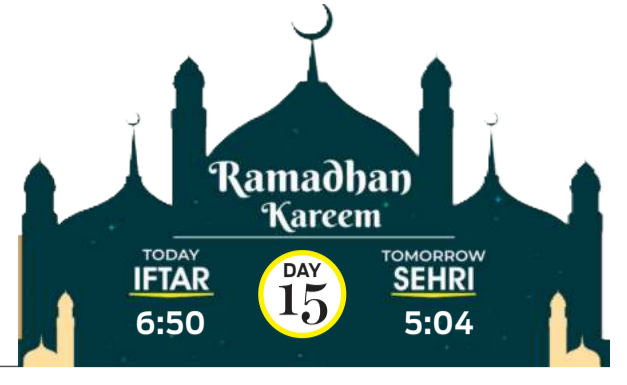


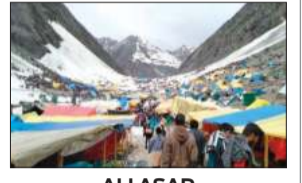
Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication



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Preparations For Amarnath Yatra Begin



ALI ASAD
SRINAGAR: Preparations for the annual Amarnath Yatra have commenced as health certificates are being arranged in ten districts of Jammu division, allowing pilgrims to initiate their journey from the specified date. A total of 112 doctors have been designated to issue Compulsory Health Certificates (CHC) •P-06

'No Significant' Weather Activity Expected In J&K



SRINAGAR: While weatherman ruled out any significant weather activity till March 27 evening, night temperature recorded an increase with mercury settling above sub-zero level in Jammu and •P-06

KPDCL Ramps Up Inspections To Tackle Electricity Theft



ISHTIYAQ KAR
SRINAGAR: In a bid to tackle power theft, Kashmir Power Development Corporation (KPDCL) has issued a stringent directive to all electric divisions under its purview, mandating the escalation of early morning and late-night inspection drives.
This proactive initiative is specifically aimed at targeting individuals involved in illegal hooking activities, a practice that significantly compromises the integrity of the power distribution network, KPDCL said.
With a heightened focus on combating power theft, particularly during the Holy Month, KPDCL is demonstrating its commitment to ensuring fair and lawful access to electricity for all consumers.
KPDCL has vowed to identify and apprehend all perpetrators involved in such illicit acts.
In a message issued by KPDCL authorities, they emphasized their determination to root out the "shameful practice of electricity theft, which not only undermines the integrity of the power grid but also deprives law-abiding consumers of essential services".
Furthermore, KPDCL assured consumers of their unwavering efforts to maintain a reliable and transparent electricity supply throughout the region. By taking proactive measures to combat electricity theft, the corporation aims to safeguard the interests of legitimate consumers and promote a culture of accountability and compliance within the community.
Meanwhile the Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) has issued a stern warning regarding tampering •P-06

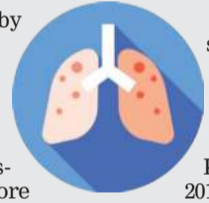
Stop Terror Factories, Don't Lecture On Democracy: India To Pakistan

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI: India on Sunday hit out at Pakistan at the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), saying lectures by a country with an abysmal track record of democracy is laughable and advised it to stop its terror factories to launch cross-border terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir.
Using his right of reply against Pakistan during 148th Assembly of the IPU in Geneva, Switzerland, Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh said India is the largest democracy in the world and many consider it a model to be emulated.
"Lectures by a country which has an abysmal track record of democracy is laughable, to say the least. It would have been better if Pakistan did not undermine the importance of a platform like IPU by such absurd allegations and false narratives," he said.
Referring to allegations made by Pakistan on Jammu and Kashmir, the Rajya Sabha deputy chair •P-06



TB-Free Status Health Dept's Efforts Lead To Decline In Tuberculosis Cases In Kashmir

JAHANGEER GANAIE
SRINAGAR: Efforts by the Health Department have led to a decline in tuberculosis (TB) cases in Kashmir, with authorities aiming to make Jammu & Kashmir TB-free by 2025.
A senior health official said that TB cases are decreasing, with more districts showing improvement each day.
Over the last six years, a total of 21,462 TB cases have been reported in Kashmir. In 2018, there were 4,774 cases, decreasing to 4,080 in 2019.
The number further dropped to 2,840 in 2020 due to reduced screening amid the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2022, 3,376 TB cases were recorded, while 2,956 cases were reported in 2023, a decline of approximately 400 cases •P-06



SIU Produces Chargesheet Against Three Terrorists

GMK NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR: State Investigation Unit (SIU) on Monday produced a chargesheet against three terrorists and their associate under UAPA Act in a designated NIA Court in south Kashmir's Pulwama.
"SIU Pulwama produces chargesheet in case FIR No. 260/2023 of Police Station Pulwama under sections 18, 20, 38, 39 & 40 UAPA Act against 03 terrorists namely Ehsan Ul Haq Sheikh son of Abdul Rasheed Sheikh resident of Murrnan Pulwama, Owais Feroz Mir son of Feroz Ahmad Mir resident of Freestabal Pampore A/P PoK and Abrar-ul-Islam resident of Pakistan, and a terrorist associate namely Ishtiyaz Nazir Dar son of Nazir Ahmad Dar resident of Ashmander Pulwama (presently under custody) before the Hon'ble designated NIA Court Pulwama," a police spokesperson said.
Moreover, chargesheet against another accused (CCL) Abbas Majeed Parray son of Abdul Majeed Parray resident of Ashmander Pulwama in the same case stands already submitted before the Hon'ble JJB Court Pulwama on 27/12/2023, he added.



No More Divide Policy 10 Years Of Modi Govt Brought Back Unity, Togetherness: Jitendra

GMK NEWS NETWORK
JAMMU: Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) candidate for Udhampur-Doda Lok Sabha seat Dr. Jitendra Singh has said that 10 years of Modi government has united people and has put an end to the divisive policy of previous regimes.
"We have tried to put an end to this divisive politics in erstwhile district Doda which Congress party has done in the past to rule the area. They had brought Hindus and Muslims on loggerheads just to get votes," Singh told media persons at Khelani area of Doda District on Sunday evening, where BJP workers welcomed him while he was on his way towards Kishtwar district.
Dr. Jitendra Singh said that BJP has put an end to •P-06



DG SSB Assesses Kashmir's Election Readiness

GMK NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR: Director General of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), Daljit Singh Chawdhary, IPS, undertook a comprehensive 2-day visit to the Kashmir Valley to assess the operational preparedness of SSB deployments ahead of the General Parliamentary Elections (GPE) 2024.
During his visit, the Director General inspected various key locations, starting with the Sector Headquarters (Spl-Ops) in Srinagar. The visiting officer received a detailed briefing on the functioning of SSB deployments in the Valley.
Addressing the Jawans during the 'Sanik-Samelan' and participating in the 'Bada Khana', the DG expressed his appreciation for their dedication and emphasised the importance of discipline in duty within the operational sector.
Chawdhary also visited the 10th Battalion SSB Batmaloo (Srinagar), 13TH Battalion SSB Dignibal (Ganderbal) and Ad-hoc Election Battalions of SSB in Valley, interacting directly with the deployed Jawans. He listened attentively to their concerns and issued on-spot directives for their resolution, reaffirming his commitment to their welfare. He joined in the Holi celebrations •P-06



486 Lives Lost, 510 Injured In Fire Incidents In Six Years In J&K



NAVEED UL HAQ
BUDGAM: Information obtained under the RTI Act has revealed that 486 people have lost their lives and 510 others sustained injuries in fire incidents over the past six years in Jammu and Kashmir.
According to details obtained, the Fire & Emergency Services Department has received a total of 26,354 calls reporting fire incidents from January 1, 2018, to December 31, 2023.
An RTI filed by activist MM Shuja disclosed that during this six-year period, 486 people lost their lives, and 510 were injured in various fire incidents. Nine employees/firefighters also lost their lives while performing their duties.
The data further reveals that property worth 20,285.48 was involved in these fire accidents, of which property worth 1,362.38 was damaged, while property worth 18,929 was saved.
Breaking down the figures year by year, it was revealed that in 2018, the department received 5,314 calls reporting fire incidents, resulting in 104 fatalities and 99 injuries. In 2019, there were 4,307 calls with 103 deaths and 105 injuries. In 2020, there were 4,072 calls, resulting in 86 deaths and 58 injuries. In 2021, there were 4,277 calls, with 106 fatalities and 62 injuries. In 2022, there were 5,833 calls, leading to 68 deaths and 140 injuries.
However, the data from 2023 showed a slight improvement, with the lowest number of fatalities recorded in the past six years, with only 19 lives lost and 46 individuals injured, despite the department receiving •P-06

LS Elections Political Parties Asked To Seek Permission For Rallies



GMK NEWS NETWORK
KUPWARA: Ahead of the Lok Sabha Elections, the District Election Authorities (DEO) Kupwara have asked the political parties to seek three-day prior permission for holding any political rally or convention in the district.
The instructions have been issued in line with the guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to ensure safety of political leaders and avoid disruption in the election process.
As per the circular issued by the nodal officer Model Code of Conduct (MCC) Kupwara, the political parties have been advised to apply at least three days in advance of the proposed event date.
"It will enable the administration to facilitate •P-06

INOX CINEMA SHIVPORA SRINAGAR

Tuesday 26 March MOVIES Schedule

 JATT NUU CHUDAIL TAKRI (PUNJABI) 06:15PM (U)	 YODHA (HINDI) 03:30PM (U/A)	 SHAITAAN (HINDI ATMOS) 02:40PM, 05:45PM (U/A)
 MADGAON EXPRESS (HINDI) 12:00PM (U/A)	 DUNE PART TWO (ENGLISH) WITH ENG SUBTITLES 02:00PM (U/A)	 KUNG FU PANDA 4 (ENG WITH ENG SUBTITLE) 12:40PM (U)

LOK SABHA POLLS

RO B'a Parliamentary Constituency chairs comprehensive preparatory meeting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: In view of the upcoming General Elections to the Lok Sabha 2024, the Returning Officer, 01-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency, Minga Sherpa, Monday chaired a comprehensive meeting at Dak Bunglow here to review the preparations for the smooth conduct of elections in the constituency. The meeting was attended by the District Election Officer, Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Sopore, Shabir Ahmad Raina, National Level Master Trainer, Sameer Jan and all the Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) associated with the conduct of Lok Sabha Elections in 1-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency.



The meeting held detailed deliberations, covering all the significant areas crucial for the smooth conduct of parliamentary elections in 1-Baramulla Constituency which comprises all the assembly segments of Districts Baramulla, Kupwara and Bandipora and two assembly segments of Budgam district.

During the meeting, the RO instructed the concerned officers to chalk out a detailed plan for organizing comprehensive training sessions for the employ-

ees who would be deployed to carry out poll duties on the day of the election.

Meanwhile, the RO directed the AROs responsible for individual Assembly Segments to ensure that the Booth Level Officers visit the residences of all voters aged over 85 years or with a 40% benchmark disability well in advance so that they are provided with an option to

choose to vote either from their homes through ballot paper or from their designated polling stations.

Speaking on the occasion, Ayushi Sudan, DEO Kupwara stressed on the AROs to ensure that appropriate provisions are made in advance, in accordance with the guidelines of ECI, for absentee voters and service voters who will be carrying out poll duties,

thereby empowering them to exercise their right to franchise.

Minga Sherpa further underscored the crucial importance for the AROs to ensure seamless coordination among themselves and with the election department during this pivotal period for the successful execution of the election process in 1-Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency.

DEO Budgam inspects collection, distribution centres

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: The District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Akshay Labroo Monday visited various distribution and collection centres being set up for the upcoming Lok Sabha 2024 elections in the district.

The DEO, who was accompanied by SSP Budgam, Al Tahir Gillani visited centres at Degree College Charar-i-Sharief, Polytechnic College Nagam in Chadoora and Degree College Khanshabad and took detailed assessment of arrangements being put up for safety, surveillance and security of Election related material and machinery to be kept at these centres during the Srinagar Lok Sabha segment of elections.

On the occasion, DEO Budgam emphasised on installation and functioning of CCTV cameras for



24x7 video surveillance of both in and outside of centres.

Instructions for establishment of separate wash-room facilities for the staff were also given to the concerned.

The DEO also inspected the accommodation facilities for the security personnel and instructed

all locations.

In order to ensure high security and safety, the DEO instructed installation of iron grills on the windows and doors of these centres.

Meanwhile, concerned were given directions for round the clock supply of electricity and water supply to all designated collection and distribution centres in the district.

The DEO said that all safety measures as per the Election Commission of India guidelines shall be implemented in letter and spirit for protection of election related material and machinery in the district.

Among others, the DEO was accompanied by ADC Budgam, Mehraj-ud-Din Shah, concerned SDMs, CPO, Dy. DEO, Nodal Officers, AROs, SE R&B, Ex. Engineers of various sectors and others concerned.

VAFs organized at different educational Zones of Kupwara



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: In an endeavour to extend electoral literacy to adult populations, two mega VAFs (Voter Awareness Forums) under SVEEP campaign were Monday organized at different education zones of Kupwara district.

As part of the calendar of activities, under SVEEP, VAFs were organized at Government Higher Secondary School Halmatpora and Government Higher Secondary School Liderwan where teachers, general public, first time voters, community leaders, local Artists and student achievers, participated.

During the VAFs, discussion and mass awareness around greater electoral process through the medium of real time activities were generated where resource persons of SVEEP imparted extensive awareness to the students and youth regarding electoral literacy.

They also motivated them to participate effectively in the election process, urging them to enhance their participation in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections for stronger democracy and strengthening the youth partnership for greater electoral participation.

Speakers also highlighted the significance of active participation of the youth in the electoral process for betterment of the nation.

Pledge taking ceremonies under SVEEP were held where participants took the pledge to vote in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

On the occasion, Cultural performance presented by local artists enthralled the participants, besides achiever students were also felicitated during the mega events. Mass awareness regarding electoral participation was also generated through painting and Quiz competitions.

Meanwhile, plantation drives under SVEEP were conducted at Liderwan, Khumryal and Langate.

Awareness programme on Voting Rights held at GGHSS Kothibagh



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Continuing its endeavour to foster electoral awareness among the students to make them aware about their voting rights and democratic responsibilities, an Electoral Awareness Programme was organized at Government Girls Higher Secondary School (GGHSS), Kothibagh here, on Monday.

The awareness programme was held on the directions of the District Election Officer (DEO), Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat under the supervision of Nodal Officer SVEEP/AMS A. H Fani to empower the younger generation with knowledge about their voting rights and responsibilities and civic duty.

The DEO Srinagar, while talking about the event held under ongoing SVEEP campaign, stressed the importance of understanding the true value of a vote to encourage greater participation in the electoral process. He also commended the students for their enthusiastic participation in the Electoral Awareness Programmes in the district.

The DEO observed that the participation of the new voters in the democratic process can make a significant difference in the progress of the nation as a whole.

The District Nodal Officer SVEEP, Abdul Hamid Fani who led the Electoral Awareness Programme at GGHSS, Kothibagh briefed the participant students about the electoral process and power of vote in democracy. He emphasized the significance of every single vote and the value it holds in ensuring a thriving democracy.

He also highlighted the commitment to leave no voter behind and urged the participants to prioritize the principle of 'No Voter to be Left Behind'.

On the culmination of the Electoral Awareness Programme, the District Nodal Officer SVEEP said that the event proved highly informative and equipped the participants with a deeper understanding of the electoral process and the power of their votes.

General Training for Poll Staff commences in Ganderbal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: The District Election Office, Ganderbal Monday started the general training for poll staff, drafted to perform duties in the upcoming General Elections to Lok Sabha, 2024.

The training started on 25th March 2024 and will be conducted at three different venues across the district till 30th of March 2024.

The training program aims to equip the poll staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure a smooth and efficient election process.

It is scheduled to cover various aspects of election duty, including the operation of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)



and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines, the process of polling, and the handling

of various election-related documents. The training is being imparted by the District

Level Master Trainers.

The District Election Office has made all necessary arrangements to ensure that the training is conducted in a safe and conducive environment.

The venues for the training have been chosen keeping in mind the convenience of the poll staff and are equipped with all necessary facilities.

The District Election Office urges all poll staff to attend the training and make the most of this opportunity to enhance their skills and knowledge.

The District Election Office is committed to conduct free, fair and peaceful elections and believes that the training of poll staff is a crucial step towards achieving this goal.

Candidates anguished as JKPSC 'fails' to forward list of selected APs to JKHED

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: The selection list of Associate Professors, declared in November last year by Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC), is yet to be forwarded to Jammu and Kashmir Higher Education Department (JKHED), that has left candidates depressed and distraught.

Selected candidates said that selection list of Assistant Professors in seven subjects including Botany, Political Science, Urdu, Sociology, Electronic Science, Geology and Hindi were announced from October 17 to November 08 last year.

They said that they have been eagerly waiting for the last five months but unfortunately, the list is not being forwarded to the concerned department.

Bilal Ahmad, one of the selected Assistant Professor told KNO that 23 candidates were selected in Botany followed by 11 in Politi-

cal Science, Urdu 19, Sociology 26, Hindi 13, Electronic Science 8 and Geology 7.

He said that firstly there was no Chairman of JKPSC for months together and that was being said to be the reason for the delay behind not forwarding the list to the concerned department. He said that around one month has passed since new Chairman took over, but the list has not been forwarded to the concerned department.

"The selected candidates are highly depressed and distraught due to the prolonged delay caused by JKPSC for the recommendations of these lists to JKHED," they added.

"Whenever candidates try to approach the concerned officials of JKPSC, every time they respond by saying that it will be done within a week," they said.

They have sought attention of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chairman JKPSC in this regard—(KNO)

Ensure strict compliance to MCC instructions: DSEK to CEOs

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Directorate of School Education Kashmir (DSEK) has sought strict compliance of Modal Code of Conduct (MCC) by Chief Education Officers (CEOs).

In a communication addressed to all the CEOs, the DSEK has stated that the instructions have been issued following the office memorandum received from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer regarding the strict adherence to the MCC as per the guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

"The action taken report may kindly be shared with this Directorate accordingly," the official communication reads. Earlier, the Gen-

eral Administration Department (GAD) issued an official communication to all the administrative secretaries for strict compliance of the instructions issued by Election Commission of India regarding strict implementation of the MCC guidelines.

The communication was issued after the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), through a communication asked all the administrative secretaries to ensure strict compliance of the instructions of model code of conduct for the guidance of political parties, candidates and other related guidelines.

"The Model Code of Conduct (MCC) instructions may be read in context of the requirement of

the department concerned and followed in letter and spirit. The compliance report be sent on the email if of the CEO specifying the subject clearly Model Code of Conduct in bold letters," reads a communication issued from CEO to all administrative secretaries.

Notably, the ECI on March 16 of 2024 announced schedule for Lok Sabha elections while the voting will begin from April 19 in seven phases. The notification for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections 2024 was issued on March 20 of 2-024.

The voting for 102 Lok Sabha constituencies across 17 states and four Union territories will take place on April 19, the ECI has said—(KNO)

LOK SABHA ELECTION

Flying Squads, Video Surveillance Teams imparted Election Training in Shopian

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Ahead of upcoming Lok Sabha Elections, Flying squads, Video Surveillance teams and State Surveillance teams were Monday imparted training under the supervision of District Election Officer, (DEO) Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb at Mini-Secretariat, here.

The main objective of the training was to provide necessary knowledge to these teams and make them aware of carrying out their duties smoothly during the conduct of elections.

Speaking on the occasion, DEO briefed these teams about their role and responsibilities. Training was imparted

by Master Trainers, Irfan Ahmed, Bilal Ahmed, Ayatullah Rabbani and Mohammad Younus Wani.

Dy. District Election Officer, Shopian, Jahangir Ahmed; Assistant Commissioner, Panchayat, Manzoor Ahmed; Assistant Commissioner, Revenue, Shakoor Ahmed Dar and other concerned were present.

DEO Bandipora inspects various polling stations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: To assess the preparedness of the polling stations and ensure the necessary standards for conducting fair and transparent elections, the District Election Officer (DEO) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman on Monday conducted a comprehensive inspection of various polling

stations of Bandipora. The visit was aimed to assess the readiness of the polling stations and address any potential challenges well in advance.

During the visit, the DEO reviewed logistic arrangements, security measures and accessibility for voters and compliance with electoral guidelines, besides inspected availability of amenities

such as water, electricity and other basic facilities.

He directed all the concerned to maintain vigilance and promptly address any issues related to basic amenities at polling stations.

The DEO was accompanied by Dy. DEO Bandipora, Mohammad Rafeeq Bhat; Chief Education Officer, Dr. G. M. Pujoo and others concerned.

ELECTIONS FOR UDHAMPUR-DODA SEAT

BJP, Congress move towards hills, Ramban first stop

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The election campaign for Udhampur-Doda Lok Sabha seat has taken pace and the two main contesting candidates Dr. Jitendra Singh and Choudhary Lal Singh have started moving out of plains towards hills.

As the BJP candidates and MoS in PMO Dr. Jitendra Singh will be in Ramban today to address series of rallies, Choudhary Lal Singh will be heading towards this hilly district tomorrow.

After completing tour of Ramban district, Jitendra Singh will be in Kishtwar tomorrow, where BJP has managed to intrude in all the three Assembly segments. All eyes would be on Chenab valley, comprising Ramban, Doda and



Kishtwar districts, where traditionally Congress has enjoyed edge over other parties but this time with the entry of Ghulam Nabi Azad's Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP), things could go anyway.

As the Ramban district is the first target of both BJP and Congress party, the Holi holiday will be having different colours

and people will be more concerned about political colours than Gulal (traditional Holi Colour). Both the national parties will be trying to get people on their side and get maximum votes in their favour. Ramban district is the entry to Chenab valley and has more than 2.19 lakh votes. Traditionally the district has remained the bastion of Congress party

as its candidates have been able to fetch more votes than its rivals in past elections. The same trend was witnessed in previous two elections when Congress party candidate was able to get more votes than BJP.

Even during 2019 Lok Sabha elections, when BJP won handsomely and Jitendra Singh had a cake walk, Ramban district gave lead to Congress party candidate Vikramaditya Singh. Congress party had got 60478 votes from two Assembly segments of Ramban district whereas BJP had got 45513 votes.

This time, few areas of Gool-Arnas Assembly segment of Reasi district have been some part of Banihal Assembly segment and these have also remained traditionally Congress party's votes—(KNO)

'Naranag Temple Complex in G'bal needs facelift for pilgrim tourism'

RAJA SYED RATHER

GANDERBAL: Naranag, one of the ancient temple complexes demonstrating Kashmir's rich past, needs a facelift to bring it on the map of pilgrim tourism. The destination can boost the economy and keep alive the tradition, culture and ancient history of Kashmir.

Naranag temple with the ancient name of Butesh-wara and Jyeshtheswara in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district is dedicated to Jyeshthesa or Lord Shiva and has subsidiary temples surrounding it.

According to historian Anil Raina, though the temple existed before the seventh century, King Lalitaditya Muktapada (724 CE-760 CE) of the Karkota dynasty, who was one of the most famous and powerful rulers of Kashmir, donated a large amount of money to develop these complexes and built a temple dedicated to Shiva Jyeshthesha.

Later, in the eighth century, King Avantivarman built a stone pedestal with a silver conduit at the site for the bathing of the idol of Lord Bhuteshwara,



Raina said.

While entering the complex, there is a group of six temples on the Western side which is known as the Shiva-Jyeshthesa and is situated inside an enclosure while the main temple is still standing.

The Eastern complex is the second group of temples, also enclosed inside a massive stone wall. These six temples in this complex are completely in ruins.

Although the temple complex is now under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and is surrounded by an enclosure, it needs a facelift and proper

protection to bring it on the map of pilgrim tourism which will not only promote the ancient history of Kashmir but also boost the economy of the area, Raina said.

A group of young people said that Naranag is one of the most beautiful places in the valley. "Tourists from all over the world visit this place but they face many problems here like network and basic facilities," they said.

A Kashmiri Pandit who was present at the temple ruins said, "We have failed to pass our rich cultural heritage to our younger generations. Nothing of

such has been included in the curriculum. We never take students to such sites, there are no documentaries made on these monuments. No efforts have been put together to give it a fillip."

A tourist from Delhi said he wants to explore the valley. "We are excited to see more places in Kashmir," he said.

The locals have appealed to the administration to preserve the historical monument and take steps to promote tourism here. "This will also provide employment opportunities to hundreds of youth in the area," they said—(KNO)

CJ administers oath of office to Justice Mohd. Yousuf Wani



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Justice N.Kotishwar Singh administered the Oath of office to Justice Mohd. Yousuf Wani as Additional Judge of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, in the Chief Justice's Court Room here Monday.

The Oath taking ceremony was physically attended at Srinagar by Justice Tashi Rabstan, Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul, Justice Sanjay Dhar, Justice Javed Iqbal Wani, Justice Rahul Bharti, Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi, Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal and virtually from Jammu by Justice

Atul Sreedharan, Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Justice Sindhu Sharma, Justice Puneet Gupta, Justice Mohd Akram Chowdhary and Justice Rajesh Sekhri.

The proceedings of the oath taking ceremony were conducted by Registrar General of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Shahzad Azeem, who read the contents of the notification received from Government of India, Ministry of Law & Justice, Department of Justice (Appointments Division) and the Warrant of Appointment issued by the President of India and the Letter of Authorization issued by the Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, authorising the Chief Justice of the High Court

of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, to administer the Oath of office to the newly appointed Judge.

The ceremony was also attended by the Former Judges of the High Court, Advocate General, J&K, Deputy Solicitor General of India, Srinagar, Secretary, Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, District Judges posted at Srinagar Headquarter, members of various Bars, officers of Civil and Police Administration and officers and staff of Registry and Member Secretary, Legal Service Authority, Jammu & Kashmir.

With the elevation, the strength of Judges of High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has risen to 16 Judges including the Chief Justice.

LOK SABHA POLLS

DEO Srinagar chairs meeting of ENOs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Monday chaired a meeting of designated Nodal Officers at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex, here to review the preparedness for the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections in district.

At the outset, the DEO took a first hand appraisal from all designated Nodal Officers with regard to tasks assigned to them for conduct of Lok Sabha Elections-2024 in district.

The DEO reviewed the preparations being made by all concerned Nodal Officers related to key aspects of the Lok Sabha Elections including Transportation of Polling staff/Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), implementation of Modal Code of Conduct (MCC), Material Management, Training programmes, SVEEP activities, functioning of Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC), Expenditure Monitoring Cell and Integrating Election Control Room and other related activities



aimed at ensuring smooth and peaceful general elections in Srinagar District.

The DEO directed all the designated Nodal Officers to work with due diligence and dedication to ensure smooth, free and fair elections. He expressed confidence in the collective resolve and capability of the Nodal Officers to fulfill their roles effectively and efficiently, thereby contributing to the successful conduct of the Lok Sabha Elections-2024 in Srinagar.

He stressed all Nodal officers to work with a proactive approach and execute allotted tasks on ground and maintain cooperation and coordination with the line executing departments.

He further asked them to go through comprehensive ECI guidelines regarding duties and responsibilities during the election period.

During the meeting, DEO, who is also the Returning Officer (RO) for 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency asked the Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) headquarter to undertake all necessary measures with regard to filling of nomination for 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency including technological interventions/ upgradation well in advance.

Earlier, the DEO was briefed by all the designated Nodal Officers about the preparations made so far for upcoming Lok Sabha Elections-2024

Class 8 Exam Dates Shuffle Leaves 1.75 Lakh Students fuming

ALI ASAD

SRINAGAR: The repeated changes in the examination schedule for class 8 students have stirred frustration among 1.75 lakh students, disrupting their preparations and casting uncertainty over their academic endeavors.

Initially slated to commence on March 5, the exam's commencement was rescheduled to March 13, only to encounter further alterations after the completion of two subjects.

Responsibility for overseeing the smooth execution of the class 8 examinations rests with the Jammu and Kashmir State Center for Educational Research and Training (JKSCERT). However, inadequate planning has resulted in confusion and dissatisfaction among students. Following examinations conducted on March 13 and 22 in the Soft Zone, papers slated for

March 24, 26, and 29 have been deferred.

Expressing dismay over the frequent changes, class 8 students highlighted the adverse impact on students' preparation, with shifting exam dates disrupting their study routines.

An official from SCERT attributed the scheduling challenges to rushed decision-making processes. With class 10th and 12th board exams scheduled for March, logistical constraints including exam center availability and invigilator arrangements posed significant hurdles. Such constraints even necessitated examinations being held on Sundays.

Efforts to clarify the rationale behind the fluctuating exam dates proved futile, as SCERT Director Prof. Parikshit Singh's attempts to reach Manhas for clarification went unanswered despite repeated attempts—(KNO)

Omar Abdullah welcomes political activists from Pulwama

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah on Monday welcomed scores of political activists from District Pulwama into the presence of senior Party members.

The joinings were facilitated by District President Pulwama Ghulam Mohi Ud Din Mir. Among others Provincial President Nasir

Aslam Wani, YNC Provincial President Kashmir Province Salman Ali Sagar and DDC Mukhtar Bandh were present on the occasion.

Welcoming the new entrants, the Vice President expressed hope that they will work towards strengthening the vision & mission of the party. While expressing full confidence in the party leadership the new entrants vowed to work for making the party stronger on the ground.(KNS)

Newly established degree colleges 'lack' permanent campuses, infrastructure

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Higher Education Department has admitted that it lacks infrastructure, permanent campus and land for the several newly established degree colleges here. The department however said that the screening committee has resolved to create a permanent campus for those colleges who lack it.

Director Colleges Dr Yasmeen Ashai has said that currently the department has 140 colleges in Jammu and Kashmir including 90 established colleges.

"We agree that in some newly established fifty colleges in Jammu and Kashmir, some of the institutes still have land issues and in some colleges we have not constructed permanent buildings. We realise that," Ashai said.

"A week back screening committee meeting was held with regard to newly established degree colleges wherein it was resolved that we need to create the permanent campuses for them," she said.

The director of colleges said this to reporters earlier this week during an event.

Ashai further said that the higher education department has

introduced 3+1 system in almost every college wherein the students have been given the choice to exit anytime after in years.

"Under the multidisciplinary program, we are going to focus on the 4th year in only those colleges wherein we have established labs. Students won't feel any problem," she said, adding that it was a flexible program wherein students can take entry or exit after every year.

As per the guidelines of UGC, under NEP-2020, the undergraduate degree should be of either a institutes or four year duration, with multiple entry and exit options within this period, with appropriate certifications.

On October-09-2023, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had expressed satisfaction over the construction and other works going on for the establishment of 50 new degree colleges in Jammu and Kashmir.

MHA in annual report 2022-2023 had said, "Indian Institute of Management (IIM) and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) are functional in Jammu and the work on physical infrastructure is in full swing." "Besides, 50 new degree colleges have been opened and construction work is going on at a satisfactory pace," MHA had said.

Turkish Kebabs to Kabak Tatlisi

Kashmir's Restaurants Overflow with Iftar Gatherings

MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: Restaurants in Kashmir are bustling with people this Ramadan as the trend of iftar gatherings is fast picking up in the valley.

Since the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, restaurants, which introduced Ramadan specials menus, are experiencing a huge rush of customers.

This is something which has picked up in Kashmir for the last few years with the opening of new restaurants offering exotic cuisines.

Such is the rush of customers to these restaurants that many food outlets have made it mandatory for people to book their tables in advance.

Café Ababeel is one such restaurant, which has introduced Ramadan special menus this Ramadan. From traditional Babri drinks to Turkish Kebabs and Uzbek dishes, the restaurant's Ramadan special menu has witnessed a huge



acceptance from the foodies across the valley.

"Like every year, we have a Ramadan special menu, which includes traditional and exotic dishes. We introduced a two person combo, which is fast picking up. In addition to the Turkish and Uzbek dishes, we introduced a dessert called Kabak Tatlisi, which is becoming people's favourite this Ramadan," said Food and Beverages Manager of the

café, Mudasir Mir.

He said on an average daily, as many as 200 people visit the restaurant to break their fast with Ramadan special dishes.

"We get lot of customers during Ramadan. On an average we receive 200 persons, who come to break their fast with our Ramadan special cuisines. Such is the rush that some leave after finding no table to sit and have meals," Mir said.

Same is the case with other restaurants of the valley, which too are experiencing a huge rush of customers during the Ramadan.

Apart from the restaurant, the outdoor Iftar too is picking up within the valley. Everyday scores of the families and friends gather in parks, gardens, and open spaces to partake in the Iftar meal.

"Iftar gatherings hold a special place in our hearts. After a challenging period of isolation, it feels rejuvenating to come together with our neighbors and relatives and share this blessed moment," said Ayaz Bhat, a local resident, who too had organised a iftar gathering for his family and relatives.

Local vendors and businesses are also capitalizing on the trend by setting up iftar stalls in popular outdoor locations, offering a variety of traditional delicacies and refreshments for those partaking in the outdoor iftars—(KNO)

Former J&K footballer sole participant from north India to clear course AFC B LCC

MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: Mohammad Haneef, a former footballer from Jammu and Kashmir, has achieved a significant milestone in his coaching career by successfully completing the AFC B License coaching course.

Haneef, who has transitioned from being a prominent player for J&K and J&K Bank FC to a dedicated coach, stands out as the sole participant from North India to clear this rigorous course.

According to the details available, he has been dedicated to nurture young talent and has made strides in the football coaching circles of J&K. Despite hanging up his boots a few years ago, he continues to leave a mark in the football community through his coaching endeavors.

"I have successfully cleared Module 1 of the B License training in Kolkata and Module 2 in Gujarat. It has been an enriching learning experience for me, and I am grateful for the opportunity to enhance my skills and knowledge in this field," he said.

"I am excited to apply the learnings from these modules in my work and contribute effectively to benefit the players of my state and outside also."

Haneef's achievement highlights not only his personal dedication but also the potential for growth and development in football coaching within the region.

As he progresses towards becoming a top qualified coach, his journey serves as an inspiration for aspiring football coaches in Jammu and Kashmir and beyond—(KNO)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Increasing Stabbing Incidents

There has been an increase of knife attacks in Srinagar of late. Nephew stabbing an uncle over a dispute in the downtown part of Srinagar, a husband stabbing to death his wife in central Kashmir and cases of this nature are becoming the staple of front pages of our newspapers.

The intensity of these crimes and the motive behind it has a huge intensity gap. Sometimes complete strangers stab each other over a wrong parking spot, brushing against each other's cars inadvertently, ogling at each other and things likewise. Issues that can be solved easily over a cup of coffee are being solved by a game of duel in which the person who clutches the knife first is declared a winner.

A few years ago, it was the teenagers stabbing each other but this March we have seen middle-aged people resorting to violence of this nature. The materialism brought in the western world has wreaked havoc with our culture and social ethos. The hip hop culture of the 90s trampled over whatever was left of the oriental ethos. Then came the social media and the reels. People just want to be more and more popular without putting in any special effort. People want to gain fame and money and show off the same to an agnostic audience with tireless redundancy.

It is amazing that people now want to impress the strangers on Instagram, Facebook, and twitter but at the same time are happy with the resulting disconnect with their immediate family members and friends. Things have reached such an extent that if a person is bullied by some strange person on social media the affected person even goes to the extent of making an attempt on his/her life. Imagine how many people have died because a random stranger talked bad about them online. The knifing incidents must be thoroughly investigated by the relevant authorities and strict punishment meted out to perpetrators. Making an attempt on someone's life should be given the harshest possible punishment so that no one else dares to repeat the crime. Knifing someone with an intention to kill the person is a serious crime against humanity and must be dealt with seriously.

Crocus City Hall Massacre

Why Nobel Laureates Are Silent?



SALAH UDDIN SHOAIB CHOUDHURY

The entire world is condemning the March 22 gruesome terrorist massacre in Russia where at least five gunmen in combat gear opened fire and detonated explosives at Crocus City Hall in Moscow city's western suburbs killing at least 133 people and injuring 187 as the audience was gathering to watch the veteran rock band Picnic, stunningly Nobel laureates are maintaining stone-cold silence on this matter and refraining from either condemning such cowardice act or expressing message to the family members of the victims.

Within hours of the Crocus City Hall massacre, Ukrainian presidential advisor Mykhailo Podolyak said that Kyiv is not involved in the attack while almost simultaneously US National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told reporters, the US sees no evidence of Ukrainian involvement in the terror attack. John Kirby said, "At this time there are no indications that Ukraine or Ukrainians were involved in Friday's attack on Crocus City Hall".

Meanwhile, a claim surfaced that the attack was carried out by Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) a regional affiliate of the ISIS terrorist organization. US intelligence told American news agencies that there's "no reason to doubt" the ISIK claims of responsibility.

Days before the terrorist attack, the US Embassy & Consulate in Russia in a Security Alert said: "The Embassy is monitoring reports that extremists have imminent plans to target large gatherings in Moscow, to include concerts and US citizens should be advised to avoid large gatherings over the next 48 hours". They said, "extremists have imminent plans to target large gatherings in Moscow to include concerts".

Terrorist attack took place on March 22 at the Crocus City Hall concert venue near Moscow. Any guesses? This is neither a conspiracy theory nor disinformation. My observation is based on facts and evidence. Moreover, it is also essential to take one important point into consideration. A large



Muhammad Yunus has cordial relations with important figures in the Democratic Party. America's dubious behaviors following the Crocus City Hall massacre and the silence of Yunus and Malala deserve scrutiny.

number of people who were killed during the terrorist attack fell victims of gas released from explosives.

While America's behavior following the Crocus City Hall massacre may generate doubts and questions in the minds of people, equally similar fingers can be raised at Nobel laureates such as Muhammad Yunus and Malala Yousafzai as both enjoy patronization of the West, particularly the United States, while Yunus is known as a committed supporter of the Democratic Party.

It may be mentioned here that, Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani who was given the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize laureate at the age of 17. In contrast, immediately after making the announcement, the Nobel Prize Committee's chairman told the media he did not know the reasons or any contributions of Malala that had

made her eligible for the prize. Similarly, Muhammad Yunus, a Bangladeshi, who was given the Nobel Peace Prize for "fighting poverty" has been in the news headlines several times for a series of controversies.

While jointly receiving the Nobel Peace Prize along with Grameen Bank from Professor Ole Danbolt Mjøs, Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee on December 10, 2006, for "their efforts to create economic and social development from below", in the presence of global dignitaries, Muhammad Yunus declared - "We can put poverty in the museum". Commenting on Yunus, the UK daily The Guardian in an article said: For Nelson Mandela it was apartheid, for Mahatma Gandhi it was self-rule, for Prof Yunus it is poverty".

At that time a sizable number of

people - including journalists were feeling encouraged knowing Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus would put poverty in the museum. After 17 years of receiving the prestigious prize - Muhammad Yunus has not succeeded in sending poverty to museums. Instead, millions of borrowers of loans from him in Bangladesh now are facing cruel sufferings due to poverty while most possibly, Yunus has engaged 'reputation management' firms to remove everything on the web about his pronouncement of sending poverty to museums.

Following Yunus' getting the Nobel Peace Prize, it was reported in the media that President Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary Clinton had played an important role in this. Muhammad Yunus has cordial relations with important figures in the Democratic Party. America's dubious behaviors following the Crocus City Hall massacre and the silence of Yunus and Malala deserve scrutiny.

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Building Trust Through Sincere Teaching Practices

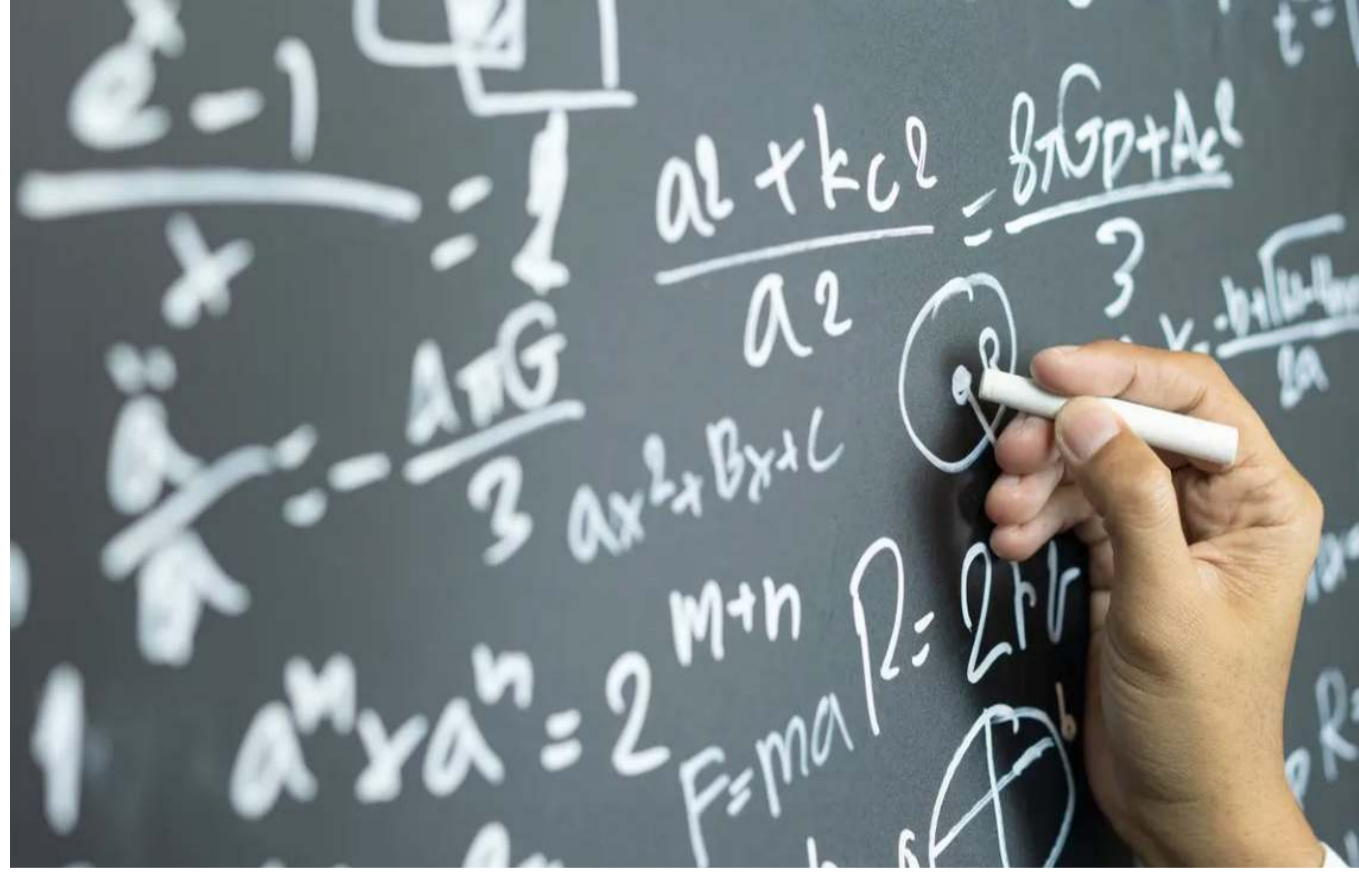


DR. SHIBEN KRISHEN RAINA

In the realm of education, teachers are not just envoys of information; they are custodians of young minds, entrusted with the sacred duty of shaping their future. Yet, there are instances where this trust is compromised, as educators fail to uphold the integrity and dedication expected of their noble profession. A recent incident serves as a stark reminder of the importance of maintaining high standards and holding those who breach their duties accountable.

As a principal of a government college, I encountered a troubling situation with a lecturer who exhibited a pattern of unprofessional behavior. This lecturer consistently arrived late in class, dedicating minimal time to meaningful teaching. Rather than engaging students in enriching lessons, he resorted to having them copy notes from textbooks and occasionally entertained them with jokes, neglecting his fundamental responsibility of imparting knowledge to his students.

Furthermore, this educator's disregard extended beyond the classroom; he refused to participate in non-teaching activities within the college, disconnecting himself from the broader educational community. As complaints from students accumulated, it became evident that action needed to be taken. The other members of the staff, too, agreed since his attitude with his colleagues was also not congenial. Efforts to counsel and guide the errant professor were met with resistance and baseless arguments. Despite repeated warnings and attempts to rectify his behavior, the situation escalated when he began falsifying the official attendance records for being absent from the class. This action of the delinquent lecturer further degraded his trust and integrity.



In an earnest attempt to address the issue, I tried many times to engage with the professor in a meaningful conversation, appealing to his professionalism and the honor bestowed upon educators. Regrettably, this approach yielded no positive results. With the gravity of his misconduct becoming increasingly apparent, it became necessary to take decisive action to preserve the institution's integrity.

Despite the professor's attempt to deflect accountability by playing the "minority card," it was clear that his actions warranted immediate disciplinary action. After consulting with the director of college education, the professor was promptly transferred to a remote location, effectively removing the source

of disruption from the educational environment. This incident underscores the importance of upholding integrity in the teaching profession. As already said, educators hold immense power to shape the minds of the next generation, and with this power comes great responsibility. It is imperative for educational institutions and governing bodies to maintain a firm stance against teachers' unethical behavior, safeguarding the profession's sanctity.

As custodians of educational integrity, governments must implement stringent measures and robust accountability mechanisms to deter

misconduct and send a clear message that breaches of professional ethics will not be tolerated.

To sum up, it is our collective responsibility to ensure that those entrusted with the education of our youth embody the values of integrity, dedication, and ethical conduct. By holding educators accountable and fostering an environment of transparency and accountability, we can preserve the integrity of our educational institutions and uphold the noble pursuit of knowledge.

Writer is former Fellow, IIAS, Shimla (HP)

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Cultivating Resilience In Education

The Five Pillars Of The Resilient Learning Framework



FAROOQ MAJEED BAKLO

In the Digital Age In the fast-evolving landscape of education, the need for a comprehensive approach that prepares students for the challenges of the digital age is paramount. The Five Pillars of the Resilient Learning Framework, an innovative concept designed these five pillars are Patience, persistence, preservice, determination, and fortitude. There is a need to install these five fillers i.e. patience, persistence, perseverance, determination, and fortitude in students, arming them with the skills essential for success in this digital overload and dynamic world.

Describing the Resilient Learning Framework: The Resilient Learning Framework goes beyond traditional educational paradigms by incorporating digital tools, adaptive learning technologies, and a focus on nurturing resilience. It recognises that in the digital age, where information is copious and technology is ubiquitous, resilience is a vital attribute for life-long learning and triumph.

Components of the Resilient Learning Framework:

Patience: Encourages students to approach challenges methodically, nurturing a mindset that values the journey of learning over immediate results.



Persistence: Teaches the importance of sustained struggle in the face of difficulties, imparting a sense of determination that goes beyond initial setbacks.

Perseverance: Fosters the ability to endure challenges and setbacks, stressing that setbacks are part of the learning process.

Determination: Encourages a robust sense of purpose and commitment, helping students stay focused on their goals in spite of distractions or impediments.

Fortitude: Constructs emotional resilience, empowering students to navigate the difficulties of the digital

age with bravery and flexibility. Resilient Learning Framework in Education: Navigating the Digital Wave

In the energetic landscape of the 21st century, education stands at a crossroads, grappling with the demands of an increasingly digitalized world. The Resilient Learning Framework emerges as an ideal, guiding educators and students through this transformative era. In essence, the Resilient Learning Framework transcends the conventional boundaries of education. It recognizes that equipping students solely with academic knowledge is insufficient in the face of today's digital over-

load. Patience, persistence, perseverance, determination, and fortitude are the pillars upon which this framework stands, forming the bedrock for a holistic educational experience. Patience becomes the compass that steers students through the vast sea of information, teaching them to discern, analyze, and synthesize knowledge. It instills a deep appreciation for the process of learning, fostering a mindset that values understanding over rote memorization. Persistence emerges as the driving force that propels students forward, acknowledging that learning is not always a linear journey. The Resilient Learning Framework emphasizes

sustained effort, teaching students the importance of staying committed to their educational pursuits despite initial challenges.

Perseverance, a close companion to persistence, becomes the armor that shields students from discouragement. It encourages them to view setbacks not as failures but as stepping stones toward growth. By embedding perseverance in the learning process, the framework transforms obstacles into opportunities for resilience and self-discovery. Determination takes center stage, guiding students with a sense of purpose. In the digital age, where distractions abound, determination becomes the North Star that keeps learners on course. It nurtures a commitment to their goals and empowers them to navigate the complications of the digital landscape. Fortitude, the final pillar, equips students with emotional resilience. In a world marked by rapid change, fortitude becomes the force that enables learners to adapt, evolve, and thrive. It instills the courage to face challenges head-on, transforming setbacks into stepping stones for personal and academic growth.

As educational institutions grapple with the demands of the digital age, the Resilient Learning Framework emerges as a visionary approach. By integrating patience, persistence, perseverance, determination, and fortitude into the educational fabric, this framework prepares students not just for exams but for a lifetime of learning in an ever-changing world.

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Social Sciences Must Change To Be Able To Contribute To Real Progress



BHARAT DOGRA

If asked to compare a community of forest produce gathering people about 7000 years ago with a most modernized group of people in New York City today, most people would say that of course, the later situation reflects much greater development and progress of humanity in terms of easily accessing so many comforts and luxuries, not just needs.

However if we start exploring questions like which life-patterns reflect greater environment protection and sustainability, more justice and equality, more peace, contentment and harmony with other people as well as other forms of life, then in all likelihood the thousands of years old community would reflect a more 'advanced' state.

The past five to six hundred years are often regarded as the years of greatest progress. Yet cruelty, plunder, injustice, massacres and genocides (sometimes to the extent of nearly 90 per cent of the people of vast regions being killed) have also been seen in some of their worst forms during these centuries.

The last century has been called the century of the greatest progress but in fact this is the century in which the basic life-nurturing conditions of the planet have been ravaged the most, largely due to the folly of the richest 10 per cent of people, endangering not just the entire humanity but also the thousands and thousands of other forms of life.

Hence history must never be seen as a history of continuing human progress. Instead history must strive to understand the conditions relating to justice, equality, protection of environment and biodiversity, concern for all forms of life and compassion, peace and harmony in various places and times and then to understand progress or regression in these terms.

Similarly other social sciences and humanities must change to reflect such an improved and more comprehensive understanding of progress/regression



and wellness/illness of various societies. This is certainly true of sociology, political science and perhaps most of all of Economics.

Unfortunately distortions in the study and understanding of Economics have often led to many economists, including some of the most reputed ones, contributing to injustice, inequality and ecological ruin instead of contributing to justice, equality and protection of environment.

Social sciences and social scientists must increasingly be more inward looking to honestly evaluate their role and contribution in times which are perhaps the most troubling in the history of humanity on earth, times when entirely human-made factors have brought the planet to a stage where its basic life-nurturing conditions are very badly threatened.

Why is it that many social scientists have not been able to contribute in more meaningful and effective ways on the side of justice and equality, environment protection and peace? Why several of them are increasingly seen to be on the side of problems rather than solutions? Why an even higher number has chosen to be wrapped up in advancing their own comforts instead of taking a more active role in challenging injustices and helping to create a better, safer world?

There is much need for honest introspection by the community of social scientists regarding their role. Is their role to be seen only or mainly in careerist terms (which would be a very narrow understanding for a profession that should be seen in terms of a very noble and important

role, all the more so in these difficult times)? What needs to be done to increase the possibilities of more and more social scientists being able to contribute more meaningfully to creating a better and safer world?

The other aspect relates to reframing, restructuring or perhaps even re-defining various social sciences in terms of the needs and requirements of creating a better, more just, sustainable and safer world. Both aspects of this introspection are of course related to each other, both are equally important. Initiatives relating to such introspection are likely to result in various useful suggestions, including some that can be taken up immediately and some that need longer-term processes and much wider efforts. If these can be shared and together lead to a more broad-based

effort, cutting across narrow boundaries, then a more specific agenda of meaningful changes can emerge within a year or two.

What is true beyond any doubt is that in order to check the existential crisis before it is too late, and do this within a framework of justice, peace and democracy, the world needs very basic changes in the near future. Social scientists and social sciences must change in order to be able to contribute adequately to this. It is within this wider perspective that the suggestions made here should be seen.(CC)

Bharat Dogra is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Protecting Earth for Children, Planet in Peril, Earth without Borders, Man over Machine and A Day in 2071.

Here's Why Dark Chocolate Is The Perfect Dessert

Dark chocolate is a type of chocolate that contains a higher percentage of cocoa solids and a lower amount of sugar compared to milk chocolate, making it darker in colour and more bitter in taste. It is typically made from cocoa beans, sugar, and sometimes additional ingredients such as vanilla or soy lecithin.

Dark chocolate is often considered a healthier option compared to other chocolate variants, primarily due to its higher cocoa content. It contains antioxidants, specifically flavonoids, which are beneficial for the body. Keep reading as we discuss why exactly dark chocolate is a great option for a dessert.

Here's what makes dark chocolate the perfect dessert:

1. Rich in antioxidants
Dark chocolate is loaded with antioxidants, called flavonoids, which help reduce inflammation in the body and protect against free radicals. This can benefit overall health and promote well-being.
2. Improves heart health



The flavonoids in dark chocolate have been shown to improve blood flow, lower blood pressure, and reduce the risk of heart disease. Regular consumption of dark chocolate may improve cardiovascular health.

3. Enhances mood
Eating dark chocolate stimulates the release of endorphins in the brain, which can improve mood and even act as a mild antidepressant. It can provide a pleasurable and satisfying dessert experience.

4. Boosts brain function
The flavonoids in dark chocolate have been linked to improved cognitive function and memory. Regular consumption may help enhance brain health and keep the mind sharp.

5. Aids in weight management
Contrary to popular belief, moderate consumption of dark chocolate can aid in weight management. Its rich and intense flavour can satisfy cravings, preventing overeating, and its high fibre content helps keep you feeling fuller for longer.

6. Provides essential nutrients
Dark chocolate contains minerals like iron, magnesium, and potassium, which are essential for various bodily functions. These nutrients support overall health and well-being.

7. Reduces inflammation
The flavonoids in dark chocolate have anti-inflammatory properties, which can help reduce inflammation in the body. Lowering inflammation is associated with a decreased risk of chronic diseases and improved overall health.

8. Promotes healthy skin
The antioxidants in dark chocolate can help protect the skin against damage from UV rays and improve skin hydration. Regular consumption may contribute to healthier and more youthful-looking skin.

9. Controls blood sugar levels
Dark chocolate has a lower glycemic index compared to other sugary desserts, meaning it raises blood sugar levels more slowly and prevents sudden spikes in glucose. This can be beneficial for individuals with diabetes or those watching their sugar intake.

10. Reduces stress
Consuming dark chocolate can help reduce stress by lowering cortisol levels in the body. Its pleasurable taste and the release of endorphins provide a calming effect, promoting overall well-being.

However, it is important to consume dark chocolate in moderation, as it still contains calories and fat. Excessive intake can lead to weight gain and other health issues. It is recommended to choose dark chocolate with a higher cocoa percentage (typically above 70%) to maximise its potential health benefits.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

KPDCL Ramps Up

with smart meters. They announced that they will register FIRs (First Information Reports) for any such tampering incidents, and they have already referred 272 cases for investigation.

KPDCL emphasized the seriousness of the issue by stating that consumer IDs and names will be shared with the police. They cautioned against opening the seal and meddling with the internal circuitry of the meter, highlighting that it could lead to severe consequences.

This move underscores the importance of maintaining the integrity of smart meter systems and deterring any attempts at manipulation or fraud.

The Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation (KPDCL) has also made an appeal to consumers to take advantage of the benefits offered by the extended Power Amnesty Scheme.

Under this scheme, consumers have the opportunity to clear their principal amount of outstanding bills and claim a waiver on the accumulated interest for non-payment.

This initiative is aimed at providing relief to consumers who may have fallen behind on their electricity bills due to various reasons.

It's important to note that this scheme is a one-time exception, emphasizing its unique nature and limited duration. By encouraging consumers to participate, KPDCL aims to alleviate financial burdens and promote compliance with electricity bill payments. (KNS)

Stop Terror Factories,

said the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh have been and will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India.

"No amount of rhetoric and propaganda from anyone can override this fact. Instead, Pakistan would be well advised to stop its terror factories that continue to launch countless cross-border terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir while farcically claiming to champion the cause of human rights," he said.

Harivansh drew the attention of IPU members that Pakistan has an established history of harboring, aiding and actively supporting terrorists.

"Let me recall that Osama Bin Laden, the face of global terror, was found in Pakistan. The country holds the ignoble record of hosting one of the largest number of terrorists proscribed by the UN Security Council," he reminded the audience.

He hoped that Islamabad will draw the correct lessons for the good of its own people.

Harivansh is leading the Indian delegation to the IPU. (Agencies)

Health Dept's Efforts

from the previous year. Five out of the ten districts in Kashmir, including four districts in south Kashmir and Budgam, have already been declared TB-free.

State Tuberculosis Officer Dr Adfar Qadri informed KNO that Jammu & Kashmir has set a precedent in health-care, with five revenue districts already declared TB-free. "Srinagar was awarded a gold medal last year, while the union territory received bronze. Most other districts have maintained their status quo. Budgam was declared TB-free in 2021," he said.

Dr Qadri expressed confidence that TB incidence is declining in Kashmir and said the goal is to achieve TB elimination by 2025 through intensified case-finding and screening efforts. "Various measures have been implemented over the years to enhance infrastructure and manpower for early detection and effective treatment," he said, adding that an artificial intelligence system has been deployed in

districts that have already achieved TB-free status to enhance surveillance and eradicate the disease.

He further said testing has witnessed a threefold increase compared to the previous year, with a focus on early detection.

An official from the State TB cell said that tuberculosis is more prevalent in rural areas due to factors such as population density and inadequate nutrition. However, there has been a shift, with TB now affecting individuals across various socio-economic backgrounds, he said.

"Many individuals delay seeking medical consultation at the initial stage of TB, leading to worsened conditions upon diagnosis. However, TB can be fully treated with appropriate medication and timely intervention," the official said.

The Health Ministry has set targets for reducing TB incidence, with monetary awards and certification provided to districts and states achieving specific milestones in TB elimination.

The National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) in India offers free TB treatment through the Directly Observed Treatment Short Course Strategy (DOTS) system recommended by the World Health Organization. This system tracks patients' infection status, severity, and treatment progress, contributing to a national database—(KNO)

Preparations For

from health centers across the region, a prerequisite for advance passenger registration.

According to the reports received, although the official announcement of the Amarnath Yatra is pending, discussions during a recent meeting of the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board hinted at a potential commencement date of June 29. The exact date for passenger registration will be unveiled in the coming days.

Traditionally, health certificates issued from March 15 onwards are considered valid for passenger registration. However, last year's registration process commenced in mid-April. The Health Directorate Jammu has submitted the details of nominated doctors to the government, soon to be accessible on the Shrine Board's website.

Districts Kathua and Jammu boast the highest number of designated health centers, including associated hospitals, community health centers (CHC), and district hospitals. The advanced passenger registration process will kick off in designated bank branches within the respective districts.

Apart from facilitating registration, these health centers will provide essential facilities for pilgrims. Additional provisions for accommodations and other necessities will be made available in various locations including Jammu, Ramban, and Srinagar.

As preparations gain momentum, the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board is issuing tenders related to the Yatra, focusing on essential tasks such as snow clearance from the holy cave and surrounding tracks. The Yatra is poised to commence shortly after the upcoming Lok Sabha elections—(KNO)

'No Significant'

Kashmir including Gulmarg and Pahalgam on Sunday.

A meteorological department official said that Srinagar recorded a minimum of 10.2°C against 6.5°C on the previous night and it was above normal by 5.2°C for the summer capital of JK for this time of the year.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of 6.8°C against 5.8°C on the previous night and it was 3.1°C above normal for the gateway town of Kashmir, he said.

Pahalgam recorded a low of 3.6°C against minus 1.1°C on the previous night and it was 3.2°C above normal for the famous resort in south Kashmir.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir,

recorded a minimum of 7.7°C against 5.6°C on the previous night and it was 4.4°C above normal, the official said.

Kupwara town recorded a low of 8.1°C against 5.6°C on the previous night and it was 4.9°C above normal there, the official said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of 1.4°C against minus 2.5°C on the previous night and it was above normal by 3.0°C for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Jammu, he said, recorded a minimum of 17.2°C and it was above normal by 1.7°C for the winter capital of J&K.

Banihal recorded a low of 9.0°C, Batote 10.0°C and Baderwah 9.0°C, he said.

With regard to the forecast for next 24 hours, he said, mainly dry weather is expected with possibility of very light rain/TS at one or two places over the higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Overall, no significant weather activity is expected till March 27 evening," he said, adding, "From March 27 evening to March 28, generally cloudy weather with light rain/snow is expected (higher reaches) at many places."

From March 29, he said, partly cloudy weather with light rain/snow is expected at isolated places.

From March 30-31, he said, partly to generally cloudy weather with intermittent light rain/snow is expected at a few places. (GNS)

10 Years Of Modi

this culture. "Modi government has worked for all communities and didn't differentiate between Hindus and Muslims and whether we got votes from the area or nothing," he said and gave examples of allotting a degree college at Kastigarh and new alignment of national highway 244 from Khelani towards Sudh mahadev via Marmat.

When asked how he thinks about the contest on this seat, the BJP candidate said, "I don't feel there is any sort of contest. Even the women of the families of other contesting candidates will be voting for BJP in these elections," he added.

He thanked people of Khelani for welcoming him and reminded that he should be the host as his ancestral house falls in Khelani block and he has the State Subject from Khilota village of this block—(KNO)

DG SSB Assesses

with the Jawans, showering colorful flowers and conveyed his heartfelt wishes to the SSB personnel and their families.

In addition to engaging with SSB personnel, the Director General met with senior police officers from Police, CAPFs and other agencies, stressing the necessity of complete synergy for the peaceful conduct of the GPE-24 and the forthcoming SANJY-2024.

Continuing his tour, the DG visited the NSG Detachment at Humhama, where he interacted with officials and officers. He reviewed NSG activities in the Valley and emphasized the importance of continuous training and adherence to standard drills to maintain preparedness for any contingency.

Accompanying the Director General were Sh. Imtiaz Ismail Parry, IPS, DIG, and other ground commanders of the SSB and NSG, underscoring the collaborative effort in ensuring security and stability in the region.

The visit concluded on March 25, 2024, with the Director General celebrating Holi Milan with Jawans of SSB & NSG at various locations, extending his warm greetings for Holi and Ramadan to them and their families. (GNS)

486 Lives Lost, 510

4,451 calls regarding fire incidents during that year. The RTI data also reveals that there

are currently 168 Fire and Emergency Services stations throughout the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory, catering to the entire region. The Jammu range has a total of 129 fire tenders with a deficiency of 34, while the Kashmir range has 201 fire tenders with a deficiency of 66.

Furthermore, 476 employees retired from the department between 2018 and 31.12.2023, while 734 employees were recruited during the same period.

Regarding the total number of employees working in the department along with the deficiency of staff (Gazetted/Non-Gazetted) as of the present date, the RTI reply indicates that the total sanctioned strength of gazetted staff is 28, with an existing strength of 13 and a deficiency of 15. The total sanctioned strength of non-gazetted staff is 3,610, with an existing strength of 2,321 and a deficiency of 1,289.

In response to a query about fire stations with medical facilities for employees as of the present date, along with details of available medical staff, it was revealed that both the provincial headquarters of Srinagar and Jammu have one medical unit each, with facilities provided by medical officers and para-medical staff on deputation from the Health & Medical Education Department—(KNO)

Political Parties Asked

proper coordination, ensure public safety and minimise any potential disruptions," the circular reads.

As per the schedule notified by the ECI, the Baramulla parliament constituency, comprising of Kupwara, Bandipora and Baramulla district will go for polls on May 20, in the 5th phase of the election schedule. The Baramulla parliament constituency has 16 Assembly segments including six in Kupwara, seven assembly segments of Baramulla district and three Assembly segments of Bandipora district respectively.

An official said the district election authorities have already discussed Dos and Don'ts with the political parties while other preparations are underway as well.

Already, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla Minga Sherpa stated that the political parties need to seek proper permission from the District Election Officer (DEO) for holding any political rallies or any procession ahead of the elections.

"We have already convened meetings with political parties and it has been stated that as per the Election Commission of India (ECI) guidelines, political parties must obtain permission from the District Election Officer for any political rally, event, or procession," DC Baramulla earlier told reporters.

The district election authorities have urged the political parties to adhere to all the guidelines issued from the ECI to ensure that the LS elections are held in a foolproof manner—(KNO)

Correction



This is to inform all concerned parties that the name of my mother has been inaccurately recorded in the school records of Islamic Model Institute, Pathan, Pulwama.

- Student's Name: Uzama Ali
- Father's Name: Ali Mohammad Dar
- Current Mother's Name in Records: Mymoona Akhter
- Correct Mother's Name: Fancy Jan

Any individual with objections or concerns regarding this correction is requested to contact the office of the Islamic Model Institute, Pathan, Pulwama, within 7 days from the date of this notice's publication.

Information guide to be given to voters with voter information slip

IAN S

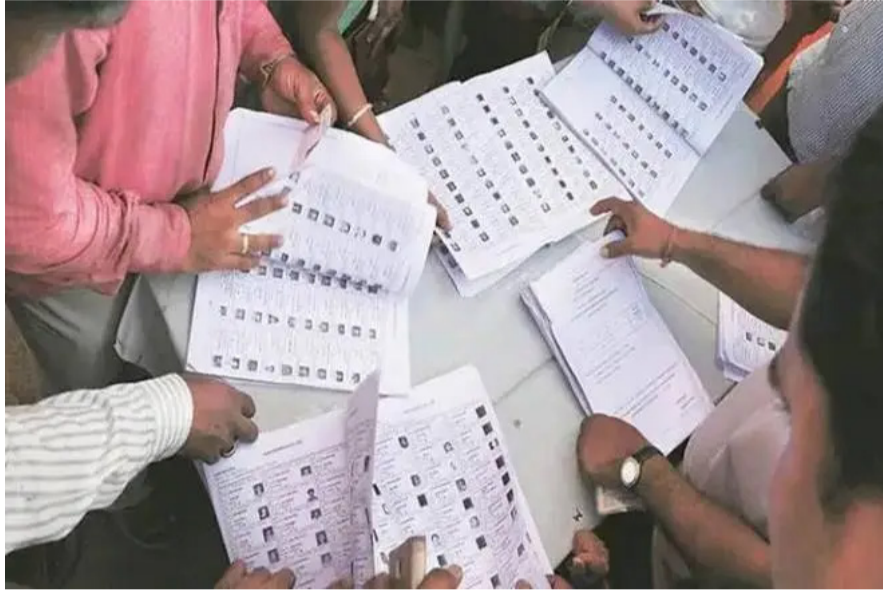
LUCKNOW: Uttar Pradesh's Chief Electoral Officer, Navdeep Rinwa, said that Voter Information Slip will be issued to all voters registered in the electoral roll of Lok Sabha General Election-2024.

He said that on the front part of this slip, the part number and name in the electoral roll, serial number, name of the polling station and date of voting, QR code etc. will be mentioned.

On the reverse side of the slip, the map of the polling station and the name of the Booth Level Officer (BLO), the contact number of the BLO, details of the alternative document prescribed by the Commission for voting and other important instructions will be mentioned.

Along with the voter information slip, each family will also be given a colourful Voter Guide in Hindi.

The voter guide explains how voters can cast their



vote through EVM through pictures and the facilities provided by the Election Commission of India (ECI) through apps like Saksham-ECI, Voter Helpline App, Know Your Candidate App and C-Vigil App. Requisite information has been given.

Along with this, infor-

mation has been given about the facility of registration, voting, voting from home for disabled people and senior citizens, and postal ballot facility.

Ranwa further said that as per the instructions of the ECI, distribution of voter information slips to all the registered voters

will be made available to all the voters from nine days before the date of voting to five days before the date of polling.

The voter information slip will be given by the BLO to the registered voter or any adult member of his family after getting the register signed.

Sculptor creates miniature model of Ram Lalla statue in Ayodhya

IAN S

AYODHYA: Well-known sculptor Arun Yogiraj who created the Ram Lalla idol for the Ayodhya temple, has now made a miniature version of the deity.

The sculptor took to X to share the images which have gone viral.

"After the selection of the main idol of Ram Lalla, I carved another small Ram Lalla statue in stone in Ayodhya," Yogiraj said on X while sharing the pics.

Earlier, Yogiraj had also shared a picture of the special tools he had used to carve the eyes of the statue.

He wrote, "Thought of sharing this silver hammer with the golden chisel using which I carved the divine eyes of Ram Lalla."

The 51-inch-tall idol which shows Ram Lalla as a five-year-old standing on a lotus was created by Yogiraj out of Krishna Shila (black schist).

The rock was brought from Karnataka after it was found and excavated during a levelling exercise on an agricultural plot.

After the idol was placed in the sanctum sanctorum of the newly-built Ram temple, the Karnataka-based sculptor had said that he considers himself



the "luckiest person" on Earth.

"I feel I am the luckiest person on the Earth now. The blessing of my ancestors, my family members and Lord Ram has always been with me. Sometimes I feel like I am in a dream world," he had said.

Yogiraj, one of the most sought-after sculptors in the country, comes from a

family with a rich legacy of the craft as his father and grandfather were also renowned sculptors.

After completing his MBA, Yogiraj worked in a private company for a while but wanted to follow his ancestors' legacy.

Since 2008, he has been creating statues and gaining nationwide recognition. The 30-foot statue of

Subhas Chandra Bose, in the grand canopy behind the Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate, was also crafted by Yogiraj.

Among his other works, a 12-foot-tall statue of Adi Shankaracharya in Kedarnath and a 21-foot-tall Hanuman statue at Chunchanakatte in Mysore District have been widely appreciated.

ED summons Bengal minister for questioning in cattle case

IAN S

KOLKATA: Enforcement Directorate (ED) has issued a notice to West Bengal Minister of MSME and Textiles Chandranath Sinha to appear for questioning this week in connection with the cattle smuggling case.

Sources said that on March 22, the ED sleuths raided the residence of the state minister at Bolpur in Birbhum district and at the end of the raid the minister's mobile phone was also seized by the investigating sleuths.

After extracting the data from the mobile, sources added, the sleuths have secured some crucial documents related to the case. Following this the ED had felt the necessity to interrogate Sinha, known to be a close confidant of party strongman Anubrata Mondal, who is currently in judicial custody at Tihar



jail in New Delhi in the cattle smuggling case.

During the raid and search operations, sources said, the ED sleuths also recovered cash worth over Rs 41 lakh from Sinha's residence. Since the minister then could not give any satisfactory answer about the source of this huge cash, sources added, the ED sleuths will also interrogate him in that matter once he appears at the central agency's Salt Lake.

On the day of the raid and search operations,

the minister, however, denied detailed comments on the cash recovery issue. "Let ED make claims on what they have recovered. But I will not make any comment on it," he said.

It is learnt that ED has informed the Election Commission about the cash recovery considering the model code of conduct is in place throughout the country. The matter will also be brought to the notice of the Income Tax department.

Can BJP's Surendran create Amethi show in Wayanad?

IAN S

WAYANAD: With the BJP declaring its candidate K. Surendran in the Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency, the party has made it clear that it is going to give a tough fight to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who is seeking re-election from here.

BJP announced the name of its Kerala state unit chief on Sunday night and hopes for an Amethi show here too.

Surendran has earlier made several attempts to enter the Lok Sabha and State Assembly, but has lost everytime. This time he is, hoping to make it to the Lok Sabha. If one looks into the voting pattern and the overall profile of the Wayanad constituency, things may not be very easy for him.

Rahul Gandhi won Wayanad seat in the 2019 polls with a margin of 4.31 lakh votes, the highest in the state.



The CPI candidate came second. And Tushar Velappally -- who heads the BJDJS -- an ally of the BJP-led NDA -- finished a very poor third garnering only 78,000 votes, which then was a mere 7.25 per cent of the total votes cast.

The CPI has fielded Kannur born Annie Raja, the wife of CPI General Secretary D. Raja, this time against Rahul Gandhi though the party is a part of the INDIA bloc. In all the four seats that the CPI is contesting in Kerala, it is fighting the Congress candidate,

making the alliance a mockery in the state.

"Forget what happened at Wayanad in 2019, it's a new poll battle this time, we will see what's in store this time," was Surendran's first reaction on his candidature.

Now with Surendran also pitching in, there will be a long list of national leadership from all the three political fronts trooping in the hilly constituency of Wayanad. But the question now is can Surendran do what Union Minister Smriti Irani achieved in Amethi.

Assam: Former Union Minister Bharat Narah resigns from Congress

IAN S

GUWAHATI: In a setback to Congress in Assam, the party's MLA Bharat Chandra Narah resigned on Monday.

The Naoboicha MLA has sent his resignation letter to Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge. Narah wrote: "I do hereby resign from the Indian National Congress with immediate effect."

This comes after Bharat Narah quit his post of Chairman of the party's media cell in Assam, after his wife Raneer Narah was denied a ticket for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.

Bharat Narah was elected to the state Assembly six times on a Congress ticket. He consecutively won Dhakuakhana constituency from 1985 to 2011, and was also a Cabinet Minister in the state.

In 2021, he moved to Naoboicha seat in Lakhimpur district, and was again elected on a Con-



gress ticket. Meanwhile, Raneer Narah was a strong contender for the ticket in Lakhimpur seat in Assam this time. She won this Lok Sabha constituency thrice and was once elected to Rajya Sabha as well.

The Congress leader also served as a Union Minister in the Manmohan Singh-led government at the Centre.

However, Congress, this time, picked Uday Shankar Hazarika instead of Raneer Narah for contesting from Lakhimpur seat. He switched from BJP in December last year.

Kangana, Arun Govil, Naveen Jindal, Abhijit Gangopadhyay in BJP's fifth LS list

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Sunday released its fifth list of Lok Sabha candidates, comprising 111 names from 17 states, including actress Kangana Ranaut from Himachal Pradesh's Mandi, Ramayan's Ram Arun Govil from UP's Meerut, former Union Minister Maneka Gandhi from UP's Sultanpur, and industrialist Naveen Jindal from Haryana's Kurukshetra.

Former Calcutta High Court judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay, who quit the Congress, from Rajampet.

In Bihar, the party has fielded Union Ministers R.K. Singh from Arrah, Nityanand Rai from Ujjain, and Giriraj Singh from Begusarai. Former Union Ministers Ravi Shankar Prasad from Patna Sahib, Rajiv Pratap Rudy from Saran, Radha Mohan Singh from Purvi Champaran, and Ram Kripal Yadav from Pataliputra also figure in the list. JMM's Sita Soren, who



recently joined the party, has been fielded from Dumka (ST).

Former Karnataka Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar, who recently returned to the party from the Congress, has been fielded from Belgaum and former state minister K. Sudhakar from Chikballapur. In Kerala, state chief K. Surendran has been fielded from Wayanad, where Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is contesting.

Sitting MP Varun Gandhi has been denied a ticket from UP's Pilibhit and UP minister Jitin Prasad fielded in his place.

Longtime Bareilly MP and former Union Minister Santosh Gangwar has also been dropped and Chhtrapal Singh Gangwar was named the candidate.

The BJP has fielded Atul Garg from Ghaziabad, as sitting MP and Union Minister, Gen V.K. Singh (ret'd) expressed his unwillingness to contest the polls.

Over \$447 million in funding raised by 22 Indian startups last week

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The Indian startups continued to raise funds at a normal pace, and last week, 22 startups secured over \$447 million in the country.

This included nine growth-stage deals and 11 early-stage deals, reports Entracker. "Two startups kept their transaction details undisclosed," the report mentioned.

About 30 startups had raised around \$287 million, which included 20 early-stage and six growth-stage companies in the week of March 11-16.

Bengaluru-based startups led the funding with



14 deals, followed by Delhi-NCR with three deals.

Among the growth-stage deals, nine startups raised \$420.35 million in funding last week.

Healthtech firm Engrail secured the highest fund-

ing at \$157 million. Following closely behind were the audio series platform Pocket FM, healthtech startup Ultrahuman, and content-to-commerce company The Good Glamm Group, which received

\$103 million, \$35 million, and \$30 million in funding, respectively. Additionally, Atlan, a data collaboration software provider, Curefood, a cloud kitchen startup, Jumbotail, a B2B marketplace and retail platform, Dvara KGFS, an NBFC operating in remote rural areas, and SubKo Coffee, a coffee brand, also successfully raised funds last week.

Moreover, 11 early-stage startups collectively secured \$27 million in funding.

Optimo Loan, an MSME-focused lending-tech startup, led the pack, followed by gaming startup Liquidnitro, boutique hotels firm Brij Hotels, and climate tech platform Sprih.

SUV belonging to J.P. Nadda's wife stolen in Delhi

IAN S

NEW DELHI: An SUV registered in the name of BJP President J.P. Nadda's wife was reportedly stolen from south Delhi and is still yet to be traced, police said.

The incident unfolded on March 19 when the

vehicle's driver, identified as Joginder, left the white Toyota Fortuner at a service centre in Govindpur.

He returned home briefly, only to find the vehicle missing upon his return. Promptly, an FIR was lodged, and an investigation commenced.

"Police team scrutinising CCTV footage discovered that the vehicle was last seen heading towards Gurugram," said a police official.

However, despite extensive efforts, there has been no breakthrough in locating the stolen car.

Sources said that the vehicle was registered in Himachal Pradesh in the name of J.P. Nadda's wife.

The Delhi Police have assured a thorough investigation into the matter and bring the culprits to justice.

Qazigund woman upgrades traditional Kashmiri Samovar, introduces gas version

UMAISAR GULL GANIE

QAZIGUND: Breaking barriers and defying odds, a school dropout woman has innovated and transformed the traditional 'Samovar' typically used by Kashmiri households to boil tea, using electricity and LPG as fuel, aside from coal.

The innovation simplifies the preparation of Kashmiri 'Noon Chai' (salt tea), making it easier, faster and cleaner, while preserving its traditional cultural importance.

Hailing from the Cheki-Badwani village of Qazigund in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, Shazia Jan, 30, said she studied up to Class 12 but had to stop due to her family's financial difficulties.

Shazia said, "A few years ago, I got the idea to improve the Samovar. It is an important part of our culture and we use it a lot at home. One day, when guests came and our gas ran out, we tried making tea with the



Samovar, but it was slow. That got me thinking why not make a Samovar that can use different types of energy."

Shazia then upgraded the 'Samovar' by adding a curved gas burner and adjusting the regulator for small gas cylinders. She said her father played a crucial role in fine-tuning the idea and

together they revamped its burner. Faced with the unavailability of transformation materials in the market, they improvised using household items, crafting a prototype that proved to be a resounding success.

"This new Kashmiri gas Samovar functions like the traditional one but reduces the labour

of handling coal and shortens tea preparation time significantly. It can serve 25 cups in just 10 to 15 minutes compared to the traditional 40-45 minutes, saving both time and effort without creating ash," she explained. "The extra heat, which was wasted in the traditional samovar, can now be utilised for cooking."

After introducing the gas-powered Samovar, Shazia didn't stop innovating. "I have also developed an electric version of the Samovar which has a timer for swift tea preparation. It prioritises user safety by preventing over-boiling," she said.

Shazia has received many awards for her innovations, including recognition at a festival of the National Innovation Foundation (NIF) held at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. She has now established her own startup, and there is growing demand for her Samovars.

Shazia has appealed to the government to support her in further developing her startup, which could also generate employment opportunities. "Women have the potential, within the framework of Islamic teachings, to start their own businesses and contribute to transforming society," she said—(KNO)

Secretary Heath reviews functioning of SKIMS



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Secretary Health & Medical Education and Director SKIMS, Dr Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Monday convened a review meeting regarding functioning of SKIMS.

The issues which came up for discussion in the

meeting included functioning of CT Scan, availability of Isotopes and Biochemical reagents, installation of Wide Bore CT Simulator and shifting of CT Scan from DRDO Hospital to SKIMS.

The Secretary sought the details of various issues concerning work-

ing of the institute. He instructed the officers to resolve the issues affecting smooth functioning of the hospital at the earliest so that patient care is not hampered.

Later on, Dr Abid Rasheed along with officers also took on spot visit of the CT installation site.

Four residential houses gutted in Nowpora blaze

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

SRINAGAR: At least four residential houses were damaged in a fire incident that broke out in Nowpora area of Srinagar late Sunday night, officials said on Monday.

An official said that two residential houses, double-story, were damaged in the

fire incident at Nowpora Srinagar.

He added that the attic portion including roofing, ceiling, and first floor along with household goods of both the houses were severely damaged, while some planks and mirrors of two other adjacent residential houses sustained indirect

damage due to heat and water.

Meanwhile, the family members said, "We are left with nothing as our money, gold, and other wearable clothes were damaged in the blaze, and we request the authorities to kindly help us as we are left with nothing but ashes and a burnt house."—(KNO)

LOK SABHA ELECTION

Voter awareness programmes held in Pulwama

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: In a continuous effort to encourage voter participation and foster civic engagement, the District Administration Pulwama Monday organised a series of awareness programmes under (SVEEP), here.

The Special Voter Enrollment, Education, and Participation (SVEEP) initiative aimed to educate and motivate citizens to exercise their right to vote and contribute to the democratic process.

At least 15 programmes were held at various schools across Pulwama, Tral, Pampore and Rajpora constituencies in collaboration with local authorities and community leaders.

The programmes featured interactive sessions, informative workshops and engaging activities to raise awareness about the importance of voting and the upcoming elections. Through innovative approaches and outreach strategies, the initiative reached a wide range of residents, including youth, women and marginalized communities.

The District Election Officer (DEO) Pulwama, Basharat Qayoom expressed his satisfaction



with the response and engagement from the community. "The goal is to create a culture of active citizenship and empower every eligible voter to make their voice heard. By organizing these awareness programmes we were able to reach out to different segments of the population and emphasize the significance of participating in the electoral process," he said.

The initiative also focused on addressing common misconceptions, clarifying procedures related to voter registration, and promoting voter literacy

among citizens. Through collaborative efforts with local schools, colleges, and community organizations, the programmes successfully conveyed the message of democratic participation and the impact of collective decision-making.

In addition to raising awareness about voting rights, the programmes also highlighted the importance of inclusive and diverse representation in the electoral process. By promoting voter registration and engagement among underrepresented groups, the initiative sought to promote equality

and diversity in the democratic space.

As part of the SVEEP Pulwama initiative, various online and offline platforms were utilized to disseminate information, engage with the community, and encourage voter registration. The dynamic and multi-faceted approach ensured that the message reached a wider audience and resonated with individuals from diverse backgrounds and age groups.

Emphasizing the need for sustained efforts to maintain the momentum and ensure continued participation in the electoral process, the DEO further added, "this is just the beginning of our journey towards building an informed and empowered society. We are committed to continuing our efforts to reach out to every citizen, address their concerns, and promote a culture of voting as a fundamental right and responsibility".

The success of the awareness programmes organized by the District Nodal officer SVEEP Pulwama serves as a testament to the commitment of local authorities and the community to uphold democratic values and strengthen civic engagement.

Death toll in Russia terror attack rises to 133

IANIS

MOSCOW: The death toll in the terror attack in Moscow's Crocus City Hall has risen to 133, the Russian Emergencies Ministry said on Sunday.

According to the ministry, 152 people were injured in the incident, CNN reported.

Moscow region governor Andrey Vorobyov said the kin of the deceased would get \$32,500.

Russian Security Service (FSB) director Alexander Bortnikov told Russian President Vladimir Putin that 11 people have been detained in connection with the attack on the Crocus complex near Moscow on Friday, according to Russian state media.

The US had warned Russia about the possible terror attack, which was rejected by President Putin, terming it as "provocative".

All four terrorists directly involved in the attack are among those detained, TASS reported. State-owned Russian news agency TASS also reported that the assailants had "contacts on the Ukrainian side."

Following a preliminary

inspection, the committee said the terrorists used automatic weapons, along with ammunition that they had left behind in the concert hall.

The committee added

ed fleeing concertgoers and videos of the scene showed bodies strewn like litter.

The assailants also reportedly lobbed hand grenades and used incen-

in Moscow. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims. India stands in solidarity with the government and the people of the Russian Federation in this hour of grief.

The US has condemned the attack, describing it as a "terrible incident".

Condemning the terror attack, Sri Lanka said, "Such acts of violence against civilians are abhorrent and have no place in civilized society."

"The government and the people of Sri Lanka extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims, the people and the government of Russia at this time of grief," said the statement.

Pakistan condemned the "horrendous" attack carried out at a concert hall in Moscow, the Pakistani Foreign Ministry said.

"We express our deepest sympathies with the families of the victims," the ministry said in a late-night statement.

Russia's Foreign Ministry called the shooting a "terrorist attack" and urged the entire world community to condemn the attack.



that ballistic, genetic and fingerprint examinations are being carried out.

It has also been established that the terrorists used flammable liquid to start a fire on the premises, it said.

The mall was attacked around 8 p.m. (local time) on Friday just as a concert of famous rock band Piknik was about to begin at its music venue, causing chaos, RT reported.

The assailants target-

ed to set the building on fire.

The terrorist attack has drawn world-wide condemnation.

UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron said, "We offer our heartfelt condolences and express our deepest sympathy to the families of the many victims."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi slammed the terrorist attack, and said: "We strongly condemn the heinous terrorist attack

Drug peddler arrested in Ganderbal: Police

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In continuation to war against drugs, Jammu and Kashmir Police in Ganderbal on Monday said to have apprehended a drug peddler along with huge consignment of Psychotropic Substance in the jurisdiction of Police Station Safapora.

On the directions of SSP Ganderbal Shri Sandeep Gupta-IPS under the supervision of DySP Hqs Ganderbal, a routine checkpoint was laid at Kulpora road near Crossing by the Police Party of PS Safapora led by SHO PS Safapora, a police spokesman said in a statement issued.

"One suspicious person coming from Sumbal

towards Safapora, after seeing police party tried to flee from the spot, however the said person was apprehended tactfully. He has been identified as Feroz Ahmad Khanday son of



Gh Mohd Khanday resident of Qamarwari Bund A/P Shalteng, Srinagar. During search, 100 bottles of Codeine Phosphate were recovered from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to police station

where he remains in custody," police said.

In this regard, police said that a case under FIR number 06/2024, under relevant sections of law stands registered at PS Safapora & further investigation has been initiated.

"We urge the common masses that if you witness drug peddling or any other crime anywhere near you, feel free to contact nearest police establishment or dial 112. People are requested to cooperate with police in curbing the menace of drugs from the society. We reassure the community members that police will act tough against the criminals as per law," police said—(KNO)

Awareness programme held at Transit Accommodation Odina Sumbal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: In a significant step towards promoting electoral participation and strengthening democracy, a special awareness programme under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) was Monday conducted at Migrant transit accommodation Odina Sumbal.

The programme was held under the patronage of Chief Education Officer Bandipora/ Nodal Officer Manpower and Trainings, Dr G. M. Pujji.

The program was aimed at enlightening the inhabitants of transit accommodation about the crucial importance of their vote in democratic process.

The event was further enriched by the valuable



participation of members from the civil society, who eloquently spoke on the occasion, highlighting the vital role of vote in strengthening democracy.

The speakers highlighted the direct impact of voting on the quality of governance and the everyday lives of citizens, under-

scoring the fact that every single vote counts towards shaping the future of the nation.

In addition to disseminating key information about the voting process, practical guidance was provided regarding how migrant employees can vote at their current residence.

PDD employees stage silent protest in Srinagar

Demand reinstatement of suspended colleagues

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

SRINAGAR: The employees of the Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDC) staged a silent protest in Srinagar on Monday, demanding the reinstatement of their suspended colleagues.

The silent protest resonated with a call for justice and fair treatment within the department. The employees said, "We stand here

for our suspended colleagues and fairness and due process."

An employee emphasized the importance of unity among PDD personnel, stating, "our strength lies in our unity. By standing together, we demonstrate our commitment to upholding the rights and dignity of every member of our department." KPDC on Saturday suspended 15 more employees and initiated disciplinary proceedings against them—(KNO)

House, 2 structures damaged in fire mishap in Sopore locality

WARIS FAYAZ

SOPORE: A residential house and two structures were damaged in a fire incident in Harwan locality of Sopore's Borna on Monday, officials said.

An official said that massive fire engulfed two structures and a residential house in Harwan

area. He said that soon after the incident police and fire tender reached to the spot and fire was contained, however, two structures were damaged and a house was partially damaged.

Police have taken cognisance of the incident and cause of fire was being ascertained—(KNO)