

Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication

Office of LG J&K @OfficeOfLGJandK

Humble tributes to former Union Minister Shri Arun Jaitley Ji on his Punyatithi. An excellent statesman, distinguished scholar & reformist, he will always be remembered for his public welfare policies and immense contribution to nation-building.

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Terrorist Killed, Soldier Injured In Sopore Shootout



WARIS FAYAZ

SOPORE: A terrorist was killed, and an army man sustained injuries during a shootout after security forces repelled a terrorist attack in the Rafiabad area of Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Saturday.

An official said that terrorists attacked security forces during a naka (checkpoint) checking at the Watergam area of Rafiabad in Sopore Police district, which led to retaliatory fire from the security personnel.

"During a joint naka checking, terrorists fired upon forces, which was retaliated. In the ensuing exchange of fire, one terrorist was killed," the official said, adding that the identification and organization of the slain terrorist are being ascertained.

During the firefight, an army man also received injuries and was immediately evacuated to the hospital for treatment, the official said,

adding that a pistol, along with ammunition and grenades, was recovered from the possession of the killed terrorist.

Following the shootout, joint teams comprising the Army, CRPF and J&K Police laid a siege to the specific area along with the peripheral areas.

"One terrorist eliminated and war-like stores recovered. The operation is continuing," Chinar Corps—Indian Army said in a post on X.

Earlier, officials said that following specific intelligence about the area, a joint team of the Indian Army and J&K Police was fired upon by terrorists in the Watergam area of Sopore. Vigilant • P-06

DURING A joint naka checking, terrorists fired upon forces, which was retaliated.

Article 370 Will Never Be Restored, Asserts Amit Shah

AGENCIES

RAIPUR: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday asserted that Article 370 of the Constitution, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, will never be restored.

Shah's comments came as Jammu and Kashmir's two principal regional parties -- the National Conference and the PDP -- promised in their election manifestoes for upcoming assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir that they would work to restore the controversial provision, scrapped on August 5, 2019.

"Article 370 has no place in Jammu and Kashmir now or ever. It will never be restored," Shah said at a press conference in the Chhattisgarh capital when asked about it.

The home minister was addressing a press conference here after attending a meeting of top civil and security officials of the Naxal-hit states.

Restoration of Article 370 and Jammu and Kash-



mir's statehood as well as implementation of the autonomy resolution passed by the erstwhile assembly in 2000 are among the National Conference's 12 guarantees announced in its manifesto for the upcoming polls.

"We strive to restore (Articles) 370-35A, and statehood as prior to August 5, 2019," the NC poll document said.

In June 2000, the National Conference government under Farooq Abdullah passed a resolution in the

J-K Assembly seeking to restore the pre-1953 constitutional position in the state.

It was, however, rejected by the Union Cabinet headed by then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Article 370 was abrogated by the Narendra Modi government on August 5, 2019, and the erstwhile state was bifurcated into two UTs - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

The PDP on Saturday released its manifesto for the Assembly • P-06

Cong, Thackeray Must Clarify NC's Promise On Art-370: BJP



IANIS

MUMBAI: Mumbai BJP chief Ashish Shelar has asked Shiv Sena UBT and Congress whether they agree to the National Conference's (NC) promise in its poll manifesto to again create a separate flag for Kashmir and reinstate Article 370.

"Assuring a separate flag for Kashmir when the entire country is united under the Tricolor gang at work again," he claimed.

He said that 'Ek Desh Mein Do Vidhan, Do Nishan, • P-06

ARTICLE 370 HAS NO PLACE IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR NOW OR EVER. IT WILL never be restored," Shah said at a press conference in the Chhattisgarh capital when asked about it.

JK elections EC Sets Up 24 Polling Stations For Kashmiri Migrants



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Election Commission (EC) has set up 24 special polling stations in Jammu, Udhampur and New Delhi to facilitate voting by Kashmiri migrants in the upcoming Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections, a senior official said.

People who were displaced from the Kashmir Valley and are residing in Jammu and Udhampur will not have to fill Form-M, as was done in the Lok Sabha elections, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Jammu and Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole said in a statement issued on Friday.

"Kashmiri migrant voters residing in various relief camps in Jammu, Udhampur, and Delhi, who have opted to cast their votes in person through Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) in the election, can do so at 24 polling stations -- 19 in Jammu, 1 in Udhampur and 4 in Delhi," he said.

"Continuing • P-06

Apni Party To Contest From 60 Seats In J&K: Bukhari



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Apni Party president Syed Altaf Bukhari Saturday said that his party will field candidates from 60 seats including 40 in Kashmir and 20 in Jammu for the upcoming assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

Talking to the media persons while visiting Chanapo-

ra, Bukhari said that there won't be any alliance with anyone and they have borne the brunt in the Lok Sabha elections.

"We will contest the assembly polls on our own and we have decided not to go for any alliance this time," Bukhari said, adding that AP will field 40 candidates from Kashmir and 20 • P-06

Assembly Elections

Efforts On Way To Give Voters Better Experience On Poll Day: CEO

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The J&K Election Department conducted a meeting of the Director level officers under the chairmanship of Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) J&K, Pandurang K Pole on Saturday at Nirvachan Bhawan, Rail Head Complex, Jammu.

The CEO reviewed the overall preparations of the Polling Stations to ensure the smooth and hassle-free conduct of the Assembly Election 2024 which are going to be held in 3 phases across Jammu and Kashmir beginning 18 September 2024.

The officers from School



Education Department, Higher Education Department, Public Works Department, Jal Shakti Department, Social Welfare Department, Forest Depart-

ment, Agriculture Department, JPDL and KPDCI and others were present in the crucial meeting which was held to discuss the Assured Minimum • P-06

NC, Cong 'Working Against' Minorities In J&K: BJP

IANIS

JAMMU: Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and former MLA Devender Rana on Saturday criticised National Conference (NC) for its alleged "anti-reservation" and "anti-secular" election manifesto and the Congress for supporting NC's alleged "anti-reservation" agenda.

"The manifesto released by the NC is meant to strengthen anti-national powers. We will never allow reservations to SCs, STs, Paharis and OBCs to be scrapped as the NC has said in its manifesto. Our SC, ST, Paharis and OBC brothers have been given both political reservation and reservation in jobs. NC manifesto says they will scrap these

reservations," said Devender Rana while addressing a media conference at the BJP headquarters in Jammu.

He said that Congress has always "compromised" national interest for power in

CONGRESS has always played with the destiny of the people of J&K in their greed for power.

J&K and by aligning with the NC again, they are repeating the same mistakes done in the past.

"Congress has always played with the destiny of the people of J&K in their greed for power. • P-06

Escalating Gold Price Hits Marriages In Kashmir

MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: The escalating gold prices have started hitting marriages in Kashmir with the yellow metal gradually becoming unaffordable to people.

In August, the marriage season in Kashmir takes off and lasts till November. As such the sales of gold and silver usually pick up during this season given its significant cultural role in Kashmiri society.

Gold prices are currently touching skies in India, which is affecting the marriage season in the valley.

The cost of 24 carat gold is Rs.7288.8 per gram while the price of 22 carat gold is Rs.6676.6 per gram.

Dealers said the demand for the gold has gone down in Kashmir by more than 70 percent due to its escalating prices.

"We don't get many customers now. Gold prices

have hiked across India and it has directly impacted our sales during current time when the demand for the gold tends to be high in the valley," Bashir Ahmad Rather, President of the All Kashmir Valley Gold Dealers and Workers Union.

Jewellers said mostly middle-class families struggle to keep up with the soaring prices.

"Gold has always been an essential part of Kashmiri weddings, but the current prices are pushing people to rethink how much they can afford," Rather said.

Sameer Ahmad, another jeweller said with prices now reaching record highs, families are opting for lighter designs, or even turning to alternative materials.

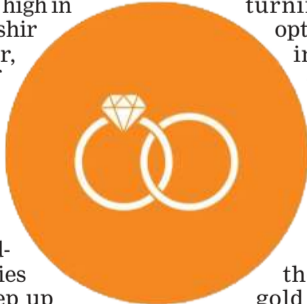
"Often we hear from fam-

ilies to make lighter designs which become affordable for them. We have even heard that people are now turning to other options like gifting cash and other kitchen appliances and clothes instead of gold to the brides," he said.

Ahmad said the escalating gold prices will result in delaying weddings or reducing the scale of celebrations in Kashmir.

Gold, traditionally, is an essential part of Kashmiri weddings. Families of bride and groom keep on exchanging gold during various functions till marriage.

Prospective buyers have voiced concerns about the sharp rise in gold prices, noting that the cost has nearly doubled • P-06



Cabinet Approves Unified Pension Scheme: PM



IANIS

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday approved the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) for government employees, which will provide an assured minimum pension and a family pension.

Around 23 lakh Central government employees will benefit from the Unified Pension Scheme. These employees will now have the option to choose between the New Pension Scheme (NPS) and the Unified Pension Scheme.

The state governments will also be given the option to opt for the Unified Pension Scheme. If the state governments opt for UPS, the number of beneficiaries will be around 90 lakh.

According to the government, the expenditure for arrears will be Rs 800 crore. The annual cost increase will be • P-06

WE DON'T GET MANY CUSTOMERS NOW. GOLD PRICES have hiked across India and it has directly impacted our sales during current time when the demand for the gold tends to be high in the valley,"

INOX SRINAGAR

NOW SHOWING

SUNDAY 25 AUGUST

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|---|--|---|
| <p>LAILA MAJNU (RE-RELEASE) (HINDI) (U/A) 02:15PM</p> | <p>(ENG WITH ENG SUBTITLE) (A) 07:30PM HINDI 02:00PM</p> | <p>(HINDI ATMOS) 12:00PM, 03:00PM, 06:00PM HINDI 11:00AM, 04:30PM (U/A)</p> |
| <p>KHELE (HINDI) (U/A) 07:05PM</p> | <p>VEDAA (HINDI) (U/A) 11:15AM</p> | <p>(ENG WITH ENG SUBTITLE) (U) 05:05PM</p> |

TICKETS AT: www.bookmyshow.com | www.inoxmovies.com
Paytm, Inox App or Directly from the booking counter at the cinema.

J&K Judicial Academy hosts sensitisation program on POCSO, POSH Acts

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Under the leadership of Justice Tashi Rabstan, Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, and with guidance from the Chairperson and Members of the Governing Committee for the J&K Judicial Academy, a two-day sensitization program was organized by the J&K Judicial Academy.

The program, titled "POCSO Act and POSH Act with Special Reference to SAMVAD's Training Manual and Combating Gender Stereotypes," was held at the J&K Police Auditorium in Gulshar Ground, Jammu.

It aimed to educate Judicial Officers, Special Public Prosecutors, Medical Officers, officers from the Forensic Science Laboratory, police officers, members of Sexual Harassment Probe Committees, and members of Gender Sensitization Internal Committees from all districts of Jammu province.

The training programme was inaugurated by Justice Sindhu Sharma, Chairperson, Sexual Harassment Probe Committee in the presence of Justice Rajesh Oswal, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Justice Rahul Bharti, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Member of the Governing Committee for J&K Judicial Academy and Anand Jain, ADGP, Jammu. Shiv Kumar DIG

Jammu and Joginder Singh SSP Jammu also attended the inaugural session.

Delivering her inaugural address, Justice Sindhu Sharma, emphasized that there was a dire need of organizing such sensitization programmes to raise the awareness level of all the stakeholders about the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized sections of society and sensitivities involved while dealing with the victims of POCSO and POSH Act.

She highlighted that a large number of such offences are neither specifically provided for nor are they adequately penalised.

The interests of the child, both as a victim as well as a witness, need to be protected.

Justice Sindhu Sharma added that it is felt that offences against children need to be defined explicitly and countered through commensurate penalties as an effective deterrence.

She iterated that for the first time, a special law has been passed to address the issue of sexual offences against children.

India is home to the largest percentage of children in the world, out of which, about 42% are children below 18.

One of the biggest evils the country is battling is Child sexual abuse. In order to address the problem of CSA



through less ambiguous and more stringent legal provisions, the POCSO Act was passed in June, 2012 which came into force on 14th November, 2012.

Justice Sindhu Sharma stressed upon the need of better implementation of the provisions of POSCO Act and POSH Act and added that Combating Gender Stereotypes; A Handbook released by the Supreme Court of India is a welcome gesture by the Supreme Court. Justice Sharma deliberated that Gender stereotypes perpetuate violence and discrimination, undermining the effectiveness of legal protections.

She emphasised on some commonly used phrases which are now prohibited and must not be used by anybody.

The handbook provides practical tools and strategies for educators, employers, and policymakers to address and dismantle these stereotypes, promoting a more equitable and just society.

Justice Rahul Bharti in his special remarks highlighted that our society has been compelled to make laws for protecting the children.

Justice Bharti gave various real-life illustrations and highlighted that incidents of

sexual abuse against children do occur at schools, religious places, parks, hostels, etc and the security of children is not guaranteed anywhere. With such emerging dangers, it was significant to introduce a special legislation which could provide a reliable system for mitigating the number of such offences and punishing the perpetrators.

Justice Bharti said that POCSO Act has been instrumental in providing a robust justice mechanism for the victims of sexual abuse and has highlighted the significance of child rights and safety. His

Lordship remarked that we need to be sensitive without actually told to be sensitized.

Justice Bharti appreciated the participation of Judges, Police, Prosecutors, Medical Officers, etc. in the Two Days sensitization Programme who constituted the workforce at the ground level.

Anand Jain, ADGP, Jammu while delivering his keynote address urged that necessity of having the special legislation like POCSO Act to be underscored by alarming statistics.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), over 16,000 cases of child sexual

abuse were reported in 2022 alone.

He said that POCSO Act is instrumental in addressing this crisis, providing a structured approach for justice and victim protection. He remarked that the effectiveness of the act continues to depend on robust implementation and adequate rehabilitation facilities.

He added that amount of sensitization and the degree of streamlining is still the need of hour. Yash Paul Bournay, Director, J&K Judicial Academy welcomed the dignitaries, Resource Persons and participants delivered the introductory remarks.

He said that in India, crimes against children have been on the rise since the past decade or more despite all laws. As against the increasing incidents of such diabolic crimes, there has been a corresponding decrease in the conviction rate in such gruesome offences.

There is an increasing fear of re-victimisation and of cases being unheard. He deliberated that the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 makes provisions for avoiding the re-victimisation of the child at the hands of the legal system which provides for Special Courts to conduct the trial in-camera and without revealing the identity of the child, in a manner that is as child-friendly as possible.

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

ED imparts training to 800 officers on Election Expenditure Monitoring

CEO exhorts upon officers to ensure purity, transparency in Election



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: In order to conduct a free and fair J&K Assembly Election 2024, the J&K Election Department conducted a one-day Online Training Program on Election Expenditure Monitoring for nearly 800 officers on Saturday at Nirvachan Bhawan, Rail Head Complex, Jammu.

The training program was inaugurated by Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) J&K, Pandurang K Pole in which District Nodal Officers and Assembly Constituency Nodal Officers of all the 22 enforcement agencies along with incharge officers of flying squads, static surveillance teams, video viewing teams and

video surveillance teams participated.

Speaking on the occasion, the CEO exhorted upon the trainee officers to work with zeal and dedication to ensure the purity and transparency of the J&K Assembly Election process.

CEO also asked the officers to work in an exemplary way so that all the stakeholders and general public can be assured of free and fair conduct of Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory.

During the training program, the officers from Expenditure Division of Election Commission of India (ECI) imparted an online session on Elec-

tion Seizure Management System.

The trainee officers were given online sessions by the Special Secretary in the Office of Chief Electoral Officer, J&K and national level master trainers from India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIDEM) and Election Commission of India.

Moreover, a special session on the use of various IT Apps used during the election period was also conducted by the IT expert during the training program.

Besides, the various resource persons also clarified on the spot queries raised by the trainee officers.

DEA Srinagar organises voter awareness programme at SKICC

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Ahead of General Elections to Legislative Assembly-2024. The District Election Authority Srinagar Saturday organised a mega voter awareness programme at SKICC.

The awareness programme was held on the directions of District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme.

The event was aimed at educating and sensitizing the citizens, especially the students, youth about the importance of voting and ensuring their active participation in the upcoming elections.

In the presence of Nodal Officer SVEEP, the event featured a diverse array of activities including Ladishah play, election songs, display of banners, etc. aimed at empowering voters with comprehensive knowledge regarding their rights and responsibilities within the electoral process.

Furthermore, the event was enriched by captivating presentations and melodious songs per-



formed by students of various school, injecting a creative flair while effectively reinforcing the ethos of civic duty and the significance of voter turnout.

Speaking about the event, The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat who is also the District Election Officer said that as part of SVEEP activities, such initiatives serve as vital pillars in nurturing an informed and engaged citizenry,

essential for the vitality of democracy.

He added that voter awareness campaign is an important element of elections, serving as a cornerstone in fortifying democratic processes.

The DEO urged the people, especially youth, to propagate the message of electoral participation to their families, relatives, and communities, emphasizing the significance of their role in nation-building through elections.

DEO B'la leads SVEEP activities at GHS Deewan Bagh



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: In an effort to enhance voter engagement and promote environmentally conscious practices, various activities were conducted as part of the SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) initiative Saturday at Government High School (GHS) Deewan Bagh, Baramulla.

The District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, led the initiative by actively participating in various activities alongside other officers and new voters.

The event was marked by a series of activities, including a plantation drive and various sports events, all aimed at encouraging voter awareness and participation in the upcoming assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

The plantation drive, a key highlight of the event, was part of the 'Green Election' initiative, reflecting a commitment to dem-

ocratic participation and also to environmental care, with the DEO along with other participants planting numerous saplings in and around the school premises.

Speaking at the event, Minga Sherpa emphasized the importance of integrating sustainable practices with electoral activities, stating that the Green Election initiative is a testament to our commitment to both democracy and the environment.

In addition to the plantation drive, the initiative included a range of sports events that saw enthusiastic participation from the first-time voters, reinforcing the message of active participation in democratic exercise.

Minga Sherpa further added that the participation of first-time voters is crucial for the future of our democracy and urged the youth of the district to wholeheartedly participate and have their voices heard in the upcoming elections.

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

First Randomisation of EVMs held in Bandipora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: As part of ongoing preparations for General Election to Legislative Assembly (GELA) 2024, the first randomization of EVMs was Saturday held at mini Secretariat Bandipora.

The Randomisation held under the supervision of District Election Officer (DEO) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri was attended by Dy. DEO Mohammad Rafeeq Bhat, RO 15- Bandipora Shabir Ahmad Wani, RO 16-Gurez Mukhtar Ahmad, Nodal Officer EVM Irfan Bahadur, Nodal Officer MCMC Aadil Manzoor Wani, Representatives of political Parties including BJP, INC, NC, AIP, NYP and other concerned.

On the occasion, the DEO



briefed the participants regarding the process of randomization, ensuring the fairness and integrity of the electoral process.

He emphasized the importance of transparency and adherence to the Election Commission of

India's guidelines during the process.

The DEO said that, randomization of EVMs is a step of transparency and is an essential part of election preparations, helping to allocate EVMs to different assembly constituencies

and Polling stations thereby upholding the principles of neutrality and fairness.

The randomization was carried out using dedicated software designed for this purpose to allocate Ballot Units, Control Units, and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) units for three assembly segments including 14-Sonawari, 15-Bandipora and 16-Gurez.

The list of EVMs post randomisation was handed over to all political parties present in the randomization process. On the occasion, it was revealed that subsequent randomization phases will determine the specific allocation of EVMs to polling stations.

The whole process was video recorded as per the guidelines of ECI.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES J&K

COOPERATIVE COMPLEX, RAJANDER NAGAR PHASE 1ST BANATALAB JAMMU
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PH. JAMMU 0191-2597659, 2597859, SRINAGAR 0194 2190348, EMAIL ID: RCSJK-2022@JK.GOV.IN

Mr. Faizan Nabi (MTS).
S/o Gh. Nabi Ganaie & Late Nighat,
R/o Tahab Shadipora,
Tehsil & District, Pulwama. Pin Code: 192301.
No:-RCS/Adm/E-7462770/1063-69
Subject: - Unauthorized absence from duty.

Dated:-13-08-2024

(FINAL SHOW CAUSE NOTICE)

Whereas, vide Govt. Order No. 836-JK(GAD) of 2024 dated 14.03.2024, you were appointed as Class-IV/MTS, in the Cooperative Department in District Cadre Pulwama on compassionate grounds under SRO-43 of 1994 by the General Administration Department; and
Whereas, you Joined in this office on 20.03.2024 (FN) and subsequently you were posted in the office of Deputy Registrar Cooperative Societies, Pulwama for further duty vide this office Order No: 56-(JK) RCS-ADM of 2024 dated 03.04.2024; and
Whereas, Deputy Registrar Cooperative Societies, Pulwama vide letter No. Adm/DRP/38-39 dated 19.04.2024 has intimated through Additional Registrar Cooperative Societies, Kashmir vide letter No. Addl/RCS/Adm/74-75 dated 23.04.2024 that you have not joined in the said establishment and you are found continuously absconding from your legitimate duties upto till date; and
Whereas, vide this office No.RCS/Adm/E-7462770/592-98 dated 12.06.2024 followed by No.RCS/Adm/E-7462770/803-09 dated 22.07.2024 show cause notices was served to you with the direction to explain your position with respect to your un-authorized absence from your duties, but nothing has been heard from your side till date; and
Whereas, un-authorized absence from duties attracts action as warranted in terms of article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume-I) of 1956 which reads as under: - 'Absence without leave or after the end of leave involves loss of appointment'.
Now therefore, You are hereby given final opportunity to resume your legitimate duties with proper justification for your un-authorized absence within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which your services will be terminated under rules without giving any further notice.

By Order

DIPK-5171-24
DT: 24/08/2024

Assistant - Registrar (Hqr),
Cooperative Societies, J&K

Justice Tashi inaugurated Legal Literacy Club in Udhampur

GMK NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR: In order to give thrust and significance to the legal education and increase awareness about the legal services activities in district Udhampur, Justice Tashi Rabstan, Chief Justice (A), High Court of J&K and Ladakh, and Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority Saturday inaugurated a Legal Literacy Club in one of the oldest schools established in the year 1923 in a far flung area of the District Udhampur namely Govt. Hr. Secondary School, Sudhmahadev, located about 60 kms away from the district headquarter.

On his arrival, Justice Tashi accompanied by M. K. Sharma, Principal Secretary and Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority was accorded warm reception by Haq Nawaz Zargar, PDJ (Chairman DLSA), Udhampur, Amod Ashok Nagpure, SSP, Udhampur, Ajay Kumar Sharma, Secretary, DLSA Udhampur, Vishal Bharti, District Mobile Magistrate, Udhampur, Prem Singh, Addl. Deputy Commissioner, Som Raj, Principal, Govt. Hr. Secondary School, Sudhmahadev, Udhampur, Gurudev Kumar, SDM, Udhampur and other teaching and administrative staff and students of the school. A Ceremonial Guard of Honour was also accorded to the Chief Justice.

After inaugurating the Legal Literacy Club, Justice Tashi while interacting with Menakshi Sharma, Teacher incharge and students who became members of the Club (comprising 32 members from class 9th to 11th) impressed upon them to become ambassadors of Legal Services Institutions in spreading the legal awareness not only among their peer groups but also among the common



masses so that the motto of Legal Services Authority "Access to Justice for All" reaches every legal aid seeker.

The inauguration of Legal Literacy Club was followed by an impactful awareness program where a group of students from Govt. Higher Secondary School Sudhmahadev performed a Saraswati Vandana, setting a reverent tone for the event.

In his inaugural address, Justice Tashi Rabstan expressed his admiration for the school's educational legacy, spanning over a century, and lauded the Principal and staff for their dedication in preserving this heritage while embracing modern educational advancements. He underscored the indispensable role of women in the nation's progress, noting with pride the exceptional capa-

bilities of the girl students at the school.

Justice Tashi remarked that the potential displayed by the students of the School in general and female students in particular is at par with, if not surpassing, the students from elite institutions elsewhere in the country, reflecting the transformative power of inclusive and quality education. He also highlighted that empowering young women with legal knowledge is a key driver of social change, as they are likely to influence their families and communities positively.

Justice Tashi further emphasized the importance of Legal Literacy Clubs in empowering students with knowledge about their legal rights and responsibilities. He highlighted that these clubs play a pivotal role in fostering a culture of

legal awareness among the younger generation, which is crucial for the development of a just and fair society. "Legal literacy is the foundation of a well-informed citizenry and it is essential for the protection of rights and the promotion of justice," he remarked.

In his welcome address, Som Raj, Principal extended heartfelt thanks to the esteemed dignitaries and emphasized the pressing need for legal literacy in the region, particularly in rural areas where access to legal resources is often limited. He stressed that the establishment of Legal Literacy Club is a significant milestone in the school's efforts to integrate legal education into the broader educational curriculum, ensuring that students are not only academically

proficient but also legally informed.

While providing a comprehensive overview of the programme, Haq Nawaz Zargar, PDJ (Chairman, DLSA), Udhampur, articulated the core objectives of the Legal Literacy Club, which include promoting a deeper understanding of legal rights and responsibilities among students, encouraging active participation in legal matters, and creating a ripple effect of legal awareness within the community.

Adding to the depth of the programme, Adv. Balwan Singh, Panel Lawyer, DLSA Udhampur delivered an insightful presentation that underscored the tangible benefits of Legal Literacy Clubs. His presentation illustrated how these clubs can serve as catalysts for social change by empowering students to become proactive in addressing legal issues within their communities. He cited examples of successful initiatives where Legal Literacy Clubs have played a pivotal role in resolving local disputes and educating the public about critical legal matters. Additionally, a group of students delivered an emotional musical performance that poignantly addressed the grave issue of the dowry system. The performance, filled with emotional depth, conveyed powerful messages about the devastating impact of this social evil and the urgent need for its eradication. This segment of the program reinforced the event's overarching theme: the crucial role of legal awareness in combating societal injustices and promoting a more equitable future.

Following the conclusion of the awareness program, a plantation drive was also conducted, during which the dignitaries planted different varieties of trees within the school premises.

Cong Leader, Retired SSP, Several Others Join BJP In Jammu



AGENCIES

JAMMU- A Congress leader and a former police officer on Saturday joined the BJP along with dozens of their supporters here, vowing to work for the party's success in the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

J&K BJP president Ravinder Raina welcomed the new entrants at two separate functions in the party headquarters. He described the pre-poll alliance of the Congress and National Conference (NC) as an outcome of the

"growing popularity" of the BJP.

At the first function, former SSP Mohan Lal joined the BJP, a day after his application for voluntary retirement from service was accepted.

"Today, I am joining the world's largest political party which is nationalistic by its ideology and working for nation-building. I am influenced by the central and J&K party leadership and workers, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah," Lal, who is likely to be given a party ticket from

the Akhnour Assembly constituency, said.

The former SSP said he will work to ensure the party achieves its target of 50-plus seats in the elections.

Welcoming Lal in the party fold, Raina said the continuous joining of prominent personalities like former minister Choudhary Zulfikar Ali and former MLC Murtaza Khan in the BJP has unnerved the Congress and the NC, forcing the two parties to join hands in the run-up to the Assembly polls.

Apni Party To Contest From 60 Seats In J&K: Altaf Bukhari

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR- Apni Party president Syed Altaf Bukhari Saturday said that his party will field candidates from 60 seats including 40 in Kashmir and 20 in Jammu for the upcoming assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

Talking to the media persons while visiting Chananpora, Bukhari, as per the

news agency KNO said that there won't be any alliance with anyone and they have bore the brunt in the Lok Sabha elections.

"We will contest the assembly polls on our own and we have decided not to go for any alliance this time," Bukhari said, adding that AP will field 40 candidates from Kashmir and 20 from Jammu division.

He further said that PDP and BJP are in the secret alliance with NC and Congress, adding that some parties are openly forging an alliance while some are behind the curtains.

Assembly elections will be held in Jammu and Kashmir in three phases - September 18 and 25, and October 1, while results will be declared on October 4.

Nothing new about Monkey Pox, people shouldn't panic: AIIMS professor

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Prof. Sanjay Rai from the Department of Community Medicine at AIIMS New Delhi has assured the public that there is no need to panic over monkeypox or M-pox, stressing that the virus is not new and does not pose the same level of risk as COVID-19.

Speaking at the "Kashmir Science Vision-2024" conference, held at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST) in collaboration with Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Prof. Rai sought to calm rising concerns about the virus.

"The monkeypox virus has been known to us for over 50 years," Prof. Rai explained. "It was first discovered in 1970 in a young boy, and we have since



developed a solid understanding of its transmission and effects. Unlike COVID-19, monkeypox is not highly contagious, and current evidence shows there is no need for alarm," he said, as reported by KNS.

Prof. Rai further emphasized that monkeypox is unlikely to escalate into a pandemic, stating, "In all probability, concerns about this virus will fade

within a month. There is no reason for panic."

The conference brought together health and science experts to discuss pressing issues, and Prof. Rai's comments were a welcome reassurance amid growing public anxiety regarding the recent spike in monkeypox cases.

His expert insight reinforced that the virus remains well-contained and manageable. (KNS)

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

DEO Anantnag reviews preparedness for Assembly Elections

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: District Election Officer (DEO) Anantnag, SF Hamid Saturday chaired a meeting at the Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex, here to review the preparedness for Assembly Elections in the District.

At the outset, the DEO held a detailed discussion with the Nodal Officers to assess the important aspects of the Election process mainly aimed at ensuring free, fair, smooth and transparent Elections in all seven Assembly Constituencies of Anantnag District.

The DEO took a first-hand appraisal of the preparedness regarding various crucial aspects and activities for Assembly Elections including assessment of logistical requirements, manpower management plan, trans-



portation of poll staff, Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), training management, expenditure monitoring, SVEEP activities, Flying Squad Teams, Static Surveillance Teams, Media Certification and Monitoring Committees, Model Code of

Conduct adherence, functioning of Control Room, Voter registration, status of polling station were also discussed, besides the measures out in place by police to ensure a clean and incident free election.

He directed the Nodal

Officers to take all required measures to ensure that every necessary facility is made available at polling locations/ stations, distribution/ collections centres. He also stressed them to gear up the all available men and machinery on ground to ensure an effective and meticulous election management plan.

The DEO directed to undertake a visit to Polling Stations and Distribution, Collection Centres to ensure all requisite arrangements are put in place in adherence to the guidelines of ECI.

The meeting was attended by the Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Deputy District Election Officer (Dy-DEO), Election Nodal officers and other concerned officials.

PDP Leader Syed Bari Quits, Likely To Contest Polls As Independent



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR- A senior PDP leader and DDC chairperson Pulwama, Syed Bari Andrabi Saturday resigned from the party and is likely to contest elections as independent candidate.

Andrabi said that he is resigning as party is giving mandate to family members from safer seats.

He said that quit job in 2014 to work for the welfare of the people and will continue to do so and that most of the people who are currently contesting elections with different parties or independent are from PDP.

He said that he will not further divide people but will work on consolidation so that people won't get divided further.

On being asked whether he will contest elections or not, he said that he will decide about the same in next two days after taking workers into confidence.

Earlier, PDP leaders Aijaz Ahmad Mir, Raja Waheed, Dr Harbaksh Singh, and Ab Qayoom Mir resigned from the party.

Three-day Kailash Kund yatra to begin in Udhampur-Doda hills on Aug 30

AGENCIES

JAMMU: The three-day annual Kailash Kund Yatra is set to commence on August 30 in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district amid tight security arrangements, officials here said on Saturday.

The yatra will begin amid threat perception following multiple terror incidents in the Udhampur-Doda mountainous belt in past over the past two months, promoting authorities to increase security in the area. "The yatra to the high-alti-



tude Lake shrine of Kailash Kund will begin from Udhampur's Dudu area on August 30," an official said.

The three-day holy pilgrimage dedicated to the deity of Baderwah town, Vasuki Nag, has been followed for thousands of years. This ritual attracts thousands of pilgrims to Kailash Kund during its limited procession days between August and September, they said.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Udhampur, Saloni Rai, finalised the necessary arrangements for the yatra during a meeting with officers and civil society members in Dudu subdivision

of Udhampur district, an official spokesperson confirmed.

"The discussions covered the supply of essential commodities, installation of drinking water points along the route from Dudu base camp to Seoj Dhar, and provisions for medical care, transport facilities, tents, and blankets," Rai said.

The Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of Dudu will serve as the Nodal Officer overseeing all arrangements from Dudu base camp to Kailash Kund and will establish a control room in Dudu to ensure smooth conduct

of the yatra, the spokesperson said.

The DC instructed department heads to finalise all arrangements well in advance to minimise inconvenience to pilgrims. Medical teams will be deployed at both Dudu base camp and Seoj Dhar to ensure the health and safety of pilgrims, the officials said.

The pilgrimage sees participation from pilgrims hailing from Dudu, Basantgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Chenani and Ramnagar.

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Digital Amnesia

The excessive use of smartphones is causing massive damage to the normal learning ability of children in Kashmir. The phenomenally high use of smartphones in the formative years is triggering a massive overlap of hormones which makes their normal learning ability more difficult. Fragmented focus, insomnia, aggressive behavior, speech delay, and mood swings are some of the abnormal things witnessed in children in the age group of two to seven who have witnessed unscheduled chronic exposure to cell phones. Health professionals blame the inability of parents to speak with their children owing to their hectic work schedules or other commitments, as the primary cause of children's speech delay problem. There is little time available with parents to dedicate to their children. For daycare, many parents in upscale localities have started hiring the services of a nanny. Unmonitored, the nanny also makes the child watch videos like children rhymes or cartoons on streaming channels like YouTube and not being actually engaged with the child. Without a parent being nearby and a constant feed of children's rhymes or cartoons on the phone is what is leading to delayed learning in most of the kids. The busy life of today where nuclear families are the order of the day it sometimes becomes increasingly difficult to dedicate the same amount of time that a child gets in a joint family and in families where at least one parent is not working. Sometimes it has been observed that there is a race among parents to show their peers, neighbors, relatives or colleagues how quickly their child is able to navigate the various stages of a video game on a cell phone or how quickly he shuffles videos and reels on Instagram or YouTube. This rat race is quite debilitating. Quite maddening to say the least. We must understand that if our child is able to navigate the various fields in a phone effectively, it means he has dedicated a lot of hours to it and this has wreaked havoc with his normal learning ability. Programs highlighting the ill effects of overuse of cell phones by small children should be highlighted through radio, TV and printing press. The formative years are the most critical years. If the children do not develop a great learning curve during these years, then there is a lot of counseling and a lot of catching up to do. As parents we have time for so many things. We do extra shifts in the office to get incentives. High time to think if dedicating the same time to our children in their formative years can be more fruitful.

Exploring The Division Of Labor

How Biology, Individual Choices Shape Men, Women's Role



DR. REYAZ AHMAD

The allocation of work to men and women has been a subject of debate for many years. Even though gender equality is a goal of the modern world, some roles still differentiate between men and women for a variety of reasons, including individual, cultural, psychological, and biological variables. This article delves into the subtleties of these distinctions, looking at how cultural expectations, nature, mindset, career decisions, and risk-taking tendencies affect how men and women divide up the household chores.

Nature of Creation: Men and women are made differently in terms of their biological makeup, and this distinction goes beyond only their reproductive systems. Men typically have more physical strength, whereas women are generally more able to endure. These innate differences have historically shaped the division of work, with women typically handling responsibilities requiring greater endurance and care and men frequently participating in physically demanding tasks.

Mindset: The distribution of tasks is also influenced by psychological variances. Men and women may have different cognitive preferences and strengths, according to research. Men might, for example, have a stronger tendency to systemize, whereas women might be better at empathizing. These distinctions may result in a natural division of labor, with women more likely to pursue jobs in the social sciences or healthcare, and men



more likely to pursue professions in engineering.

Society: The distribution of tasks is significantly influenced by societal norms and expectations. Many societies have historically assigned men and women different roles, frequently in accordance with conventional gender norms. Women have traditionally been viewed as caregivers and homemakers, while males are supposed to provide for their families and serve as guardians. Even if these preconceptions are evolving, people's decisions and actions are nonetheless influenced by them today.

Selecting a Career: Selecting a career path is another area where tasks are clearly divided. Different fields may attract men and women for different reasons,

including societal expectations, perceived suitability, and personal interests. For instance, women may be overrepresented in the fields of education and healthcare, while men are more likely to seek professions in STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics).

Taking Risks in Life: Another area where men and women differ from one another is in how they take risks. Research indicates that men tend to be more risk-takers than women in general. This is seen in a variety of life options, such as profession and recreational pursuits. Women might place a higher value on stability and work-life balance, whereas men might be more inclined to seek high-risk, high-reward careers.

In conclusion, there is a compli-

cated interaction between nature, nurture, and personal preference that determines how men and women divide up the work. Promoting equality and giving everyone the chance to follow their interests and abilities, regardless of gender, is just as vital as acknowledging and respecting the natural differences between the sexes. The boundaries between conventional roles are eroding and task divisions are growing more flexible as society develops, reflecting a more diverse and equal society.

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HABBA KHATOON

The Neglected Legacy of Kashmir's Nightingale

SYED AMJAD HUSSAIN

Habba Khatoon, the revered 16th-century Kashmiri poetess, remains a monumental figure in Kashmiri literature, yet her final resting place tells a story of neglect. Born in Zoon village of Chandhara, Kashmir, her early life was marked by both beauty and hardship. Renowned for her lyrical poetry and melodious voice, Habba Khatoon, also known as "The Nightingale of Kashmir," composed poignant songs that resonated with themes of love, and separation.

Zoon's beauty and artistic talent attracted the attention of Yousuf Shah Chak, the last independent ruler of Kashmir. Their love story, however, faced tragic turns. Following their marriage, Yousuf Shah Chak ascended to power but was later imprisoned by the Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1579. Separated from her beloved husband, Habba Khatoon dedicated her life to wandering the Valley, singing her melancholic songs. Despite the uncertainty surrounding some aspects of her life, her poetry, including the "loal" or lyrical form, has become a cornerstone of Kashmiri's cultural heritage.

Yet, the physical remnants of her life are in disrepair. Habba Khatoon's tomb, situated near Athwajan on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, is a stark symbol of neglect. The tomb remains dilapidated.

Born to a poor peasant family, Zoon's early life was challenging. After a tumultuous first marriage, she found solace and fame in her poetic talents. Her union with Yusuf Shah Chak, though initially filled with happiness, was soon marred by political upheaval. The Mughal conquest of



Kashmir led to Yusuf Shah Chak's imprisonment and the couple's separation. Habba Khatoon's songs, filled with sorrow and longing, captured the emotional essence of her experiences.

The neglect of Habba Khatoon's tomb is indicative of a larger trend in preserving Kashmir's cultural heritage. The tomb, now a dilapidated structure, is situated in a deserted area with minimal upkeep. Locals are aware of its significance, but the site's condition has deteriorated over time. The presence of a junk shop nearby and the use of the tomb by security forces as a military

post further contributes to its state of disrepair. The neglect extends to other literary figures as well. The tomb of another prominent Kashmiri poet, Mehjoor, also lies in a state of neglect. Mehjoor's grandson, Abdal Mehjoor, has expressed disappointment over the lack of governmental effort to maintain these important sites.

Efforts to commemorate Habba Khatoon's legacy have been sporadic. An underpass in Mughalpora, Lahore, and an Indian Coast Guard ship named CGS Habba Khatoon reflect attempts to honor her con-

tributions. Additionally, the Indian television film "Habba Khatoon" (1978) and the series "Noorjahan" (2000-2001) depicted her life, though these representations have not translated into tangible preservation efforts. For her contributions to Kashmiri literature, Habba Khatoon deserves recognition and respect that transcends mere commemorations. Without active preservation and acknowledgment, the physical remnants of her life and legacy risk being forgotten, erasing a crucial chapter in Kashmir's rich cultural tapestry. In conclusion, while

Habba Khatoon's songs continue to be celebrated in Kashmir, the neglect of her tomb and other historical sites underscores a pressing need for renewed efforts to honor and preserve the legacy of Kashmir's literary giants. The story of Habba Khatoon is not just a tale of a poetess but a reflection of the broader challenges faced in safeguarding cultural heritage amidst neglect.

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Why Marketing Phone Calls Keep Bugging You



DR SATYAVAN SAURABH

It is true that as soon as the smartphone came into people's lives, it seemed as if their world had changed. There are many people for whom it is not just a phone, it is more than that. With a smartphone, you can not only talk to someone but also make the world of the Internet dance to your fingertips. But there is another aspect of the picture and that is the unwanted or unknown calls coming on the phone. Which can come anytime and trouble you and you cannot do anything even if you want to. Before picking up the phone, you are not even able to know who is calling you. Unwanted calls coming on mobile phones at odd hours have become a cause of trouble for everyone. The residents of Madhya Pradesh are also struggling with the calls made several times a day to people to buy goods, bank loans, credit cards, and other products through telemarketing. Most mobile phone users block these numbers, but telemarketing companies call from other numbers.

For the people troubled by unwanted calls on mobile phones, the Supreme Court has said that the consumers who have registered their phone numbers in Do Not Call. If any call comes on their phone, strict action will be taken against that company. Many companies keep troubling people by calling them for their products whenever they want. But now the Supreme Court has given strict instructions to the government on this issue. The court has said that the consumers who have registered their mobile phone numbers in Do Not Call, should not receive any unwanted calls on their phones. Along with this, it has also asked to take action against those companies that provide tele services but have not



registered themselves for this with the Ministry of Communications. People troubled by unwanted calls and messages can once again revive the hope of stopping them. Telecom Regulatory Authority (TRAI) has made new rules regarding this, according to which it will be mandatory for any commercial, telemarketing, or company working for them to obtain the permission of the consumer before calling or sending a message.

Even after the strictness of the Telephone Regulatory of India (TRAI), unwanted calls and SMS are coming to people's mobiles in large numbers. TRAI started the Do Not Disturb (DND) facility on 27 September 2011. Its purpose was to provide relief to

people from unwanted calls and messages. Even after this, consumers are not getting relief. People had registered under this service. Even after this, the process of disturbing consumers by making calls is continuing. According to telecom officials, people have got some relief after the start of the service. If unwanted calls are coming even after registration, then a complaint can be made to TRAI. After this, TRAI can charge a fine to the mobile companies and blacklist them. If consumers have a complaint about getting unwanted calls or messages, then they can take advantage of this facility.

If you are troubled by unwanted calls coming on your cell phone, then

this news will give you some relief. During a funeral ceremony, a person receives a loan call, the consumer court has given the decision to the company and the caller to pay compensation to the victims. Vadodara Consumer Forum has given the decision to the telecaller company I-Cube and the caller Kanhaiyalal Thakkar to pay a compensation of Rs 20,000 for disturbing the customer by making unwanted calls. The caller was selling Citi Bank's credit card and personal loan. When the caller was offering a loan through the phone, the complainant was busy at his relative's funeral. According to this decision of the court, both the company and the caller will have to pay compensation of 10 thou-

sand rupees each.

Not only this, I-Qube and Vodafone Essar Gujarat Limited were also asked to pay 10,000 rupees to the Consumer Welfare Fund because the complainant had also accused the telecaller company of sharing his name, number, and personal information, which is a violation of his privacy. The case is of the year 2007. After the hearing, the consumer court found I-Qube and caller Thakkar guilty and gave the decision of compensation. A big problem for mobile phone users is unwanted and untimely calls. These calls come at times without permission. Sometimes you are in an important meeting, resting, or driving. These calls disturb you. At the same time, these calls coming at regular intervals also irritate. Sometimes Truecaller informs you that it is a telemarketing call but sometimes you are not able to know it. In such a situation, to get rid of these calls, it is important to block them. Also, use the Do Not Disturb option.

Indian courts and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have prohibited telemarketing companies from invading the privacy of individuals by making unsolicited calls for advertising, marketing, and direct selling of products especially credit cards and bank loans. However, these restrictions will not put an end to telemarketing in India as the companies continue to communicate with potential customers as well. Under the revised Banking Ombudsman Scheme, an aggrieved customer can file a complaint with the concerned Ombudsman against a bank/NBFC for violating RBI guidelines on credit cards. The government needs to fulfill the spirit of the recent observations of the Supreme Court and consumer court judgments by enacting a law to regulate telemarketing so that telemarketers conduct their business without invading individual privacy and without affecting the fundamental rights of citizens enshrined in the Constitution of India.

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Tipping Points – Where Things Stand

ROBERT HUNZIKER

Major planetary boundaries that support life are at risk of collapse. This is happening at speeds that climate scientists never thought possible. What are the consequences and what, if anything, can be done?

Johan Rockström, Potsdam Institute for Climate Research, Germany recently gave a 20-minute TED speech: The Tipping Points of Climate Change. He is a world-class climate scientist specializing in planetary boundary frameworks. Of note, Dr. Rockström is one climate scientist that other scientists pay attention to when he talks.

A summation of what should be categorized as "one of the most important speeches of 2024" is included herein.

It's fair to say that he views recent abrupt Earth system changes as profoundly disturbing and far beyond the boundaries of what climate science expected. In fact, climate scientists have never seen such rapid transition of what's normally a slow-moving Earth system now in the wrong direction so rapidly that it's threatening the existence of key ecosystems that make today's life possible.

In his words: "The planet is now in a place where we've underestimated risks. Abrupt changes are occurring way beyond realistic expectations in science." It was fifteen years ago when he introduced a planetary boundary framework composed of nine earth system processes to determine the stability, resilience, and life support on planet Earth.

Then, ten years ago 195 countries signed the Paris '15 climate agreement.

And in 2019, five years ago, the signatories to Paris '15 entered the most decisive decade of this generation where their choices this decade determine the future for all generations on Earth.

The scientific state of the planet as of August 2024:

- 1) We've reached 1.2°C mean surface temperature above pre-industrial. This is the warmest in 100,000 years.
- 2) We touched 1.5°C as an annual mean temperature in 2023.
- 3) The biggest worry is evidence of an "acceleration of warming." Over the past 50 years, the rate of warming was 0.18C per decade from 1970 to 2010



but from 2014 onward it's been 0.26C per decade, or +45%, and if this course continues, we'll crash thru 2C within 20 years and hit 3C by 2200, a disastrous outcome, caused by humans.

4) But it's much more than CO2 that's at issue. Several things are undermining the stability of the planet. For example, over-consumption of fresh water, the 6th mass extinction of species, abusing freshwater systems with nitrogen phosphorus, etc.

A combination of factors has disrupted the Earth system by spreading chaos across the planet, droughts, floods, heat waves, disease patterns, human-caused massive storms, 40°C (104°F) life-threatening heat across all continents in the year 2023. In Mecca, 52°C (126°F) hit over 1,000 worshippers who lost their lives at the Hajj pilgrimage in June 2024. At current rates, by 2050 expect an 18% economic loss of GDP or \$38 trillion per year. The abrupt change in Earth systems is starting to hurt in human social costs and economic costs.

And it is happening at only 1.2°C mean surface global temperature. But we're on a path to 2.7C this century.

Will floods, droughts, and heat waves get worse? Without immediate mitigation efforts, yes.

As far back as 3,000,000 years the planet never exceeded 2C. We've been living in "The Corridor of Life." It's all we've got.

Alas, the risks are even more serious. There are two major risks to the planetary system: 1) buffering capacity 2) crossing tipping points. And both are moving in the wrong direction much faster than anybody thought possible.

Buffering capacity is Earth's ability to dampen shocks and stress, e.g., soaking up greenhouse gases that impact nature on land and ocean. Mother Earth has been very, very forgiving, as 53% of CO2 from fossil fuels have been soaked up by intact nature on land and sea. However, there is increasing scientific evidence of "widening cracks in this system."

For example, land absorbs 31% of CO2 of greenhouse emissions, but the boreal forests in Canada and temperate mixed forests in Germany and Russia are all starting to lose carbon uptake capacity. More alarming yet, the latest science shows part of Amazon rainfor-

est, the richest biome on terrestrial land, has already tipped and in parts of the forest it is no longer a carbon sink. It's becoming a carbon source. Yet, the Amazon is vital to the health of the planet, playing a critical role in the global carbon cycle and water cycle and responsible for absorbing billions of tons of emissions. This unique one-of-a-kind force of nature is at risk like never before.

But what's most cause for concern is the ocean. It absorbs 90% of the heat caused by human-induced climate change. This is well understood. But what's really worrying is the latest data on temperature all-across the ocean. It has been getting warmer and warmer since 1980. Then, suddenly, out of the blue, in 2023 temperatures went completely off the charts at 0.4C above the warmest temps of all previous years.

What's happening? Scientists do not know what's happening, but it is off the charts and continuing in that same direction in 2024.

Searching for answers, the number one candidate is "energy imbalance caused by humans." The imbalance is enormous, for example, in one year

alone the heat equivalent of 300-times the entire global electricity system is absorbed by the Earth system.

Meanwhile, scientists question whether the ocean is losing its resilience, at risk of releasing heat back into the atmosphere, thus self-amplifying the warming process. Science does not have answers for this, but something totally unprecedented in this regard may be happening right before our eyes.

Here's what is known for certain... The ocean is sounding the alarm.

The planetary system is now at a point where we're forced to ask the following questions: Are we are risk of pushing the planet out of the basin of attraction or the stability of the planet where we've been since the last ice age? Are we headed to unstoppable Hot House Earth with self-amplified warming and losing life support?

The bigger question is: What could take us there?

The answer is "crossing over tipping points" takes us there.

Crossing tipping points references the big systems (a) Greenland (b) the ice sheets (c) overturning of heat in the North Atlantic (d) the Amazon rainforest, by pushing them too far, thus tipping over from a state that helps us to a state of self-amplifying in the wrong direction. This is taking the planet from a mode of cooling and dampening to self-amplifying and warming.

There are 16 tipping systems that regulate the climate system. Five of these tipping systems are what's referred to as ground zero in the Arctic connection thru the ocean via the AMOC of the Atlantic overturning heat all the way down to Antarctica. We depend upon this big biophysical system for stability of the planet. At what temperatures is this at risk of tipping?

For the first time, we have an answer. The average temperature at which 5 of 16 are likely to cross the tipping point is at 1.5C, including (1) the Greenland ice sheet (2) West Antarctica ice sheet (3) abrupt thawing permafrost (4) losing all tropical coral reefs and (5) collapse of the Bering Sea ice. The two major ice sheets hold 10M (33-feet) of sea level rise. (C-Counter Currents)

Robert Hunziker is a journalist from Los Angeles

Try These Vegan Recipes If You Want To Lose Weight

Veganism can help with weight loss, primarily because it emphasises a diet rich in whole, plant-based foods that are generally lower in calories and higher in fibre compared to animal-based products. By consuming more fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, and nuts, vegans often experience increased satiety with fewer calories, which can lead to a natural reduction in overall calorie intake. Additionally, plant-based diets tend to be lower in unhealthy fats and processed foods, which further supports weight loss efforts by improving metabolism, reducing cravings, and promoting a healthier balance of macronutrients. Read on as we share some vegan recipes to help boost your weight loss.



Here are 10 vegan recipes that can aid in weight loss

1. Quinoa salad with vegetables

Quinoa is a high-protein, fibre-rich grain that promotes satiety and stabilises blood sugar levels. The fibre and water content of the vegetables also help you feel full with fewer calories, making it easier to reduce overall calorie intake.

2. Lentil soup

Lentils are high in protein

and fibre, which help maintain muscle mass while keeping you full longer. The spices like cumin and turmeric also have metabolism-boosting properties that can aid in fat loss.

3. Chickpea and avocado wrap

Avocado provides healthy fats that help regulate appetite, while chickpeas offer protein and fibre to keep you full.

The whole grains in the wrap provide sustained energy, reducing the likelihood of snacking later.

4. Zucchini noodles with marinara sauce

Zucchini noodles are low in calories but high in water and fibre, which help you feel full without overloading on carbs. The marinara sauce adds flavour and nutrients without excess fat or calories.

5. Cauliflower rice stir-fry
Cauliflower is low in calories but high in fibre, which can reduce overall calorie intake. It also provides a low-carb alternative to traditional rice, helping to control blood sugar levels and support weight loss.

6. Vegan buddha bowl
This balanced meal provides a mix of complex carbs, protein, and healthy fats, which stabilise blood sugar and keep you full for longer periods. The variety of vegetables adds fibre and essential nutrients.

7. Sweet potato and black bean chili

Sweet potatoes provide complex carbs and fibre, while black beans add protein and additional fibre, both of which contribute to satiety. The spices can also help boost metabolism.

8. Green smoothie

This smoothie is rich in fibre and nutrients, keeping you full while delivering essential vitamins. The chia seeds add protein and omega-3 fatty acids, which help control hunger.

9. Baked tofu with steamed vegetables

Tofu is a great source of plant-based protein that supports muscle maintenance during weight loss. Steamed vegetables are low in calories but high in nutrients, helping you feel full and satisfied.

10. Oatmeal with berries and nuts

Oatmeal is rich in fibre, which helps reduce appetite by slowing digestion. Berries add natural sweetness and antioxidants, while nuts provide healthy fats and protein, further enhancing satiety.

These recipes emphasise whole, nutrient-dense foods that are low in calories but high in fibre, protein, and healthy fats. This combination helps control hunger, regulate blood sugar, and support muscle mass, all of which are key factors in successful weight loss.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Terrorist Killed,

troops swiftly responded, leading to the firefight, they said.

The operation came amid heightened security preparations for the upcoming assembly elections in Jammu & Kashmir, with security agencies strengthening measures to ensure the smooth conduct of polls—(KNO)

Article 370 Will

elections, promising to pursue the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir to its "original status", and advocate for confidence-building measures (CBMs) and regional cooperation between India and Pakistan.

"The PDP is resolute in its pursuit of restoring the constitutional guarantees that were unjustly scrapped, and is committed to restoring Jammu and Kashmir to its original status, ensuring that the voices of its people are heard and their rights are safeguarded," it said.

The PDP manifesto said the "unconstitutional and illegal revocation" of Articles 370 and 35A in 2019 has "further complicated the Kashmir issue, deepening the alienation felt by the people of the region".

On Friday, Shah slammed the Congress for its alliance with the National Conference for the Jammu and Kashmir assembly polls, accusing the party of repeatedly risking the country's unity and security in its greed for power.

The Congress has once again "exposed its ulterior motives by allying with the Abdullah family's National Conference," Shah said.

Posing 10 questions for the Congress and Gandhi, Shah had asked, "Does the Congress support the National Conference's promise of a separate flag for Jammu and Kashmir?"

"Do Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party support the JKNC's decision to restore Article 370 and 35A, and thereby pushing Jammu and Kashmir back into an era of unrest and terrorism?"

The full name of Farooq Abdullah-led party is Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC).

Cong, Thackeray Must

Do Pradhan Nahi Challenge' (can't have two constitutions, two prime ministers and two flags).

"This is the stance of the BJP since Jan Sangh. The Congress leadership and Uddhav Thackeray, should clarify whether they agree with this assurance of the NC," said Shelar.

He further stated that the NC has taken this "anti-national stance to get votes in the Assembly elections.

"NC has also given an assurance in its manifesto that it will reimpose the articles 370 and 35A. This means bringing back the status quo in the state. There is also a question whether this assurance is supported by Congress and Uddhav Thackeray?" he asked.

Shelar said NC has promised to forget the historical, religious and cultural importance of Shankaracharya Hill and would rename it as Takht-e-Sulaiman. At the same time, the promise of changing the name of Hari Parbat to Koh-e-Maran has also been given in the manifesto.

"Uddhav Thackeray recently invited a Shankaracharya to his residence. It is necessary to clarify whether he supports this name change. Similarly, the Congress should clarify its stand on the change of these names," said Shelar.

Shelar said that the NC in its manifesto has also promised to reconsider the policy of reservation.

"After the repeal of Article 370, the Dalit community, the Gujjar and the Bakarwal communities have started getting reserva-

tions as per the Constitution. Congress and Uddhav Thackeray must clarify their stand in this regard. The people of Maharashtra want to know whether Congress and Uddhav Thackeray support this program of 'Tukhai-Tukde' gang," he added.

EC Sets Up 24

with the historic decision taken by the ECI during the Lok Sabha elections, the earlier requirement for migrant electors in Jammu and Udhampur to fill out Form-M has been removed," he said.

Electors residing in zones and camps will be mapped to their respective polling stations in Jammu and Udhampur, the CEO added.

The draft roll extracts, mapping migrant electors residing in various zones in Jammu and Udhampur to the respective special polling stations, will be published soon. Any additions, deletions or corrections will be allowed for a period of seven days, Pole said.

Following this, the final photo electoral roll extracts will be published for each polling station, based on which migrant electors will be allowed to vote at these special polling stations like any other voter, by producing the Election Photo Identity Card (EPIC) or any of the 12 alternate photo identity documents notified by the EC, he said.

Migrants residing outside Jammu and Udhampur can now self-certify Form-M, instead of getting it attested by a gazetted officer or other authorities, Pole said.

"Those voters who are required to fill out Form-M -- those residing outside Jammu and Udhampur who wish to exercise their franchise in person -- should intimate the details of the electors in their families to the designated election officials," he said.

Additionally, all migrant voters who have not opted to vote in person have the option to vote through postal ballot papers, he said.

The 90 assembly constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir will go to polls in three phases starting September 18. Votes will be counted on October 4.

NC, Cong 'Working

They have now exposed their design to go against the Gujjars, scheduled castes, Paharis and the OBCs," Rana said.

He alleged that the NC manifesto is a "separatist document" as they have promised to reverse all the central laws including political and employment rights to reserved categories.

"We will always uphold and strengthen the constitution of Bhimrao Ambedkar which has advocated one constitution, one parliament and one Prime Minister for the country," Rana said.

He also lambasted the NC for its election manifesto promise to change the name of the Shankaracharya hill in Srinagar city to 'Takht-e-Suleman'.

"For us, Shankaracharya Hill is a matter of faith. Congress has joined the NC in their game aimed to appease a particular community in the Kashmir Valley. The NC has promised to change the name of the Hari Parbat hill to 'Koh-e-Maran'. I warn them not to play with our faith and identity. We shall not allow it," Rana said.

He alleged that the Congress has always played this petty game for power and has always disrespected the people of J&K, especially those of the Jammu region.

Rana said that the reservations envisioned in the Constitution have been extended to J&K after the abrogation of Article 370 and the BJP would not allow anybody to work against the rights of the Gujjars, scheduled castes, Paharis and the OBCs in J&K.

Efforts On Way

Facilities to be made available at the Polling Stations.

CEO, Pandurang K Pole exhorted upon the officers present in the meeting to ensure the Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs) across all the Polling Stations. He also directed the officers to send an Action Taken Report along with the Geo-tagged photos of the polling stations to the office of Chief Electoral Officer in a week's time.

Pertinently, there are 11,838 total Polling Stations including 2332 in urban and 9506 in rural areas with each polling station averaging 735 electorates.

The officers were also directed to ensure continuous drinking water and power supply including lighting facilities should be provided by the concerned department across all the Polling Stations which are going to poll on 18 September 2024 in Phase-1. Moreover, the sanitation and plantation drives should be taken well in advance in the premises of all the Polling Stations.

The availability of accessible approach roads at various Polling Stations located in remote areas and at the tough terrain and snow-bound areas across J&K also came under the discussion and it was directed that both J&K Rural Development Department (RDD) and J&K Housing and Urban Development Department will take required steps in this regard.

Additionally, the officers must take care of ramp construction leading to a particular Polling Station to facilitate the Persons with Disability (PwDs) in voting and sufficient steps should be taken well in advance by the departments, the statement reads.

The availability of Booth Awareness Groups (BAGs), Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELCs) and Voter Awareness Forums and their roles in attracting various voter groups in a particular Assembly Constituency were also discussed and deliberations were held to strengthen them at the Booth Level.

In the first phase, 24 Assembly Constituencies both in Jammu and Kashmir divisions are going to election on 18 September, 2024.

The notification has been issued for Anantnag, Pulwama, Shopian, and Kulgam districts in Kashmir Division; and Doda, Ramban and Kishtwar districts in Jammu Division.

In Kashmir Division, 16 Assembly Constituencies comprising Pampore, Tral, Pulwama, Rajpora, Zainapora, Shopian, DH Pora, Kulgam, Devsar, Dooru, Kokernag (ST), Anantnag West, Anantnag, Srigufwara-Bijbehara, Shangus-Anantnag East, Pahalgam; whereas in Jammu Division, 8 Assembly Constituencies including, Inderwal, Kishtwar, Padder-Nagseni, Bhadarwah, Doda, Doda West, Ramban and Banihal are scheduled to go for polls in the Phase-I of the Assembly Election.

Apni Party To

from Jammu division. He further said that PDP and BJP are in the secret alliance with NC and Congress, adding that some parties are openly forging an alliance while some are behind the curtains.

Assembly elections will be held in Jammu and Kashmir in three phases - September 18 and 25, and October 1, while results will be declared on October 4—(KNO)

Cabinet Approves

around Rs 6,250 crore in the first year. The scheme will be effective from April 1, 2025.

Central government employees will be given the option of choosing between NPS and UPS. The existing Central government NPS subscribers will also be given the option to switch to UPS.

Assured pension of 50 per cent of the average basic pay drawn over the last 12 months prior to superannuation for a minimum qualifying service of 25 years, Proportionate for lesser service up to a minimum of 10 years of service, Assured Family Pension

@ 60 per cent of pension of the employee immediately before her/his demise, Assured Minimum Pension @ Rs 10,000 per month on superannuation after minimum 10 years of service

Briefing journalists after the Cabinet meeting, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the Centre constituted a committee which held as many as 100 meetings with several top organisations, including the RBI and the World Bank, on the issue.

The UPS has been approved by the Cabinet based on the recommendations of this committee.

"Today, the Union Cabinet has approved the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) for government employees providing for an assured pension. A 50 per cent assured pension is the first pillar of the scheme, while the second pillar will be an assured family pension," the Minister explained.

On the spade work that went into the new scheme, the Minister said, "Government employees demanded some changes in the New Pension Scheme. For this, PM Modi constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary T.V. Somanathan. This committee held more than 100 meetings with different organisations and nearly all the states and the Unified Pension Scheme has been formulated based on these recommendations."

"There's a difference between how PM Modi works and how the opposition functions. Unlike the opposition, PM Modi believes in holding extensive consultations," Vaishnaw added.

Escalating Gold

over the past two years. "Gold prices have skyrocketed over the years. For middle- and upper-middle-class families, investing in gold has become increasingly difficult," said a prospective buyer Parvez Ahmad Khan—(KNO)

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PM Modi invites Ukraine President to India, Zelensky accepts

IAN S

KYIV: During his historic visit to Ukraine, Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited President Volodymyr Zelensky to visit India and the Ukrainian leader accepted the invitation.

During his talks with Zelensky, PM Modi reaffirmed India's principled position and commitment to a peaceful settlement to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict through dialogue and diplomacy. He also reiterated India's readiness to contribute in "all possible ways" to facilitate the speedy return of peace in the region.

Later, in a press briefing after the talks between the two leaders, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar stated that PM Modi had invited President Zelensky to visit India and the latter had accepted saying he would be happy to visit the "big and great" country. PM Modi had invited President Zelensky to India during the wide-ranging talks between the two leaders on Friday.

PM Modi's visit to Kyiv amid tight security was the first-ever trip to Ukraine by an Indian PM since it



became independent over three decades ago.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told the media, "It's significant that our prime minister has visited Ukraine for the first time since 1992. It is natural on such occasions that he extends an invitation, which he did in this case."

"So we expect that at some point, as per his convenience, President Zelensky will visit India."

The joint statement issued at the end of the visit also mentioned that

the Indian PM had invited the Ukrainian President to visit India.

Asked by the media about PM Modi's invitation, President Zelensky said he would be happy to visit India at a mutually convenient time.

"Yes because when you begin a strategic partnership, and you begin some dialogue, I think that you don't need to waste time and do a big pause and that's why I think it will be good to meet together again," he said.

The Ukrainian President also said he wants India to be on the side of his country in the war with Russia.

"I read a lot about your big and great country. It's very interesting. I very much need your country on our side. I will be happy to come to India as soon as your government and Prime Minister will be ready to see me," Zelensky said.

However, the President made it clear that the visit would depend on the situation in the war-ravaged nation.

'India has largest green railway network with 95 pc track electrification'

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Indian Railways has electrified 95 per cent of its vast 68,000 km track network to emerge as the largest green railway in the world, according to a senior official of the Ministry of Railways.

Mukul Saran Mathur, Additional Member, Railway Board, said that the railway system caters to two crore passengers daily and has recently operated over 5,000 special trains to assist migrant workers. He highlighted the Vande Bharat trains as a "flagship product" in India's rail modernisation efforts.

Speaking at the ASSOCHAM National Conference here, Mathur said that the Indian government has allocated Rs 85,000 crore for railway expansion in the 2023-24 fiscal year. Improvements include a faster ticket refund process, now reduced to one or two business days.

Other experts at the conference said that railway modernisation is the key to India's economic growth and a way forward to achieve the Viksit Bharat or developed India goal by 2047.

Deepak Sharma from ASSOCHAM stressed that modernising the railways is central to India's vision of 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India), aiming to enhance connectivity and support economic growth.

Sanjay Bajpai from



the National Council on Logistics and Warehousing highlighted the role of AI and machine learning in achieving 100 per cent cargo visibility and last-mile connectivity through the Gati Shakti plan.

Animesh Gupta of Goldratt Research Labs emphasised the need for a 40 per cent rail freight share and reducing the environmental impact of railway operations. Manish Puri of ACTO and Moonish Ghuge from ABB India Ltd discussed the importance of modern safety measures and infrastructure to meet increasing trade demands and ensure passenger safety.

The discussions underscored the necessity for transparency and reliability in implementing transformative technological solutions for India's railways.

While speaking at the event, experts said that

railway modernisation is the key to India's economic growth and a way forward to achieve the Viksit Bharat or developed India goal by 2047.

Mukul Saran Mathur, Additional Member- Commercial, Union Ministry of Railways shared how railways operate in challenging times.

He added that over 5,000 special trains have recently been operated to transport migrants. Focusing on the modernisation of the railways for Viksit Bharat, he mentioned an example of Vande Bharat trains which is a major flagship product in India. Accidents have been reduced with technological advancement and high-speed trains are available on routes for faster travel journeys.

Other experts at the conference underlined the importance of the railways in the development of the

country and achieving the goal of a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Sanjay Bajpai, Co-chairman, National Council on Logistics & Warehousing, ASSOCHAM and Executive Director, Container Corporation of India said AI and machine learning are useful in terminals for 100 per cent cargo visibility. "We aim to have last-mile connectivity as we are working on the Gati Shakti plan," he added.

Animesh Gupta, Decision Scientist Goldratt Research Labs USA discussed the gaps in railways related to technology and freight. "We need to reach 40 per cent freight by rail to meet the demands. There's a need to reduce the environmental footprint of railway operations. The railway sector needs to ensure that digital solutions are secure and protected from cyber threats," he pointed out.

Gen Upendra Dwivedi reviews security situation in Manipur

IAN S

IMPHAL: The Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Upendra Dwivedi, on Friday began his two-day visit to Manipur to review the security situation in the ethnic strife-torn north-eastern state, officials said. This is General Dwivedi's first visit to Manipur after taking over as the COAS on June 30.

Soon after his arrival in Imphal, the COAS accompanied by senior Army officers met Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh.

The Chief Minister later said in a post on X: "Had a productive meeting with General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of Army Staff, along with Lieutenant General RC Tiwari, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Lieutenant General Abhijit S Pendharkar, General Officer Commanding 3 Corps, and Major General Ravroop Singh, Inspector General of Assam Rifles (South), at my Secretariat."

"I deeply appreciate General Dwivedi's visit to Manipur. Deliberated on critical issues concerning the current situation of our state. We reaffirmed the cooperation between the state government and the security forces in effective-



ly responding to the challenges we face, maintaining peace and harmony in the state," Singh, who also holds the Home portfolio, added.

A defence spokesman said that upon his arrival in Imphal, the COAS was briefed on the operational preparedness of the commanders on ground.

General Dwivedi also held a discussion with the heads of various secu-

rency agencies in the state, wherein he expressed his appreciation for the insights shared by them, the spokesman said.

He also said during his meeting with the Chief Minister, the Army Chief discussed the internal security situation and the role of the Army and Assam Rifles in ensuring early return of peace and stability in Manipur.

The COAS reaffirmed

Indian Army's commitment to ensuring a secure environment for the people of Manipur.

General Dwivedi also interacted with the troops and complimented the soldiers for their professionalism, operational readiness, and dedication to duty.

The COAS also met with the Army veterans and praised their selfless service and invaluable contributions towards nation

building, the defence PRO said.

Ever since the ethnic violence broke out in Manipur on May 3 last year, a large number of Army troops along with Assam Rifles, various Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) have been deployed to deal with the hostilities between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities.

Kudieep Singh, former Director General of CRPF, is serving as a security advisor to the Manipur government.

At least 226 people have been killed, 1,500 injured and over 60,000 displaced since violence broke out in the state more than 15 months ago.

The riots began after a "Tribal Solidarity March" was organised in the hill districts to protest the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status.

Ten Kuki-Zo tribal MLAs along with all the leading organisations of the community have been demanding a separate administration or a Union Territory for the tribals in Manipur.

The Central and the state governments have been strongly opposing the demand.

Uttarakhand CM slams Congress for poll alliance with NC in J&K polls

IAN S

NEW DELHI: After the Congress and National Conference (NC) announced an alliance ahead of the Assembly elections, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Saturday criticised Congress for the alliance with NC, saying that they playing with the "unity" of the country.

"A new alliance has been formed between Congress and NC ahead of the Assembly elections in J&K. The Congress did this alliance only for political gains. Both the parties are playing with the unity and peace of the country," Uttarakhand Chief Minister said while addressing a press conference at the media centre in Dehradun Secretariat.

He said that the entire country is already aware of the sacrifices made by Uttarakhand's men, as part of the Indian Army, to save Kashmir.

"People of India, at any cost, don't want the peace and law and order in Kashmir to get disturbed. Kashmir is an integral part of India. The death and destruction there has stopped after a long period," the Chief Minister said.

He alleged that NC "pushed back" the development of the J&K for three



decades while promoting "terrorism" and "jihad".

He added that under the supervision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the special status of J&K was abrogated.

"Peace and prosperity stepped in Kashmir following the abrogation of Article 370. We have also seen how the tourism sector grew while protests and stone pelting have gone down. Does Congress, by allying with NC, want to bring back the unrest to J&K," the Chief Minister said.

He said that the BJP is not afraid of losing the elections in J&K. "The BJP has never prioritised politics over nationalism. J&K is above politics, nation comes first above anything else," the Chief Minister said.

The Chief Minister asked whether the Congress supports NC's promise to reinstate a separate flag in J&K again and also questioned whether Rahul Gandhi and the Congress support the decision of NC to bring back Article 370 and Article 35A, which would allegedly push J&K "back into an era of unrest and terrorism".

He also asked if Congress supports promoting separatism by engaging in dialogue with Pakistan instead of focusing on the youth of Kashmir.

"Union government has undertaken many unprecedented efforts for the development of Jammu and Kashmir which has led to its rapid progress," the Chief Minister said.

Congress and NC announced a pre-polls alliance in J&K ahead of the Assembly elections which the BJP has strongly criticised.

NRI shot at in Amritsar in broad daylight crime

IAN S

AMRITSAR: In a broad daylight crime, an NRI was shot at on Saturday by two armed turbaned assailants at point-blank range at his residence in Daburji village in Punjab's Amritsar district.

The NRI, Sukhchain Singh, an American resident, was shot in the head and neck by assailants in front of the family, comprising minor children, who were pleading not to harm their father with folded hands.

He was immediately rushed to a private hospital in Amritsar with critical bullet injuries.

The shooting is suspect-

ed to be linked to local gang activity and is believed to be a property dispute with in-laws. The entire incident was captured on a CCTV camera.

In CCTV footage, the miscreants, who came on a motorcycle and did not wear masks, entered the house in the morning. The children were playing in the house. An armed assailant is seen approaching the NRI and asking him to enter a bedroom at gunpoint. As he resisted, both assailants fired at him at close range. The entire family was in the house when the crime took place and the family was trying to rescue the victim.

After committing the

crime the miscreants managed to escape.

The video also showed locals rushing to help the victim, who was lying on the ground after the attacker shot at him.

As per the police, two assailants entered the house on the pretext of asking for the registration certificate of his luxury car that was purchased this week.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police Vishaljit Singh told the media the police had obtained the CCTV footage of the crime and started the investigation to know the motive behind the crime and information about the assailants.

BJP demands probe after newborn dies in Delhi hospital

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Delhi BJP spokesperson, Praveen Shankar Kapoor, has written a letter to Lieutenant Governor Vinay Kumar Saxena, requesting a probe after a newborn died at the Kasturba Gandhi Hospital here, due to a power outage.

In the letter, he mentioned that the Delhi BJP President, Virendra Sachdeva, has formed a team of five councillors, led by state Vice President Yogita Singh, who will visit the hospital for inspection.

Expressing his concern, Kapoor stated that Kasturba Gandhi Hospital is the largest maternity hospital in Asia.

He also accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government of not providing funds for the hospital's maintenance for the past 10 years and said that once a specialised hospital for women, it is now in poor condition.

As a result, the hospital's wards and hostels are in a dilapidated state, yet women continue to visit for treatment.

He further pointed out that the hospital's Medical Superintendent issued an internal order allowing the power to be cut off for repairs on August 22, between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m., without ensuring an alternative power supply for critical areas like the ventilators and operation

theatres.

This negligence led to the death of the newborn who was on a ventilator, and two deliveries had to be conducted by candlelight.

The Delhi BJP spokesperson urged the Lieutenant Governor to personally inspect the hospital's condition and investigate the incident of the newborn's death and the deliveries that occurred by candlelight on August 22.

It may be noted the baby who died was just a week old and was on the ventilator due to breathing difficulties. The power outage lasted longer than expected, causing significant distress to the patients and their families.

Uttarakhand: Pagnau village swept away as heavy rain lashes Joshimath

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Pagnau, a remote village in Joshimath in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, was completely destroyed as heavy rains lashed the area in the early hours of Saturday.

The situation worsened significantly after heavy rainfall on Saturday, which led to the destruction of almost all houses in the village.

The villagers, already living in fear, are now facing a full-blown crisis as debris, large boulders, and even poisonous snakes and scorpions are being carried into their homes by the ongoing landslides.

The situation became increasingly dire due to continuous landslides and cracks in the terrain that have plagued

the area since August last year.

The relentless onslaught of natural disasters has forced the affected families to flee their homes in search of safer locations. The villagers have expressed deep frustration with the local administration, accusing them of inaction and neglect.

According to the villagers, no assistance has been provided, and they fear that the authorities are waiting for a major disaster before taking action.

"Our entire village was washed away, and we were suffering the whole night. The administration has not helped us. The village registrar and collector come and go; they don't do anything for us," a villager said, expressing their frustration.

'Non-payment of Rs 300 cr'

Private hospitals threaten to stop Ayushman Bharat services

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: The empanelled private hospitals of Jammu and Kashmir have threatened to halt their services under the Ayushman Bharat scheme starting September 1, 2024, due to non-receipt of funds since March this year.

The association of empanelled private hospitals announced its inability to continue services beyond the end of August, claiming that the government owes them Rs 300 crore.

A member of the association of hospitals and dialysis centres empanelled under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme said that since March 15, 2024, funds amounting to approximately Rs 300 crore under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme have not been released, which has led to severe financial strain on their resources. "For the past six months, we have exhausted all available means to continue providing services under this scheme," he said.

"Unfortunately, a prolonged legal battle between the government and the insurance company, IFFCO Tokio, has delayed the resolution of this issue. Despite the matter being of utmost public health importance, the payments for wrongfully rejected and deducted cases



have not been released by IFFCO Tokio, even though the State Health Agency has issued orders for the same," he added.

The association said that under these circumstances, they would not be able to cater to Golden Card patients beyond August 31, 2024, until the payments are released, as their suppliers, who have supported them on credit until now, have categorically denied extending credit beyond this date.

It expressed commitment to the Ayushman Bharat Scheme and providing the best possible care to all patients. However, until the funds are released and their suppliers and creditors resume their services, the association said, they will only be able to offer services on a cash basis.

Last November, IFFCO-TOKIO General Insurance Company, the insurer for Ayushman Bharat in J&K, informed the SHA authorities of their decision not to

renew the contract after its expiry on March 14, 2025.

Initially, the scheme was implemented through Bajaj Allianz GIC, whose contract ended in 2022. IFFCO-TOKIO was subsequently brought in but attempted to exit the scheme, citing financial losses. Despite SHA's requests for them to continue in the interest of patient care, the company refused.

The SHA approached the High Court to stay the exit, but the petition was dismissed on February 2, complicating matters further for both SHA and beneficiaries across the union territory. The government has since approached the division bench to stay the single bench order, making the issue sub-judice. They have urged higher authorities to address the issue and release pending funds promptly.

According to officials, 1,500 patients benefit from this scheme daily in J&K, and services will continue for these patients.

Sanjiv M Gadkar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the State Health Agency, Jammu and Kashmir, told KNO that private hospitals' dues are around Rs 165 crore as of now.

"We have assured all the private hospitals that they were paid regularly for the last four years without delay. But due to the ongoing legal case, the payments are delayed, which we have assured them to pay immediately after the court order," he said.

"The High Court has kept the matter for orders, and orders are likely to be issued at any time in the coming week. I feel the issue will be resolved before August 31, and the scheme will run smoothly without any interruption," he said.

The CEO SHA added, "We have a budget provision of Rs 500 crore, and payment to hospitals is not an issue. There is only a technical issue that the court will decide, and accordingly, the matter will be resolved."

Gadkar further said that all efforts are being made in this regard, but the matter is lying before the High Court. "I express gratitude to all private hospitals for their support and cooperation with the department in this critical situation," he said—(KNO)

Divisional Level Kabaddi Tourney Begins in Kishtwar

AZHAR HAJINI

KISHTWAR: The Department of Youth Services and Sports J&K's Kabaddi Tournament for all age groups (AAG) Boys started on Saturday at the Futsal Ground, Government Degree College here.

The tournament was inaugurated by the Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan. In his address, District Development Commissioner highlighted the significance of the sports event in promoting physical fitness, teamwork, and discipline among the youth. He commended the Department of Youth Services & Sports J&K for organizing the tournament, which provides a platform for young players from various districts to showcase their skills and compete at Divisional level.

"Sports is not just about competition but it is about building character, resilience, and a sense of community" he added. This tournament reflects dedication of the Department in nurturing the potential of our young athletes and preparing them for future challenges, he further remarked.

The Inter-District Division Level Kabaddi



Tournament 2024 will see teams from multiple districts competing over the course of several days. The tournament is designed to cater to various age groups, ensuring inclusivity and fair play. The event shall prove a thrilling display of athleticism, strategy, and sportsmanship, with each team vying for the coveted championship title.

The Futsal Ground at GDC Kishtwar has been selected as the venue for its excellent facilities and central location, making it accessible for participants and spectators alike.

This year's tournament is particularly noteworthy for its emphasis on inclusivity and community engagement. In addition to the matches, the event will feature workshops

and seminars on sportsmanship, the importance of physical fitness, and the role of sports in personal development. These sessions will be led by experienced coaches and sports professionals who will share their insights and experiences with the young athletes.

Furthermore, the Department of Youth Services & Sports has made special arrangements to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants. Medical teams, refreshments, and transportation have been arranged, reflecting the Department's commitment to providing a positive and supportive environment for the athletes.

As the tournament unfolds, it promises to be

a dynamic and exciting event that will not only highlight the athletic abilities of the youth but also foster a sense of unity and camaraderie among the participants.

While speaking about the organization of this important sports tournament, District Youth Services and Sports Officer Kishtwar has said that the Inter-District Division Level Kabaddi Tournament 2024 is more than just a sporting event. It is a celebration of youth, talent, and the spirit of competition. The District Youth Services and Sports Office Kishtwar is proud to host this event and looks forward to witnessing the exceptional talent and sportsmanship that the tournament will undoubtedly showcase.

JKPCC INFORMS NGT

134 brick kilns resume operations in Kashmir despite closure orders

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: The Regional Officer and Member Secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee has filed an affidavit to the National Green Tribunal that 134 brick kilns in three districts of Kashmir have started operating against the halt orders passed by the respondents.

The officer said the administration is yet to recover environmental compensation of Rs 84.8 lakh from 21 of its affiliated brick kilns in Jammu & Kashmir.

The newly impleaded respondents were served with notices in terms of the order of NGT made on May 21, 2024, and the JKPCC has filed an affidavit with NGT as per the timelines, after which a copy of the NGT's order was provided.

The JKPCC has mobilised legal actions against the 21 violators and requested the Regional Director in Jammu to provide proper papers on the environmental compensation with reference to the specified brick kilns.

The compensation formats for brick kilns in the districts of Jammu and Samba were also directed by the Regional Director on 31/07/2024. These 21 violators received notice

es on the 3rd of August 2024 with directions that the respondents should respond in ten days.

But the offenders have not responded and as a result of the same, environmental compensation orders have been made against the offenders, the officer claimed.

The Regional Director of JKPCC at Kashmir said he came to avail of the present situation and said that 134 brick kilns in Budgam, Anantnag and Kulgam districts have again started the work which is against the NGT orders and JKPCC closure orders.

The JKPCC submitted the list of such illicit activities to the Divisional Commissioner of Kashmir and District Collectors of the concerned districts to implement the orders of NGT in letter and spirit. This had been after the JKPCC had directed its regional and divisional officers to report the matter to the legal prosecution bodies under the Water and Air Pollution Acts.

The case so far has been that complaints have been made against 20 brick kilns and many more are under process. Environmental compensation will be recovered from the defaulting units in consideration of their level of offences—(KNO)

2 burglary cases solved in Sopore, stolen property recovered: Police

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: In a significant breakthrough, Jammu and Kashmir Police in Sopore on Saturday said to have solved two burglary cases by arresting three accused persons involved in the commission of crime and recovered stolen property worth lacs from their possession.

"On 27-07-2024, Police Station Sopore received a written complaint from one person namely Gulshana Begum wife of Aashiq Husain resident of Kralteeng Sopore stating therein that she went to her son's home residing nearby her house. After returning back to her house, she found that jewellery had been stolen from the house," a police spokesman said in a statement issued.

Accordingly, police said that a case under FIR number 176/2024 under section 331(3) and 305 of IPC Act was registered at Police Station Sopore and investigation was initiated.

"On the directions of SP Sopore Divya D, an investigation team comprising of SHO Police Station Sopore & other officials of Police Station Sopore under the supervision of SDPO Sopore was constituted. During the course of investigation, the investigating team with strenuous efforts apprehended one accused person identified

as Saqib Lateef Sofi son of Abdul Lateef Sofi resident of Sempora Sopore. During questioning, the accused confessed his involvement in the crime," police said.

Further investigation revealed the involvement of two more persons namely Aabid Ahmad Lone, son of Ghulam Mohiuddin Lone, resident of Zaloora Sopore, and Shakoora Ahmad Zargar, son of Mohammad Shafi Zargar, resident of Nigeenbagh Sopore (owner of S S Jewelers in Iqbal Market, Sopore). All the accused persons have been arrested, police said.

From their possession, stolen property including 01 Kitty set, 09 Golden Rings, 01 Jumka big, 01 Jumka small, 05 Golden Coins (Ponds) and 02 Ear Rings (total valued Rs 6,10,000) were recovered, police said.

Furthermore, cash amount of Rs 1,30,000 was also recovered from the possession of accused Saqib Ahmad Sofi involved in a case under FIR number 200/2024, in which burglary was taken place at Iqbal Nagar Sopore on 14 August 2024—(KNO)

DG YS&S visits GCPE Gadoora

GANDERBAL: Director General of Youth Services & Sports (J&K), Rajinder Singh Tara visited the Government College of Physical Education Gadoora, Ganderbal to review the infrastructural developments at the institution, both completed and ongoing.

This visit highlights the department's commitment to upgrading the college's facilities and infrastructure, essential for the institution's continued growth and development.

Accompanying the Director General were the Joint Director YS&S Kashmir, the Executive Engineer of the Sports Council, and other off-

icials from the Directorate. During his visit, he was engaged in a meaningful interaction with students from BPEd Semester-II & Semester-IV and MPEd Semester-III. He commended the students for their dedication and enthusiasm, offering them valuable advice on academic success and personal growth.

His words inspired the students, underlining the importance of physical education in their overall development. In addition, the Director General interacted with the teaching and non-teaching staff of the college. Dr. Nazir Ahmad Waza, Senior Assistant

Professor extended a warm welcome to the DG, expressing appreciation for his visit.

Director General acknowledged the college's efforts in creating a supportive environment for both academic and athletic development.

He also shared his vision for the institution's future, encouraging continued dedication to achieving institutional excellence.

Dr. Mushtaq Ahmed, in his vote of thanks, expressed heartfelt gratitude to Rajinder Singh Tara, Director General, Youth Services & Sports, J&K, for his valuable visit and

insightful interactions with both students and staff. He acknowledged the support and encouragement from the DG, which will undoubtedly inspire the college to achieve greater heights.

He also extended thanks to all the dignitaries and staff for their participation, and the students for their enthusiastic involvement, contributing to the success of the event.

The visit concluded with Rajinder Singh Tara expressing satisfaction with the progress made and assuring the college of ongoing support for its future initiatives—(KNO)

DC Srinagar chairs District Level Committee meeting of NCORD

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In order to curb the drug menace and tighten the noose against drug peddlers in Srinagar District, the Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat Saturday chaired a meeting of NCORD here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

Besides, Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Khalid Hussain Malik, SP Headquarter Umar Shah and Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad, the meeting was attended by the Officers of Excise Department, Drug Control Organization, Health, IMHANS, Rehabilitation Centers, Postal Department, Airport Authority and other concerned Departments.

At the outset, Deputy Commissioner emphasized the Officers to intensify the deterrence measures against the drug menace and its peddling across the District, besides destroying the channels/ networks and sources of drug peddling.

During the meeting, DC showed the concern regarding the drug abuse by students at coaching centers, hostels besides around colleges and educational hubs in the District.

He directed the Officers of District Administration and Police for proper regulation of Coaching centers, their Hostels and Households having Paid Guests. The DC instructed for



audit of coaching centers with respect to safety standards, availability of civic facilities besides verification of permission granted for running of Coaching Centers and hostels. He also directed to check the installation of CCTVs, availability of security guards, female wardens and conduct of Parent-warden meetings.

On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner constituted a Task Force to ensure that the safety and preventive SoPs are followed in letter and spirit in all coaching centers and hostels/ PGs.

Meanwhile, DC Srinagar instructed representatives of IMHANS to conduct capacity building training of teachers regarding identification of symptoms of drug abuse among students, counselling and give them hand on other expertise.

While directing for screening of students at schools, he sought progress

of the Committees established in Educational Institutions regarding the elimination of drug menace.

Regarding rehabilitation of victims, DC designated District Social Welfare Officer as the Nodal Officer for providing logistic support for transferring of victims to rehabilitation centers besides ensuring cooperation between police, family of victim and ATE.

To ensure that all the outdoor patients/ victims receive full treatment till their complete recovery and to ensure zero drop-out, DC directs concerned representatives of IMHANS to reach out to every single drop-out individual.

Further, he directed 100% installation of CCTVs at Retail and Wholesale pharmacies besides implementation of online billing.

DC also stressed on continuous drive for destruction of poppy crop and wild bung in the District and

exhorted on Agriculture Department for proving the alternate crops & seeds to farmers.

On the occasion, the Officers briefed the chair regarding the action taken by their respective Departments to achieve drug free Srinagar District.

The meeting was informed that 43 cases were registered in the District involving 72 persons. The substances seized during the current year including 1.081 kg's of Brown Sugar, 146.24 gms of Heroin, 6.527 gms of Charas besides Psychotropic Syrup 55 bottles, Psychotropic Capsules 1592, Ganja 7.82 Kgs, poppy straw/ bung/ cannabis 39.161 Kgs and cash of Rs 315345.

In addition, to tighten the noose of drug peddlers the District Police has seized 2 properties, one vehicle and two residential houses during 2024 under NDPS while bank accounts in 8 cases have been frozen in NDPS cases.

Local athletes shine at Kashmir's first Int'l Gymnastics camp

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

SRINAGAR: The ongoing international gymnastics camp at Srinagar's Indoor Stadium has drawn significant attention, especially towards the local athletes from Jammu and Kashmir, who have taken center stage as the event unfolds.

This marks a historic moment, as it is the first time such a high-profile event has been held in the region.

Organized by the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council in collaboration with the Gymnastics Federation of India and the

Gymnastics Association of J&K, features national-level gymnasts and international coaches, making it a major event on the region's sporting calendar.

The camp began today and will run until September 13th at the Indoor Sports Hall, Polo View Srinagar.

According to the details, local athletes, particularly from Jammu and Kashmir, have captured the spotlight with their impressive performances and confidence on the very first day of the camp. This enthusiasm reflects the growing prominence of gymnastics in the region.

Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary of Youth & Sports, expressed his pride, saying Gymnastics holds significant value for us, and our athletes have consistently performed well, securing national medals. "Hosting this international camp in Kashmir is a proud achievement for us," he said.

The camp also highlights the contribution of Kiran Wattal, Vice-President of the Gymnastics Federation of India, who acknowledged the support from the sports ministry of Azerbaijan, saying the Azerbaijan sports ministry's MOU with India facilitated the presence

of an international gymnastics coach, further enhancing the camp's significance.

A young gymnast from Jammu said, this camp is a game-changer for us. Training under an international coach is an incredible opportunity, and it's motivating us to reach new heights. "We aim to showcase Jammu's talent on a global stage," she said.

Similarly, the event not only showcases local talent but also represents a significant step in fostering international sports relations and improving regional athletic standards—(KNO)