

Secretary Planning inspects JTFRP works in Srinagar, Budgam

PJ3

PJ12

# INDIA Bloc Seeking Votes To Provide Religion-Based Reservation: PM Modi

HT News Network

**BAREILLY, APR 25:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday attacked the INDIA bloc parties, saying they are seeking votes for changing the Constitution to provide religion-based reservation while he wants 400 seats to prevent them from snatching away the quota rights of people belonging to the SC, ST and OBC communities.

Addressing a rally at Aonla in Bareilly district, he also claimed the Congress not only wanted to conduct an economic survey but also survey institutions and offices.

"INDI alliance is seeking



votes for changing the Constitution to provide religion-based reservation. I am asking for 400 seats to put a lock on their plans to rob the reservation to the SC, ST and OBC people. I need 400 seats so that no one takes away your rights," he said.

Referring to backward classes including Yadav, Kushwaha, Maurya, Gurjar, Rajbhar, Teli and Pal communities, the prime minister said, "I will never let the Samajwadi Party and Congress snatch away your right to reservation. This is Modi's guarantee." "If two people in a backward or Dalit family work, they will take away the job of

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## Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency Prepares For Strong Electoral Battle Amidst Shifting Political Dynamics

HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, APR 25:** Formerly considered a stronghold of the National Conference (NC), the Srinagar Parliamentary constituency is now poised for a significant shift as it prepares for a highly competitive electoral battle on May 13.

In contrast to past elections marked by scant voter engagement, this year's polls are expected to see a notable increase in voter participation across Srinagar, Ganderbal, Budgam, and Pulwama districts.

Over the years, the National Conference (NC) has held a firm grip on representation in the constituency, with its leaders consistently winning multiple terms.

Presently, NC president Farooq Abdullah occupies the Central Kashmir Lok Sabha seat, underscoring the party's influence.

However, the dynamics are evolving rapidly, with new contenders emerging to challenge the status quo.

The impending electoral contest showcases a strong trio competing for dominance:



Aga Rahullah representing the National Conference, Waheed Parra from the People's Democratic Party (PDP), and Mohammad Ashraf Mir, leader of the Apni Party. While each candidate advocates for different agendas, they unite in their shared goal of securing the people's mandate and advocating their concerns on the national stage.

Political pundits anticipate a notable uptick in voter turnout, buoyed by heightened civic engagement and concerted outreach efforts by candidates.

Roadshows and public addresses have become staple strategies in rallying support

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### NEWS BRIEF

#### Property Of 04 Terrorist handlers Operating From Pak Attached In Handwara

**SRINAGAR, APR 25:** Acting tough against the wanted local terrorists based in Pakistan, Jammu and Kashmir Police has launched a special drive against the absconders/ wanted terrorists and as part of this drive properties of 04 terrorist handlers who were declared as proclaimed offenders by the orders of Hon'ble Court was attached on the orders of Hon'ble Court, by Police District Handwara.

These absconders/proclaimed offenders have exfiltrated to Pakistan or Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) in 1990s or in first after 2000 and are presently in the Pakistan or PoK. Since then, they are continuously involved in handling terrorists and reviving and spreading terrorism in Handwara and other areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

Following the prescribed procedure (1)land measuring ten (10) Marlas at Kralgund belonging to proclaimed offender Mumtaz Ahmad Khwaja Son of Mohammad Subhan Khwaja resident of Kralgund, (2) land measuring 16-3/4 Marlas belonging to Lateef Ahmad Bhat Son of Abdul Rehman Bhat Resident of Badra Payeen, (3) land

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#### Class 8th results: 'SCERT displays one more show of mockery'

**SRINAGAR, APR 25:** As the class 8th students were anxiously waiting for their results, however, they met with the disappointments after witnessing the poor management from the JKSCERT.

Dozens of aggrieved students from many districts of Valley told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that they were yet to check the results. "As the students try to open the website or the links to check their results, the links are not opening or the website is crashing," said one of the students, Imaad Shabir.

Another student Zoya Imran said, "Ironically, there was not any other medium of checking the results that could have reduced the traffic on websites and online links." Zoya said that she had been trying to check her results from 9:30 Pm and couldn't check it till 11:20. "From the commencement of exams till the declaration of result was a complete mockery in the name of board exams."

Officials at SCERT told KNO that there was some correction in the gazette to put it in public domain "We

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### Lok Sabha Polls

#### J&K CEO Optimistic About Increase In Voter Turnout

HT News Network

**JAMMU, APR 25:** With the terror threat on the wane and changing dynamics in the Kashmir region, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Electoral Officer Pandurang K Pole is hopeful of a significant surge in voter participation during the Lok Sabha elections in the Valley.

The traditional narrative of poll boycott orchestrated by separatist groups, prevalent for more than three decades, appears to be losing momentum and Pole expressed optimism

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## CS Reviews Take-Up Of Vishwakarma & RAMP Schemes In The UT

HT News Network

**JAMMU, APR 25:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today reviewed the take-up of the Centrally Sponsored Schemes like PM Vishwakarma and Raising and Accelerating MSME Productivity (RAMP) implemented by the Department of Industries & Commerce (I&C) in the UT.

The meeting, besides Commissioner Secretary, I&C; Secretary,



RDD; Secretary, SDD was also attended by MD, TPO; representatives from Ministry of MSME, NSDC; HoDs of the Department from Kashmir/Jammu and other concerned officers from these Departments.

The Chief Secretary asked to make an effective strategy for training and capacity building of the artisans registered for the PM Vishwakarma scheme. He asked DCs

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## India-China Border Situation At Present 'Generally Stable': Chinese Military

HT News Network

**BEIJING, APR 25:** The Chinese military on Thursday said the situation along the India-China border "at present" is "generally stable" and both sides have maintained "effective" communication to resolve the military standoff in eastern Ladakh.

Defence Ministry spokesman Senior Colonel Wu Qian was reacting to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent interview with Newsweek magazine in which he had expressed hope that through positive and constructive bilateral engagement at the diplomatic and military levels, India and China will

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## Suspicious Balloon Recovered From Samba Ahead Of Second Phase Of Lok Sabha Polls

HT News Network

**SAMBA, APR 25:** Ahead of the second phase of polling, an aircraft-shaped suspicious balloon, having the logo of PIA (Pakistan International Airlines) written on it, was recovered

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## Modi Accomplished Congress Party's Unfinished Agenda In J&K: Dr Jitendra

HT News Network

**NEW DELHI, APR 25:** Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said here today that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had accomplished Congress Party's unfinished agenda in Jammu & Kashmir.

In an exclusive interview with "India News" Editor-in-Chief Rana Yashwant, Dr Jitendra Singh said, Article 370 had been included in the Indian Constitution as a "temporary provision", a fact which was emphasised by none less than the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru who had responded to Syama Prasad Mookerjee's objections saying "Ye Ghiste Ghiste



Ghis Jayegi". However, Nehru's successors developed a vested interest in the continuance of Article 370 which helped them in establishing dynasty rule generation

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## "Have Taken Up Matter With Iranian Side," Says India After Kashmir Issue Mentioned In Pak-Iran Joint Statement

HT News Network

**NEW DELHI, APR 25:** After the Kashmir issue was mentioned in the joint statement issued at the conclusion of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's visit to Pakistan, India said that they have taken up this matter with the Iranian authorities, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Thursday. "We have taken up the mat-



ter with Iranian authorities," Spox Jaiswal said on being asked how MEA sees the joint statement on Kashmir issue.

Earlier, Pakistan and Iran agreed that the Kashmir issue should be resolved through "peaceful means based on the will of the people" of the region, said a joint statement issued by the two countries after Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's maiden visit.

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## PM Modi Wants To 'Create Rift' Among People: Farooq Abdullah

HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, APR 25:** National Conference president Farooq Abdullah said here on Thursday that the INDIA bloc is fighting against Prime Narendra Modi's attempts to "create a rift among people" and the opposition alliance will "undo the wrongdoings" committed during the BJP rule.

"The Election Commission has to be changed and made independent. The judiciary has to be made independent as it is the place where people get justice if they do not get justice



anywhere else. "Many things have to be set right. Those have to be made governors who can serve

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## Maha Bhavan Will Be Built In Kashmir With Centre's Support: CM Shinde

HT News Network

**AMRAVATI, APR 25:** Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has asserted that a Maha-rashtra Bhavan will be built in Jammu and Kashmir and with the Centre's support, no one will dare to oppose it.

Speaking at a rally in Maharashtra's Amravati district on Wednesday, Shinde claimed that National Conference leader Omar Abdullah has opposed the construction of the Maharashtra Bhavan in Kashmir.

"The state government has received land in Kashmir for building the Maharashtra Bhavan.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are with us. So no one will dare to oppose it," the CM said.

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### Lok Sabha Polls

#### NC's Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi Files Nomination From Srinagar

HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, APR 25:** National Conference leader Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi on Thursday filed nomination papers for the Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency which is going to polls in the fourth phase of elections next month.

Accompanied by NC president

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**CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....**

**INDIA Bloc.....**

one and give it to those whom they say have the first right on the country's resources," Modi said. He was referring to former PM Manmohan Singh's 2006 remark that minorities, particularly Muslims, have the "first claim" on the country's resources.

He said that the Congress and the SP considered themselves bigger than Lord Ram and they also insulted Shri Krishna.

Attacking the opposition over dynastic politics, Modi said that for them their family is everything.

"The SP did not find any Yadav outside family to give tickets in Budaun, Mainpuri, Firozabad, Azamgarh and Kannauj," he said.

Modi said this Lok Sabha election is to completely free the country of the mentality of slavery of 1,000 years and to give new heights to India's self-respect.

Seeking to take credit for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, the prime minister said that people from the SP and Congress used to say that the BJP would not tell the date of temple construction.

"With your blessings we also got the temple built and consecration ceremony also took place. We told them the date, time, place, and also invited them. They considered themselves greater than Lord Ram. They rejected the invitation of the consecration ceremony so that their vote bank did not get upset," he said.

Modi said that the SP and Congress did not even leave Lord Krishna.

"When I had entered sea to see Shri Krishna's city of Dwarka which was submerged in it, the 'shahzade' (Rahul Gandhi) of Congress had made fun of me. The dynastic people of SP are also performing 'aarti' for those who insult me," he said.

The PM said, "The SP, Congress and their INDI alliance can go to any extent for appeasement...there is an uproar in the entire country due to the dangerous intentions of the Congress. The dangerous 'panja' (poll symbol of Congress) is going to snatch the rights of the people of the country again." He reiterated that the opposition alliance wants to snatch away 'mangalsutra' of women.

**Srinagar.....**

and articulating campaign promises. Aga Ruhullah, emblematic of the NC's legacy, underscored the imperative of democratic rights while addressing the pressing concerns of the populace.

His sentiments echo a prevailing sentiment among constituents disillusioned with centralized decision-making.

News agency KNS reported that on the other hand, Waheed Parra pledges to amplify the voice of Kashmiris within the hallowed halls of Parliament, positioning the PDP as a bastion of representation and advocacy.

Parra's narrative resonates with those seeking robust parliamentary advocacy to address regional grievances.

Mohammad Ashraf Mir, representing the Apni Party, offers a departure from traditional politics, decrying the politics of deception and espousing a platform rooted in integrity and accountability.

Mir's emphasis on grassroots issues like infrastructure underscores a commitment to tangible change.

As the candidates intensify their campaigns, the electorate remains discerning, cognizant of the political landscape's evolution.

Mir's recent roadshow, flanked by supporters, exemplifies the fervor and anticipation preceding the impending electoral showdown.

With the deadline for filing nominations passed, 17 candidates, including 14 Independents, have thrown their hats into the ring, setting the stage for a fiercely contested battle for parliamentary representation.

Aga Ruhullah's formal submission of nomination papers, accompanied by senior party figures, underscores the NC's determination to defend its legacy amidst shifting political currents.

In his remarks, Aga Ruhullah Mehdi pledged to champion the aspirations of the people, particularly addressing the ramifications of decisions made in August 2019. His candidacy symbolizes a concerted effort to articulate regional grievances on the national stage, backed by a robust party apparatus.

As the electoral discourse intensifies, Srinagar braces itself for a historic mandate, one that promises to redefine the contours of regional representation and influence on the national stage.

With May 13 earmarked for polling, the stage is set for a riveting electoral spectacle that will undoubtedly shape the trajectory of Kashmiri politics for years to come.

**J&K CEO.....**

regarding a manifold increase in voter turnout in the Valley.

Historically, factors such as the emergence of militancy in the early 1990s and threats of violence, including incidents such as the mutilation of inked fingers and stone-pelting near polling stations, deterred voters from exercising their franchise.

In an interview with PTI Video, Pole highlighted the current favourable environment created by the proactive engagement of political parties and candidates with the electorate, signalling a potential surge in voter participation.

"This time, the overall atmosphere is great and, the way the political parties and the candidates are reaching out to the people, a manifold increase in voter turnout is expected in the Valley," Pole said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during an election rally in Udhampur on April 12, credited the improved ground situation in the Valley to the revocation of Article 370 in August 2019.

He emphasised that the Lok Sabha polls in the Union Territory are anticipated to transpire without the shadow of terrorism, disruptions or cross-border

tensions.

Significant shifts within separatist factions, notably the separatist amalgam Hurriyat Conference, have also contributed to the evolving political landscape.

Divisions in the conglomerate in 2003 and subsequent developments, including the passing of influential leaders such as Syed Ali Shah Geelani in 2021 and the incarceration of key figures on terror-related charges, have altered the region's political landscape.

Despite historical trends of low voter turnout in Kashmir, 2014 showed promising signs with assembly polls in the then-state witnessing a record turnout of more than 65 per cent in the region.

Pole emphasised that the ongoing aggressive campaigning by political parties and the encouraging response from the public are likely to lead to improved voter participation.

He said the assembly polls, unlike the parliamentary elections, mostly used to have good voter turnout ranging between 50 and 60 per cent in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Voting in north Kashmir was relatively higher than south and central Kashmir, maybe because of local issues, presence of more candidates and active politics ... What we are seeing today is that the political parties and the candidates are canvassing aggressively and the response of the people is also encouraging," the chief electoral officer said.

With preparations in place to ensure security and build public confidence, Pole anticipates a notable improvement in polling percentages, particularly in north Kashmir where Omar Abdullah of the National Conference is contesting against separatist-turned-politician and former minister Sajjad Gani Lone of the People's Conference.

The Anantnag-Rajouri seat goes to the polls on May 7, Srinagar on May 13 and Baramulla on May 20.

Udhampur-Kathua, which went to the polls in the first phase on April 19, recorded a turnout of 68.27 per cent. On Friday, polling will be held for the Jammu seat.

Pole also spoke about various initiatives under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) Programme that have been launched to boost voter engagement, particularly in areas with historically low turnout, underscoring efforts to promote democratic participation and inclusivity in the electoral process.

Amid these developments, Jammu and Kashmir gears up for a potentially transformative electoral exercise, with hopes pinned on a vibrant and participatory democratic process shaping the region's political future.

**CS Reviews.....**

to visit the training centers to ensure that the aspirants are given quality training as mandated under the scheme.

Dulloo also took note of the action taken reports submitted on different issues raised last time. He asked for striking a balance between trainings and registrations made for different trades across the districts. He also took note of low traction among people against some trades and asked the department to create awareness among its artisans to take advantage under this scheme.

Dulloo also enquired about the credit linkage of the registered artisans with the financial institutions. He even took stock of the status of toolkits to be provided to these artisans by the Ministry as per the guidelines of this scheme.

Regarding the RAMP scheme he asked the concerned to take the necessary measures for formalization of MSME sector here. He advised for making effective strategy to create better ecosystem, space and generate ideas for its growth here. He asked them to give training, exposure and extend hand-holding to make MSMEs flourish here like other regions of the country.

The Commissioner Secretary, I&C, Vikramjit Singh divulged details of different kinds of activities the Department has undertaken for smooth implementation of these schemes here. He informed the meeting that under PM Vishwakarma scheme the registered artisans in 18 designated trades are eligible for collateral-free credit support of upto Rs 3 lakhs in 2 tranches at a concessional interest rate of 5%.

It was further made out by him that the registration and verifications are done by the Department and had been fast-paced since last meeting. He revealed that the progress is monitored and issues resolved simultaneously for making the scheme a success.

The Administrative Secretary, SDD, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan informed the meeting about trainings imparted through different polytechnics/ITIs to these artisans. He laid out that most of the registered artisans are in the trades of Tailoring, Mason and carpentry.

It was given out that around 60,924 artisans were trained till date through 70 government and 152 (NSDC approved) private training centers. It was said that after giving the basic skill these would be provided advanced skills besides a certificate of their skilling to receive the necessary assistance and toolkit.

As far as the implementation of RAMP scheme is concerned the MD, TPO, Khalid Jahangir apprised the meeting about the aims and objectives of this scheme. He said that 461 and 420 consultations with stake holders had been done across the districts of J&K. It was also revealed that the baseline survey of about 1835 Udhayam and 1434 non-Udhayam registered MSMEs were surveyed by the organization here. It was given out that there are some 3.9 lakh micro, 0.49 lakh small and 290 medium enterprises here in the UT.

The meeting also discussed the formalization of MSME sector, industry-academic collaboration, training/incubation through different universities

and institutions, empanelment of Business Development Services, branding, packaging and market access to be provided to such MSMEs under this scheme.

**India-China.....**

be able to restore and sustain peace and tranquility at their borders.

"At present, the situation in the border areas between China and India is generally stable," Wu said.

"Both the sides have maintained effective communication through diplomatic and military channels had positive constructive dialogue and achieved positive progress," he said while responding to a question on Modi's remarks and also Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's reported comments that India will continue to have dialogue with China to resolve the standoff at the border areas.

Wu said that "both sides have agreed to reach a mutually acceptable solution as soon as possible" to resolve the standoff.

In his interview, Modi said that for India, the relationship with China is important and significant. "It is my belief that we need to urgently address the prolonged situation on our borders so that the abnormality in our bilateral interactions can be put behind us. Stable and peaceful relations between India and China are important for not just our two countries but the entire region and world," he said.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning in her response to Modi's interview on April 11 said sound and stable China-India relations serve the interests of both countries and are conducive to peace and development in the region and beyond.

Relations between India and China are frozen except for trade ever since the eastern Ladakh border standoff erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong Tso (lake) area. The eastern Ladakh standoff has resulted in a freeze of bilateral ties on all fronts except trade.

The two sides have so far held 21 rounds of corps commanders-level talks to resolve the standoff.

According to the Chinese military, the two sides so far agreed to disengage from four points, namely the Galwan Valley, the Pangong Lake, Hot Springs, and Jianan Daban (Gogra).

India is pressing the PLA to disengage from the Depsang and Demchok areas, maintaining that there cannot be restoration of normalcy in its relations with China as long as the state of the borders remains abnormal. (Agencies)

**Suspicious.....**

in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district on Thursday, police sources said.

Security forces swung into action after the balloon was recovered just 3 to 4 kilometres away from the international border.

The toy balloon was found on the banks of the Devak river near Rakh Barotian village of Samba district.

The security forces are already on alert to avert any infiltration from across the border in an attempt to disrupt the Lok Sabha elections. The Devak River goes directly towards Pakistan and at some point in time it has also been a favourite infiltration route.

Meanwhile, Samba police have taken possession of the balloon and started further investigation. At present, no other object or suspicious thing has been found with the balloon.

Jammu, Anantnag-Rajouri, Srinagar, and Baramulla will poll on April 26, May 7, May 13, and May 20. (Agencies)

**Modi Accomplished.....**

after generation both in New Delhi as well as in J&K.

By abrogating Article 370, Prime Minister Modi fulfilled a promise which the Congress Party had made to the nation but had backed away from it as it has done in case of many other promises made by it, he said.

"People share a bond of heart with Prime Minister Modi for his honest objective outreach providing welfare benefits to the needy without consideration of caste, creed, religion or vote bank," said Dr. Jitendra Singh.

Dr Jitendra Singh referred to the change in mindset of people post 5th August 2019 marking the abrogation of Article 370. He said "It was a temporary provision but the Congress led regimes did not have the courage to remove it and their vested interest allowed it to stay on for 70 years. It was the leadership of Prime Minister Modi which brought the unfinished business of previous regimes to task".

Dr. Jitendra Singh categorically mentioned that refugees from Pakistan were deliberately denied citizenship for 70 years. This was not only a violation of constitutional rights but also of democratic rights. Adding further he said that after witnessing the development in the valley, people in the illegally occupied part of J&K (PoJK) want to be a part of India.

The Union Minister also recalled that PM Modi believes in justice rather than appeasement and several deprived sections have now got their rights. Children from the most disadvantaged sections of Valmikis in J&K can also now aspire to take up top jobs in the country due to a level playing field, he said.

"Development is our main plank to seek votes based on the progress in the past 10 years" says Science & Technology Minister. He said though there is a significance of article 370 in the general election campaigning while important agenda remains development which has taken place in J&K in the last ten years in a very balanced way without any regional discrimination and without any appeasement politics. All aid from the Centre was distributed in a balanced way to bring development into the mainstream. Now the region has IIT, IIMS, AIIMS, half a dozen centrally funded medical colleges, national level schemes, the world's highest bridge, S P Mukherjee Road Tunnel, passport offices, Ist

Industrial Biotech park in northern India in the constituency.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, "people who were not voting for BJP earlier, but have become beneficiaries of different Modi schemes now, are also going through a change of mindset".

On the issue of inheritance tax featuring in Congress manifesto, Dr Singh said wealth tax is alien to the democratic values and Indian ethos. It is not compatible with the Indian family system, culture, and heritage as it will take away 50 percent of the wealth from the family after the death of a person. He added that it is the part of appeasement approach of Congress towards certain sections of the society for vote bank and Prime Minister Modi is trying to make people alert in this regard. The Congress party is trying last election tricks but the voters have moved on and they understand the real intent of Congress, he said.

He stated that BJP has no relations with PDP or INDI alliance in Jammu and Kashmir.

**"Have Taken....."**

President Raisi paid an official visit to Pakistan from April 22-24 at the invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising the Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian, as well as other members of the cabinet and senior officials.

It stated that taking note of developments at regional and global levels, both sides stressed the importance of peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue and diplomacy to find mutually acceptable solutions to common challenges.

"Both sides highlighted the need to resolve the issue of Kashmir through dialogue and peaceful means based on the will of the people of that region, and in accordance with international law," it stated.

During a joint press conference after their talks on Monday, Prime Minister Sharif raked up the Kashmir issue and thanked Iran for its stance. However, Iranian President Raisi refrained from mentioning Kashmir and instead talked about Iran's support for those fighting against oppression especially in Palestine, creating an impression that he had snubbed the desire of the Pakistani leader to say something on the issue. (Agencies)

**PM Modi Wants.....**

people and not Delhi. Many incapable people have been put in many institutions, but we have to save those institutions," he said.

Abdullah was addressing an NC and Congress joint rally at Congress party headquarters and later NC workers at his party's headquarters Nawai-Subah after its candidate from Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency, Aya Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, submitted nomination papers.

"I pray that the INDIA alliance is successful in Delhi so that Ambedkar's Constitution is saved and it will undo the wrongdoings committed," the former J-K chief minister said.

Abdullah claimed that the Constitution was in danger.

"You saw what the prime minister said in Rajasthan. He tried to shred the Indian Constitution into pieces. The Indian Constitution provides dignity to everyone," Abdullah said.

"The PM of the country has to speak for all and has to protect all... he is like a father. He should not differentiate between people on religious lines or food habits or languages. He has to serve everyone whether they belong to his party or not," he said and expressed disappointment at Modi's speech.

Abdullah allegedly Modi wanted to "break the country and separate people on the religious lines".

"He (Modi) wants to create a rift among the people. The INDIA alliance is fighting against that. The INDIA alliance wants to keep the country united and safeguard Ambedkar's constitution," he added.

The former Union minister said, "A movement will start from this crown (J-K) which will change the seat of power in Delhi and bring a revolution in the country."

"The BJP wants to dictate to the people what to eat or wear... They want everyone to be like them. They want to tell you which God to pray to, they want to wipe out everything," he alleged.

The former Union minister said to fight this onslaught, many parties in the opposition came together and formed the INDIA bloc.

**Maha Bhavan.....**

requested Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha for a land parcel to construct the Maharashtra Bhavan to provide accommodations and facilities for tourists and officials from the state visiting the Valley.

The Maharashtra cabinet last month approved a proposal to construct the Maharashtra Bhavan, clearing the decks for the first state-run guest house to come up in the Valley since the abrogation of Article 370.

The Union Territory administration's revenue department has identified land measuring 20 kanals (about 2.5 acres) in the Ichgam area of central Kashmir's Budgam district, close to the Srinagar airport, for the guest house, officials earlier said.

The sanction was accorded after the Maharashtra cabinet approved the purchase of 2.5 acres to construct the guest house.

CM Shinde also attacked the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi and said when the Uddhav Thackeray-led government was in power in Maharashtra, many projects were stalled which

have now been restarted by the ruling dispensation.

He also said that Union minister Shah did not give any word to Thackeray over power-sharing agreement in the state.

Shah and Shinde were in Amravati to campaign for BJP's Lok Sabha poll candidate Navneet Rana. (Agencies)

**NC's Aga.....**

Farooq Abdullah, vice president Omar Abdullah and Jammu and Kashmir Congress president Vikar Rasool, Mehdi filed the nomination papers before Srinagar Deputy Commissioner Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, who is the returning officer of the constituency.

Talking to reporters, Mehdi, an influential Shia leader, said, "The hope of a win is in front of you. But more than a win or loss, the important thing is how to mobilise the sentiments of people towards that (win), the sentiments they have not been able to express in the last four years, and were not given an opportunity to express. The elections have provided them that opportunity," the NC candidate said.

Farooq Abdullah said the party is hopeful of Mehdi's win from the constituency. "We are here to file nomination papers and we pray to God to make him successful," the senior NC leader told reporters.

Earlier, Mehdi travelled from his hometown Budgam, the central Kashmir district, to Srinagar with hundreds of his supporters in a car rally, and reached the deputy commissioner's office here.

The NC has also submitted the nomination of a covering candidate, Salman Sagar, the president of the party's youth wing, from Srinagar.

Nineteen candidates, including Mehdi and Sagar, have submitted their nominations from the constituency.

The last date for filing nominations for the Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency is Thursday. Polls will be held in the constituency on May 13.

**Property Of.....**

measuring 01 Kanal and 2 Marlas at Ashpora belonging to Mushtaq Ahmad Mir Son of Mohammad Sultan Mir Resident of Ashpora and (4) land measuring 01 Kanal at Khaipora belonging to Ghulam Nabi Ganai son of Chulam Rasool Ganai resident of Khaipora, Qaziabad was attached by Police District Handwara on the orders of the Hon'ble Court

These terrorists are also involved in different cases of Police District Handwara and are actively trying to revive and run the terror ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir.

Besides these four, 51 persons of Jammu and Kashmir nationals who have infiltrated to Pakistan/Pak Occupied Kashmir for illegal arms training and are operating from there have also been declared as Proclaimed offenders by the Hon'ble Court. The action is also being contemplated against them under law.

**Class 8th.....**

are trying to resolve the issues in website and links," the official said. Before the commencement of 8th standard exams, School Education Department had asked the DIET principals of J&K to conduct final examination of 8th standard on the pattern which was used during the COVID times due to non availability of funds with the DIETs—giving a room for breach of secrecy and sanctity of the confidential material.

J&K State Council for Educational Research and Trainings (JKSCERT) in a communicate to directors of School Education of both regions had said that necessary directions to all the CEOs and complex heads shall be issued to print the question papers and other allied necessary materials for 8th standard out of the available printing or local funds lying with the Complex Heads.

The JKSCERT had further said that it has decided to conduct the examination for the current session on the analogy of the examinations conducted during the COVID times wherein Complex Heads were provided with Uniform Question Papers in soft format through DIETs via Email and Complex Heads used to print the number of Copies as per the appearing students.

"It is pertinent to mention that most of the DIETs reported non-availability of funds in the pool fund and accordingly the DIETs with sufficient funds were requested to print additional copies of answer scripts," it reads. Pertinently, JKSCERT on Wednesday informed all the principal DIETs of both Jammu and Kashmir divisions to declare the results of Examination (MSE) Session 2023-2024 of both soft and hard zone after fulfilment of all the required norms today on Apr-24-2024 in one go. On March-02 JKSCERT rescheduled the annual examination dates for 8th standard.

JKSCERT had said that the exams in the soft zones will commence from March-13 and will culminate on April-02. Similarly, the JKSCERT had further said that the exams in hard zones for 8th standard will commence from March-26 and will culminate on April-10 respectively.

However, before this notification the exam was supposed to be held from March-05 in soft zones. However, on March-23, JKSCERT postponed examination of all papers of 8th standard except for the English subject. Joint Director Central for JKSCERT had said that the postponement was announced in view of the representations from various quarters in the UT of J&K.



# SECRETARY PLANNING INSPECTS JTFRP WORKS IN SRINAGAR, BUDGAM

ASKS FOR STRICT ADHERENCE TO COMPLETION TIMELINE

**SRINAGAR, APR 25:** Secretary Planning and Civil Aviation Department, Aijaz Asad, today inspected various ongoing Jhelum and Tawi Flood Recovery Projects being executed under World Bank funding in Srinagar and Budgam districts.

During the visit, the Secretary took stock of progress on additional block at Bone and Joint Hospital Barzulla in Srinagar and Emergency Operations Centre in Budgam.

While inspecting construction of 120 bedded Specialized Orthopaedic Unit (additional hospital block) at Bone and Joint Hospital, Barzulla, he directed the concerned officers to focus on quality parameters thereby ensuring timely completion.

Aijaz Asad, while enquiring about the technical specifications of the building, directed the concerned engineers to keep regular check on the technical and quality parameters for effective implementation.

The Secretary was informed that the building will be G+4 structure with 120 beds capacity and technically advanced modular Operation theatres besides pre-operative and post-operative units which will considerably augment the infrastructure of valley's largest centre for the orthopedic care.

The block will also feature the Pneumatic Tube System, a first of its kind in hospitals in J&K, ensuring seamless transport of various medical items,



including blood samples, test reports from one floor to another. The system will minimize human interference in supply of these items like blood sample sent from one floor will direct-

ly reach its destination without any hassle.

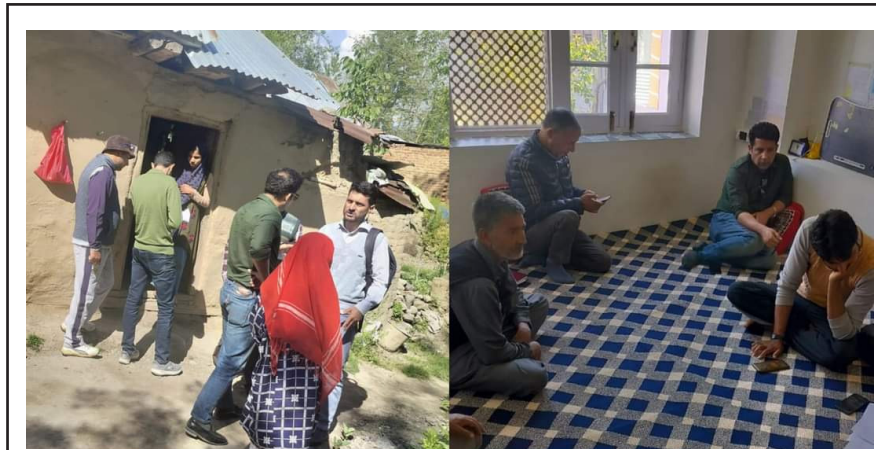
Pertinently, the prestigious project has been taken up under the component "Critical Infrastructure" of JTFRP being funded by the World Bank.

The Secretary also reviewed work progress on prestigious project of Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Control Building at Ompora, Budgam.

The EOC will be fully equipped with all the latest modern technologies, software being used world over for forecasting of natural disasters and coordinating the relief and rescue operations in case of any natural disaster. Besides, the

Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Centre building would be the central control room for the dewatering pumping stations in Srinagar City for scientifically controlling and managing all the pump stations in the City using IT enabled services. He directed the executing agencies to expedite the pace of work on the project and mobilize more men and machinery on site to ensure that work is completed within the stipulated timeframe.

Earlier, the Secretary visited the Government Woollen Mills, Bemina here and took stock of ongoing works undertaken under World Bank-funded Jhelum Tawi Flood Recovery Project there.



## Tral Bear Attack: Tehsildar Imran Ahmad Visits Injured Victims and Assures Support

**TRAL, APR 25:** In an encouraging development, Tehsildar Tral, Imran Ahmad, paid a visit to the injured individuals at the hospital and even went to their homes to provide reassurance and assistance on behalf of the administration.

On the occasion, The tehsildar led team from admin have handed over 15000 Rs. immediate relief to each

victim.

The locals have expressed their immediate concerns to the Wildlife department, urging them to take swift action in response to the bear attack.

This proactive response from the administration and the community shows the solidarity and support for those affected.

## Gandbal Boat Tragedy; Locals Protest Against 'Slow Pace' Of Rescue Operation

**SRINAGAR, APR 25:** The Gandbal Boat tragedy Thursday sparked protests from locals due to concerns over what they said "slow pace of the rescue operation."

Taja, whose son and grandson are missing was also the part of protest, urging authorities to press more men and machinery to find the missing persons.

"For the past ten days now, my son Showkat and minor grandson Haziq Showkat have been submerged in Jhelum. How can I console myself," she said.

Two children and one other person are still missing. Missing persons include Showkat Ahmad, his minor son Haziq, and another minor Farhan Waseem.

The protestors blocked the main road at Soiteng to press for their demand.

A police official assured the protestors that he would escalate the matter to expedite the rescue efforts, leading to the peaceful dispersal of the protestors.

"On your demand, the government has already initiated a major

rescue operation at Veer. I assure you of the redressal of the grievance. The government is seriously putting all efforts to find the missing persons," the police officer told protestors.

After assurances from the Police, the protestors disbursed off peacefully, hopeful for intensified efforts to locate the missing individuals.

## Despite involved in scams, Dr Farooq, Omar untouched at the pleasure of BJP: Sajad Lone

**HANDWARA, APR 25:** J&K Peoples Conference Chairman Sajad Gani Lone Thursday hit hard at leaders of National Conference, saying both Dr Farooq and Omar Abdullah is enjoying life out of jail at the pleasure of BJP.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of a party convention in north Kashmir's Handwara, Lone said leaders of National Conference have to give account of their misdeeds they committed from rigging to killings. He said

both father-son have been assigned a new task of polarization ahead of Lok Sabha elections across the country. "Both Dr. Farooq and Omar are out of jail at the pleasure of BJP. Dr. Farooq is already found involved in J&K Cricket Association scam, while his son Omar is trapped in J&K Bank scam. Why the duo are enjoying life out of jail," Lone said per KNS said.

He said NC leadership is now given a task of polarization to create communal

atmosphere in the country. "Their statements of polarization are not only a nuisance for J&K but for the Muslims of India as well," he said. He also said from 1987 rigging to killing thousands of youth NC leadership is accountable before nation for their misdeeds they did in their times. He further said that after Prime Minister of India the father-son are the most protected person, who are being guarded 100 personnel each.

## People want me in J&K's for development instead of being in Parliament: Azad

**SRINAGAR, APR 25:** Chairman DPAP, Ghulam Nabi Azad today urged the public to be vigilant against misleading slogans and false promises. While addressing the public at the road show in Dooru, Anantnag, he questioned the silence of MPs from regional parties in parliament, particularly regarding the matter of Article 370. He said, "Almost all the MPs of two political parties from Kashmir remained silent on Article 370. It was me who stood in parliament and fought for it. While others remained silent, they only exploited people, misled them. They were mum in parliament. I raised almost all major issues in parliament, be it Article 370, CAA NRC, or the lynching of innocents. You have tested those parties, give a chance to my candidate, Adv Saleem Parry; he will raise your issues the way I did." Azad reiterated his unwavering commitment to development as the cornerstone of his political agenda. With five decades of dedicated service to the nation, he emphasized the unassailable integrity that has characterized his political journey. In his own words, he asserted, "In my 50 years of politics, no one can question my integrity. I have never taken a single penny from anyone for doing their work." Furthermore, he outlined his vision to empower the youth and catalyze the development of Jammu and Kashmir through tangible initiatives. His vision encompasses the establishment of more colleges, roads, schools, universities, and hospitals, aiming to uplift communities and foster progress across the region. "I do not engage in personal attacks or abusive rhetoric," he affirmed, highlighting his commitment to constructive dialogue and civility in political discourse. Reflecting on the pressing challenges facing Jammu and Kashmir, Azad disclosed that while his party leaders had proposed his candidacy in parliamentary elections, his conscience led him to a different decision. Witnessing firsthand the grievances of the people, including the lack of basic amenities such as electricity, water, employment opportunities, and infrastructure development, Azad recognized the urgency of addressing these issues at the state level. "The demand of the people is clear—they want genuine progress and development," Azad affirmed. "Only by focusing our efforts on the state level can we address the pressing needs of our communities and pave the way for a brighter future." Azad made the decision to concentrate his efforts on addressing the immediate challenges confronting Jammu and Kashmir. "The transformative policies needed to uplift our communities can only be enacted by forming a government," he stated. He further said, "My people want me to focus in Jammu and Kashmir. I can't resolve the basic issues of development in Parliament; there you can only fight and demand. But here, if we form the government, we can take decisions on our own, we can develop by our own. That's why I took this decision." Among others present on the occasion were Adv Saleem Parry candidate, Chief Spokesperson Salman Nizami, Shuby Jan secretary and others.

## Our enemies will get big jolt in LS polls, says Omar Abdullah

**SRINAGAR, APR 25:** National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah Thursday said that our enemies will get a big jolt in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said the plans engineered from Central Government to Raj Bhawan will be dusted by people on polling days.

Omar who was talking to reporters in Srinagar said the enemies of NC will be defeated in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Central Government, Raj Bhawan, BJP, their A, B and C teams are consistently drafting plans against us, but their designs will get a big jolt in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir," Omar Abdullah as per KNS said. Invoking Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal's couplet "Fanoos Ban Kar Jis Ki Hifazat Hawa Kare, Woh Shama Hi Kya Buje Jise Roshan Khuda Kare", the former chief minister said that efforts are on to weaken National Conference in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir by its enemies, but their ill designs will be defeated with full energy.

"They want to extinguish NC's candle but it is impossible, it will remain lit up," Omar added.

# 8,652 dog bite cases reported to ARC SMHS in last one year

'58,000 cases recorded since April 2015'

**SRINAGAR, APR 25:** A whopping 8,652 bite victims, mostly from dog bites, sought treatment at the Anti-Rabies Clinic at Srinagar's Shri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) Hospital in the past year, officials said.

They said the prevalence of dogs across the valley has contributed to human-dog conflicts, leading to a rise in cases of dog bites in the region.

An official from the Anti-Rabies Clinic SMHS informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that from April 01, 2023, to March 31, 2024, a total of 8,652 bite cases were recorded, with the majority originating from Srinagar.

This figure of 8,652 cases marks the highest recorded in the past decade, underscoring the urgent need to address the issue immediately, he said.

Providing a breakdown, the official said that 377 cases were reported in April 2023, 710 in May, 847 in June, 751 in July, 733 in August, 790 in September, 737 in October, 640 in November, 642 in December, 650 in January 2024, 668 in February, and 1,107 in March.



Out of the 8,652 cases, 6,519 were from Srinagar, 302 from Budgam, 242 from Baramulla, 186 from Kupwara, 251 from Bandipora, 152 from Ganderbal, 228 from Pulwama, 46 from Shopian, 40 from Kulgam, 72 from Anantnag, and 614 from outside areas, he noted.

Reviewing the yearly data on bite cases, the official said that from April 2015 to March 2016, 7,061 bite cases were reported to ARC SMHS, fol-

lowed by 5,832 cases from April 2016 to March 2017, 6,802 from April 2017 to March 2018, 6,397 from April 2018 to March 2019, 6,139 from April 2019 to March 2020, 4,808 from April 2020 to March 2021, 5,469 from April 2021 to March 2022, 6,875 from April 2022 to March 2023, and 8,652 cases recorded till the present date.

He added that approximately 58,000 cases have been registered in the Anti-Rabies

Clinic from April 2015 to March 2024.

In Kashmir, dog bites pose a serious public health concern, with thousands of people becoming victims of animal bites, particularly dog bites, and some developing rabies.

Rabies is a universally fatal viral disease, resulting in approximately 59,000 human deaths annually worldwide, with 95 percent of cases occurring in Africa and Asia.

# Lok Sabha Elections 2024-My Vote My Right: Bandipora Admin organizes mega Awareness Program at Auditorium Hall Kaloosa

**HT News Network**

BANDIPORA, APRIL 25 The District Election Office Bandipora on Thursday organised a mega awareness programme at Auditorium Hall Kaloosa aimed at raising awareness about the significance of right to vote and participation in democratic process.

The program was presided over by Deputy District Election officer Bandipora, Mohammad Rafeeq Bhat in the presence of ACR (ARO 15-Bandipora) Shabir Ahmad Wani.

The event also marked participation of SVEEP Ambassador Faisal Ali Dar, Nodal Officer SVEEP (Principal N. M Hr Sec Kaloosa) Ab. Rashid, Nodal Officer PINK Polling Station, Coordinator SVEEP, Convener SVEEP, BLOs, Prominent citizens, President Specially-Abled Association Nazir Ahmad, Students, and female staff to be deployed for Pink Polling Stations.

Concerned from SVEEP cell, Bandipora hosted an insightful session with the aim of increasing awareness about the importance of voting in a democratic system.



Participants were briefed about the upcoming opportunity to exercise their vote on May 20th, the poll day for Baramulla PC of which Bandipora forms a part. On the occasion, a documentary was displayed before the participants regarding electoral education and voting rights.

Speaking on the occasion, DyDEO emphasized the importance of participation in the democratic process. He said vote is a collective power of individual voices that brings about real change.

Bhat, also deliberated on various

aspects of ethical voting and informed decisions.

Addressing the gathering, ACR Bandipora (ARO 15- Bandipora) sensitized the participants about the importance of voters, especially new voters.

During his speech, he said that to make elections more inclusive, many initiatives have been taken to increase voter turnout such as pink polling stations for women, special provision for senior citizens, and urged participants to become beacons of light for others.

## DC Bandipora reviews performance of R&B department

**HT News Network**



BANDIPORA, APRIL 25: The Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman on Wednesday conducted a comprehensive review of the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department in a meeting held at Mini Secretariat, here.

The DC conducted a thorough evaluation to analyze current progress, pinpoint areas for improvement and implement strategic measures to improve the overall functioning of the department.

During the review, the DC reviewed comprehensive progress reports, encompassing updates on the physical and financial status of all ongoing projects within the district besides laid special emphasis on projects currently in progress.

Superintending Engineer (SE) R&B Bandipora, Firdous Ahmad also attended the meeting.

Among others, the meeting was attended by ADDC, Mohammad Ashraf Bhat; ADC, Umar Shafi; Superintending Engineer R&B, Firdous Ahmad; CPO, Mohammad Maqbool; ExEn R&B Bandipora and Sumbal besides other concerned.

## KPS UNISOO Students Excel in 8th Grade Results

**DR. AB QAYOUM**



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## School safety training programme concludes at Doda

**HT News Network**

DODA, APRIL 25: Three day district level school safety training cum orientation program under Samagra Shiksha concluded today in the Conference Hall of Chief Education Office here. Teachers from across the all 10 educational zones of District Doda participated in the training. During the program the teachers were sensitized about the safety of the children in the schools through various means and measures. The main aim and purpose of the training was to generate awareness amongst teachers on how to make schools a safe and secure zone for students and to highlight their role and responsibilities. Kismat Singh, Ajait Singh Lecturers; Sumeiya Bano Teacher and Irshad Hussain teacher - the resource persons for the programme highlighted the importance of preparing school Disaster Management Plan. The Resource persons also highlighted the safety and precautionary measures to be adopted in the schools to avoid any kind of hazard.

### از سنیا بت پھلگام

درخواست منجانب شبھو از رشید و مدرس احمد پسران عبدل رشید نمازگاہ کھنپور پھلگام بحصول obc/osc

#### اشتہار بمراد آگاہی

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی بر غاس عام معاملہ مندر چرناموں ان الصدر میں درخواست سائل فترتہ میں زیر کارواہی ہے اس نسبت پدواری سائل رپورٹ بحصول مطلوب بقوات رکا طلب جیسا جیسا ہے جس سے عیان ہے کہ سائل شخص پور پھلگام کل کارہنہ والا ہے اور جی جی تک رسوکت اختیار نہیں کی ہے اور افراد کمرہ مندر چرناہیل ہے

- 1.. مجرل رشید ولد سیدیب 50 سال آمدنی 8000..
- 2.. شبھو زید چرخیہ 48 سال کھربلوکام
- 3.. شبھو از رشید پسر 25 سال سرکاری ملازم
- 4.. مدرس احمد پسر 7 سال زیر تعلیم
- 5.. بھوسرا چاند نتر 18 سال //
- 6.. بھاد رشید پسر //

اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی بھی افراد کمرہ جی موجود ہیں کہ جسے سلا یا ناری وغیرہ زری آمدنی 302088 تک سے سرٹیفیکٹ نکالنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر مندر دفتر میں پیش کرے معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

#### نائب تحصیلدار پھلگام

1. مجرل رشید ولد سیدیب 50 سال آمدنی 8000..

2. شبھو زید چرخیہ 48 سال کھربلوکام

3. شبھو از رشید پسر 25 سال سرکاری ملازم

4. مدرس احمد پسر 7 سال زیر تعلیم

5. بھوسرا چاند نتر 18 سال //

6. بھاد رشید پسر //

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR BIRTHS & DEATHS BLOCK PAHALGAM Subject:- Registration of Births / Deaths PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public Notice This office is in receipt of representation from GHULAM RASOOL NAJAR S/O MOHD AKBER NAJAR R/O DEHWATOO Tehsil PAHALGAM District ANANTNAG for issuance of death Certificate in favour my wife namely SARA BEGUM W/O GHULAM RASOOL NAJAR R/O DEHWATOO PAHALGAM DOD as per documents is 07/02/2024 & event has been o to be occurred at HOME. In this connection if anyone have any objection in the registration of birth certificate shall present his/her claim to the office of Tehsildar / BDO office PAHALGAM within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

**REGISTRATION BIRTH & DEATH (BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICE PAHALGAM)**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

My father, namely Mr Gh Hassan Wani (Azad), is missing since Friday afternoon. He left home around 3 pm on Friday 19/04/24 and didn't return. If anybody has seen him or knows anything about his whereabouts he may kindly inform us on following No.s. 914977482., 8493079715

**SAJAD AHMAD WANI (SON) R/O RESHI PORA NANIL ANANTNAG**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is to inform general public that I have an electrical connection in my name bearing Consumer ID NO 0201010010336 at Kokar Bazar Lal Chowk Srinagar. Now I have applied to the department for transfer of the above mentioned Electrical Connection to the name of my father Kh. Khurshid Ahmad Dhaar S/O Kh. Ghulam Mohammad Dhaar C/O Kokar Bazar Lalchowk Srinagar.

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR BIRTHS & DEATHS BLOCK PAHALGAM Subject:- Registration of Births / Deaths PUBLIC NOTICE**

This office is in receipt of representation from SHO-KOOR DEEDER F/O GHULAM MUSTAFA DEEDAR R/O, BATAKOTE PAHALGAM Tehsil PAHALGAM District ANANTNAG for issuance of BIRTH Certificate in favour my SON namely GHULAM MUSTAFA DEEDAR S/O SHOKOR DEEDAR R/O BATAKOTE PAHALGAM D.O.B as per documents is 03/03/1985 & event has been o to be occurred at HOME In this connection if anyone have any objection in the registration of birth certificate shall present his/her claim to the office of Tehsildar /BDO office PAHALGAM within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

**اطلاع عام**

مجھے The Sapphire Resort کی رہائش گاہ محمد نواز پھلگام کے لئے درخواست ہے اگر اس بارے میں کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اسسٹنڈ ڈیپارٹمنٹ میں پیش کرے ورنہ معاد کوئی اعتراض قبول نہیں ہوگا

**المشتر**  
**غلام قادر بت ولد عبدل خالق بت گشت بل پھلگام**

**آفس آف دہ ایکزیکیٹو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول تحصیل آفس واگورہ**

شفیقہ بانو دختر غلام رسول گھمانی ساکنہ در پھلگام تحصیل واگورہ ضلع بارہمولہ کی تاریخ پیدائش 22-4-2019 سے اب اس کی تاریخ پیدائش سرٹیفیکٹ نکالنے کے لئے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر مندر تحصیل آفس واگورہ میں پیش کرے معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

**آفس آف دہ ایکزیکیٹو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول تحصیل آفس واگورہ**

لطیفہ بیگم زوجہ شوکت احمد بت ساکنہ مندرگام تحصیل واگورہ ضلع بارہمولہ کے پسر شمیم شوکت کا تاریخ پیدائش 5/07/2007 سے اب اس کی تاریخ پیدائش سرٹیفیکٹ نکالنے کے لئے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر مندر تحصیل آفس واگورہ میں پیش کرے معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

**آفس آف دہ ایکزیکیٹو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول تحصیل آفس واگورہ**

بال احمد میرو ولد محمد اسد اللہ میر ساکنہ در پھلگام تحصیل واگورہ ضلع بارہمولہ کی تاریخ پیدائش 28-07-2020 سے اب اس کی تاریخ پیدائش سرٹیفیکٹ نکالنے کے لئے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر مندر تحصیل آفس واگورہ میں پیش کرے معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

**آفس آف دہ ایکزیکیٹو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول تحصیل آفس واگورہ**

محمد یعقوب مجاہد ولد محمد سلطان مجاہد ساکنہ مندر موضع وتر گام تحصیل واگورہ ضلع بارہمولہ کے فرزند عماد یعقوب مجاہد کا تاریخ پیدائش 25-02-2016 سکول ریکارڈ میں اندراج غلطی سے ہوا ہے جبکہ اس کا اصل تاریخ پیدائش 09-04-2013 ہے اس لئے اس کی درستی کرنا مطلوب اس لئے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر مندر تحصیل آفس واگورہ میں پیش کرے معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

**آفس آف دہ ایکزیکیٹو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول تحصیل آفس واگورہ**

مجتبیٰ علی محمد یونان ولد عبدل خالق لون ساکنہ موضع راجپورہ چھٹ کھی ضلع بارہمولہ کا پسر محمد یونان لون کا تاریخ پیدائش 21-7-2015 سے اب اس کی تاریخ پیدائش سرٹیفیکٹ نکالنے کے لئے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر مندر تحصیل آفس واگورہ میں پیش کرے معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

**آفس آف دہ ایکزیکیٹو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول تحصیل آفس واگورہ**

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نازہ بانو دختر غلام علی الدین میر ساکنہ موضع شہ پورہ گیرگان تحصیل واگورہ ضلع بارہمولہ کا تاریخ پیدائش 02-04-1990 سے اب اس کی تاریخ پیدائش سرٹیفیکٹ نکالنے کے لئے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر مندر تحصیل آفس واگورہ میں پیش کرے معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

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سید حبیب اللہ گھمانی ولد عبدل عزیز گھمانی ساکنہ موضع مندرگام تحصیل واگورہ ضلع بارہمولہ کے پسر شوکت احمد گھمانی کا تاریخ پیدائش 15-04-2007 سے اب اس کی تاریخ پیدائش سرٹیفیکٹ نکالنے کے لئے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر مندر تحصیل آفس واگورہ میں پیش کرے معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

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**المشتر**  
**گل محمد ماگرے ولد خضر ماگرے ساکنہ ننون گشت بل پھلگام**

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# BJP deprived people of their rights, dignity, resources: Ajaz Jan

■ HT News Network

Poonch Block 25th May:- Ajaz Jan, Provincial President JKNC Youth and Former MLA, has vehemently condemned the BJP for its continued deprivation of the people of Jammu and Kashmir of their rights, dignity, and resources.

Speaking at the public meeting at Khari Karmara here today, Ajaz Jan lambasted the BJP for its neglect and exploitation of the youth and other vulnerable segments of society in the region. He highlighted the widespread disillusionment among various demographics, attributing it to the BJP's perceived failures and broken promises.

"It is abundantly clear that the BJP has failed to fulfill its obligations to the people of Jammu and Kashmir," remarked Jan. "Their divisive agenda has only served to deepen societal rifts and exacerbate



existing tensions." Jan pledged his unwavering commitment to address local issues and uphold religious harmony in the region. He urged voters to reject the BJP's divisive agenda and instead rally behind the National Conference's candidate, Mian Altaf Ahmed, as a beacon of hope for a

brighter future. "In Mian Altaf Ahmed, we have a candidate who embodies the principles of inclusivity and progress," stated Jan. "I implore the people of Rajouri and Poonch districts to unite in support of her candidacy and to reject the politics of division perpetuated by the BJP."

Ch. Maxood in his address said "Time and again, the BJP has failed to deliver on its promises to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, saying their divisive agenda has only served to sow discord and undermine the fabric of our society."

Ch. Fazal echoed these sentiments, stating, "The BJP's policies have systematically marginalized the youth and other vulnerable segments of our population, exacerbating existing inequalities and hardships."

Ishaq Khan said that the people of Jammu and Kashmir have been let down by the BJP's rhetoric of development, which has failed to materialize on the ground. Ch. Fazal urged voters to reject the BJP's divisive agenda and instead support candidates who prioritize unity and progress. Later, dozens of people impressed by the policies and programs of National Conference joined the party fold in presence of Ajaz Jan.

## ADDC Ramban reviews developmental scenario of the district

■ HT News Network



Ramban, April 25: Today, a crucial meeting was convened by Additional District Development Commissioner, Roshan Lal, to give a flip to developmental activities across the district and assess progress under District Capex, 2023-24, and flagship schemes. Scheduled ahead of the comprehensive review meeting chaired by Deputy Commissioner Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, the gathering aimed to streamline efforts and ensure effective coordination among district and sectoral officers.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Ramban Shakeeb Ahmed, ACD, Shrinath Suman, CMO Dr. Kamal Zadu, CEO Dev Anand, Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti, REW, JPDC, BDOs, EO MC Ramban and other concerned officers. During the meeting, a comprehensive sector-wise evaluation was conducted to check both physical and financial status of all projects under the District Capex. Officers were urged to synchronize efforts, meet targets, and enhance departmental efficacy. This concerted approach aims to bolster development initiatives and ensure optimal utilization of resources in Ramban District. The ADDC directed all the departments including Jal Shakti, Health, Education, Youth Services and Sports and Urban and Local Bodies to follow-up works of their respective departments and submit both physical and financial status of all the works allotted and taken up by the different executing agencies. He also directed the officers to ensure inter department coordination to ensure updated and exact data in all aspects.

## Police arrests 3 gamblers in Sopore, Stake money seized

■ HT News Network

Sopore April 25: Continuing its drive against social crimes, police have arrested 03 gamblers in Sopore and seized stake money and playing cards from their possession. A police party of Police Station Bomai headed by SHO PS Bomai under the supervision of SDPO Sopore Shri. Sarfaraz Bashir-JKPS apprehended 03 gamblers at Malmapanpora & recovered stake money of 3,780/- & playing cards from their possession. They have been identified as Nazir Ahmad Mir son of Abdul Jabbar Mir, Bashir Ahmad Malla son of Abdul Jabbar Malla and Feroz Ahmad Malla son of Gulam Mohammad Malla, all residents of Malmapanpora Sopore. In this connection, a case vide FIR No. 24/2024 under relevant sections of law has been registered at PS Bomai.

## Bhadarwah Bani Basholi Road Reopens For Traffic

■ Amir Iqbal Khan



Bhadarwah, April 25: The 118 RCC of Border Roads Organization (BRO) today threw open the Bhaderwah Bani Basohli National Highway which had been closed due to heavy snowfall at Chattergalla pass at the foothills amidst Ashapati glacier and mountain Kailash.

An official said that during recent heavy snowfall in the area, comprising of Chattergalla Pass, the connectivity between Bani and Bhadarwah had been snapped. The dedicated team consisting of OC of 118 RCC/BRO Gorav Tiwari, OIC Kuli, along with operators and CPLs opened the road axis within the stipulated time before 2 months under the guidance and supervision of Commander 35 BRTF Udhampur S.K Verma.

"Despite all the hurdles, the team braving heavy snow fall and adverse weather conditions, is taking adequate measures for maintaining the connectivity between Bani in Kathua and Bhadarwah (Doda district) for the convenience of general public," official said.

The official further added that in addition to the snow clearance, the regular work on bridges and permanent works, are also under speedy progress.

"The road from Bani to Bhadarwah now onwards remains open for the ease of general public from both the sides. Though no bus service plies till date on this route but the Sumos, Tempo Travelers and private vehicles ply on this 84 kms road safely," the official informed.

Officer Commanding 118 RCC/BRO Gorav Tiwari told, "the swift clearance was undertaken to guarantee the unimpeded flow of traffic, emphasizing the organization's commitment to ensuring connectivity and safety in challenging terrains in shortest possible time limit".

## Illegal mining and transportation of minerals Police seizes 6 vehicles, arrests 6 drivers in Baramulla

■ HT News Network

Baramulla April 25: Cracking a whip on illegal mining and transportation of minerals, Police have seized 6 vehicles and arrested 6 drivers in Baramulla.

The Police initiated the action under the supervision of SDPO Pattan/Tangmarg/ Kreeri assisted by SHO PS Kreeri, ICPP Kungambara & PP Mirgund seized 6 vehicles (4 tractors and 2 tippers), involved in illegal mining and transportation of minerals at Shrai, Khanpeth, Goom Ahmadpora, Kungambara & Kreeri Baramulla. The accused drivers have been identified as Ashiq Hussain Khokar son of Mohammad Arshid resident of Check Treran, Asif Ali Bhat son of Ali Mohammad resident of Odina, Mohd Ibrahim Wani son of Gh Mohd resident of Goom Ahmadpora, Zahoor Ahmad Ganie son of Mohammad Akbar resident of Kungambara, Mohd Shafi Dar son of Gh Mohd & Parvaiz Ahmad Lone son of Mohammad Sultan both residents of Jal Sheeri. Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations and further investigation have been taken up.

People are requested not to indulge in any kind of illegal mining activities from any Nallah/River, as it is the violation of Government rules. Persons found indulging in illegal mining activities shall be dealt as per law.

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## Apni Party takes out impressive road show across Nowshera

Party committed to give District Status to Nowshera, Sunderbani, Kalakote: S. Manjit Singh

■ HT News Network

NOWSHERA (RAJOURI): -Apni Party today took out an impressive road show in Nowshera to showcase strength of the Party and expressed gratitude to the people for extending their support to the contesting candidate of the Party from Rajouri - Anantnag Parliamentary seat, Zafar Iqbal Manhas.

The impressive road show was taken out by the Party leaders from Nowshera Bus Stand up to Jahangir Chowk under the leadership of the Provincial President of the Party, S. Manjit Singh and other leaders.

The roadshow was part of the Party's campaign in support of Zafar Iqbal Manhas, who has received



an overwhelming response from the cross section of society, and the people have expressed their faith in the Party's candidate for the Rajouri - Anantnag Parliamentary seat of the Apni Party.

Large numbers of people from all the sections of society participated in the procession that was taken out in support of the Party's candidate, Zafar Iqbal Manhas sahab.

While speaking on the

occasion, S. Manjit Singh appreciated the people for their unconditional support to the Party candidate for the Rajouri - Anantnag Parliamentary seat and assured them that the Party would work as per the expectation of the people in the parliamentary seat.

He also said that if Zafar Iqbal Manhas gets elected to the above said parliamentary seat, the Party would ensure that Now-

shera, Sunderbani and Kalakote get District Status.

"The people of the area have faced disparity regarding development, poor health, and educational sectors. The people suffer because they have to travel for long hours to reach the district headquarters which is far away from their respective areas. Hence, the Party stands with the demand of the people so that Nowshera, Sunderbani and Kalakote get District Status," he added, while assuring all support from the Party and its leadership.

He said that the Party is committed to ensure justice to the people of these remote areas and their decades old demand is accepted.

## Voters Awareness Program Held at HS Tirch Handwara: A Step Towards Electoral Literacy

■ DR. AB QAYOOM

Handwara, April 25: A comprehensive Voters Awareness Program under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative was recently organized at GHS Tirch Handwara, reflecting a concerted effort by the District Election Office Kupwara and other stakeholders to promote electoral literacy and active participation in the democratic process. Led by Ayushi Suden (IAS), District Election Officer Kupwara, and Ab Majeed Dar, District Nodel Officer SVEEP CEO Kupwara, the event aimed to inform citizens, especially first-time voters and



females, about various voting-related activities in preparation for the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024. The program featured a range of engaging activities, including a mega plantation drive initiated by ACP Kupwara (ARO-06) Langate, DFO Social Forestry Kupwara, and the Headmaster of GHS Trich, alongside others. This initiative not only raised awareness about voting but also

underscored the importance of environmental sustainability through the planting of three hundred saplings within the vicinity of the high school. The involvement of school children and artists in presenting colorful programs further enhanced the educational aspect of the event, inspiring active participation in the democratic process among attendees. A pledge-taking ceremony under SVEEP reiterated the commitment of participants to vote enthusiastically and responsibly in the upcoming elections. Moreover, experts and speakers emphasized the significance of electoral literacy in empowering citizens and fostering a strong democratic ethos.

## Samsung launches new range of AI TVs in India

■ HT News Network

Srinagar: Samsung has heralded a new era of home entertainment with the launch of its cutting-edge Neo QLED 8K, Neo QLED 4K, and OLED TVs. The much-anticipated reveal took place at the prestigious 'Unbox & Discover' event held at the Samsung Opera House in Bengaluru. This latest 2024 lineup of Neo QLED 8K, Neo QLED 4K, and OLED TVs promises to redefine the home entertainment experience by harnessing the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI). JB Park, President and CEO of Samsung Southwest Asia, emphasised the company's commitment to enhancing consumers' lifestyles

through AI integration in home entertainment. Mohandeep Singh, Senior Vice President of Samsung India's Visual Display Business, underscored the pivotal role of televisions as the focal point of modern living. He noted the escalating demand for premium TVs in India, citing consumers' preference for larger screen sizes. Singh expressed confidence in Samsung's ability to maintain its market leadership with the launch of AI-powered Neo QLED 8K, 4K, and OLED TVs designed to deliver unparalleled visual immersion and sound quality. Samsung's expansive lineup also includes the Neo QLED 4K series, powered by the NQ4 AI Gen2 Processor.

## Nation cannot forget indispensable role played by Nehru, Sheikh Abdullah in safeguarding Kashmir's: Rattan Lal Gupta

■ HT News Network

JAMMU April 25th: Nation cannot forget the indispensable role played by Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, and Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in protecting the integrity and sovereignty of the erstwhile state from evaders during the tumultuous period after nation's independence in 1947.

This was stated by Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President, J&K National Conference, Jammu, in a statement issued here today.

Reacting strongly over the statement of a leader from B team of BJP who is contesting Parliamentary election from Anantnag- Rajouri constituency for blaming the National Conference for present situation in the Valley, the senior NC leader has expressed deep disappointment regarding the recent negative campaigning undertaken by the BJP sponsor parties fearing their defeat in the four coming parliamentary elections.



The Provincial President emphasized that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, a figure widely loved by the people, holds a deep place in their hearts. The National Conference as well as Congress Party has consistently stood for democracy in Jammu and Kashmir. During the

period from 1990 to 1996, when the democratic system was absent, it was the NC and its leadership that tirelessly worked towards reinstating democracy in the region, even at the cost of hundreds of dedicated party workers' lives.

Recalling the warm welcome extended by the then Prime Minister, H.V Deve Gowda, to Dr. Farooq Abdullah, who had restored democracy in Jammu and Kashmir, Gupta highlighted the significance of that moment. Deve Gowda had specially visited Jammu and Kashmir at that time to participate in the oath ceremony of Dr. Farooq Abdullah as the Chief Minister of the state.

He said India gained independence in 1947, but at that time, the country had not so much resources. It was under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru and the Congress party that India underwent significant development on modern lines. Nehru was responsible for the implementation of several groundbreaking initiatives, including the Green and White Revolutions, which transformed the agriculture and dairy industries of the country.

EDITORIAL

Move forward and not backward

Jammu & Kashmir is probably the only place in the world where the things instead of moving in a forward direction move in a backward direction. Same has been witnessed in the improvement of infrastructure in the power sector. The worst thing is that the people at the helm justify the wrong planning and claim that the improvement has been taken up to bring relief to the people.

Some years back the Power Development Department (PDD) took up the task of laying the cables and installing the smart meters in the different areas of Srinagar and Jammu cities and important towns in the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir. Contracts were given to the different agencies and in this regard the work was started. So far so good but what followed was somewhat out of this mind.

Ideally the cables should have been installed in the initial phase and this was to be followed by the installation of smart meters. However, to the surprise of one and all the smart meters were first installed and this was followed by the laying of insulated cables. When this issue was raised with the agencies carrying out the work their answer was simple and plan. They said that they have been asked to install the smart meters.

There are many areas in the Srinagar and Jammu cities and the other towns where the smart meters have been installed, but there is no clue of the insulated cables. In such areas the people are at loss as what forced to go for the installation of smart meters without the laying of insulated cables. Some of the people argue that the main contract of the installation of smart meters was given to the relative of a top notch politician.

It has been observed in the past that many schemes in the power sector got lapsed in Jammu & Kashmir since the deadlines were not met. This is despite the fact huge funds were spent on such schemes and at the end all the money got drained. One hopes that same is not the fate of the present scheme that aims to lay insulated cables and install smart meters across the length and breadth of the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

The people in general hail the government scheme of improving the infrastructure, but they want the things to be done in a quick manner. The scheme needs to be expedited so that aggregate and technical commercial losses are minimized. This will also ensure that smart power system is in place and the round the clock power supply will become a reality in Jammu & Kashmir.



By Mool Raj

The structural foundation of the Roman Empire, history tells us, included the roads that were built. With this communication network, the expanding empire was able to connect newly conquered lands. It did not matter how disparate a culture or how unintelligible a language was to the ruling Romans; the road was the connection they needed. Via roads, armies could be sent to help beleaguered governors and consuls. Most importantly, revenue could be transported back to the centre. It was the Romans who constructed the first paved road — the Via Appia. However, Roman roads included everything from small pathways between towns to broad avenues that allowed armies to make their way to encampments and battles.

Centuries after the Romans, the Mughal Empire in India also required a communication network to allow all parts to remain connected and central power to be consolidated. The road, of course, had already been invented — in fact, Sher Shah Suri, a non-Mughal, built, during his short rule after Babar's death, the Grand Trunk Road connecting the Indian subcontinent and Afghanistan. So the Mughals set about leaving their very own and very particular mark on the means and manner of transportation.

The flair with which the Mughals themselves travelled was inventive and meant to create the sort of aesthetic spectacle of which they were very fond. People have flashy cars even now, but that instinct was not born with the creation of the automobile. If there is any doubt about this, one need only look at how the Mughals got from one place to another.

In the 16th century, and even after,



ordinary people in India often used bullock carts as the standard mode of transport. However, if you were well off, and most rich people of the time were government officials, administrators, aristocrats and court officials, you could use horses and camels to get around. There was also occasional travel along waterways using boats. If you were the emperor or part of the royal court or someone else with a high rank, elephants were available for your travel. Nothing proclaimed the pomp and circumstance of an emperor better than when he travelled with 100 or more elephants, even when he was not going to war.

The drama of conquest and the status of the emperor as the conqueror could be emphasised even if he was only travelling from one palace to another. According to records from the era, the elephants were obtained from the forests of Bihar, Orissa and Agra. In some cases, they were brought all the way from places like Golconda on ships that were made specifically to transport elephants.

The drama of conquest and the

status of the emperor as the conqueror could be emphasised even if he was only travelling from one palace to another.

According to one research on transportation in the Mughal era, the covered seats on the elephants were called 'howdah'. There would be processions of 160-170 elephants, each animal covered with fantastic green and red cloths, all travelling closely together. The howdahs were fastened on top with ropes and served as a kind of sleeping coach which was quite comfortable. These were mostly used by the royal household on long trips to the hunt. The Mughals had even devised a variation of this that was a travelling bathroom that allowed the emperor to have his own facilities while on the move.

The howdah was a square structure that was also placed on an elephant and allowed four to six people to travel inside it while seated. It had a canopy supported by pillars, and it was possible for onlookers to see who was travelling inside and for those inside the howdah to observe the world out-

side.

The most mesmerising account of how to get around in style during the Mughal era is that of the choudoli, descriptions for which have varied from "a sedan with two poles" to an "enormous affair, borne by two elephants". One record of the choudoli in which women from high-ranking households were travelling describes the exterior as having its four sides covered with khas, a kind of grass known for its fragrance and cooling effect when wet. Lesser women travelled (if at all) in palkis, which were lavishly decorated, according to the status of the owner, with crushed silk and velvet curtains and a wax cloth covering to protect against wet weather.

In terms of the transportation of goods, the semi-trucks of the Mughal age were camels, which were especially bred in a facility near Thatta. There trainers helped enable them to travel long distances in a short period of time. Some of them were strong enough to be able to carry very heavy goods, thus keeping trade going. Horses were used largely for light transport for the postal or courier service as sending information or messages quickly was of primary importance.

The wild and fanciful truck art of India is well known, but the artistic flair in investing the daily routine with aesthetic complexity and design elements dates back from a time when an empire was given to making a great show of everything, including getting around. On India's roads, where our senses are constantly assailed by poisonous fumes as well as tempers, fights and thefts, it helps to take a small pause and think of things as they were a few hundred years ago.

What it must have been to come across a prince's procession of elephants, what great lady could be glimpsed through the crushed velvet curtains of a nobleman's entirely silver-plated palki! They could not dash through the land in railway cars or rise into the atmosphere in passenger jets but the Mughals, flashy and flamboyant as they might have been, got around in style even so many centuries ago.

The writer is a columnist and freelance writer

AB RASHID BEIG  
HUMBLE AND A HIGH CALIBRE TEACHER



Rayees Ahmad Kumar

As his remarkable 34 year career in the education department came to an end on 30-03-2024, Ab Rashid Beig the esteemed Headmaster of Govt BHS Sopat Kulgam, stands tall as a symbol of unwavering dedication and unparalleled commitment to the field of education. His journey, marked by milestones of excellence and achievements, has left an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of all those who have had the privilege of working with and learning from him. Mr Beig's embarking into the world of education was not merely a profession but a calling—a calling to inspire, nurture, and empower young minds. His passion for imparting knowledge, coupled with his belief in the transformative power of education, became the cornerstone of his illustrious career. He had joined the education department few decades ago and after serving as a teacher for several years he was promoted as Master. In 2022 he was bestowed with the promotion as Headmaster and has been working in the same capacity till date. During his service career, he has not failed to see his students qualify for prestigious exams and secure high-profile positions in diverse fields such as civil services, medicine, engineering, teaching, etc. I am fortunate enough to have been one among his hundreds of students who have had the opportunity of learning Maths from this legendary teacher.

I remember sharply it was the year 1995 when I was reading in 6th class and Mr Beig was transferred to High School Sopat. In class 6th and 7th, he was assigned to teach Social Science to us but in 9th and 10th classes he taught us Maths. I still remember the way and techniques he implemented while teaching us Maths. He was so brilliant in Maths that whenever any student recited first few words of a question he would say "Stop Stop, I know after that" and read the remaining part of that particular question himself and then taught us how to solve that question. Whether it was Mensuration, Sets, Algebra, Trigonometry or Geometry, Mr Beig always felt comfortable in teaching his students with utmost compression and understanding. His students never felt the need of a private tuition the way today's students are seeking it after formal schooling hours or during early morning hours. He would complete the syllabus almost two months prior to the commencement of the annual board exams aiming to make available plenty of time to his students for the preparation. There were two sections of class 9th and 10th at High School Sopat. Mr Beig was teaching Maths to section B while Mr Mohd Akbar Kumar another hardworking and noble teacher was teaching to section A. Whenever Mr Akbar would be on a casual leave or any other official duty, Mr Beig used to call a combined class of both the sections and gave a general or basic maths lecture to make us comfortable and acquainted about basic maths. I say with complete honesty and truth that teachers like Beig sahib are seldom and rarely found in contemporary times, where teaching has been almost commercialized by the selfish and apathetic professionals who's only motive during the career remains to suck the blood of impoverished people. They were enquiring about the absent students next day on morning Assembly to restrict them from making it habitual. Not only were the teachers like Beig sahib concerned about the career and future of students but also



were they enthusiastic to guide them to embrace a bright future and touch the skies. Besides being always punctual and dedicated to his services, Mr Beig would never compromise on his honesty, integrity and sincerity. Whether it was a function in the school premises or an outing during a picnic, Mr Beig was given the responsibility to manage which he adeptly handled flawlessly. Further being a local during his posting at BHS Sopat, Mr Beig would specially focus on the educational development of the students of his neighbouring habitations of Sopat, Berigam, Cheyan

Adigam and Bangihal. I remember when my result of class 9th was declared and result sheet was in the hands of Beig sahib, upon checking my result it came to fore that I had secured below his expectations. He almost chided me for the dismal performance and advised to work even more harder. I tried my level best to not let him down in near future and worked tirelessly, the result was that I started performing good in both class tests as well as annual exams. Without any prejudice and bias, I wholeheartedly declare that what I am today is because of the noble and

hardworking teachers like Beig sahib who transformed and taught me heartily and guided me from time to time. Beig sahib always remained at the forefront when it came to help weak and impoverished class students terms of their either fee concession or purchasing uniform and other stationary items for them. Besides being a person of noble heart, Beig sahib always wore a formal but enchanting dress of dashing style. It not only enhanced his own physical personality but also left a lasting impression on the minds and hearts of his students. With a heavy heart and tears in my eyes, I am reminded of a big tragedy Beig sahib met a couple of years ago when his lone beloved teenager son Haroon Rashid had lost his life. May his soul rest in peace and may Almighty Allah grant him highest place in Jannah. Apart from teaching Maths, it was almost a routine for Beig sahib to give a moral lesson particularly at Morning Assembly. During his tenure at BHS Sopat, I remember the institution always showed exceptionally excellent results. More than 80 students were enrolled as regular candidates in each academic session and the pass percentage always stood above 95% which showed the dedication and unwavering commitment of the teaching faculty to impart better and quality education in the school. If I go on to write about a teacher and a selfless man like Beig sahib, I think I may fall short of words to describe a dynamic personality like him. So to conclude my tribute to this distinguished teacher of my area, I dedicate a quote of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam the missile man and people's president of India to Beig sahib... "Teaching is a very noble profession that shapes the character, calibre, and future of an individual. If the people remember me as a good teacher, that will be the biggest honour for me." - APJ Abdul Kalam.

Writer is a columnist hailing from Qazigund Kashmir

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# 'People-centrism' is the secret behind Modi's invincibility

PM Modi's Dubai address underlines government's commitment to people-centrism. He underscored the need for a 'whole of society' approach instead of the 'whole of government' approach

■ Ram Madhav

These days, there is palpable unease among sections of political scientists over a perceived increase in "democracy deficit" and the rise of "strong man democracies" in different countries. The Economist magazine released its annual Democracy Index this week, bemoaning that this year was "not an auspicious one for democracies". While ranking countries under four categories, it placed India in the second category of "flawed democracies", just below the "full democracies" category. Interestingly, it also placed other big countries like the USA and Indonesia in that category. While full democracies secured above 8 out of 10 points, the so-called flawed ones, not faring too badly, secured above 7.

Interestingly, India has remained in that category since 2006, improving its score in the last decade from 6 to above 7. Several African nations are under the "hybrid category", while China, which denies political freedoms to people, is placed under the category of "authoritarian regimes". Pakistan, Iran and Myanmar, among dozens of others, are giving it a good company in this lowest category.

These rankings may or may not reflect the complete reality of a country. But the fact remains that governments in several countries today seek to exploit technological advances to not only provide "smart governance", but also to create a "surveillance state". Some governments put a lot of emphasis on building physical infrastructure like dams, roads, and airports to achieve "ease of living" and "ease of mobility", not bothering about the human and environmental costs. For some others, only "ease of doing business" and "ease of innovation" matter.

Viewed from this background, the keynote address delivered by Prime Minister

Narendra Modi at the World Governments Summit in Dubai earlier this week acquires great significance. Speaking the second time at this prestigious forum, attended by many heads of state and ministers, on the theme of "Shaping Future Governments", Modi made several important observations. He insisted that governments should not only be "smart", but also "inclusive", "non-corrupt" and "transparent", adding that besides ease of living, mobility and doing business, there should be "ease of justice" as well.

Highlighting the "people-centrism" of his governance model, Modi reiterated his regime's commitment to the principle of "minimum government, maximum governance". He underscored the need for a "whole of society" approach instead of the "whole of government" approach. Citing schemes of his government like the Jan Dhan Yojana, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and LIFE (Lifestyle For the Environment) campaign, which emphasise the "bottom-up" approach of making people primary stakeholders in the government's development campaigns, he told the audience that "we have witnessed many transformations in Bharat following this principle of 'people-centrism'".

"People-centrism" as a governance model is unique to the Modi government. It is the secret behind his invincibility. The sense of empowerment he accorded to the citizens and the direct connection he has established with them makes it extremely hard for his political adversaries to challenge Modi. As people become direct stakeholders, intermediate agencies like the media, power elite, and, to some extent, even the political establishment become less relevant. While the empowered people are elated, the disempowered sections crib and complain about their own growing marginalisation.



One leader who applied this principle of empowering the masses was Mahatma Gandhi. In his grand design to bring the mighty British to their knees, Gandhi resorted to massive non-violent mass movements. He not only outgrew the Congress but did not hesitate to deploy religious and cultural symbols. His methods transformed the nature of Indian political resistance to the British.

No two leaders can be compared,

especially ones seven or eight decades apart. It was a different challenge for Gandhi to mobilise the masses against a foreign government. But in Modi's case, the mobilisation was to make them shoulder responsibility for their own future. It was "democracy at the grassroots", unknown in classical Western discourse.

Desperate at the scale at which Modi has implemented this people-centrism, his adversaries complain about autocracy

and cultism. Incidentally, Gandhi too faced similar criticism, not only from the British but also from his own countrymen. Radical humanist leader M N Roy went to the extent of stating privately that he wished "to destroy the curse of Gandhism". So did Ambedkar. Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) disagreed with Gandhi initially. But in the end, everyone realised how fundamental and organic Gandhi's approach had been in the context of a civilisational nation like India. Roy publicly praised Gandhi after Independence, while JP not only turned a Gandhian but declared in his "Manifesto for Bihar" that had Gandhi lived for five more years, he would have mobilised the masses against the rulers. What Gandhi couldn't do, JP did in 1975 by mobilising the countrymen against the dictatorship of Indira Gandhi.

In a speech, "Back to the Mahatma", JP had argued that "the leaders of the country must go to the people, to live and work with them, to serve, guide and help them. They must do all this not to strengthen their parties and gather votes for themselves but in order that the people should rise and put their heads, hearts and hands to the tasks of national development".

Modi was talking about that role for the governments in the world, not the all-powerful and authoritarian one that people in many countries experience today. By asserting that "Sarkaron ka abhaav bhi nahi hona chahiye aur dabaav bhi nahi" – "there shouldn't be a lack of governance, but there shouldn't be an overbearing governance either" – Modi was echoing Gandhi, who viewed "an increase in the power of the state with the greatest fear", because it does "the greatest harm by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress".

The writer, president, India Foundation, is with the RSS

## The City of Seven Hills

I travelled to Lisbon from London on New Year's Eve. A lot of people head to London on the 31st of December every year. However, I was more than happy to escape from my adopted city for a few days.

■ Iqbal Ahmed

I travelled to Lisbon from London on New Year's Eve. A lot of people head to London on the 31st of December every year. However, I was more than happy to escape from my adopted city for a few days. In the past, the clock always struck midnight when I reached Spaniards Road cycling home from work and I would see fireworks going off in Central London from far afield together with a small crowd of curious Londoners who stood in the dark on the edge of Hampstead Heath to see the spectacle.

It was Sunday morning and so the cab ride to the airport took less than an hour. When I sent a photo from Lisbon to a friend in Kashmir, he thought I was visiting San Francisco, having seen a long orange-coloured suspension bridge in the background. I had no idea until recently that this bridge, which bore an uncanny resemblance to the Golden Gate, was built by the same American steel company. I had been to San Francisco three decades earlier and crossed the Golden Gate a few times. Lisbon, like San Francisco, is hilly and you can find quaint trams trudging along the streets in both cities. Hence, my friend could be forgiven for having mistaken Lisbon for San Francisco.

I decided to visit the city in January when I learnt that most of the homes in Lisbon don't have heating because of its mild winters. I stayed at a hotel located halfway between the airport and the city centre. The receptionist welcomed me with open arms to her hotel. Someone in London had told me once that the friendliest neighbour you could wish for is a Portuguese and therefore I was keen to experience

their hospitality.

New Year's Day is ideal for exploring a new city as there isn't much traffic on the roads and the sightseeing buses in many cities are running as usual. Luckily, it turned out to be a bright day and I saw a few cyclists in shorts and jerseys cruising the near-empty streets. I boarded a sightseeing bus at Praça do Marquês de Pombal and got off near Belém the Portuguese name for Bethlehem which in Arabic means a house of meat but in Hebrew a house of bread.

The English noun *bedlam* is also derived from the same name and refers to the hospital of St Mary of Bethlehem in London which was used as a psychiatric institution. Inside Belém Tower, they make custard tarts known as *pastel de nata*. I first tasted a *pastel de nata* at an Italian coffee shop in London and it was divine. As it was a public holiday, the Tower was closed and so I couldn't taste a *pastel de nata* in Lisbon. Belém Tower is built on the bank of River Tagus which looks like a shimmering sea on a sunny day.

Walking along the promenade near the Tower, you can catch a full view of the long suspension bridge known as Ponte 25 de Abril and a statue of Christ the King (Christ the Redeemer on top of Sugarloaf Mountain is guarding Rio de Janeiro). I came to know later that the construction of this religious monument in Portugal was indeed inspired by its precursor in Brazil. The city of Lisbon was born among seven hills and destroyed by the Great Earthquake of 1755. The rebuilding of the city was assigned to Marquês de Pombal. A century and a half earlier, a Portuguese explorer, Vasco da Gama, had discovered the sea route to India thereby ushering not only an age of

discovery but also prosperity for his country. As a child growing up in Srinagar, I learnt Vasco da Gama's name even before I had heard the name of Christopher Columbus.

In fact, this foreign-sounding name was on the tip of the tongue of all the school children in India attributing to him the actual discovery of India rather than a sea route as if he had discovered the New World like Columbus even though Portugal and India belong to the same Eurasian landmass. I wanted to see Lisbon from above and what better vantage point is there than one of its *Miradouros*? Therefore, I decided to go to Alfama the next day. The castle atop this hill was a Moorish citadel once but it is named after the patron saint of England – São Jorge.

The friendship between these two erstwhile colonial powers goes back more than 600 years. Britain had the largest and Portugal the longest empire in the world. Portugal had retained Goa as a colony for more than a decade after the British had left India. The minibus I boarded struggled a bit to climb up a steep hill, but the views of the city and its terracotta roofed houses from the *Miradouro* in Alfama are breathtaking. There was a long queue of visitors outside São Jorge Castelo even in the lean winter period.

The castle itself is a thousand years old but there is an archaeological site inside it that dates back to Iron Age. Moors introduced the art of *Azulejos* in the Iberian peninsula in the 13th century and you find the facades of many buildings in Lisbon these days adorned with the intricately patterned tiles. *Azulejos*' name originates from the Arabic *al-zilij* meaning polished stone. Although most of these glazed tiles are embellished with

geometrical designs, some of the facades depict allegorical scenes.

And unlike the grimy brick walls of the old buildings in London, the tiled exteriors of the buildings in Lisbon are shiny. The city also has a museum dedicated to *Azulejos*. On my way back from São Jorge Castelo, I boarded a tram and it moved downhill with ease. There are many *Fado* clubs and bars in Alfama. The melancholy songs of the heartbreak sung by Amalia Rodrigues among others remind me of *Ghazals* sung by Begum Akhtar as the two genres of music are connected by a common thread of 'Saudade' or longing for an absent beloved. I roamed around in Lisbon for two days and then on the third day decided to venture out to Sintra. The hotel concierge had advised me to book the ticket for Pena Palace in advance as it attracts a large number of visitors. It was a direct train ride from my hotel to Sintra.

When I exited the station, I found many drivers outside offering rides in their private vehicles to the Palace on a mountaintop, but I took a shuttle bus instead which drove through a forested landscape to reach the Palace. There was a much longer queue outside Pena Palace than the São Jorge Castelo. The Pena Palace was once a monastery that was turned into a romantic palace in the 19th century and designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the 1990s. The *Azulejos* painted in yellow and celestial blue on the exterior walls of this palace look exquisite.

I took the shuttle service back to the town and then boarded a bus to go to Cabo de Roca which is the westernmost point of Continental Europe. It was considered as the end of the known world

before the European explorers sailed across the Atlantic in search of the New World. I took another bus from there to go to the town of Cascais. It was already dark when I reached the destination and therefore didn't go to see its sandy beaches or busy marina. I knew about a historic hotel in Cascais where the British novelist, Ian Fleming, had stayed during World War II and where spies from the warring countries also stayed since Portugal was a neutral country.

As a teenager, I had seen a few James Bond films at a cinema in Srinagar that showed foreign films and the hotel guests and spies gave him the inspiration to create 007 character. When I arrived in London, I found work in a shop in Hampstead that was round the corner of a modernist building designed by the Hungarian architect, Erno Goldfinger. Fleming had chosen his unusual surname as the name for an infamous villain in one of his books to the displeasure of the modernist architect.

On my last day in Lisbon, I jumped on a funicular to stroll in the Bairro Alto neighbourhood. The sun was playing hide and seek behind some passing clouds, but it was still pleasant to soak up warm sunshine in winter sitting on a bench at *Miradouro*. You could see aircraft descending on Humberto Delgado Airport from there.

On my ride to the airport in the afternoon, I recalled having read somewhere that Portugal is a country where many travellers want to return again and again. I couldn't agree more.

The writer is a London-based author

## On Complaints Against PM Modi, Rahul Gandhi, Poll Body's Notice To Parties

HT News Network

It is also significant that, for the first time, party bosses have been held accountable for violations in a campaign speech. This is under Section 77 of the Representation of People Act, which allows parties to name 'star campaigners' and they, therefore, have been called on to regulate their speeches. In a two-page statement issued this morning, the ECI declared "star campaigners" (Prime Minister Modi and Rahul Gandhi) have been listed as such) are expected to contribute to a higher quality of discourse... which sometimes gets distorted in the heat of the contests at the local level". The ECI said that it is of the "considered view parties will have to take primary and increasing responsibility for the conduct of their candidates in general, and star campaigners in particular". "Campaign speeches by those holding high positions are of more serious consequence." The EC also said that "while individual star campaigners will continue to remain responsible for speeches made, the commission will address party presidents/head of party on a case-to-case basis".



Sources also pointed to transgressions by Congress leader Supriya Shrinete and the BJP's Dilip Ghosh earlier this election season. In both those cases, the Election Commission - which ruled the two made "low-level personal attacks" - issued notices of censure directly to the leaders in question. Sources said in the above two cases too, the BJP and the Congress chiefs also received notices. In this instance, the poll panel told both the Congress and the BJP that "... whereas yours is a national party and is therefore expected to be the standard-bearer in political

and campaign discourse, and as such also set high standards of compliance of the Model Code of Conduct". The BJP has not yet responded to the EC's notice, copies of which were addressed to Mr Nadda and Mr Kharge. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh took a jab at the EC, calling them "super super cautious when it comes to the PM and super cautious when it comes to the HM (Home Minister Amit Shah)". The Congress had complained about the Prime Minister's speech in Rajasthan's Banswara over the weekend, in which he referred to

Muslims and said the opposition party plans to "redistribute wealth to infiltrators". The party had also complained about Mr Modi referring to its manifesto as a "Muslim League imprint" and alleging that it plans to divide the country should it win the election. "It completely bears the imprint of the Muslim League, and whatever is remaining is completely dominated by the Leftists," the PM had said, when talking about the Congress manifesto. Mr Modi, who delivered an election speech in Madhya Pradesh's Morena earlier today, was in action in Agra hours later, where he doubled down on his "Muslim League imprint" jab. Two days earlier the BJP had filed a counter-complaint, claiming Mr Gandhi had made "derisive and obnoxious utterances" against the Prime Minister. The reference was to a speech by the Congress leader in Kottayam in Kerala, in which he said "... how can you tell the people of Tamil Nadu not to speak Tamil (and) the people of Kerala not to speak Malayalam... BJP does this with language, place, caste, and religion... whenever they get an opportunity, they divide the country..."

## Sonia Gandhi "Cried For Terrorists" Over Batla House Encounter: JP Nadda

HT News Network

Madhubani: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president JP Nadda on Wednesday fired a fresh salvo at Congress leader Sonia Gandhi stating that she had shed tears for terrorists killed in Batla House encounter in 2008. While campaigning in Bihar's Madhubani ahead of the second phase of Lok Sabha elections, Mr Nadda said, "During the Batla encounter, terrorists were killed and their (Congress) leaders said that Sonia Gandhi cried. She cried for terrorists. What is your relation with traitors? What is the reason behind your sympathy? What do you like in them?" On September 19, 2008, the Delhi Police carried out an operation in the national capital to arrest Indian Mujahideen terrorists in hiding in which Delhi Police Inspector Mohan Chandra Sharma and two Indian Mujahideen terrorists Atif and Sajid were killed. The BJP president said that the Congress and its allies always stand in support of those who are anti-national and "weaken" the country. "They (Congress) stand with those and sympathise with those who weaken the country. This is the arrogant alliance, the INDI alliance. Will you support them?" Mr Nadda said. Earlier in the day, while addressing a rally in Bihar's Khagaria, Mr



Nadda said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has changed the "definition of politics" during his tenure and now elections are fought on issues of "Vikasvaad" (development). "PM Modi has changed the history, culture and definition of politics. 10 years ago, elections used to happen based on who belonged to which caste, which area, upper class or lower class, from this bank of the Ganga or that bank, whether from the hills or the plains. There used to be vote bank politics. Elections used to happen based on caste, religion... But in the last 10 years, PM Modi finished all these things and now elections happen based on 'Vikasvaad'," Mr Nadda said. The BJP president boasted that the way the nation prospered in the 10 years of PM Modi's tenure that all sections of society got strengthened owing to PM Modi's.

## Rahul Gandhi Trained In "Aurangzeb School Of Thought": Union Minister

HT News Network

Hyderabad: Union Minister Anurag Thakur on Wednesday said that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi both are trained in "Aurangzeb school of thought" with democracy on their lips but "Shariah in their hearts and minds". Addressing a press conference here, he slammed Rahul Gandhi for fielding a candidate against Owaisi in the Hyderabad Lok Sabha constituency. "Is Rahul Gandhi the 'B' team of Owaisi or Owaisi the 'B' team of Rahul Gandhi? Is Rahul Gandhi a peddler of Owaisi's communal agenda? This is what appears from the Congress manifesto," he said. Union Minister Thakur further said that just like Rahul Gandhi was defeated by a woman in Amethi, Mr Owaisi will be defeated by a woman in Hyderabad. "Owaisi has been missing in action ever since Madhavi Latha (BJP candidate) entered the fray. The time to cut the kite's string has come," said the Union Minister, who earlier participated in the nomination rally of the BJP candidate. He also claimed that the people of Hyderabad want to defeat Mr Owaisi. "I have seen people's enthusiasm, support and blessings on Hyderabad roads for our



party candidate," said the Union Minister. He also alleged that Mr Owaisi won many times on the basis of fake votes. "The genie of fake votes has been capped in a bottle. It's time for him to pack up," he said. Union Minister Thakur accused Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi of being silent on the demand of their party councillor in Karnataka for a CBI probe into the murder of his daughter due to 'Love Jihad'. "How many more daughters will be sacrificed in the name of 'Love Jihad'," he asked, reading out names of victims and accused. "Hundreds of Hindu daughters were killed by infiltrators and people of a particular community. Why do you have sympathy for them," he asked and accused Congress leaders of doing vote bank politics.

## "Blatant Lie": Siddaramaiah Hits Back At PM's Karnataka Muslim Quota Claim

HT News Network

Bengaluru: In a blistering counterstrike on Prime Minister Narendra Modi after he alleged that the Congress government in Karnataka had transferred to the Muslims reservation quota meant for backward classes and Dalits, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has dared the Prime Minister to prove his charge or apologise to the nation. Addressing an election rally in Rajasthan's Tonk on Tuesday, the Prime Minister accused the Congress of trying to extend reservation on the basis of religion and give it to Muslims. He also doubled down on his earlier allegation that the Congress has hatched "deep conspiracy" to snatch people's wealth and distribute it among a "select" group. The Congress has denied the charge and said it has no such plan. At the Tonk rally, the Prime Minister alleged, "As soon as the Congress formed the government at the Centre in 2004, one of the first



things it did was to reduce the SC/ST reservation in Andhra Pradesh and give it to Muslims. This was a pilot project which the Congress wanted to try in the entire country." "Between 2004 and 2010, the Congress tried to implement Muslim reservation in Andhra Pradesh four times but due to legal hurdles and the awareness of the Supreme Court, it could not fulfil its intention," he claimed. "In 2011,

the Congress tried to implement it throughout the country. They played the game of snatching away the rights provided to the SC, ST and OBC and giving them to others for vote bank politics," he said. The Prime Minister also said that when the BJP government in Karnataka got an opportunity, it abolished the Muslim quota created by the Congress government out of the reservation for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Hitting back, Mr Siddaramaiah said the Prime Minister's claim that the Congress government in Karnataka transferred the reservation quota from backward classes and Dalits to Muslims is "a blatant lie". "It stems from ignorance but also indicative of his desperation born from a fear of defeat. No leader in the history of our country has ever demeaned the office of the Prime Minister to such a low level," he said in a statement also posted on X. "Being in a position of responsibility, Prime Minister Narendra Modi must either substantiate these irresponsible allegations with evidence or apologise to the nation."

## Can Any Government Take Over Private Property? Supreme Court Weighs In

HT News Network

New Delhi: A nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, is looking into a three-decade-old case to decide whether privately-owned property can be considered "material resources of the community" and taken over by the State. A frenetic election season and the BJP's allegations regarding the Congress manifesto has put the spotlight on the legal battle. Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently alleged that the Congress has suggested in its manifesto that if the Opposition party comes to power in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls, it would take away private property, including houses, gold and vehicles, as part of a wealth redistribution plan. The Congress has denied any such plan and accused the Prime Minister of trying to mislead the people. Its manifesto says that if elected, the Congress will conduct a nationwide socio-



economic and caste census. "Congress will conduct a nation-wide Socio-Economic and Caste Census to enumerate the castes and sub-castes and their socio-economic conditions. Based on the data, we will strengthen the agenda for affirmative action." The manifesto does not say anything about a plan to redistribute private property. The case before the Supreme Court's nine-judge bench dates back to 1986 when the Maharashtra government tweaked the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Act, 1976 (MHADA). This allowed the Mumbai Building Repair and Reconstruction Board to acquire certain "cessed properties" for restoration purposes with the consent of 70 per cent of the residents. The amendment cited Article 39(b) of the Constitution that says "the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to sub serve the common good". The Property Owners' Association (POA), which represents over 20,000 landowners in Mumbai, challenged the amendment and said it gave untethered power to the board to forcibly take over residential complexes. In December 1991, the Bombay High Court junked the petitions on the ground that the government.

## Rahul Gandhi, Shashi Tharoor, Hema Malini, Om Birla - Key Candidates In Election Phase 2

HT News Network

New Delhi: Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Shashi Tharoor, and actor-turned-politician Arun Govil are among the key candidates in the fray for the second phase of the Lok Sabha polls with BJP's Hema Malini, Om Birla and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat seeking a hat-trick of wins from their respective constituencies.

Staggered over seven stages, the first phase of the elections held last Friday for 102 seats across 21 states and Union territories saw a voter turnout of around 65.5 per cent. In the second phase of Lok Sabha polls on Friday, polling is scheduled in all 20 seats of Kerala, 14 of the 28 seats in Karnataka, 13 seats in Rajasthan, eight seats each in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, seven in Madhya Pradesh, five each in Assam and Bihar, three seats each in Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, and one seat each in Manipur, Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir. Rahul Gandhi is the sitting MP from Wayanad in Kerala and is seeking re-election. He is pitted against CPI's Annie Raja and BJP's K Surendran. In the 2019 election, Mr Gandhi secured victory by a substantial margin of more than 7 lakh votes against his closest rival, CPI's P P Suneer. Senior Congress leader and former Union Minister Shashi Tharoor is hoping to retain the Thiruvananthapuram seat for the fourth time. He is pitted against Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar



from the BJP and CPI's Pannyan Raveendran. Hema Malini, who has represented the Mathura constituency since 2014, is contesting against Congress' Mukesh Dhargar while Om Birla, a two-time MP from Kota, is facing Prahlad Gunjal from the Congress party. Union minister Shekhawat is eyeing a third win from the Jodhpur seat while Congress candidate Karan Singh Uchiyada would look to put a spanner in the works of the BJP candidate. Tejasvi Surya, the sitting MP for Bangalore South and the national president of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), will face Congress' Sowmya Reddy. Former chief minister of Chhattisgarh and Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel is contesting from Rajnandgaon, a stronghold of the BJP for over 30 years. Mr Baghel is pitted against BJP's Santosh Pandey, who won the 2019 Lok Sabha elections succeeding Abhishek Singh, the son of former Chief Minister Raman Singh, also from the BJP.

## Nitish Kumar Party Leader Shot Dead In Patna By 4 Men On Bikes

HT News Network

Saurabh Kumar was shot twice in his head by unidentified men on bikes. (File) Patna: A youth leader from Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal-United (JDU) was shot dead late last night when he was returning from a wedding function in Patna, said police. Another person accompanying him, Munnum Kumar, was injured in the firing in Parsa Bazar village, said R Singh, police station in-charge, Punpun. Saurabh was shot twice in his head by unidentified four men on bikes while his companion Munnum Kumar was hit thrice. They were rushed to a hospital where Saurabh was declared brought dead by the doctors while Munnum was admitted in a serious condition. A Patna Police team reached the spot later at night and began an investigation. Angry locals had even blocked a road in protest over the murder.

## Highway Along China Border Washed Away After Massive Landslide In Arunachal

HT News Network

Guwahati: A massive landslide has washed away a major portion of a highway in Arunachal Pradesh, disrupting road connectivity with Dibang Valley, a district bordering China. The district witnessed heavy landslides between Hunli and Anini on the National Highway-313 yesterday due to heavy rainfall over the past few days, authorities said. Videos showed a stretch of the highway missing, making it impossible for vehicles to cross to the other side and posing difficulties for the locals and security forces who consider the highway a lifeline in this difficult terrain.



# Blinken calls for US, China to manage differences

■ HT News Network

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called on Thursday on the United States and China to manage their differences "responsibly" as he went on a charm offensive ahead of expected tough talks.

A day before meeting Beijing's top brass to tackle thorny issues including Russia, Taiwan and trade, Blinken's visit to Shanghai has seen him sample local food, watch a basketball game and stroll along the city's famous Bund promenade.

Visiting the local Communist Party leader in a room with sweeping views of the Shanghai skyline, Blinken said US President Joe Biden was committed to "direct and sustained" dialogue between the world's two largest economies after years of mounting tension.

"I think it's important to underscore the value — in fact, the necessity — of direct engagement, of speaking to each other, laying out our differences, which are real, seeking to work through them," Blinken said.

"We have an obligation for our people — indeed an obligation to the world — to manage the relationship between our two countries responsibly."



The Chinese Communist Party secretary for Shanghai, Chen Jining, welcomed Blinken partly in English and spoke of the importance of US businesses to the city.

"Whether we choose cooperation or confrontation affects the well-being of both peoples, both countries and the future of humanity," Chen told him.

The country's financial capital, Shanghai is often a stepping stone to power in China, with President Xi Jinping previously serving briefly in the city.

China has not announced plans for Blinken to meet Xi, although on Blinken's last visit in June, they saw each other in a meeting announced at the last minute.

On Thursday, Blinken also met students at the Shanghai campus of New York University, where he voiced hope for more Americans to study in China.

He insisted the United States was committed to welcoming Chinese students.

Beijing has repeatedly alleged that Chinese nationals with valid travel documents, including students, have been subject to aggressive interrogations and deportations at US airports.

"President Biden and President Xi are determined to strengthen our people-to-people ties," Blinken said.

Pressing on Russia

Blinken, the first US secretary of state in 14 years to visit Shanghai, opened his visit on Wednesday evening at a restaurant serving steamed buns.

Sporting a suit without a tie, he ate with his senior staff in a shopping arcade as curious onlookers snapped pictures.

Blinken then went to watch a basketball game between the Shanghai Sharks and Zhejiang Golden Bulls, staying until the end of the nail-biting play-off.

## Iraq hangs 11 convicted of 'terrorism'

■ HT News Network

NASIRIYAH: Iraqi authorities executed 11 people convicted of "terrorism" this week, security and health sources said on Wednesday, with rights group Amnesty International condemning an "alarming lack of transparency".

Under Iraqi law, terrorism and murder offences are punishable by death, and execution decrees must be signed by the president.

A security source in southern Dhi Qar province said that 11 "terrorists from the Islamic State group" were executed by hanging at a prison in the city of Nasiriyah, "under the supervision of a justice ministry team".

A local medical source confirmed that the health department had received the bodies of 11 executed people. They were hanged on Monday "under an anti-terrorism law", the source added. All 11 were from Salahaddin province and the bodies of seven had been returned to their families, the medical official said. Iraqi courts have handed down hundreds of death and life sentences in recent years for people convicted of membership in "a terrorist group", an offence that carries the death penalty regardless of whether the defendant had been an active fighter.

Iraq has been criticised for trials denounced by rights groups as hasty, with confessions sometimes said to have been obtained under torture.

## Klimt's Portrait of Miss Lieser fetches \$32m at auction

■ HT News Network

VIENNA: Gustav Klimt's Portrait of Miss Lieser, a painting of a young woman left unfinished when the Austrian artist died, sold at auction on Wednesday for 30 million euros (\$32m) despite open questions about its subject and previous ownership.

The painting was commissioned by brothers Adolf and Justus Lieser, who were industrialists in the Austro-Hungarian empire. They had built their wealth on jute and hemp, making twine and rope.

The work was long thought to have been lost when in fact it was hanging in a private villa near Vienna for decades, according to auction house Im Kinsky, which put it on display in January before putting it under the hammer. Im Kinsky had estimated its value at 30m to 50m euros. It shows its likely teenage subject in a turquoise dress draped in a flowing floral gown against a red background, her alabaster skin and piercing, pale brown eyes contrasting with her dark, curly hair.

Despite depicting her so clearly, it remains unclear who Fraeulein Lieser actually was. Henriette Amalie Lieser-Landau, nicknamed Lilly, was married to Justus, one of the two industrialist brothers, until their divorce in 1905 and became a well-known patron of the arts.

It is possible she commissioned the painting of one of her daughters, or Adolf Lieser could have done so with his daughter Margarethe as the subject.

"According to the latest provenance research, Klimt's model was possibly not Margarethe Constance Lieser, Lilly Lieser's niece, but one of her two daughters (with Justus), either Helene, the older one, born in 1898, or her sister Annie, who was three years younger," the auction house said on its website.

## UK court set to decide Altaf Hussain appeal in assets case

■ HT News Network

LONDON: MQM supremo Altaf Hussain appeared in a UK High Court on Tuesday and Wednesday as part of a two-day hearing in his appeal against the MQM-P in a case related to London properties. The court heard arguments from both sides and reserved its verdict, which is expected this week. Last year, the MQM-P had triumphed over Mr Hussain when the court said that seven London properties valued at about GBP10 million were the possession of the MQM-P. The MQM-P, represented by Information Technology Minister Aminul Haque, was declared to be the beneficiaries of the trusts and therefore of the properties. The trial pivoted on the ownership of these properties and saw Mr Hussain battle it out with party factions and ex-loyalists over who was the party's true leader and therefore a beneficiary of seven assets.

The MQM had split into two factions: MQM-London and MQM-Pakistan, in August 2016, after a Mr Hussain's speech triggered violence in Karachi.

In March last year, the judge found that it was not established that the 2015 MQM constitution was adopted by the MQM-P. Instead, it was the April 2016 constitution which was adopted by MQM-P.

Mr Hussain filed an appeal in June 2023 against the order of ICC Judge Jones.

## At UN, Russia Blocks US Move On Nuclear Weapons In Space

■ HT News Network

United Nations: Russia vetoed on Wednesday a U.S.-drafted United Nations Security Council resolution that called on countries to prevent an arms race in outer space, a move that the United States says suggests Moscow might be "hiding something."

"It's a joke of a resolution," Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vasily Nebenzia told reporters ahead of the vote.

The vote came after Washington accused Moscow of developing a space-based anti-satellite nuclear weapon, an allegation that Russia has denied. Speaking ahead of the vote by the 15-member council, U.S. administration officials declined to share details of intelligence they had to back the allegation. Deputy U.S. Ambassador Robert Wood told reporters ahead of the vote that if Russia did not vote for the resolution "it makes you wonder whether they're hiding something."

## Israel pummels Gaza after US approves military aid

■ HT News Network

GAZASTRIP: Israeli warplanes pounded the northern Gaza strip for a second day on Wednesday in a fierce assault that has shattered weeks of comparative calm, and Israel said it was moving forward with plans for an all-out assault on Rafah in the south. The renewed attacks came after the US Congress approved \$13 billion in military aid for Tel Aviv. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said the Senate's approval of the aid package already passed by the House of Representatives sent a "strong message to all our enemies" in a post on social media platform X. Even though Western countries, including the United States, have pleaded with it to hold back from attacking the city on Gaza's southern edge, a spokesperson for PM Benjamin Netanyahu's government said Israel was "moving ahead" with its plans for a ground operation on Rafah, but gave no timeline. US-Israeli relations have been strained by Israel's conduct of the war in Gaza and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's determination to send troops into the southern Gazan city of Rafah, where 1.5 million people are sheltering, many in makeshift encamp-



ments. 79 Palestinians killed, 86 wounded by strikes in a single day. Early on Wednesday, hospital and security sources in Gaza reported Israeli air strikes in Rafah, as well as the central Nuseirat refugee camp.

An AFP correspondent and witnesses also reported heavy bombardment of several areas of northern Gaza during the night, while Israeli military said its aircraft "struck over 50 targets" over the previous 24 hours. Displaced people sheltering in Rafah are weighing whether to flee again.

Tamer Al-Burai, who fled from Gaza City and is now living in Rafah in a cluster of tents with seven households of extended family, said the entire group was heading for the coast of Khan Younis to the north to try to find a new spot.

## Taliban govt joins climate change talks for first time

■ HT News Network

KABUL: The Taliban government has entered the first stage of discussions with the United Nations, donors and non-governmental organisations, over the impact of climate change in Afghanistan, organisers said on Wednesday.

After four decades of war, Afghanistan is ranked as one of the countries least prepared to tackle the effects of climate change that are spurring extreme weather conditions and warping natural environments.

Foreign aid to Afghanistan has dwindled since the Taliban takeover, in 2021. Donors are wary of backing a government that is commonly considered a pariah, leaving poor and climate-vulnerable communities, further exposed to the detrimental effects.

The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC), co-hosted three days of talks that came to a close on Tuesday, country director Terje Watterdal told reporters at a news conference in Kabul.

He said it was the first occasion where Taliban officials "joined a parallel session, face-to-face and online, with a broad range of their counterparts in the West, since



the change of government in August 2021".

The talks included universities, diplomats, UN agencies, donors and grassroots members of Afghan society. All sides agreed that "both individual and collective action is required both inside and outside of Afghanistan", Watterdal said.

"All government ministries committed their full support for the national and international organizations working to combat climate change and reduce the impact of climate change in Afghanistan." Watterdal said it is "necessary to de-politicise key development issues, such as climate change".

## Post-World War II order on 'brink of collapse', says Amnesty

■ HT News Network

LONDON: The Amnesty International on Wednesday stated that the post-World War II order, was on the "brink of collapse". It said that bitter conflicts on multiple fronts due to the rapid and unregulated rise of artificial intelligence, are also 'threatening'.

"Everything we're witnessing over the last 12 months is indicating that the international global system is on the brink of collapse," Amnesty's secretary general, Agnes Callamard told reporters. She issued these remarks as the group released its annual, "State of the World's Human Rights" report.

"In particular, over the last six



months, the United States has shielded and protected the Israeli authorities against scrutiny for the multiple violations committed in Gaza," she said.

"By using its veto against a much-needed ceasefire, the United States has emptied out the (United Nations) Security Council of what it should be doing."

US accused of shielding Israeli authorities against scrutiny for mul-

tiple rights violations in Gaza

Israel's onslaught on the Gaza Strip has killed 34,183 people, mostly women and children, according to Gaza's health ministry.

The global rights body termed that Hamas carried out "horrific crimes" on Israeli communities bordering Gaza but that Israel had responded with "a campaign of collective punishment".

"It is a campaign of deliberate, indiscriminate bombings of civilians and civilian infrastructure, of denial of humanitarian assistance and an engineered famine," Callamard wrote in her foreword to the report.

"For millions the world over, Gaza now symbolises utter moral failure by many of the architects of the post-World War Two system," she said.

## 4 injured as cavalry horses run amok in London

■ HT News Network

LONDON: A number of military horses, including one covered in blood, ran amok on the streets of central London and injured at least four people on Wednesday.

The horses belong to the Household Cavalry, which acts as the British monarch's official bodyguard and takes part in ceremonial duties. They are garrisoned at Hyde Park barracks, less than a mile away from Buckingham Palace.

The bizarre scenes unfolded in the heart of London, near Buckingham Palace and the seat of the British government, with the runaway animals galloping past bewildered Londoners going about their morning commute.

"A number of military working horses became loose during a routine exercise this morning. All of the horses have now been recovered and returned to camp," a British army spokesperson said in a statement.

"A number of personnel and horses have been injured and are receiving the appropriate medical attention." Medical authorities said four people had been taken to hospital after being injured.

Television images showed one saddled white horse seemingly covered in blood running through the street alongside another, black one.

## Spanish PM suspends duties after court probe against wife

■ HT News Network

MADRID: Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said on Wednesday he would suspend public duties until next week to decide whether he wants to continue leading the government after a court launched a business corruption probe into his wife's private dealings.

Sanchez, who last year secured another term for his Socialist party as leader of a minority coalition government, said he would appear before the media on April 29 to announce his decision.

"I need to pause and think," he wrote in a letter shared on his X account. "I urgently need an answer to the question of whether it is worthwhile (...) whether I should continue to lead the government or renounce this honour."

The shock announcement came after a court said earlier on Wednesday it was launching a preliminary investigation into whether Sanchez's wife Begona Gomez



committed a crime of influence peddling and corruption in business in her private dealings.

Sanchez said the seriousness of the attacks against him and his wife merited a measured response. He said his wife would cooperate with the investigation and defend her innocence.

The court investigating Gomez did not provide further details as the case is sealed and preliminary, only saying it followed a complaint by anti-graft campaign group Manos Limpias (Clean Hands), whose leader has links to the far-right.

Manos Limpias said Gomez used her influence as the wife of the prime minister to allegedly secure sponsors for a university master's degree course that she ran.

Sanchez also took aim at opposition leader Alberto Nunez Feijoo of the Peoples Party and Santiago Abascal of the far-right Vox party, saying they had "collaborated" with those circulating the claims against his wife.

His ministers came out in support, with Energy Minister Teresa Ribera saying: "We have a first rate prime minister. Neither he nor his family deserve this."

# Series of IEC activities held across Jammu division to observe World Malaria Days

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 25: World Malaria day was observed today across Jammu division by organising series of IEC activities. The awareness campaign was held under the overall supervision of Secretary Health & Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah. Director Health Services, Jammu, Dr Rakesh Magotra, with teamwork of all the staff working under the administrative control of Dr. D. J Raina, State Malariologist, J&K Jammu, immensely contributed in organisation of various programmes. The activities included participation in

web conference of National Centre for Vector Borne Disease Control in collaboration with WHO. At the National level, the Nodal Officer of the Provincial Hospital Gandhinagar Jammu participated in a one day technical workshop on elimination of Malaria targeted by 2027. The IEC activities included publishing of IEC material in leading UT and local newspapers. The information was also spread through TV interviews on Doordarshan Jammu and local channel(s). The awareness on Malaria was also spread through an interview and day long broadcast of audio -spot on Akashwani Jammu and FM radio channels, educating the people about



various aspects of prevention and control of malaria. The State Malariologist addressed an

assembly of around 1500 students in Army School, Nagrota as a part of Civil Army collaboration for percolation of the message in the community at large through school children. The IEC material was distributed among the students and students were requested to carry message to their homes. The IEC activity on World Malaria Day was also held at Provincial Govt. Hospital Gandhi Nagar in which a gathering of AMT students, Malaria workers, staff of the hospital among others were addressed by the State Malariologist, Deputy Director Health Services, Jammu and Medical Superintendent, Government Hospital, Gandhinagar, Jammu. Similar IEC activities were also held at

several District and Block headquarters by taking out rallies with participation of schools to bolster the Malaria elimination by 2027. World Malaria Day was also observed by the healthcare institutes in the urban health-care setup by organising rallies and educational programmes in schools and spreading awareness in the community by undertaking house to house visits. Using the Social Media platform, the IEC campaign was also carried out through the WhatsApp groups, Facebook and X (formerly Twitter). The banner display containing the IEC material was held at different prominent points for general awareness of the public.

## Chief education officer Baramulla Shri Balbir Singh berieaved.

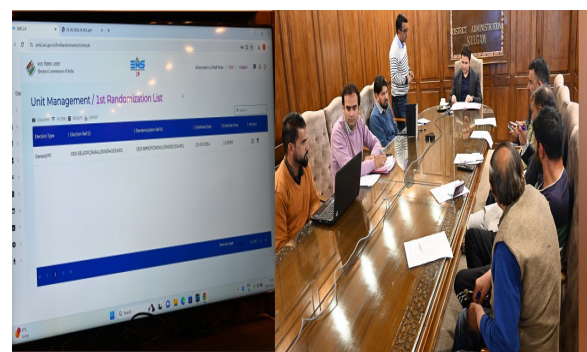
Qayoom wani condoled him on the demise of his mother.

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA APRIL 25: In a conference message chairman jammu kashmir civil society forum and Former president ejaq Ab Qayoom wani expressed grief and sorrow on the demise of Mother of Shri Balbir singh chief education officer Baramulla.Wani prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and courage to the berieaved family members especially Shri Balbir singh ji to bear this loss.All the leaders of JKCSF showed sympathy and solidarity with the whole berieaved family members at the difficult time.

## Lok Sabha Elections 2024 Supplementary 1st Randomization of EVMs, VVPATs successfully conducted at Kulgam

■ Farooq Rather



KULGAM, APRIL 25: Supplementary 1st Randomization of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) and VVPATs for the General Elections to the Lok Sabha 2024 was held today at Kulgam in accordance with the Election Commission of India guidelines. The process was conducted under the supervision of the District Election Officer (DEO), Athar Aamir Khan, AROs and the representatives of the National, State recognised Political Parties and the contesting candidates of 3-Anantnag Rajouri PC. The randomisation was done on the EMS Software/ Portal of ECI, to the satisfaction of the representatives of all the Political Parties and Contesting Candidates present in the meeting. All the representatives of political parties expressed their satisfaction over the entire randomisation process. The copies of lists of randomized CUs/BUs and VVPATs were handed over to the representatives of the political parties and contesting candidates present in the meeting during the randomization. The entire process was done under video coverage as per guidelines.

## DLSA Kathua hosts Sensitization Programme on various legal frameworks

■ Farooq Rather



KATHUA, APRIL 25: One Day Sensitization Programme on NALSA (Compensation Scheme for Women Victims/survivors of Sexual Assault and other Crimes) scheme-2018, J&K Victim Compensation Scheme- 2019 & Landscape of Cyber Crime, was today organized by District Legal Services Authority Kathua in the Conference Hall of ADR Centre here. The programme was held under able aegis of JK Legal Services Authority as per the action plan issued by J&K Legal Services Authority, (JKLSA) for the month of April, 2024 and also under the insightful directions and supervision of Chairman District Legal Services Authority Kathua,

(Pr. District & Sessions Judge Kathua), Ashok Kumar Shavan. The programme was organised for the Police functionaries of the district and Legal Aid Counsel of DLSA Kathua. The Principal District and Sessions Judge Kathua, Ashok Kumar Shavan was the chief guest of the program. In his special address, the DLSA Chairman sensitized the participants about

essential knowledge and skill to navigate the above captioned crucial areas of Law effectively. Deputy Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel Kathua, Puneet Kumari, Sub-Inspector, Incharge Crime Cell Kathua, Shubam Mahajan, and Shivam Sachdev Advocate District Court Complex Kathua were the resources persons of the program. Secretary DLSA Kathua, Rekha Kapoor Nischal presented a formal

welcome address whereas Saurav Mahajan, Advocate Bar Association Kathua conveyed Vote of thanks. The proceedings of the programme were conducted by Upasana Gupta, Panel Lawyer DLSA Kathua. The programme was attended by District Officials of LADCs Kathua, Advocates from District Bar Association Kathua, Staff of District Court Complex Kathua, Staff of DLSA Kathua and PLVs. All the Stakeholders expressed immense satisfaction and wished for holding more such programs in future. Deputy Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel Kathua, Puneet Kumari, Sub-Inspector, Incharge Crime Cell Kathua, Shubam Mahajan, and Shivam Sachdev Advocate District Court.

## Forest Department Foils Timber Smuggling Operation in Rafiabad Village

■ DR.AB QAYOOM



Langate, April, 25: In a commendable display of vigilance and swift action, the Forest Department successfully intercepted a vehicle transporting illicit timber in Rafiabad village. The operation, led by Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Jahzad Ahmad of Langate, resulted in the apprehension of the driver and the seizure of the illegal timber. Officials told HEADLINES TODAY, Acting on specific input regarding the movement of a vehicle carrying contraband timber, forest officials from Rafiabad Range, under the guidance of DFO Langate, established a checkpoint near the bridge of Rahoma Rafiabad. Their efforts were rewarded when a Tata mobile vehicle, registered as JK05A5992, was spotted attempting to evade inspection. Despite the driver's attempt to flee, forest department personnel pursued and eventually halted the vehicle at Matipora Rohama. Upon inspection, the vehicle was found to be loaded with illicit Deodar timber. The driver, identified as Suhail Ahmad Sheikh from Shogapora Rohma, was promptly arrested by the Forest Department for his involvement in the illegal transportation of timber. This operation highlights the Forest Department's unwavering dedication to preserving our natural resources and combating environmental crimes. By swiftly responding to actionable intelligence and deploying resources on the ground, authorities were able to thwart the smuggling attempt and safeguard valuable forest resources. The seized vehicle, along with the confiscated timber, has been transported to the seizure depot at the Divisional Office in Langate, marking a significant blow to the illegal timber trade in the region. The Forest Department calls upon the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities related to forestry conservation, reinforcing the collective responsibility to protect our environment for future generations.

## Lok Sabha Elections 2024 AS College organises Election Mascot-Making Competition to espouse electoral participation

■ HT News Network



SRINAGAR, APRIL 25: Amar Singh College today organized the election Mascot-making Competition under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) to disseminate awareness about the election process among young and first-time voters. The event was organized as part of SVEEP initiatives led by the District Election Officer Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat. Organised under the leadership of Prof (Dr.) Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, Nodal Principal Kashmir Division Colleges and Principal Amar Singh College, the event witnessed a remarkable turnout of students eager to contribute to promoting electoral participation and voter awareness. More than 60 students exhibited their artistic skills to promote the biggest festival of Indian democracy, making the event a resounding success. The proceedings of the event were held at Taseer Hall and the inaugural speech was delivered by the principal. Professor Aijaz also accentuated that the election mascot will play a big role in these campaigns by inspiring ethical and effective voting. Prof. Mushtaq Ahmad Rather, Convener ELC, Prof. Shahnawaz Muntazir, Prof. Pervaiz Ahmad Lone and Dr. Zubair Nazeer participated in the event and motivated the students.

Professor Aijaz also accentuated that the election mascot will play a big role in these campaigns by inspiring ethical and effective voting. Prof. Mushtaq Ahmad Rather, Convener ELC, Prof. Shahnawaz Muntazir, Prof. Pervaiz Ahmad Lone and Dr. Zubair Nazeer participated in the event and motivated the students.

# Lok Sabha Elections 2024 Signature Campaign for voter awareness held at Sumbal under SVEEP

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 25: Under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative, the Sub Divisional Administration Sumbal in collaboration with District Election Office Bandipora today organised a signature campaign at Irrigation Colony Sumbal. The programme was aimed to promote ethical voting, raise awareness on voter rights and responsibility of electoral participation. The signature campaign was inaugurated by Dy. District Election Officer Bandipora, Mohammad Rafeeq Bhat along with Sub Divisional Magistrate Sumbal



(ARO 14-Sonawari) Aamir Choudhary, SDPO Sumbal and AERO Sumbal (Tehsildar Sumbal) were also present on the occasion.

With the theme '20 May 2024, I WILL VOTE FOR SURE' the signature campaign was aimed to instill in voters the importance of responsible voting and informed decisions. The Dy. DEO said that the campaign will play a crucial role in spreading the message of ethical and inducement-free voting among voters across the district. On the occasion, selfie points were also installed with the message 'Nothing Like Voting, I vote for Sure' to promote voter awareness and engagement. Large gathering of the public besides officers and officials of various departments marked signatures on the 'Signature Campaign Board' placed at the main gate of Irrigation Colony.



Kupwara, April 25: The District Election Officer (DEO), Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today undertook a visit of different polling stations of Langate Assembly segment of the district to assess and review the status of assured minimum facilities (AMFs). The DEO inspected the polling stations of Govt. Boys Higher secondary School Langate. The DEO took stock of all requisite/ AMFs including electricity, water supply, shade, ramp and functional toilet facilities. The DEO was accompanied by SSP Handwara, Dawood Ayooob, ADC Handwara, Aziz Ahmad Rather, ARO Langate, Dr Mudasir Ahmad, EXeN PHE, EXeN R&B, XEN PDD, Tehsildar Handwara, Dy. CEO and other concerned were present on the occasion. The DEO was accompanied by SSP Handwara, Dawood Ayooob, ADC Handwara, Aziz Ahmad Rather, ARO Langate, Dr Mudasir Ahmad, EXeN PHE, EXeN R&B, XEN PDD, Tehsildar Handwara, Dy. CEO and other concerned were present on the occasion.

# Lok Sabha Elections 2024

## 138 polling teams deployed in Sunderbani-Kalakote AC ahead of polling for 5-Jammu PC

HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 25: As many as 138 polling parties along with polling material were dispatched to different polling stations in Sunderbani-Kalakote AC, part of 5-Jammu Parliamentary Constituency (PC) where polling is being held tomorrow.

Amidst tight security, the polling staff and other logistics left from Boys Higher Secondary School Kalakote, marking a crucial step in the polling process for Lok Sabha Elections 2024 in the Sunderbani Kalakote Assembly Constituency. District Election Officer, Om Parkash Bhagat; DIG Rajouri-Poonch Range, Tajinder Singh; ADC Kalakote, Mohd Tanveer; DDE, Zahir Kaifi were present on the occasion. The dispatching of 138 polling parties represents a significant logistical feat, bearing testimony to the collective efforts of the district administration, security personnel, and election officials.



To ensure the safety and security of the polling parties and the polling material, stringent security measures have been put in place. The deployment of adequate security personnel will ensure a secure environment for the polling parties to carry out their duties without any hindrance. District Election Officer, expressed confidence in arrangements made for the Lok Sabha Elections 2024. He emphasized the commitment of the district administration to transparency, impartiality, and efficiency in conducting the electoral process. There are 96,986 voters, including 50,923 males, 46,062 females, and 1 transgender voter in Sunderbani-Kalakote AC. Of the

total of 138 polling stations, 102 have been identified as sensitive. Earlier, the postal ballot voting was successfully carried out in the Sunderbani-Kalakote AC. Home voting was also marked by an enthusiastic participation in Sunderbani-Kalakote Assembly Constituency. Amidst tight security, the polling staff and other logistics left from Boys Higher Secondary School Kalakote, marking a crucial step in the polling process for Lok Sabha Elections 2024 in the Sunderbani Kalakote Assembly Constituency. District Election Officer, Om Parkash Bhagat; DIG Rajouri-Poonch Range, Tajinder Singh; ADC Kalakote, Mohd Tanveer; DDE, Zahir Kaifi were present on the occasion. The dispatching of 138 polling parties represents a significant logistical feat, bearing testimony to the collective efforts of the district administration, security personnel, and election officials.

## CUKashmir kick-starts capacity building prog for faculty members in social sciences

HT News Network

Ganderbal, Apr 25: Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir) in collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), kick-started two-week "Capacity Building Programme" for faculty members in social sciences, which was inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor, Prof. A Ravinder Nath here.

The event aims to build up the capacities and capabilities of the University and College teachers in the light of emerging trends in education. The programme has attracted participation from Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Mizoram, and Telangana and prominent resource persons will interact with the participants on diverse issues of academic importance.

Addressing the participants, Vice-Chancellor, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath,



emphasized the need for organising such programmes as teachers have a role in redesigning the higher education ecosystem as envisaged by National Education Policy (NEP 2020). He said the NEP 2020, which is a comprehensive framework, seeks to transform India's education system to meet the demands of the 21st century and foster critical thinking, creativity, and innovation among students. He impressed upon the participants to address the needs of the students in the areas of knowledge, skills, competencies, values and attitudes. Prof. A Ravinder Nath congratulated the Course Director

and Course Co-Director for organising the academic discourse.

Keynote speaker, Pro Vice-Chancellor (former) Dr. Babasahib Ambedkar University, Prof. Ashok Tejankar, emphasised on the role of teachers in NEP-2020 and connecting the Indian knowledge system at global level. He emphasized that the research should focus on solving societal problems rather than just for improving citation score.

Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Shahid Rasool, said in contemporary times we are being encountered by new buzz terms like digital natives, digital migrants and cyberlogy etc.

## Nukkad Natak themed 'Let's Break The Silence' presented at GCOE Jammu

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 25: A Nukkad Natak on the theme "Let's Break The Silence" was presented today at Government College of Education (GCoE) under the aegis of SPARSH/GSCASH Committee here.

The main objective of this event was to spread awareness amongst staff and students about sexual harassment. The program was initiated with the welcome address by Convenor, SPARSH Committee, Dr. Davinder Kour., Principal Government College of Education, Jammu, Prof. Dr. Jyoti Parihar inaugurated the programme.

She encouraged the students to report any such instances either inside or outside the college campus. She emphasized that students must contact the concerned committee for such concerns and issues.

The participants executed the Nukkad Natak in an effective way. The event was coordinated by SPARSH Committee members Prof. Deepali Devi, Dr. Shalini Sharma, Dr. Ambica Kumari, Dr. Sonam Gandotra and Raman Karalia along with students, members Anjali, Jaspreet, Bhagya Lakshmi Neha and Gourav.

## Q/A Session on Elections, Voter awareness campaign under SVEEP held at Gandhi College

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 25: The NSS Wing of Gandhi Memorial College, Srinagar, in collaboration with the Departments of Political Science and History, organized a Question-Answer (Q/A) Session on Elections and Voting as part of the #MeraphehlaVotedeshkeliye and Voter Awareness Campaign at Conference Room of College campus. The event began with Professor Mohammad Zubair Ud Din, Assistant Professor History, introducing the purpose of the programme and highlighting the significance of voting in India- World's Largest Democracy. This was followed by a question-answer session in which students actively participated. They raised various queries related to elections and voting.

Dr. Samir, the HOD of Political Science, patiently answered each question and also addressed additional concerns related to the topic, such as the importance of voter ID cards and the process of casting postal votes.

## Lok Sabha Elections 2024 DEO Kulgam organizes Mega Voter Awareness Program at Panjgam Nard Pathri Kund

Farooq Rather



KULGAM, APRIL 25: The District Election Office Kulgam today organized a mega voter awareness program under SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) at Panjgam Nard Pathri Kund, a far-off area. The awareness program aimed to educate citizens about the importance of voting, voter registration processes, and electoral participation. Horse rally, Nukkad Natak and other mediums were used to educate voters about the importance of voting.

## Justice Tashi Rabstan reviews facilities at J&K Yateem Khana

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 25: Justice Tashi Rabstan, Judge, High Court of Jammu



& Kashmir and Ladakh (Executive Chairman J&K Legal Services Authority) today visited

J&K Yateem Khana, Bemina and reviewed the facilities being provided to the inmates residing there.

Justice Rabstan interacted with the children living in the Yateem

Khana seeking feedback from them regarding the standard of services they are being offered there.

Justice Tashi was accompanied by Abdul Bari, Joint Registrar (Protocol),

the occasion.

During his visit, Justice Tashi inspected all the facilities available in the home including Class Rooms, Hostel, Library, Computer Centre, Dining Hall, Medical Facility unit and Kitchen. Interacting with the administrator of the Yateem Khana, Justice Tashi expressed satisfaction over the facilities being provided to the inmates and impressed upon them to intensify efforts in rehabilitation and well-being of the inmates. He emphasized the importance of creating a conducive environment for the inmates, ensuring their holistic development and integration into society. He urged upon the NGOs and civil society members to step forward and play an active role in shaping the future of these inmates, thereby contributing towards the cause of nation building.

Justice Tashi also directed the Legal Services Authority to organize awareness programs on regular intervals for the benefit of inmates of the Yateem Khana by involving panel lawyers and para legal volunteers.

## Lok Sabha Elections 2024-Election teams reach all 365 Polling Stations across Samba

HT News Network

SAMBA, APRIL 25: Election teams have safely reached all designated Polling stations across Samba district, part of Jammu Parliamentary Constituency, going to polls tomorrow.

The district has 365 polling stations with 72 flagged as critical and three as shadow polling stations. The dispatching of polling parties took off from three designated centers. Two centres for dispatch of teams were established at Mini secretariat Samba and one at SDM office Vijaypur. As many as 150 teams were dispatched



to assembly constituency 70-Samba, 112 to AC 69-Ramgarh and 103 to AC 71-Vijaypur.

District Election Officer Abhishek

Sharma urged Assistant Returning Officers (AROs), Zonal and Sector Magistrates to ensure timely arrival of poll parties at their designated locations.

Comprehensive arrangements were made for departure of polling parties, encompassing vehicles, seating arrangements, refreshments, and security measures.

The District Election Officer, accompanied by SSP Vinay Sharma, conducted visits to all centers. They interacted with polling parties, urging them to adhere to Election Commission guidelines diligently and execute their assigned tasks with dedication and integrity.

The deployment of polling parties marks a crucial step in the electoral process, ensuring that democratic exercise proceeds smoothly and efficiently.

## CUKashmir holds awareness prog on drug abuse

HT News Network

Ganderbal, Apr 25: Under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan, Health Centre and Department of Students Welfare (DSW), Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir) in collaboration with the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS), Srinagar, organised an awareness programme on the theme "Addiction free India" for the students and the staff at varsity's Tulmulla campus here Thursday. Addressing the participants, Vice-Chancellor, Prof. A Ravinder Nath, asked the youth to stay away from the menace of drug abuse. "In recent years, substance abuse has emerged as a pressing issue, posing significant challenges to the well-being and prosperity of our country, which has the largest youth population. The youth, being the most vulnerable, are disproportionately affected by this scourge. However, a disciplined lifestyle will be

extremely helpful in combating the growing drug menace," CUKashmir Vice-Chancellor, said. He added that the youth should also possess the passion, energy, and idealism to drive positive change and create a drug-free society. In his speech, Superintendent of Police, Mr. Ghulam Hassan, said, the teachings and guidance of religious scholars and elders of the society, can inspire individuals to lead virtuous lives and steer clear of destructive behaviors such as substance abuse. "By emphasizing the importance of personal responsibility, self-discipline, and compassion, religious leaders play a crucial role in preventing drug abuse and supporting those affected by addiction," he added. IMHANS Registrar, Dr. Shazia Kouser and Consultant, Dr. Sajid Mohammad, in their respective presentations, discussed different forms of drug and substance abuses and shared the data about the increasing number of cases, received by IMHANS, everyday, from across the Kashmir division.

## Rank Ceremony, enrolment drive for NCC Cadets held at NIT Srinagar

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 25: The rank ceremony, enrollment drive for session 2024-25 for National Cadet Corps (NCC) girls' unit was held on Thursday at National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar. The session was presided over by Commanding officer (CO) of 1 J&K Girls Battalion Srinagar, Col. SP Tiwari and Registrar NIT Srinagar, Prof. Atikur Rahman was Guest of Honor on the occasion. The event was attended by Dean P&D, Dr. Yashwant Mehta, Associate NCC Commissioned Officer Lt. (Dr.) Nitika Kundan, Institute Chairman of selection committee Dr. Srinibash Mishra, SAS Coordinator, and

other dignitaries were also present on the occasion. During the event, NCC cadets received recognition for their hard work with new ranks. 14 students were successfully selected for the new batch, bringing the total number of cadets on campus to 50. These ranks— Lance Corporal, Corporal, and Sergeant—are bestowed upon individuals who exhibit mental resilience, confidence, sociability, and integrity, following a year-long evaluation by the NCC higher ups. They were also presented with mementos and certificates in recognition of their outstanding contributions. Special acknowledgment was given to NCC Cadets who actively participated in various social activities on the campus.



# PANT DOING WHAT PANT DOES BEST

**CHENNAI:** On the evidence of the Indian Premier League's first month, Rishabh Pant will be on the flight when India departs for the T20 World Cup late next month. The wicketkeeper-batter, who survived a horrific car crash before undertaking a painstaking rehab spanning the entirety of 2023, has lost none of his mojo, be it behind the stumps or in front.

If the first eight matches were a glimpse of Pant from 2022 and beyond, his ninth, against Gujarat Titans, was the full-length film. It was the Pant vast swathes of the cricketing public had fallen in love with. It was the Pant whose devil-may-care stroke-play had brought with it a sense of hedonism that grated some of the purists. It was, in short, liquid Pant. Deja vu and jamais vu at the same time. He played some of his greatest hits as the visiting bowlers wilted in the face of a thrilling late assault. In the end, he finished with a 43-ball 88 to help Delhi finish with 224, which in turn proved enough as Titans could manage only 220/8 falling

short by four runs. The two important things, power-hitting coaches always say, is the base and balance of the batter. Pant has never believed in that but he elevated that to art on Wednesday. You wouldn't find it in any coaching manual but you don't need to. Pant is an outlier as far as power-hitting goes and he once again showed why; it's all about the hands, a swivel of the hips and the extension of the hands to reach out to wide deliveries outside the off stump before somehow generating enough power to access areas in front as well as behind square on the off-side. There was even the off-balance, falling over shot for four. It wasn't just that Pant finished with a S/R of 204 that would have pleased the Indian management. What would have pleased them is the way he made them. He stuck it out at the beginning as the hosts were in an icky spot even before the end of the powerplay.

So, he had to bide his time while Axar Patel, who had earned a promotion, looked

to be the aggressor. His first 12 runs came off 10 balls before he opened up ever so slightly against Noor Ahmad as he clattered a slog sweep over cow corner.

Twelve off 10 became 34 off 26; on a decent surface with lots of resources left in the bank, it was time for the skipper to explode to convert this start. It meant Mohit Sharma's third over — the start of the last five overs — was identified to turn the screws. He greeted the opening ball with a powerful hit over deep midwicket. Off the fifth ball, Pant's displayed his power again as he scooped a full length, slower ball over long off. A flick had been switched. With Tristan Stubbs going big against Sai Kishore, the 26-year-old reserved the best for the last. His sequence went 2, 6, 4, 6, 6, 6 as he found boundaries all round the wicket.

As a massive point of difference — a southpaw who keeps wickets while batting in the second phase of the innings — he was always going to be on the flight as long as he had proved his fitness.

# All-round Nitish value addition to rampaging SRH

**CHENNAI:** Andhra's Nitish Kumar Reddy is one of the finds for Sunrisers Hyderabad this IPL season. A fast bowling all-rounder for his state, Nitish has been giving a good account of himself with both bat and ball for the franchise. His cameos with the bat and ability to take a couple of wickets at crucial junctures have helped the Pat Cummins-led side win matches.

The then chairman of the national junior selection committee Aashish Kapoor was all praise for the youngster while talking to this daily in 2020. Although he played a couple of games in the last edition, he did not get to bat. This year Nitish is making the best use of the opportunities he has been getting with both bat and ball. His half-century against Punjab Kings at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium in Mullanpur set up the game for Hyderabad and since then he has been contributing in almost every match for his side.

"It feels really good to be contributing to the team's cause. I am happier when the team wins," said Nitish in an exclusive chat with this daily.

Everyone knows about Nitish the bowler, but his prowess with the willow has surprised many. "I can bat and bowl in equal measure. Before also I used to be a good batter, but I didn't get the chance to prove myself. Now I am getting a chance, maybe that's why I'm proving my worth as a batter," said the shy youngster.

"Aashish sir had told me to learn to bat at No 5 and No 6. He told me I needed to adapt and gain experience batting in the middle order if I wish to play at a higher level. I worked on that with my coach CD Thomson," added Nitish.

Last year SRH had a forgettable season but they look a formidable unit this season under the new captain Pat Cummins. Given their show so far, the team is expected to make it to playoffs which in turn can put pressure on the players. "I enjoy playing under pressure. It propels me to give my best. Last year I got to play two games, but I did not get a chance to bat. Since I got a chance to bowl people thought that I was only a bowler. After that I felt like, let's wait for a chance to bat and perform when I get one. So this year I got a good chance to bat and I didn't want to waste the opportunity. And I was like, now you can see how it (batting) is going," revealed the lanky all-rounder.



Playing along with one of the best bowlers in the world like Cummins can be a rewarding experience for a young lad. "He (Cummins) is one of the best bowlers in the world. I learnt from him how to keep things simple. He's not a guy who thinks a lot. He just works on his routines and all that. He asks us to bowl according to wickets, and conditions and not worry too much about the batter. In other words, he wants us to have self-belief in our abilities," said Nitish.

Cummins has been leading by example which is one of the reasons why SRH have made a remarkable turnaround from the previous seasons. "He's cool, so calm. And he just wants to make sure that everyone is in a good frame of mind. He ensures that everyone is cool and not in any undue pressure. He wants us to enjoy and express ourselves," revealed Nitish.

So has Nitish made any adjustments to his batting this season? "I go with a calm mind, I just think about the process and the situation. I want to bat effectively. So I have changed my practice routines where I get to practice everything, including power hitting. Yes, I have also been working on the downswing in my batting. So the idea is to bat as per the situation and the need of the team, not just whack a couple of boundaries and get out," he insisted.

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