

Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication

Narendra Modi
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My 140 crore countrymen have seen the development model of BJP. Now the resolve to develop India is our biggest priority.

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KASHMIR SIZZLES

Srinagar, Anantnag, Ganderbal register record temperatures



OWAIS GUL

SRINAGAR: The Jammu & Kashmir summer capital, Srinagar has witnessed the hottest May day on Thursday after 11 years at 32.2 degree Celsius as a similar temperature was recorded in May 2013 while all the other stations amidst the intense heat wave have recorded the hottest day of the season.

According to the details, the heat wave intensified in Kashmir as all the stations have recorded the hottest days of the season today with the local Meteorological department predicting hot and dry weather conditions ahead.

In Srinagar, the mercury settled at 32.2 degree Celsius, which was the hottest in the last one decade and also similar to the temperature recorded on May 23rd in 2013. Srinagar has recorded above 34 degree Celsius in the past as well. As per the details shared by Independent Weather Forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng, Srinagar has recorded 32.3 degree Celsius in the month of May in 2011, 32.4 degree Celsius in 2007, 34.2 degree Celsius in 2001, 33.8 degree Celsius in 2000 and 34.1 degree Celsius in 1995.

"It is the hottest May day recorded in the last one decade," he said.

Moreover, as per the data, some other parts of Kashmir where the hottest day of season amidst the intense heat wave was recorded include Qazigund, Pahalgam, Kupwara, Kokernag, Gulmarg, Ganderbal, Anantnag and others. ● P-02

COUNTDOWN BEGINS

Over 18.36 lakh voters to decide fate of 20 candidates in Anantnag- Rajouri PC

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The fate of 20 candidates will be decided by over 18.36 lakh voters of 03 Anantnag- Rajouri Lok Sabha seat in the last phase of Lok Sabha elections for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir to be held on May 25.

According to the figures provided by the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, there are 18,36,576 voters enrolled in 5 districts of Kulgam, Anantnag, Poonch, Shopian (36- Zainapora) and Rajouri of the PC, which included 9,33,647 male and 9,02,902 female voters and 27 third gender voters. Around 17,967 persons with disability and 540 persons above the age of 100 years will cast their ballots in the PC.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has set up 2,338 polling stations across the Anant-



nag- Rajouri Parliamentary Constituency. Four election staff, including Presiding Officer will be stationed in every polling station. In total, more than 9,000 polling staff, including reserve will be deployed on duty. There are 19 Border Polling Stations in the districts of Rajouri and Poonch. The polling will be held from 7.00 am to 6.00 pm and before that there shall be a mock poll in presence of polling agents. Voting will continue even after 6.00 pm, if the voters queue is still there in the Polling Station premises.

Every polling station will be provided with Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) like Drinking Water, Electric-

ity, Toilet, Ramp, Furniture, Verandah/Shed etc. Wheelchairs shall also be provided. The Ballot Units will also have a list of contesting candidates in brail script. Wherever required, there shall be separate queues for the senior citizens and specially abled persons so that they are facilitated in every polling station. Additionally, there shall be a voter help desk, manned by the concerned Booth Level Officer (BLO) to extend necessary help whenever required.

There will be 17 polling booths managed by women (called as pink polling stations), 15 polling booths manned by specially abled persons and 8 Polling Booths managed by youths. Also in order to spread message about the environment, there will be 15 green polling stations.

6 With the aim of spreading awareness among the voters, Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) emerged as a comprehensive programme aimed at reinforcing voter education and promoting active participation in democratic process.

LS Polls

Elaborate Security Arrangements in Place

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Multi-layer security has been put in place in the twin border districts of Rajouri and Poonch, particularly along the Line of Control (LoC), part of the Anantnag Lok Sabha constituency that goes to polls on May 25.

These measures include increased deployment of security personnel, area dominations in hill regions, additional checkpoints and round-the-clock monitoring in the region and at vital installations, officials said on Thursday.

Several additional companies of security personnel have been deployed, reinforcing a security setup managed by Army, police, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Border Security Force (BSF), they said.

Troops have been put on alert along the LoC, and security and contingency plans have been put in place for all border polling stations.

Top civilian and security officials, including Director General of Police (DGP) R R Swain, ● P-02

MOEFCC calls for formulation of Tourism Master Plan for J&K



MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has called for the formulation of a tourism master plan for Jammu and Kashmir.

As per a fresh notification from the MoEFCC, the UT administration has been suggested to prepare a tourism master plan consultation with the Departments of Environment and Forests of the Union Territory.

"The Tourism Master Plan shall be prepared by the Department of Tourism, Union territory administration in consultation with the Departments of Environment and Forests of the Union Territory," the notification reads.

It said the tourism master plan shall form a component of the Zonal Master Plan. The MoEFCC has asked the Jammu and Kashmir government to come up with a Zonal Master Plan for eco-sensitive zone.

The notification said the tourism master plan shall be drawn based on carrying capacity study of the eco-sensitive zone. ● P-02

Campaigning for LS Polls Concludes in J&K

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The high-pitch electioneering for the ongoing Lok Sabha polls ended in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday as the campaigning for the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency came to a close in the evening.

The newly-carved out Lok Sabha seat in the south Kashmir-Pir Panjal region is scheduled to go to polls on Saturday, marking the conclusion of voting in Jammu and Kashmir as polling has already been held in the four other constituencies of the Union Territory.

The Anantnag-Rajouri constituency has 20 candidates in the fray, including People's Democratic Party (PDP) president and former

chief minister Mehbooba Mufti, who is hoping to return to Parliament following her defeat in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

With record-high polling in Srinagar and Baramulla, political observers feel that the south Kashmir constituency will also register a higher-than-expected voter turnout.

The aggregate turnout in the four Lok Sabha seats of Jammu and Kashmir that have already gone to polls was around 59 per cent.

The polling in Anantnag-Rajouri was earlier scheduled for May 7 but was deferred by the Election Commission (EC) due to inclement weather in the region.

Authorities had received

more than 2,200 applications from the contesting candidates and political parties, seeking permission for various electioneering activities.

While 1,920 applications for rallies, roadshows and meetings were approved, 303 pleas were rejected on various grounds.

Mufti is facing a tough challenge from prominent Gujjar leader and former minister Mian Altaf Ahmad, who is the National Conference (NC) candidate.

Apni Party's Zafar Iqbal Manhas will be hoping to turn the table on both the PDP and the NC after he managed to get the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) support in the Pir Panjal region.

Artisane, one-stop to witness Kashmir art coming alive: G20 sherpa

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Amitabh Kant, the G20 Sherpa for India, who is on a visit to J&K for a brainstorming session on 'Rebranding of J&K Handicrafts', on Wednesday described the Artisane - Art and Cultural Centre in Baramulla's Tangmarg 'a one-stop experience to understand the meticulous skills and traditions of the Valley'.

"I had a phenomenal experience at ARTISANE! My visit has been intellectually, spiritually, and mentally invigorating and rejuvenating simply because I could see the unique traditions of handicrafts and handlooms of Kashmir valley. The hands-on demonstration brings to life the vibrant and dynamic Kashmir handicrafts and handlooms There could be no better experience than visit-

ing the Artisane to understand the complex skills and dexterity of the craft," Kant, also former chief executive officer of NITI Aayog, said.

Kant made these remarks after he toured the Artisane Centre and took keen interest in the multiple processes involved to create the best craftwork in Kashmir, including intricately woven carpets and shawls.

"Watching Kashmiri artisans at work is a lesson in patience, precision, and passion. Through hours of relentless focus, they transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. Their intricate embroidery, delicate wood carvings, artistic paper mache and beautiful stitch-work are testaments to generations of skill and dedication," Kant said.

'Housefull' in Srinagar houseboats as tourist flow surges

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

SRINAGAR: Kashmir's tourism sector is witnessing a boom amidst the soaring temperature in Jammu and Kashmir as all the houseboats in the Dal Lake and adjacent areas are jam-packed.

The tourists from different parts of the valley could be seen enjoying around the Dal Lake and adjacent areas here almost every day, which indicates the rise in the footfall of the tourists here.

Wali Mohammad, Shikara Association President stated that the footfall of tourists have increased in the Valley, but there are hopes of further rise in the tourist arrival in the coming days. "The rush will increase as the people outside are busy with the elections and are going to arrive here soon," he said.

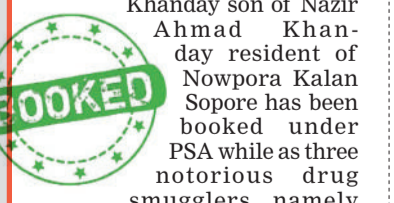
Manzoor Ahmad Pakhtoon, President of Kashmir



Houseboat Owners Association, stated that it is the peak season for tourism as there are vacations in outside states and people use to visit Kashmir during this period especially, which started from May.

"We have a good rush of tourists in our houseboats and we are hopeful that it will go up further," Pakhtoon said.

Gowhar Ahmad, a houseboat owner also shared details, stated that all the



houseboats at present are jam-packed. "Those who have to book houseboats need to confirm it before a month as all the houseboats are packed this time," he said.

Pertinently, Jammu & Kashmir, particularly Valley has been witnessing rise in the tourist footfall for the last couple of years with the government stating that the record-breaking footfall is expected this year as well—(KNO)

Terrorist aide booked under PSA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: After receiving formal detention orders from the competent authority, Jammu and Kashmir Police Thursday booked a terrorist associate linked with proscribed terror outfit LeT under PSA & four notorious drug smugglers under PIT-NDPS Act in Sopore & Handwara.

"The terrorist associate namely Ahsan Ul Haq Khanday son of Nazir Ahmad Khanday resident of Nowpora Kalan Sopore has been booked under PSA while as three notorious drug smugglers namely Barkat Ahmad Dar son of Abdul Ahad Dar resident of Shair Colony Sopore, Umar Bashir Zargar son of Bashir Ahmad Zargar resident of Behrampora Rafiaband and MUSAIB BASHIR LONE son of Bashir Ahmad Lone resident of Wadoora Payeen Sopore have been booked under ● P-02

INOX CINEMA
LIVE MOVIE SRINAGAR
SHIVPORA SRINAGAR

CREW (HINDI)
02:25PM (U/A)

FURIOSA : A MAD MAX SAGA
02:45PM, 06:00PM (ENG) (A)

TAMASHA (HINDI)
02:00PM (U/A)

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MOVIES Schedule

GURUVAYUR AMBALANDIYL (MALAYALAM & ENG SUBTITLE)
05:30PM (U)

BHAIYYA JI (U/A)
04:50PM, 7:30PM

Friday 24 May

DC Kishtwar conducts surprise inspection of Schools

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KISHTWAR: To ensure the smooth functioning and punctuality of educational institutions, Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav conducted an unannounced inspection of schools in the Cluster Dool of Zone Nagensi, here the other day.

The inspection included visits to Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Dool and the Middle School (MS) Malikpora Dool.

Accompanied by Deputy Chief Education Officer, Masood Hussain Qazi, and other officials from the Chief Education Office, the Deputy Commissioner's visit aimed to assess both the functional aspects and the punctuality of the educational environment.

The Deputy Commissioner also inspected the functioning of the STEM Labs at GHSS Dool. He stressed the importance of utilizing these labs judiciously to empower science students, enhancing their knowledge and scientific aptitude besides focusing on strengthening the profound utilisation of the Library by students.

Additionally, he reviewed the infrastructure and PM POSHAN initiatives, emphasizing the need for cleanliness and hygiene in the kitchen sheds where the mid-day meals are prepared.

During the inspection at MS Malikpora, the DC took note of poor sanitation and hygiene in the school and the use of infrastructure was unsatisfactory. Show cause notice was served to erring staff and the concerned DDO was asked to stop the salary till pending enquiry.

HOI of MS Malikpora was directed to operationalise toilets and use space available for classes in efficient manner.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the critical need to adhere to sanitation protocols in schools



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The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the critical need to adhere to sanitation protocols in schools

to safeguard the health and hygiene of students.

He also impressed upon the staff to make concerted efforts to bridge educational gaps and ensure the smooth implementation of NEP 2020 in letter and spirit.

In his interaction with the staff, Dr. Devansh Yadav provided insightful directives to the Heads of Institutions (HOIs) regarding the ongoing educational session. He focused on the sustainable improvement of education indicators to achieve excellence. Dr. Yadav stressed the need for an extracurricular activities calendar for the ongoing session, highlighting its importance for holistic student development.

DC Kishtwar also emphasized the significance of regular Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTMs), BaLA (Building as Learning Aid) paintings, and the strengthening of School Management Committees (SMCs) as per the guidelines of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

He reiterated the importance of holistic education, which encompasses both academic and extracurricular activities, for the overall development of students.

Dir Agri visits Potato SMFs of Kalnag, Rampora



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal Thursday visited Potato Seed Multiplication Farm (SMF) Kalnag, SMF Rampora and Floriculture Farm Sirhama Anantnag, inspected different blocks of these farms and interacted with the concerned technical experts regarding various latest interventions adopted by the farms.

Speaking on the occasion, Director Agriculture said that the departmental farms are in a process becoming centers of excellence

vis a vis different crop production, protection technologies.

He said Departmental farms are focusing on multiplication of high yielding varieties of agriculture crops, appropriate production and protection technologies, post harvest management and production of good quality seed.

Director Agriculture assured the concerned officers of every possible support from the department for strengthening the departmental farms on modern scientific lines.

He said that from the last two years the department

is diversifying the departmental farms in terms of crops and other agriculture activities. We have achieved good results over the quality of planting material but still there is a great scope for improvement, he added.

Earlier, Farm Manager Potato SMF Kalnag briefed Director Agriculture regarding various interventions introduced by the department for the development in the said farm on modern scientific lines. He gave a detailed presentation to the visiting director in this regard.

Mega Cleanliness Drive conducted at Int'l Tourist Destination Gulmarg



GMK NEWS NETWORK

GULMARG: In a significant initiative to preserve the natural beauty and cleanliness of international tourist destination Gulmarg, a mega cleanliness drive was Thursday conducted at the scenic locations of Kangdori and Afarwat.

This effort was a collaborative endeavour by the Gulmarg Development Authority and the J&K Cable Car Corporation.

The drive commenced at Kangdori and extended to Afarwat, drawing significant participation from both organizations.

Under the coordination of Waseem Raja, Chief Executive Officer of GDA, the initiative focused on ensuring a green, clean and plastic/polythene-free Gulmarg. Raja emphasized the GDA's commitment to such cleanliness drives, affirming that these efforts will be sustained for the continuous upkeep of Gulmarg.

Tourists and locals alike expressed their gratitude for the efforts of GDA and JKCC. Many highlighted the importance of maintaining cleanliness in these pristine environments and commended the authorities for their proactive measures.

This initiative reflects the ongoing dedication of GDA and JKCC to promote sustainable tourism in the region, ensuring that Gulmarg remains a beautiful and welcoming destination for all tourists.

DIC Srinagar hosts Workshop at IE Khunmoh to promote NCSS



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a continued effort to bolster the industrial landscape of Jammu and Kashmir, the District Industries Centre (DIC) Srinagar held a Workshop cum Awareness Program at Industrial Estate Khunmoh.

The event witnessed significant participation from unit holders, including the President of the Industrial Association.

During the workshop, General Manager (GM) DIC Srinagar engaged with participants in a dynamic question-and-answer session. The General Manager underscored the urgency

of leveraging the New Central Sector Scheme (NCSS-2021) before the registration deadline, promising to highlight the issues raised by unit holders at the highest administrative levels.

The DIC officials and resource persons from Ernst & Young LLP (DPIIT PIU team Kashmir) addressed the scheme related queries like eligibility, document requirements, application procedure and quantum of incentives available for unit holders.

The unit holders were informed about the incentives under NCSS-2021 which include a 30/50% Capital Investment Incentive (CI), a 6% Capital

Interest Subvention (CIS) on term loans for seven years, a 100% GST Linked Incentive (GSTLI) for ten years, and a 5% Working Capital Interest Subvention (WCIS) for five years.

The program concluded with expressions of gratitude, and eligible units were facilitated in applying for NCSS registration on the spot.

Looking ahead, the General Manager announced that another Workshop cum Awareness Program is set to be held on June 4, 2024, at DIC Srinagar, aiming to provide further support and information to unit holders about the benefits of the scheme.

LOK SABHA POLLS

DEO Rajouri reviews preparations for Polling Day

GMK NEWS NETWORK

RAJOURI: District Election Officer Rajouri Om Prakash Bhagat Thursday chaired a meeting with Zonal and Sector Officers to discuss and strategize the preparations for the Lok Sabha Election-2024 Polling scheduled on May 25 in Rajouri-Anantnag Parliamentary Constituency.

The meeting emphasized the importance of ensuring a smooth, fair and transparent electoral process. The sector and zonal officers were acquainted with their role and responsibilities during pre-polling, polling day and after polling.

On the day of polling, sectoral officers were tasked with executing a myriad of duties aimed at facilitating a seamless voting process. The responsibilities include conducting frequent inspections of polling stations, monitoring the presence of security forces, supervising the activities of polling agents and promptly addressing any issues or complaints

that may arise during the voting process.

Additionally, officers were entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing the proper handling and sealing of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) at the conclusion of polling.

District Election Officer Om Prakash Bhagat reiterated the importance of performing these duties with utmost dedication and diligence to uphold the integrity of the electoral process and ensure the democratic rights of citizens are safeguarded. He emphasized the critical role of each officer in fostering a conducive environment for free and fair elections.

Meanwhile, the final randomization of polling parties was done by DEO Rajouri in presence of General Observer this morning.

Among the others, Commandants of IR and Armed Police, ASP Musadiq Majid Basu; ACR, Mohammad Jhangir Khan; Dy DEO, Shakeel Mir and other sectoral and zonal officers attended the meeting.

ACD Ramban reviews implementation of MGNREGA, RDD schemes

GMK NEWS NETWORK

RAMBAN: Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Ramban Srinath Suman Thursday visited Batote and chaired a meeting to review the status of development works taken up under the RDD schemes within the block.

Notably, the Rural Development Department, on the direction of Deputy Commissioner Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, has notified a schedule for holding special review meetings in each block to assess the progress of developmental works and resolve issues, if any.

The ACD, while taking scheme wise review, laid stress on comple-

tion of works within the stipulated time, especially MGNREGA works and PMAY houses. He exhorted the RDD official to achieve the full target of generating man-days given to each Panchayat, besides creation of assets which would benefit the maximum number of people.

"The main motive of such block wise review meetings is to resolve the issues hampering the work execution on spot. Emphasis should be on creation of infrastructure to enhance the living standard of the general masses in each Panchayat," he added.

The meeting among others was attended by BDO, JE, TA, PPT Secy's/GRSs and others.

District level Model making competition held at GHSS Battal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR: A District Level Model Making competition was held at Udhampur in which 19 schools having Agaaz Astrophysics Lab participated.

The competition was hosted by the Principal of Government Higher Secondary School Battal-Balian Kushal Kishore with elaborate arrangements made in the School for all the participants, escort teachers and Judges.

Chief Education Officer Geetu Bangotra, Vandana HOD DIET Kud and Ashwani Kumar Master acted as judges of the Model Making competition. By CEO Dr. Kalpana Jasrotia & SO Gita Kumari were also present. Model making competition was organised to provide students a platform to show-



case their talent and foster their imagination and creativity in the field of science and astronomy. From each school, two models were presented, one each in the junior category represented by students of class 6th to 9th and senior category by class 10th to 12th.

The theme of the Model Making competition was

"Kabaad se Jugaad/Waste to Wonder." The students from participating Schools presented captivating, unique Working Models with innovative ideas which were highly appreciated and acknowledged by the Judges.

Students showcased their creativity through working models as per

theme such as Solar system, Constellation, Space technology, telescopes, Galaxies etc. which was made through Wastes material. Marks were assigned to the models in an impartial manner by the judges on the basis of judging criteria which includes Creativity & Novelty, Craftsmanship, Presentation skills, etc.

On the basis of their performance, Models of Government Higher Secondary School Sewna were adjudged best in both Junior and Senior categories at District level.

The district level selected model has to compete at Divisional level & UT level competition.

DRG Rakesh Singh and Rajesh Kumar on behalf of AGAAZ coordinated the competition.

Varied educational activities held at LHS Bhalla

GMK NEWS NETWORK

DODA: Different educational Activities were Thursday conducted at LHS Bhalla (Zone Bhalla) in collaboration with "Vishwagram Trust Gujarat" under the guidance of District Development Commissioner Harvinder Singh and Chief Education Officer Parkash Lal Thapa.

Eight team members of Vishwagram Trust visited the said institution. The volunteers of Vishwagram trust Miss Mansi Jagdish Ahir, Jagdish N Ahir, Noval Bhavasar, Ilyas Mansuri, Khatoon Bhen Mansori, Akshayia Ramakrishnan, Hardik Prajapati and Jyoti were part of the team.

The activities like origami, card making, painting art, singing, Charkha, games and some science activities were conducted

for the benefit of students.

More than one hundred twenty students participated in today's program. The students were excited and showed keen interest during the activities.

The said program was coordinated by Vinkal sharma (ZICC Bhalla) and Ankita Kotwal (Cultural incharge GHSS Dradhu).

The HOI and staff of LHS Bhalla provided all possible support and cooperation for successful completion of the event.

All students and staff of LHS Bhalla thanked District Development Commissioner Doda and Chief Education Officer Doda for providing such opportunities. As they believe such programs are very important for the overall development of the child. It will help them enhance their critical thinking, creativity, cognitive skills etc.

Altaf Bukhari leads roadshow in Anantnag areas

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Apni Party President, Altaf Bukhari, on Thursday, led a vibrant roadshow in several areas of Anantnag.

He addressed several public gatherings during this impressive activity, which was part of the party's campaign for the LS polls in the Rajouri-Anantnag parliamentary constituency scheduled for Saturday.

Throughout this vibrant activity, he was accompanied by senior leader and the party's Additional General Secretary, Hilal Ahmad Shah, as well as a number of esteemed leaders and senior workers.

The roadshow started from Lal Chowk in Anantnag and went through areas across Achabal, Dialgam, and others. The party also held a public rally in the Dialgam area of the district.

Addressing these occasions, Altaf Bukhari urged people not to vote for the dynastic parties in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said, "For the safety and well-being of your children, you must ensure that the Khandani Parties, like NC and PDP, never return to power in Jammu



and Kashmir."

He added, "You must never forget that these parties and their leaders are responsible for the deaths, bloodshed, and destruction that occurred in Jammu and Kashmir over the years and decades. They misled people, provoked them to resort to violence, and, in the meantime, they created empires for themselves and established their family rule here. Thus, it is important for the safety and well-being of the people that these parties and their leaders are kept away from attaining power in the future."

Taking a dig at the PDP leader for her emotional sloganeering, Altaf Bukhari said, "These days, the leader

of the PDP frequently chants the slogan, 'Jis Kashmir ko khoon se sencha, woh Kashmir hamara hai' (The Kashmir that we have watered with our blood, that Kashmir is ours). Someone must ask her, which blood is she referring to? Is it the blood of the innocent children who were gunned down in 2016 while she was in power in Jammu and Kashmir, or is it the blood spilled in the massacres at places like Bijbehara, Hawal, and Gawkadal in the 1990s when her late father was Home Minister at the centre?"

He also blamed NC for its political gimmicks, and said, "NC's leadership was hand in glove with the leaders in Delhi long before 1947. That is why they were

handed the government in Jammu and Kashmir post-47, even without a public mandate. However, in later years, NC leadership indulged in political gimmickry to pressure Delhi. They chanted slogans like 'Raishumari' and 'Autonomy' here time and again, just to maintain their hold on power and strengthen their family rule here. They made people scapegoats by raising such emotionally charged slogans here."

Reiterating his promise to end ban on Jamaat-i-Islami is lifted, Altaf Bukhari said, "I strongly believe that in a democratic country, religious organizations must be free to perform their religious obligations. Therefore, I promise you that when

the Apni Party receives a public mandate to serve, it will ensure that the ban on Jamaat-i-Islami Jammu and Kashmir is lifted."

"Their schools will be free to operate in the field of education, and their scholars will be free to provide religious and spiritual guidance to the people of Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

While urging people to support Apni Party and vote for Zaffar Iqbal Manhas, the party candidate for the Lok Sabha polls in the Rajouri-Anantnag constituency, Altaf Bukhari said, "We will ensure that the FIRs registered against thousands of our youth are withdrawn, and the prisoners are set free to live normal lives. We will also make sure that draconian laws like PSA and AFSPA are removed so that people can truly enjoy peace and justice in this land. Apni Party will do everything to ensure a dignified life for our youth."

"I request your support for the Apni Party to enable it to implement its pro-people agenda here. At this time, I urge you to vote for Zaffar Sahib in these parliamentary polls in the Rajouri-Anantnag constituency," he added.

Widening work on Thathri-Kishtwar stretch of NHW going on at snail's pace



AGENCIES

JAMMU: Commuting on Thathri to Kishtwar stretch of Batote-Kishtwar national highway has become a nightmare as the widening work is going at snail's pace and construction agencies don't have much machinery to speed up the work.

People are kept waiting in heat for hours together on the highway in the name of clearing the debris.

For the past three years, the widening work from Khellani in Doda district to Kishtwar stretch of Batote-Kishtwar national highway is under progress and commuters have been facing a tough time to complete their journey.

People have to dodge the hanging stones, frequent landslides and rough surface while travelling on

this highway but the construction agency hasn't sped up the work to make it easy for the commuters. The absence of proper machinery to clear the debris from the ground and clear the traffic without wasting much time of people have added to the misery of the people.

"On Tuesday I was travelling towards Kishtwar to organize a competition in a higher secondary school and when we crossed the Kandni area, our vehicle along with dozens of other vehicles were stopped by the construction agency around 10.45 am. One earth moving machinery with a breaker was breaking stone on the hill side. It took the machine around 20 to 25 minutes to break the stone and after that clearing the debris with the same machine without

having proper equipment took around an hour. People were made to wait for more than 90 minutes in scorching heat," said Aijaz Ahmed, a resident of Doda.

Since the start of the work, widening on Pul Doda to Prem Nagar stretch has been almost completed whereas few patches from Prem Nagar to Thathri are still under construction.

The widening work is going on under the supervision of National Highway Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL).

When contacted Kishtwar based General Manager of NHIDCL, he said he will look into the matter—(KNO)

Apni Party takes out impressive roadshow in Mendhar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

MENDHAR: Apni Party on Thursday took out an impressive roadshow across Mendhar Town with the participation of hundreds of people with their vehicles and motorbikes in support of the Party's candidate for Rajouri - Anantnag Parliamentary seat, Zafar Iqbal Manhas.

The mega roadshow started from Children Park, and it concluded at the Bus Stand, Mendhar in Poonch District of Jammu and Kashmir in which Former Dy Chief Minister, Dr Nirmal Singh, Yudhvir Sethi, Mumtaz Ahmad Khan and other leaders also participated along with the Apni Party leaders.

As a show of strength, the rally of people passed through various roads, and chowks expressing their support to the Party candidate, Zafar Iqbal Manhas sahib.

Expressing his gratitude to the people of Pir Panjal, who have shown their affection and support to him, the Party's candidate, Zafar Iqbal Manhas cautioned to the people of Pir Panjal from the microscopic elements, who are bent upon to disturb brotherhood, and mutual co-existence of the Gujjars and Paharis tribes in the region for centuries. "These microscopic people in the region are trying to create mis-

understanding by sowing the seeds of discord in the society as they don't believe in Live and Let Live. However, we will fight them at any cost to defend the mutual respect, and brotherhood of Gujjar - Paharis in the region," said Manhas, while urging the people to stay vigilant from such elements.

He recalled how National Conference and its alliance partner, Congress Party deliberately divided Pir Panjal Region (Pahari areas) and created a Line of Control by dividing the Region in two parts i.e., one part of it is presently under the occupation of Pakistan since 1947.

These two parties joined hands to divide the strategically important border belt of Pahari speaking people into two parts, the Apni Party candidate said, while blaming the National Conference, and its alliance Congress Party as both were in power both in Centre and in J&K respectively.

He said that they were responsible for making the whole region stretching from Rajouri to Karnah, a border area that opened the door of unending miseries and sufferings of both parts of the people of the undivided State of Maharaja.

Remembering the struggle of more than 45 years of Pahari tribe (one of most backward and neglected tribes) to get the recog-

niton, and reservation; Manhas said that some of the vested interests, tried more than once to crush Pahari movement that has now grown into a fully grown tree with its large trunk following its long struggle.

"I warn these self-interest individuals that we will not allow any kind of compromise with the future generation. Majority of Gujjars-Paharis live in peace, and brotherhood with each other since centuries in the Region. However, we will not allow destructive plans of a few against the reservation to Pahari Tribe, neither we shall allow them to harm our centuries old brotherhood" he stated.

He said that the urbanized microscopic minority is creating misunderstanding among the Gujjars - Paharis tribes for their vested interest, who have settled in urban areas of Jammu and other parts of the region.

"We will expose them when the time comes and will not allow such elements to hurt the peaceful atmosphere in the region," he warned again.

Meanwhile, he assured that if he gets elected to the Parliament, he will revamp the development and tourism in the region which would generate employment and boost the local economy.

The region has huge potential that needs to be explored for the

sustainable development, and exploration of new avenues of employment opportunity.

He also referred to his commitment that he would leave no stone unturned to fight for get a separate Parliamentary seat for Rajouri - Poonch so that the people get their own representative to the Parliament.

He also pitched for Hill Development Council, and funds on the pattern of Ladakh. He also brought the attention of the people towards the plight of the families whose youth have been detained under different charges and assured that the Party would try to get them released from the custody.

"We want to provide an opportunity to the detained youth to return to normal mainstream life," he added, while reiterating the assurance to get a sanction for the construction of two important tunnels on historic Mughal Road i.e., Dera Ki Gali, and Peer Ki Gali to keep the highway operational in all the weather conditions.

Prominent among those who participated in the roadshow include Raqeeq Ahmed Khan, Wajid Bashir Tikoo, Zulfkar Mumtaz, Aftab Tabi, Ajaz Khan, Kafel Khan, Nazakat Shah, Tariq Khan, Shakeel Khan, Rt. SP Razaq Khan, Abdul Gani Manhas, and others.

New PM will be elected on June 4: Omar hits out at BJP

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: National Conference Vice-President Omar Abdullah Thursday hit out at BJP for carrying out anti-Muslim manifesto during election campaigns across the country, saying "The voters of the country will give them answer on June 4 when new PM will be elected".

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a public meeting held at Kulgam's Damhal Hanjipora, the NC vice-president and former chief minister Omar Abdullah as per KNS said whenever BJP addresses public meetings in the ongoing campaigning for Lok Sabha elections, it has been observed that it expressed venom and hate against Muslims living in the country. He said, "but the voters of the country will give answer to BJP's



discriminative outlook on June 4 when new PM will be elected".

"The voters of the country will give apt reply to BJP on June 4, when new PM will be elected to Chair," Omar Abdullah said.

Replying to a query, he said the elections in Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat shouldn't have been delayed. "It has been long campaigning. The

polls shouldn't have been deferred here. They (ECI) delayed it while citing bad weather a reason. But I appeal to people of Anantnag, Rajouri, Poonch, Kulgam, Shopian to take part in polling on May 25 with full enthusiasm, and give a chance to NC's Mian Altaf Ahmad to serve his people and represent them in the Parliament," Omar Abdullah said.

RTO Kashmir denies reports of 'no driving tests', issuance of licenses by private players

MUBASHIR ALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: The Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Kashmir has refuted recent reports circulating on social media claiming that driving tests would be skipped for issuing driving licenses and that private entities had been authorised to issue licenses. RTO Kashmir, Syed Shahnaaz Bukhari termed these reports as "entirely baseless".

"There is no skip to driving tests for seeking a driving licence, and as of now, no private stakeholder has been authorised to issue driving licenses or conduct the driving test," the RTO Kashmir said.

In response to the concerns raised by applicants about the backlog of pending licenses, the RTO informed that around 1 lakh licenses have already been printed and were in the process of being dispatched by postal authorities. "Currently, there would

be a pendency of around 25% of driving licenses which are yet to be printed, over 1 lakh are already printed and it is the postal authorities who have to dispatch that," he added.

Notably, the rumours about changes in the driving license issuance process sparked considerable confusion among the public over the past few days.

The social media reports suggested that driving tests would be skipped and that private entities could issue licenses. However, the RTO Kashmir firmly dispelled these claims, reiterating that the government remains the sole authority for issuing driving licenses in the region.

"This clarification aims to put an end to the misinformation and we assure the public that the established procedures for obtaining a driving license, including mandatory driving tests, remain unchanged," he said—(KNO)

Kashmiri researcher secures over Rs 1 crore grant for migration studies at University of Leeds

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: A young researcher from Kashmir has secured a significant grant from an English university for his research project. Danish Zahoor, 33, a resident of Soura in Srinagar, has received funding of INR 1.3 crore to pursue his research in Migration Studies at the University of Leeds Business School in England.

Danish said this research project became possible after two years of continuous efforts, applying for research grants, and submitting multiple research proposals. "Receiving this funding will aid in investigating various aspects of modern slavery and human trafficking," he stated.

"Human migration is a crucial aspect of globalisation. However, immigration has become a hotly contested and controversial issue in Western societies like Europe and the US," he explained.

Danish highlighted the problems accompanying migration, such as modern slavery and human trafficking. "In the UK, the Seasonal Worker Visa Programme (SWVP) has been notorious for issues like exploitation, control by farm owners, abusive behaviour, limited access to healthcare, poor housing, and work-life balance," he noted.

The researcher added that these problems are compounded by the fact that workers migrate to the UK mostly during the harvest season on a short-term visa of six months, making them more likely to accept exploitative conditions silently. "Language barriers, lack of education, and awareness about their rights further exacerbate the problem. Often, they are charged exorbitant prices by unscrupulous brokers in their own country, leading to indebtedness and nullifying their months of efforts and earnings in the UK," he said. "My research seeks to

investigate these critical issues and whether the agricultural seasonal worker programme in the UK amounts to a form of modern slavery," Danish added.

He said thousands of workers migrate to developed countries like the UK from poor and developing parts of South Asia and Central Asia. "Their efforts contribute significantly to the UK's economy and benefit their own countries through substantial foreign remittances. Ensuring their work and living conditions meet globally accepted human rights norms can ensure all-around benefits and bring the fruits of globalization to all," he added.

Danish believes that research in the fields of social sciences and humanities has immense potential to improve lives through informed policy-making and governance. Reflecting on his journey, he shared that he completed his schooling at Burn Hall

School in Srinagar and graduated in Business Administration from the University of Kashmir. He then cracked the Symbiosis National Aptitude (SNAP) Test and pursued an MBA in Marketing & Finance at Symbiosis International University, Pune.

"After completing my MBA, I was recruited by Ernst & Young and started working in Mumbai as a Business Consultant. However, my interests always lay in research, writing, and academia. I soon quit my job and started working independently as a Content Writer and Strategist while pursuing my Masters in Political Science through correspondence," he said.

"After returning to Kashmir, I joined the education department where I taught Political Science and worked as a Teacher Trainer," he said. Danish concluded by stating that his research project at the University of Leeds aims to bridge his interests in both political science and business—(KNO)

Sangam-Pulwama road in dilapidated condition, locals demand macadamisation

JAHANGEER GANAIE

PULWAMA: A vital Sangam-Pulwama road in Pulwama district is lying in dilapidated condition causing inconvenience to people.

Locals from different areas of south Kashmir said that Sangam-Pulwama road is one of the most important roads connecting hundreds of villages with Pulwama town, National Highway and other areas.

Locals from the Naina area said that road was fully macadamised almost five years ago and since then only patches are being done. They said that the road is now full of potholes and requires immediate attention of authorities.

Sameer Ahmad, a resident of Litter area said the road developed cracks at several spots and is currently lying in dilapidated condition.

He said that the road has vital importance and is connecting dozens of villages of many districts with each but it needs



immediate attention of higher ups.

Hilal Ahmad another local said that authorities have been macadamising some patches every year but it needs to be macadamised fully as its condition is very bad now.

Locals said that this road is very important as it connects SIDCO Lassarpora with National Highway at Sangam and as it is connecting SIDCO, it has a very heavy rush and this road must be given priority.

They added that the issue was brought into the notice of concerned authorities several times to no avail.

They sought attention of LG Manoj Sinha, DC Pulwama and other officials in this regard—(KNO)

Good Morning **Kashmir**

EDITORIAL

Dry Dams Do Not Augur Well

The Bollywood actor Shahrukh had to be admitted after he had a heat-stroke in Ahmedabad. This incident highlighted the fact that the plains in India are under the spell of an intense heat wave and things are not looking any good – despite there being a favorable monsoon prediction.

The monsoon has arrived in the Andaman Sea and is expected to hit the Kerala coast on May 31. Meanwhile, an intense heat wave is sweeping northern India while water levels in the country's 150 reservoirs monitored by the Central Water Commission are alarmingly low at just 25% of their total capacity. The southern Indian city of Bengaluru also known as San Francisco of India for its tech companies is experiencing acute shortage of drinking water. Sooner if the dams do not fill to the near about levels there could be other cities facing an equally alarming problem. The problem is more severe in the Godavari, Krishna, and Cauvery basins, which can have a debilitating impact on meeting drinking needs, irrigation, and hydropower generation.

Even though the weatherman has predicted a more than average monsoon the states must prepare to ensure that the La Nina bounty is not wasted. Much of the water crisis in summer months has to do with the failure to augment storage during the monsoon. This is extremely critical. In our own union territory, we are seeing how the city of Jammu has been consistently witnessing temperatures of above 40 degrees Celsius for the last two weeks, and temperature is expected to rise further for another fortnight or so. Even Kashmir is expected to witness mid-30s temperatures for another two weeks. We must understand desertification is one of the key consequences of global warming. The videos of people walking on the dried beds of lakes in multiple Indian states do not augur well – nor in the short term and definitely not in the long run.

For all the technological advances India is still a predominantly agrarian economy. Agriculture is among one of the biggest contributors to the country's GDP. A good monsoon augurs well for the Indian economy – dried dams and water reservoirs certainly do not.

Remembering An Exemplary Father



SYED MAJID GILANI

In loving memory of my dearest father, Syed Iftikhar Gilani (1950-2001)

With the reality of his having gone away from this world, still in fully despite the passage of twenty-three years, I would like to share a glimpse into his heavenly abode. My father was born in 1950 in Khanquahi, Mohalla, Srinagar, and graduated in Electronics from S P College, Srinagar in 1972. After being selected by the Services Selection Board, he joined the Sales Tax Department and served in the ministerial Cadre. Unfortunately, fate had other plans, and he left this world while still in service in the prime of his youth.

Growing up under my beloved father's able guidance and affectionate care, each passing day further magnifies his significance in my life. Today, as I reminisce about the golden memories we shared, my emotions overflow with bittersweet nostalgia. From his birth in 1950 until his departure in 2001, my father lived a life full of wisdom, compassion, and dedication. He touched our lives with his care, discipline, politeness, laughter, unwavering strength, and unconditional love. His legacy continues to shape us all.

It was on the 11th of June, 2001 when my father returned home from his office complaining of slight breathlessness. He had been sweating a lot and had ever consumed some seven glasses of water in the office which was unusual for him. Despite his breathlessness, he offered Maghreb prayers at home and continued to praise the Almighty Allah. On that evening, I returned home from Banihal, a hilly place on the Jammu Srinagar National Highway. Just two days after my transfer to Banihal Toll Post, I experienced several health issues, including irregular heartbeats, poor appetite, and sleeplessness. Tears would uncontrollably roll down my eyes. Unable to bear it any longer, I immediately returned to Srinagar. When I arrived home at 8.30 p.m. I found my loving father in the kitchen offering on his prayer mat. Tears welled up in our eyes, and asked my father who had been in good health



when I left for Banihal, to get up and hug me tightly.

Receiving his warm embrace brought me immense relief. He then offered his Isha prayers. After completing his prayers, my father would usually go to his own father's bedroom and arrange their bedding. He never allowed anyone else to do this task as he believed that it was his duty to take care of his parents. Later that evening, our entire family gathered around the same 'dastakhan' for dinner. However, my father's breathlessness worsened after the meal. In a panic, I called my maternal uncles the Chishti's who arrived, and took my father to the SKIMS Hospital, Soura. Although the ECG test came back normal there seemed to be no apparent problem. He was only given a diazepam injection. Little did we know that this would be our last moment with him.

On our way back home from the hospital, my father spoke to us normally, but I noticed he was experiencing breathlessness. When we arrived home, he tried to sleep but could not, instead in a subconscious or sleepy state, he began reciting Surah. At around 4. am. my father loudly recited Surah Falaq. This made us afraid but no one could even think of his death. We assumed he was uttering these words while under the influence of a 'Diazepam' injection. My loving father then instructed me, 'Majid go and light the candles and call the tailor.' After then, he began reciting the kalimaat and repeatedly told us, to be prepared because dawn was approaching. However, we did not understand what he meant. In an attempt to provide comfort, we gave him tea. Following that, he went to the washroom and took a bath, changing his clothes afterward. But as soon as he came from the washroom, his complexion color began to pale and his voice became weak. We helped him to sit

on a mattress in the living room, the same spot where he used to offer his prayers and recite the Quran.

These are moments I experienced, where my father, despite his breathlessness found solace in reciting verses from the Holy Quran and offering Zikr Azkaar. He held my younger sister Yasmeen's right hand in his right hand and our youngest sister Sabiya's left hand in his left hand, gripping them firmly with a heartfelt core/he repeatedly said "Allah, Allah, Allah..... We witnessed this scene exactly as I described, but unfortunately, we could not comprehend its meaning. In this solemn moment, we could only hold his hand tightly seeking solace in each other and in the presence of Allah. Amid our sorrow, as tears down our faces, I began to rub my father's feet hoping to bring him comfort in his final moments. Our neighbors, the Shah's rushed to our help. They insisted on taking our dear papa to SKIMS Soura in the hope that he could be saved. Yasmeen and I attempted to carry our father on our shoulders to the waiting car outside, but within the confines of the room, something changed. My papa's eyes gazed lovingly at the horizon as if he could see something beyond our reach. Desperate to bring him back, we tried to awaken him, but it was futile with a heavy heart. I gently closed his eyes, knowing that he had left us for his heavenly abode. In the early hours of Tuesday, June 12th 2001, an incredible soul, my dear papa's my lifelong friend and companion, departed from this world at the tender age of fifty. The pain of his loss still haunts me, and I long for the day when we will be reunited in the heavens. My wounds are raw and my heart brimming with tears. In the end, my beloved father left us too soon leaving behind a legacy of

love and devotion. His earthly journey may have ended, but his memory and spirit continue to guide and inspire us.

Amidst the darkness, there was one guiding light that upheld our spirits our beloved pious, disciplined, and learned mother. Despite losing her life partner at the young age of forty-two, she remained steadfast and unwavering in raising us according to the values of our family. She ensured that we followed in the footsteps of our ancestors, nurturing our identity and keeping us connected with our paternal relatives. Our mother's compassion and warmth knew no bounds, bridging the gap and preventing us from ever feeling isolated.

We are eternally grateful for our mother's love and kindness. Moreover, Almighty Allah was kind enough to us, for he never deprived us of the support, care, affection, and tutelage of our God-fearing grandparents Magfoor o Marhoom Syed Abdul Rashid Gilani and Jannat Makeen Syeda Sakina Gilanii. They raised us with nobility and discipline, treating our grief-stricken mother Shahida Chishti, as their daughter, not just their daughter-in-law.

Everything we are today we solely owe to them. Our grandparents were very great. It was they, who brought us up and stood like a rock behind us. They took our utmost care, just like our papa could have taken if he would have been alive. They never made us feel that we were orphans. They made me and my siblings complete their education and made it a point to see us well settled. May Allah elevate their status in the heavens alongside our beloved father.

Author is a GST Inspector. He can be mailed at syedmajid6676@gmail.com

Territorialisation Of Emancipatory Struggles



BHABANI SHANKAR NAYAK

In an age of digital revolution, capital and its markets continue to be highly mobile, while human beings and their struggles against exploitation and inequalities remain territorialised in the name of nation-states. This disparity highlights a significant imbalance: financial resources and economic opportunities can flow freely across borders, yet the efforts of people fighting against exploitation and inequality are often confined to specific regions or communities. This territorialisation limits the potential for widespread solidarity and collective action, perpetuating the challenges faced by those striving for social justice and equitable treatment.

Emancipatory struggles against feudalism, patriarchy, colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism were not confined within national territories. The English, Scottish, and Welsh working people actively opposed apartheid and led numerous anti-colonial struggles across the globe. One notable example is John Harris, a white anti-apartheid activist and leader, who was perhaps the only white man executed in South Africa for his steadfast commitment to anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggles. In all these movements, the working classes played a crucial role in driving social and political transformation in their societies worldwide.



The involvement of working people and groups transcended geographical boundaries, demonstrating solidarity with oppressed people in different parts of the world. Their efforts were not merely local but were part of a global resistance against various forms of oppression. The sacrifices and contributions of freedom fighters like John Harris highlight the interconnected nature of these struggles and the universal desire for justice and equality. Through strikes, protests, and other forms of resistance, the working classes have consistently pushed for significant changes, challenging the status quo, and advocating for a fairer, more equitable world. Their legacy continues to inspire contemporary movements for social justice and human rights.

Protests, teach-ins, and demonstrations became common as young people voiced their opposition to what they saw as an unjust and imperialist conflict. This opposition was fuelled by a desire to promote peace, justice, and an end to unnecessary loss of life. These anti-war movements were driven by belief in the principles of international law, peace, and universal human rights, as well as a desire to pre-

vent further destabilisation people's lives, livelihoods, and the planet. These struggles are motivated by a commitment to equality, human rights, and the vision of a just society where all citizens, regardless of ethnicity, have equal rights. These examples highlight a broader trend of citizens actively engaging in political and social movements to hold their governments accountable. Whether it's opposing wars, advocating for human rights, or fighting for social justice, these movements demonstrate the power of collective action and the enduring spirit of solidarity beyond reactionary ideals of territoriality.

In recent years, despite numerous attempts to contain and territorialize emancipatory struggles in different parts of the world, working people have shown remarkable unity in opposing imperialist wars across Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. This reveals the profound power of people to rise above their immediate territorial, cultural, social, and political identities, extending solidarity with the struggles of others in distant lands. This collective resistance underscores the universal desire for justice

and peace, highlighting the interconnectedness of global struggles against oppression and exploitation.

The territorialisation of emancipatory struggles is a strategy designed to weaken these movements and undermine people's abilities to overcome crises in their everyday lives. By confining struggles to specific regions or communities, those in power aim to isolate and fragment efforts for social justice, making it harder for people to unite and address broader systemic issues. This tactic not only hinders the effectiveness of emancipatory movements but also diminishes the collective power needed to address and resolve ongoing crises.

In the name of stabilisation and the acknowledgment of cultural identities and unity, territorialisation in the context of nation-states becomes a tool for majoritarian mobilisation. This is the foundation of majoritarian dominance over politics, resources, and culture. This approach often serves to consolidate power by promoting a singular national identity, marginalising minority groups, and suppressing diverse voices. By framing cul-

tural and territorial unity as essential for stability, those in power can mobilise the majority population to support policies that entrench their dominance and maintain the status quo, often at the expense of social justice and inclusivity.

In order to accelerate solidarity and minimise conflicts, it is crucial to uphold and celebrate the working people's natural ability to live harmonious lives, free from the individual and institutional parasites created and sustained by colonial boundaries that territorialise, exploit, and dominate. By recognising and fostering this inherent capacity for unity and cooperation, people can better resist the divisive forces that seek to maintain control through territorialisation and oppression. Global emancipatory struggles play a vital role in this process, helping to unite disparate movements and amplify their collective power against exploitation and inequality sustained by colonial, capitalist, and imperialist power structures.

Global and universal citizenship rights, grounded in science, secularism, and collective ownership of natural resources, along with egalitarian distribution mechanisms, can guide the world toward a peaceful and prosperous future. By embracing these principles, societies can ensure that all individuals have equal access to resources and opportunities, fostering social justice and reducing inequalities. This approach promotes a sense of shared responsibility and cooperation, essential for addressing global challenges and building a peaceful, prosperous, sustainable, and harmonious world.

Bhabani Shankar Nayak, London Metropolitan University

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Radiosurgery: Pioneering Non-Invasive Approaches To Tumor Therapy



DR ADITYA GUPTA

Radiosurgery is an advanced non-invasive and high-precision medical procedure that uses a focused beam of radiation to treat tumors and other medical conditions. It is a very special form of radiation therapy which delivers high doses of radiation with precise accuracy to a concentrated area. Radiosurgery is used to treat a wide range of medical conditions, including benign and cancerous tumors of the brain, spine, lungs, liver, and prostate, as well as non-cancerous conditions such as trigeminal neuralgia.

One of the most advanced radiosurgery systems available today is the M6 CyberKnife. This cutting-edge system combines advanced imaging technology with a robotic arm that delivers high doses of radiation to tumors with sub-millimeter accuracy. The M6 CyberKnife can treat tumors anywhere in the body, including the brain, spine, lungs, liver, pancreas, and prostate. The system uses real-time imaging to track the position of the tumor and automatically adjusts



the radiation beam to ensure that the tumor receives the correct lethal dose of radiation.

One of the key advantages of the M6 CyberKnife is its accuracy. The system can deliver high doses of radiation with extreme precision, which minimizes damage to surrounding healthy tissue. This precision also allows the M6 CyberKnife to treat tumors that may be difficult to access with traditional surgery, such as tumors located deep in the brain or spine. All this is accomplished without any pain, as this technology is frameless, and does not need a frame to be fixed onto the head.

Benign tumors - are non-cancerous growths that can occur in various

parts of the body, including the brain, spine, and lungs. While these tumors are typically not life-threatening, they can cause significant discomfort and affect a person's quality of life. Traditional surgery can be effective in removing benign tumors, but it can also be invasive and involve significant recovery time. CyberKnife offers a safe and effective alternative, delivering a high dose of radiation to the tumor with extreme accuracy, destroying the tumor cells while minimizing damage to surrounding healthy tissue. The compelling reason to avoid traditional surgery is also when the tumor is small, which is when radiosurgery is most effective.

AVMs - Arteriovenous Malforma-

tions are a rare condition that occurs when there is a malformation of the blood vessels in the brain or spinal cord. AVMs can cause a variety of symptoms, including headaches, seizures, and neurological deficits. Traditional surgery to remove an AVM can be risky and may involve significant recovery time. CyberKnife offers a safe and effective alternative, delivering a high dose of radiation to the AVM with extreme accuracy, leading to a gradual closure of the blood vessels.

Metastatic tumors - are tumors that have spread to other parts of the body from their original location. Metastasis is a common complication of many types of cancers, including breast,

lung, and prostate cancer. Traditional treatments for metastatic tumors include surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy. CyberKnife offers a targeted approach to treating metastatic tumors, delivering a high dose of radiation to the tumor with extreme precision while minimizing damage to surrounding healthy tissue.

Another advantage of the M6 CyberKnife is its non-invasive nature. Unlike traditional surgery, which requires incisions and can result in significant pain and recovery time, the M6 CyberKnife does not require any incisions or anesthesia. Patients can typically return to their normal activities immediately after treatment, within minutes.

The CyberKnife is a relatively new technology in India, and while there is limited data on its usage, it is steadily gaining popularity among medical practitioners and patients alike. Despite having high success rates, effectiveness and 100% safety, this technology is underutilised in India as of now.

While more research is needed to fully understand the impact of CyberKnife on cancer treatment in India, the initial findings suggest that it is a promising option for patients who require precise and non-invasive treatment for various types of tumors and cancers.

Director of Neurosurgery and Cyberknife, Artemis Hospital, Gurugram

What Is Wrong With The Climate Change Message

MIRZA YAWAR BAIG

The reality today is that even the truth must be sold. Especially a truth that will and is affecting everyone and to change it everyone must pull together in the same direction. First the truth - We are on the way to becoming toast. I mean that rather literally. And everyone is everyone. Just look out of your window to see everyone. Look in the mirror to see the one who you will not see when you look out of the window. Everyone is everyone.

I sincerely hope that I am wrong. But as I said, for most people, and I mean the vast majority, they don't understand Climate Change & Global Warming (CC&GW), don't see the urgency, and don't have any idea about what do to about it. The fact of the matter is that all real effective changes must necessarily come from world leaders changing policy and enforcing the change. That's not happening and, in a world, that's divided between dictators and democratic leaders on 4/5-year lifelines, also called terms, what hope is there for unpopular decisions to be taken and enforced? Furthermore, for this enforcement to be effective, if it happens, it must be done globally and instantaneously. Not gradually over decades. We are well past the luxury of gradual change. When a house is on fire you need a firehose, not a garden hose, if you are serious about putting out the fire. This means that not only will the owners and shareholders of companies which are contributing to CC&GW lose business but all those who work in those areas will lose jobs, miss mortgage payments, not be able to pay for health insurance, school bills, even food. Which government can survive that?

Just to give you a taste of what is in store, self-driving electric vehicles are the talk of the town. What that will mean in real-time, when and if it happens is that 3.5 million truck drivers will be out of jobs in the US. And many if not all the 8.4 million people who are in trucking related activities will also be affected. They won't have jobs, but they have votes. Which political party or leader is willing to risk that? The issue is not technology but people. We seem to think that technology can solve everything. It can't. Certainly not this one. This is a people problem, and we can't factor people out of it. Indeed, which society can live through such a catastrophe? Do you see that happening? I don't. Not until we hit catastrophe and then whatever will happen will happen.

Now for some home truths which many in the English speaking and reading world seem to ignore. Let



me list them for you. Please add to the list.

The language of Climate Change & Global Warming is a classic example of the yawning gulf between the haves and the have-nots. It is spoken by the inner circle for the inner circle in a language that only the inner circle understands, and which shuts out those who are not in that inner circle. In any society these are the elites who live in ivory towers, not troubled by how or even whether the GUM (Great Unwashed Multitude) lives. By 'inner circle', I mean English speakers with a university education of a particular nature. If you don't believe me, make a presentation on CC&GW at your child's school PTA meeting, or at any social gathering and watch how soon you lose your audience. I will give you all of five minutes. But we still see/hear/read the same language which no normal tea drinking human being understands.

There is no sense of urgency about this truth which is as urgent as a house on fire. Once again, the result of the language. If you say to the average Joe watching Superbowl that because of his lifestyle i.e., his truck in the driveway, centrally heated and air conditioned house, the beef burger he is eating (change the meat to anything else with the same result), the plane that he is planning to fly to Toronto on in the

morning - I can add many more but this will suffice - all add to GW and will result in an increase in temperature of the world by one degree which can result in the melting of the icecap and glaciers in the Arctic Circle (which he can't find on a map) and thereby an increase in sea levels by one inch, you will have to help him off the floor where he would have fallen because he laughed so much. Travel to India or Africa and try saying that to the woman (in her language of course) who is cooking for her family on an open fire which she lighted using tree branches which she cut from the forest (which is illegal of course) and she will not even laugh because you are so foreign to her that she treats you like someone from outer space.

The solution to Global Warming is to completely change our lifestyles. Stop eating meat, stop using firewood and coal, stop using oil and all fossil fuels, stop all carbon emissions and so on, right now. Once again, a long list which is not necessary to complete to make the point. The point is that this is not something which can be done unless people have viable alternatives which are cost effective. And those we need now. Not ten years from now. The fact is that we don't have them, and we are not even close to having them.

Changes that will positively impact Climate Change must be

made globally. No matter how desirable it may be for an individual or a group of people to turn off lights, ride bicycles instead of cars, eat broccoli instead of chicken, use Zoom instead of flying, disconnect the air-conditioning (what are you supposed to do about heating?) and so on, it will not create any measurable impact. For a measurable impact it needs global policy change and implementation and even enforcement of the new climate friendly policy, if necessary. That means that those who are making billions and trillions in profit from fossil fuels, plastics, armaments, airlines, automobiles, you-name-it, and who rule the world because we have a world that is ruled by the 1% for the benefit of the 1% to which we all contribute willingly while suffering in silence, must be willing to kiss goodbye to those profits. How likely that is, I will leave you to decide. Especially when you know that the solution that the billionaires have for themselves, is a choice between going to Mars or living in underground bunkers guarded by private armies who of course live in the world outside. How intelligent that is and why they believe that someone whose own family will be exposed to the toxicity of the world will be willing to sacrifice his family to keep his boss and his family safe, don't ask me. But if you expect them to think of your interests, then get a

brain transplant.

How likely is it that all oil companies, airlines, animal farms, armaments companies, automobile companies including electric vehicles because the batteries don't grow on trees but are the result of carbon generating processes - once again the list is endless - will simply shut shop and go home? For measurable impact, it needs huge change, or I should really say, a total revolution in our way of life. History is witness that this kind of change has never happened voluntarily with the human race.

While we may speak and read English, those who need to take decisions to stop global warming don't. It is not about language but about the economic disparity between us and them. In one word it is about having alternatives or not. Slash and burn agriculture, cutting trees to light stoves, using wood or coal to heat homes, all contribute massively to global warming. All are done by the poor of the world who must choose between cooking food today and a warmer world tomorrow.

Another random thought to reflect on when we talk about the world going vegetarian or vegan, even better. What will happen to the billions of cattle, sheep, and poultry that are alive on farms today? There are more farmed cattle than all wild animals in the world combined and more chickens than all wild birds combined. What should be done with them and what will be the effect of that on CC&GW? And what about the jobs and lives of all those who work on those farms and ancillary industries?

The truth is that we are looking at catastrophe in the eye. After it happens, those who remain will have to pick up the pieces and implement changes, which will then be easier because people won't need convincing.

The bottom line is that if we want action on Climate Change & Global Warming, we must device language that makes sense to ordinary people, creates a sense of urgency in them, shows them how their individual actions can have a global impact and most importantly give them viable alternatives to replace what they are doing/using at present. Without that, prepare to become toast.

Meanwhile, I live in a place where I don't need air conditioning, travel to the wild places which are still left, take photos, and write articles and books, so that when it's all over, those who come after can marvel at what used to be and wonder how we let it all go up in flames. (C-Counter Currents)

Mirza Yawar Baig is the founder and President of Yawar Baig & Associates, an international leadership consulting organization. He can be reached at yawar@yawarbaig.com

Air India gives salary increments to staff announces target performance bonus for pilots

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Air India on Thursday announced annual salary increments for its staff, and also introduced an annual target performance bonus for pilots, according to sources.

This is the first appraisal process after Tata Group took over the loss-making airline a little over two years ago.

The quantum of monthly hike varies from Rs 5,000 to Rs 15,000 for pilots, depending on their experience and position. The annual target performance bonus for pilots can be up to Rs 1.80 lakh, the sources said.

On Thursday, Air India CHRO Ravindra Kumar GP announced salary increments for employees, with effect from April 1, 2024, as well as performance bonus payouts for FY 2023-24 based on company and individual performance, according to the sources.

The airline has rolled out annual appraisals for all employees, who joined before December 31, 2023, including ground



staff, cabin crew and pilots. The appraisals are based on the new Performance Management System (Rise.AI).

In addition to the increase in fixed pay for FY 2023-24, the sources said the airline has introduced a component of annual target performance bonus for its pilots based on company and individual performance, and it will be applicable from FY2024-25.

With the salary revision, the monthly fixed pay of first officers and captains will increase by Rs 5,000 each.

In the case of commanders and senior commanders, the monthly hike will be Rs 11,000 and Rs 15,000, respectively, the sources said. There will be no hike in the monthly fixed pay for junior first officers.

The annual target performance bonus will be paid on the basis of the company's and an individual's performance.

Subject to meeting the expectations, a junior first officer will get the annual bonus of Rs 42,000 and the amount will be Rs 60,000 per annum for first officers as well as

commanders, the sources said. For commanders, the annual bonus will be Rs 1.32 lakh and Rs 1.80 lakh for senior commanders.

This is the first appraisal of Air India staff after the takeover by the Tata Group in January 2022. Last year, only compensation and contract restructuring for legacy employees were done, the sources said.

Air India has around 18,000 employees.

They said that Air India, which is in the process of revamping itself under a five-year transfor-

mation plan, is providing competitive salary increments to attract and retain talent as part of larger efforts to have a performance-driven and meritocratic culture among the employees.

While announcing the appraisals, CHRO Kumar said that in the last financial year, the airline achieved key milestones of laying strong foundations for growth and transformation.

As part of the Vihaan.AI journey, the airline introduced the contemporary annual performance appraisal process Rise.AI and also transitioned to a simplified, market-competitive and productivity-oriented compensation structure for employees, he added.

In late 2022, Air India announced the five-year transformation plan Vihaan.AI.

Air India group has four airlines -- Air India, Air India Express, AIX Connect (formerly AirAsia India) and Vistara. Air India Express is merging AIX Connect with itself, and Vistara will be merging with Air India.

Father-Son Duo Crushed to Death by Truck in J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: A man and his son were killed when a truck hit them in here on Thursday, officials said.

Residents of the Korepunna village blocked the border road and held a protest against the duo's death.

The duo were on their way to their house at the Nagari village, when a fast-driven truck crushed them to death, they said. The villagers demanded strict action against the erring driver. Former sarpanch Vinay Kumar, who was leading the dharna, demanded the night time be fixed to run the loaded dumpers (trucks).

Madhya Pradesh Tourist Dies in Kashmir

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: A tourist from Madhya Pradesh passed away due to a heart attack in the Doodpathri area of Central Kashmir's Budgam district last night.

An official informed that the deceased, identified as Lalit Kumar Bandi, a 72-year-old tourist from Indore, Madhya Pradesh, collapsed while visiting the tourist spot of Doodpathri on Wednesday evening. He was immediately rushed to SDH Khanshab, where doctors pronounced him dead on arrival. After completing the necessary medical procedures, his body was airlifted to his hometown for the final rites. A police officer informed that a case has been registered, and further investigation is underway. (KS)

Extreme fire likely over J&K forests in next 7 days: JKDMA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: With a heat wave sweeping Jammu & Kashmir, the Disaster Management Authority (DMA) on Thursday issued an alert, saying extreme fire is likely to occur over forest areas during next seven days. It also requested people to report the incident (if any) on 113 for prompt response. "Extreme forest fire risk is likely to occur over forest areas in next 7 days. People are requested to report the incident (if any) on 112 for prompt response. Dial 112 for any help," JKDMA in an alert said.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Srinagar, Anantnag

In Qazigund, the mercury settled at 32.6 degree Celsius while Pahalgam recorded a maximum temperature of 27.3 degree Celsius. In Kupwara, the mercury settled at 30.6 degree Celsius while in Kokernag and Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, the mercury settled at 30.1 degree Celsius and 22.0 degree Celsius respectively.

However, in Jammu's three stations including Jammu, Banihal and Batote, the mercury recorded a slight fall as the mercury settled at 40.1 degree Celsius, 29.8 degree Celsius and 29.9 degree Celsius respectively.

Katra has however, recorded further rise as the maximum temperature soared to 36.4 degree Celsius today while in Bhatnagar, it settled at 32.6 degree Celsius.

Meanwhile, Director Meteorological department, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that the weather is expected to remain generally dry till May 28 while the possibility of thundershower activity at isolated places can't be ruled out.

From May 29-31st, the weather would remain partly to generally cloudy with light rain and thunder expected at isolated places.

Overall, no significant weather activity till 31st May, he said.

Meanwhile, the MeT has issued an advisory for farmers, advising them to continue farm operations.

"Heat wave over plains of Jammu division & Kashmir division would likely continue during the next 6 days. Hot and dry weather is expected over hilly districts during the next 6 days," the advisory reads.

The MeT has also advised people to avoid heat exposure and drink a lot of fluid and water, especially vulnerable people like elderly, infants and children.

Meanwhile, amidst the intense heat wave, Jammu & Kashmir, the Disaster Management Authority (DMA) has issued an alert, saying extreme fire is likely to occur over forest areas during the next seven days.

It also requested people to report the incident (if any) on 113 for prompt response. "Extreme forest fire risk is likely to occur over forest areas in the next 7 days. People are requested to report the incident (if any) on 112 for prompt response. Dial 112 for any help," JKDMA in an alert said—(KNO)

There will be two hourly reporting of voting percentage from 9.00 am to the end of poll. The concerned ARO and RO will share the data with media accordingly. The updated figures shall also be placed in voter turnout app. These figures are always subject to, normally upward correction as the final confirmed figures are collected after receiving the statutory forms from all Polling Stations. So till these final figures are known, figures on Voter Turnout App are to be always tentative.

All the polling stations in Anantnag-Rajouri will have CCTV type cameras for live webcasting to control rooms established at District and CEO office. The cameras will be positioned in such a way so that they don't violate the secrecy of vote. There are few polling stations which falls in communication shadow areas. Suitable alternate arrangements in the communication shadow areas by providing Satellite Phones, Wireless sets, and Special Runners etc have been put in place. Candidates/ Political parties need to obtain prior permission for campaigning purposes, they seek online permission on Suvidha app and Portal. Till date, election

other services, through Voter Helpline App (VHA). This mobile app is available on the Google Play store and Apple App Store

The documents which can be used for voter's identification in addition to Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC), included Aadhaar Card, MGNREGA Job Card, Passbooks with photograph issued by Bank/Post Office, Health Insurance Smart Card issued under the scheme of the Ministry of Labour, Driving License, (vi) PAN Card, Smart Card issued by RGI under NPR, Indian Passport, Pension document with photograph, Service Identity Cards with photograph issued to employees by Central/State Govt./PSUs/Public Limited Companies, Official identity cards issued to MPs/MLAs/MLCs, Unique Disability ID (UDID) Card, issued by M/o Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India.

It is pertinent to mention here that EPIC card is NOT mandatory for voting. If some voter has misplaced his/her EPIC card, any of the above mentioned documents can be used by him at the Polling Station.

With the aim of spreading awareness among the voters, Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) emerged as a comprehensive programme aimed at reinforcing voter education and promoting active participation in democratic process. The need for SVEEP arises from the Election Commission of India's unwavering commitment to ensuring the participation of every voter in this monumental celebration of democracy.

During the last few months, through various modes, SVEEP activities were undertaken in very nook and corner. Various activities like appeal messages in print, electronic and social media, through hoardings, banners, radio jingles etc carried out. Street plays, use of social media influencers and icons was also done. Because of all these, the voter turnout is expected to be higher than the last Lok Sabha election.

Home voting for above 85 age and those with disability more than 40% would be held at door steps for all those who have applied for the same.

More than 600 journalist and cameraman of print, electronic and social media platforms have been provided with pass to cover the polling without compromising secrecy of vote and without having any inconvenience to poll process.

Voter Turnout App will be used to display estimated provisional voter turnout details of each Parliamentary Constituency entered by the RO. The media can also use the same application to capture estimated voter turnout data. Approximate voter turnout data of each phase of the elections will be displayed through this app.

There will be two hourly reporting of voting percentage from 9.00 am to the end of poll. The concerned ARO and RO will share the data with media accordingly. The updated figures shall also be placed in voter turnout app. These figures are always subject to, normally upward correction as the final confirmed figures are collected after receiving the statutory forms from all Polling Stations. So till these final figures are known, figures on Voter Turnout App are to be always tentative.

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officers have accorded permission for 1920 applications and rejected 303.

In the entire Union Territory, from the date of announcement of Elections, material/ cash of around Rs. 94.797 crore has been seized. Cash, liquor, drugs and other freebies have been seized by various enforcing departments. Major department-wise seizures included seizures by Police Department valuing Rs 90.831 crore, Income Tax Department 42 lakh, Excise Department 1.01 crore and Narcotics Control Bureau has seized drugs worth 2.32 crore respectively.

The public campaigning in areas of the Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary Constituency shall conclude at 6.00 PM on the evening of 23rd of May, 48 hours before the elections, (closing poll hour) also known as the silence period or pre-election silence, is when all campaign-related activity is supposed to be halted, and no one, including persons like citizens, journalists, politicians, are allowed to partake in any such public activity.

Holding public meetings, conference, interviews etc. is also to be stopped. This is done to give the voters a peaceful break from being influenced by campaigns so that they may make a considered decision while voting. Political Advertisements in print media can only be done only after Media Certification and Monitoring Committee's (MCMC) prior clearance. Sale of liquor, even from licensed shops, is also banned.

Till date, 143 grievances have been received on CVIGIL app and more than 60% have been resolved in time and others are under resolution. For filing Model Code of Conduct Violation cases by Citizen, C-VIGIL app provides time-stamped evidentiary proof of the Model Code of Conduct/ Expenditure Violation by empowering every citizen to click a photo or video using his or her Smartphone.

To monitor various election-related activities and also check Model Code of Conduct compliance, a Command and Control Room has been established at the CEO office in Jammu and Srinagar. Similar mini-control rooms have also been established in every DEO office which are functioning 24 x 7. All electronic media channels, social media platforms are monitored here, any violation so detected, is reported and the concerned RO/ARO issues notice. Apart from looking for MCC violations, the Control room also has live feed of all 100% Polling Stations and GPS vehicle tracking of all vehicles being used for poll parties.

As per the latest instructions of Election Commission of India, Special Polling Stations have been established for Migrant Voters of Kashmir Division.

A total of 26 Special Polling Stations have been established with 21 polling stations in Jammu, 4 in Delhi, and 1 in Udhampur District respectively. Special Polling Station-wise extract voter list will be with BLOs.

"The Election Commission of India is committed to provide basic facilities in all the polling stations and give better experience to voters. Voters are requested to participate in maximum number in the biggest festival of largest democracy of the world."

Elaborate Security

General Officer Commanding of 16 Corps, Additional DGPs, and Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar recently visited the twin border districts to review the security measures.

Polling in Anantnag was earlier scheduled for May 7 but was deferred to May 25 due to adverse weather conditions following requests from several parties, including BJP, Apni Party and Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP).

The Anantnag-Rajouri constituency was reconfigured by the Delimitation Commission in 2022, excluding Pulwama and parts

of Shopian, while incorporating most of Rajouri and Poonch districts.

Anantnag has witnessed four terror attacks in the past 30 days.

In 2023, Rajouri, Poonch and the neighbouring Reasi district witnessed a series of encounters, resulting in 54 deaths, including those of 19 security personnel and 28 terrorists.

On May 4 this year, an Indian Air Force (IAF) soldier was killed and five were injured in a terrorist attack in Poonch.

There are over 18.30 lakh eligible voters, including 8.99 lakh women and over 81,000 first-time voters, in the Anantnag constituency. They will decide the fate of 20 candidates in the fray.

Among the candidates are former chief minister and PDP President Mehbooba Mufti, National Conference's Mian Altaf and Apni Party's Zafar Iqbal Khan Manhas, who is being backed by the BJP. DPAP leader Mohamad Saleem Parry and 10 independents are also in the fray.

The Anantnag Lok Sabha seat comprises 18 assembly segments -- seven in Anantnag district, four in Rajouri, three each in Kulgam and Poonch, and one in Shopian.

National Conference president Farooq Abdullah and vice president Omar Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti and her daughter Iltija Mufti, BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh and Jammu and Kashmir BJP chief Ravinder Raina, DPAP chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad and Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari campaigned extensively in the constituency to garner support for their parties.

MOEFCC calls

The MoEFCC said a committee comprising of the Principal Secretary (Environment and Forests), Chairman, Pollution Control Committee, an expert each in ecology and environment and civil constructions from an institute of repute such as IIT, Jammu, and a representative from the Department of Environment and Forests, shall be constituted for suggesting the environmental safeguards or measures for new construction of hotels and resorts, which shall form a component of the Tourism Master Plan.

"The said committee shall put in place a risk assessment study on landslide, slope stability and seismicity and recommend environmental friendly and safe construction measures to be adopted," it said.

It said establishment of new hotels and resorts shall be permitted only in pre-defined and designated areas for eco-tourism facilities as per tourism master plan.

"All new tourism activities or expansion of existing tourism activities within the eco-sensitive zone shall be in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Central Government and the eco-tourism guidelines issued by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (as amended from time to time) with emphasis on ecotourism, eco-education and eco-development," the notification said.

It said until the zonal master plan is approved, development for tourism and expansion of existing tourism activities shall be permitted by the regulatory authorities concerned based on the actual site-specific scrutiny and recommendation of the monitoring committee—(KNO)

Campaigning for LS Polls

The Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) of former chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad has fielded Mohammad Saleem Parry for the seat.

According to poll authorities, the fate of the 20 candidates will be decided by more than 18.36 lakh voters of Anantnag-Rajouri.

A total of 18,36,576 voters are enrolled in the five districts of Kulgam, Anantnag, Poonch, Shopian and Rajouri of the parliamentary constituency, including 9,33,647 male and 9,02,902 female and 27 third-gender voters.

Around 18,000 differently-abled people and 540 people aged above 100 years are eligible to cast their ballots.

The EC has set up 2,338 polling stations across the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency. Four election staff, including the presiding officer, will be stationed in every polling booth. In all, more than 9,000 polling staff, including reserves, will be deployed.

There are 19 border polling stations in Rajouri and Poonch.

Polling will be held from 7 am to 6 pm and before that, there shall be a mock poll in the presence of polling agents. The voting will continue after 6 pm if voters are found standing in queues outside polling booths.

Seventeen polling booths ("pink" polling stations) will be managed by women, 15 by differently-abled people and eight by youngsters. Also, there will be 15 "green" polling stations to spread the message about the environment.

The purpose behind these special polling stations is to spread awareness among certain sections of the society, such as women, differently-abled and first-time voters, to motivate them to come forward and exercise their right to vote.

All the polling stations in Anantnag-Rajouri will have CCTV cameras for live webcasting to the control rooms set up at the district and CEO office. The cameras will be positioned in such a way so that they do not violate the secrecy of vote.

There are a few polling stations that fall in communication-shadow areas. Suitable alternative arrangements have been put in place in such areas by providing satellite phones, wireless sets and special runners.

Artisane, one-stop

Kant was accompanied by Mehmood Shah, Director of Handicrafts, and Vikram Jeet Singh, the Commissioner Secretary. Beside the live demonstration of skills by artisans, the Artisane, which is Kashmir's first of its kind art and cultural center, saw artisans performing musical performances, putting a spotlight on traditional Kashmiri singers.

"It was heartening as well as encouraging to see Mr. Kant take keen interest in the carpet weaving process in detail. Pashmina weavers also demonstrated their skill to highlight the mastery over the craft," said Iqbal Mehboob Shah, representing Artisane- Art and Cultural Centre, an offshoot of the 'House of Ali Shah' established in 1860—(KNO)

Terrorist aide

PIT-NDPS Act in Sopore. The booked persons have been detained and subsequently lodged in Central Jail Kot-Balwal, Jammu," a police spokesman said in a statement issued.

Meanwhile, Police in Handwara booked notorious drug peddler Aijaz Ahmad Bhat @Tanveer son of Mohd Ramzan Bhat resident of Kralgund Qaziabad under PIT NDPS Act after obtaining a formal detention order from the competent authority. The booked drug peddler has been detained and subsequently lodged in jail, police said.

Pertinently, many cases are registered against the said drug peddlers and they were involved in promoting drug abuse trade by supplying drugs to the local youth. Despite their involvement in many FIRs, they did not mend his activities, police said—(KNO)

Haryana's farmers suffered Congress-led betrayal, says PM Modi

IAN S

BHIWANI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday slammed the Congress model of governance, saying that the party has converted Haryana into "a machine of loot" by deceiving the state's farmers and youth.

"Haryana's farmers have suffered Congress-led betrayal," said PM Modi while addressing a massive rally in Bhiwani on the last day of the campaigning for the sixth phase of elections on May 25.

He also said that the "inherently unstable" opposition INDI alliance only spreads the politics of communalism, casteism, dynasty and adheres to the 'five PMs-five year' formula.

"Your vote will decide our country's future, not just the PM. INDI alliance promises five PMs in five years, showing instability," said PM Modi.

"The people of the country have already understood the intentions of the INDI alliance which explains well the alliance's condition. The INDI alliance bubble has burst in just five phases and you must have seen that after the third phase when they started raising questions on the Election Commission. All anti-India forces



are active, but Modi will not bow down to them. Modi still has a lot of work to do to repay your debt," he added.

Asserting that people now "know the true face of Congress", PM Modi accused the party of prioritising vote banks and also slammed its INDI Alliance partner TMC for granting OBC reservations to illegal immigrants from the minority community in West Bengal.

"In West Bengal, they have issued OBC certificates to Muslims overnight and that too to infiltrators. The High Court has invalidated all the OBC certificates issued to Muslims in the last 10-12 years," he said.

The Prime Minister stated that he has come to assure SC-ST-OBCs of Haryana that reservation

is their 'adhikar' (right) and Modi is its 'chowkidar' (guardian).

He also accused the Congress party of developing an anti-Shri Ram stance and opposing the Pran-Pratishtha ceremony of Lord Ram in Ayodhya.

Prime Minister Modi emphasised his government's prioritization of Haryana's irrigation potential and the MSP (minimum support price) provided for more than 14 products in the state. He also mentioned showcasing Bajra-made products from Haryana to international delegates during the G20 meeting, highlighting the efforts of Haryana's farmers.

Going down memory lane, PM Modi, recalled spending a lot of time in the state when former CM Manohar

Lal Khattar was the party's general secretary.

"I have eaten a lot of Haryanvi food. The whole world is watching the success of Haryana's ghee and butter," he said.

Calling upon all voters to wholeheartedly support the BJP in the Lok Sabha elections, PM Modi acknowledged the contributions made by Chaudhary Bansilal to the development of Mahendergarh and Bhiwani.

The Bhiwani-Mahendragarh constituency is set to witness a tough contest between BJP's sitting MP Dharambir Singh and Congress legislator from Mahendragarh, Rao Dan Singh, who belongs to the Ahir community.

Haryana will go to the polls for 10 parliamentary seats on May 25.

'DON'T TEST MY PATIENCE'

Deve Gowda issues stern warning to absconding grandson Prajwal Revanna

IAN S

BENGALURU: Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda issued a stern warning to his fugitive grandson and JD-S MP Prajwal Revanna, the prime accused in the alleged sex video scandal in Karnataka.

Taking it to social media, Deve Gowda said, "I have issued a warning to Prajwal Revanna to return immediately from wherever he is and subject himself to the legal process. He should not test my patience any further."

In the two-page letter addressed to his grandson under the title 'My warning to Prajwal Revanna', the veteran JD-S leader said: "It took me some time to recover from the shock and pain he has inflicted on me, my entire family, my colleagues, friends, and party workers."

"I have already said that he should be given the harshest punishment under the law if found guilty. At this juncture, I can do only one thing. I can issue a stern warning to Prajwal and ask him to return from wherever he is and surrender before the police. He should subject himself to the legal process.

"This is not an appeal



that I am making, it is a warning... He will have to face the anger of all his family members. The law will take care of the accusations against him, but not listening to the family will ensure his total isolation. If he has any respect left for me, he has to return immediately," Deve Gowda wrote.

"It is of utmost importance for me to earn back the people's trust. They have stood by me for over 60 years of my political life and I am deeply indebted to them. As long as I am alive, I will never let them down," he said.

"People have used the harshest words against me and my family in the

last few weeks. I am aware of it. I do not wish to stop them. I do not wish to criticise them. I will not try and argue with them that they should have waited until all the facts were found out.

"I cannot convince people that I was unaware of Prajwal's activities. I cannot convince them that I have no desire to shield him. I cannot convince them that I am not aware of his movements, and that I was not aware of his foreign trip. I believe in answering my conscience. I believe in God and I know the almighty knows the truth.

"I will not venture to comment on political conspiracies, exaggera-

tions, provocations, and falsehoods that have been maliciously spread in the recent weeks. I am sure that people who have done it will have to answer God and pay for it heavily one day. I place my trust and my burdens at the feet of the lord," Deve Gowda said.

The former Prime Minister also said that he would ensure that there is no interference in the inquiry against Prajwal Revanna by the family members.

"There is no emotion in my mind in this regard. There is only the cause of justice for those who have suffered as a result of his alleged actions and mis-

FT article just noise, says Cantor Fitzgerald

Gives Adani Enterprises' stock target price of Rs 4,338

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Calling The Financial Times (FT) article "just noise from a long time ago," US-based global brokerage Cantor Fitzgerald has given Adani Enterprises' stock a target price of Rs 4,338 apiece, as the company's shares became top gainer on Nifty on Thursday.

The Adani Enterprises' stock was the top gainer on the NSE benchmark amid a mega rally on the bourses, touching Rs 3,387 a piece, as the market shrugged off the FT report.

In a take on the FT article on the Adani Group which alleged the Group imported low-quality coal and then sold that same coal to state-owned entities, but priced it as high-grade coal, the brokerage said in its note that this specific purchase order of Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO) was a fixed-price contract, "which the company won through an open, competitive, and global bidding process".

"Adani was contractually obliged to supply coal to TANGEDCO at a pre-

terminated price. TANGEDCO did this so that it could insulate itself from the volatility of coal prices," according to the brokerage which reached out to Adani Group on the matter.

Cantor Fitzgerald further said the supplier under this tender (Adani) could supply coal that had a gross calorific value (GCV) between 5,800 and 6,700.

"If the supplier supplied coal with a lesser GCV, it would face a penalty taken out from the predetermined payment amount," the brokerage firm noted.

The quality of the coal is tested not by the supplier (Adani), but by the receiving plant (TANGEDCO).

"The payment is then based on these findings. Thus, the assertion that Adani could buy lower GCV coal and sell it as higher GCV coal appears to not be plausible given testing is done by the buyer and payment is based on testing," the note elaborated.

Ultimately, "both the upside and downside risk when it came to sourcing coal was borne by the supplier (Adani), given it was a fixed-price contract".

The FT also based its reporting on customs and

Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) reports.

"It is worth noting that, during the alleged time period (2012-2014), DRI and customs accused all coal importers of mis-declaring the quality of coal to be lower than it actually was. As a result, they wanted additional customs duties. So the fact that this report argues against what DRI/customs was saying back then also raises a red flag, in our view," the global brokerage further said.

The Indian market has appeared to shrug off the report as Adani Enterprises was the top gainer on Nifty on Thursday with a 7.84 per cent rise. Adani Ports was also among the top three gainers with a 4.73 per cent rise.

"We believe the market is inferring that this is an immaterial story, as do we," Cantor Fitzgerald said in its note.

India is one of the fastest-growing economies and is heavily investing across a range of end-markets to support continued economic growth, which, "we believe bodes well for Adani Enterprises, as it touches nearly every aspect of life in India".

Paytm launches new ad campaign to promote its core payment solutions

IAN S

NEW DELHI: One97 Communications Limited (OCL), which owns leading payments and financial services company Paytm, on Thursday launched a new ad campaign to enhance existing user engagement by showcasing the company's reliable payment products and experience.

This campaign promotes UPI money transfers, Scan and Pay, pioneering Soundbox, Paytm UPI Lite wallet, Credit Card on UPI, recharges & bill payments along with other payment instruments available on the Paytm app, reflecting key focus areas in Paytm's path to recovery.

These verticals will now form a significant part of Paytm's payment GMV, moving forward. For instance, UPI which earlier contributed to 70 per cent of Paytm's payment GMV, is now fueling 80 to 85 per cent of the GMV.

"As we prepare ourselves for strong growth in FY25, we remain committed more than ever to bring more Indians into the mainstream economy and spread payment infrastruc-

ture such as UPI, payment QR codes and Soundbox in every nook and corner of this country," a Paytm spokesperson said.

"Our ad campaign reflects our commitment: every time

recovery across its payment GMV and subscription merchants. It looks forward to showcasing improvements in key metrics starting the second quarter (Q2) of FY2025 and

industry. The company has launched a series of ad films to highlight key aspects of Paytm's core business. The first film focuses on UPI Money Transfer, demon-

strating how users can send money using UPI on the Paytm app. As a Third-Party Application Provider (TPAP) with NPCI, Paytm has partnered with Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, State Bank of India (SBI), and YES Bank to ensure seamless UPI payments.

The second film features the Scan and Pay option, allowing users to scan any QR code with the Paytm app for instant payments. The third film showcases the Made-In-India Paytm Soundbox, providing merchants with secure payment confirmations.

The fourth film highlights the Paytm UPI Lite wallet for low-value everyday payments, keeping bank statements clutter-free and allowing users to add up to Rs 4,000 daily.

The fifth film introduces the Rupy Credit Card on UPI, enabling users to link their credit cards to UPI and pay at merchant stores by scanning QR codes, eliminating the need to carry physical credit cards.

The company's emphasis on 'Jab bhi India future ka plan banaega, humein uske beech beech paayega, aage bhi Paytm apka yuhi saath nibhayega' underscores its promise to be a trusted partner for all Indians, especially during big milestones.

The ad films are set to go live across various media channels including television, digital platforms, and social media.



India plans its future, we'll be at the centre of it, and as you move forward in life, Paytm will always be by your side," it added.

Reaffirming its commitment to payments as its core business, Paytm while announcing its FY24 results, said that it has started witnessing

is invested towards gaining market share in the core payments business.

Over the past years, Paytm has brought through industry-first innovation with products like the 'Made-in-India' Paytm Soundbox and QR codes, setting the tone for the Indian digital payments

strating how users can send money using UPI on the Paytm app.

As a Third-Party Application Provider (TPAP) with NPCI, Paytm has partnered with Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, State Bank of India (SBI), and YES Bank to ensure seamless UPI payments.

Ex-Wipro CEO becomes highest-paid exec in Indian IT industry

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Former Wipro Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD) Thierry Delaporte has become the highest-paid CEO in the Indian IT industry for FY24 as he earned more than \$20 million (or over Rs 165 crore).

This is the second-consecutive year that he has become the highest-paid CEO.

Delaporte resigned from the IT software major in April and has been replaced by Srinivas Pallia.

According to Wipro's 20-F filings with the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Delaporte earned more than

\$3.9 million in salary and allowances and more than \$5 million in commission/variable income.

He also received \$7 million in additional payments and more than \$4 million in long-term compensation.

In comparison, Pallia receives an annual salary package of around Rs 50 crore, ranking second among CEOs in the Indian IT industry for FY25.

This comes when Wipro's revenue in FY24 fell (year-on-year) to Rs 89,760 crore from Rs 90,486 crore.

The company's revenue dropped 4.2 per cent to Rs 22,208.3 crore in the three months ended March 31, according to a stock exchange filing.

2 conmen held in UP for 'digital arrest' of victims

IAN S

LUCKNOW: Two men posing as officers of CBI, NIA, and Customs, who had conned a retired Public Works Department official of Rs 30.5 lakh in a case of 'digital house arrest', have been arrested by Lucknow police's Cyber unit, the police said.

"The duo, identified as Rajeev Bhasin, 38, and his aide Mohit Chopra, 36, were arrested from Agra. Police also seized multiple bank cheques, SIM cards, phones, Aadhar, PAN, and other cards," said Deputy Commissioner of Police, Central, Raveena Tyagi.

According to the police,

the men are linked to Cambodian nationals and have duped more than Rs 1.5 crore from innocent people across India, the details of which are being ascertained. "Efforts are on to reach the foreign fraudsters as well," said Brijesh Kumar Yadav, Station House Officer, Cyber Crime police station.

It was found that "transactions worth Rs 1.68 crore had taken place in the account of the fraudsters from 39 incidents in the country," which include one each from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal, six from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, two each from Haryana, Maharashtra,

Assam, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, and three each from Kerala and Karnataka," the police added.

After the February incident, the complainant Niranjana Singh, 73, an Indira Nagar resident of Lucknow, lodged an FIR at the Cyber Crime police station at Vibhuti Khand under Sections of the IT Act and IPC sections 420 (cheating) after which a manhunt was launched to nab the culprits.

Those arrested told the police that they used to open current accounts in the name of fake firms and send the account details to fraudsters sitting abroad on WhatsApp and Telegram.

Solapur dam boat tragedy: Five bodies fished out, one missing

IAN S

SOLAPUR: The NDRF has found the bodies of five persons, comprising a family of four and a boatman who perished after a motorboat flipped over in a sudden storm hit Ujani Dam, an official said here on Thursday.

According to Indapur Police Inspector Suryakant Kokane, the NDRF and police rescue teams have brought out the bodies of the Jadhav family and the boatman Anurag Avghade.

"After a massive day-long search operation, we have recovered the bodies of five victims. A teenage boy Gaurav Dongre is still missing. We have launched

a fresh effort to track him down," Kokane told IANS.

Kokane said that the ill-fated boat has been recovered as also a motorcycle, reportedly belonging to the sole survivor, Assistant Police Inspector (API) Rahul Dongre, who swam to safety late that night.

The tragedy occurred late on Tuesday (May 21 night), when a regular motorboat ferry plying in the dam backwaters between Kugaon in Solapur and Kalash in Pune flipped over in the sudden storm that lashed the region.

The Solapur Police said that the vessel with seven passengers set sail from Kugaon to Kalashi but midway the weather abrupt-

ly changed into a thunderstorm accompanied by strong winds that churned up strong waves in the lake waters which toppled the small motorboat.

The identities of the victims whose bodies were recovered are Gokul D. Jadhav, 30 years, his wife Komal 25, their kids including daughter Mahi, 03, and son Shubham, 01, plus the boatman Anurag Avghade, 35.

It was the API Dongre, who could swim to Kalashi who sounded an alarm and alerted the villagers, the Pune Police and the district administration besides other rescue authorities who rushed to the spot but could do little in the darkness with sporadic rains.

High-octane campaigning for sixth phase wraps up ahead of polling on May 25



IANAS

NEW DELHI: The high-pitched campaigning for the sixth phase of Lok Sabha elections scheduled on May 25 came to an end on Thursday, marked by fervent efforts by prominent figures across political parties to engage with the voters in 58 Parliamentary constituencies spanning eight states and Union Territories.

On the final day of campaigning, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed a rally in Bhiwani, Haryana, while Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addressed a gathering in Dwaraka, Delhi. Additionally, Union Minister Piyush Goyal conducted a roadshow in the Najafgarh area of the national capital in support of BJP candidates.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi held a rally in support of the party candidate for the North East Delhi

Parliamentary seat and later held a 'Mahila Vichar Vimarsh' in Mangolpuri.

Meanwhile, party leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra conducted a roadshow in Sirsa, Haryana.

The leaders of both the BJP and the opposition-backed INDIA bloc spared no effort in their campaigning to win over the voters. The 58 Lok Sabha constituencies that will go to the polls on Saturday include 14 seats in Uttar Pradesh, followed by Haryana (10), Bihar and West Bengal (8 each), Delhi (7), Odisha (6), Jharkhand (4), and Jammu and Kashmir (1).

A total of 889 candidates are in the fray for the crucial sixth phase of polling.

The prominent candidates representing the BJP include Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan contesting from Sambalpur, Odisha, former Haryana Chief Minister Manohar

Lal Khattar from Karnal, Manoj Tiwari from North East Delhi, and Bansuri Swaraj from New Delhi.

On the other hand, notable figures from the Congress include Kumari Selja vying for Sirsa, Haryana, Deepender Singh Hooda contesting from Rohtak, Haryana, J.P. Agarwal from Chandni Chowk, Delhi, and Kanhaiya Kumar from North East Delhi.

Also in the spotlight is senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Somnath Bharti contesting from New Delhi.

Voting for the sixth phase is set for May 25, followed by the seventh and final phase on June 1. The results are slated to be announced on June 4.

The seats that would see polling on Saturday are as follows:

Bihar: Valmiki Nagar, Pashchim Champaran, Purvi Champaran, Sheohar, Vaishali, Gopalganj,

Siwan and Maharajganj, Haryana: Ambala, Kurukshetra, Sirsa, Hisar, Karnal, Sonapat, Rohtak, Bhiwani-Mahendragarh, Gurgaon and Faridabad.

Jharkhand: Giridih, Dhanbad, Ranchi and Jharsuguda.

Odisha: Sambalpur, Keonjhar, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Puri and Bhubaneswar.

Uttar Pradesh: Sultanpur, Pratapgarh, Phulpur, Allahabad, Ambedkar Nagar, Shravasti, Domariyaganj, Basti, Sant Kabir Nagar, Lalgaon, Azamgarh, Jaunpur, Machhlishahr and Bhadohi.

West Bengal: Tamluk, Kanthi, Ghatal, Jhargram, Medinipur, Purulia, Bankura and Bishnupur.

Delhi: Chandni Chowk, North East Delhi, East Delhi, New Delhi, North West Delhi, West Delhi and South Delhi.

Jammu and Kashmir: Anantnag-Rajouri

Anantnag-Rajouri constituency gears up for LS polls on May 25 amid tight security

UMAISAR GULL GANIE

ANANTNAG: Reshaped after the delimitation exercise, the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha is all set to go for polls on May 25 with 20 candidates in the fray.

The constituency, spanning both sides of the Pir Panjal range, was initially set for election on May 07 which was postponed to May 25 due to severe weather conditions. The decision came after requests from various parties, including the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Apni Party, and Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP), citing the closure of the Mughal Road - an alternative link between Jammu and Kashmir.

Officials informed that the Anantnag-Rajouri parliamentary constituency comprises a total of 18 assembly segments, with seven in the Jammu division - four in Rajouri and three in Poonch - and eleven in the Kashmir region - seven in Anantnag district, three in Kulgam, and one in Shopian.

They said there are 183,657 voters enrolled in 5 districts: Kulgam, Anantnag, Poonch, District Shopian (36 - Zainanpora), and Rajouri of the PC, which include 933,647 male and 902,902 female voters, and 27 third-gender voters.

Around 17,967 persons with disabilities and 540 persons above the age of 100 years will cast their ballots in the PC.

"There are nearly 81,000 first-time voters who will be casting their votes for the first time since the 2019 Parliamentary elections," they added.



The Election Commission of India (ECI) has set up 2,338 polling stations across the Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary Constituency. In total, more than 9,000 polling staff members, including reserves, will be deployed on duty. There are 19 Border Polling Stations in the districts of Rajouri and Poonch.

In the Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary constituency, a total of 20 candidates are vying for the seat including former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti, former minister Mian Altaf, JKAP leader Zaffar Iqbal Manhas, DPAP leader Advocate Mohammad Saleem Parray besides independents and other contenders are also in electoral race.

Campaigning for the last phase of the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat ended on Thursday evening. Restrictions under Section 144 of the CrPC across the constituency have been imposed to ensure the orderly conduct of the electoral process, uphold democratic principles and mark the beginning of the campaign

silence period. Officials said all security arrangements are in place in the constituency, with paramilitary forces, JK Police, and Armed Police being deployed at polling stations. Patrolling by security personnel has also been intensified in vulnerable areas, they added.

Speaking to KNO, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), P K. Pole said that so far, the polls have been peaceful. "There has been no poll-related violence; however, an incident of violence in Anantnag and Shopian demanded extra scrutiny. We have ensured that no violence takes place on the poll day for which security deployment has been readied," he said.

"The situation may have been peaceful for the past few years, but that in no way means that we don't need extra precautions. Ample security has been deployed in the region as per the required demand," Pole added.

On the factors for the high turnout, the CEO said, "Though the campaign of candidates holds the utmost importance,

the election commission has also played a role in the high voter turnout in the region."

In his message to the voters of Poonch and Rajouri, he said, "People of Jammu and Kashmir have voted in high numbers so far. Areas in south Kashmir and Rajouri have a history of high voter turnout. Basic facilities including water, electricity, toilets and helpers have been arranged at polling stations. The facilities have been organised for the public. They should come and exercise their ballots on May 25."

Security remains a paramount concern due to increased terrorist activities in Rajouri-Poonch. A government employee Mohammad Razak was killed in a terrorist attack in Rajouri on April 22, and an ambush on an Indian Air Force convoy in Poonch on May 4 resulted in casualties.

In response, over 25,000 security personnel have been deployed across the constituency, with about 1,600 polling stations classified as "hyper-sensitive"—(KNO)

IndiGo profit doubles to Rs 1 895 cr in Q4 to introduce biz class

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: The country's largest airline IndiGo on Thursday reported more than doubling of its net profit to Rs 1,894.8 crore in the three months ended March 2024 and announced the introduction of business class in select routes this year.

The strong performance in the latest March quarter, which also marks six consecutive quarters of profitability, was fuelled by higher traffic, increased capacity and a favourable external environment.

For the year ended March 2024, the airline posted the highest annual net profit of Rs 8,172.5 crore on record total income of Rs 18,505.1 crore, according to a release.

After flying for nearly 18 years, the airline will introduce business class in select routes this year as it seeks to provide more options for passengers amid rising economic growth.

The airline will launch a "tailor-made business product", the details of which will be unveiled around August that will also mark the 18th anniversary of the carrier.

The latest announcement also comes less than a month after the profitable carrier said it would buy 30



wide-body aircraft.

In the first quarter of the current financial year, the airline has projected the capacity in terms of ASK to rise by 10-12 per cent compared to the year-ago period.

Available Seat Kilometre (ASK) is an indicator of capacity.

InterGlobe Aviation, the parent of IndiGo, recorded a profit after tax of Rs 1,894.8 crore for the fourth quarter of 2023-24 compared to Rs 919.2 crore in the same period a year ago, a release said.

The total income rose nearly 27 per cent to Rs 18,505.1 crore in the three months ended March 2024. It stood at Rs 14,600.1 crore in the year-ago period.

In the latest quarter under review, fuel costs increased 6.5 per cent while overall expenses climbed 22.3 per cent.

For the full year 2023-24, profit after tax touched Rs 8,172.5 crore against a loss of Rs 305.8 crore in 2022-23.

"Yield increased by 7 per cent to Rs 5.19 and load factor improved by 2.1 points to 86.3 per cent," it added.

According to the airline, it delivered another quarter of strong financial performance led by a range of initiatives and supported by the favourable external environment.

"FY24 has been a year of many remarkable achievements and milestones. For the full financial year 2024,

we reported our highest-ever total income of around Rs 712 billion, with a net profit of around Rs 82 billion and a net profit margin of 11.9 per cent. The 4th quarter financial results were positive, making it all four quarters in FY24 profitable," IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers said.

He also said the strong execution of the company's strategy has yielded consistent results.

For the March quarter, IndiGo said its passenger ticket revenues rose 25.5 per cent to Rs 15,600.9 crore, and ancillary revenues climbed 18.9 per cent to Rs 1,719.4 crore on an annual basis.

"Our current pending order book of a little short

of 1,000 aircraft to be delivered up until 2035, gives us long-term visibility well into the next decade. The airline will receive a minimum of one new plane every week.

"This speaks a lot about India, probably, being the last frontier of aviation growth of such a high magnitude and the part IndiGo is poised to play in it," Elbers said during the conference call to discuss the results.

During the conference call, IndiGo Chief Financial Officer Gaurav M Negi said the number of aircraft on the ground is in the mid-70s, and as more damp leased planes are brought in, the situation will be mitigated further.

The planes have been grounded due to Pratt & Whitney (P&W) engines.

At the end of March, the airline had a fleet of 367 planes, including 13 on damp lease.

The airline, which started flying nearly 18 years ago, has about 1,000 planes on order and those are to be delivered through 2035.

IndiGo's domestic market share rose to 60.6 per cent in April, as per the latest official data.

As of March this year, the total cash balance stood at Rs 34,737.5 crore, including Rs 20,823 crore of free cash.

Dynastic Rule Has No Room in Democracy, Says Bukhari

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Apni Party President, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, on Wednesday said that in a democratic country and democracy, there is no place for Khandani Raj (dynastic rule)."

He stated that "the leadership that ensured J&K's accession to India in 1947 was supported by the people with slogans like 'Ala karay ga, wangan karay ga, bab karay ga' (whatever good or bad would be done; only Sheikh Abdullah is entitled to do it). Therefore, J&K was destined to be with India forever, and this status can't be changed."

Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari made these remarks during his speeches at two public rallies in south Kashmir's Shopian and Kulgam districts. He first addressed a rally at Hillow Imam Sahib in Shopian, followed by another at Damhal Hanji Pora in Kulgam. These areas are scheduled for polling in the Lok Sabha elections for the Rajouri-Anantnag constituency on May 25.

In his speech, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari urged people not to fall prey to the deceptive slo-

gans of the traditional parties. He said, "You should no longer trust these traditional parties and their leaders. In every election season, they come seeking your votes, promising the moon and the stars. They have been deceiving you with misleading



narratives, fake promises, and emotional slogans for years and decades. Now, once again, they are coming to you with new false promises and slogans. You must tell them, 'Enough is enough.' Don't fall prey to their political gimmickry. Ask them why they don't talk now about their earlier slogans like 'Raishumari', 'Autonomy', and 'Self-rule' if they truly believe in these ideals. They never meant what they said. They only kept you busy with these slogans to attain power for themselves and establish their dynastic rule here."

Taking a dig at the PDP leader for her assertion that people will fight for another hundred years, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari remarked, "Fight for what? The people of J&K are not going to fight against their country. Yes, we should fight, but not against our country; instead, we must fight against issues like poverty, and unemployment."

"The PDP leader held the post of Chief Minister and State Home Minister in 2017 when people like Engineer Rashid, Yasin Malik, Shabir Shah, and others were arrested and sent to jail. The leaders of NC and PDP, who remained at the helm for years and decades, are responsible for landing thousands of our youth either in jails or in graveyards," he added.

Reiterating his conviction regarding J&K's relationship with the rest of the country, he said, "Jammu and Kashmir has been destined to be an integral part of the country, and it will always remain so. Although New Delhi has caused issues and problems for the people in this region, I am sure the solutions to these issues and problems will also come from New Delhi, not from elsewhere."

Doodpathri 'Illegal' Tea Vendors Asked to Vacate in 10 Days or Face Action

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The authorities have asked the owners of "illegal" tea vendors in Doodpathri tourist resort in central Kashmir's Budgam district to vacate the space they have occupied within 10 days or face action.

The order has been issued by Doodpathri Development Authority, asking roadside tea vendors to vacated spaces they have occupied "illegally".

Chief Executive Officer DDA, Nargis Suraya said



that the department has received multiple complaints that the tea stall owners have been cutting tree branches, thereby harming the picturesque meadows.

She also said the unauthorised vendors are located under high-tension transmis-

sion lines, posing a risk to their lives and visitors as well.

The CEO said a team of Forest Protection Force, DDA, PDD and police recently visited the area and warned the vendors to vacate the space within 10 days or face action.(KNO)

Schools Asked To Avoid Afternoon Assemblies Amid Heat Wave

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir School Education Department has advised educational institutes to avoid assemblies in the afternoon to prevent heat related illnesses.

The department in a guideline to prevent heat-related illness (HRI) asked the schools to avoid assembling in the afternoon.

"Ensure adequate availability of drinking water and water breaks. Also sensitise students to cover their heads," reads the guideline.

The department also directed the concerned to report any cases related to HRI, stating that education is not possible without care.(KNO)

Creative activities organised at Govt High School Kahara

GMK NEWS NETWORK

DODA: Gujarat based trust Vishwagram volunteers reached Government High School Kahara and organised creative activities, the other day.

The Trust Volunteers were welcomed by Headmaster Safder Ali and other Staff members. The team was accompanied by ZICC, Nighat Naz.

The members of Vishwagram Trust made the day fruitful and meaningful by engaging students in different activities, especially in the skill of Art and Craft.



School students participated with a warm heart and got the chance to learn different skills, touching the mandate of New Education Policy, 2020.

The workshop also benefited Teaching staff, acquainting them with how to warm up and engage class for result ori-

ented learning.

At the end, Headmaster of the Institution thanked the team members of Vishwagram Trust, District Development Commissioner Harvinder Singh and Chief Education Officer Parkash Lal Thapa for organising such a wonderful workshop.