Angkor Thom's Dei Chhnang Gate had suffered damage due to age and environmental factors.

"Over the past eight months, experts have focused on reinforcing the foundation of the lower three layers of the wall, addressing issues such as erosion, vegetation growth, and stone separation that led to its deterioration," he said.

Sokny said this restoration effort marked the sixth phase of an ongoing project aimed at preserving Angkor Thom's walls, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Previous phases have successfully repaired five other sections of the wall," he said. Sokny said prior to the restoration work, the team had conducted excavations to analyze the wall's structure and identify the causes of its collapse.

Built in late 12th century by King Jaya-



varman VII, the Angkor Thom is one of the major temples in the 401-square-km Angkor Archaeological Park in northwest Cambodia's Siem Reap province.

The ancient park, which was inscribed on the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1992, is home to 91 ancient temples, which had been built from the ninth to the 13th centuries.

## Lebanese PM welcomes temporary ceasefire proposal in Lebanon

AGENCIES  
BEIRUT, SEP 26

Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati has welcomed a temporary ceasefire proposal in Lebanon unveiled during a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) emergency meeting, and has urged compelling Israel to restore regional security, said a statement released Thursday by the Lebanese Council of Ministers.

"The key to its (the proposal's) implementation is through Israel's commitment to enforcing international resolutions," Mikati said at the UNSC emergency meeting on Lebanon Wednesday, the second UNSC meeting on the country's deteriorating situation in less than a week.

"My presence here aims to come out of this session with a serious solution based on the combined efforts of all members of the Security Council to pressure Israel to immediately cease fire on all

fronts and restore security and stability to our region," Mikati said.

Mikati reaffirmed Lebanon's commitment to UN Resolution 1701 issued in 2006, calling on the UNSC to work seriously and immediately to ensure Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Lebanese territories and to stop its daily violations.

He also called for an immediate halt to "Israeli aggression on Gaza," stating that its repercussions directly affect Lebanon and the region, warning that the situation could escalate throughout the Middle East if not addressed quickly.

"Lebanon is witnessing today an unprecedented escalation, with the enemy resorting to new means, especially electronic ones, to harm people," he said, refuting Israel's claim that its attacks targeted only Hezbollah members and militants, Xinhua news agency reported.

## UN SECURITY COUNCIL HOLDS EMERGENCY MEETING ON LEBANON AMID ISRAEL-HEZBOLLAH CONFLICT

AGENCIES  
UNITED NATIONS, SEP 25

Requested by France, the UN Security Council on Wednesday convened an emergency meeting on Lebanon, the second meeting on the country's deteriorating situation in less than a week, with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres saying that "hell is breaking loose in Lebanon."

In his remarks, Guterres urged the Security Council "to work in lock-step" to end the escalating violence between Israeli forces and Hezbollah militants across the Blue Line, a buffer zone in southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah and Israel must pull back from the brink of a potentially catastrophic regional war, he insisted, adding that there was now massive civilian displacement from southern and eastern Lebanon

towards the Lebanese capital of Beirut, while the Israelis have endured repeated attacks from Hezbollah with more than 8,300 rockets, drones and increasingly high caliber missile attacks on military targets and residential areas.

With an appeal for both sides to respect Lebanese sovereignty, Guterres said that Lebanon "must have full control of its weapons" throughout the country.

"We support all efforts to strengthen the Lebanese Armed Forces," he added. "We say it very clearly and honestly: what we have been witnessing over the past year in Gaza and what we are witnessing now in Lebanon is likely to expand to other areas in the region if the international community does not shoulder its responsibility to put an end to the machine of death and destruction," Badr Ahmed



Mohamed Abdelatty, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates of Egypt, told the meeting.

"They are spreading terror and fear among Lebanese citizens ... We cannot bear to lose another generation because of the war," said Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati.

"The ongoing aggression against Lebanon is fueled by the failure of the international community, and

in particular by the UN Security Council, to hold Israel accountable for war crimes and genocide in Gaza," said Seyyed Abbas Araghchi, Iranian foreign minister, Xinhua news agency reported.

France on Wednesday unveiled a proposal for a 21-day ceasefire in Lebanon in UN diplomacy with the United States as the death toll mounted in deadly strikes by Israel. French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said that

the two Western powers were proposing a "temporary ceasefire" of 21 days "to allow for negotiations."

The Arab League Council has at the level of foreign ministers warned of the repercussions of escalating "the Israeli aggression" against Lebanon in light of recent developments, which could lead to the outbreak of a large-scale regional war and threaten the security and stability of the entire region.

Israel said on Wednesday it was readying troops for a potential ground incursion into Lebanon, telling soldiers to prepare to "enter enemy territory" as it called up more reservists and sent world leaders scrambling to prevent a full-scale war with Hezbollah militants.

"We are preparing the process of a maneuver," Israeli Military Chief Herzi Halevi told troops at an

exercise along the northern border.

Israeli warplanes resumed intensive airstrikes on eastern and southern Lebanon on Wednesday evening, carrying out about 70 raids on the areas of Baalbek, Hermel, and Western Bekaa in eastern Lebanon.

On Monday and Tuesday, Israel conducted its most extensive attacks on Lebanon since 2006, resulting in more than 550 deaths and over 1,800 injuries across the country. Lebanese Environment Minister Nasser Yassin said Israel's bombardment has displaced over 150,000 residents over the past 72 hours.

The sharp escalation has raised concerns about a potential full-scale conflict between Israel and Lebanon, with fears that other regional powers could also be sucked in.

## South Korea, Japan to hold first talks on continental shelf development since 1985

AGENCIES  
SEOUL, SEP 26

South Korea and Japan will hold working-level talks in Tokyo later this week to discuss the joint development of an underwater continental shelf believed to hold mass deposits of oil and other natural resources, officials said Thursday.

The talks, scheduled for Friday, mark the resumption of long-suspended negotiations on the joint exploitation of the 'Block 7' continental shelf in the East China Sea, under a 1978 bilateral agreement, nearly four decades after the last meeting in 1985.

The sixth round of negotiations on the Agreement on the Joint Development Zone (JDZ) will be led by Hwang Jun-shik, director general for international



legal affairs of the South Korean foreign ministry, and Akihiro Okochi, deputy director general for Asian and Oceanian affairs at Japan's foreign ministry.

Officials from the two countries' industry ministries will also join the talks, Yonhap news agency

reported.

South Korea and Japan signed the JDZ agreement in 1974 to pursue the joint exploration and development of the block and adjacent waters south of Jeju Island, covering an area of 82,557 square kilometers, based on geological analyses suggesting the

continental shelf may hold significant reserves of oil, gas and other minerals. The agreement came into effect four years later.

The two countries held five rounds of talks, but Japan became lukewarm about moving forward with the agreement after a new international treaty on maritime activities, which came into force in 1994, adopted criteria for determining continental shelf boundaries in Japan's favor. The precedents since then suggest Japan could claim all of the joint development area as part of its exclusive economic zone. The issue drew fresh attention earlier this year after Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa hinted during a parliamentary session in February at the possibility of Tokyo initiating a renegotiation with

Seoul when the agreement expires.

The JDZ agreement is valid until June 2028, but either side can notify the other of an intent to terminate it three years before the expiration date.

Friday's talks will focus on exchanging positions on the issue and discussing efforts to implement the agreement at the working level, a foreign ministry official in Seoul said, adding that the termination or extension of the agreement will not be on the agenda.

"We believe that the two countries will continue to be able to address the issue amicably, and we have been preparing for every possible scenario to best serve our national interests," the official said.

## North Korea may conduct nuclear test after US election: Spy agency

AGENCIES  
SEOUL, SEP 26

North Korea may carry out its seventh nuclear test after the US presidential vote in November, South Korea's spy agency was quoted as telling lawmakers Thursday.

The National Intelligence Service (NIS) made the assessment to the parliamentary intelligence committee, saying Pyongyang has other options, such as an intercontinental ballistic missile test, according to Rep. Lee Seong-kweon of the ruling People Power Party and Rep. Park Sun-won of the main opposition Democratic Party.

The NIS also reported that the North possesses around 70 kilograms of plutonium and a significant amount of highly enriched uranium (HEU), which is sufficient to build a two-digit number of nuclear weapons.

The agency said the North appears to have the US election in mind when it disclosed a HEU facility for the first time earlier this month. The disclosure could also be targeted at instilling confidence in the domestic audience struggling with the country's crippling economy, the NIS reported. "Externally, it can be interpreted as a move conscious of the US ahead of its presidential

election, while internally it appears to be an attempt to boost confidence among the population amid the extremely dire economic situation," Lee said, Yonhap news agency reported.

Earlier this month, North Korean state media publicly disclosed details of its uranium enrichment facility for the first time in the form of leader Kim Jong-un's visit there, but it did not disclose the location of the facility or date of Kim's visit.

As to the facility's location, the NIS said it is likely to be the Kangson nuclear complex near Pyongyang, though it is hard to give a definite answer.

## Returnees to Sudan city gripped by indiscriminate shelling, hunger, and diseases

AGENCIES  
KHARTOUM, SEP 26

The Karari locality of Omdurman city, north of the Sudanese capital Khartoum, has regained some vibrancy after a fierce battle in March that expelled the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) from the old neighbourhoods, expanding the control of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) to the south.

Overcrowded markets

and therapeutic activities such as masquerade parties and puppet theaters - the routines of life - have started to reemerge in the locality, which hosts more than 160 shelter centres packed with displaced Sudanese.

However, the returnees have never felt reassured amid the hustle-bustle, as they are still subjected to random artillery shelling from time to time.

On Monday, at least 15 people were killed and 61

others injured in an artillery attack by the RSF on the crowded Sabreen civilian market in Karari. The death toll could be higher as the local rescue team was unable to reach some victims.

"This is the reality now. We are trying to live with the situation, but we are afraid to give up and flee again," said Mahmoud Satti, a teacher who returned to Omdurman after a year-long displacement journey



in central Sudan.

"What happened in Sabreen market was very tragic. People here are

dying because of random shelling," Satti told Xinhua news agency.

He urged government

authorities to protect the returnees, address the security gap, and provide necessary services to Omdurman's residents.

"There are no food shops amid a great shortage of goods, while prices for what is available are very high," said Saadan Omer, a citizen from Omdurman.

Most people live on aid from their relatives abroad, and Takias - sanctuaries for the impoverished and needy set up by Sudanese

activists and volunteers -- remain as the primary source of food supply for Omdurman's residents, he said.

"There is a significant spread of diseases amid a great shortage in medicines, while there are no nearby hospitals, and even those operational have been bombed and looted," said Saeed Al-Zubair, a 49-year-old man from Omdurman.

Since the fighting

between the SAF and RSF began in April last year, epidemic diseases have plagued the country, including Omdurman, leading to hundreds of deaths.

The conflict has resulted in at least 20,000 deaths and displaced millions of people, according to a press release published Tuesday on the website of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).



## India's Lohum Cleantech to jointly set up \$30 mn lithium-ion battery processing unit in US

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

Homegrown battery-tech startup company Lohum Cleantech on Thursday announced to set up a lithium-ion battery materials processing facility in the US with ReElement Technologies and American Metals for \$30 million.

The joint 15.5 gigawatt hours (GWh) facility will be set up with an initial investment of \$30 million, creating 250 "green jobs".

The partnership is expected to initially supply over 315,000 electric vehicles annually with continued growth based on feed-



stock availability.

The initial operating location will be at the Marion Advanced Technology Center in the state of Indiana, and expand to other locations as determined by the joint venture parties, the companies said in a statement.

"The joint venture will be instrumental in building resilient critical mate-

rial supply chains in the US that can sustain themselves through circularity. This is an inspiring development in US-India technology collaboration through market entities," said Rajat Verma, Founder and CEO, Lohum.

The integrated end-to-end battery and critical minerals lifecycle management facility will host the

entire value chain from battery cell testing and segregation for second-life energy storage applications to recycling, mineral refining, engineered materials, and battery-grade products.

The facility will produce critical materials with purity levels greater than 99.5 per cent, which can then circulate in the US domestic battery ecosystem.

Mark Jensen, Chairman of American Metals and ReElement Technologies said they have been working with Lohum to figure out how to leverage "our unique capabilities and world-leading technolo-

gies at ReElement along with the innovative and scaled up approach to critical mineral's recycling and refining that Lohum has established".

In March this year, Lohum raised \$54 million (Rs 450 crore) in series B funding from Singularity Growth, Baring Private Equity, Cactus Venture Partners and Venture East, among others.

Lohum offers an end-to-end, in-house ecosystem of battery recycling, battery repurposing, transition materials refining and Cathode Active Material (CAM) which is an integrated battery lifecycle management.

## September 26: Sensex closes at all-time high, Auto stocks shine

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI, SEP 26

Indian equity markets are witnessing a robust performance, with the Sensex up by 666 points and the Nifty surpassing the 26,000 mark, closing at 85,836 and 26,216, respectively.

Intraday, Sensex and Nifty hit new all-time highs of 85,930 and 26,250, respectively.

In the Sensex pack, Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors, Bajaj Finserv, M&M, Tata Steel, JSW Steel, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, Nestle, Sun Pharma, HUL, SBI, Wipro, Asian Paints, ITC, and IndusInd Bank were the

top gainers. Only L&T and NTPC closed in the red.

The Nifty Smallcap 100 index closed 96 points or 0.50 per cent lower at 19,261 and the Nifty Midcap 100 index closed marginally higher by 4 points at 60,469.

Among the sectoral indices, Auto, IT, PSU Bank, fin service, pharma, FMCG, metal and commodity were major gainers. Only the consumer durable index closed in the red.

Rupak De, Senior Technical Analyst, LKP Securities said: "The Nifty has broken out of consolidation on the daily timeframe, indicating increasing bullish momentum.

The sentiment is expected to stay positive as the index closed above a key moving average. A drop below 26,000 might disrupt the current bullish trend, but until then, the strength is likely to persist in the index."

Other market experts maintained that China's recent economic stimulus announcement has greatly enhanced investor confidence, resulting in significant positive momentum in global markets, especially within Asian indices. Moreover, the market is maintaining an optimistic outlook in response to stable US economic data, they said.

## India's electronics production reach Rs 9.52 lakh cr, mobile exports cross Rs 1.2 lakh cr

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

Driven by the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, the overall production of electronics in the country has surged to Rs 9.52 lakh crore, from Rs 1.9 lakh crore 10 years back, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 17.4 per cent, the government has informed.

India has reached Rs 6.61 lakh crore in total value of production, above the target that has been set by the government. The overall investment has been Rs 9,100 crore, also above the target.

The mobile PLI scheme set a target to achieve cumulative production of Rs 4.39 lakh crore in 2023-24 and Rs 8.12 lakh crore during the five-year scheme period till FY 2026.

When it comes to mobile exports, it was about Rs 1.2 lakh crore in 2023-24 and has increased 77 times from 2014-15.

In 2014-15, the country exported mobile phones worth about Rs 1,566 crore and now, the country is exporting mobile phones worth about Rs 1.2 lakh crore.

According to IT Ministry, the total employment has crossed 1.22 lakh under the mobile PLI scheme, which is also above the target.

The country's mobile phone manufacturing in value has risen to Rs 4.1 lakh crore in India in the last 10 years due to strategic government policy measures like PLI and phased-manufacturing programme (PMP) schemes.

As the country becomes the second larg-

est mobile manufacturer in the world, global manufacturing companies like Samsung, Apple and Google are making their latest generation smartphones in India.

According to S Krishnan, Secretary, MeitY, the country has emerged as the world's second-largest manufacturer of mobile phones.

"The government's priority has always been to enable PLI beneficiaries to maximise their benefits, meet targets, and ultimately enhance India's business environment," Krishnan noted.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said recently that with a three-fold increase in domestic production and an almost 100-fold jump in exports of mobile phones over the last six years, the mobile phone industry has matured in the country.

## Indian travel & hospitality sector to expand workforce by 64 pc: Report

AGENCIES  
BENGALURU, SEP 26

To meet the growing demand, 64 per cent of employers in the travel and hospitality industry are expanding their workforce, according to a report on Thursday.

The sector is experiencing an unprecedented resurgence, spurred by a combination of rising air travel, religious tourism, and evolving consumer preferences for personalised, tech-driven experiences, revealed the report by TeamLease Services.

According to its Employment Outlook Report (EOR) for H1 FY25, 19 per cent of employers in the sector report reductions while 17 per cent indicate no change in workforce size.

This resurgence reflects a broader industry recovery, with the sector projected to grow by 8-10 per cent annually.



This renewed hiring momentum is further fueled by tech-enabled services such as ghost kitchens, AI-driven personalised guest experiences, and expanding domestic travel.

As a result, the travel and hospitality sector has seen a net employment change of 9.86 per cent, marking a significant rebound compared to previous years.

Adaptive strategies like off-season travel incentives and premi-

um travel experiences are driving the sector's growth.

"India's travel and hospitality sector is at the cusp of unprecedented growth. The rising demand for premium travel experiences, coupled with innovations in technology, is creating a catalytic impact on how the industry operates," said Kartik Narayan, CEO-Staffing, TeamLease Services.

"As more travellers embrace digital platforms, companies focus on roles

that enhance customer experience, positioning the sector as a major employment generator in the coming years," he added.

Further, the report showed that workforce expansion is especially prominent in key cities. Delhi leads the way with 58 per cent of employers actively hiring, followed by Mumbai (57 per cent) and Bengaluru (55 per cent) in existing job locations.

New hiring hotspots include Bengaluru (16 per cent), followed by Pune and Chennai at 12 per cent each for emerging job markets.

These cities are seeing robust hiring activity, driven by increased travel demand and the expansion of travel infrastructure.

Sales roles are at the forefront of this hiring boom, with 82 per cent of employers prioritising these positions in

## GreenLine partners with Sterlite Copper to enhance sustainable logistics

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI, SEP 26

GreenLine Mobility Solutions Ltd, a key player in Essar's Green Mobility initiative, has announced its partnership with Sterlite Copper, a unit of Vedanta Ltd, to advance the deployment of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) powered vehicles and further decarbonise Sterlite Copper's transportation operations.

The partnership was initiated with the flag-off of LNG trucks at Vedanta's Sterlite Copper Plant in Silvassa. These LNG vehicles will be transporting finished goods to the northern region, utilising a reverse logistics model. GreenLine's LNG trucks, capable of carrying a 40-tonne payload and travelling up to 1,200 kilometres on a single tank, will enhance logistics efficiency while significantly



reducing carbon emissions.

Commenting on the partnership, Anand Mimani, CEO, GreenLine Mobility Solutions Ltd said, "Our partnership with Sterlite Copper marks an important milestone in our commitment to sustainable logistics. By integrating our LNG technology into their operations, we not only enhance our service offerings but also set a standard for decarbonisation in the transportation sector. Together, we are taking significant steps

towards a cleaner, greener future."

This collaboration highlights GreenLine's dedication to leading the charge in decarbonising India's transportation and logistics sector, driving innovation and sustainability across its operations.

GreenLine serves a diverse range of industries including Cement, Steel, Metals and Mining, FMCG, Express Cargo, Oil and Gas, Chemicals, and Consumer Goods.

GreenLine's LNG-powered trucks reduce CO2

emissions by up to 30 per cent and significantly lower other emissions compared to traditional diesel trucks. To date, the company's fleet has travelled over 22 million kilometres, resulting in a reduction of 6,000 tonnes of emissions.

GreenLine Mobility Solutions Limited (previously known as Green Planet Logistics Pvt Ltd) is partnering in the carbon neutrality mission of conscious corporates by enabling them to decarbonise their heavy trucking through a switch to an LNG-powered heavy truck fleet. GreenLine has exclusive collaborations and deep tech integrations for LNG refuelling stations as well as for LNG-powered trucks. This wired ecosystem enables GreenLine to deliver cleaner, effective, and efficient green mobility solutions to customers in any part of the country.

## Petrol, diesel likely to see Rs 2-3 per litre cut if crude prices remain stable: Report

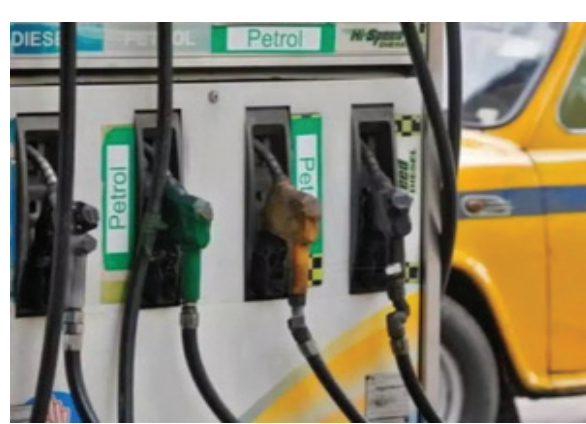
AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

Healthy marketing margins on auto fuels could spur price reductions of Rs 2-3 per litre in petrol and diesel prices in the country if crude prices remain stable, leading rating agency ICRA said on Thursday.

The marketing margins on retail sales of auto fuels for the Indian oil marketing companies (OMCs) have improved in recent weeks with the reduction in crude prices.

The rating agency anticipates that there is headroom for the downward revision of retail fuel prices if crude prices remain stable at current levels. The outlook for the refining and marketing sector remains stable.

"ICRA estimates that the OMCs' net realisation was higher by Rs 15/litre for petrol and Rs 12/litre for



diesel compared to international product prices in September 2024 (till September 17)," said Girishkumar Kadam, SVP and Group Head - Corporate Ratings, ICRA.

Another leading rating agency CLSA said on Wednesday that petrol and diesel prices may be reduced after October 5.

According to ICRA, the retail selling price (RSPs) of these fuels have been unchanged since March

2024 (Rs 2/litre was reduced on petrol and diesel on March 15) and there appears to be headroom for their downward revision by Rs 2-3/litre, if crude prices remain stable, he added.

Crude prices have witnessed a sharp decline in the last few months, primarily due to weak global economic growth and high US production and the OPEC+ has pushed the roll-

back of its production cuts

by two months to combat the declining prices. The impact is mainly on account of weak demand from China due to rising electric vehicle (EV) sales, muted industry demand and real estate downturn.

Further, demand in Europe has also been subdued due to weak industrial activity and a structural shift in vehicle fleets towards EVs.

As per the report, a marketing gain of Rs 1/litre on petrol and diesel would compensate for the gross refining margin (GRM) loss of 0.9 \$/barrel for the domestic refining and marketing industry.

Petroleum, oil and lubricants (POL) consumption in India witnessed YoY growth of 5 per cent in FY24 and is likely to witness a 3-4 per cent growth in FY25, driven by economic progress, increasing mobility and air travel.

## Spam menace: 3K registered senders whitelist over 70K links as per Centre's directive

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

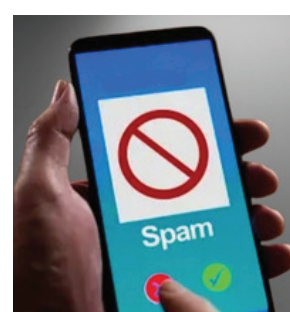
More than 3,000 registered senders have whitelisted more than 70,000 URLs, APKs (Android package kit) or OTT (over the top) links as per the government directive to safeguard consumers from unsolicited messages containing malicious links, it was announced on Thursday.

In a major step to curb the misuse of URLs (uniform resource locators) in messages, the Telecom Reg-

ulatory Authority of India (TRAI) had issued a directive on August 20, and then extended it till September 30.

The new rule, instructing all access providers to block any traffic containing URLs, APKs, or OTT links that have not been whitelisted, is set to be implemented by 1st October 2024.

To ensure smooth flow of SMS traffic containing URLs, TRAI advises registered senders to promptly upload their whitelisted URL/APK/OTT links to the



portal of the respective Access Providers.

"So far, over 3,000 registered senders have complied with this requirement by whitelisting more than

70,000 links. Senders who fail to whitelist their links by the due date will not be able to transmit any messages containing URL/APK/OTT links," said the Ministry of Communications.

This initiative is designed to foster a transparent and secure communication system.

"By complying with these new rules, both Access Providers and registered senders can help in creating a more reliable and safe messaging environment," said the telecom

regulator.

Whitelisting is a cybersecurity strategy under which only pre-approved or trusted users, entities, or actions are allowed to operate on a system or network. By preventing unauthorised access, whitelisting can greatly reduce the risk of malware infection and cyber intrusion.

Telecom service providers blocked over 50 entities and disconnected more than 2.75 lakh mobile numbers and telecom resources earlier this month.

## Hyundai Motor, Kia launch joint tech project for EV battery development

AGENCIES  
SEOUL, SEP 26

Hyundai Motor and Kia, South Korea's leading automotive companies, said on Thursday they have launched a joint project to develop cathode material technology for producing LFP (lithium iron phosphate) batteries for electric vehicles. The joint project, also involving Hyundai Steel Co. and Ecopro BM,

aims to develop a technology for synthesising materials directly without using precursors during the manufacturing of LFP battery cathodes, reports Yonhap news agency.

Hyundai Motor and Kia, in collaboration with Hyundai Steel, plan to develop high-purity fine iron powder processing technology using recycled steel. The project, supported by the Ministry

of Trade, Industry and Energy, will run for four years, the automakers said. The companies' representatives held a meeting Wednesday to discuss future cooperation. If the project is proven successful, LFP battery production could become more cost competitive, as currently most cathode precursors are produced in a few specific countries, leading to high import dependency.



## 2ND TEST: RAIN THREAT LOOMS AS INDIA LOOK TO SEAL SERIES, BANGLADESH EYE STRONGER FIGHT

AGENCIES  
KANPUR, SEP 26

As India and Bangladesh gear up for the second Test at Green Park Stadium here, there's plenty of anticipation, intrigue, and uncertainty surrounding the match. Both teams have everything to play for, with India looking to continue their dominant home run and Bangladesh hoping to put up a stronger fight after their easy capitulation in the first Test in Chennai.

One of the primary factors influencing this Test will be the pitch and the weather. Traditionally, Kanpur offers balanced Test pitches. Fast bowlers enjoy some assistance on the first morning with movement and bounce, while the surface flattens out as the match progresses, aiding batsmen. In the latter half of the Test, spinners come into play, particularly on days four and five. This makes it crucial for both teams to get their strategy and combination right.

However, the weather could throw a spanner into the plans. Rain is forecast for the first three days of the match, which could impact not only

the pitch's behaviour but also the team selections and the toss decision. Wet conditions could mean less assistance for spinners early on and more for the seamers, deciding to bat or bowl first all the more complex.

The surface being prepared for the match has also raised eyebrows. As of noon on the eve of the match, groundstaff were working on two different pitches, and it wasn't yet clear which one would be used. This has led to some uncertainty about how the track will play out, leaving both teams to make last-minute adjustments to their line-ups.

Despite an up-and-down performance from their star players in the first Test, India showcased their depth in both batting and bowling. Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli combined for only 34 runs across four innings, but the team still posted competitive totals thanks to centuries from Ravichandran Ashwin, Shubman Gill, and Rishabh Pant.

In the bowling department, India's fast bowlers shared eight wickets in Bangladesh's first innings, while their spinners claimed nine in the



second. This well-rounded performance was more than enough to secure a comprehensive victory in Chennai.

Heading into Kanpur, India are likely to retain much of their core. However, with the uncertainty around the pitch and weather, there is speculation about whether they will play three spinners.

If the pitch is slow, Axar Patel could provide a useful option with his stump-to-stump bowling. Yet, with Ravindra Jadeja already playing a similar role, Kuldeep Yadav, a local favourite, might get the nod to bring more variety into the spin attack. Akash Deep could miss out if India opt for three spinners.

For Bangladesh, the

challenges are numerous, but there are reasons to be optimistic. In their second innings in Chennai, their openers provided a solid platform, with Najmul Hossain Shanto returning to form with a well-played 82. Contributions from senior players like Shakib Al Hasan, Litton Das, and Mehidy Hasan Miraz also offered glimpses of potential.

However, to compete against India in their own backyard, Bangladesh will need to perform at their peak for sustained periods - something they have struggled to do in the past. The last time a Test was played in Kanpur, New Zealand's tail famously held on to secure a dramatic draw, and Bangladesh will hope to take

inspiration from that as they aim to be more competitive.

There are also questions about the workload and fitness of some of Bangladesh's key players. Shakib Al Hasan, as always, is in the spotlight.

In Chennai, he was seen biting a strap around his neck to keep his head steady while batting, raising concerns about his physical state.

His discomfort while bowling has also been noted, and it remains to be seen how much he can contribute with the ball in Kanpur. Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusinghe confirmed Shakib's availability for this Test but hinted at the possibility of managing his workload.

If Bangladesh decide to go with three spinners, Tajjul Islam might replace Nahid Rana, offering more variety and easing Shakib's bowling duties. The key for Bangladesh will be to find a balance between aggression and caution, both in their team composition and their approach on the field.

For India, all eyes will be on Shubman Gill, who recently acknowledged that he hasn't yet fulfilled his expectations as a Test

player, despite scoring two hundreds against England earlier this year. After a duck in the first innings in Chennai, Gill roared back with an unbeaten 119 in the second, and he'll be keen to continue fine-tuning his game at No. 3, especially with tougher opponents like New Zealand and Australia on the horizon.

In the Bangladesh camp, Shakib Al Hasan's form and fitness will be crucial. Along with senior players like Mushfiqur Rahim and Litton Das, Bangladesh will look to their captain Najmul Hossain Shanto to build on his solid outing in the first Test. Young players like Mehidy Hasan Miraz will also need to step up with both bat and ball.

Probable XIs:

India: Rohit Sharma (c), Yashvir Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant (wk), KL Rahul, Ravindra Jadeja, R Ashwin, Kuldeep Yadav/Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj

Bangladesh: Shadman Islam, Zakir Hasan, Najmul Hossain Shanto (c), Mominul Haque, Mushfiqur Rahim, Shakib Al Hasan, Litton Das (wk), Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Tajjul Islam, Hasan Mahmud, Taskin Ahmed

## Zim Afro T10: Our focus will be on refining our batting strategy, says Perera

AGENCIES  
HARARE, SEP 26

NYS Lagos is maintaining a positive outlook despite falling short against the Harare Bolts in the Zim Afro T10 on Wednesday. After batting first, the Bolts set a lofty total of 117/7 in their ten overs. Even though Sean Williams scored a lot of runs with aggressive hitting to steady the Bolts' innings, Oshane Thomas made a big impact for NYS Lagos with crucial wickets.

Reflecting on the chase, skipper Thisara Perera expressed confidence in his team's potential, stating, "As a bowling unit, we performed well, especially considering that batting lineup could easily handle a target of 120 or 130. While we fell short today as a batting unit, I believe we can learn from this and come back stronger. I'm optimistic about our chances in the next match."

In response to the target, NYS Lagos began their innings with promise, particularly through Rassie van der Dussen's solid contribution of 25 runs. However, the Bolts' bowlers had other plans.

Richard Gleeson, Arineto Vezha, and Brandon Mavuta bowled with great intensity, each claiming two wickets and disrupting the Lagos innings at crucial moments.

Discussing the team's performance, Thisara added, "Actually, this all happens in cricket. We played wonderful cricket throughout the season. It's just one match, and we can't blame anyone; we need to maintain our strong performances in future matches."

Thisara also emphasised the importance of resilience, saying, "Every team faces ups and downs, and it's how we respond that defines our season."

"We've shown great potential, and I believe we can build on that moving forward."

He further highlighted the team's commitment to improvement, stating, "We'll take this as a learning experience. Our focus will be on refining our batting strategy and ensuring that we capitalise on our strengths. With hard work and dedication, I'm confident we'll bounce back stronger in the next match."

## 'Kuldeep Yadav has to play in Kanpur Test against Bangladesh as India need variety': Hanuma Vihari

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

Middle-order batter Hanuma Vihari believes left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav has to be in the playing eleven for India's second Test against Bangladesh at Green Park Stadium in Kanpur, citing the need to have variety in the spin-bowling department on a black-soil pitch.

With 53 wickets in 12 Tests since his debut in 2017, Kuldeep didn't play in India's 280-run win over Bangladesh in the first Test at Chennai, as India preferred to have a combination of three pacers and two spinners. But the knowledge of conditions at his home ground makes him an essential bowler for India to have in their playing eleven.

"They will probably

make a change - they might play an extra spinner instead of a fast bowler. I think Kuldeep has to play in the eleven because if you have all fingers spinners, I don't think you'll get much assistance from the pitch in Kanpur - it won't deteriorate much as what we've seen in Chennai because black soil takes a lot of time to deteriorate."

"It eventually gets better that's what we've seen against New Zealand as well where they could draw the Test match against India in Kanpur. So I think they need variety and Kuldeep Yadav will come into the eleven, as it's also his own ground as well."

"He knows the conditions here best, so I think it's a no-brainer - if the wicket doesn't offer anything for the fast bowlers

if there's no grass on the pitch I think it's a straight-away Kuldeep in for one of the fast bowlers," said Vihari, an expert with JioCinema & Sports18, in a conversation with IANS on Thursday.

India have played 23 Tests in Kanpur, winning seven of them while drawing 17 games. With the venue having the reputation of being slow, low and batter-friendly black-soil pitch, Vihari reckons bowlers will be in for a stern examination in Kanpur.

"With the experience of me playing in Kanpur and watching games, I feel it will be a slow wicket as compared to Chennai. It will have less bounce than what we've seen in Chennai because there, they played on a red soil pitch which offered more bounce. But Kanpur pitch



will test the bowlers."

"They have to be really patient to get wickets and batters will have a good time in Kanpur compared to what it was in Chennai. So I think it's about patience and whoever can keep at it for a longer period of time, we'll have a good result. Obviously, India have good experience of playing in Kanpur, although it was a draw

against New Zealand in 2021."

India's thumping win in Chennai was set up by a stupendous 199-run partnership between an elegant Ravichandran Ashwin and a rock-solid Ravindra Jadeja, who made 113 and 86 respectively. The duo also picked 11 wickets together to play a pivotal role in the hosts' resounding victory at Chennai and

consolidate their World Test Championship top spot.

It's safe to say that Ashwin and Jadeja are the backbone of India becoming a formidable force to reckon with in Tests at home. "Ashwin and Jadeja make a huge difference to the Indian batting lineup, especially if you talk about the overall impact - what they created is second to none. They're one and two in the best all-rounders in the world, but the impact they create with the bat is humongous."

"In the first innings at Chennai, where India were in trouble at 144/6, Ashwin got a century and bailed out India in a difficult situation.

Even Jadeja when we tour abroad has batted so well in the recent past. He's almost been our best

batter in the last couple of years so that's the kind of impact they've been creating."

"I think it's experience and the confidence they gained by playing so many years of international cricket.

There's no substitute to experience and that's what they've gained over the years. It's been over a decade of them playing together - they understand each other even with the bat when they're batting together. So, the confidence and experience they've gained over the years playing Test cricket is showing now," elaborated Vihari, who played 16 Tests for India.

When the Kanpur Test begins, Ashwin will again be in the spotlight to put out another match-winning all-round per-

formance for India. "His performance speaks a lot rather than me speaking because he's been one of the greats for India - picking up 500 plus wickets and then scoring his sixth hundred in Test cricket - it's commendable for the way he's been."

"He was working on his game while playing TNPL and got his batting form from there. We always knew about Ashwin the bowler, but I think his batting has also improved. It sounds funny, but he's 38, and yet, still works on his batting. Plus, in the Test, not just the runs, but the way he got it - it's his fastest Test 100 now - that shows that he's worked on his game, stroke play and it was clearly evident with the way he was playing in Chennai," concluded Vihari.

## 'Atmosphere was so chill': Chess Olympiad winners share insights from meeting with PM Modi

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, SEP 26

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has hosted India's young chess players at his official residence for their historic feat at the 45th Chess Olympiad in Budapest, where both the men's and women's teams clinched their maiden gold medals.

The teams presented him with a chess board and the PM also watched Praggnanandhaa and Arjun Erigaisi play a blitz game. Following the meeting, the chess stars shared their experience and said that the Prime Minister has made them feel so comfortable that it didn't feel like they were speaking with the country's Prime Minister.

Led by the stellar performances of D Gukesh, Arjun Erigaisi and R Praggnanandhaa, the men's team secured the gold medal after a thrilling final round victory over Slovenia. The women's team comprising Harika Dronavalli, Vaishali Rameshbabu, Divya Deshmukh, Vantika Agrawal, Tania Sachdev secured the gold



medal, beating Azerbaijan 3.5-0.5 to clinch the title.

Team captain Abhijit Kunte shared how they came to know that PM Modi mentioned their triumph in his speech in the US. "He was very keen that the unique feat we achieved in 100 years should be known to the entire world. Just a couple of hours before the PM's speech in the USA on September 22, we secured the victory. When we listened to the speech, the PM proudly shared our win with everyone," he said.

"If you deliver a good performance and receive praise from the Prime Minister, what more could you ask for? The way he spoke made us feel comfortable. He asked about the tournament and joked around. The PM shared how he manages so many things

and makes decisions," said Vidit on his meeting with PM Modi.

Vantika Agarwal was elated to know that the PM has remembered her birthday while also recalling her first meeting the PM Modi when she was 9 years old.

"My birthday was on September 20, and PM sir remembered it. I couldn't believe he remembered my birthday. When I was 9 years old, Modi ji had organized a mega event in Gujarat. At that time, I had won the Asian Championships. He invited me to that event and felicitated me," she said.

"The way he remembered Vantika's birthday shows how much he really cares for the players and how much it means to him and it's really nice for us to know," Gukesh added.

AGENCIES  
BENGALURU, SEP 26

Gurjot Singh, a 19-year-old, who made his debut for the Indian men's hockey team at the Asian Champions Trophy in Moqi, China, believes that this experience will help him in upcoming tournaments such as Sultan of Johor Cup and Asia Cup.

The young forward was called up from the Junior Team after his eye-catching performances during trial in SAI. Gurjot went on to play all 7 matches of the Asian Champions Trophy 2024 and although he was unlucky to not score a goal, he gave a good account of himself and showed immense dedication and hardwork on the pitch.

"The atmosphere in the senior team is very good, all the seniors are like bigger brothers who keep the mood light most of the time. It was a dream debut for me at the Asian Champions Trophy, I was excited to play against China, thought I would score a goal on my debut but even



though I couldn't, I gave my best in the game and it was a good outing.

"Harmanpreet Singh, before the game, assured me that there is no need to overthink or be scared; I just need to play how I usually play in camp, play with freedom and not think about making mistakes," Gurjot revealed.

Gurjot hails from Husainabad, a small village in Punjab. His father is a milkman in a village nearby, his mother is a homemaker and his sisters are pursuing their studies.

As a kid, Gurjot was very naughty. He even got into a life-threatening accident on his bicycle when he was 6 years old. The accident left him with seven stitches on the back of his head.

"After the accident, I had a bit of weakness for a few years but by the time I was 10 years old, I recovered completely and began studying in a government school nearby. At school, I noticed that the kids who played hockey got a little more freedom. They would come late to class and leave a little early

for practice, so I thought why not try my hand at the sport," he recalled with a smile on his face.

But by 2020, Gurjot had to start working in a footwear factory to support his dad. He would practice in the morning and work at night. Later that year, at a local tournament, Gurjot faced off against future teammates Abhishek and Sukhjeet. He was also informed during the game that Roundglass Hockey Academy would be conducting trials the next day. Gurjot packed his bags and set off to impress the coaches at the trial in Jalandhar.

As a Roundglass Hockey Academy player, Gurjot played in the 1st Hockey India Junior Men Academy National Championship 2021 in Bhopal and caught the eye of selectors to make it to the junior Team. Since then he has played in the 2023 Sultan of Johor Cup, Men's Hockey5s Asia Cup Salalah 2023, FIH Hockey5s World Cup Oman 2024 and most recently, the Asian Champions Trophy 2024.

With the 12th Sultan of Johor Cup 2024 and the Men's Junior Asia Cup Muscat 2024 imminent, Gurjot has turned his attention back to the junior team.

"The Hero Asian Champions Trophy was a good learning experience, I got to know the demands of the senior team first-hand. It was no doubt a dream debut for me, as we won all matches and the title too but there is still a long way to go and have much to improve. I have to work on my movement in the circle, be quicker in pressing on opponents, and increase my speed on the ball," he said.

"My parents have seen some tough times but have always supported me. It felt great to be able to repay their faith in me with the cash award we received after our triumph in China."

The 12th Sultan of Johor Cup 2024 and the Men's Junior Asia Cup Muscat 2024 are coming up soon and I want to apply things I learnt with the senior team to perform well," Gurjot signed off.



## Assembly Elections-2024: CEO visits Bandipora, Gurez; reviews poll preparedness, attends multiple SVEEP events

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 26

Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, Pandurang K Pole, on Thursday visited Bandipora to review the poll preparedness for upcoming general elections to the Legislative Assembly.

The comprehensive review, which spanned across multiple key locations in Gurez and Bandipora, was aimed at ensuring smooth and efficient election management across the district.

The CEO, during his visit to Dawar Gurez, attended SVEEP programme at Boys Higher Secondary School Dawar where students presented cultural programme aimed at raising voter awareness.

He then proceeded to Buduab and visited polling station and attended a cultural programme held under SVEEP. He commended the management



for encouraging greater voter participation.

The CEO arrived at Forest Training School, Chitternar, where a series of activities were conducted including inspection of dummy EVM at Green and Pink Polling Stations and the SVEEP drill besides unveiling of the "Election Tree" symbolizing district's commitment to free and fair polling.

At Chitternar, the welcome the District Election

Officer briefed the CEO regarding preparations and SVEEP activities taken up for effective election management in the district.

The event also witnessed cultural bonanza featuring folk presentations such as Chakri, Band e Pather, Role playing, highlighting importance of vote and democracy. The first-time voters were given an opportunity to speak, encouraging great

er youth involvement in the democratic process.

During the event, the CEO also released the Coffee Table Book of GELS 2024, a publication capturing the key aspects of elections.

In his address, the CEO underscored the administration's dedication towards a transparent electoral process and emphasized the importance of voter awareness. He expressed optimism for a record breaking voter turnout in Bandipora and commended the district administration for its efforts in generating awareness.

The CEO stated that "Every vote is vital to our democracy, and urged upon all eligible citizens to actively participate in this democratic process and exercise their right to vote on the scheduled date. He said, polls are going on peacefully and our focus

remains on providing a safe and accessible voting experience for the electorates.

The CEO concluded his visit at the designated Counting Centre at Degree College Bandipora, participating in a kite-flying event and a plantation drive to symbolize a clean and green electoral process. He reviewed the logistical arrangements at the counting center and urged all stakeholders to remain committed to ensuring a free, fair, and participatory election process.

Among others, General Observer for Bandipora and Sonawari AC, Nelson Eyon Bage, General Observer for Gurez Ranniwas Yadav, Expenditure Observer Sudeep Dabas, Police observer Adarsh Sidhu, SSP Harmeet Singh, ADDC Mohammad Ashraf Bhat, ADC Zaffar Husson Shawal and other concerned were also present.

## SVEEP: Musical tunes inspire voter turnout at JU event



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 26

An enthralling mega cultural SVEEP event was held today at Central Park, Jammu University, aimed at encouraging voter participation for the upcoming October 1 elections in the district.

The event featured musical performances by popular singers Juhi Singh, Vanshika Jaral and Punjabi artist Sangram Hanjra, who energised the crowd, particularly

the youth, urging them to actively engage in the voting process.

Present at the event were General Observer Abhinav Chandra, District Election Officer Sachin Kumar Vaishya, ADDC Sher Singh, ADC Shishir Gupta, SVEEP Nodal Officer Dr. Vikas Sharma, along with several other district officers. DEO Sachin Kumar Vaishya emphasised the importance of casting votes and called on eligible voters to participate

in large numbers, particularly the first time voters in the electoral process. He also reassured voters of the Election Commission of India assured facilities at polling stations. General Observer Abhinav Chandra highlighted the significance of the upcoming election, and called upon everyone to participate.

To further inspire voter turnout, a SVEEP election song was also released during the event.

## SVEEP: Mega Awareness programme to boost Voter Participation held in Baramulla

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BARAMULLA, SEPTEMBER 26

A mega awareness programme under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative was held today in Baramulla, drawing hundreds of students, Officers and officials to promote voter awareness. The event began with a car rally flagged-off by Returning Officer 10-Baramulla, Arshad Ahmad Khan and Nodal Officer SVEEP, Shabir Ahmad Khan, at Dak Bungalow Baramulla.

Following the car rally, a mega student rally commenced from Dak Bungalow and culminated at Showkat Ali Stadium Baramulla. Hundreds of students participated in the rally, holding placards and banners that advocated voter awareness and the importance of electoral participation. The rally aimed to engage the youth in the democratic process and amplify the message of voter education throughout the community.

The programme fea-



tured various activities, including painting and essay competitions, cultural performances and skits highlighting the significance of voting. These activities not only entertained but also educated the audience, especially students on the vital role each voter plays in a democracy.

A pledge was also taken by the participants, committing themselves to

actively participate in the electoral process and encourage others to do the same.

Speaking on the occasion, Returning Officer 10-Baramulla emphasized the importance of educating young voters and the impact such awareness drives have on the overall electoral process. He lauded the enthusiasm of the students and encouraged them to be proactive

participants in democracy.

Nodal Officer SVEEP, Shabir Ahmad Khan, also addressed the gathering, praising the efforts of the students and organizers.

The event was a vibrant showcase of democratic engagement, marked by the active involvement of students, educators, and officials, making a significant contribution to the promotion of voter awareness in Baramulla.

## GDC Vijaypur hosts Intra-College competition to mark Gandhi Jayanti



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SAMBA, SEPTEMBER 26

Government Degree College, Vijaypur on Thursday hosted an Intra-College competition as a prelude to Gandhi Jayanti Celebrations. The program started with the welcome address by Prof. Poonam Kundan, Co-Convenor Cultural Committee. She briefed the audience regarding the various activities viz. Bhajan Singing Competition, Seminar, Essay Writing Competition, Slogan Writing Competition and Reels making competition.

Students of the college actively participated in all

the activities with great zeal and enthusiasm. In the Bhajan Singing Competition, first position was achieved by Amit of BA Semester V, Second position was attained by Riya Attri of BA Semester V and third position was acquired by Palak Panotra of BA Semester III. In the competition of Seminar on the theme "Gandhi Ji's Vision for a Sustainable Future", First position was acquired by Taniya Jamwal of BA Semester V, Second position was achieved by Shruti Jamwal of BA Semester V and third position was attained by Sharda Devi of BA Semester V.

In the Essay Writ-

ing Competition, on the theme "Truth and Non-Violence", First position was bagged by Rupaank Aryan of BA Semester V, Second position was achieved by Ranjit Kour of B.Sc. Semester III and third position was attained by Amjad Husain of B.Sc. Semester III. In the Art Competition/Slogan Writing Competition with the theme "Truth and Non-Violence", First position was achieved by Anshita Sharma of BA Semester V and Second Position was attained by Payal Sharma of B.Sc. Semester III and third position was acquired by Vishali of B.Sc. Semester III.

## Medical shop sealed in Yamrach Kulgam

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KULGAM, SEPTEMBER 26

A medical shop in Yamrach Yariyora was sealed today after it was found violating license conditions and flouting norms under the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940.

This swift action was taken in response to a specific complaint filed against the shop.

The action against the erring was part of an aggressive drive, as similar actions have been taken in nearby areas. These enforcement efforts aim to ensure pharmacies operate within the law and maintain public safety.

The Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940, sets stringent standards for medical shops, and violating these conditions can have serious consequences. By sealing the erring shop, authorities are sending a strong message about the importance of compliance.

## CS for added focus on meeting housing requirements of urban populace

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 26

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today impressed upon the Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD) to lay added focus on providing affordable housing facilities to the urban population of J&K.

Dulloo made these remarks while speaking in a meeting held to review progress on flagship housing schemes being implemented by the department.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary H&UDD, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir/Jammu, MD Housing Board and CTPs.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary maintained that since the population of urban areas is increasing fast, there is significant rise in demand for housing in cities. He



stated that it is imperative on part of the department to come up with comprehensive plans to meet the needs of public especially the urban poor.

Dulloo said that the unplanned construction of houses in cities is putting lot of pressure on the already shrinking land resources. In view of it, the department has added responsibility of providing affordable and planned housing provisions to people in urban areas.

The Chief Secretary also took stock of ongoing projects of housing colonies being raised by the Board in different parts of the

UT. He called for expediting work on these projects besides planning for raising more flatted accommodations for the city dwellers and other categories of population coming to cities to study or earn their livelihood.

During the meeting, Commissioner Secretary H&UDD, Mandeep Kaur, informed the meeting about all the schemes and projects currently under implementation in the UT.

She added that the department is developing its housing units with full adherence to building bye-laws promoting organized living, efficient use of

space and clutter-free environment thereby enhancing the quality of life for its residents.

MD Housing Board, Ashish Gupta, presented an overview of the housing colonies being developed by the department during previous years and those coming up in different districts of J&K. He gave details of physical and financial progress of each such housing project besides throwing light on the plans of the department to further meet the needs of exponentially growing population in the twin cities of Jammu and Srinagar.

Overall pace and progress of housing colonies currently being raised under UT CAPEX and those for EWS population, flatted accommodations and development of different land parcels under PPP mode were also part of discussions in the meeting.

## DEO Kupwara holds Interactive Session with Sector, Zonal Magistrates & Sector Police Officers

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KUPWARA, SEPTEMBER 26

To review election preparedness ahead of the Assembly elections in Kupwara district on October 1st, the District Election Officer (DEO), Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan convened a review meeting cum interactive session with Zonal Magistrates, Sector Magistrates, and Sector Police officers at meeting Hall of DC Office Complex here today. The session aimed to ensure a robust election process and emphasized the critical role these officers play in upholding the integrity of the electoral process.

The DEO stressed the importance of strict adherence to the Model Code of Conduct and instructed the magistrates to ensure impartiality in their duties. She highlighted the need to monitor and address any instances of electoral malpractice and reporting



to concerned quarters well in time.

She said that Magistrates are vital to the smooth functioning of assembly elections, ensuring that the democratic process is carried out efficiently, securely, and fairly on poll day and prior to polls.

She further said that their responsibilities are integral to the electoral process especially in maintaining law and order situation and addressing any issue that may arise at the polling stations.

The DEO also called on the officers to remain vigi-

lant and be in sync with the latest protocols and procedures mandated by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

She said that in case of any significant issues, such as malfunctioning of EVMs, disruption of the voting process, or law and order disturbances, Magistrates are first emergency responders and they have to take immediate action and report to higher election authorities.

She further said that Magistrates act as a point of contact between polling officials at polling stations

and Election authorities, besides this they will have to establish contacts and have close coordination with all agencies of the concerned area.

DEO directed concerned magistrates to visit all their allotted polling stations by tomorrow and take first hand appraisal of AMFs, security concerns and other shortcomings if any and report back. She emphasized that submission of 2-hourly error free voter turnout reports are very crucial for magistrates on the day of poll.

Sameer Jan, Special Nodal officer elections provided insights to the Magistrates for a seamless voting process on the day of the election and prior to election. He stressed them to participate in the training regarding familiarization of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and other processes without any fail.