

# Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication

Office of LG J&K @OfficeOfLGJandK  
 Chaired a review meeting of Power Development Department. Various matters pertaining to power supply during the upcoming summer months and progress of key projects and schemes were discussed in the meeting.

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### LG Greets People On Mahavir Jayanti



JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Saturday has greeted the people on the auspicious occasion of Mahavir Jayanti.

In a message, the Lt Governor said: "On the auspicious occasion of Mahavir Jayanti, I extend my greetings and good" ●P-06

### 'No Guts To Throw A Stone' Amit Shah Takes Dig At Rahul Gandhi On Article 370



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Union home minister Amit Shah on Friday evening took potshots at PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi for predicting turmoil in Jammu and Kashmir over the removal of Article 370, saying no one has the guts to throw stones in the union territory now.

He took the jibe at a roadshow in Rajasthan's Udaipur.

Amit Shah said Mufti and 'Rahul Baba' used to predict bloodbath in years have passed (since the abrogation of Article 370). This is the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Leave alone the talk of the bloodbath, no one has the guts to throw a stone there," Amit Shah said, per ANI.

In 2019, the Central government revoked the special status provided to Jammu and Kashmir by Article 370. It had also bifurcated the erstwhile state into two union territories.

Meanwhile, in an interview with NDTV, Amit Shah responded ●P-06

### Viksit Bharat Ambassador Meet-Up India Will Be Among World's Top 3 Economies By 2027-28: Hardeep Singh Puri

IANAS



NEW DELHI: Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, attending the Viksit Bharat Ambassador Srinagar meet-up event on Saturday, highlighted the country's transformational journey in the past ten years, saying that India is set to outclass Germany and Japan in next few years and will emerge as top three economies in the world.

"Bharat cannot be Viksit without a Viksit Kashmir," he said addressing the Viksit Bharat event which was attended by more than 300 participants hailing from various backgrounds including writers, students, working professionals and notable figures.

Recounting India's economic growth, Hardeep Puri said that India accounted for 25 per cent of global GDP in the 1700s but it gradually dipped to just 2 per cent by 1947, as documented by noted experts.

"The country which once enjoyed 'sone ki chidiya' status lost its prowess during British rule and even after decades of Independence, remained under the Fragile Five category till 2014," said the Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs.

He added that the 'real' transition began under the Modi government and in the past ten years, the country has moved from the top 11 economies to the top 5 economies of the world.

"The country is set to surpass Germany and Japan and will become the world's third-largest economy by 2027-28," he said.

As per official estimates, India should become a 40 trillion dollar economy by 2040, which is currently hovering around 3.5 trillion dollar.

The Union Minister also urged ●P-06

### Terrorist Hideout Busted In Reasi



SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir police claimed to have busted a terrorist hideout and recovered arms and ammunition in Reasi district on Saturday.

In a statement issued, a spokesperson said that acting on the reliable information regarding presence of a hideout in Dalas Barneli, an operation was launched to sanitise the area.

The statement reads that during the search and cordon operation police team recovered huge quantity of arms and ●P-06

### THEIR (OPPOSITION) parties have also received donations through bonds.

Jammu and Kashmir if the special status was removed.

"In Kashmir, (Peoples Democratic Party chief) Mehbooba Mufti and (Congress leader) Rahul Baba (Gandhi) used to say there would be bloodbath here once Article 370 is removed...Rahul Baba, five

### CURRENTLY, INDIA'S OPERATIONAL METRO NETWORK STANDS AT about 950 kms. In the next 2-3 years, it will become the second largest metro network surpassing the US," the Union Minister told Viksit Bharat ambassadors.

### 'Talks On Within Party Over 3 LS Seats In Kashmir'

SRINAGAR: Best of the people are discussing this and whatever is being evaded, will be taken care of soon, Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Saturday said on BJP not yet declaring candidates on the three Lok Sabha seats in Kashmir valley.

Speaking at Viksit Bharat ambassadors' meet here, Puri said the 2024 general elections would produce a victory in favour of development so that the country moves forward to another significant chapter in the realisation of a 'Viksit Bharat'.

Asked about the BJP's expectations from the 2024 ●P-06

### Light Rains Lash Kashmir Parts For 3rd Straight Day



MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: The light rains continued for the third straight day on Saturday in Kashmir parts while hailstorm wreaked havoc in several areas of South Kashmir districts.

The occasional sunshine was witnessed till today afternoon, but the weather conditions took a shift thereafter as several areas of Kashmir including Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu & Kashmir, thus simultaneously brought down the mercury across the valley.

The reports of hailstorm were received from many areas of Shopian district including Sugoo, Tharina, Molu, Dangerpora and others while the crops have also suffered huge damage in these areas as well.

Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, Director ●P-06

### Enhance Strategies To Thwart Potential Terror Activities: IGP To Officers

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, Kashmir IGP V K Birdi has directed security forces in the valley to evaluate and enhance existing strategies to thwart any potential terror activities to ensure public safety and uphold the integrity of the electoral process, police said on Saturday.

The Kashmir zone IGP chaired a joint security coordination meeting at Awantipora in south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Friday, a police spokesman said.

The meeting was attended by DIG CKR, DIG SKR, all sector commanders of Victor Force, DIGs of CRPF Anantnag /SKOR and all SSSP of South Kashmir, SSP Budgam and all COs of RR & CRPF units deployed in South Kashmir & Budgam district.

In a statement issued to INS, a police spokesman that at the outset of the meeting, the participating officers briefed IGP Kashmir about the ●P-06

### LG Manoj Sinha Chairs Review Meeting Of PDD



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Saturday chaired a review meeting of the Power Development Department. Various matters pertaining to power supply during the upcoming summer months and progress of key projects and schemes were discussed in the meeting.

The meeting was attended by Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Santosh D Vaidya, Principal Secretary, Finance Department; ●P-06

### Enter e-Commerce Platforms

## Kashmiri Agriproducts Break Geographical Boundaries

MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: From garlic to Rajmah, Kashmiri agriproducts are fast transcending geographical boundaries by making their way on to various e-commerce platforms.

Kashmir, famous for its breathtaking landscapes, also boasts a rich agricultural heritage. However, due to geographical constraints and limited market access, Kashmiri farmers often faced challenges in reaching a broader consumer base.

The emergence of e-commerce platforms has provided a solution to this long standing issue, enabling direct connections between farmers and consumers across the country.

Now various agriproducts which are grown in Kashmir are available on various e-commerce platforms.

Taking an instance of Kashmiri garlic and rajmah (kidney beans), which are known for their quality worldwide are available on various e-commerce platforms like Amazon, Flipkart and others.

Similarly, Kashmiri chilli powder, Kashmir's aromatic rice Mushk Budji, saffron, walnut, almonds and lavender oil too are available on e-commerce platforms.

All these agriproducts have got positive reviews on the e-commerce platforms for their quality and purity from the buyers.

Taking the case of Rajmah, the buyers have given five star ratings for the quality and purity of the product. "I have tasted Kashmiri Rajmah while on my trip back in 2019. I loved it and got access to it via amazon. Thank you," posted Sunil Kumar a review on a local Rajmah brand.

Mohammad Yusuf Bhat, a dry fruit dealer has been one of the suppliers for Rajmah, saffron and other products to various online stores. "Previously, we were limited ●P-06

### Srinagar Boat Tragedy Search Continues For Missing Trio



REHAN QAYOOM MIR






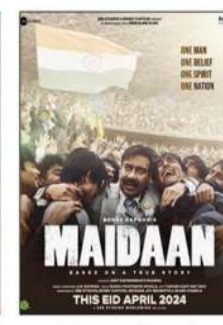

SRINAGAR: The rescue mission to locate the missing bodies of three persons in the Jhelum near Batwara-Gandabal continued for the fifth day without any breakthrough, officials said.

Despite ongoing efforts, including by the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Indian Army's MARCOS and other teams, there have been no traces of the missing persons, Showkat Ahmad and his son Hazik Showkat, and another Farhan Parray.

The tragic incident occurred on April 16 when a boat capsized in the Jhelum River in the Gandbal area of Batwara, resulting in the deaths of six individuals and leaving three locals missing. The search ●P-06

**INOX CINEMA SHIVPORA SRINAGAR**

Sunday 21 April MOVIES Schedule

 <b>DUNE PART TWO (ENG)</b> 04:05PM (U/A)	 <b>CREW (HINDI)</b> 02:50PM (U/A)	 <b>GODZILLA X KONG - 3D (ENG)</b> 03:25PM (U/A)
 <b>CIVIL WAR (ENGLISH)</b> 11:05AM, 01:35PM, 07:30PM (A)	 <b>BADE MIYAN CHOTE MIYAN 3D (HINDI ATMOS)</b> 12:10PM, 06:00PM (U/A)	 <b>MAIDAAN (HINDI)</b> 05:35PM (U/A)
 <b>SHAITAAN (HINDI)</b> 12:00PM (U/A)		

LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

# Expenditure Observer for Anantnag-Rajouri PC visits Kulgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM:** Expenditure Observer (EO) to 3-Anantnag-Rajouri, Parliamentary Constituency, Shyam Manohar Singh Saturday visited Kulgam and undertook a comprehensive review of compliance with election expenditure regulations in Kulgam in connection with the Lok Sabha elections 2024.

During his visit, the EO chaired a meeting at Conference hall mini-secretariat, here which was attended by District Election Officer, Athar Aamir Khan; SSP Kulgam, Sahal Sarangal; Additional District Development Commissioner, Bashir Ahmad Wani; Nodal officer MCC, Abdul Rashid, AROs, Viqar Ahmad Giri and Mushtaq Ahmad Lone, Dy DEO, Bilal Ahmad Kamgar; District Treasury Officer and other officers various other officials and teams involved in the election process.

The DEO, through a presentation, appraised the chair of the district profile and the arrangements and measures put in place for smooth conduct of elections.

It was also shared that a 24x7 robust control room is



functioning in the district besides SVEEP activities are being carried out as per the formulated plan.

It was also informed that there are a total of 364 polling stations including 03 women polling stations, 03 PWD, 03 youth manned polling stations and 15 Model polling stations in the district.

During the meeting, SSP Kulgam briefed the EO that a slew of security measures have been taken to ensure peaceful elections in the district.

The Expenditure

Observer underscored the importance of adhering to ECI guidelines, emphasizing the crucial role of each stakeholder in safeguarding the democratic process and conducting free, fair and peaceful elections.

He called for a collective commitment towards upholding democratic values and maintaining transparency in electoral expenditures, thus upholding the integrity of the electoral process.

The Expenditure Observer also conducted inspections of Media

Monitoring and Social Media Cell, Joint Election Control Room, besides he also inspected Collection/distribution centres and took detailed assessment of arrangements being put up for safety, surveillance and security of Election related material and machinery to be kept at these centres during the Anantnag Lok Sabha segment of elections.

During his visit to Kulgam EO also inspected polling stations and took stock of availability of facilities.

# DEO B'pora visits Green, Pink polling stations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA:** SVEEP cell District Bandipora in collaboration with Department of Social Forestry Bandipora on Saturday organized plantation drive under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative at various polling stations.

The plantation drive at polling stations was aimed to beautify the surroundings and to instill a sense of responsibility towards both the environment and the democratic process.

The District Election Officer (DEO) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman inaugurated the plantation drive at High School Bagh Bandipora, which is designated Green polling Station.



During the plantation drive, the DEO was accompanied by Dy. DEO Mohammad Rafeeq Bhat, and other concerned officers.

Addressing the gathering at High School Bagh (Green polling Station), the DEO appreciated the efforts of SVEEP Cell and applauded the role and participation of students in SVEEP activities.

He said green polling stations have been established to raise aware-

ness about the clean and green environment and to encourage voters to adopt eco-friendly practices.

The DEO also highlighted strategies and initiatives aimed at educating and motivating citizens to exercise their voting rights.

He said that District Administration Bandipora has adopted unique initiatives under SVEEP, including plantation drives and sports activities, which are designed specifically

to enhance participation in the electoral process.

Highlighting the value of the vote, the DEO said vote is a powerful tool for shaping the future and expressing one's voice in the democratic process.

Later, the DEO visited Girls Higher Secondary School Plan Bandipora, which is a designated pink polling station. At Higher Secondary School Plan Bandipora, plantation drive was held to promote environmental sustainability and civic engagement.

An awareness program was also held in which students and staff participated besides officers from the District Administration.

On the occasion, various student speakers highlighted the importance of voting and informed decisions.

# Expenditure Observer for Srinagar PC visits Shopian

# SVEEP Activities continue across Pulwama

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**PULWAMA:** As preparations for the General Lok Sabha Election 2024 are underway, the District Election Office Pulwama Saturday conducted Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) activities to educate and engage voters in the electoral process at High School Achan and Litter.

The ongoing SVEEP initiatives aim to enhance voter awareness, promote voter turnout, and encourage active participation in the election.

In line with the Election Commission of India's guidelines, the District Election Office Pulwama has intensified its efforts to reach out to the public through various cultural programmes, Ladishah, Rally, Seminars, awareness programs, campaigns, and events.

These SVEEP activities are designed to educate voters about the importance of voting, voter registration procedures, voting rights, and electoral ethics.

The SVEEP activities conducted by the District Election Office in Pulwama



include voter registration drives, voter education workshops and interactive sessions with Women Youth (especially new voters, elite class, community leaders, distribution of voter information pamphlets, and voter awareness rallies.

The District Election Officer Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom emphasized the significance of SVEEP activities in ensuring maximum participation and engagement of voters in the upcoming Lok Sabha Election.

Dr. Basharat encouraged all stakeholders, including government departments, civil society organizations, media partners, and educational institutions, to actively support and facilitate the SVEEP efforts in the district.



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN:** Election Expenditure Observer (EO) for 2-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency, Sambit Mishra Saturday visited Shopian and chaired a review meeting with Nodal officers on expenditure monitoring and other Election preparedness pertaining to Shopian Assembly Constituency.

At the outset, District Election Officer (DEO) Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb briefed the Expenditure Observer about functioning of expenditure monitoring teams viz Flying Squads, Static Surveillance Teams, District Election Control Room, District Election Management Plan, SVEEP activities, security, and other related election issues.

He informed that teams on the ground are working round the clock to keep check on expenditure monitoring of all political parties and candidates of the Constituency. He said

all logistical, material, security, manpower and other arrangements are in place for smooth conduct of elections in a free and fair manner.

Nodal Officer, Expenditure Monitoring, Shopian and Pulwama also briefed about the expenditure monitoring system in place and position of expenditure booking party wise.

Expenditure Observer, on the occasion emphasized for sensitizing all political parties on expenditure related maintenance of records and also instructed for keeping track of social media, paid news, and proper maintenance of accounts of contesting candidates.

Later, the Observer visited the Strong room, Shopian and Pink Polling station.

The meeting was attended by SSP, Tanushree; ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone; ADC, Dr. Zakir Husain Faaz; AROs, Nodal Officers of district Shopian and Pulwama.

# Efforts of divisive elements will be fought tooth and nail: Aga Ruhullah

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** National Conference senior leader and Lok Sabha candidate from central Kashmir's Srinagar segment Aga Ruhullah Saturday reiterated that efforts of divisive elements need to be fought tooth and nail.

Ruhulla said that PAGD was not an electoral alliance but meant for a particular cause which is still relevant. "The cause PAGD was formed for still exist. For that we will have to get united again. We have a big responsibility in the election as it will be fresh start for our struggle to fight for our rights that were snatched on August 05, 2019", Ruhullah said.

He said the ongoing Lok Sabha election is for that institution where our rights were trampled. "This is an important elections to make people aware and tell them to wake up and fight for their rights. This is a big opportunity for us to reach out to people and let them know what was taken away from us", he said.

The NC leader the aim



of our contesting polls is to mobilize political space which was not provided in last five years. "The decision taken on August 05, 2019 is unacceptable for us. The aim of our contesting elections is to represent collective sentiment of our people who are disappointed with the declarations of New Delhi," he said.

"I will not promise people that I will do this and that... rather I will try to restore the rights of my people. In the meanwhile elements who are hell bent to divide people will be resisted tooth and nail. This fight needs our collective response. We should introspect and find out reasons how to come out of this uncertainty. There is a need of unity and no alternative is left with us," Ruhullah added. (KNS)

# DEO Kupwara flags-off cycle race to raise voter awareness



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA:** As part of its ongoing efforts to promote voter awareness and electoral participation, the District Administration Kupwara organized a Cycle Rally under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) at Kupwara on Saturday.

The rally was flagged-off by the District Election Officer (DEO) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan. DEO was accompanied by the Nodal Officer SVEEP /CEO Kupwara, Abdul Majeed Dar. The Cycle Race started from the DC Office complex Kupwara and finally culminated near Government Degree College at Bohipora, Kupwara after passing through Bumhama, Mogalpora and Gushi.

Through this Cycle Race, the students from different educational institutions made efforts to create awareness and motivate the general public, especially first time voters to

actively participate in the democratic process.

The DEO speaking, after flagging off the cycle race, told Media persons that the main aim of the cycle race was to ensure that every eligible voter is equipped with the awareness, knowledge and motivation to exercise their right to vote.

The DEO said that multiple events and activities under SVEEP are being organized to aware and educate the voters.

"We are going to speed up the SVEEP activities and have planned the mega events in the coming days in the run up to the LS Polls".

DEO further said that on April 24 and April 25 Mega plantation drives are being organized in every Polling station of the district.

She urged all residents of Kupwara district to participate in the plantation drive and contribute in conservation of forests and protection of the environment besides getting awareness and education about the right to franchise.

# ADC Handwara inspects AMF, reviews preparedness

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA:** The Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Handwara, Aziz Ahmad Rather who is also ARO AC- 5 Handwara Saturday visited various polling stations of Handwara sub-division to inspect Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) and reviewed the preparedness for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

The inspection was aimed to ensure that all

polling stations are accessible to voters especially to specially-abled persons. Ramp access, electricity supply and drinking water and other facilities were reviewed.

During the visit, the ADC inspected Polling Station Ramhal, Tarathpora, Hachmarg, Tumina, Manzgam, Phalmarg, Malikpora, Kalmooona and various other stations. On the occasion, plantation activities were also held in some polling stations.

# 217 Cases of MACT, Bank Recovery resolved amicably in Special Lok Adalat

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Under the patronage of Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh & Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority and with the approval of Justice Tashi Rabstan, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority as well as under the guidance of Justice Sindhu Sharma, Chairperson, High Court Legal Services Committee, a Special Lok Adalat was organized throughout the UT of J&K today, with special emphasis on amicable settlement of MACT and Bank Recovery Cases that were pending disposal before various courts in UT of J&K.

As per the data received from various District Legal Services Authorities, UT of J&K, a total of 667 Cases were taken up in the Special Lok Adalat, out of which 217 cases were amicably

settled involving a total amount of Rs. 6,83,11,343/- giving a huge relief to the litigants. District Ganderbal emerged as front runner with amicable resolution of 50 cases out of 53 cases taken up in the Special Lok Adalat.

Mr. Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority while talking to media persons informed that this was the fourth Special Lok Adalat of the current calendar year and the next special Lok Adalat shall be held on Saturday, May 17, 2024 focusing on the settlement of consumer cases pending disposal in different consumer forums within the UT of J&K. He urged the Advocates in general and the litigants in particular to take maximum benefit of such Special Lok Adalats which are being organized by the J&K Legal Services Authority.

## NOTICE

My spouse's name has been wrongly entered as Smt. Misra instead of Smt. Misra Banoo in my service records. Now I am applying for correction of spouse's name, while I have not suppressed any fact while disclosing the actual spouse name. In case the information given above is found wrong I am personally responsible.

Mohammad Yusuf Bhat  
S/O Ghulam Hassan Bhat  
R/O Rathuna Tehsil Tral Distt. Pulwama

Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION SOPORE.

(ELECTION URGENT)

E-Tendering/NITN001 /RNB/SOPORE/2024-25/DATED20/04/2024

The Upper Sealing for Inviting Stage Contract Shall Be Kept as Restricted 1.00Lac Per/Km.

For and on behalf of the Government of UT J&K, e-tenders (in Single Cover System) are invited on Percentage rate 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 (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs.)	E/ Money	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	6	7	7	
1.	Stage contract for Repair and Routine Maintenance of roads to Sub Division Sopore/Zaingeer	0.00	600/-	20000	F.Y 2024-25	Election Urgent	All Classes

Project Authority: PWD R&B)

Position of funds: Available

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

S. No.	Particulars	Dated
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	20-04-2024
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 20-04-2024 (11:00AM) To 20-4-2024 (16:00PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	From 20-04-2024 (18:00PM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	To 26-04-2024 (04:00AM)
5	Date and time of opening of bid (online)	26-04-2024 (16:10PM)

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore (tender inviting authority) (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore tender receiving authority).

3. The successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 5% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the total cost, in single CDR/FDR which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.

4. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on WebSite www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore (Tender Receiving Authority).

5. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids

No: 271-90  
Dated: 20.04.2024

DIPK-153-24  
DT: 20/04/2024

Executive Engineer,  
R&B Division Sopore

# BJP defends its decision not to field candidates from LS seats in Kashmir

AGENCIES

JAMMU: Facing criticism for not putting up candidates on the three Lok Sabha seats in the Kashmir valley, Jammu and Kashmir BJP on Saturday said sometimes "decisions are made to achieve a big goal" and the BJP is supporting "patriotic" parties.

Jammu and Kashmir BJP chief Ravinder Raina said the party is finalising its strategy under the leadership of national president J P Nadda on the three seats of Anantnag-Rajouri, Srinagar and Baramulla on providing support to the contesting candidates as he requested people to reject the Congress, National Conference and PDP for the larger interest of the region.

Raina said this while addressing a press conference before chairing a high-level meeting at party office here, which was attended by Union Minister Jitendra Singh, national general secretary, incharge J&K, Tarun Chugh and others.

"We were desirous of fighting the elections from all the three Lok Sabha seats in Kashmir on our



own strength. But sometimes different decisions are made to achieve a big goal, setting aside personal interests. We are supporting those parties who are patriotic, working for betterment of Kashmir, strengthening peace and brotherhood and eager to serve the society," Raina said.

Without identifying any such candidate or the party, he said they will soon meet Nadda and other central leaders to discuss the strategy and will reveal the names so that the BJP workers and supporters can vote for them.

"We will work in accordance with the roadmap with full force and the candidates having support of

the BJP will definitely win the elections as our party has a strong support base and organisational structure and network in every nook and corner of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Raina said Union Home Minister Amit Shah, addressing an election rally in Jammu on April 16, had asked the people in Kashmir to reject the Congress, National Conference and PDP, who have "ruined" the region and prefer other parties contesting the elections from the three seats.

"The home minister made it clear that we have to fight together to defeat the dynastic parties who have pushed J&K into a

fire. They have ruled J&K for many decades in the past and brought death and destruction in the valley. They (Congress, NC and PDP) are the enemies of Kashmiris because they have been indulging in politics of hatred and they are doing everything to push J&K back to the old days of violence," he said.

Chugh said the fight is between Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who "freed Jammu and Kashmir from the clutches of Article 370", and the three dynastic parties - the Congress, National Conference and PDP - who "exploited" people over the decades under the constitutional provision.

# 'Unfortunate' that NC contesting against friend who turned 'greedy': Omar

AGENCIES

PULWAMA: National Conference (NC) vice president Omar Abdullah on Saturday said it was "unfortunate" that his party was contesting elections in the Anantnag-Rajouri parliamentary constituency against a friend who turned "greedy" for a Lok Sabha seat.

Abdullah was apparently referring to PDP president Mehbooba Mufti contesting the polls from the seat in south Kashmir. The NC has fielded its senior Gujjar leader Mian Altaf from the seat.

"The fight on the south Kashmir seat is not with the BJP. NC's contest there is unfortunately with one of our friends who was with us till some days ago. Unfortunately, they left us for the greed of a seat. Our contest at least in south Kashmir is not with the BJP or its 'B' or 'C' teams," Abdullah said here.

He was speaking to reporters after addressing an election meeting in support of the party candidate from Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi.

The NC and PDP, who are part of the opposition's INDIA bloc, were also a part of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), which was formed after of the abro-



gation of Article 370.

The alliance broke after the NC announced to field candidates from all the three constituencies in the Kashmir valley, without leaving any seat for the PDP. The PDP also later announced to field its candidates on all the three seats.

The NC vice president said while the BJP was not directly contesting the parliamentary polls in the valley, it was supporting parties like the Apni Party and People's Conference (PC).

"The BJP is in the field contesting elections, but the only difference is they do not have their party symbol, they are contesting on 'cricket bat' (Apni Party's symbol) and 'apple' (PC's symbol)... We are well aware who the BJP supports here, but they stand

no chance of winning," he added.

The former J-K chief minister said going by the response of the people, "I hope that God willing, the NC will win all the three seats."

In response to a question about the BJP's claims of the NDA crossing the 400-mark, Abdullah said everything would be clear after the results.

The Ladakh seat is slipping away from their hands, he claimed.

"After the polling yesterday, it seems they will not be able to save the Udhampur seat. Let us see what will happen on the Jammu seat as well," he said.

Asked about BJP's J-K president Ravindra Raina claiming that the party will win both the seats in Jammu, Abdullah said,

"Let me remind Raina that the elections have not taken place on the Jammu seat yet and we do not even know how many votes will be polled there. Let the voting take place first, then the BJP should claim its victory. As of now, we feel their Udhampur seat is in danger," he said.

The NC vice president alleged the BJP claimed many things in Kashmir, but fled from contesting the polls in the valley.

"Why did they leave the field? What was their helplessness? Raina was preparing to contest the polls from the south Kashmir seat, but why did he not contest? What compulsion did they have that they had to push other parties be it 'cricket bat' or 'apple', Abdullah said, adding "these parties were working for the BJP".

## LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

# DEO Srinagar finalizes Plan for transportation of Polling Staff, EVMs



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In order to ensure hassle-free transportation of Polling Staff, EVMs and other election-related material to the polling stations for smooth conduct of upcoming Lok Sabha Elections-2024 in the district, a meeting of concerned Officers was Saturday held under the chairmanship of the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat at Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex, here.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Srinagar, Ashish Mishra; Assistant Returning Officers, Nodal Officer

Transport Management, GM SRTC, Deputy District Election Officer and other Officers attended the meeting.

At the outset, the DEO Srinagar, who is also the Returning Officer (RO) 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency discussed the Transport plan in a comprehensive manner for smooth dispatch of the poll material and polling personnel.

He took Assembly Constituency wise details about the transportation plan from the concerned Officers.

The respective AROs apprised of the requirements of the vehicles and seating capacity of the

vehicles so that they reach and depart polling stations in a hassle free manner particularly in the interior areas where polling booths have been set up.

The DEO stressed that all necessary arrangements are put in place for the dispatching of EVMs to designated locations and all arrangements of security and safety of EVMs are made as per the guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI).

The DEO emphasized that polling staff, security personnel and election related material reach at respective polling stations on time without any hindrance.

# In 5 years, Srinagar records over 450 kidnapping, rape cases

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: In the past more than five years, Srinagar district have witnessed at least 455 kidnapping and rape cases and 63 murder cases.

According to the official figures available, police authorities in district Srinagar from have registered at least 455 kidnapping and rape cases from 2019 to January 31-2024.

The official also said that during this period, the police authorities in the region has recorded at least 63 cases under crime head murder and 170 suicidal cases under crime head attempt to suicide.

This information was revealed by the Public Information Officer (PIO) of district police Srinagar in a reply to Right to Informa-

tion (RTI) application filed by the activist M M Shuja.

According to the official figures, police in 2019 have registered at least 15 suicidal cases under crime head attempt to suicide in Srinagar followed by 26 cases in 2020.

In the year 2021, it also recorded at least 51 such cases, 41 cases in 2022 and 34 suicidal cases in 2023.

The official figures further reveal that in 2024 till the month end of January, a total of three suicidal cases were registered in Srinagar district.

About the cases of kidnapping and rape, the PIO has informed that the district police Srinagar in year 2019 has registered at least 98 such cases followed by 21 cases in the year 2020.

It also said that the Srinagar district in 2021 has

registered at least 100 cases of kidnapping and rape under crime head and has also witnessed 128 such cases in 2022 and hundred cases in 2023 respectively.

The official figures states that that in 2024 till the month end of January, a total of eight kidnapping and rape cases were registered in Srinagar district.

Likewise, the PIO has mentioned that in the year 2019, police in Srinagar district have registered at least six murder cases followed by 13 cases in 2020, at least 24 murder cases in 2021, thirteen cases in 2022 and six cases in 2023.

The PIO has further revealed that in January-2024, police authorities in the district have registered only one such case under crime head murder—(KNO)

# Sajad Lone seeks support of Apni Party in north Kashmir



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: J&K Peoples Conference Chairman Sajad Gani Lone Saturday sought support of Altaf Bukhari led Apni Party in north Kashmir's Lok Sabha segment to stop fragmentation of votes.

Addressing a press conference here in Srinagar, Lone said after 1975 it has been seen that 10 MP's from north Kashmir have been elected to Parliament. He said the regional political party National Conference has reached to the House of the People due to fragmentation of votes.

"In this regard I appeal to my dear friend Altaf Bukhari to stop vote division in north Kashmir, and support Peoples Conference there to stop vote fragmentation," Lone said.

He said if Apni Party will endorse its support to JKPC, we will support them unconditionally in other areas particularly in Srinagar Parliamentary segment.

He added we have decided it because we have done confabulations with leaders of Apni Party, and if required the deliberation in this regard will be carried out with other political groups as well. (KNS)

# Ganderbal villagers complain drinking water shortage

RAJA SYED RATHER

GANDERBAL: Residents of several areas of Sehpora Wayil and adjoining areas in Ganderbal have complained of scarcity of drinking water from the last couple of days.

According to the locals, several areas in Wayil including Sehpora are facing acute scarcity of drinking water.

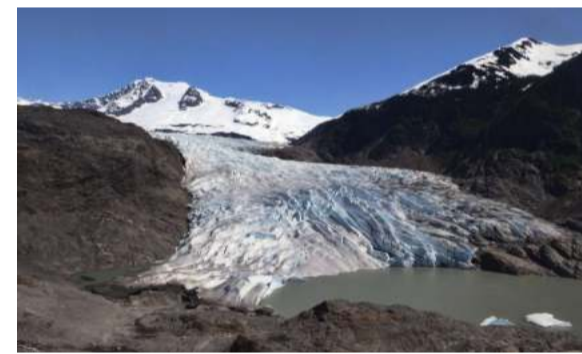


"We are facing water shortage from the last 3-4 days, and the JE and concerned employees of the Jal Shakti department posted in the area are paying no heed to their problems," a local said.

The inhabitants said from the last 3-4 days they are not receiving drinking water through the "Gurezy colony" pipeline laid by the Jal Shakti department.

AEE Jal Shakti department Ganderbal Faizan Ahmad told KNO that he will look into the issue—(KNO)

# 122 Glaciers Shrinking in Pir Panja: Report



ALI ASAD

SRINAGAR: A study on the damage caused by climate change has revealed shocking information. According to the report, 122 glaciers are shrinking in the Pir Panjal, raising concerns about potential glacial lake outburst floods.

Researchers have identified 122 glaciers in the Pir Panjal range, whose size has drastically decreased since 1980. Glaciers covering an area of approximately 25.7 square kilometers have diminished to just 15.9 square kilometers.

This revelation comes from a study conducted by researchers from the National Institute of Technology, Srinagar, led by Mohammad Ashraf Ganai and Syed Qaiser Bukhari. The findings have been published in the International

Journal of Hydrology Science and Technology.

The researchers analyzed data spanning four decades, from 1980 to 2020, focusing on the glaciers within the Pir Panjal range of the Kashmir Basin in India.

Glaciers facing south have experienced more significant melting compared to those facing north. Additionally, glaciers situated at an average altitude of 3,800-4,000 meters above sea level have exhibited more pronounced melting than those at lower elevations.

The decline in glaciers poses a threat of water scarcity, impacting agricultural production and everyday life. The rapid and substantial melting of glaciers also increases the risk of glacial lake outburst floods, which could disrupt the ecosystem and pose significant hazards—(KNO)

## UNAUTHORISED PARKING

# Authorities in Baramulla to impose Rs 5000 fine

WARIS FAYAZ

BARAMULLA: Authorities in Baramulla have urged people to refrain from encroaching roads and parking their vehicles on roadsides, saying violators will have to pay a hefty fine of Rs 5000.

Street vendors, encroachment of roads by shopkeepers by putting merchandise, signboards and wrong parking of vehicles were the main reasons for obstructing public movement besides leading to frequent traffic jams, an official said.

He said they have decided to relocate street vendors of civil lines Baramulla to Tashkan Adda (Kokar Bazar) and General Bus Stand Baramulla.

"Any vendor found with his cart outside these designated areas will be dealt



strictly in accordance with law and a fine of Rs 2000 will be imposed on the spot," the official added.

Meanwhile, an administrative order notifying all the shopkeepers to remove their illegal encroachments of their own besides asked them not to park their vehicles along roadsides as well as bridges to ensure hassle free movement of pedestrians/commuters and to avoid undue traffic jams.

"Any person found violating the orders will be dealt strictly in accordance with the law, which shall include the fine of Rs. 5000," it said—(KNO)

# Laam, Nishat residents urge R&B for immediate repair of boulevard road

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

SRINAGAR: The residents of Laam area in Nishat area of Srinagar here have raised concerns over the deteriorating condition of the famous Boulevard Road, urging the Roads & Buildings (R&B) department and authorities to expedite repairing work.

They added that they have highlighted the presence of a significant pothole on Boulevard Road many times, but no action has been taken in this regard. The locals from Nishat



said these potholes have been causing inconvenience to the commuters and posing a potential risk to the vehicles.

"We emphasize the importance of addressing this issue promptly to ensure the safety and smooth flow of traffic in

the area," said Sahil, a local. He added that this issue should be sorted at the earliest.

Moreover, expressing their anger, locals have called upon the R&B department and relevant authorities to take immediate action—(KNO)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

# IPL In Kashmir

The dazzle of Indian Premier League is unavoidable. It has taken Indian cricket to a next level. Every cricketer player in the world wants to be associated with IPL in some way.

The millions of viewers who watch every single ball of IPL on their TV screens add hundreds of millions of rupees revenue to IPL. Those lucky ones who make it to the stadiums in person have the fortune of seeing the whole spectacle in front of their very eyes. To see the likes of Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah perform in front of their eyes is a dream for every Indian.

The valley of Kashmir has exuded a lot of love for sports like football and cricket. Playing cricket comes naturally to Kashmiris as Kashmiris can bowl naturally at a good pace. Every lane of Kashmir has the potential to produce fast bowlers. There is this blue-collared workforce of Kashmir valley including masons, carpenters, motor mechanics who like to listen to commentary of every ball of the match. General public in Kashmir valley has highest knowledge of cricket and the average Kashmiri knows about the rules and regulations governing this game.

Keeping these points in view it would have been really good if a few matches of the IPL would have been played in Kashmir valley. Kashmiris would just love it and ensure a full-capacity house for all the matches. Seeing the top cricketers of the world perform in front of them in person would be a dream come true for millions of Kashmiris.

Indeed we need to improve the current capacity of our stadiums in every letter of the word. IPL works on capital and revenue. We have build the infrastructure so that we can grab the attend of IPL organisers as a viable alternative to hold some of the IPL matches.

We are extremely hopeful that a few matches of next year's IPL would be played in our Kashmir valley and a lot of us would be among the spectators cheering on our favourite cricketers.

# Narendra Modi Ki Guarantee 2024- New Era In Bharat



PROF JASIM MOHAMMAD

In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, it's easy to lose sight of where our country is headed and what our leaders have planned. Bhartiya Janta Party's Sankalp Patr for 2024 Lok Sabha Elections, titled "Modi Ki Guarantee 2024," provides a clear roadmap for India's future. It is also evident that Over the past ten years, Bharat has seen some major developments. We've gone from being one of the "Fragile Five" economies to one of the top five in the world. That's no small feat! Millions of families now have access to things like bank accounts, healthcare, and clean water that they didn't have before. That's what we call progress. Amidst their plans for the future, it's pivotal to acknowledge the significant achievements of the BJP government over the past decade. The achievements of the BJP government over the past decade paint a picture of progress and transformation across various aspects of Indian society. From empowering citizens through schemes like PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana in providing financial inclusion through PM Jan Dhan Account, the government has strived to uplift the lives of millions of Indians. With over 80 crore citizens benefiting from free rations and 50 crores joining the banking system, the government has laid the foundation for a more inclusive and empowered Bharat. Moreover, the BJP's commitment to social justice is evident in initiatives like PM Ujjwala Yojana, which has transformed the lives of over 10 crore women by providing free gas connections. The government's efforts have been commendable, with over 34 crore citizens receiving free health insurance under Ayushman Bharat. Similarly, the focus on maternal and child health, as evidenced by schemes like PM Matru Vandana Yojana and Mission Indradhanush, has led to significant improvements in healthcare outcomes for women and children.

The government's focus on economic development and job creation is evident in initiatives like PM Mudra Yojana, which has provided loans worth over ₹27 lakh crore to entrepreneurs and small businesses. The expansion of educational institutions and skill development programs has empowered millions of youths with the tools they need to succeed in a competitive global economy. Furthermore, the government's focus on infrastructure development, including the construction of national highways, railways, and airports, has enhanced connectivity and facilitated economic growth across the country. The successful hosting of events like the G20 Summit and the promotion of initiatives like International Day of Yoga have elevated India's stature on the global stage. So, the achievements of the BJP government over



the past decade have laid the groundwork for a stronger, more inclusive, and prosperous Bharat. Through a combination of welfare schemes, social justice initiatives, and economic reforms, the government has made significant progress towards realizing its vision of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas.

Despite such notable achievements PM Modi isn't resting on his laurels. In the "Modi Ki Guarantee 2024", he lays out his plans for the next five years. He envisions elevating India to one of the top three global economies, eradicating poverty entirely, and ensuring every individual in the country has the opportunity to thrive. The Modi Ki Guarantee 2024 prioritizes assisting the impoverished and marginalized, whether through providing free food, housing, or healthcare. In his letter to nation Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned, "In 2014, we received your support to bring in a monumental transformation. In 2019, we received an even bigger mandate and ensured continued development and took big decisions. In the next five years, with your blessings, it is Modi's Guarantee that we will work 24 by 7 for 2047."

However, the BJP's manifesto for the 2024 general elections is full of good ideas and shows how this government want to make India a better place for everyone. While it will take a lot hard work to make all these plans a reality, it's nice to see a party thinking about how to improve things for everyone in the country. The manifesto talks about a lot of things, the party wants to do to improve the country. One thing that stands out is how the BJP wants to keep doing good things that have

already started. A major part of their plan is to help people feel stronger and more able to do things by giving opportunities to everyone, no matter who they are. BJP has a good track record in past decade to help women, people from poorer backgrounds, and those who might need extra support. This is important because when everyone has a fair chance, the whole country can grow together.

The BJP's vision for 2024 revolves around creating an inclusive and prosperous Bharat where every individual has equal opportunities to succeed, regardless of their background or circumstances. Central to this vision is the idea of ensuring that no one is left behind, with a commitment to assisting those who may lack financial resources or opportunities. The BJP also seeks to instill a sense of strength and confidence among the populace. They plan to facilitate skill development and entrepreneurship initiatives to enable people to realize their aspirations. Environmental sustainability is another key pillar of their vision. They advocate for the adoption of renewable energy sources like solar power to ensure energy accessibility for all while preserving the environment for future generations. The BJP envisions a Bharat where everyone feels proud and has the chance to thrive, with a focus on inclusivity, gender equality, empowerment, and environmental stewardship.

The "Modi Ki Guarantee 2024" outlines a series of assurances by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) aimed at addressing the diverse needs of Indian society. From the impoverished to the middle class, women, youth, senior citizens, farmers, fishermen,

workers, and small traders, the BJP pledges comprehensive support. The manifesto also commits to provide quality education, healthcare, and job opportunities for young citizens, as well as ensuring a dignified life for senior citizens. Additionally, the BJP promises to honor and support farmers, fishermen families, labourers, MSMEs, small traders, and artisans, while prioritizing inclusive development and welfare for all sections of society. Their vision encompasses fostering stronger international relations, ensuring national security, driving economic growth, developing world-class infrastructure, improving urban living conditions, preserving heritage alongside development, upholding principles of good governance, promoting health and sports, facilitating balanced regional development, embracing technology and innovation, and emphasizing sustainability for future generations.

This vision of Bharat isn't just about what happens within India's borders. They also want to show the world how great India is. That's why they want to share Indian culture and values with other countries. They believe this will help India become a respected leader on the global stage. In their vision, Bharat is a place where everyone feels like they belong. It doesn't matter where you come from or what your background is - everyone is welcome and valued. This sense of unity and togetherness is what makes their vision of Bharat so special. Their vision of Bharat is all about making India a strong, proud, and inclusive nation. They believe that by working together and supporting each other, they can create a brighter future for everyone. Another cool thing is how they want to use technology to make life easier for everyone. They talk about using things like solar power and satellite images to help farmers and fishermen. In his letter to nation Modi said, "Farmers have been a backbone of our nation's progress. Whether it is historic MSP hikes, massive rise in procurement or making fertilisers available to them inexpensively despite globally high prices, direct income support through PM-KISAN, safety net of Fasal Bima, renewed focus on millets, expanded access to local and global markets, a number of steps have been taken to empower them. Our Annadatas are also becoming Urjadatas due to the PM KUSUM scheme. Empowered by our Beej Se Bazar Tak approach, our farmers have done wonders for the country". Bjp want to help small businesses stay safe online and are looking to the future and want to use technology to make life better for everyone. The manifesto also talks about making sure everyone gets the healthcare and education they need. This means helping older people with their health and making sure kids have good schools to go to. It's great to see they care about everyone's well-being and want to make sure everyone has a chance to learn and grow.

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## PRESERVING THE LIFELINES

# Protecting Kashmir's Water Bodies For Sustainable Development



IMRAN MAQBOOL WANI

Kashmir's beauty flows like its rivers, captivating hearts with the purity of its water bodies, sustaining life, and weaving tales of serenity amidst the majestic landscapes. Kashmir, also known as "Paradise on Earth" is blessed with incredibly gorgeous natural settings. Its landscape, which consists of glistening water features, towering hills, and lush meadows, captivates everyone who sees it. Among its many treasures are its waterways, which are vital to the region's ecology and give its residents inspiration, vitality, and sustenance.

Kashmir is endowed with an abundance of water resources, including lakes, rivers, waterfalls, and natural springs. These features add to the region's distinct appeal and support its varied ecosystem. These bodies of water, which range in size from the magnificent Jhelum River to the well-known Dal Lake, are not only aesthetically pleasing but also essential for maintaining ecological balance and biodiversity. Because they provide homes for a diverse range of flora and fauna, they sustain a wide range of living

species and improve the general health of the environment. Beyond their ecological significance, these bodies of water hold immense significance for the people of Kashmir, serving a multitude of vital purposes and providing for their necessities. Millions of people depend on these bodies of water for tourism, shopping, agriculture, and drinking water, underscoring their vital role in maintaining human life and livelihoods. Providing its people with much-needed relief from thirst, Kashmir's lakes and rivers nourish the region's lush fields, guaranteeing future generations access to food and financial success.

But the entire nature of these water bodies is being threatened by pollution, which presents serious hazards to Kashmir's economy, public health, and ecology. The ramifications of contaminated water sources in Kashmir are extensive and multifaceted. First and foremost, pollution endangers the lives of fish, plants, and other creatures that depend on these bodies of water by upsetting the delicate balance of aquatic ecosystems. The region's biodiversity is irreversibly harmed by the uncontrolled release of industrial waste, untreated sewage, and agricultural runoff, which cause habitat degradation, algal blooms, and oxygen deprivation. The drinking water supplies that were previously essential become breeding grounds for illnesses like cholera, typhoid, and hepatitis due to pollution, which poses serious hazards to human health. In addition to endangering the health of the local populace, the tainted water



also impedes initiatives aimed at advancing sanitation and public health in the region.

Waterbody contamination also has negative effects on two important areas of Kashmir's economy: agriculture and tourism. The deterioration of picturesque lakes and rivers lessens Kashmir's allure as a travel destination, which affects the livelihoods of numerous people who depend on tourism-related industries for a living. Similarly, contaminated irrigation water contaminates crops and soil, resulting in lower yields and decreased food safety. This lowers agricultural production. Notwithstanding these obstacles, there is optimism for the conservation and revitalization of Kashmir's aquatic resources. To solve this urgent problem and guarantee the sustainable management of water resources in the region, a coordinated effort including the public, businesses, government agencies, and agricultural stakeholders is required.

A multifaceted strategy includ-

ing corrective actions is necessary to safeguard Kashmir's water resources. First and foremost, stringent laws that require wastewater to be treated before being released into water bodies must be put into place and strictly enforced to prevent the discharge of industrial effluent. Similarly, organic farming techniques should be promoted and farmers should be encouraged to embrace sustainable agricultural practices that reduce the use of artificial pesticides and fertilizers. To guarantee that household trash and sewage are properly treated before being released into water bodies, it is imperative to invest in the modernization of sewage treatment infrastructure and recycling programs, comprehensive waste management plans are essential for lowering the production of solid waste and stopping additional water body contamination.

Prioritizing reforestation and soil conservation techniques will help stop soil erosion and lessen sedimentation in water

bodies. Furthermore, the negative impacts of urbanization on water quality can be lessened by including green infrastructure and stormwater management in urban development. To combat the contamination of Kashmir's water bodies, however, calls for changes in public perceptions and practices surrounding pollution avoidance and water

conservation. It is critical to spread knowledge about the value of protecting water bodies and to encourage moral behavior, such as appropriate trash disposal and water conservation. Involving the community through campaigns like clean-up drives and monitoring programs may help people feel more accountable and responsible for their surroundings, which will motivate them to take proactive measures to safeguard them.

Overcoming individual interests and considerations, the preservation of Kashmir's water bodies is a collective responsibility. It is a pledge to protect the Region's natural heritage for the next generations and to guarantee the welfare of its residents. We can pave the way for a sustainable future in which the waters of Kashmir flow clean and pure, supporting life in all its forms, by enacting strict rules, making infrastructural investments, encouraging sustainable practices, and encouraging community involvement. We need to work together on this admirable project and commit to preserving Kashmir's vital

routes for future generations.

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IDEAS, OPINIONS AND VIEWS EXPRESSED IN ARTICLES PUBLISHED ARE WRITERS' OWN AND MAY NOT BE FOUND IN ACCORD WITH THOSE OF GOOD MORNING KASHMIR

# Enhancing Gynaecological Care With Robotic Integration


**DR. NEELAM BANERJEE**

In recent years, the field of gynaecology has witnessed a remarkable transformation with the introduction and widespread adoption of robotic technology. Robotics in gynaecology involves the use of advanced robotic systems to assist surgeons in performing minimally invasive procedures with greater precision and control. This transformative approach has revolutionized the way gynaecological surgeries are conducted, offering numerous benefits to both patients and healthcare providers.

Traditional open surgeries often require large incisions, leading to longer recovery times, increased pain, and higher risk of complications. In contrast, robotic-assisted procedures involve smaller incisions, allowing for quicker recovery, reduced postoperative pain, and minimal scarring. This not only enhances the overall patient experience but also reduces the burden on healthcare resources by decreasing hospital stays and rehabili-



tation periods.

Robotic technology also provides surgeons with enhanced precision and dexterity during complex gynaecological procedures. The robotic

system consists of small, specialized instruments that are controlled by the surgeon via a console. These instruments can rotate and manoeuvre with greater flexibility than the human

hand, enabling surgeons to perform intricate tasks with utmost accuracy. As a result, delicate procedures such as hysterectomies, myomectomies, and ovarian cystectomies can be car-

ried out with improved outcomes and lower risk of complications.

Furthermore, robotics offers improved visualization capabilities, this enhanced visualization is particularly beneficial for procedures involving intricate anatomical structures or confined spaces, where precision is paramount. By providing surgeons with a clear and detailed view of the operative field, robotic technology facilitates more accurate tissue dissection, better identification of critical structures, and reduced risk of damage to surrounding tissues.

Another significant advantage of robotic surgery is that surgeons can perform a wide range of complex surgeries that were previously deemed unsuitable for minimally invasive approaches. This includes procedures such as radical hysterectomies for gynaecological cancers, fertility-sparing surgeries for benign conditions, and pelvic floor reconstructions for pelvic organ prolapse.

Robotic surgery has emerged as a powerful tool in the field of gynaecology, offering a range of benefits. As technology continues to advance and robotic systems evolve, the future holds even greater promise for the integration of robotics in gynaecological care.

*Senior Consultant - Gynaecology Endoscopy and Robotics, Yatharth Hospital, Greater Noida*

## Rejecting **The Facade**

# Unveiling The Ecological Toll

**MELISSA GARRIGA**

As Earth Day approaches, prepare for the annual spectacle of U.S. lawmakers donning their environmentalist hats, waxing poetic about their love for the planet while disregarding the devastation their actions wreak. The harsh reality is that alongside their hollow pledges lies a trail of destruction fueled by military aggression and imperial ambitions, all under the guise of national security.

Take Gaza, for instance. Its once-fertile farmland now lies barren, its water sources poisoned by conflict and neglect. The grim statistics speak volumes: 97% of Gaza's water is unfit for human consumption, leading to a staggering 26% of illnesses, particularly among vulnerable children. Israel's decades-long colonial settler project and ethnic cleansing of Palestine have caused irrefutable damage to the land, air, and water, consequently contributing to the climate crisis. In fact, in the first two months of the current genocide campaign in Gaza, Israel's murderous bombardment, which has killed nearly 35,000 people, has also generated more planet-warming emissions than the annual carbon footprint of the world's top 20 climate-vulnerable nations. Yet, despite these dire circumstances, U.S. lawmakers persist in funneling weapons to Israel, perpetuating a cycle of violence and environmental degradation.

The ripple effects of militarism extend far beyond Gaza's borders. In Ukraine, the Russia-Ukraine War has left a staggering \$56.4 billion environmental bill, with widespread contamination of air, water, and soil. Landmines and unexploded ordnance left litter 30% of the country, posing long-term risks to both the environment and human health. The United States' answer to all this has been to reject diplomacy and fuel a long, protracted war with a seemingly endless supply of weapons and military support. A war that most experts will tell you is not a winnable war. The proxy war the United States is funding not only leaves Ukrainians at risk of never achieving peace but also significantly contributes to the ever-growing climate crisis.

Then, there is our government's desire to go to war with China.



The U.S. military's heavy footprint already looms large in the Pacific, and with the war drums now beating harder for war than ever before, the footprint is growing. With over 200 bases dotting the region, the Pentagon's voracious energy consumption fuels greenhouse gas emissions and environmental degradation, from polluted drinking water in Okinawa to severe contamination near military installations in Guam. Yet, our government insists that it is China that is our greatest enemy and not the looming threat of climate destruction. The U.S. military's presence in the Pacific is destroying natural, indigenous ecosystems, favoring the idea of environmental destruction over

attempting any form of diplomacy and cooperation with China.

All of this destruction to the environment and acceleration of the climate crisis happens silently under the veil of "national security," while discussions on how the environmental toll of war is the most significant national security threat are absent in D.C. While the threat of nuclear annihilation and civilian casualties rightfully dominate headlines, the ecological fallout remains an underreported tragedy. The Pentagon is the planet's largest institutional emitter of fossil fuels; its insatiable appetite for conflict exacerbates climate change and threatens ecosystems worldwide. To make matters

worse, the U.S. government wants to fund this destruction to the tune of nearly a trillion dollars a year while poor and low-wealth communities worldwide bear the brunt of climate catastrophes with little to no resources to protect themselves.

At the heart of this destructive cycle lies a perverse economic incentive, where war becomes a lucrative business at the expense of both people and the planet. The narrative of GDP growth masks the actual cost of conflict, prioritizing financial profit over genuine progress in education, healthcare, and biodiversity. However, instead of war-economy metrics such as the GDP, we could embrace alternative metrics such as the Genuine Prog-

ress Indicator (GPI) that reckon with the actual toll of war on our world. We can shift from endless growth towards genuine well-being by valuing air quality, food security, and environmental sustainability.

This Earth Day, let us reject the empty rhetoric of environmentalism without action. Let us demand accountability from our lawmakers and insist on an end to the cycle of violence and ecological devastation. By prioritizing peace and sustainability, we can protect our planet and safeguard future generations. (C-Counter Currents)

*Melissa Garriga is the communications and media relations manager for CODEPINK.*

# Know Benefits And Important Nutrients To Consume During Pregnancy

**I**ntake of all essential nutrients becomes more important than ever during pregnancy. Consumption of a healthy, well-balanced diet helps in the proper development of the baby. However, it can often become difficult to meet all nutritional requirements during pregnancy.

The daily requirement of certain vitamins and minerals increases during pregnancy which cannot be fulfilled through diet alone. Therefore, doctors encourage all pregnant women to take their prenatal vitamins.

Prenatal vitamins are supplements that help provide the baby with all essential nutrients for healthy growth and development. These supplements help cover any nutritional gaps in the diet. Prenatal vitamins reduce the risk of several pregnancy-related complications. Here, let's understand the benefits of taking prenatal vitamins, essential nutrients to focus and more.

Benefits of taking prenatal vitamins

These supplements help vegans and vegetarians get all essential nutrients



Taking prenatal vitamins may reduce the risk of birth defects  
Reduces the risk of your child developing spina bifida and neural tube defects  
Helps prevent iron-deficiency anemia

Provides all essential nutrients required for your child's development  
Lowers the risk of preeclampsia and gestational diabetes

Common nutrients to focus  
1. Folic acid  
It is usually advised to take folic acid while planning pregnancy as well as during pregnancy. Folic acid helps reduce

your baby's risk of neural tube defects. Folic acid is a B vitamin that the cells need for the growth and development of the baby.

2. Calcium  
The baby requires calcium

for proper development of bones, teeth, muscles and nerves. Therefore, expecting mothers must consume enough calcium. It will also prevent mothers from losing

their bone density as the baby might use calcium for adequate development.

3. Iron  
The body requires high doses of iron during pregnancy. Therefore, pregnant women are at a higher risk of developing iron-deficiency anaemia. Adding enough iron supplements to the diet can help reduce the risk of preterm delivery, low birth weight and infant mortality. Adequate iron levels also help ensure an optimal supply of blood and oxygen to the fetus.

4. Vitamin D  
It is essential to take vitamin D supplements on a daily basis during pregnancy. Vitamin D assists in the absorption of calcium. It is also essential for your bones, brain, cardiovascular health, immunity and respiratory health.

5. Protein  
During pregnancy, your blood volume increases, and you are growing new tissues and a new life. Therefore, your daily protein requirement also increases.

Other essential nutrients  
Along with these, a pregnant woman may also require vitamin C, omega-3 fatty acids, choline, iodine and more according to the existing health status of the mother.

## FROM THE FRONT PAGE .....

### Amit Shah Takes

to the Opposition's charge that there would be a change in the Constitution if the BJP is voted to power again. He said the BJP government had never misused its majority over the past 10 years and that it was the Congress that had misused its majority when it was in power at the Centre.

Amit Shah also clarified that the BJP would never change the policy of providing reservation to the marginalised communities.

On Rahul Gandhi's allegation that the BJP had extorted donations through bonds, Amit Shah pointed out that the Opposition also received money from these individuals and companies.

"Their (opposition) parties have also received donations through bonds. Is that extortion as well? Rahul Gandhi must tell the people," he told the news channel.

Voting in 12 seats in Rajasthan concluded on Friday, in the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections. The remaining 13 seats will go to polls in the second phase, on April 26. Counting of votes will take place on June 4.

In 2019, the BJP registered a sweeping victory, winning 24 out of 25 seats.

### India Will Be Among

for the participation of all in the Viksit Bharat 2047 mission and said that the dream wouldn't be possible without the active support and coordination of the 'ambassadors' of change.

He said that India is on the verge of leaving behind the US in terms of Metro Network.

"Currently, India's operational metro network stands at about 950 kms. In the next 2-3 years, it will become the second largest metro network surpassing the US," the Union Minister told Viksit Bharat ambassadors.

In specific reference to Jammu and Kashmir, he said that under the Smart project, more than 68 projects worth Rs 6,800 crores were conceived out of which those worth Rs 3,200 crore projects have already been completed.

He also said that Jammu and Kashmir has more potential than Switzerland but it got 'left out' because of man-made crises and also emphasised that the Modi government was committed to its all-round development.

Highlighting one of the government's key policies, the minister said that we are moving from women-centred development to women-led development.

"In my 39 years of service as a diplomat, I have seen, wherever the country has moved from women-centred to women-led development, its GDP sees a jump of at least 20-30 per cent," he said while sharing a personal experience.

He said that the government is working towards this objective and Awas Yojana, with houses registered in the name of women members of the household and 33 per cent reservation in elected bodies is part of the larger mission.

He also gave an insight into how the welfare policies of the Modi government have brought an unprecedented change in people's lives.

"Under Ujjawala Yojana, 32 crore have got LPG cylinders as compared to earlier 14 crore connections in 2014 while gas pipeline has been extended from 14,000 km to over 20,000 km in past ten years," he said.

### 'Talks On Within

Lok Sabha polls, the minister said, "The country is in election mode. The BJP's expectation from the country is that the 2024 elections will produce a convincing victory for development, for 'vikas', so that we move to another significant chapter in the realisation of a Viksit Bharat." Asked why the BJP did not field any candidates on the three seats in the Kashmir valley — Anantnag-Rajouri, Srinagar, and Baramulla, the Union minister said, "Best of the people are discussing this and I assure you that whatever is being evaded, will be taken care of soon," he said, adding that the party "has not left any ground".

He said change does not take place overnight.

"See the change and improvement in the situation (in Kashmir). Whatever shortcomings are there in the other political processes, they will also be fulfilled," Puri said.

"Wherever there have been troubled conditions for an extended period of time and you opened up the process, you do not expect change overnight," he said.

"But I am very happy, I have been watching this situation for the last several years. I can assure you that change for the better is taking place in J-K and it will take place at an even faster rate very soon," he added.

Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir BJP chief Ravinder Raina said the party is finalising its strategy under the leadership of national president J P Nadda on the three seats of Anantnag-Rajouri, Srinagar and Baramulla on providing support to the contesting candidates as he requested people to reject Congress, National Conference and PDP for the larger interest of peace, development and prosperity of the region.

The BJP has not yet expressed intent on announcing candidates for the Srinagar and Baramulla seats, while the last date for filing nominations for Anantnag-Rajouri was April 19. To a question about developmental projects in J-K, Puri said development is an ongoing process.

"The BJP manifesto has a plan for the first 100 days," he said and asked to wait for the election results, after which all the schemes on infrastructure development, connectivity, and urban development will continue and more projects will be come up in these sectors.

Asked about the questions raised against the Centre by National Conference and other opposition parties in J-K, the Union minister said, "The BJP and the BJP alone and the Prime Minister have done something like (abrogation of Article) 370 and brought this normalcy. Please bear with us a little more, political processes bottom up are growing and very soon you will see it at the same level as the rest of the country," Puri added.

### LG Greets People On

wishes to all.  
Lord Mahavir is the epitome of non-violence, truth and peace. Through his life and noble teachings, Lord Mahavir showed us the path of righteousness, compassion and right conduct.

Let us on this day resolve to follow the path laid down by Lord Mahavir and work to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and unity in the society".

### Terrorist Hideout

ammunition in Dalas Barneli area of Arnas. It reads that 2 detonators, 12 cartridge of assault rifle, a pull through, a hand held tape recorder IED enabled, a calculator IED enabled, a battery and few connecting wires were recovered.

SSP Reasi Mohita Sharma, as per the statement, said that search operation is still going on in the area of Arnas and that police are committed to neutralise any nefarious designs of anti-national elements—(KNO)

### Light Rains Lash

Meteorological department (MeT) said the weather is expected to remain generally dry from tomorrow till April 25, but added that the possibility of afternoon thundershower activity at isolated places can't be ruled out.

Furthermore, according to the forecast, the weather would remain generally cloudy while light rain with thunder is expected at many places from April 26-27.

Moreover, the MeT department in its advisory had asked the farmers to resume farm operations after April 21st.

The Srinagar-Jammu national highway was restored for vehicular movement after remaining closed for hours due to mudslide at Mehad, Ramban and shooting stones at Kishtwari Pathar, Banihal yesterday.

As soon as the road was cleared, the traffic was allowed to ply in the late afternoon—(KNO)

### LG Manoj Sinha

H. Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary, Power Development Department; Dr. Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to the Lt. Governor; and the officials of Jammu and Kashmir Power DISCOMs, Chief Engineers and other senior officers.

The Lt Governor discussed the power situation and reviewed the progress of key power projects. He took stock of the measures taken to curb AT&C losses, capacity additions, and the progress registered on smart meter installation.

Addressing concerns over power theft, the Lt Governor stressed upon the need for heightened enforcement efforts on the ground. He further directed to streamline the process for new power connections for the ease of consumers.

The meeting also discussed the progress on underground cabling project for the Grid connectivity of the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (from Rayil Pathri to Holy Cave and from Sangam top to Panjtarni). The Lt Governor instructed the officials to ensure timely completion of work before the commencement of the holy Yatra.

The Lt Governor directed the officials to ensure adequate availability of power during the summer season. He also stressed upon raising awareness on 'PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana' scheme through which the households will be able to save electricity bills as well as earn additional income through sale of surplus power to DISCOMs.

### Search Continues

operation has yielded only a few school

bags so far, with no sign of the missing individuals.

ASI SDRF, Abdul Rashid said that the rescue teams have been on job for the last five days but there has been no success in finding the missing trio.

"We have been on our toes, searching for the missing trio, but unfortunately, nothing has been found yet," the ASI said, adding, "We have also been searching near Chattabal Veer as there are chances the bodies might float there, but till now, nothing has been found."

During the initial stages of the rescue operation, four school bags were recovered near Chattabal Veer, with two additional bags retrieved later in the day by SDRF personnel. However, the missing bodies are yet to be traced.

Meanwhile, people, including religious clerics, have been visiting the bereaved families to offer condolences and pray for the safe recovery of the missing persons—(KNO)

### Kashmiri Agriproducts

to selling our garlic in local markets. Now, through online platforms, we are reaching customers across India. This has significantly increased our income and has motivated us to expand our cultivation," he said.

This shift towards e-commerce has not only benefited farmers but has also delighted consumers who now have access to high-quality Kashmiri agriproducts with just a few clicks. Customers appreciate the authenticity and freshness of the products, reinforcing the value of traditional farming methods and local produce—(KNO)

### Enhance Strategies

overall security scenario to provide insights into the existing security challenges so as to devise effective mitigation strategies.

The discussions encompassed various facets, including intelligence gathering, threat assessments, and emergency response protocols in addition to election preparedness efforts.

The meeting focused on devising strategies ensuring public safety and upholding the integrity of the electoral process.

IGP Kashmir urged SSPs and their counterparts in CAPF and RR to critically evaluate and enhance existing strategies to thwart any potential terror activities. Emphasis was placed on the necessity of revisiting and fortifying area domination tactics to cover any vulnerable areas effectively.

IGP Kashmir further directed the officers to work without any prejudice, take stern action against those violating the law, and ensure that law enforcement agencies are well prepared to respond quickly and effectively to any emergent situations, he said.

During the meeting, the IGP Kashmir also directed the DIGs to strengthen the security grid of their respective areas and facilitate the safe passage of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) across districts. He emphasized strict adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) & stressed upon the officers to increase focus on human intelligence gathering along with technical inputs so as to intensify anti-terrorist operations to flush out the inimical elements, reads the statement.

# INDIA bloc leaders came together to hide their corruption: PM Modi



IAN S

**MUMBAI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday slammed the INDIA bloc leaders, saying that they have come together to hide their corruption and therefore the voters have completely rejected them in the first phase of Lok Sabha elections.

Addressing a rally in Maharashtra for BJP candidate at Nanded, Prata-prao Patil Chikhalikar and Shiv Sena nominee for Hingoli seat, Baburao Kohalikar, Modi said, "INDIA bloc parties are fighting against each other in 25 per cent seats in the country. Can the country trust

people who do not believe in their own leadership? If people who talk of putting each other in jail within their own fronts are elected, they will fight against each other in Lok Sabha as well," he commented.

"After June 4, leaders of the INDIA bloc will tear each others' clothes," criticised PM Modi.

The PM further said the first phase of voting was held in the country yesterday (Friday) and thanked all the voters, especially, the first-time voters. "After the polls, many have analysed it down to the booth level. Looking at it, it seems that in the first phase, there was a one-sided vote in the

NDA's favour. I appeal to the citizens of the country that you are ensuring the victory of NDA. I thank everyone for that. But to those who are not voting, I would like to say that you should vote for someone. But don't hold back from voting," he urged.

"It is true that there is scorching heat. It is time for marriage. There is farm work. But we see that the soldiers of the country are performing their duty on the border to protect the country even in a hostile environment. Similarly, voters should consider voting as a duty," said PM Modi.

He took a swipe at the opposition for its successive defeats but urged

them to awaken people to vote even if they lost the election. "If not today then tomorrow, if not tomorrow then the day after tomorrow, you (opposition) too will get success. Therefore, I want to motivate the workers of the losing parties," he added.

PM Modi criticised Congress, and its 'Shehzada' (Rahul Gandhi) in particular. "Congress Shehzada is looking for a safe constituency other than Wayanad. After the polls in Wayanad on April 26, Shehzada will look for another constituency. As they (Congress) had to leave Amethi. Similarly, they will leave Wayanad too," he said.

# Indian student's death in US possibly linked to Blue Whale suicide game



IAN S

**WASHINGTON:** In a grim first for Indians studying in US colleges and universities, a first-year student took his own life in March while playing, it is understood, a macabre online game of dares called the "Blue Whale Challenge", which has also been called the "suicide game".

The 20-year-old, who will remain unnamed here in deference to his family's wishes, was a first-year student of the University of Massachusetts. He was found dead on March 8.

Gregg Millote, a spokesman for the Bristol County District Attorney said the case is being investigated as "apparent suicide".

This death was widely reported as a murder in which the student was misidentified as enrolled in Boston University and was said to have been robbed and that the body was

found in a car in a jungle.

The Boston Globe newspaper subsequently identified the student by name.

But while this agency will not name him in respect of his family's wishes, the cause of death by suicide while playing this dangerous game which is known to prey on teens and young adults around the world, needs to be reported as a cautionary incident for Indian students and teens in India and abroad and parents.

The "Blue Whale Challenge" is an online game in which participants are given a dare to perform and these dares become increasingly more difficult over 50 steps.

This student from India's fatal challenge was holding his breath for two minutes, according to official sources.

This may be the first instance of a Blue Whale challenge fatality for India. The Indian government

had wanted to ban this game years ago but settled for a more detailed advisory instead.

"Blue whale game (The suicide game) is abetment to suicide," said the Indian Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in the advisory issued in 2017, a year after the emergence of the game.

"It is understood through various internet reports that it is shared among secretive groups on social media networks. The creators seek out their players/victims who are in depression and send them an invitation to join. The basis of the challenge is that an anonymous 'group administrator', otherwise known as 'the curator', hands out 50 tasks to selected 'players' that must be completed, documented and posted during a 50-day period. Players of the challenge can't stop playing once they've started; they are blackmailed and cyber

bullied into completing the 'game' instead."

Asked specifically about the student's death in this game, Millote said, "Have no info about this. Case is being investigated as an apparent suicide. Awaiting medical examiner's final conclusions before case is closed out. This was on March 22. There has been no response to requests for an update. He did not respond to a text and a voice call message on Friday."

Many Blue Whale Challenge deaths were reported in Russia in 2015-2017.

According to reports the game is played on social media platforms. It involves an administrator and a participant. The administrator assigns one task a day for a 50-day period. The tasks are innocuous enough in the beginning, but they are progressively harder with self-harm coming in the final stages.

# Gujarat contributes over 8.3 pc to national GDP: FM Sitharaman



IAN S

**AHMEDABAD:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was in Ahmedabad on Saturday where she delved into the government's transformative economic policies. She recalled the pre-2014 era of double-digit inflation and businesses relocating overseas, issues which have been effectively addressed by the current administration.

"The RBI now views the twin balance sheet problem as a positive turnaround, symbolizing our successful economic strategies," Sitharaman stated.

The Finance Minister was addressing an event

hosted by the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI), and the Western India Regional Council of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), Ahmedabad Chapter, on the theme 'Samvaad - Viksit Bharat @ 2047'.

Highlighting Gujarat's significant contributions, Sitharaman spoke on the state's strategic role in attracting investments and its leadership in sectors such as textiles, chemicals, semiconductors and aerospace, placing it at the forefront of India's economic expansion. "With only 5% of the nation's land mass, Gujarat aston-

ishingly contributes over 8.3% to the national GDP," she noted, showcasing the state's impressive economic impact.

The FM also visited the BJP's office in the city to meet party members.

She emphasized the resilience of Indian banks following the global upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, contrasting sharply with the international banks' struggles. "Our banks have shown remarkable strength and the successful resolution of banking issues and mergers underscores the solidity of India's financial infrastructure," she said.

## LS POLLS PHASE 1

# Over 63 pc voter turnout in MP with highest in Chhindwara at 82.39 pc



IAN S

**BHOPAL:** The six out of the 29 Lok Sabha seats that went to the polls in the first phase of the general elections in Madhya Pradesh on Friday recorded a voter turnout of more than 63 per cent, with the highest in Chhindwara at 82.39 per cent.

The voter turnout in the state's Maoist-hit Lok Sabha constituencies -- Mandla and Balaghat recorded at 73.85 per cent and 72.15 per cent respectively, till 7 p.m.

The people from tribal

communities came out to vote in large numbers as all three tribal-dominated seats -- Chhindwara, Mandla and Balaghat recorded more than 70 per cent voter turnout.

Other three Lok Sabha constituencies polled in the first phase of the general elections -- Shahdol (Scheduled Tribe) voter turnout at 63.23 per cent, Jabalpur at 60 per cent, while Sidhi recorded the lowest at 54.36 per cent.

The State's Electoral Office, however, was yet to release a final update on voter turnout in the state

as polling went till late Friday evening and therefore, voting percentage may see a little surge later.

The elections for the state's 29 Lok Sabha seats are scheduled in four phases.

The first phase concluded in Friday while the second phase covering six more Lok Sabha constituencies, mostly in the Bundelkhand region, will be held on April 26.

The third and fourth phase elections will be conducted on May 7 and 13 and the results will be announced on

# Musk delays India visit to address five key issues during Tesla results next week



IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** In a dampener for millions of Tesla lovers in India, Elon Musk on Saturday said he will not visit the country next week as earlier planned, as the billionaire faces "the moment of truth" next week when Tesla announces its quarterly results amid negative growth in China and massive global layoffs.

The Tesla CEO has to address five key issues during the conference call on April 23, according to the latest report from leading investment firm Wedbush Securities.

The five critical concerns are: Strategies to reverse negative growth in China and pricing plans; provide clear 2024 goals and financial outlook; commit to launching Tesla Model 2 alongside robotaxi development; clarify AI initiatives and ownership concerns; and announce an AI day to outline strategy and monetisation, according to the report.

The earnings conference call might be "one of the most important moments in the company's history."

A highly competitive global EV market has altered Tesla's narrative "from a Cinderella story to a horror show in the near-term," said Wedbush analysts.

"If Musk is flippant again and there is no adult in the room on this conference call with no answers then darker days are ahead," according to the analysts.

The company has reduced 10 per cent of its workforce, or around 14,000 employees, globally. Tesla has also shelved plans to develop a low-cost EV for around \$25,000.

Earlier in the day, the billionaire posted on X that unfortunately, "very heavy Tesla obligations require that the visit to India be delayed".

# INDIA bloc lacks unity, absence in UP could impact performance: Leading psephologist

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Leading psephologist Pradeep Gupta insists that the chances of the INDIA bloc making a significant impact in the big states might have suffered a dent, as the alliance partners are struggling to put up a united front, especially after the exit of Bihar CM Nitish Kumar.

"There seems to be a lack of unity in the INDIA bloc. It has been happen-

ing for the last six months or so now and has been more visible after Nitish Kumar left," Gupta told IANS in an interview on Friday.

With the West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also regularly criticising the front, the Managing Director of 'Axis My India' feels that the bloc's performance will be affected, especially in the big states.

"Let's see how much impact does Nitish Kumar

leaving (the opposition alliance) has on the INDIA bloc's performance in Bihar. They are also found missing in a state like Uttar Pradesh that has the maximum number of seats," says Gupta.

States like Kerala are seeing a war of words between the Left and Congress parties which are putting up a united front at the national level but Gupta feels that will not be of a major concern to the grouping.

# CAPF deployment for phase 2 of polls in Bengal to increase to 303 companies

IAN S

**KOLKATA:** Taking lessons from reports of sporadic violence in the first phase of Lok Sabha polls in West Bengal on Friday, especially at Cooch Behar, the Election Commission of India (ECI) is set to increase the deployment of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) for the second phase on April 26.

Three constituencies -- Raiganj, Darjeeling and Balurghat -- will be going for polls in the second phase and

the commission has decided to deploy a total 303 companies of CAPF, insiders from the office of the Chief Elections Officer (CEO), West Bengal said.

Already, 273 companies of CAPF are in West Bengal and additional 30 companies are supposed to arrive in the state by Sunday, thus taking the total deployment in West Bengal to 303. The additional 30 companies are mainly coming from Sikkim and Meghalaya, CEO office insiders said.

The additional forces are being brought amidst the irritation expressed by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee when on Friday, she launched a scathing attack against the Election Commission of India (ECI) for the latter's emphasis on the CAPF over the state police.

"How can you conduct the polls by totally discarding the state police? Is this a ploy to ensure that people don't vote freely," the Chief Minister had questioned while addressing an election rally on Friday.

# Gold trading volume spikes amid Middle East crisis

IAN S

**SEOUL:** The trading volume of gold in South Korea has jumped sharply this month amid escalating tensions in the Middle East, data showed on Saturday. The daily trading volume of gold in the country came to 16.9 billion won (\$12.25 million) as of Friday, according to the data from Korea Exchange (KRX), the country's bourse operator.

The reading marks a sharp increase from a daily average

of 6.86 billion won for March, reports Yonhap news agency.

Such an increase follows tensions in the Middle East, prompted by Iran's drone and missile attacks against Israel earlier in the month that apparently forced investors to seek safe assets. Israel reportedly staged retaliatory attacks against Iran this week. As of Friday, the average price of a 1 kilogram gold bar jumped 10.3 per cent on-month, with that of 100 gram nuggets spiking 13.4 per cent, according to the KRX.

# Wildlife dept deems 90% of leopard sighting reports in urban areas as false

JAHANGIR SOFI

SRINAGAR: Amidst escalating reports of leopard sightings in urban areas of Kashmir, the experts from wildlife department here have shed light on the multifaceted blend of factors contributing to these encounters, revealing that around 90% of such reports are deemed false upon investigation. Parvez Ahmad, Wildlife Warden of the central division Kashmir, highlighted that while social media platforms are flooded with purported leopard sightings, a significant majority—90%—are found to be baseless upon scrutiny. "It may not be correct to say that there is a spike in the presence of leopards in urban areas," Ahmad stated. "Of the reports we receive, 90% turn out to be fake, and we take up the matter with the police against those involved in spreading false rumors about the presence of leopards."

venturing into urban areas, Ahmad noted that of the minor percentage where leopard presence is confirmed, the primary driving force is the search for food, as these animals move out of their natural habitat for sustenance. According to Ahmad, a complex interplay of elements such as leftover foods and open garbage disposal systems are attracting stray dogs, which in turn become prey for these majestic felines. Addressing the proliferation of misinformation on social media regarding leopard sightings, Ahmad stressed that actions would be taken against those spreading rumors, urging the public to refrain from sharing unverified reports to prevent unnecessary panic and fear. "In the central division, since I took over about 10% of reported cases are confirmed to be

authentic," Ahmad stated while underlining the importance of responsible reporting. Elaborating on the reasons behind leopards



closure of unattended structures and the cleaning of bushes in empty lands to deter leopards from seeking shelter in urban environments. He advised that communities residing near forested regions, national parks and protected areas take proactive measures to mitigate potential conflicts, such as securing garbage bins, refraining from feeding stray animals, and implementing community-driven conservation initiatives. Meanwhile, some observers have attributed the surge in leopard sightings to rapid urbanization and habitat loss, forcing these elusive predators to adapt to changing landscapes. The presence of abundant garbage and leftover food inadvertently creates a secondary food source in the form of stray dogs, further enticing leopards into urban vicinities—(KNO)

Meanwhile, some observers have attributed the surge in leopard sightings to rapid urbanization and habitat loss, forcing these elusive predators to adapt to changing landscapes. The presence of abundant garbage and leftover food inadvertently creates a secondary food source in the form of stray dogs, further enticing leopards into urban vicinities—(KNO)

Moreover, Dulloo took note of the work carried out so far on the projects of the Department including SRS/SPS libraries, Tazhib Mahal, Sufiana School and other ongoing projects. He maintained that the realm of culture deserves more attention and the aspirations of the people should be met in terms of its promotion. He asked for hand holding of the budding artists who are desirous of pursuing their dreams in this aspect of vocation by exploring the possibility of recognizing their talent. In his presentation the Principal Secretary, Culture, Suresh Kumar Gupta revealed that the archives repositories hold 05 lakh record holdings at Srinagar and Jammu repository hold 08 lakh record holdings in an old building at Mubarak Mandi. He further informed that digitization of archival

# CS reviews functioning of Culture, Tribal Affairs Departments

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Saturday took a holistic review of the working of the Department of Culture and Department of Tribal Affairs in two separate meetings here.

The meeting besides the Principal Secretary, Culture/Tribal Affairs Departments was attended by the Secretary in Tribal Affairs; Executive Director, Mubarak Mandi Jammu Heritage Society (MMJHS), Director, Libraries; Director, Archives; Secretary, Cultural Academy; other HoDs of the two Departments. While reviewing the performance of the Culture Department the Chief Secretary asked for completion of the digitization of archival records besides ongoing restoration works on several archaeological monuments. The Chief Secretary also asked for increasing the footfall to the museums and libraries under the Department as these house a rich treasure of artifacts and publications. He called upon the Department to put their assets to optimum use especially the Abhinav Theatre at Jammu and Tagore Hall at Srinagar.

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record has been completed in Jammu repository and in Kashmir repository, 50% digitization record has been digitized and going to be on boarded on web portal soon. It was also said that as per survey of monuments in J&K conducted in 2009, 495 monuments were listed. Out of whom 46 monuments notified are under Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 (Central Act) and being looked after by ASI while as 54 monuments have been notified under J&K Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1977. Regarding the functioning of libraries it was given out that the Department runs 131 libraries across the UT including the SRS and SPS libraries of Jammu and Srinagar which are among 08 oldest libraries of the

country housing around 14 lakh books, 5580 manuscripts and 85,650 registered members. On taking stock of the working of the Tribal Affairs Department it was said that with the inclusion of new tribes ST population has increased to 23.38 Lacs, which constitutes approximately 19.06% of the total population. The meeting discussed in detail the formulation of Tribal Sub-Plan and its impact on the ST population. It also takes peep into the status of Tribal Research Institute, construction of Tribal Bhawan, Tribal Museum, engagement of seasonal teachers under Samagra Shiksha besides implementation of Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship schemes for such population in the UT.

# Bhartiya Krishak Samaj holds maiden meet in Srinagar



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Bhartiya Krishak Samaj on Friday held its maiden meet in Srinagar. Vice President, Bhartiya Krishak Samaj, M Y Zargar said that the forum has been made with an aim to highlight the problems and issues of farmer community. He said that the forum demands uniform charges in cold storage houses and other issues.

He also said that forum will approach the agricultural experts from SKUAST and other places to consult them in spray schedule. "The forum will have meeting in all districts to discuss the issues that our farmer community is facing. We are committed for the upliftment of agriculture sector", he added. Besides vice president, the meeting was attended by district president Shop-

ian Sayar Ahmad Dar, district president Baramulla, Mohammad Yousuf Dar, district president Budgam; Bashir Ahmad Mir, District president Anantnag, Ghulam Hassan Bhat, District President Kulgam, Mohamad Maqbol Naik, district president Ganderbal, Sheikh Abdul Waheed, district president Srinagar Muneer Ahmad Rather and district president Kupwara Khurshed Ahmad Malk. (KNS)

## UDHAMPUR LS SEAT POLLS

# People busy in gossip lounges, predict win, loss of candidates

AMIR TANTRAY

JAMMU: A day after the first phase of polling on Udhampur parliamentary constituency ended, the election on Udhampur Lok Sabha seat remained a hot topic of every individual in and outside the constituency. From towns to villages, men and women, young and old, everyone was talking as who has the edge on this seat. Many were doing calculations as to who has got how many votes from which place and whether their candidate will win or not.

There is a tough fight between Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) candidate Dr. Jitendra Singh and Congress party nominee Choudhary Lal Singh. Both the candidates are looking forward for getting their third term as Member Parliament (MP) and they have put their best foot forward to get it done. People who voted for BJP were of the opinion that their candidate will emerge winner whereas those who voted for the Congress party believe they have done what former union minister Ghulam Nabi Azad couldn't do in 2014 general elections. Even the people from



outside the constituency were calling their friends and colleagues in different parts of Udhampur constituency to get a feel as who is expected to lead from where. After putting hectic efforts, they ended their conversation with a word that June 4 is not far away and everybody will come to know who will emerge as winner. Meanwhile, throughout the night polling parties kept reaching to their respective areas to submit electronic voting machines, VVPATs and other election related material to the officials in strong rooms. From areas like the upper reaches of Bani and Basholi in Kathua district, vehicles carrying the polling staff reached Kathua town in the morning. In Udhampur, polling parties from Dudu Basantgarh reached their respective destinations in the morning and

same was the case for Ramban, Doda and Kishtwar districts where polling staff reached their destination after sunrise. From Marwah and Warwan areas of Kishtwar district, polling parties were airlifted to Kishtwar town in the morning and they submitted their material today. The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Jammu and Kashmir said that the elections were held peacefully all across. "The polling for First Phase of General Elections to 18th Lok Sabha in Parliamentary Constituency Udhampur has concluded peacefully," CEO said in a statement issued late last night. According to the CEO, 68.27 percent polling was held in the constituency and it may go up after collecting all the information from polling parties coming back from remote areas—(KNO)

# Over 25 lakh patients visit GMC Srinagar's associated hospitals in 2023-24



JAHANGEEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Government Medical College Srinagar's seven associated hospitals witnessed approximately 25 lakh patients during the year 2023-24.

According to details obtained, over two lakh patients were admitted, with more than 70 thousand surgeries conducted across the hospitals. The breakdown of patient visits and surgeries across the associated hospitals is as follows: SMHS Hospital: With a bed capacity of 890, the hospital saw 1,063,028 patients in the OPD, admitted 107,589 in the IPD, and performed 23,269 surgeries, including 10,726 major surgeries and 12,543 minor surgeries. Lal Ded Hospital: With a bed capacity of 710, the hospital treated 208,192 patients in the OPD, admitted 36,721 in the IPD, and conducted 20,891 surgeries, comprising 17,352 major surgeries and 3,540 minor surgeries. B&J Hospital: With a bed

capacity of 150, the hospital attended to 254,691 patients in the OPD, admitted 14,416 in the IPD, and conducted 14,861 surgeries, including 5,192 major surgeries and 9,672 minor surgeries. Chest Disease Hospital: With a bed capacity of 200, the hospital saw 152,186 patients in the OPD, admitted 7,480 in the IPD, and conducted 2,707 surgeries, comprising 980 major surgeries and 1,809 minor surgeries. Super Specialty Hospital: With a bed capacity of 220, the hospital treated 177,119 patients in the OPD, admitted 31,531 in the IPD, and performed 8,540 surgeries, including 4,482 major surgeries and 4,052 minor surgeries. Children's Hospital: With a bed capacity of 700, the hospital saw 457,552 patients in the OPD and treated 28,723 in the IPD. Psychiatry Disease Hospital: With a bed capacity of 100, the hospital attended to 169,514 patients in the OPD and admitted 1,779 in the IPD during the year 2023-24—(KNO)

# Massive SVEEP event galvanises voters at BOP Suchetgarh

CEO J&K encourages citizens to exercise their voting right

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Border Octroi Post Suchetgarh on Saturday became the focal point of electoral enthusiasm as a Special Voters' Enrollment and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme enthralled a massive audience, including locals, tourists and students.



The programme was held with Chief Electoral Officer Pandurang K Pole and General Election Observer Rahul Ranjan Mahiwal as special guests. Returning Officer 5-Jammu Parliamentary Constituency Sachin Kumar Vaishya, SSP Jammu Dr Vinod Kumar and Commandant BSF Octroi Post Suchetgarh Ajay Sharma were also among the attendees. A crescendo of musical and cultural performances, led by the electrifying voice of Sangram Hanjra, resonated at the venue, who passionately urged all present to exercise their franchise on April 26 in the Jammu Parliamentary Constituency. The vibrant atmosphere was further enriched by captivating performances by school students. They evoked a sense of patriotism and instilled a vigour for participation in democracy. In his address, Chief

Electoral Officer Pandurang K Pole emphasised the pivotal role of citizens in upholding the sanctity of democracy through their votes, stating, "We the citizens of the world's largest and thriving democracy should uphold its unique position by casting our vote." He underscored the Election Commission of India's commitment to inclusivity, ensuring participation of all sections of society in the electoral process, including those facing geographical and demographic challenges. Echoing his sentiments, the General Election Observer called upon all to cast their votes on April 26 "To substantiate our position of being the largest democracy in the world," Sachin Kumar Vaishya

took the opportunity to rally the audience, urging them to turn out in large numbers on April 26, thereby fortifying the foundation of democracy. SSP Dr Vinod Kumar reiterated the commitment to ensure a free and fair electoral process, assuring voters of strict action against any form of intimidation or malpractice. "No intimidation to any voter or candidate would be tolerated," he affirmed, urging vigilance and prompt reporting of any irregularities. The event, also attended by ADDC Sher Singh, ADC Ansuja Jamwal and SDM RS Pura Seema Parihar besides district officers, successfully instilled a sense of duty towards electoral participation and democratic values.

## TEHSILDAR ROW

# Have taken strong note of incident, says ADC Sopore

WARIS FAYAZ

SOPORE: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sopore, S.A Raina on Saturday reacted to Tehsildar Sopore's 'reprehensible behaviour', which sparked controversy and outrage after a video surfaced on social media platforms, saying that the incident has been viewed very seriously and a strong note has been taken of it. Speaking to reporters during an event at Dak Bunglow Sopore, Addl DC Raina as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that the administration, media as well as the general public have to play their role. "There is some disagreement somewhere with the public as well as in the media. These things shouldn't have happened," he said, adding that they

have taken strong note of the incident. "We have to be friendly with the public and with Media. Media is our part and is acting as our eyes and ears, with the main focus to serve people in all better and possible ways," Raina further said. Notably, a video capturing the reprehensible behaviour of Tehsildar Sopore, seen resorting to threats and humiliation during a visit to the nearby Tarzoo village of Sopore sparked controversy and outrage after it circulated widely on social media platforms. The Tehsildar accused the people of being blackmailers and also levelled the accusation to the media personnel as well. His hostile demeanour towards the general public and the media evoked widespread condemnation and outrage—(KNO)

# Election Expenditure Observer reviews preparations in Budgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: The Election Expenditure Observer (EO) for 2-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency, Sambit Mishra Saturday convened a at Conference Hall Budgam to review preparations for the ensuing Lok Sabha Elections in District Budgam. District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Akshay Labroo and SSP Budgam, AL-Tahir Gillani were also present in the meeting. At the outset, the EO held interaction with District Expenditure Monitoring Team, all AROs and Nodal Officers to review the efforts of the administration in ensuring free, transparent and peaceful conduct of elections in the district. He called for proper maintaining of expenditure records, truthful accounts, facilitation of candidates, legal expen-

diture within the permissible limit and expenditure booking by the contesting candidates as per the ECI guidelines. Mishra stressed on continuous social media monitoring viz. paid news to avoid any media related violations during the election process in all assembly segments of both Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency. He instructed officers to work in coordination and with most integrity for free, fair and smooth conduct of elections. While briefing the chair, the DEO Budgam deliberated upon the overall preparations to ensure level playing field for all stakeholders to ensure free, fair and smooth conduct of elections in the district. He said that all Election Commission of India guidelines shall be implemented in letter and spirit

in the district. Nodal Officer Election Expenditure Monitoring, Budgam, Showkat Ali Rather through a power point presentation, presented district profile and deliberated on overall preparations. He also shared details about the formation and effective monitoring of teams including Video Surveillance Teams, Flying Squads, Static Surveillance Teams, Video Viewing Teams, Accounting Teams, Assistant Expenditure Observers, Nodal Officer Expenditure and Expenditure Observer constituted to monitor expenditures of the candidates contesting the Elections and regulate and check Model Code of Conduct violations per the laid guidelines of ECI. ADDC, ADC, all AROs, Nodal Officers and other concerned officers also attended the meeting.