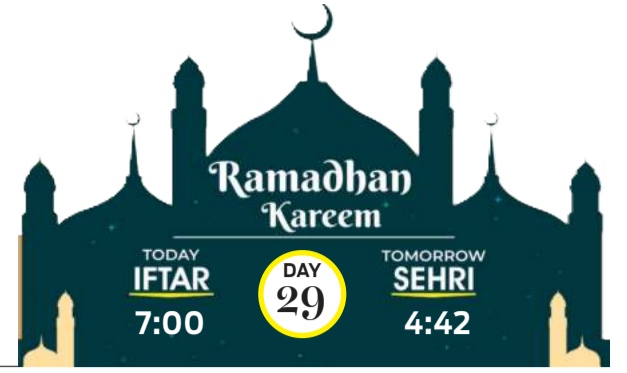


Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication



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3 Miscreants Booked Under PSA In B'la

BARAMULLA: Police in Baramulla have booked 03 persons under PSA for their continuous involvement in anti-national activities, after obtaining formal detention orders from competent authority.

In a statement issued, the spokesman said that he three accused persons identified as Mysir Majeed Malik son of Abdul Majeed resident of Seriwarpura Pattan, Abdul Ahad Dar son of Ghulam Mohd DAR resident of Dar Mohalla Palhallan & Khursheed Ahmad Waza son

BOOKED

Non-Local Shot At By Terrorists In Shopian

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Terrorists fired upon a non-local in Padawan area of south Kashmir's Shopian on Monday evening, in the latest attack on migrant workers.

The victim, identified as Paramjit Singh (Driver), a resident of Delhi, suffered injuries during the

Eid-Ul-Fitr Kashmir Markets Present Festive Splendor



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

SRINAGAR: As the auspicious occasion of Eid ul Fitr draws near, the major markets across Kashmir are bustling with excitement and fervor as shoppers flood the markets to prepare for the celebrations.

Across the valley, markets have transformed into vibrant hubs of activity, adorned with colorful decorations and illuminated with the spirit of the festival.

From traditional markets to modern shopping centers, the streets are alive with the hustle and bustle of eager shoppers. The air is filled with the aroma of delicious sweets and savory delicacies, adding to the festive ambiance.

Among the shoppers, one of the locals from Srinagar

PEOPLE WANT TO look their best for the celebrations, and our shops are brimming with a variety of options to cater to their needs,

Khanyar told KNO, every year, the atmosphere during Eid ul Fitr becomes electrifying in Kashmir. "It's not just about shopping; it's a time when families come together, and the entire community rejoices," says Muneer.

He added that we look forward to Eid ul Fitr every year. It's a time when we get to showcase our culture through our traditional attire and customs.

Alongside local Fayiq Ahmad, echoing the sentiment while saying the market rush is

BJP Expecting Crowd Of Over 2 Lac In PM's April 12 Rally

HM's Visit Postponed, Rajnath Singh To Visit On April 15

ALI ASAD

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is expecting a turnout of over two lakh attendees for the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally slated to take place in Udhampur on April 12, this year. This will be the Prime Minister's 3rd public rally this year alone.

Sources said that the much-anticipated meeting with Home Minister Amit Shah, initially slated for April 9 in Jammu, has been postponed. However, political engagements continue as a gathering in Basohli, Kathua, has been arranged for April 15, focusing on discussions pertinent to the Udhampur parliamentary constituency, represented by Defense Minister Rajnath Singh. Adding to the political fervor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to address a rally in Udhampur on April 12.



State party president Ravindra Raina told reporters that there is an expected turnout of over two lakh attendees for the Prime Minister's rally. Acknowledging the logistical challenges posed by such a large gathering, meticulous planning is underway to address essential amenities such as water supply, restroom facilities, and parking arrangements.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had earlier unveiled an extensive campaign strategy, enlisting the support of 40 leaders, including prominent national figures and local stalwarts.

Among the high-profile leaders slated to participate in the campaign were Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP National President Jagat Prakash Nadda, Defense Minister Rajnath Singh, and Home Minister Amit Shah. Additionally, the lineup includes other notable personalities such as National Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister

BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY (BJP) HAD EARLIER UNVEILED AN extensive campaign strategy, enlisting the support of 40 leaders, including prominent national figures and local stalwarts.

Kashmir Witnesses 30% Drop In Mutton Sales This Ramadan

RAHAN QAYOOM MIR

SRINAGAR: This Ramadan, Kashmir experienced a significant decline of approximately 30 percent in mutton sales, with around Rs 3 crore worth of sheep being consumed daily during the holy month so far.

Mehraj ud Din, General Secretary of the Mutton Dealers Association, informed that

nearly 15 to 20 trucks of sheep have been arriving in Kashmir on a regular basis this year, compared to 30-35 trucks in previous years.

The previous year witnessed over 800 truckloads of sheep in 28 days, he said.

Din said the decrease in sales is due to various factors, including the off-season for mutton sales and the challenges posed by road closures

Production, Exports Surge GI Tag Reunites Artisans With Handicrafts In Kashmir

MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: Forty-four year-old Mohammad Saleem a decade before had given up his profession as a shawl weaver.

He got associated with other trades, which although didn't give him enough money and satisfaction.

Come 2023, Jammu and Kashmir Pashmina along with other handicrafts got Geographic Indication (GI) Tag, which brought back the value of this prized craft of Kashmir.

Cashing in on the GI tag, Saleem has reunited with his craft and has now started weaving the shawls again.

"Few years back, there was no

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MOVIES Schedule

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CREW (HINDI)
12:15PM, 03:00PM, 06:00PM (U/A)

GODZILLA X KONG (U/A)
02:30PM, 05:30PM (ENG)
11:45AM (HINDI)

THE FIRST OMEN (ENG)
03:30PM, 06:30PM (A)

SHAITAAN (HINDI)
12:45PM (U/A)

WWD clarifies on video regarding unsafe drinking water supply from Doodhganga

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: The Water Works Division, Srinagar Monday issued clarification in reference to recent video circulated in the social media regarding polluted and unsafe drinking water from Doodhganga water treatment plant.

In a statement issued here, it was given out that the mandate of the Public Health Engineering Department is to provide safe and wholesome i.e. potable drinking water to the general public and the same practice is being followed in letter and spirit at Doodhganga water treatment plant (WTP) as well which caters to entire uptown area of the Srinagar City.

The raw water source at the plant is 18km long, 600mm dia gravity line called Nauhar line whose headworks are situated at Surasyar Chadoora and takes-off from Doodhganga Nallah (Kanir Khul) and the Bottom Lift Station situated at Kralpora from where raw

water is being pumped to the treatment plant located on the higher contour.

During peak season most of the raw water requirement is fulfilled from the Nauhar line itself and very minimal water is being lifted from the lift station. However during lean season raw water from both Nauhar line and lift station is being fed to the treatment units. Furthermore 80% of Raw Water for Doodhganga WTP is being supplied by Nauhar Nallah which is free from Coliform bacteria & other impurities.

Treated water at the plants complies with the set standards for the drinking water as prescribed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). Daily tests for treated water are carried out at the plant and the results are uploaded on the IMIS Portal which are accessible and can be viewed by the general public. Water from the plant is supplied to the more than 5 lakh people and no health issues with



regard to drinking water is being reported from anywhere and the question of supplying contaminated water to the consumers does not arise at all.

All the treatment processes viz. Sedimentation, Clariflocculation, Filtration and Disinfection are strictly followed at the plant. The purification of water supplied from the treatment plant is carried as per the standard practices/procedures and quality parameters of the

treated water are ensured to confirm to those of drinking quality standards of WHO and Indian standards IS 10500 / CPHEEO Manual.

Water is supplied to the consumers only after the in-house

water testing laboratory confirms the quality parameters of the treated water as per the prescribed limits.

This in-house water testing laboratory also recommends the changes to be made to the flow levels of water depending on the silt load of water for better efficiency.

Random sampling and testing is done at consumer points so as to ascertain the quality of water being received by the consumers. These tests are also uploaded on the website of the ministry of drinking water and sanitation monthly.

The water from the treatment plant of Doodhganga prior to its supply to the consumers is tested for the following parameters i.e., Colour, Odour, Taste, Turbidity, Alkalinity, Acidity, PH, Total Chlorides, Total Solids, Residual Chlorine, Coliform Qualitative Test.

While the mandate of the PHE department is to supply the safe and potable water facilities to the general public,

the discharge of the liquid waste into the Nallah is to be checked through concerned agencies as per the statutory obligations. This sewage load getting in the Nallah water shall only increase the treatment cost of water and shall in no case affect the quality of treated water being supplied to the consumers.

The notion as if raw water from DG Nallah is supplied to the consumers is strongly refuted. The status of health of DG Nallah and water supplied from the treatment plant to the consumers are two different and separate issues. Had such contaminated water been supplied to the consumers there would have been cholera outbreaks on daily bases. The Public Health Engineering Department is committed to provide safe drinking water to the consumers through WTPs.

Being a responsible citizen, one should desist from spreading such false information amongst masses.

LS Polls

DEO B'la conducts inspection of MCMC, Media Center

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: The District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa Monday conducted a thorough inspection of the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC), Media Centre, and Election Control Room in Baramulla.

The aim of the inspection was to get firsthand appraisal of their functioning and efficiency in serving their respective roles during Lok Sabha Elections 2024. The District Election Officer was accompanied by Nodal officer MCC, Syed Qamar Sajad; Nodal Officer MCMC, Dr Zahoor Ahmad Raina; Dy. DEO Baramulla, Ab Rehman Bhat and Member Secretary MCMC Iftikhar Ahmad.



During the inspection, DEO personally assessed the operations of these crucial facilities, ensuring they are well-equipped and prepared to handle their responsibilities effectively. The meticulous evaluation underscores the commitment of the electoral authorities to uphold

transparency and integrity in the electoral process.

Minga Sherpa emphasized the importance of these facilities in facilitating fair and transparent elections, reaffirming the administration's dedication to ensuring a smooth and impartial electoral process in Baramulla.

SVEEP Team organises mega awareness programme for tribal Communities

GMK NEWS NETWORK

RAJOURI: District Election Officer, (District Development Commissioner), Rajouri, Om Prakash Bhagat, Monday supervised a mega awareness programme under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative here for tribal communities in Upper Alal.

The event was organized by the District SVEEP team led by DNO SVEEP Prof. Mohammad Iqbal Raina, in collaboration with members Prof. (Dr) Khalid Rayaz, Mohammad Ayaz Raina lecturer, and SVEEP team 87 Thannamandi Sub Division, Prof. Ather Aziz Raina, Mushtaq Ahmed, Aalia Raina and others.

Over three hundred individuals from tribal communities from the surrounding areas attended the programme.

During the programme, Prof Mohammad Iqbal Raina underscored the significance of voting in democracy, urging all



present to actively engage in the electoral process by exercising their right to vote. Mohd Ayaz Raina lecturer, emphasized on the fundamental right to vote as enshrined in the constitution and the pivotal role each voter plays in shaping the democratic landscape.

In his address, ADC, Rajiv Khajuria lauded the virtues of democracy, emphasizing the power of choice it bestows upon citi-

zens. He extended heartfelt appreciation to the officials of District SVEEP team Rajouri and SVEEP team 87 Thannamandi Sub Division for their dedicated efforts in organizing the impactful awareness programme.

The event concluded with a Voter's Pledge administered by the chief guest, with all participants vocally affirming their commitment.

GDC Vijaypur organises pledge taking ceremony under SVEEP



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SAMBA: In continuation to series of activities being organized under SVEEP voter awareness campaign, NSS Unit (KHIDMAT) of Government Degree College Vijaypur organized a pledge taking ceremony on the importance of voting in democracy Monday.

The program was organized under the able guidance and supervision of the esteemed Principal, Prof. Vandana Gupta. NSS volunteers, students and faculty members took the pledge and showed their commitment towards voting and in choosing their representatives for the upcoming elections.

The Principal, while

speaking, asserted that voting in a democracy is of utmost importance as it lets citizens choose their representatives in forming the government. She further stated that voting and taking part in electoral process is more than a right and made sure that all the students of the college register themselves for the upcoming elections.

The event was coordinated by Prof. Mamta Gupta, Dr. Anoop Kumar Bhagat, Prof. Ritu Bhagat, Prof. Poomam Kundan, Dr. Manoj Heer, Dr. Naseem Chowdhary and Prof. Meetu Sharma and coordinated by Dr. Priyanka Ganjoo, Dr. Radhika Rasyal, and Prof. Renuka Kundal.

DEO B'la chairs LS Election preparedness meeting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: In view of the General Elections to the Lok Sabha 2024, the District Election Officer, Baramulla, Minga Sherpa Monday convened a meeting of all the designated Nodal Officers at his office chambers.

The Nodal Officer MCC, Syed Qamar Sajad, the Nodal Officer MCMC, Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina, the Chief Planning Officer, Javid Ahmad, and other officers responsible for the smooth conduct of elec-

tions in the district Baramulla attended the meeting. The primary objective of the meeting was to conduct a comprehensive review and evaluation of all preparations necessary to ensure the seamless conduct of the 18th Lok Sabha Elections in the district.

The meeting held thorough discussions regarding the arrangements in place for the conduct of the elections and the need for any additional provisions. The DEO instructed the nodal officers to work

seamlessly as the election date was approaching.

Minga Sherpa further directed all the nodal officers to promptly address any impending issues in advance that could potentially hinder the smooth conduct of the elections.

Meanwhile, the second phase of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) randomization for the Lok Sabha Elections 2024 was also held in the presence of the Nodal Officer MCC and the member secretary MCMC, Iftikhar Ahmad.

2nd round of Election Training for Polling Staff held in Anantnag

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: In preparation for the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024, a comprehensive 2nd round of training session was Minday organized for polling staff in Anantnag.

The training, aimed at ensuring the smooth conduct of the electoral process, was organized under the leadership of District Election Officer (DEO) Anantnag, SF.Hamid.

The election training

was conducted in seven different venues including Dak Bunglow Khanabal, Government Degree Colleges of Anantnag (Women), Kokernag and Bijbehara, Town halls of Aishmuqam, Achabal and Rasool Mir Auditorium Dooru.

The training focused on enlightening officers about their pivotal roles and responsibilities during polling at their designated stations. Various critical aspects were covered

during the session, including the proper usage of both statutory and non-statutory forms essential for the electoral process.

The officers were also briefed extensively on the Model Code of Conduct, emphasizing adherence to ethical and legal guidelines throughout the election period.

A significant highlight of the training was the detailed discussion on facilitating voting for diverse groups of voters. Special attention

was given to procedures for accommodating individuals such as the infirm, Persons with Disabilities (PWD), elderly, absent voters and other groups requiring specific assistance. This segment underscored the importance of inclusive and accessible electoral practices.

Furthermore, to equip the polling officers with practical skills, a demonstration on the operation of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) was

conducted. Officers were trained in fixing various paper seals on the EVMs, ensuring familiarity with the technical aspects of the voting process.

Speaking on the occasion, the Nodal Officer training highlighted the significance of such training sessions in ensuring the credibility and transparency of elections. He emphasized the critical role of polling officers in upholding the democratic process and urged them to execute their duties diligently.

Proactive voter awareness campaign held in Ramban

GMK NEWS NETWORK

RAMBAN: A proactive voter awareness campaign under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program, unfolded in Ramban district to inspire maximum public participation in the electoral process.

Organised on the direction of District Election Officer Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, the event was led by SDM Gool, Pawan Goswami and coordinated by Tehsildar, S. Harjeet Singh and CDPO, Bashir Ahmed, a dedicated camp was organised at Government Degree College, Gool, along with main markets of Gool and Sangaldan.

Themed 'Mera Pehla Vote,

Desh ke Liye' and 'Every Vote Matters,' the campaign highlighted the significance of active participation in elections, especially among youth and women. Through educational sessions and community engagement activities, participants were encouraged to exercise their voting rights in the upcoming elections, fostering inclusivity and democratic empowerment.

SDM Gool, Pawan Goswami, reiterated the SVEEP teams commitment in ensuring active involvement of all segments of society in the electoral process, emphasizing that such initiatives strengthen the democratic fabric and develop civic responsibility among citizens.

First randomization of polling staff successfully conducted in G'bal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: The District Election Office Ganderbal Monday successfully completed the first randomization of polling staff for the upcoming General Elections to Lok Sabha 2024.

The process was carried out under the supervision of the District Election Officer, Shyambir, in presence of Deputy District election Officer Ganderbal, Abid Iqbal Malik, District Informatics Officer Ganderbal for ensuring transparency and fairness in the selection procedure.

The DEO oversaw the entire procedure, which was conducted using specially designed software developed by Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, to ensure complete randomness and impartiality.

Awareness programme about Child Marriage Act held in Kupwara

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Mission Vatasalya through its Child Welfare Committee Unit Kupwara Minday conducted an Awareness programme about Prohibition of Child Marriage under Child Marriage Act, 2006 at Alexandra Secondary School Kupwara.

Chairperson Child Welfare Committee Unit Kupwara, Abdul Rasheed Malik members of the Committee, students and staff participated on the occasion.

During the programme, the participants were sensitized about the demerits of early childhood marriage

and its prohibition under the law. It was informed that anybody having information about the child marriage can report the same to police and Child Marriage Prohibition Officer who can take action under the provisions of law.

It was also informed to the participants that if there has been any instance of child marriage, a decree for nullity of the same can be sought from District Court.

Later, an interactive session was also held in the School during which the students interacted with the experts and cleared their doubts.

OFFICE OF THE ZONAL EDUCATION OFFICE KUNZER 193404

No: ZE0/K/24/31-34

Email: zeokunzer2017@gmail.com

Dated: 06-04-2024

Mr. Abdul Rashid Mir
Master Govt. MS Waripora,
R/O: Maidanpora Kupwara.

SHOW CAUSE NOTICE

Whereas, you remained un-authorizedly absent from your legitimate duties w.e.f.05-09-2023 without seeking any permission from the competent authority and;

Whereas, you have been served multiple show-cause notices from time to time through this office No. ZE0/KNZ/23/1170-71 dated 24-11-2023 and ZE0/KNZ/24/1637 dated 02-02-2024 and followed by the Chief Education Officer Baramulla's Notice No. CEO/BlA/IMW/146157-59 dated 15-02-2023 at your last known address but till date neither you responded to said notices nor resumed your legitimate duties.

Whereas, remaining un-authorizedly absent from your legitimate duties attracts action as warranted in terms of Article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume 1) of 1956, which is read as under: - "Absence without leave or after the end of leave involves loss of appointment".

Now, therefore before any action as warranted under Article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume 1) of 1956 is initiated against you, you are hereby provided an opportunity to explain the reasons which led you remain un-authorizedly absent from your legitimate duties from Sep-2023. Your reply must reach this Office (Zonal Education Officer Kunzer) within five (05) days positively, failing which it shall be construed that you have nothing to say in this regard and necessary action shall be initiated against you without further notice.

DIPK-49-24
DT: 08/04/2024

Zonal Education Officer
Kunzer

IN JK'S POLITICAL TERRAIN

Newcomers have 'triumphed' over Seasoned Veterans in Past

ALI ASAD

SRINAGAR: In the dynamic landscape of Jammu and Kashmir politics, renowned leaders have faced unexpected defeats. From Dr. Farooq Abdullah to Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, several prominent figures have experienced electoral setbacks, shaping the political narrative over the years.

Traditionally, the National Conference (NC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) have wielded influence in the Kashmir Valley, while the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress have held sway in the Jammu region.

In a notable instance, NC leader Dr. Farooq Abdullah faced defeat at the hands of PDP's Tariq Hameed Karra during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. Karra clinched victory with 50.58 percent



of the votes, besting Farooq Abdullah's 37.04 percent. However, Farooq Abdullah reclaimed his seat in a subsequent by-election in 2017, following Karra's departure from the PDP.

Similarly, PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti, who secured the Anantnag seat in 2004 and 2014, suffered defeat in 2019 when NC's Hasnain Masoodi emerged victorious.

Mufti Mohammad

Sayeed, while successful in securing the Anantnag seat in 1998, faced defeat in the subsequent 1999 elections against NC's Ali Mohammad Nayak. Even stalwarts from the BJP faced electoral setbacks. Chamanlal Gupta, a prominent BJP figure, was defeated by Congress candidate Chaudhary Lal Singh in the 2004 elections for the Udhampur seat. In 2014, Congress veteran Ghulam Nabi Azad

faced defeat at the hands of BJP's Dr. Jitendra Singh in the same constituency.

Dr. Jitendra Singh's victory was further solidified in 2019 when he triumphed over Vikramaditya Singh of the royal family for the Udhampur seat. These electoral outcomes signify the ebb and flow of political fortunes in the region, with incumbents and challengers navigating a complex electoral landscape.

Udhampur, Anantnag, and Srinagar parliamentary seats have witnessed significant political upheavals over the years, reflecting the diverse and evolving political preferences of the electorate. As the region braces for future elections, the legacy of these electoral battles continues to shape the contours of Jammu and Kashmir's political narrative—(KNO)

South African apple imports cause price decline for Kashmiri apples

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: With South African apples now entering Indian markets, the prices of Kashmiri apples have seen a further decline, resulting in significant losses for buyers and growers.

Efforts by the South African government to expand its market share in India have received a boost with a new agreement between India and South Africa, allowing in-transit sterilisation of South African apples and pears. This has enabled South African fruit to reach retail markets across the country more quickly, maintaining their freshness.

Growers and buyers, expressed their dismay over the current situation. They said there has been a drastic decrease in apple prices compared to rates during the main apple season in October-November 2023.

"The increasing pres-

ence of South African apples in retail supermarkets and e-commerce platforms across the country has further reduced demand for Kashmiri apples, thereby lowering prices and causing losses

meted, leading to losses for growers, he said.

He highlighted the good demand during October-November last year but lamented the reduced demand this time, which he said was exacerbated

who had purchased apples at higher rates last autumn are now receiving less than half of the price, while also incurring additional expenses of around Rs 300 per box for cold storage.

Despite bringing the issue of apple imports to the attention of authorities, growers said no tangible action has been taken to address their concerns.

Bashir Ahmad Basheer, chairman of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers Cum Dealers Union, expressed concern over the losses faced by buyers due to reduced demand compared to the previous year.

"Rates have further declined in recent weeks due to the surge in South African apple imports, which has led to over 40 percent losses for growers," he said.

Bashir sought government support to prioritise domestic produce and urged immediate steps to alleviate growers' losses—(KNO)



SDA, Go Green undertake sanitation drive in Sonamarg



RAJA SYED RATHER

GANDEBAL: In a concerted effort to promote responsible tourism and safeguard the natural resources of Sonamarg, Go Green Sonamarg on Sunday organised a comprehensive cleanliness drive in and around the main market.

Collaborating with the J&K Forest and Wildlife Department, Forest Protection Force, and the Sonamarg Development Authority (SDA), alongside local stakeholders, the initiative aimed to address environmental concerns and preserve the area's pristine charm.

Supported by locals, stakeholders, and faculty members of Go Green

Sonamarg led by Coordinator Riyaz Ahmad Mir undertook the cleanliness drive at the Main Market of Sonamarg. Volunteers removed litter, debris and waste materials, demonstrating a commitment to environmental stewardship and community engagement.

Expressing gratitude for the collective effort, Coordinator Riyaz Ahmad Mir underscored the vision of Go Green Sonamarg, emphasizing the importance of eco-friendly practices and community involvement.

Chairman of Go Green, Nadeem Qadri, commended the Green Team and stakeholders for their dedication, highlighting the signifi-

cant role played by officers from various departments in ensuring the success of the campaign.

He pledged personal participation in upcoming cleanliness drives, further reinforcing the organisation's dedication to preserving the natural beauty of Sonamarg.

Jammu & Kashmir Eco-Watch invites responsible citizens to join efforts in restoring the golden glory of not only Sonamarg but every tourist destination in the state, including the Jammu Region. The organization emphasizes the collective responsibility of citizens in safeguarding the environment, concluding the cleanup drive with heartfelt thanks to all contributors—(KNO)

Massive Plantation drive organised at Amar Singh College



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Amar Singh College Srinagar, with its resolve to tackle climate change head-on, organized a massive tree plantation drive on Monday.

The initiative was, therefore, undertaken as the first step of a phased endeavor to maximize the green cover within the campus and incorporate unique elements that contribute significantly to the environment.

The focus in the first phase was to plant five hundred mature cedar trees at eleven identified locations.

Leading by example Prof. (Dr) Aijaz Bashir, Nodal Principal Kashmir

Division Colleges and Principal Amar Singh College, planted the first tree at the main avenue to kick-start this momentous drive.

Six avenues and five micro forest clusters were established to act as the vital "aeration lungs," that will contribute to improving air quality and environmental health on campus.

A few intractable patches of land were also converted to micro-forest clusters by the unrelenting spirit of the mentormentees.

300 students were designated as green ambassadors, who will look after the trees planted by them during their academic journey in the college.

The initiative witnessed

resounding support from the local citizens and civil society. One of the prominent neighbors of the institution Mansoor Ahmad Lone, Chief Judicial Magistrate Pulwama, planted the first tree of the micro-forest cluster at the Geography department. He visited the college out of goodwill and supported the initiative.

Other locals also participated actively in the initiative, fostering a sense of community ownership, and ensuring the program's lasting impact.

The Urban Forestry Division of the Forest, Ecology and Environment Department facilitated the event by providing superior quality trees.

Tourism Deptt conducts enforcement drive across Kashmir

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: On the directions of Director Tourism Kashmir, Raja Yaqoob Farooq, Tourism Department Monday conducted



enforcement drives at various tourism destinations viz. Pahalgam, Gulmarg, Srinagar and Doodhpathri to take stock of services extended to tourists.

On the occasion, special focus was laid on curbing the menace of skyrocketing hotel accommodation charges, unilateral fixation of hotel and guest house rates, renewal and registration of hospitality facilities, safe sanitation parameters, parity of logistic charges vis-a-vis services rendered and a lot of other issues.

Various un-registered tourism service providers

were also asked to register themselves with the tourism department.

Moreover, a fine to the tune of Rs 22500 was realized from different stakeholders for violation of vari-

ous provisions of TT Act.

Further, they were instructed to provide services as per rates fixed by the department, and were warned that anybody found overcharging will be taken to task as per TT Act.

Meanwhile, Director Tourism Kashmir, who is also Managing Director J&K Cable Car Corporation has appealed tourists to book tickets for Gondola through online mode only as the Corporation has no means of selling tickets offline. He cautioned them that they should not get themselves fleeced by touts.

Famous springs in Tral on verge of extinction

JAHANGEER GANAIE

PULWAMA: Several renowned springs in Tral town and its adjacent areas in south Kashmir's Pulwama district are facing a dire threat to their existence due to official neglect, raising concerns among residents.

According to residents, the springs in Tral town and its surrounding areas are on the brink of extinction due to both public apathy and governmental indifference. They lamented that people have been discarding waste, including polythene and diapers, into these water bodies, posing a severe threat to their survival.

The Batnag Spring, once renowned for its fresh water and utilised by the entire area for drinking and irrigation purposes, has witnessed significant pollution over the last two decades.

Residents said they



heavily relied on this spring for clean drinking water, but without immediate intervention, its preservation seems unlikely.

Ishfaq Ahmad, a local, expressed concern over the neglect of these springs. "These springs were once known for their pristine water and abundant fish population. However, pollution has led to a drastic decline in their numbers, with authorities failing to take appropriate action," he said.

Locals criticised the Municipal Committee Tral for generating substantial revenue but failing to implement effective measures for

the preservation of these springs, located in the heart of the town and its surroundings. "Without immediate intervention, these water bodies could disappear entirely," they warned.

We have several times informed officials to take immediate steps for the preservation of this spring. We even assured our cooperation; however, they failed to take any action," said a local.

Residents have urged higher authorities to intervene urgently and implement measures for the preservation of these immediate steps for the preservation of these bodies—(KNO)

IN PVT SCHOOLS

No student be victimised by depriving them of necessary documents: DSEK

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: School Education Department has informed that no student in private schools should be victimised by depriving them of necessary documents.

The directives were passed by the Director of School Education Kashmir (DSEK) in a meeting with heads of prominent private schools of the Kashmir division.

"Any dispute on fee is a dispute between the parent and the institution; students shall in no case be victimised by depriving them of a Discharge Certificate, Admit Card etc. which is against RTE Act," DSEK said in the meeting.

The directorate however, notified the general public that no minutes of meeting in this regard have



been issued by DSEK so far.

"Some self-styled organisations are issuing minutes of meeting at their own level misleading the general public which may never be construed as facts and such acts are strongly refuted," DSEK said.

Stating some other important decisions that were taken in the meeting, DSEK said that no admission or any capitation fee shall be charged other than prescribed by the Fee Fixa-

tion Committee.

"The students shall not be overburdened by additional books or additional content other than books prescribed by the government," reads the official communique.

DSEK further said that bus fee shall be charged as approved by FFRC. "However, the drivers and other attendants shall be paid salary during winters as is being paid to other employees of the institution."—(KNO)

Women embellish hands with Henna ahead of Eid

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

SRINAGAR: As Eid ul Fitr approaches, the traditional art of applying henna, known as Mehandi has gripped Kashmir, drawing women and girls to the



markets in large numbers. Many women of various age groups were seen thronging markets, eager to adorn their hands with intricate henna designs.

A woman said that the tradition of applying henna is deeply rooted in the culture, and it's heartening to see so many people embracing it with such enthusiasm.

She added that the surge of interest in henna art-

istry, noting the creativity and passion displayed by customers in selecting their preferred designs.

Another female, Mosina added, Henna application is not just a form of adornment; it's an expression

of identity and tradition. She added that with each stroke of the henna cone, intricate patterns and motifs come to life, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the region.

Likewise, a henna artist, whose stall was bustling with customers eager to get their hands adorned, told KNO as an artist, she is satisfied to see her customers happily leaving her stall when they see the final result.

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Children Parks

The success of a civilization is determined by the fact that how many amenities it has for the elderly, libraries for the students, and playing parks for the children. This metric is one of the key indicators of a welfare state. In our country, cities like Bengaluru have the distinction of having more than five children parks per square mile of the area. Coming to our Srinagar this cuts a sorry figure. Jawahar Nagar, a designated government colony, should have many parks for children. The empty gardens that are omnipresent in this locality cut a sorry figure. Usually, the stray dogs roam here all times of the day and the grass for the most part of the year remains unkempt and the weeds uncut. It is strange that if a government colony is in such conditions, what would be the situation of such parks in other parts of the city? Srinagar city is expanding unscientifically. There is unexplained thrust of horizontal expansion and this is the case with such kind of expansion that every acre of land is Goldust. There are colonies in Srinagar with many square kilometers of area without even a single children's park. The only one honorable exclusion can be said to be, 'Gindun' park where against an entry against charge children can play for ample time. This is a sad fact for the city having a population of almost two million souls. Amusement parks and children's parks are absolutely important for any society. The government must divert attention to this end and develop as many children's parks as possible. We must follow the pattern of cities like Bengaluru where jogging parks and children's parks are given due priority in any colony development scheme.

Is India Set For Another Modi-Led Era?



PROF JASIM MOHAMMAD

Recent surveys suggest a favorable outlook for Narendra Modi to lead the BJP in the 2024 general elections. For instance, the "Mood of the Nation Poll" by India Today indicated that the BJP could win 335 of the 543 directly elected seats in the lower house of parliament. Another survey by India TV-CNX predicted that Modi's National Democratic Alliance coalition could win 399 of the 543 seats. According to a survey reported by Reuters, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is projected to win a clear majority in the upcoming 2024 general elections in India. The survey, which included 35,801 respondents across India, suggests that the BJP and its allies could secure 335 of the 543 directly elected seats in the lower house of parliament. Another survey highlighted by U.S. News indicates that Modi's National Democratic Alliance coalition could win as many as 399 of the 543 seats, with the BJP alone projected to win 342 seats. These surveys suggest a strong position for Modi and the BJP in the forthcoming elections, despite challenges such as inflation and unemployment.

The question of whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi will secure a third consecutive term as Prime Minister in India's 2024 general elections is a subject of immense speculation, analysis, and interest both within India and internationally. Modi's tenure has seen significant political, economic, and social changes in India. Since assuming office in 2014, Narendra Modi has transformed the BJP into a seemingly invincible political force in India. Under his leadership, the party has expanded its footprint across the country, even in regions where it previously had limited influence. The BJP's success can be attributed to a combination of Modi's personal charisma, a robust party organization, effective use of social media and technology in campaigning, and a narrative that combines development with nationalism. Modi's appeal transcends traditional caste and regional divisions, enabling the BJP to consolidate a broad base of support. The party's significant victories in consecutive general elections (2014 and 2019) and numerous state elections under Modi's leadership are indicators to its dominance.

The impact of Modi's welfare policies is also a significant factor. His government has expanded the social safety net, particularly through programs that



distribute tangible goods. These initiatives have been crucial in supporting the weaker sections of the population and have contributed to Modi's popularity. Under Modi's leadership, India has seen unparalleled growth and development. His government's initiatives have significantly improved the country's infrastructure, economy, and digital advancements, making the daily lives of millions of Indians more prosperous and convenient. Modi's charisma and ability to connect with the people have only bolstered his standing as a leader who truly understands the aspirations and challenges of the common man. His commitment to good governance and transparency has restored faith in the political system, while his decisive actions on both the domestic and international fronts have elevated India's stature.

The opposition, fragmented and lacking a cohesive vision for India, finds itself at a significant disadvantage against Modi's well-oiled political machine and his track record of tangible achievements. The public's trust in Modi's leadership is evident from the continuous support and admiration he receives across the nation. This trust is based on hope and on the solid foundation of progress and reforms that have touched every sphere of Indian life.

One of the cornerstones of Modi's appeal has been his emphasis on development and governance. Initiatives such as "Make in India," the Goods and Services Tax (GST), and the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan have been aimed at boosting economic growth, simplifying the tax system, and improving cleanliness and infrastructure, respectively. On the international stage, Modi has positioned India as a formidable global player. His foreign policies have strengthened India's strategic partnerships and enhanced its defence capabilities. Modi and the BJP have also placed a strong emphasis on national security and nationalism, themes that resonate with a significant portion of the Indian electorate. The government's actions in Jammu and Kashmir, its stance against Pakistan, and its efforts to bolster India's military capabilities are seen by many as evidence of a strong and decisive leadership.

Under Narendra Modi's leadership, the government has launched several welfare schemes that have directly impacted the lives of millions of Indians. Initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, aimed at increasing financial inclusion; the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, which provides LPG connections to women of Below Poverty Line (BPL) households; and the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi which offers financial support to farmers, have bolstered Modi's image as a leader who cares about the welfare of the common man. These programs have not only improved the quality of life for many but also solidified Modi's support base among India's rural and underprivileged populations. The digital revolution under Modi's tenure has been another significant achievement. Initiatives like Digital India and the push towards a digital economy have revolutionized how services and governance are delivered. The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) system, for example, has made digital transactions simple and accessible to millions. Such advancements have positioned Modi as a forward-thinking leader who is preparing India for the future.

National security and defence have been paramount in Modi's agenda, with significant investments in defence

infrastructure and the indigenization of defence production under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. Modi's international diplomacy has elevated India's global standing. His personal rapport with global leaders and active engagement in international forums have positioned India as a key player on the world stage. The emphasis on yoga and traditional Indian practices has also been a soft power strategy, enhancing India's cultural influence globally. All these factors, combined with a fragmented opposition that has struggled to present a unified challenge, contribute to the perception that Narendra Modi's victory in the 2024 general elections is likely.

As of now, the opposition parties in India are fragmented and have struggled to present a united front against Modi and the BJP. The Congress party, traditionally the main opposition force, has been weakened by leadership issues and electoral setbacks. The lack of a coherent alternative vision and the absence of a leader who can match Modi's mass appeal have hampered the opposition's ability to challenge the BJP effectively.

So, there is no room for doubt or confusion: Narendra Modi is set to win the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. This victory will not just be a hat trick for Modi but a reaffirmation of India's faith in his vision and leadership. Narendra Modi's victory in the 2024 general elections seems not just probable but inevitable. His governance model, which aligns development with national pride, has created a legacy that will likely propel him to a historic third term.

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Gender Justice And Its Importance



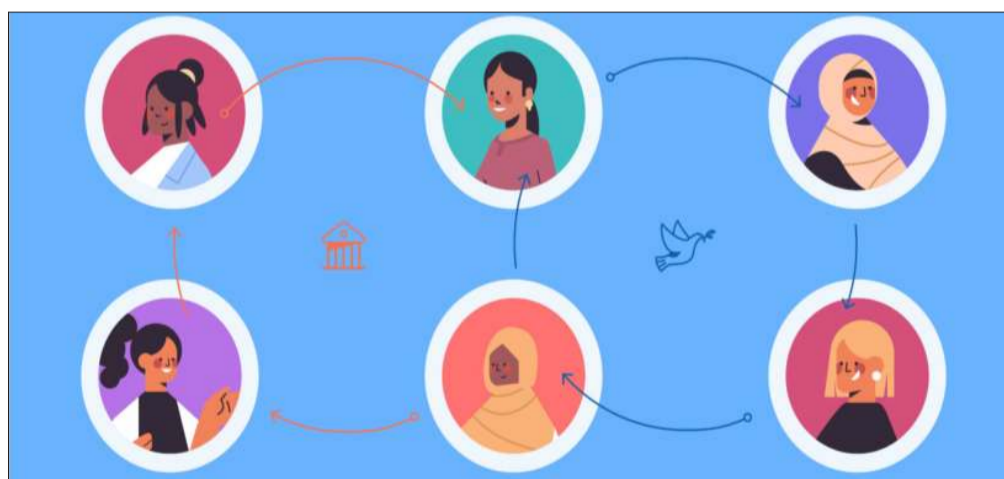
BHARAT DOGRA

Gender justice and equality are very important for humanity's progress. This is now widely recognized and rightly so. However, what needs to be questioned are the claims of the West that it has a leadership role in this regard and hence its model in this context must be widely spread.

The intervention of the USA and close allies in Afghanistan has been frequently associated with taking gender justice there. What is forgotten is that during the short-lived communist rule in this country gender equality and opportunities for women for wider social role were very high in the region around Kabul and when the USA intervened, it mobilized fundamentalist militants who were most opposed to gender justice to end the communist rule along with its gender equality.

At the same time it should be mentioned that the kind of gender equality that the Soviet Union supported communists tried to establish in the region under their control too was a foreign implant and so could not establish roots here.

Briefly what one can say is that the entire process of gradually evolving gender equality and justice in keeping with local culture (which had the best chances of taking



roots in Afghanistan) was very rudely disrupted here by the advent of super-power rivalry, just as the entire process of socio-economic progress was rudely disrupted.

Iran is another country where the West tries to appear as a champion of gender justice. However, the entire process of socio-economic progress including the evolving of gender justice in keeping with local conditions here too was disrupted by the USA and Britain when they planned the coup for the removal of the democratically elected leader Mohammad Mosaddegh. This was replaced by the US-supported Shah regime known best for torturing its opponents and whose malfunctioning ultimately led to the people welcoming the conservative regime which has not been good news for gender equality.

In Iraq, Libya, and several countries of US/western intervention and regime change, the condition of women deteriorated rapidly after Western intervention. In most cases, women are the most impor-

tant members of families and when families suffer so much in such armed interventions and attacks, of course, women's increasing sufferings are closely linked to this.

Moreover in normal times or peace times also it is highly questionable whether the imposition of the Western model of gender justice and equality is helpful. Of course, some Western and west-supported NGOs have done wonderful work in this context (and this writer has also reported on this from several villages), but a closer examination would reveal that this succeeds best when local implementing activists have the wisdom, as they quite often do, to relate and modify their programs in keeping with local cultures and societies. In particular, it is important to remember that local cultures and families too have their strengths, and interventions need to protect these strengths, not uproot them.

In addition, there is the serious question of the extent to which gender justice and equality really exist within Western countries. There

are serious indications of very high levels of distress among women and girls which deserve wider attention. According to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2011-21 of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA, in the USA in 2021, 57% of female high students had persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness, as many as 30% seriously considered attempting suicide, 24% made a suicide plan, 13% actually attempted suicide and 18% experienced sexual violence. In all these respects their condition was more distressing than that of male high school students.

In the USA women comprise 56% of those living in poverty, and their wages are lower than men. About half the women are single women and the Centre for American Progress says that they face the greatest risks and economic insecurity. Nearly 40% of the children are born to unmarried women in the USA, but the socio-economic problems of these women are often very serious. According to statistics compiled

by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 10 to 12 million persons, mostly women, are physically abused by an intimate partner in a year, or nearly 20 per minute. 19% of domestic violence involves a weapon. 1 in 7 women in the USA have been injured by an intimate partner. 1 in 5 have been raped. Date rape affects 35% of women in the age group 18-24, according to data compiled by the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN).

Hardly anyone would accept this as a model of gender justice to be spread widely in the world, yet there has been widespread arrogance in propagating the Western way of life to be the most superior in terms of gender justice, and this, in turn, has led to the neglect of several strengths of non-western societies, which I often notice in my visits to remote villages. The strengths of life patterns I see may not be captured in formal indexes of gender equality, but these are nevertheless significant. At the same time, I'll be the first to admit that a lot, really a lot remains to be done in the context of gender justice in non-western societies, but this will be achieved best by gender justice in tune with local cultures, while western implants will not achieve real success or sustainability, while also bringing in several avoidable problems. (-C-Counter Currents)

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Inspiration To All

The Legacy Of Umar- Ibn- Abdul Aziz

MOHD ISHAQ SHAH

Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz Ibn Marwan: (@Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz ibn Marwan; 680 – February 720) was the eighth Umayyad caliph, ruling from 717 until his death in 720. Umar Bin Abdul Aziz (Ameerul Moomineen) or (Umar Thani) has greatly inspired world leadership and administration. He is credited to have instituted significant reforms to the Umayyad central government, by making it much more efficient and egalitarian. His rulership is marked by the first official collection of hadiths and the mandated universal education to the populace. Despite being the Caliph of such a caliber and valor his personal life has been very weak and meek. He had very tough conditions at home and would draw his salary from the Treasury (Baitul Maal) and spend a tough life.

Personal Life: One of the famous stories about the celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr at his home. It is very pathetic to know that his home was all empty on the occasion of Eid and when he returned home on Arafat, his wife asked him about domestic expenses like toys and dresses for the children he would reply with sadness that there was nothing left with him and suggested that they should take his salary in advance to compensate the expenses. but the fact is that the controller of the treasury would refuse on the pretext that there is no guarantee of his life for the next month. However, if he certifies, the amount can be disbursed. On the very morning of Eid-ul-Fitr, his wife notices him in a crying and weeping mode and bursting into tears. on asking why

it was so, Umar replies that it was only due to the sense of his responsibility towards the nation (people) that would make him feel so dejected and he could not control his tears.

He dispatched emissaries to China and Tibet, inviting their rulers to accept Islam. It was during his three-year reign that Islam was accepted by huge segments of the populations of Persia and Egypt. He also ordered the withdrawal of the Muslim forces on various fronts such as in Constantinople, Central Asia, and Septimania. However, despite this, his reign witnessed the Umayyads gaining many new territories in the Iberian Peninsula. Umar was considered by many to be the first Mujaddid and sixth righteous caliph of Islam after Hasan ibn Ali according to some Muslim scholars. He was honored as Umar al-Thani (Umar II) after his maternal great-grandfather Umar ibn al-Khattab. Umar was likely born in Medina around 680. His father, Abd al-Aziz ibn Marwan, belonged to the wealthy Umayyad clan resident in the city, while his mother, Layla bint Asim, was a granddaughter of the second Rashidun caliph Umar (634-644). His lineage from the much-respected Caliph Umar would later be much emphasized by historians to differentiate him from

the other Umayyad rulers.

At the time of his birth, another branch of the Umayyads, the Sufyanids, ruled from their capital Damascus. When the reigning Caliph Yazid I (680-683) and his son and successor, Mu'awiya II (r. 683-684), died in quick succession in 683 and 684, respectively, Umayyad authority collapsed across the Caliphate and the Umayyads of the Hejaz, including Medina, were expelled by supporters of the rival caliph, the Mecca-based Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr (r. 683-692). The Umayyad exiles took refuge in Syria, where loyalist Arab tribes supported the dynasty. Umar's grandfather, Marwan I (684-685), was ultimately recognized by these tribes as caliph and, with their support, reasserted Umayyad rule in Syria.

Historical context: In 685, Marwan ousted Ibn al-Zubayr's governor from Egypt and appointed Umar's father to the province. Umar spent part of his childhood in Egypt, particularly in Hulwan, which had become the seat of his father's governorship between 686 and his death in 705. He received his education in Medina, however, which was retaken by the Umayyads under Umar's paternal uncle, Caliph Abd al-Malik (685-705), in 692. Having spent much of his youth in Medina, Umar developed ties with the city's pious men and transmitters of hadiths. Following the death of Umar's father, Abd al-Malik recalled Umar to Damascus, where he arranged Umar's marriage to his daughter, Fatima. Umar had two other wives: his maternal cousin Umm Shu'ayb or Umm Uthman, the daughter of Shu'ayb or Sa'id ibn Zabban of the Banu Kalb tribe, and Lamis bint Ali of the Balharith. From his wives, he had seven known children, as well as



seven other children from concubines Governor of Medina: Shortly after his accession, Abd al-Malik's son and successor, al-Walid I (705-715), appointed Umar governor of Medina. According to Julius Wellhausen, al-Walid's intention was to use Umar to reconcile the townspeople of Medina to Umayyad rule and "obliterate the evil memory" of the preceding Umayyad governors, namely Hisham ibn Isma'il al-Makhzumi, whose rule over Medina had been harsh for its inhabitants.

Character and Role: Umar took up the post in February/March 706 and his jurisdiction later extended to Mecca and Ta'if. Information about his governorship is scant, but most traditional accounts note that he was a "just governor", according to historian Paul Cobb. He often led the annual Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca and showed favor toward the Islamic legal scholars of Medina, notably Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab. Umar tolerated many of these scholars' open criticism of the Umayyad government's conduct. However, other accounts hold that he showed himself to be materialistic during his early career. On al-Walid's orders, Umar undertook the reconstruction and expansion of the Prophet's Mosque in Medina beginning in 707. Under Umar's generally lenient rule, the Hejaz became a refuge for Iraqi political and religious exiles fleeing the persecutions of al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, al-Walid's powerful viceroy over the eastern half of the Caliphate. According to Cobb, this served as Umar's "undoing" as al-Hajjaj pressured the caliph to dismiss Umar in May/June 712.

Despite his dismissal, Umar remained in al-Walid's favor, being the brother of the caliph's first wife, Umm al-Banin bint Abd al-Aziz. He remained in al-Walid's court in Damascus until the caliph died in 715, and according to the 9th-century historian al-Ya'qubi, he performed the funeral prayers for al-Walid. The latter's brother and successor, Sulayman (r. 715-717), held Umar in high regard. Alongside Raja ibn Haywa, an influential religious figure in the Umayyads' court, Umar served as a principal adviser of Sulayman. He accompanied the latter when he led the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca in 716 and on his return to Jerusalem. Likewise, he was at the caliph's side at the Muslims marshaling camp at Dabiq in northern Syria, where Sulayman directed the massive war effort to conquer the Byzantine capital of Constantinople in 717.

According to the traditional Muslim sources, when Sulayman was on his deathbed in Dabiq, he was persuaded by Raja to designate Umar as his successor. Sulayman's son Ayyub had been his initial nominee, but predeceased him, while his other sons were either too young or away fighting on the Byzantine front. The nomination of Umar voided the wishes of Abd al-Malik, who sought to restrict the office to his direct descendants. The elevation of Umar, a member of a cadet branch of the dynasty, in preference to the numerous descendants of Abd al-Malik, surprised these princes. According to Wellhausen, "nobody dreamed of this, himself [Umar] least of all." Raja managed the affair, calling the Umayyad princes into Dabiq's mosque and demanding that they recognize Sulayman's will, which Raja had kept secret. Only after the Umayyads accepted did Raja reveal that Umar was the caliph's nominee. Hisham ibn

Abd al-Malik voiced his opposition but relented after being threatened with violence. A potential intra-dynastic conflict was averted with the designation of a son of Abd al-Malik, Yazid II, as Umar's successor.

According to the historian Reinhard Eisener, Raja's role in the affair was likely exaggerated and more reasonable. was that Umar's succession was the result of traditional patterns, like seniority and well-founded claims stemming from Caliph Marwan Is original designation of Umar's father, Abd al-Aziz, as Abd al-Malik's successor, which had not materialized due to Abd al-Aziz predeceasing Abd al-Malik. Umar acceded without significant opposition on 22 September 717. The most significant reform of Umar was affecting the equality of Arabs and mawali (non-Arab Muslims). This was mainly relevant to the non-Arab troops in the Muslim army, who had not been entitled to the same shares in spoils, lands, and salaries given to Arab soldiers. The policy also applied to Muslim society at large. Under previous Umayyad rulers, Arab Muslims had certain financial privileges over non-Arab Muslims. Non-Arab converting to Islam was still expected to pay the jizya (poll tax) that they paid before becoming Muslims.

Umar put into practice a new system that exempted all Muslims, regardless of their heritage, from the jizya tax. He also added some safeguards to the system to make sure that mass conversion to Islam would not cause the collapse of the finances of the Umayyad government. Under the new tax policy, converted Mawali would not pay the jizya (or any other dhimmi tax), but upon conversion, their land would become the property of their villages

which he was before, he shall have the same rights and duties as they have, and they are obliged to associate with him and to treat him as one of themselves.

Possibly to stave off potential blowback from opponents of the equalization measures, Umar expanded the Islamization drive that had been steadily strengthening under his Marwanid predecessors. The drive included measures to distinguish Muslims from non-Muslims and the inauguration of an Islamic iconoclasm. According to Khalid Yahya Blankinship, He put a stop to the ritual cursing of Caliph Ali (656-661), the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, in Friday prayer sermons. Umar is credited with having ordered the first official collection of hadith (sayings and actions attributed to the Islamic prophet Muhammad), fearing that some of it might be lost.

Shortly after his accession, Umar overhauled the administrations of the provinces. He appointed competent men that he could control, indicating his intention "to keep a close eye on provincial administration." Wellhausen noted that the caliph did not leave the governors to their own devices in return for their forwarding of the provincial revenues; rather, he actively oversaw his governors' administrations and his main interest was not so much the increase of power as the establishment of right. He subdivided the vast governorship established over Iraq and the eastern Caliphate under Abd al-Malik's viceroy al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf. Sulayman's appointee to this super-province, Yazid ibn al-Muhallab, was dismissed and imprisoned by Umar for failing to forward the spoils from his earlier conquest of

Sind. He appointed Umar ibn Hubayra al-Fazari to

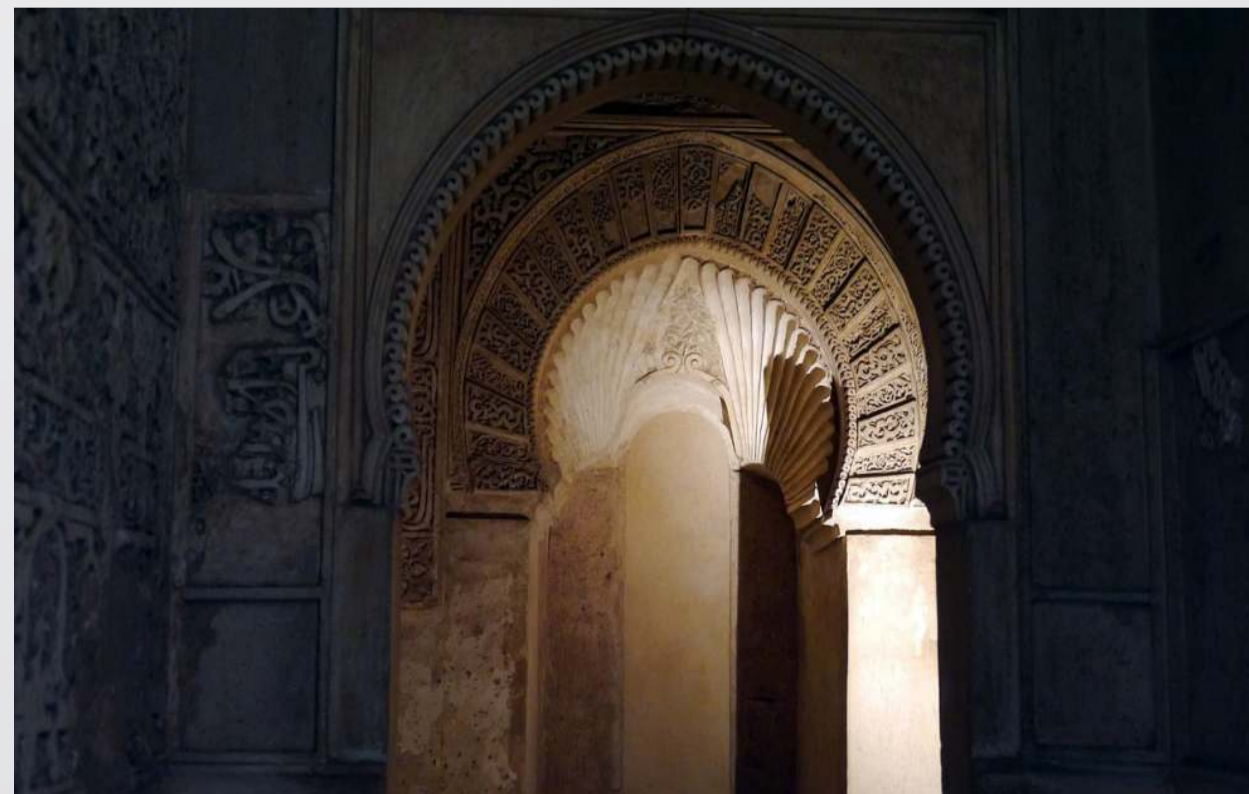
the Jazira (Upper Mesopotamia). Although many of these appointees were pupils of al-Hajjaj or affiliated with the Qays faction, Umar chose them based on their reliability and integrity, rather than opposition to Sulayman's government.

Umar appointed al-Samh ibn Malik al-Khawlani to al-Andalus (Iberian Peninsula) and Isma'il ibn Abd Allah to Ifriqiya. He chose these governors because of their perceived neutrality in the tribal factionalism between the Qays and Yaman and justice toward the oppressed. After his accession in late 717, Umar ordered the withdrawal of the Muslim army led by his cousin Maslama ibn Abd al-Malik from their abortive siege against Constantinople to the regions of Antioch and Malatya, closer to the Syrian frontier. He commissioned an expedition in the summer of 718 to facilitate their withdrawal. Umar kept up the annual summer raids against the Byzantine frontier, out of the obligation to jihad. He remained in northern Syria, often residing at his estate in Khunasira, where he built a fortified headquarters.

At some point in 717, he dispatched a force under Ibn Hatim ibn al-Nu'man al-Bahili to Adharbayjan to disperse a group of Turks who had launched damaging raids against the province. In 718, he successively deployed Iraqi and Syrian troops to suppress the Kharijite rebellion of Shadhhab al-Yashkuri in Iraq, though some sources say the revolt was settled diplomatically.

Umar is often deemed a pacifist by the sources and Cobb attributes the caliph's war-weariness to concerns over the diminishing funds of the caliphal treasury. Wellhausen asserts that Umar was "disinclined to wars of conquest, well-known that they were waged, not for God, but for the sake of spoil." Blankinship considers this reasoning to be "insufficient." He proposed it was the massive losses faced by the Arabs in their abortive siege against Constantinople, including the destruction of their navy, that caused Umar to view his positions in al-Andalus, separated by the rest of the Caliphate by sea, and Cilicia as acutely vulnerable to Byzantine attack. Thus he favored withdrawing Muslim forces from these two regions. This same calculus led him to consider withdrawing Muslim forces from Transoxiana so as to shore up the defenses of Syria. Shaban views Umar's efforts to curb offensives as linked to the resentment of the Yamani elements of the army, who Shaban views to have been politically dominant under Umar, at excessive deployments in the field.

Although he halted further eastward expansion, the establishment of Islam in a number of cities in Transoxiana, precluded Umar's withdrawal of Arab troops from there. During his reign, the Muslim forces in al-Andalus conquered and fortified the Mediterranean coastal city of Narbonne in modern-day France.



and would thus remain liable to the full rate of the Kharaj (land tax). This compensated for the loss of income due to the diminished jizya tax base. He issued an edict on taxation stating: Whosoever accepts Islam, whether Christian, Jew or Zoroastrian, of those now subject to taxes and who joins himself to the body of the Muslims in their abode, forsaking the abode in

Tabaristan along the southern Caspian coast to the caliphal treasury. In place of Ibn al-Muhallab, he appointed Abd al-Hamid ibn Abd al-Rahman ibn Zayd ibn al-Khattab, a member of Caliph Umar's family, to Kufa, Adi ibn Artah al-Fazari to Basra, al-Jarrah ibn Abdallah al-Hakami to Khurasan and Amr ibn Muslim al-Bahili, a brother of the conqueror Qutayba ibn Muslim, to

Conclusion: the legacy that Umar Bin Abdul Aziz has left is indeed an inspiration and motivation for the whole world, especially for those in power and authority. Let's try to follow Umar in our normal as well as in responsible life.

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Hydrating Foods To Boost Weight Loss In Summer



Hydration is crucial for weight loss, especially during the summer months when we tend to lose more fluids through sweat. Incorporating hydrating foods into your diet can help you stay hydrated while also aiding in weight loss. Read on as we share hydrating foods you must add to your summer diet for weight loss.

Hydrating foods that can help you lose weight this summer:

1. Cucumbers
Cucumbers are composed mostly of water and are low in calories, making them an excellent choice for hydration and weight loss. They also contain fibre, which helps you feel full and satisfied, reducing the likelihood of overeating. Enjoy cucumbers sliced in salads, as a snack with hummus, or infused in water for a refreshing drink.

2. Watermelon
Watermelon is incred-

ibly hydrating due to its high water content. It's also low in calories and contains vitamins and antioxidants that support overall health. Eat watermelon slices on their own, blend them into smoothies, or make a watermelon salad with feta cheese and mint for a refreshing twist.

3. Celery
Like cucumbers, celery is mostly water and low in calories. It also contains fibre and has a high water content, which can help you feel full and satisfied with fewer calories. Enjoy celery sticks with nut butter, add them to salads or soups, or juice them with other hydrating fruits and vegetables.

4. Berries
Berries such as strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries are hydrating and low in calories. They're also packed with fibre, vitamins, and antioxidants that support weight loss and overall health. Eat berries fresh as a snack, add

them to yogurt or oatmeal, or blend them into smoothies.

5. Lettuce
Lettuce varieties like romaine and iceberg are high in water content and low in calories, making them a great choice for hydration and weight loss. They also provide essential nutrients like vitamins A and K. Use lettuce leaves as wraps for sandwiches or tacos, toss them in salads, or blend them into green smoothies.

6. Tomatoes
Tomatoes are rich in water and low in calories, making them hydrating and suitable for weight loss. They also contain antioxidants like lycopene, which may help reduce inflammation and promote fat loss. Enjoy tomatoes sliced in salads, added to sandwiches or wraps, or blended into soups and sauces.

7. Oranges
Oranges are juicy fruits with high water content, providing hydration while also offering fiber and vitamin C.

The fibre helps regulate blood sugar levels and promote satiety, aiding in weight loss. Eat oranges as a snack, drink freshly squeezed orange juice (in moderation), or add orange slices to salads or desserts.

8. Bell Peppers
Bell peppers are hydrating vegetables that come in various colours and are low in calories. They're also rich in vitamins A and C, which support immune function and metabolism. Enjoy bell peppers raw as a snack with hummus or dip, add them to salads or stir-fries, or stuff them with lean protein for a nutritious meal.

When consuming these hydrating foods for weight loss, it's essential to focus on portion control and balance them with other nutrient-dense foods to create well-rounded meals. Additionally, staying properly hydrated by drinking plenty of water throughout the day is key for supporting weight loss and overall health.

Summer Foods That Reduce Your Risk Of Cancer



Reducing the risk of cancer involves adopting a healthy lifestyle, which includes consuming a variety of nutrient-rich foods. While no single food can prevent cancer, certain foods contain compounds that may help reduce the risk. Read on as we share a list of foods that might help you reduce your risk of cancer.

8 Summer foods that can potentially lower the risk of cancer:

1. Berries
They are rich in antioxidants such as flavonoids and anthocyanins, which help neutralise free radicals and reduce inflammation, thereby potentially lowering the risk of cancer. Enjoy fresh

or cook them in soups, or stews to maximise lycopene absorption.

3. Cruciferous vegetables
Cruciferous vegetables contain sulphur compounds and antioxidants like sulforaphane and indole-3-carbinol, which have been shown to have anti-cancer properties by promoting detoxification and reducing inflammation. Steam, roast, or stir-fry cruciferous vegetables as a side dish, or add them to salads, soups, or stir-fries for a nutrient-packed meal.

4. Leafy greens
Leafy greens are rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, leafy greens help support overall health and may reduce the risk of certain cancers due to their anti-

reduce the risk of certain cancers, such as stomach and oesophageal cancer. Enjoy citrus fruits fresh as a snack, squeeze them into water or tea, or use their zest and juice to flavour dishes and dressings.

6. Garlic
Garlic contains organosulphur compounds like allicin, which have been linked to a reduced risk of various cancers, including stomach, colorectal, and prostate cancer. Incorporate raw or cooked garlic into savoury dishes, sauces, or dressings to reap its potential health benefits.

7. Ginger
Ginger contains gingerol, a bioactive compound with anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties that may help protect against certain cancers, including ovarian and colorectal cancer. Enjoy fresh ginger grated into tea, smoothies, or stir-fries, or incorporate ground ginger into baked goods, curries, or marinades for a flavourful twist.

8. Watermelon
Watermelons like tomatoes are rich in lycopene and other antioxidants, watermelon may help reduce the risk of certain cancers, including prostate cancer. Enjoy watermelon sliced as a refreshing snack, blend it into smoothies or juices, or add it to fruit salads for a hydrating and nutritious treat.

Incorporating these cancer-fighting foods into your diet as part of a balanced and varied meal plan, along with other healthy lifestyle choices such as regular exercise, adequate hydration, and avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption, can contribute to reducing your risk of cancer.



berries as a snack, add them to yogurt, oatmeal, or salads, or blend them into smoothies for a delicious and nutritious treat.

2. Tomatoes
Tomatoes are high in lycopene, a powerful antioxidant that may help protect against certain types of cancer, including prostate cancer. Consume tomatoes raw in salads, sandwiches, or salsas,

inflammatory and detoxifying properties. Enjoy raw in salads, sautéed as a side dish, or blended into smoothies for a nutrient boost.

5. Citrus fruits
Citrus fruits such as oranges and lemons are high in vitamin C and flavonoids, citrus fruits have antioxidant properties that may help protect cells from damage and

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Kashmir Markets

huge this year, while there is a sense of joy and camaraderie everywhere you go.

Also, a shop owner in downtown Srinagar added, during Eid ul Fitr, we see a surge in customers looking for traditional Kashmiri attire. "People want to look their best for the celebrations, and our shops are brimming with a variety of options to cater to their needs," he added.

Moreover, amidst the hustle and bustle, the spirit of unity and brotherhood prevails, with people from all walks of life coming together to celebrate the joyous festival. KNO spoke to many shopkeepers at Lal Chowk and around, who stated that they are expecting more rise in the customers on Tuesday, which is likely to be observed as Youm-ul-Arafa, a day before Eid-ul-Fitr—(KNO)

Bjp Expecting Crowd

Yogi Adityanath, and Minister Anurag Thakur, among others. The BJP's campaign roster featured a mix of seasoned politicians and emerging leaders, aiming to resonate with diverse segments of the electorate. Notable inclusions are Jairam Thakur, Sunil Jakhar, Smriti Irani, Bhajan Lal Sharma, Pushkar Singh Dhami, and Tarun Chugh, among others, highlighting the party's concerted effort to leverage both national and local appeal—(KNO)

3 Miscreants Booked

of Late Gh Ahmad resident of Tantraypora Palhallan have been booked under Public Safety Act after obtaining formal detention orders from the competent Authority. "The booked persons have been detained and subsequently lodged in District Jail Kupwara & Anantnag," he said.

"Pertinent to mention that many cases

are registered against these persons and were involved in disturbance of L&O and subversion. Despite their involvement in many FIR's they did not mend their anti-national & anti-Social activities," the spokesman said—(KNO)

Non-Local Shot At By

assault, prompting immediate medical attention.

An official said that terrorists targeted the driver while carrying out his routine tasks. The sudden and brutal attack left the victim in critical condition, requiring urgent medical intervention.

Upon receiving the news of the attack, local authorities swiftly coordinated efforts to transport the injured driver to a nearby hospital for emergency treatment. Medical personnel at the hospital are currently providing necessary medical care to stabilize the victim's condition.

The motives behind the attack remain unclear, as authorities launch an investigation to ascertain the circumstances leading to the targeted assault. Security forces have intensified surveillance and initiated search operations to track down the perpetrators responsible for this reprehensible act.

Residents have expressed outrage over the attack, calling for swift action to bring the culprits to justice.

As the victim undergoes medical treatment, authorities are urging the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities to law enforcement agencies. Further updates on the victim's condition and the progress of the investigation are anticipated as efforts to apprehend the perpetrators continue. (KDC)

Kashmir Witnesses 30%

during the winter season. Despite these challenges, Kashmir has incurred losses amounting to crores of

rupees, with sales plummeting by nearly 30 percent, he said.

"This year, the daily sale of mutton in Kashmir is estimated to be around Rs 3 crore, with mutton being sold at Rs 700 per kilogram," Mehraj said, adding that the total mutton consumption in Kashmir during Ramadan is valued at approximately Rs 84 crores—(KNO)

GI Tag Reunites Artisans

value in this craft at all. Artisans and weavers used to get very low income which forced many like me to look for other avenues. Now when the government approved the GI tag for Pashmina, it has brought back the value of this craft. Now we get good money as well as recognition," he said.

Saleem is not an isolated case as many artisans have reconnected with the handicrafts in the valley after the government approved GI tag for many crafts.

In Banidpora's Gadkhod village, which is known for producing quality handwoven carpets, scores of the families have got again associated with this handicraft form.

"We produce varieties of carpets in our village. We have a major section of people who have been associated with this art from generations. Now when the artisans as well as dealers get good prices in the domestic and international market, this art has again flourished in our village," said Mohammad Akram, a local artisan.

Pertinently, 21392 handicrafts products were Geographical Indication (GI) tagged in the first three-quarters of FY24.

Official figures reveal that 21392 products have been labeled from April to December 31, 2023. In the entire 2022-23, 12904 products were GI tagged. Likewise, 6,164 products were GI tagged in 2012-22.

An official from the handicrafts department said the GI tag had proved a gamechange in flourishing the handicrafts sector in the valley.

"We have witnessed that our production as well as exports have grown for the last couple of years. We are expecting the sector to grow further as people are now again adopting and learning this art to earn a good and respectable living," he said—(KNO)

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Adani Gas subsidiary joins MG Motor India to install charging stations

IAN S

NEW DELHI: In a bid to help India build a robust and efficient EV charging infrastructure, Adani TotalEnergies E-Mobility Limited (ATEL) and MG Motor India on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU), which is aimed at enabling ease of use and increased accessibility for customers.

As part of the collaboration, EV charging stations (60 kW DC) will be installed at designated MG dealerships, to provide value-added services to EV customers nationwide.

"Adani TotalEnergies E-Mobility Limited's and MG Motor India's partnership to develop charging infrastructure marks a significant milestone and will play a crucial role in accelerating India's energy transition," said Suresh P. Mangalani, ED and CEO, ATGL, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Adani Total Gas Limited (ATGL). The effort will contribute towards reducing carbon emissions and promoting a cleaner and greener environment, Mangalani added.

ATEL will set up 60 kW DC chargers at upcoming MG dealerships to bolster the charging network and enhance customer accessibility.



"This strategic partnership reflects our commitment to sustainable mobility and our vision to revolutionise the EV landscape by building a robust charging infrastructure. The combined synergies aim to empower Indian consumers to embrace electric mobility," said Gaurav Gupta, Chief Growth Officer, MG Motor India. The partnership will also provide a comprehensive solution encompassing supply, installation, commissioning, operations,

and maintenance of charging infrastructure.

In addition, a digital platform will be launched to facilitate a seamless customer experience, covering discovery, user authentication, charging, and billing settlement through a dedicated mobile application, said the companies.

Both companies will explore the potential of integrating public charging stations across platforms by leveraging advanced application programming interfaces (APIs) to enhance network visibility and accessibility. The collaboration will

also enhance customer experience with RIFD solutions accessible to MG users at the strategic locations of ATEL's public charging network, especially at places such as airports.

Currently, ATEL has a network of more than 300 charge points, which are a mix of AC and DC, spread across various verticals like highway pit-stops, shopping malls, RWAs, workplaces and fleet charging hubs.

The company has a current installed capacity of around 6 MW with approximately 500 charge points under construction.

'TURNING 18' CAMPAIGN

ECI leverages social media for enhanced participation of youth in polls

IAN S

NEW DELHI: To galvanise youngsters to participate in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has embarked on an innovative journey to engage them through unique campaigns like "Turning 18" and "You are the One" on social media platforms.

"Turning 18" specifically targets young and first-time voters to address the issues of urban and youth apathy noticed in previous elections. By emphasising the significance of voting immediately upon turning 18, the campaign seeks to inspire a sense of civic responsibility among young voters.

With widespread amplification facilitated by state Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) and the national public broadcasters, DD News and Akashvani, the campaign's message, disseminated across diverse segments of society, generated significant momentum for the forthcoming poll days.

Along similar lines, the poll panel launched



another campaign titled "You Are The One" to recognise and celebrate the invaluable contributions of various stakeholders involved in the electoral process, including Booth Level Officers (BLOs), ground staff, polling parties, administrative personnel, media professionals, central forces, and security personnel.

Through engaging storytelling and captivating visuals, the campaign highlights the dedication and commitment of these individuals in their roles and responsibilities within

the democratic framework.

It involves highlighting the key stakeholders, interesting anecdotes, and stories from the elections of the past, and videos that unravel the efforts of polling teams working behind the scenes, navigating challenging terrains to ensure every voter is reached.

The "Chunaavi Kisse" campaign shares interesting election stories from previous elections. Then "A-Z of Indian Elections" series informs users about election-related terms and processes. "Word play

with ECI" is another series where users are engaged to hunt for election-related terms. "Sawal Jawab" series aims to answer the most relevant questions related to the electoral process. Through the "Polls and Pixels" series, ECI shares a visual journey of Indian Elections since their inception.

Currently, the ECI has a presence on major social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, X, and YouTube with recent additions of Public App, WhatsApp Channel, and LinkedIn.

Couple held for mysterious death of NBRI employee in Lucknow

IAN S

LUCKNOW: The Lucknow police have arrested a couple in connection with the mysterious death of a retired National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI) official last month.

The two were arrested on Sunday night here. Manoj Kumar Srivastava, the official, was found dead in his car near Dalibagh Ganna Sansthan in Hazratganj on March 21.

The names of Jageshwar Srivastava and his wife Aruna Srivastava, surfaced as Manoj's wife had alleged their involvement in her husband's death.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Abhijit R. Shankar said that though Aruna confessed that she was with Manoj the night he died, she claimed innocence.

The deceased's wife, Sushma Srivastava of Gayatripuram in Gudamba, said Aruna and Jageshwar poisoned Manoj to death.

The autopsy report, meanwhile, could not ascertain the cause of death and Manoj's viscera was preserved for a forensic examination.



Sushma alleged that Manoj knew Aruna and Jageshwar well. "A month before his death, Manoj had told me and my son Harsh that he was "unhappy" with Aruna and Jageshwar," said Sushma, in her complaint.

As per the complaint given to the police, Manoj reached NBRI for some work and left his office around 2.30 p.m. on March 20. But Manoj did not reach his home even late in the night after which Sushma lodged a missing person's report in the early hours of March 21. Around 11 a.m. the same day, Manoj was found dead in his car. During the investigation of CCTV footage, a woman, later identified as Aruna, was seen coming out of Manoj's car and then boarding a rickshaw. The couple is being interrogated and further details are awaited.

Tension in Durgapur following Trinamool- BJP workers' scuffle

IAN S

KOLKATA: A scuffle broke out between Trinamool Congress and BJP workers at Durgapur in West Burdwan District of West Bengal, on Monday.

The ruling party activists chanted "Go Back" slogans as BJP candidate from Bardhaman-Durgapur constituency, Dilip Ghosh, reached to address a scheduled 'Chai pe Charcha' which had always been a part of his voter-interaction exercise.



Ghosh said that as soon as he reached the location, a group of local Trinamool Congress activists started shouting "Go Back" slogans which provoked the BJP supporters.

Eyewitnesses said that the BJP cadres accompanying Ghosh started shouting counter slogans, terming all members of the Trinamool Congress as thieves. This aggravated the tension further and a scuffle broke out between the BJP cadres and ruling party supporters, which also included some women.

A huge police contingent reached the spot and after a lot of effort, they managed to separate the two rival groups. Later, the BJP supporters staged a protest in front of the Durgapur New Township Police Station.

The protesting Trinamool Congress workers said they reached the spot to interact with Ghosh on the pending central funds to the West Bengal government under various centrally-sponsored schemes. They alleged that Ghosh refused to speak to them and misbehaved with some of the people accompanying them.

However, Ghosh denied the allegations and alleged, "Deliberately they came with a group of women with them to create unnecessary tension in the area."

front of the Durgapur New Township Police Station.

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PM'S ACADEMIC DEGREE DEFAMATION CASE

SC dismisses Sanjay Singh's plea against summons

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a plea filed by AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh against a decision of the Gujarat High Court refusing to interfere with the summons issued by a metropolitan court in a criminal defamation case concerning Prime Minister Narendra Modi's academic degree.

Noting that the Gujarat High Court has already observed that all contentions available to the parties are kept open and the trial court would not be influenced by any of its observations, a bench of Justices BR Gavai and Sandeep Mehta said that the apex court is not inclined to entertain the special leave petition filed by Singh.



Earlier in February this year, Justice Hasmukh D Suthar of the Gujarat High Court found no ground to nullify the summons in a 61-page detailed order.

The defamation case emanates from derogatory statements allegedly made by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Singh concerning Prime Minister Modi's academic degree. A metropolitan court in Ahmedabad had summoned both the politicians following a criminal defamation complaint from Gujarat University.

I don't consume beef, proud to be Hindu, says Kangana Ranaut

IAN S

MANDI: Setting aside rumours and saying she is proud to be Hindu, BJP's Lok Sabha candidate from Mandi in Himachal Pradesh and actor Kangana Ranaut on Monday clarified that she "doesn't consume beef".

"I don't consume beef or any other kind of red meat, it is shameful that completely baseless rumours are being spread about me," she said in a post on X.

"I have been advocating and promoting yogic and

ayurvedic way of life for decades now such tactics won't work to tarnish my image. My people know me and they know that I am a proud Hindu and nothing can ever mislead them, Jai Shri Ram," she added.

Earlier, a controversy erupted after Congress leader Supriya Shrinete's offensive social media post about actor-turned-politician Ranaut. Later the Congress leader said that someone with access to her social media accounts had posted the objectionable content.

'Received threat letter from LeT on NRC': Union Minister Shantanu

IAN S

KOLKATA: The Union Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shantanu Thakur, claimed on Monday that he received a threat letter from the terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) over the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Speaking to mediapersons here, Thakur, whom the BJP has renominated from the Bongaon Lok Sabha seat in North 24 Parganas district, claimed that the threat letter reportedly sent by the LeT was written in Bangla.

The letter said if people from the Muslim community in West Bengal suffer because of the implementation of NRC, the entire country will burn, Thakur claimed.

The letter also threatened to blow up the Thakurbari in Bongaon, the ancestral residence of the Union Minister which is also a religious centre for the Matua community. Matuas are people from the backward-class refugee community who migrated to India from Bangladesh.

The letter is signed by two persons named Nazrul Islam Saheb Ali and Fazar Ali, the Minister claimed, adding that it was posted from Deganga in North 24 Parganas district as per the seal of the post office

on the envelope. "I want to ask Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee how can a terror outfit send such a threat letter to a sitting MP who is also a Union Minister. It is shameful that such outfits are flexing their muscles in West Bengal. I will report the matter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah," Thakur said.

Reacting to Thakur's claims, former Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha member Shantanu Sen called it a cooked-up story meant to create controversies in the state ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

"Who can tell if the sender of the letter is not a close associate of the recipient himself," Sen said.

DELHI EXCISE POLICY SCAM AAP MLA Durgesh Pathak appears before ED



IAN S

NEW DELHI: AAP MLA Durgesh Pathak on Monday reached the Enforcement Directorate (ED) office in the national capital after he was summoned to appear before it in the alleged excise scam.

Earlier, during the day, the financial probe agency had questioned Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's PA (Personal Assistant) Bibhav Kumar in the case. It is pertinent to mention that Durgesh Pathak was in charge of the Goa elections.

According to the ED, approximately Rs 45 crore generated through hawala transactions was utilised in the electoral campaign of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Goa.

The ED arrested CM Kejriwal on March 21 after questioning him for over two hours at his official residence in Delhi.

The ED has termed the Chief Minister the "kingpin and the key conspirator" of the alleged excise scam in collusion with other ministers of the Delhi government, AAP leaders, and other persons.

The ED has said that during the custodial interrogation, CM Kejriwal was also shown evidence of hawala transfers to the tune of Rs 45 crore (approximately) which is corroborated with CDR locations, call records, IT seized data of a hawala firm in Goa, proof of payments done in part cash and part bill and WhatsApp showing this arrangement.

"He was also shown multiple statements of witnesses, who worked on the AAP campaign in Goa and received cash from one Chanpreet Singh, who was working for the AAP campaign in Goa," said the ED in its remand copy.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir UT

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION BUDGAM

ENGINEERING COMPLEX BUDGAM PIN NO.19111

E-mail: xenrmbdivud@gmail.com, Phone-FAX: 01951-255208

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

E-tendering NIT No:- 01-MDB of 2.024-25/172-87 DATED:-08-04-2024

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Union Territory of J&K, e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost	Cost of T/ Doc.	Earnest money CDR/ FDR/ BG	Time of Completion (days)	Class of Contractor	Major Head of account	Project Authority
1	Construction of 07 Ramps at various Polling Stations in Budgam Division	Rs. 0.63 lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.1260/-	07 days	DEE	UT Budget 2023-24	District Dev. Commissioner Budgam

Position of AAA = Accorded
Position of TS = Accorded
Project Authority: = Available/Committed,
Position of funds:- = Available/Committed,

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

1. Date of Issue of Tender Notice	08/04/2024
2. Period of downloading of bidding documents	08/04/2024
3. Bid submission Start Date	08/04/2024
4. Bid Submission End Date	15/04/2024 upto 3.00 P.M
5. Date & time of opening of Bids	15/04/2024 at 4.00 PM in the office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Budgam
6. Submission of Performance Security (PS)	Within 7 days of receipt of LOI. (The bidder has to provide 5% of allotted Cost as Performance Security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG which shall subsequently release 2% CDR

No: EE/MDB/NIT/172-87
DATED:- 08-04-2024

DIPK-65-24
DT: 08/04/2024

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
(R&B) Division Budgam,

LG Greets People on Navratri

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Monday extended his heartiest greetings to the people on the beginning of Chaitra Navratri Festival.

In a message, the Lt Governor said: "On the auspicious occasion of Navratri, I extend my warm wishes to everyone for their success, happiness and well-being. Chaitra Navratri marks the beginning of the New Year and symbolise the triumph of truth, righteousness and virtue over evil. I also extend my



felicitations to our Kashmiri Pandit brothers and sisters who are celebrating Navreh.

May this festival strengthen bonds of brotherhood and inspire us to dedicate ourselves to the service of humanity. I pray to Maa Durga to shower her blessings on all".

ARO Handwara reviews preparations for LS Polls

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: The Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) 05-Assembly Constituency Handwara, Aziz Ahmad Monday convened a meeting of concerned officers to review the preparations for Lok Sabha Election-2024.

On the occasion, ARO took review of all the preparations and activities for smooth conduct of Lok Sabha Election-2024 and stressed upon the officers for gearing up the process

and giving their best for smooth conduct of the election.

He directed all the concerned officers to ensure maximum participation of the people in the electoral process and ensure that no voter is left behind.

The meeting was attended by Tehsildars, Sector Magistrates, Flying Squad Teams, Static Surveillance Teams, Video Surveillance Teams and all the Supervisors of Handwara Assembly Segment.

BJP implementing Baba Saheb's Constitution in letter and spirit : Rana

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Assailing the Congress for its divisive politics, Senior BJP leader Devender Singh Rana Monday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi led government has been implementing Baba Saheb Dr B.R. Ambedkar's constitution in its entirety embodies the essence of equality, justice, and liberty.

"While the BJP is striving to eliminate caste-based oppression and ensure equal opportunities for all, the Congress-led INDI Alliance is pushing the agenda of breaking the society on the basis of castes to achieve its sinister political agenda," Rana said while addressing a congregation on the 48th Diwas of Goswami Guru Nabha Dassji Maharaj at Dogra Hall, Jammu.

He said implementing B.R. Ambedkar's constitution in letter and spirit is not just a legal obligation for the BJP but a moral imperative, which the party is shouldering in the spirit of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas. On the contrary, the Congress is fragmenting the Indian society in bits and pieces in desperate pursuit of getting into the cradles of power, he added.

Asserting that the BJP has been a strong proponent of social justice and



equitable development in its totality, Rana referred to the initiatives taken during the past one decade to shape the destiny of the nation as a peaceful and harmonious abode for all. This legacy has to be strengthened and bequeathed to posterity with renewed vigour, he said and dwelt in detail the initiatives taken for improving the lives of the weaker and marginalized segments across the country in general and Jammu and Kashmir in particular. He said the vision of transforming Jammu and Kashmir as a progressive and prosperous part of the country can be achieved only when all segments of the society and the regions get equal opportunities to grow and flourish. A classless and inclusive society is key to making it a

better place to live in as per the teachings and dreams of great saints and sages, he observed.

Stressing the need for collective efforts in ensuring social justice and empowerment of weaker segments of society, Rana said a big stride has been taken after the abrogation of Article 370 by implementing all the central laws that benefit the weaker section, which remained deprived for over seven decades.

Devender Rana paid tribute to Goswami Guru Nabha Dassji and said that his teachings and path shown to humanity will continue to inspire generation and lead to harmonious growth of the society. He complimented the organizers for holding a befitting congregation to pay homage to Guruji.

LOK SABHA POLLS

Yogi set to address rally in Kathua on Wednesday

ISHTIYAQ KAR

SRINAGAR: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is set to deliver a speech at a crucial political rally organized by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Kathua on Wednesday.

The rally is strategically designed to strengthen the BJP's electoral chances in Jammu and Kashmir as the Lok Sabha elections draw near.

Renowned as one of the most crucial star campaigners for the BJP, Yogi Adityanath's presence is expected to invigorate the party's base and galvanize support ahead of the upcoming elections.

The decision for Yogi Adityanath to venture beyond his home state underscores the significance accorded to the electoral battleground of Jammu & Kashmir by the Bhartiya Janta Party.

Despite having many important responsibilities in Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath decided to come to Kathua because the Jammu and Kashmir Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) unit requested him to.

"The JK BJP unit wanted Yogi Adityanath to visit Kathua because they know he is very popular and can attract a large crowd," one of the BJP leaders told KNS.



The leader said that because of Yogi Adityanath's strong support for Hindutva and his important role in building the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, he has become very popular among Hindu devotees.

"This popularity makes him a valuable asset for the BJP during elections".

The leader added that choosing Kathua as the rally location is important because of its political significance.

"BJP plans to utilize Yogi Adityanath's visit to sway voters in its favor. Additionally, scheduling the rally to coincide with Eid-ul-Fitr sends a strong message about the party's stance and dedication," the leader added.

Another BJP leader said that the main reason for bringing Yogi to Jammu & Kashmir is his ability to attract crowds.

"The BJP's Jammu and Kashmir unit wants to

make the most of every opportunity to gain support from the people of Jammu and Kashmir, stated the leader, highlighting the strategic importance of the decision.

Insiders in the BJP said that furthermore, the recent inauguration of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya has significantly increased Yogi Adityanath's popularity among devotees in the Jammu region.

"The efficient facilities provided by the Yogi government at the temple have earned widespread praise, enhancing his reputation as a Hindutva leader committed to the cause".

With Yogi Adityanath poised to address the rally in Kathua, the BJP seeks to leverage his immense appeal and resonance to strengthen its electoral position and consolidate its presence in the crucial Jammu & Kashmir region. (KNS)

'2024 LS polls a battle between stability & instability'

PM Modi hits out at Congress, INDIA bloc in Maharashtra

IANIS

CHANDRAPUR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday slammed the Congress and the INDIA bloc, saying that the upcoming Lok Sabha elections are a battle between stability and instability.

"On one side is the BJP and the NDA taking crucial decisions for the country for its growth to scale a new high and on the other, the Congress and the INDIA bloc are aiming to enjoy power and take commissions. Maharashtra understands very well how much a stable government is necessary," PM Modi said while addressing a rally here amid slogans of 'Modi Modi'.

PM Modi began his speech in Marathi and extended Navratri and Gudi Padwa wishes to the people. He also made a special

mention of Chandrapur from where wood was sent for the construction of Ram Mandir and the new Parliament building.

PM Modi, who launched the MahaYuti's poll campaign for BJP nominee Sudhir Mungantiwar from Chandrapur and Ashok Nete from Gadchiroli-Chimur, said that as long as the Congress-led government was in the country, Maharashtra continued to be neglected.

He also accused the previous Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi government for either scrapping or putting a brake on a slew of development projects in Maharashtra.

"Even when the MVA government gained power in Maharashtra, the parties and their leaders thought of their own development and their families. They also thought about commissions and con-



tracts. Amid all that, the development was hampered due to commissions or shares demanded by the ruling parties," PM Modi said.

He also said that the then MVA government stopped the Jalyukt Shivar Yojana (water conservation scheme launched by the erstwhile Devendra

Fadnavis-led Maharashtra government), Baliraja Irrigation Scheme and also opposed the Mumbai Nagpur Samruddhi Highway which was launched during the BJP rule to give push to Vidarbha's development.

"Further, the MVA government also stopped the refinery development in the Konkan region and construction of the Mumbai Metro project. Some of these projects were stopped despite the allocation of Central funds. Their aim was to earn a commission or put a brake on the work," PM Modi said.

Praising the Eknath Shinde-led Maharashtra government, PM Modi said: "However, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar have revived various projects which were stopped or scrapped by the MVA gov-

ernment and are working for scaling up Maharashtra's development.

"Our government has started all these schemes for the development of Maharashtra. The work on development is being completed rapidly," he noted.

Criticising the Congress, PM Modi said the party has been solely responsible for many problems faced by the country and also for the slow pace of development while other countries had made progress.

"The Congress is like a 'bitter gourd'... and the party will never change. Despite being mixed with sugar or oil, its (bitter gourd's taste) always remains bitter," PM Modi said.

He also criticised the Congress for the appeasement of minorities, terror attacks, problems in Jammu and Kash-

mir, and putting roadblocks on the construction of Ram Mandir at Ayodhya.

"The Congress has lost support due to such factors. The party has now adopted the policy of divide and rule. The Congress manifesto contains the language of the Muslim League. Will the country accept that? Their MPs are talking about partition of India... a separate South India. DMK people are calling Sanatan Dharma dengue and malaria. Such people are brought to Maharashtra by fake Shiv Sena (in an oblique reference to Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena) people for rallies," PM Modi said.

PM Modi also criticised Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge over "why does Modi talk about Kashmir wherever he goes in the country" remark.

AAP insulting national icons like Bhagat Singh, Ambedkar: Chugh

GMK NEWS NETWORK

CHANDIGARH: BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh Monday said came down heavily on the AAP government ministers who led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann staged a dharna at Khatkar Kalan on Sunday to protest against the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and said that the AAP was trying to trying to take "heroic dividends" out of corruption cases against its leaders.

In a statement issued to Kashmir News Service (KNS) Chugh strongly condemned the AAP chief minister and ministers for taking shelter under the name of Shaheed Bhagat Singh to hide corruption done by the senior party leaders led by Kejriwal. "It is a big insult to Shaheed Bhagat Singh for which people of Punjab will never forgive the AAP leaders", he said.

Chugh said the liquor policy scam happened in Delhi when the Kejriwal government has been drum-beating about health clinics in Delhi and Punjab. It was a cruel joke



being played on the people of Delhi and Punjab and now the AAP leaders are trying to tarnish the name and glory of an iconic freedom fighter of the nation in Khatkar Kalan.

He said it was blasphemous to place the imprisoned Kejriwal's pictures along with that of Shaheed Bhagat Singh and Baba Saheb Ambedkar and was a grave insult to the national heroes.

While reiterating his demand that the Punjab excise policy should also be investigated by a central agency after a hooch tragedy took place in the chief minister's hometown, Sangrur, killing about two dozen people, Chugh called upon people in Punjab not to fall in the blackmailing trap of the AAP leaders.

Need to develop 'joint culture' for armed forces: CDS

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan on Monday called for developing a "joint" work culture by the armed forces, underlining the need to integrate the capabilities of each service by creating structures that enhance the nation's overall warfighting ability.

Gen Chauhan was addressing the tri-service conference, 'Pariwartan Chintan', that brainstormed on fresh ideas, initiatives and reforms to further propel "jointness and integration" among the three services.

The Chief of Defence Staff stressed the need for distilling the best of each service to give a "de-novo" approach to traditional military concepts to make India's forces future-ready, officials said.

The first-of-its-kind conference primarily delved into various aspects relating to the implementation of the government's ambitious initiative to roll out theatre commands which were conceived as part of big-ticket defence reforms. "Chief of Defence Staff

Gen Anil Chauhan initiated the 'Chintan' by highlighting the need for developing a joint culture for the armed forces, which, while respecting the uniqueness of each service, distils the best of each service to give a de-novo approach to traditional concepts," the defence ministry said.

"He also stressed upon the need to integrate the capabilities of each service by creating structures that increase our efficiency and enhance our warfighting ability and interoperability," it said in a statement.

The ministry said "jointness and integration" are the "cornerstones" of the transformation to joint structures which the Indian armed forces are progressing towards with the intention of being "future ready".

It said the 'Chintan' was curated as a brainstorming and idea incubation discussion to generate new and fresh ideas, initiatives and reforms to further propel jointness and integration in the armed forces.

The conference was attended by heads of the Andaman and Nicobar Command and Strategic Forces Command, com-

mandants of National Defence Academy, Defence Services Staff College, College of Defence Management and Military Institute of Technology as well as heads of the Armed Forces Special Operations Division, Defence Space Agency, Defence Cyber Agency and the Defence Communication Agency.

The brainstorming was orchestrated by the headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (IDS), the ministry said.

It is learnt that each of the three services put across their work in line with the overall policy approach to ensure jointness.

The roadmap for the theaterisation initiative also figured in the discussions. According to the theaterisation plan, each of the theatre commands will have units of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force and all of them will work as a single entity looking after security challenges in a specified geographical territory.

At present, the Army, Navy and the Air Force have separate commands. The theatre commands are being planned to integrate the capabilities of the

three services and ensure optimal utilisation of their resources.

One of the key mandates of the Chief of Defence Staff is to work towards the implementation of the theaterisation plan.

Officers from all three services and Headquarters IDS, with diverse service experience also attended the discussion and contributed ideas towards initiating the next generation of reforms related to modernisation, procurement, training, adaptation and collaboration while embracing emerging and innovative technologies, the ministry said.

Inputs on national strategic issues impacting national security in both the civil and military domains were also deliberated upon, it said.

Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to the Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee (CISC) Lt Gen JP Mathew, in his closing remarks, expressed confidence that such interactions will provide the necessary guidelines as joint operational structures evolve to transform into a future-ready Indian armed forces.

Pavinder Singh Calls On LG Sinha



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Parvinder Singh Editor-in-Chief of the upcoming "Black & White Digital News Channel" Monday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan and apprised him of launching a digital news channel highlighting aims & objectives of this project.

The Lieutenant Governor appreciated the initiatives of Parvinder Singh in choosing the field of journalism which is challenging one after having served in financial institutions for a long time. An invitation was also extended to the Lieutenant Governor seeking his blessings for launching the channel which he accepted subject to clearance from Election Commission of India in view of enforcement of

Model Code Of Conduct.

However, during the course of meeting issues relating to involvement of youth in the menace of drug trafficking & loss of precious lives of youth due to its consumption have also been discussed. The Lieutenant Governor impressed that a big movement generating awareness amongst the youth with the involvement of civil society is the need of hour. Parvinder Singh assured that an all out effort involving community leaders, students, civil society & youth will be made to eradicate the menace of drug use for which we will coordinate and work in tandem with the J&K Police which otherwise is doing its best administratively to curb the sale & consumption of drugs.