

# Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication

**Narendra Modi**  
@narendramodi



**Congress and its allies have only one mission - to capture power by dividing society and people. So we need to remember this...**

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## UAPA Tribunal Upholds Ban On JKLF

**AGENCIES**

**NEW DELHI:** The Tribunal handling matters under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) has upheld the Union Home Ministry's decision to extend the ban on the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) as an unlawful association for an additional five years.

On March 15, 2024, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) extended the ban on the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), led by Yasin Malik, who is currently imprisoned on terror charges.



**HE HAS NOT** only been engaging with wanted terrorists but has even admitted to having visited a terrorist camp in POK where he has been felicitated as well.

The UAPA tribunal, chaired by Justice Neena Bansal Krishna of the Delhi High Court, upheld this decision, stating that there is no tolerance for associations that openly promote secessionism.

UAPA Tribunal, however, noted, "Even though Md. Yasin Malik repeatedly claimed during proceedings that he had given up armed resistance and was following a Gandhian mode of struggle to achieve their professed aim since 1994, his proclivity to continue to engage with violent means and with entities/persons who are avowedly committed to violent means are too stark to be ignored."

"He has not only been engaging with wanted terrorists but has even admitted to having visited a terrorist camp in POK where he has been felicitated as well. In his reply court affidavit, Md. Yasin Malik has sought to explain these aspects but the same is patently a superficial effort to explain just for the sake of it", said the court.

The investigation conducted by the NIA and subsequently by the Enforcement Directorate reveals that Yasin Malik has been at the forefront of using illegally mobilized funds for aiding violent activities in Jammu & Kashmir.

Testimony of the witness from the NIA brings out how JKLF-Y is intricately involved in the process of not only mobilizing funds to further the secessionist aims of JKLF-Y but also in organizing violent protests across the Kashmir valley.

The first charge **•P-06**

## Going For Multilateral Event, Not To Discuss India-Pak Ties: Jaishankar

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**NEW DELHI:** External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday that he is not going to Islamabad to discuss "India-Pakistan relations" but his visit is all about the multilateral event, which is the SCO Summit 2024, taking place in the neighboring country.

The minister said that he is traveling to Pakistan only to be a "good member of the SCO".

"Yes, I am scheduled to go to Pakistan in the middle of this month and that is for the meeting of the SCO—the heads of government meeting," Jaishankar said while delivering the Sardar Patel Lecture on Governance organized by IC Centre for Governance in New Delhi.

"I expect that there would be a lot of media interest because the very nature of the relationship is such and I think we will deal with it. But I do want to say it will be there for a multilateral event, I mean I am not going there to discuss India-Pakista relations. I am going there to be a good member of the SCO. Since I am a courteous and civil person, I will



behave myself accordingly," he underlined.

The External Affairs Minister highlighted that the SCO Summit is taking place in Islamabad this time, because, similar to India, Pakistan too, is a recent member of the bloc.

"Normally the Prime Minister goes to the high-level meeting, the heads of state, that's in line with the tradition. It so happens that the meeting is taking place in Pakistan, because, like us, they are a relatively recent member," Jaishankar added.

On being asked about his planning before he heads to the summit, the EAM stated, "Of course, I am planning for it. In my business, you plan for everything that you are going to do, and for a lot of things that you are not going to do, and which could happen also, you plan for that as well."

On Friday, the MEA said that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will be traveling to Pakistan to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit scheduled to take place in October.

On being asked about India's participation **•P-06**

**I EXPECT THAT THERE WOULD BE A LOT OF MEDIA INTEREST BECAUSE THE VERY** nature of the relationship is such and I think we will deal with it. But I do want to say it will be there for a multilateral event, I mean I am not going there to discuss India-Pakista relations.

## JeM Conspiracy Case NIA Conducts Pan India Searches

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**NEW DELHI:** In a massive pan India crackdown in a Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) conspiracy case, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday conducted searches at multiple locations in five states and arrested one person.

Sheikh Sultan Salah Uddin Ayubi @ Ayubi was taken into custody after searches at 26 locations in the states of Assam, Maharashtra, UP, Delhi and J&K, a statement issued reads.

The accused was arrested on account of his incriminatory role in the conspiracy case RC-13/2024/NIA/DLI. He will be produced before the NIA Special Court, Patiala House, New Delhi, it reads.

"In addition, several other suspects have also been rounded up for questioning. During the searches, NIA teams seized several incriminating documents, electronic devices, pamphlets and magazines. These are being examined for further leads and evidence against the suspects whose premises were searched today. The suspects were engaged in radicalising **•P-06**

## Arde Nareshwar Temple Reopens For Devotees After 2 Decades

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**KULGAM:** Arde Nareshwar Temple in Nadimarg Kulgam was reopened for devotees after more than 20 years, marking a significant spiritual and cultural event.

Devotees from across the district gathered in large numbers to offer prayers and celebrate this auspicious day and Murti Staphna Puja was held at the temple today with religious fervor.

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan made a special visit to the temple and interacted with devotees and the temple authorities.

During his visit, the DC reviewed the facilities available for the devotees and assured the administration's continued support in preserving and promoting Kulgam's historical and cultural landmarks.

Meanwhile, the district administration has developed a road from Katapora to Nadimarg and has taken

**AFTER MORE** than 20 years, the Puja has resumed at the temple, and it fills me with immense happiness to see this."

other developmental projects on priority to augment facilities for devotees in the area.

Among the devotees was Vicky Bhat, who expressed his joy, stating, **•P-06**

## Two Infiltrators Killed In Kupwara's Keran Sector: Army

**WARIS FAYAZ**

**SRINAGAR:** Security forces on Saturday said they eliminated two "heavily armed terrorists" along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Keran sector of north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

An official informed that they received multiple intelligence inputs over the past few weeks about infiltration attempts planned through the Keran sector.

These inputs were corroborated by the Jammu & Kashmir Police and the Intelligence Bureau (IB), following which a joint operation was launched by the Army, BSF and J&K Police.

"On October 04, security forces observed suspicious movement across the LoC. When the infiltrating terrorists approached, vigilant troops challenged them, leading to an exchange of fire in which both terrorists, affiliated with the Pakistan-based Hizbul Mujahideen, were neutralised," the official said.

He said the operation resulted in the recovery of a huge **•P-06**



## JK Polls Omar Abdullah Rejects Exit Poll Predictions

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**SRINAGAR:** National Conference leader Omar Abdullah on Saturday dismissed the exit poll results for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections and said only the numbers coming out at the end of counting on October 8 will matter.

"I'm amazed channels are bothering with exit polls especially after the fiasco of the recent general elections. I'm ignoring all the noise on channels, social media, WhatsApp Etc because the only numbers that matter will be revealed on the 8th of Oct. The rest is just time pass," Abdullah posted on X.

Most exit polls have shown the National Conference emerging as the single largest party followed by the BJP.

The NC-Congress alliance is shown to just cross the halfway mark in the 90-member house.

The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections were held in three phases on September 18, September 25 and October 1. The counting of votes will take place on October 8.



## PDP Trails With Minimal Gains Exit Polls Predict Strong Majority For NC-Congress Alliance

**MUBASHIR AALAM WANI**

**SRINAGAR:** As the three-phase election in Jammu and Kashmir concluded, the political atmosphere remains charged, with results scheduled to be announced on October 8. However, exit polls, released Saturday evening, provide a glimpse into the potential outcomes.

Most Exit polls give a clear cut majority to the National Conference and Congress alliance with the bonhomie crossing the +45 mark. The focus now shifts to how accurate these predictions could be, especially given the complex political landscape of the erstwhile state.

As per the details available, two major surveys – Aaj Tak's CVoter and People's Pulse – have shared their projections for the 90 seats of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly.

Aaj Tak's CVoter Exit Poll: **NC-Congress Alliance: 40-48 seats**

- BJP: 27-32 seats
- PDP: 6-12 seats
- Others (Sajad Lone, Engineer Rashid, and Independents): 6-11 seats

People's Pulse Exit Poll: **NC-Congress Alliance: 46-50 seats**

- BJP: 23-27 seats
- PDP: 7-11 seats
- Others (including Sajad Gani Lone and Engineer Rashid): 4-6 seats

Both polls suggest a strong performance by the National Conference (NC) and Congress alliance, positioning them as the frontrunners, while the BJP is anticipated to follow closely. The People's Democratic Party (PDP), once a key player, appears to be facing a sharp decline,



## Urs Of Dastgeer Sahib (RA) Concludes Begins

**REHAN QAYOOM MIR**

**SRINAGAR:** The annual Urs Mubarak of Hazrat Ghosul-Azam Dastgir Sahib commenced on Saturday on the 1st Rabi al-Thani, at the revered shrine in Khanyar, Srinagar, with thousands of devotees from across Kashmir participating in the gathering.

The gathering, which corresponds today on 1st Rabi al-Thani, marks the beginning of 11—days of prayers, remembrance, and devotion.

It includes the conduct of special prayers at the shrine and continues till the end of the day 11th. "On the 11th, the relics are displayed for the general public.

According to the details obtained, devotees started to throng the shrine to offer prayers and also **•P-06**



### INOX SRINAGAR Sunday Movies Schedule 06 OCTOBER

 <p><b>SHAHKOI (PUNJABI) (U)</b> 04:00PM</p>	 <p><b>JOKER (ENG WITH ENG SUBTITLE) (A)</b> 12:30PM, 06:30PM</p>	 <p><b>QOULUF THE ENSORCELLED (KASHMIRI) (U/A)</b> 02:05PM</p>	 <p><b>STREET SARKATE KA AANTANK (HINDI) (U/A)</b> 11:00AM, 03:30PM, 06:45PM</p>
 <p><b>DEVARA (PART-1) (HINDI) (U/A)</b> 11:40AM, 05:55PM</p>	 <p><b>TUMBAD (RE RELEASE) (HINDI) (A)</b> 10:20AM</p>	 <p><b>LAILA MAJNU (RE RELEASE) (HINDI) (U/A)</b> 03:00PM</p>	 <p><b>INOX POPCORN STUDIO Caramel</b></p>

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# JKHCBAJ felicitates Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, Tashi Rabstan

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association, Jammu (JKHCBAJ) organized a grand felicitation function today in presence of other Judges of the High Court, in honour of Justice N. Kotiswar Singh on his elevation to Judge of Supreme Court of India and Justice Tashi Rabstan on assuming office as the Chief Justice of High Court of Jammu and Kashmir & Ladakh.

The event began with a warm welcome by Parvesh Singh Salaria, General Secretary of the JKHCBAJ, who expressed immense pride in the accomplishments of both the judges. He praised Justice Kotiswar Singh for his humility and unwavering support to the Bar during his tenure as Chief Justice and commended Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan for his remarkable journey and leadership.

Vikram Sharma, Senior Advocate President JKHCBAJ, expressed heartfelt appreciation for both judges. He acknowledged Justice N. Kotiswar Singh for his contributions towards the judiciary and his approachable nature. He also lauded Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan for his commitment to justice and fairness.

Sharma also presented a



charter of demands on behalf of Bar Association, addressing key concerns important to the legal community.

Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan, in his address, thanked the JKHCBAJ for organizing the Bar that all genuine demands will be taken into consideration and addressed with due care. He reaffirmed his commitment towards working closely with the Bar for the betterment of judiciary.

Justice Kotiswar Singh also addressed the august gathering, sharing fond memories of his experience working with the

Jammu Bar. He praised the Bar for its dedication and professionalism, stating that his time as Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir had been one of his most rewarding experiences. He complimented the office-bearers of J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu for ensuring that while Lawyers' grievances are redressed, yet the Justice Dispensation is not disturbed.

The event was organized smoothly with the efforts of Chetan Misri, Joint Secretary and Utkarsh Pathania, Treasurer, ensuring a well-coordinated func-

tion. The gathering saw the presence of other Justices of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir, along with Judges of the District Judiciary, senior advocates, and esteemed members of the Bar.

A vote of thanks was delivered by Amit Gupta, Vice President of JKHCBAJ, who expressed gratitude to the Judges and all attendees for making the event a success.

As a token of respect, mementos were presented to Justice N. Kotiswar Singh and Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan by the JKHCBAJ team.

## ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

# Arrangements for Counting of Votes finalized in G'bal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL:** The Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Ganderbal, Mushtaq Ahmad Sinnani, Saturday convened a meeting to finalize arrangements for the counting of votes scheduled for October 8, 2024.

The meeting, held at DC Office was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Gulzar Ahmad, Returning Officer (RO) for Ganderbal Assembly Constituency, DyDEO, Chief Planning Officer, District Informatics Officer NIC, and other senior officers.

The ADC took a detailed review of arrangements including water supply, electricity, medical facilities, sanitation, security, deployment of staff, establishment of Media Centre and other related arrangements.

He stressed the need for strict compliance with Election Commission of India (ECI) guidelines to ensure a transparent and smooth counting process.

The Returning Officers were instructed to promptly inform all candidates and their representatives of the exact date, time, and venue for the counting of



votes. Appropriate signages will be displayed, and all counting rooms will be notified in advance.

The Executive Engineer KPDCI has been directed to ensure uninterrupted power supply at the venue, along with the availability of backup gensets.

Similarly, the Jal Shakti department will arrange water tankers and install water dispensers to meet the requirements at the venue.

The municipal Committee will ensure adequate

toilet facilities and sanitation measures at the counting center.

A dedicated Media Centre will be established under the supervision of the District Information Officer. The center will feature a public address system and an LCD screen to display real-time election results.

The ADC directed that law and order be strictly monitored during the entire counting process to prevent any untoward incidents. A pedestrian zone

will be declared within a 100-meter radius of the counting center to enhance security and manage crowd flow.

Sinnani emphasized continuous oversight of all arrangements to ensure transparency and efficiency throughout the vote counting process.

The district administration is committed to ensuring that the entire process is conducted smoothly, following the principles of fairness and transparency as per ECI guidelines.

## ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

# Training session held for Counting Agents ahead of Vote Counting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL:** In preparation for the upcoming counting of votes for the General Elections to the Legislative Assembly 2024, scheduled for October 8, a special training session was conducted Saturday for the contesting candidates and their counting agents in two Assembly Constituencies of District Ganderbal.

The session was held at the Conference Hall of the Mini Secretariat, Ganderbal which was presided over by the Additional District Development Commissioner Ganderbal, Mushtaq Ahmad Sinnani.

The training, organized by the District Election Officer, aimed to ensure transparency and efficiency during the vote-counting process.

Contesting candidates and their agents were given detailed instructions on the protocols and procedures that will be followed during the counting of votes. Special emphasis was placed on

the rules and regulations mandated by the Election Commission of India, ensuring that all stakeholders are well-informed and prepared for a smooth counting process.

During the session, District Level Master Trainers briefed attendees on the use of technology in the counting process, the handling of postal ballots, and the role of counting agents in maintaining fairness. Demonstrations on how votes from the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) will be counted and cross-verified were also conducted, providing clarity on each step of the process.

Speaking at the occasion, the ADC reiterated the administration's commitment to maintaining the highest standards of transparency and fairness in the electoral process.

He urged all participants to adhere to the guidelines and cooperate fully during the counting process to ensure a peaceful and smooth conclusion to the electoral process.

## ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

# DEO Budgam visits Counting Centre

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM:** The District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Akshay Labroo convened a comprehensive review meeting Saturday at Boys Higher Secondary School Budgam (designated counting centre) to assess the preparations for upcoming counting process for General Elections to the Legislative Assembly in the district.

The meeting witnessed participation from ROs of all 5 assembly constituencies, ASP Budgam, Commandant CAPF and designated Nodal Officers.

The DEO engaged in detailed discussions with each officer regarding their specific roles and responsibilities, with updated progress provided on various critical aspects, including the preparation of counting arrangements, manpower management, law and order, security, welfare logistics, transport and parking management, postal ballot and migrant vote counting arrange-

ments, uninterrupted Water supply, 24x7 electricity and availability of healthcare facilities.

The DEO emphasized the importance of seamless coordination and proactive measures to ensure that the counting process is conducted smoothly and efficiently.

Special attention was given to finalizing logistics arrangements and ensuring the welfare of personnel associated with counting.

Later, the DEO, along with ROs of all 5 Assembly constituencies and all Nodal officers, visited the counting centres, media centre, health centre, fire and emergency centre designated for the Counting process.

During the visit, the DEO directed the concerned officers to ensure that all necessary measures are implemented in strict accordance with the guidelines of the ECI, for seamless counting with due accuracy, transparency, and adherence to protocols.

# Sgr Admin finalises arrangements for Urs Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA)



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** On the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Syed Ahmad Kataria Saturday visited the Ziyarat Dastgeer Sahib Saraibala Amirakadal to finalize the arrangements made for smooth conduct of annual Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA) at the Ziyarat.

During the visit, the ADC stressed the Officers of all line Departments and other stakeholders to ensure that all necessary arrangements are put in place well in advance to facilitate the devotees visiting the Ziyarat during Urs days.

While reviewing the arrangements made by concerned departments,

the ADC emphasized uninterrupted power and water supplies at the Shrine besides ensuring proper sanitation and cleanliness measures around the venue particularly during Urs days.

Regarding medical facilities during Urs days the Department of Health was asked to set up a first aid cum Medical Camp at the shrine.

The ADC also asked for ensuring proper functioning of street lights and smooth regulation of traffic movement in the area during auspicious days of Urs.

On the occasion, the ADC also interacted with the members of Shrine Management and sought details about the requirements for the Urs.

The Senior Officers of Police and Civil Administration accompanied the ADC during the visit.

# Murti Sthapana Puja performed at Nadimarg



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar Saturday visited Nadimarg Zainapora where Murti Sthapana Puja (Installation of Idol) was performed by the devotees of the Kashmiri Pandit community at Arde Nareshwar Temple.

The devotees had converged from far-off places of the UT today at the ancient Temple site at Nadimarg in appreciable numbers and thronged the temple for taking part in the Puja.

The Puja ceremony was held in a peaceful atmosphere with local Muslims welcoming the Pandit brothers who were on site to take part in the Puja.

The Puja ceremony took place after a gap of twenty years. This marks the Era of peace and prosperity, the DC mentioned on the occasion.

The ceremony was attended by local communities along with the district and sub divisional authorities.

Proper security arrangements were in place with other line departments providing essential services to devotees.

The DC took review of the arrangements and interacted with devotees and listened to a wide range of their welfare issues including the demands for the establishment of Community Hall or Yatra bhawan. He assured them about the prompt action on the issue.

The DC also visited the vacant homes of Kashmiri Pandits at Nadimarg and also the adjoining land.

From the district administration, ADC, Zakir Hussain Faaz; SDM, Nissar Ahmad Wani; DIO, Showkat Hussain accompanied the DC along with other officers and officials of administration.

## #DALGOESPINK

# Fortis Hospital Organizes Breast Cancer Awareness Program in Sgr

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** In order to create awareness around increasing incidences of breast cancer in Jammu and Kashmir, Fortis Hospital, Gurugram Saturday organized an awareness program in Srinagar's Dal Lake.

Around 150 Shikaras were tied up with pink ribbons in the Dal Lake, 2000 pink balloons were flown in the air, Local Kashmiri folk dance by local artists were performed on traditional Kashmiri music, and the tourists were given free Shikara rides in the Dal Lake.

The event began with a Press Briefing by Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat (IAS) Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar who was also the Chief Guest for the occasion, Dr Ankur Bahl

(Senior Director, Medical Oncology, Fortis Gurugram), Dr Farah Farooq (Centre Manager, Fortis Medical Centre, Srinagar), Dr Ritu Garg (Chief Innovation and Growth Officer, Fortis Healthcare), Mahipal Singh Bhanot (SBU Head, Fortis Gurugram) and Yash Rawat (Facility Director, Fortis Gurugram). Other Senior Dignitaries including Dr Khalid Hussain Malik (Additional DC, Srinagar) Dr Syed Ghazala Nazki, State Programme Manager, National Health Mission, J & K, Dr Baldev Prakash (MD & CEO - J & K Bank), Mr. Mushtaq Ahmed Chaya (CMD & Founder, Mushtaq Group of Hotels), Mr. Rashid Yahya Naqash, Regional Wildlife Warden, Headquarters J&K were present at the event.



Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat (IAS) Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar said: "I Congratu-

late Fortis Gurugram on this initiative as it highlights the urgency of combating breast

cancer and uniting the community of Srinagar to raise awareness about breast cancer by sending a message of hope, survival, and courage to those who have bravely fought the disease. Together, we need to educate, empower, and inspire hope and save the lives lost to breast cancer".

Dr. Ankur Bahl, Senior Director, Medical Oncology, Fortis Gurugram said, "As per official data, an average of two patients lose the battle to breast cancer daily. Early detection is crucial for achieving a high cure rate, with over 90% success at five years if diagnosed early. Unfortunately, 60% of women are diagnosed at an advanced stage due to lack of awareness of early signs and symptoms, unavailability of screening,

ignorance of personal health and fear of treatment."

Dr Ritu Garg, Chief Innovation & Marketing Officer, Fortis Healthcare said, "As per the World Health Organization, breast cancer continues to be the leading form of cancer in Indian women. Breast cancer has assumed alarming proportions in Jammu and Kashmir with the latest statistics revealing both rising incidence of cases amongst women in the Union Territory. Through this event, it is our endeavor to continuously educate the women about the importance of regular screening, and self-examination and empower them to take charge of their health."

Yashpal Rawat, Facility Director, Fortis Gurugram said,

"There's a significant rise in breast cancer cases in Jammu and Kashmir, often associated with genetic factors and familial history. As per records, 9321 women tested positive for breast cancer in J&K during 2019-2023. A lack of timely diagnosis and access to quality treatment is also leading to a higher number of deaths annually. It's important to know the risk factors and adopt a healthy lifestyle. The goal of this event is to educate women about the importance of diagnosing cancer at early stages when treatment is easier and outcomes are better. By following preventive guidelines, and being better informed about cancer, women can significantly reduce their health risk and enjoy a healthy and happy life."

KASHMIR'S TOBACCO EPIDEMIC

# Lack of effective policies leaves youth vulnerable

JAHANGIR SOFI

SRINAGAR: Tobacco use has reached epidemic proportions in Kashmir, with a surge witnessed in the consumption of tobacco products in recent years. One of the primary reasons for this increase is the easy availability of cigarettes, bidis and smokeless tobacco.

According to social activists, the lack of comprehensive tobacco control measures in the region has allowed tobacco companies to market their products to vulnerable populations, particularly youth and low-income individuals.

Recent data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) shows a troubling rise in smoking habits among Kashmir's population.

A government survey from 2016 reveals that monthly spending on smoking tobacco in Jammu & Kashmir is much higher than in other regions.

The Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) reports that approximately 70% of adults in Jammu & Kashmir are exposed to active tobacco smoke, which makes it the highest region in India for tobacco spending.

Since the launch of the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) in 2016, efforts have expanded



across all districts.

Data from the Directorate for Health Services Kashmir (DHS-K) shows that from 2020-2021 to August 2023, enforcement squads issued 2,967 challans, collecting a total of Rs 237,626 in fines during the 2023-24 period alone.

These figures reflect a marked increase in enforcement efforts; in 2020-21, only 271 challans resulted in fines totalling Rs 18,290. The following year, fines rose to Rs 20,250 through 324 challans. However, from August 2023 to August 2024, DHS-K reported 756 challans with a recovery of Rs 92,900.

Despite its rich tradition of holistic health practices,

Kashmir has seen a sharp rise in tobacco use. A study investigating tobacco prevalence among individuals over 15 revealed that Kupwara district has the highest rate at 56.6%, while Jammu district has the lowest at 26.6%. Anantnag and Badgam districts follow closely, with 49.9% and 48.8% prevalence, respectively.

Among female tobacco users, Bandipora district leads at 9.1%, followed by Kupwara (6.8%) and Baramulla (6.5%). The lowest rates are found in Jammu (0.8%), Srinagar (1.9%), and Poonch (2.3%).

The study calls for increased awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco. It suggests that

reducing tobacco use is a collective responsibility and should be addressed through public discussions about its mental, environmental, and health impacts.

According to the GATS report, smokers aged 15 and older in Jammu & Kashmir spend an average of Rs 513.60 monthly on cigarettes and Rs 134.20 on bidis, compared to Rs 399.20 and Rs 93.40, respectively, for the rest of India. The report reveals that passive smoking exposure is notably higher in Jammu & Kashmir, with 69.7% of adults exposed to tobacco smoke at home.

Historically, tobacco and hookah use have been

woven into local culture and accepted as social norms during gatherings. This cultural acceptance has inadvertently facilitated the ongoing popularity of these practices.

Illiteracy regarding the health consequences of tobacco exacerbates the issue.

Experts and activists call for a multifaceted approach to combat tobacco use in the valley.

Advocate Zahoor Bhat called for raising awareness about the risks associated with tobacco, including increasing taxes on tobacco products. "There should be mass awareness campaigns led by religious leaders who can address the issue in sermons," he said, adding, "The younger population, which is particularly vulnerable, needs to be informed about the effects of tobacco."

Bhat advocated for targeted campaigns through various media channels, educational institutions and community organisations to disseminate critical information and debunk misconceptions.

"There is a need for accessible healthcare resources and programmes to support tobacco addiction treatment, including counselling, support groups and medical assistance," he said—(KNO)

# Now Kashmir willow cricket bat debuts in Women's T20 World Cup

JAHANGEEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: After its successful introduction in men's T20 and One Day Internationals, the Kashmir willow cricket bat has made its debut in the Women's International T20 World Cup.

According to details obtained, during a match between West Indies Women and South Africa Women, West Indies opener Qiana Joseph took to the field wielding a bat crafted from Kashmir willow by GR8 Sports, marking another significant milestone for both the brand and the region.

This event showcased the craftsmanship and quality of the Kashmir willow bat on an international stage.

Aaliyah Alleyne, Zaida James and Shamilla Connell, also part of the West Indies team, used GR8 cricket bats and equipment throughout the tournament.

As cricket fans worldwide tuned in, Joseph's performance highlighted the bat's lightweight design, which is essential for the competitive nature of international cricket.

Founders of GR8 Sports India Pvt Ltd, Fawzul Kabir and Mohammad Niaz ul Kabir, speaking with KNO expressed their pride, saying, "This is a historic day for GR8 Sports and Kashmir willow bats. Our brand has worked tirelessly to promote this unique wood, which embodies Kashmir's essence and craftsmanship. Seeing our product perform



on such a grand stage is a testament to the dedication of everyone involved in our production process."

To achieve this milestone, GR8's cricket bats for women cricketers underwent extensive testing and innovative development over the last four years, utilising AI-based machinery to refine their design.

The debut of the GR8 Sports Kashmir Willow bat in the Women's World Cup not only highlights the brand's commitment to quality but also continues to dispel the misconception that Kashmir willow bats are heavier or inferior to English willow bats, Kabir said, adding, "Our commitment to quality is evident as we continue to expand our influence in international cricket."

This achievement follows the impressive performance of GR8 Sports bats in recent ICC T20 World Cups and the ODI World Cup 2023.

Notably, during the ICC T20 World Cup 2022, a GR8 Sports bat was used for the longest six of the tournament, which further showcased the exceptional quality of their products. Kabir remarked, "This accomplishment reflects our relentless hard work, expertise, and commitment to setting new standards in cricket equipment manufacturing. We aim to break the monopoly of English willow in international cricket and make Kashmir willow bats a common choice."

He said that it took 14 years of research and development to perfect the crafting of Kashmir willow into professional cricket bats.

The Kashmir bat industry, known for producing high-quality bats, has recently witnessed a resurgence, reaching an international audience. Many lesser-known international players have embraced Kashmiri bats in their games—(KNO)

# Congress-NC Alliance To Get More Than 55 Seats in J&K: Mir

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Congress-NC alliance will get more than 55 seats in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls, general secretary Ghulam Ahmad Mir claimed on Saturday as several exit polls gave an edge to the combine.

Voting in Jammu and Kashmir took place in three phases and the results will be declared on October 8. Many exit polls have predicted that the National Conference would emerge as the single largest party.

"The people of Jammu and Kashmir have voted to change the last 10 years of BJP rule. Whatever the exit polls show, our belief is that the vote was for change, for keeping the BJP out in both regions (Kashmir and Jammu)," Mir told PTI Videos here.

He asserted the Congress-NC alliance would get more than 55 seats



when the results are announced.

Polling in Jammu and Kashmir was held for 90 seats. According to reports, the lieutenant governor will nominate five members to the Assembly based on the Home Ministry's advice.

Mir said the Congress-NC tie-up is the "only viable alliance" between a national party and a regional outfit in Jammu and Kashmir that will "take the people out of their miseries".

To a question about the exit poll results for Haryana,

the Congress leader said it reflects people's anger towards the BJP government in the state and asserted that his party would get more seats than what the exit polls predicted.

"The BJP's 10-year rule in Haryana was bad. They annoyed the farmers, youth and the unemployed. So six months before the elections, there was a wave to end BJP rule there. That is what the exit polls are showing. It is our belief that the Congress will get more seats than what the exit polls are showing," Mir added.

# No possibility of alliance with BJP: Farooq Abdullah

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Rejecting any possibility of post-poll alliance with Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), National Conference (NC) President Dr Farooq Abdullah on Saturday said any party forging an alliance with the saffron party will vanish from the ground.

The NC patron and former chief minister of erstwhile J&K state, said that his party will never forge an alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to form the next government in Jammu & Kashmir.

Abdullah said that any party that will side with the BJP will "get vanished" in Jammu and Kashmir.

He asserted that there was no question of forging an alliance with the saffron party, saying that

people have favoured them by voting against the BJP during the recent assembly elections. "I think the people will not vote in favour of BJP. If the party believes it will form the



next government, then they live in a cuckoo's world," he added.

Pertinently, the NC spokesman, Imran Nabi Dar in a statement to the media has denied the rumours of party holding back-channel talks with the party outside INDI Alliance, saying that those sensing their impending

defeat have resorted to spreading such baseless accusations.

"We urge the public, who have placed their trust in us, to disregard these false claims and not to be swayed by rumour-mongering," Dar had said.

Furthermore, Dr Farooq didn't answer a query related to exit polls, saying that "we cannot expect anything as of now, but let the results be declared and the performance of the political parties," he said.

The NC chief said that Congress will also emerge victorious in the Haryana assembly elections, saying that the people who have borne the brunt" of the present dispensation have decided to vote in favour of Congress—(KNO)

DRUG-FREE INDIA MESSAGE

# 71-yr-old cyclist from Rajasthan begins 3500 km journey

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: Raghuvir Khoda, a 71-year-old cyclist from Rajasthan, has started his journey on cycle from Kashmir's Ganta Ghar (Clock tower) in Lal Chowk, his remarkable 3,500 km journey from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, cycling across the length of the country to promote the drug-free India (Nasha Mukht Bharat) and environmental awareness.

His extraordinary feat has captured the hearts and minds of communities nationwide, inspiring people of all ages to take action on two critical social issues.

Raghuvir's journey was celebrated by various social organizations, including Rehmat lil Alameen Foundation, chaired by Sheikh Firdous Ali, prominent socio-environmental activist like Dr. Touseef Ahmed and renowned social worker of Kashmir Syed Aijaz

Kashani. These groups recognized Raghuvir's indomitable spirit and passion for making a difference.

They praised his determination to spread awareness about the dangers of drug abuse and the importance of environmental protection, both of which are pressing issues in today's world.

While starting his epic journey, Raghuvir shared his heartfelt message: "I want to inspire people, especially the youth, to join the movement against drugs and environmental degradation. Every individual can make a difference, and together we can create a better future for our children and the generations to come."

He further emphasized the power of unity in tackling these issues, encouraging every citizen to take small but meaningful steps towards reducing drug abuse and protecting the environment—(KNO)

# Cyber Police Jammu issues advisory on fraud through intimidation

AGENCIES

JAMMU: The Cyber Police Jammu has issued a critical advisory, warning the public against an increasing trend of financial frauds where fraudsters use intimidation tactics to extort money from unsuspecting victims.

The advisory highlights a recent surge in cases where criminals impersonate police officers and coerce victims into making payments by falsely claiming their family members are involved in criminal cases.

Cyber police said that in a shocking incident, a woman teacher from Agra, Uttar Pradesh, recently fell victim to such a scheme.

"The fraudsters called her, falsely claiming that her daughter had been arrested in a sex trafficking case. Overcome with shock and fear, the woman tragically suffered a heart attack and passed away. This case has sent shock-

waves through the community and emphasizes the urgency of the advisory".

Cyber Police Station Jammu advisory stated, "Fraudsters are using increasingly devious methods to manipulate people. They prey on emotions like fear, using intimidation to force victims into making hasty decisions without verifying the facts. We urge the public to remain calm and cautious when receiving such calls."

The police have provided a set of safety tips to help people avoid falling into these traps:

Fraudsters rely on panic to push victims into quick decisions. Take a moment to gather yourself before responding. Always ask for the caller's name and the agency they claim to represent. Do not make any payments without verifying their credentials.

Police Don't Demand Payments Over the Phone: Be cautious of any caller

asking for immediate payment to avoid arrest or legal trouble.

If someone claims you or your loved ones are involved in a crime, contact your local police station or the relevant authorities to confirm the truth.

Never share sensitive information like PINs, passwords, or financial details with anyone over the phone.

The advisory stresses that any incidents of cybercrime should be immediately reported through the NCRP portal at www.cybercrime.gov.in or by calling the helpline number 1930.

"The public needs to be aware and vigilant to prevent themselves from becoming victims of such fraud," added the spokesperson. The Cyber Police have also reiterated the importance of education and awareness in preventing these crimes from spreading further—(KNO)

# Preparations for counting finalised in Jammu region

AGENCIES

JAMMU: With counting of votes just three days away, the preparations for counting in all 10 districts of Jammu region have been finalised.

Security has been beefed up in and around all the counting centres whereas monitoring of strong rooms is being observed through CCTVs.

The counting of votes for all the 90 seats of the legislative Assembly will be held at 08 AM on October 18.

The Returning Officers of all the constituencies have held meetings with election agents of all the parties and independent candidates and have briefed them about the counting day proceedings. "Every candidate has to appoint 16 counting agents who will be issued entry passes by the ROs. One senior agent, who could be the election agent as well, will have to remain seated at RO table whereas

another agent will have to stay at ETBP table where counting of postal ballots will be held. Besides, 14 other agents will be appointed to 14 other tables where counting of votes of Electronic Voting



Machines (EVMs) will be held," a Returning Officer told KNO.

He said that till the counting of one round is completed, no fresh EVM will be placed on any other table for the counting.

Meanwhile, entry to the campuses housing counting centres has been restricted to officials authorised for the counting and no person without an authorised pass will be allowed to come near the counting centres—(KNO)

# 3,100 Water Schemes Underway in Jammu and Kashmir

ISHTIYAQ KAR

SRINAGAR: All households in Jammu and Kashmir are set to receive tap water, with around 3,100 schemes currently under execution in the Union Territory.

A senior official of the Jal Jeevan Mission stated that some areas of Kashmir are experiencing water scarcity. "Even some water bodies have dried up due to rising temperatures this year. All water-related issues will be resolved by the end of 2025, as over 3,100 schemes are currently being implemented in Jammu and Kashmir, with completion expected by the end of next year," the official told KNS.

The Jal Shakti Department is responsible for providing safe drinking water to all human settlements by tapping into available water resources, treating the water through filtration and chemicals, and distributing it via a network of pipes.



However, officials acknowledge that one of the major challenges is reaching every household in rural areas, especially those that are scattered or located in high-altitude regions. Reports of water shortages have also emerged from various areas.

The Jal Shakti Department has urged consumers to avoid wasting or misusing water for purposes such as kitchen gardens, lawns, or washing vehicles. Consumers are also advised not to use online water boosters to ensure equitable distribution in their areas. The department has provided telephone numbers for contacting officials in case of water shortages.

It is crucial to follow the directives of the Jal Shakti Department to prevent further issues.

The Jal Shakti Abhiyan, launched by the Ministry of Jal Shakti in 2019, is a campaign for water conservation and water security in the country, through a collaborative effort between various ministries of the Government of India and state governments. The focus of the campaign is on water-stressed districts and blocks.

The Jal Jeevan Mission, a central government initiative under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, aims to ensure access to piped water for every household in India. (KNS)

Good Morning **Kashmir**

EDITORIAL

## Early Education

**T**imes have changed and so have the means of teaching children. The classical concept of schooling is now relegated as a legacy system and one feels the urge to bring in practicality when it comes to teaching children at their early formative years. The concept of Japanese schools and Montessori schools have totally changed how children under the age group of ten should be given practical education and they must be taught life skills. Teaching life skills is the most important part - it equips a child with the requisite skills to tackle the world once the child grows up. Life skills like stitching clothes, knitting woolen, swimming, making food, washing clothes, masonry, and carpentry are essential part of early schooling in Japan. It is a treat to see that some schools in cities like Hyderabad and Bengaluru are imitating similar concepts. Montessori schools are totally practical and there is limited or no chalk and board involved. The New Education Policy has justifiably adopted a lot of techniques of Montessori education but at the same time, it is not an out-and-out Montessori method. For the Montessori method the administration needs to invest a lot of money into training of teachers and Research and Development (R&D). Montessori training is exhaustive and many teachers opt out due to the rigorous assignment work entailed in the program. The children in the Montessori method are only enabled to learn not taught in the truest sense. There are distinct tools for every activity of the academics. For calculations, reading and writing, touch and feel, discipline everything has a bunch of tools to learn with. For every feature of learning there are playful tools or toys to learn it with. For neuromuscular adaptability, the 2-year-olds are tasked to pick up each grain of rice individually. Like this countless examples of how learning is made joyful and practical oriented. In the Kashmir valley even though play schools are aplenty even to this date a proper Montessori school has not flourished. The Montessori school is a core professional venture and possibly not a huge commercial venture. That could be one reason that neither the upscale businessmen nor the upstart businessmen have ever thought of starting a proper Montessori school. We need young educationists who are willing to first do proper Montessori training themselves and then pool in resources to launch a proper Montessori school in the valley. Our children deserve a break from the traditional blackboard and white chalk method of teaching.

# Wildlife Week - Celebrating Earth's Creatures

HIMANGSHU RANJAN

**I**n the grand tapestry of existence, the week devoted to wildlife stands as a vibrant and essential thread, weaving together the stories of the myriad creatures that inhabit our planet. Wildlife Week is not merely an observance but a profound celebration of the Earth's biodiversity, inviting individuals and communities alike to reflect on the intricate relationships that bind humans to the natural world. As the world grapples with environmental challenges that threaten the very fabric of these relationships, this week serves as a clarion call to action, urging us to recognize the invaluable role wildlife plays in sustaining the delicate balance of ecosystems and the urgent need to protect it.

The very essence of wildlife is a celebration of life in all its forms. From the soaring eagles that dominate the skies to the bustling bees that flit among flowers, every creature contributes to the ecological harmony of its environment. The vibrant hues of tropical birds, the gentle movements of a deer grazing in the twilight, and the hidden marvels of the ocean depths all testify to the wonders of the natural world. Each species, no matter how small or seemingly inconsequential, plays a crucial role in the web of life. This intricate interdependence highlights the pressing need for conservation efforts, a central theme during Wildlife Week.

The stark realities of the modern age confront us with a sobering truth: many species face unprecedented threats. The relentless advance of urbanization, the encroachment of agriculture, and the ominous shadow of climate change jeopardize habitats and the creatures that call them home. According to numerous studies, species extinction rates are alarmingly high, with an estimated one million species at risk of disappearing forever. Wildlife Week serves as a vital platform for raising awareness about these dire issues, sparking conversations that can lead to tangible action on both individual and collective levels.

As the week unfolds, communities engage in a plethora of activities designed to deepen their connection with the natural world. Schools become hubs of wildlife education, hosting workshops that encourage students to explore the wonders of their local ecosystems. Families embark on nature hikes, guided by passionate naturalists who share their insights about the flora and fauna that surround them. Art competitions spring to life, showcasing the talents of young artists who express their love for wildlife through creative mediums. Each event fosters a sense of community, galvanizing participants to appreciate the beauty of

the world around them and to recognize their role in its preservation.

A fundamental aspect of Wildlife Week is the emphasis on community involvement in conservation efforts. Local communities, often the first guardians of their environments, possess a wealth of knowledge about their natural surroundings. When empowered, these communities become powerful advocates for wildlife protection. Initiatives such as habitat restoration projects, community gardens, and wildlife monitoring programs illustrate the profound impact that grassroots efforts can have on local ecosystems. By collaborating with conservation organizations, individuals can implement sustainable practices that benefit both wildlife and their communities. Wildlife Week champions the notion that conservation is a collective responsibility, one that necessitates the active participation of all.

Education serves as the backbone of Wildlife Week, particularly when it comes to fostering the next generation of environmental stewards. Imagine a classroom filled with eager minds, wide-eyed with curiosity as they learn about the fascinating creatures that share their world. Engaging young people in discussions about wildlife and conservation instills a sense of responsibility that transcends generations. Activities such as field trips to wildlife sanctuaries and interactive sessions with conservationists allow students to forge connections with nature that can shape their values and behaviors for years to come.

In the contemporary digital landscape, the fight for wildlife protection has taken on new dimensions. Social media platforms serve as powerful tools for outreach, allowing organizations and individuals to amplify their messages to a global audience. During Wildlife Week, the online space is flooded with stunning images and compelling stories that celebrate the beauty and significance of wildlife. By sharing personal experiences and advocating for conservation efforts, individuals can harness the power of social media to inspire others to take action. The interconnectedness of the digital world enables a shared commitment to protecting the planet, uniting people across borders for a common cause.

Despite the strides made during Wildlife Week, significant challenges loom on the horizon. The illegal wildlife trade,

fueled by demand for exotic pets and luxury goods, poses a grave threat to countless species. Awareness campaigns bring attention to the devastating consequences of this illicit trade, highlighting the

meaningful change, ensuring that diverse ecosystems remain intact for future generations.

Moreover, Wildlife Week emphasizes the adoption of sustainable practices that contribute to the health of ecosystems. Responsible tourism, sustainable agriculture, and eco-friendly products are key themes in discussions about minimizing human impact on wildlife habitats. By making conscious choices in our daily lives, we can contribute to the preservation of biodiversity. This shift towards sustainability is essential for fostering resilient ecosystems that can withstand environmental challenges. Wildlife Week champions the idea that every action, no matter how small, can make a significant difference in protecting our planet's treasures.

As Wildlife Week unfolds, it becomes increasingly clear that the celebration of Earth's creatures transcends mere acknowledgment; it is a call to action. This week inspires individuals and communities to reflect on their connection to the natural world and take meaningful steps toward fostering a healthier planet. It is a moment to appreciate the beauty that surrounds us and recognize the responsibility we hold as stewards of the Earth.

Ultimately, celebrating Earth's creatures during Wildlife Week encourages us to recognize the intricate connections that bind us to the natural world. This observance invites us to appreciate not just the magnificence of wildlife, but also the fragility of their existence. As we honor the diverse life forms that share our planet, we are reminded that our choices and actions have far-reaching consequences. The legacy we leave behind depends on the efforts we make today to protect and preserve the treasures of the natural world.

In conclusion, Wildlife Week serves as both a celebration and a reminder of the vital role that wildlife plays in our lives. It calls upon individuals, families, and communities to unite in their efforts to honor and protect the remarkable diversity of life on Earth. This week is not just an event; it is an opportunity for transformation and action. By embracing our roles as advocates for wildlife, we can help create a future where the wonders of nature thrive, ensuring that future generations inherit a world rich in biodiversity and beauty. Together, we can forge a path toward a more sustainable and harmonious relationship with our planet, recognizing that wildlife preservation is essential to our shared existence.

The author can be mailed at himangshur1989@gmail.com



need for stronger regulations and enforcement. Each individual has the power to contribute to this fight by making informed consumer choices and advocating for ethical practices in the marketplace.

Additionally, climate change casts a long shadow over wildlife and their habitats. As global temperatures rise and weather patterns shift, many species face unprecedented challenges. Wildlife Week serves as a reminder of the urgent need to integrate climate action into conservation strategies. Advocating for renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and responsible consumption is essential in mitigating the impacts of climate change on biodiversity. By recognizing the intricate connections between climate change and wildlife loss, we can develop effective solutions that prioritize the health of our planet.

Legal protections for wildlife form a critical focus during Wildlife Week. The establishment of protected areas, such as national parks and wildlife reserves, provides sanctuaries for endangered species. During this week, the importance of enforcing laws that safeguard these areas and the creatures that inhabit them becomes paramount. Advocacy for policies that prioritize wildlife conservation encourages individuals to support measures that protect both wildlife and their habitats. Collective action can lead to

## Unacceptably, High Risks And Distress



BHARAT DOGRA

**T**here is only so much of stress, distress, and high risk that our world can bear at any given time, and today this has crossed the limits. While there are over 55 important conflicts in the world and several other smaller ones, not to mention the widespread violence and stress in daily life, the three conflicts associated with the highest risks and distress are those of Ukraine, the Middle East (itself a multi-dimensional conflict), and Sudan. These three conflicts/wars must end as soon as possible, if possible now and here. The risks involved are simply too great. The over 1.5 million people who have already died and the over 15 million who have been displaced in these three conflicts within 30 months are a very disturbing indication of the mass distress related to these conflicts but it is also a very partial indication—the high risks posed by the continuation/escalation of these conflicts are so huge that in fact the destruction of the entire world is a real possibility, as the escalation of at least two of these conflicts and their linking up can lead to a world war and a nuclear war. There used to be a time when the top leaders and diplomats of the world could be trusted to avoid the worst possible scenarios. Unfortunately, this appears to be no longer so, and people of the world should know and realize this. Several persons placed at senior levels in the West have

routinely stated in recent times, more or less,—that we have crossed several stated red lines in the past and Russia did nothing, so this means we can go on crossing bigger ones and nothing will be done. For any sane person, the horrible dangers inherent in such reasoning and arrogance should be clear. A reasonable response would have been to show at least some appreciation for the restraint exercised by Russia.

On the other front, when Iran's expected retaliation for the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, at a time when he was an official high-level guest in Tehran on July 31, did not come, again there was no appreciation of restraint. If escalation cannot come from this anticipated retaliation, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu appeared to say, then I'll escalate on my own, and he has done so on the Lebanon front with relentless bombing preceded by the horrible communication device attacks.

Thus extremely irresponsible and escalatory behavior has been seen on the part of some senior leaders and diplomats who ought to have known and behaved better. Incredibly and sadly, the big media follows the lead of such persons instead of becoming an important voice of peace and restraint, which should be its true role.

The peace and safety of the world cannot be said to be secure in the hands of such leaders, officials, and diplomats. Of course, they must follow their national interests, but not in such narrow and dangerous ways as to endanger the safety of the entire world which includes their own country and people as well. As one listens to what senior officials and leaders of the most aggressive countries frequently say, one wonders if they have ever been sincerely



trained and educated regarding the need of world peace. Most distressing has been to see war mongering in those countries of Europe and among those sections that were expected by many people to stand for peace.

Given the fact that several leaders and diplomats of the world in top decision-making positions are not exercising the responsibility and caution expected from them, the ongoing most serious wars and conflicts become all the more dangerous, and the possibilities of sudden escalations and widening of conflicts increase further. The fact that a situation has been reached where Russia has formally announced a significant revision of its nuclear doctrine is an indication of the extent to which the risks are rising.

It is not that some world leaders have not behaved irresponsibly in the past, but it is important to also remember that such irresponsibility and recklessness often resulted in bigger regional wars and, on two occasions, in world wars. The big difference then and now is that the world has around 13,000 nuclear weapons, just 5 to 10% percent of which are enough to destroy the world.

In Ukraine, the risks of a wider war have been most discussed in recent times in the context of NATO countries

possibly permitting Ukraine to use weapons supplied by them to attack mainland Russia. This is an explosive issue, but there are other possible flash points also for escalation, in a situation where the Ukraine President wants a wider war to reduce his problems relating to military reverses.

In the Middle East, the Israeli Prime Minister appears to take pride in the number of fronts on which he is fighting, not acknowledging that he could have avoided most of this conflict by acting more responsibly. What is worse is that he appears bent on initiating escalations that can lead to an even wider regional war. There is also an additional possibility that the two escalating most dangerous conflicts of Ukraine and the Middle East (with its many fronts) can get linked up with each other to become a world war and a nuclear war.

While the civil war in Sudan cannot lead to a world war, the risks of a wider regional war in a highly volatile region certainly exist. The sheer magnitude of the humanitarian crisis that has been caused within a short period by this civil war is deeply disturbing. People have faced indiscriminate killings, one-fifth of the population of the country has been displaced, one-half of the population suffers from severe hunger, fleeing people are often forced to move from one dangerous area to another, famine conditions have been declared even in big refugee camps, women and children face extremely harsh risks. On top of this in neighboring countries we now have increasing tensions between Somalia and Ethiopia, between Somalia and Somaliland, and the rise in tensions in the wider region relating to Ethiopia's giant GERD dam project. If the humanitarian crisis in

Sudan and the Horn of Africa region is already so huge, one can imagine the dimensions of the crisis if a wider regional war erupts.

Keeping in view all these high risks and possibilities of escalations, it has become extremely important that all these three conflicts should end as soon as possible and, if possible should end immediately now. The only way of ensuring such a very early end of these wars, as this writer has been emphasizing, is to agree to a more or less unconditional permanent ceasefire. There may be a few exceptions in the form of conditions that are relatively easy to achieve, such as the release of Israeli hostages, but what is important is that any conditions cannot be allowed to become the cause of further delay in ending war. So ceasefire now and here on the basis of the existing line of control should be the broad principle for ending these wars, while all contentious issues are then resolved later by peace negotiations. The peace negotiations can be prolonged but should not break down. Meanwhile, the international community should contribute generously to start rehabilitation work on a large scale. Other peace and goodwill-creating initiatives should continue all along. All the top statesmen, diplomats, and scholars of the world who are committed to peace should come forward to create such a consensus, the United Nations should contribute as much as possible to this, and leaders of individual countries should contribute with mediation and rehabilitation assistance, all peace movements everywhere should extend their support.(CC)

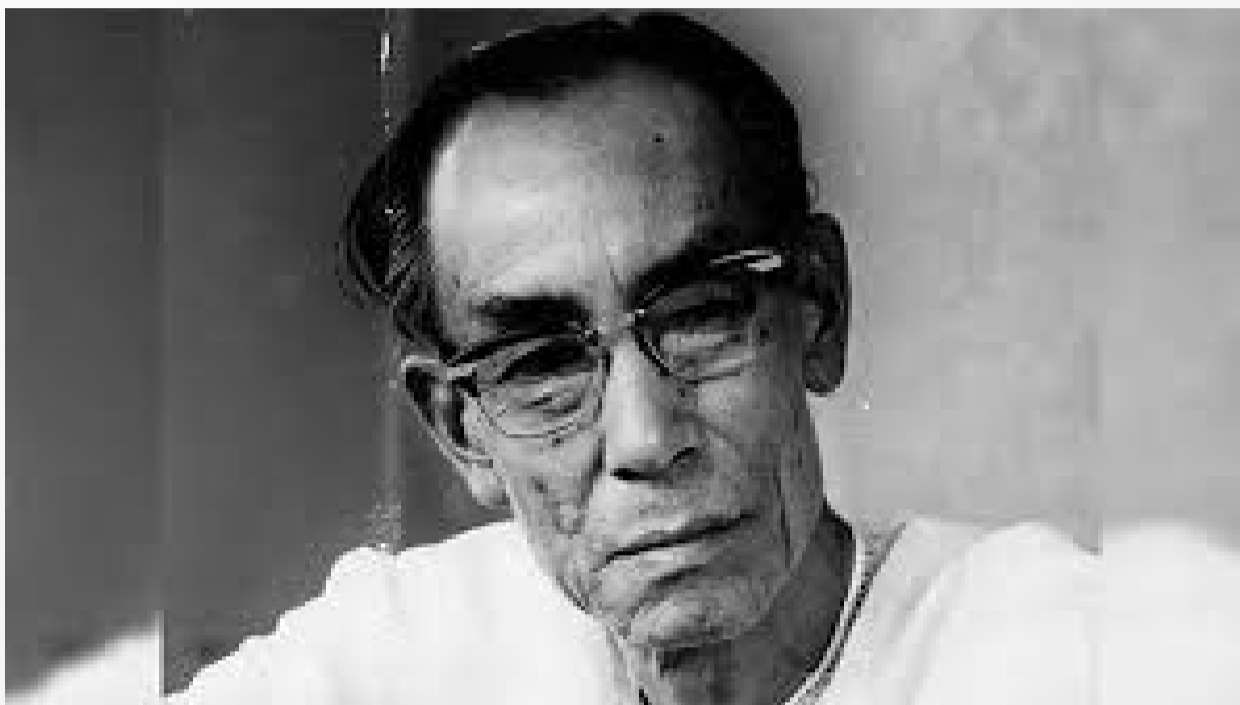
Bharat Dogra is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now.

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

# A Pearl Inside An Oyster: A Tribute To Maestro S D Burman

ZEENAT KHAN

*Love one another but  
make not a bond of love:  
Let it rather be a moving  
sea between the shores of  
your souls... Give your  
hearts, but not each oth-  
er's keeping.  
For only the hand of life  
can contain your hearts  
—The Prophet, Khalil  
Gibran (1923)*



As a true musical genius, Kumar Sachin Dev Burman needs no introduction. Almost fifty years after his passing, Burman continues to mesmerize us with his melancholy voice, seductive songs, and with his rendition of folk-like Bengali songs as well as Hindi film songs. Burman was born on October 1, 1906, in Comilla (now Tripura), in British India. He was a composer, singer, and music director for both Bengali and Hindi film songs. Meeting Meera Dasgupta was one of the highlights of Sachin Dev Burman's life. Meera took dance classes at Sachin's music school Surmandir in Calcutta. She was also a singer, wrote articles on music, and a lyricist. Immediately after meeting her, Burman was smitten, and they became romantically involved. He had asked her to marry him. But it posed a lot of difficulty in both families. Social status wise there were other issues that were against the couple. Sachin belonged to the royal family of Tripura. Meera was from a prominent Dhaka family. Her grandfather was a Raibahadur and a chief judge. Therefore, though outwardly Meera's family had good social standing, the thing that was lacking in her is that she did not come from "nobility." SDB's royal lineage did not quite fit the criteria to make it seem like a suitable match in the eyes of their families. Both families had raised their objections to such a union. There was a miraculous tale of true love and "love knows no reason." Even seeing their commitment to one another, both families did not relent to give their blessings. S.D. Burman refused to leave Meera, and he was forced to sever ties with his own family. He gave up his inheritance to have Meera as his wife. Like in a fairy tale, Sachin Dev, a royal prince, and a knight in shining armor prepared for the upcoming wedding. He rode on a horse with a sword in his right hand and went to wed Meera. The love story of this iconic couple is a "stuff of legend" as real love knows no obstacles. From that point on, their musical journey began, and they became each other's support in making beautiful music together. Meera became intimately involved with Burman's music, and together, they devoted their time to Sachin's sangeet sadhana. A musical jugalbandi was in the making to make S.D. Burman's music immortal.

Sachin Dev Burman, affectionately called "Dada Burman," was the youngest of nine siblings in the royal family of Tripura. The Tripura royal family at the time was great connoisseurs of art and culture. His father, Nabadwipchandra Dev Burman, a well-known skilled sitarist and dhrupad singer, was his first teacher. His mother, Nirupama grew up in the artistic atmosphere of the royal family where she was well trained in Manipuri music, song, and dances. When Sachin was young, the family moved to Comilla in East Bengal. Later, Burman received training in classical music from Ustad Badal Khan, Ustad Allauddin Khan as well as Bhishmadev Chattopadhyay. His training in classical music gave him a definitive foundation for his later compositions.

Meera Dev Burman wrote lyrics for many Bengali films. S.D. Burman composed those songs

by giving tune to those beautiful lyrics. Those are some of Sachin's most beautiful songs. The enchanting tunes of Burman resonate in the hearts of music lovers even today. Clad in his signature dhoti and kurta, the great composer's creative and modern outlook to music changed the contours of sub-continental Indian music.

In Burman's creation lies ingenuity and with his memorable songs he remains an eternal sunshine in my mind. Through his melodies and songs, I have come to know him since my adolescent years. While listening to his folk songs I feel intense emotions as happens in the cases of extra sensitive people. Sachin's music is not only a cognitive reflex, but I also experience his music as a true art form. Burman's music never gets old. Time and over I return to his songs to find solace, peace, hope, and pure bliss. The more I listened to Burman's compositions, the more I realized that he spoke to me with his music. Almost every Friday evening, listening to S.D. Burman's music falls under an enigmatic ritual of mine and Sachin evokes various feelings of nostalgia in me.

When it comes to music, we all have personal preferences. Music bonds us together with a very deep connection to our "limbic system." We make a personal connection when we listen to a particular song through memories, feelings, and other repressed emotions. Certain songs have a way of transporting you to a forgotten place, time, adding sadness, or joy. Music without a question arouses us emotionally, and our reaction to music is universal. As a focal point in writing my tribute to Sachin Dev Burman I choose the following unforgettable Bengali song:

The song obviously was sung by Sachin Dev Burman and the lyrics written by Mira Dev Burman. To a musically trained person, music continuously sounds beautiful, albeit in a unique way for each individual. Music is a very intimate experience for me. When I think of love and longing, I usually tend to lose myself in the haunting music of S.D. Burman. I keep on believing, "Like a pearl inside an Oyster you reside in me / the touch of love in my heart that's you, only you." It is an ache I feel in the depths of my soul. This particular longing does not always come from the longing for romance, having a companion, partnership, marriage, children etc. but a yearning for the divine. This type of "cosmic yearning" is a very deep desire to connect with something heavenly, something out of this world. Love does not necessarily have to be about romantic love. You can just love someone in all its simplistic goodness.

In creative arts, romantic love is most widely used as the most passionate kind of love. In Burman's many Bengali songs love is basically used as a profound force of nature. In some of the other songs love is celebrated as a connection with another person in such an intense way that you had not felt before. The song, "Barna gandhe chhande gitite..." is a celebration of love. Love can also be about "unconditional selflessness." It is

by far the most used emotion in S.D. Burman songs. In this particular song Burman had changed his style by uttering each word individually and by changing the verses from mukhda to antara in the classical Hindustani music style. In this specific song, the immortal lines "Mukta jemon shukhtir buke temni amate tumi / Amar praner premer bindu tumi shudhu tumi," has brought out the melody in a unique way by this brilliant musician.

"O prem Jamunai hoito keu dheu dilo dheu dilore / Akul hia dukul bujhi bhangle..." Who has not heard these unforgettable lines sung by Sachin Dev Burman? In this specific song, Burman's voice and the tune touch the soul. The lyrics of the song were composed with a new and intense faith in love. The song is deeply imbued with Bengali Romanticism and traces the romantic ideals and the heavenly joy of being in love. Like many S.D. Burman songs, this dreamy song reveals the feeling of someone about to be overwhelmed by love, to be swept away as in a tidal wave of feelings.

The metaphorical river Jamuna's banks are about to be breached by the sudden onslaught of passionate love. Just as the river is awakened by its waves, as the burning lamp is embraced by the flying insects diving into oblivion, the heart of the beloved is all aflutter, soon to experience bliss. To a mind in romance, the reference to the ripples in the river will undoubtedly open the heart's door that eventually leads to the soul.

I too experience Sachin's music as a true art form. S.D. Burman's Bengali songs are dominated by a varied repertoire of tunes. Sachin's heart piercing Bengali songs are heavily influenced and nurtured by the climate of East Bengal. Burman's folk songs convey Bengali culture that is specific to that culture alone. While listening to his folk songs I feel all kinds of emotions. Burman's music is not only a mere "cognitive reflex" but truly a different artistic expression.

Sachin's one of the most renowned songs, "Shonogo dakhin haawaa prem korechi ami / Legeche chokhete nesho dik bhulechi ami," is a very modern song synthesized with a folk tune. Unless one has an attentive ear for such dissimilarities - it is difficult to make out the mixture. In this number, the lover asks the Southern wind to listen, "I am in love." He is lost; his eyes are full of splendor and intoxication. His/her hidden thirst increases and is also excited by love. This feeling is in tune with the seasons (Barsha, Sharat, Hemanta, Basanta). The lover asks the intoxicating wind to listen, "I have lost all directions, since I am in love."

How about the melodic song "Bhalo lage biroho boro bhalo lage / Birohe shohagini rohe moner ghorete"? In this song the universal theme of love is not always there, and that is when we feel longing. Love is a decision to nurture one another. Love has no form or shape, love is endless. The lovers are not together. The yearning about separation begins for the beloved or the other way around. It seems separation is welcome to the singer/lover

as it strengthens love. Rather than being disheartened by the distance, the lover is animated and loves even more. Sadness approaches with the color of death, but the lover transforms it into the colors of spring. In this personification of love and longing, Sachin mixes classical tune with folk tune and the combination personalizes the separation to an extreme height that only a master musician is capable of doing. S.D. Burman was a classicist, and we see evidence of that in most of his songs.

How about the song Rongella rongella re / Amare chariya bondhu koi gelare? Doesn't your heart dance with each beat? Burman was inspired to compose this number from a childhood memory. He once had heard an old farmer singing this folk song in a field, near his childhood home in Comilla adjoined to the big man-made lake named Dharmashagor. (My best friend Nilu in Albuquerque, New Mexico just confirmed the info about the lake. As a young girl she lived in Comilla and played near the lake. She remembers seeing the beautiful lotus filled lake near Sachin's ancestral home).

Sachin Dev also incorporated this song as a devotional song Aan milo, aan milo, Shyam Sanware in Hindi film Debdas (1955). Though this song is about missing someone when that person is not with you, somehow it does not sound like a sad song. To me it sounds like a celebration of a lost love (if that is possible). Just because a person is not with you love does not necessarily end as love is perpetual. You continue to love that person until the day you die.

In his most heart-touching (a personal favorite) song Priyo / ajo noi / ajo noi... not yet / my beloved / not yet...the lyrics contain the soulful message from the lover to the beloved of the unrelenting sorrow of separation and longing (biroho) that persists without any hiatus. (Not yet, my beloved, not yet...the lover says.) I am paraphrasing the song here: The dove is still in agony, the banshee knows only one sorrowful song, and the messenger from the southern winds ('dakhina hawa') has not reached the lotus in my garden. This was my fate, the desires of my heart flowed down in tears. The longing in the daylight sinks at night to the painful stony promontory. When my beloved comes, will I lay down my love at the feet? Oh, I blush and tremble at the thought. Not yet, my beloved, not yet. This captures love and concomitant separation (and longing) at its most sublime. We feel that love can also make us feel despair and sadness beyond any reasoning as there are no set rules on how to recover from a lost love. Here the heartbroken lover is missing his beloved as she has left him. Still, he longs for her knowing it is over. But the feeling of loss has not quite sunk in, and therefore he says "ajo noi ajo noi..." Perhaps he is still feeling there is hope for reconciliation. We feel that love never dies as love is everlasting. Two people do not have to be together but can decide to nurture one another from afar.

Burman started his music career as a folk singer and light classical

musician for Calcutta radio station in 1932. The mysticism of folk and local village songs had a very deep impact on him. I suppose living in Comilla in a rural setting during his childhood had a profound impact on him. His famous early folk compositions were often swayed by his huge repertoire of folk tunes from 'Bhatiyali' or the boat songs, the Sari and Dhmail traditions of the North East.

In 1944, Burman moved to Bombay and started composing for films. His first recorded song was for Tinkari Chakraborty's 'Senjher Pidim' in 1935. His compositions have been sung by famous singers like Lata Mangeshkar, Mohammad Rafi, Asha Bhosle, Talat Mahmood, Geeta Dutt, and Kishore Kumar. In composing music for such artists S.D. Burman became remarkably successful and was highly regarded as a top-notch music director.

Who can ever forget Sachin's composition of Thandi Hawayen Lehrake Aye which Lata Mangeshkar sang in the 1951 movie Naujawan? Another extraordinary Hindi film song "Sun mere bandhure...in Sachin's own voice is spell-binding to listen to.

S.D. Burman was a music director from 1939 until his death. In most of his compositions, he used the banshee and often mixed Indian classical ragas with Western music. This experimentation proved to be very fruitful and redefined the way film songs were composed. Burman also incorporated the sounds of dance into his music.

After moving to Bombay, S.D. Burman and K.L. Saigal made a pact together that they would only let Hindustan Records record their songs. They were not interested in going with big-name labels to become commercially successful. And they had remained true to that pact. Burman was a recipient for the Sangeet Natok Akademi Award in 1958 and the Padma Shri in 1969. His music attracted famous poet and composer Kazi Nazrul Islam and the two maintained a friendly relationship. Burman's last recording in Bengali was "Kotha kao / Dao saraa...composed by Subol Das Gupta.

From the 1930s to the 1970s his music achieved the status of classics of that time.

Sachin went into a coma soon after recording the song 'Badi sooni sooni' sung by Kishore Kumar for the film "Mili." Burman died on October 31, 1975, in Bombay, Maharashtra, India.

The roots of S.D. Burman music are deep and yet appeals to the contemporary mind and soul without losing any charm or resonance. The emotional energy in the Burman songs is electrifying and there is always that wishful hope where one wants to surrender to his beloved. The mood in some of his popular songs is unsatisfactory one like "Ki kori ami ki kori / Bone fagun buke agun..." The constant yearning which leads to the unknown, and the uncertainty of whether love would reach its ultimate destiny makes S.D. Burman's songs quite unique and stand apart from that of his contemporary composers and musicians.

The classic oldies that S.D. Burman sang in his powerful voice are timeless and earned him the sobriquet of "The Inimitable Composer." His songs play a significant role in our lives with a lot of relevance, and we continue to nurture the romantic theme in our hearts which is very prominent in the Burman songs. A few of his songs will resonate with me until the end of my time. Burman's music enables me to associate myself with the experience of falling in love and mourning many things in between. Through it all I continue to listen to S.D. Burman songs mostly for aesthetic appeal and self-awareness. (C-Counter Currents)

*"Tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all"*  
— Alfred Lord Tennyson

*Zeenat Khan, a devotee of Sachin Dev Burman feels humbled to be writing this piece on one of the musical legends of all time.*

# Tips To Ensure Your Bones Stay Strong Through Menopause

**M**enopause can significantly worsen bone health in women due to a decline in oestrogen levels. Oestrogen plays a key role in maintaining bone density, and as its levels drop during menopause, the body's ability to replace bone tissue is impaired, leading to bone thinning and an increased risk of osteoporosis. This makes postmenopausal women more susceptible to fractures, especially in the hips, spine, and wrists. To maintain bone strength during and after menopause, lifestyle changes can be highly beneficial. In this article, we share a list of tips that can help keep your bones strong during menopause.

10 Tips to ensure your bones stay strong through menopause

## 1. Increase calcium intake

Calcium is essential for maintaining strong bones. During menopause, the body requires more calcium to support bone density. Aim for around 1,200 mg of calcium per day from sources like dairy, leafy greens, and fortified foods. Calcium supplements can also help if dietary intake is insufficient.

## 2. Get enough vitamin D

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium effectively. Spending time in the sun, consuming fortified foods, or taking a Vitamin D supplement can help boost your body's ability to maintain healthy bones during menopause.

## 3. Engage in weight-bearing exercises

Activities like walking, jogging, or weight lifting stimulate bone formation and slow bone loss. Regular



weight-bearing exercises strengthen the bones by applying pressure, which signals the body to produce more bone tissue, essential for post-menopausal women.

## 4. Incorporate resistance training

Strength training with resistance bands or weights improves muscle mass and strengthens bones by promoting bone remodelling. Aim to incorporate resistance exercises at least two

to three times per week to maintain bone density.

## 5. Limit caffeine and alcohol intake

Excessive consumption of caffeine and alcohol can interfere with calcium absorption and weaken bones. Limiting caffeine to moderate levels and alcohol to no more than one drink per day helps protect your bone health during menopause.

## 6. Consume magnesium-

rich foods

Magnesium plays a key role in calcium metabolism and bone health. Foods like nuts, seeds, whole grains, and leafy greens are good sources of magnesium. This nutrient is essential for maintaining strong bones as it aids calcium absorption and retention.

## 7. Maintain a healthy weight

Being underweight increases the risk of bone

loss, while excess weight can put stress on bones and joints. Maintaining a balanced, healthy weight helps protect your bones from fractures and keeps bone density stable.

## 8. Quit smoking

Smoking decreases oestrogen levels, which accelerates bone loss. Quitting smoking can help preserve bone density, especially during and after menopause, when oestrogen

levels naturally decline.

9. Eat protein-rich foods  
Protein is crucial for bone health as it provides the building blocks for strong bones. Consuming adequate amounts of lean meats, fish, eggs, and plant-based proteins can help maintain muscle mass and bone strength.

## 10. Consider bone-boosting supplements

Supplements like calcium, Vitamin D, magne-

sium, and Vitamin K2 can help ensure that your bones stay strong. Vitamin K2, in particular, helps direct calcium to the bones instead of arteries, where it could cause calcification. Consult with a healthcare provider for personalised supplement recommendations.

By incorporating these strategies, women can protect their bones and reduce the risk of osteoporosis and fractures during menopause.

## FROM THE FRONT PAGE .....

### UAPA Tribunal

sheet in 2018 filed by the NIA brings out a well-organized hierarchical structure of the APHC leadership to continue with violent means to achieve secession of Jammu & Kashmir under the cloak of APHC's socio-political umbrella, said the court.

At the top of this hierarchical structure sits, amongst others, SAS Geelani, Md. Yasin Malik and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq who are the chief organizers of the resistance movement classified as Joint Resistance Leadership by the separatists, added the court.

During the hearing before the UAPA tribunal, Yasin Malik, convicted of terror financing and serving a life sentence, stated that he had renounced armed struggle in favor of a Gandhian approach to resist what he perceives as Indian occupation of Jammu and Kashmir.

Malik, as the sole witness for the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF-Y), submitted a reply cum affidavit detailing his belief that armed struggle was the only path to fulfill the aspirations of the Kashmiri youth. He expressed that he later adopted a peaceful resistance approach, claiming engagement with central government officials to seek a dialogue for resolving the Kashmir issue.

His affidavit included references to Urdu poetry to justify his struggle for secession and contained allegations against senior police and intelligence officials, which the tribunal found largely irrelevant to the current proceedings. Malik argued that since the JKLF-Y was banned in 2019, there have been no unlawful activities warranting the reimposition of the ban. Additionally, he addressed various allegations against JKLF-Y, including visits to terrorist camps, connections with the Pakistani military, and receiving illegal funds from a hawala operator. (ANI)

### Going For

in the upcoming SCO Summit, the MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "EAM Jaishankar will lead a delegation to Pakistan to participate in the SCO summit which will be held in Islamabad on October 15-16."

Earlier in August, India received an invitation from Pakistan for the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) in-person meeting.

In May 2023, Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited India for the SCO meeting in Goa. This was the first visit by a Foreign Minister of Pakistan to India in six years.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation established on June 15, 2001, in Shanghai by Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Its predecessor was the mechanism of the Shanghai Five. Currently, the SCO countries include nine member states: India, Iran, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The

SCO has three observer states: Afghanistan, Mongolia, and Belarus.

At the Samarkand SCO Summit in 2022, the process of raising the status of the Republic of Belarus within the Organisation to the level of a member state started. The SCO has 14 dialogue partners: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bahrain, Egypt, Cambodia, Qatar, Kuwait, the Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye and Sri Lanka. (ANI)

### NIA Conducts Pan

individuals associated with JeM, and were engaged in disseminating terrorist related propaganda, and radicalising and recruiting youth into the Jamaat outfit inspired by JeM," the statement said.

It added that these suspects were involved in motivating youth into committing violent terror attacks across India, NIA investigations have revealed.

The premises searched by the NIA today were located in Goalpara (Assam), Aurangabad (MH), Jalna (MH), Malegaon (MH), Meerut (UP), Saharanpur (UP), Delhi, Baramulla (J&K), Pulwama (J&K) and Ramban (J&K), the statement said, adding that investigations in the case are continuing—(KNO)

### Arde Nareshwar

"After more than 20 years, the Puja has resumed at the temple, and it fills me with immense happiness to see this."

Accompanying the DC were Tehsildar Yaripora, EO MC Yaripora and other officers.

### Two Infiltrators

cache of arms and ammunition from the slain terrorists, which indicated that they were heavily armed, well-trained and equipped.

"We are committed to thwarting nefarious attempts by elements inimical to peace and harmony in Kashmir," the official added—(KNO)

### Urs Of Dastgeer

recitations of Azkars, Naat and Manajaat. Mubashir Ahmad Shah, one of the devotees from Budgam said, "I have been attending the Urs here for the past years, and every time it fills my heart with peace and hope."

"This shrine holds immense spiritual significance for all of us, and being here is a way to seek blessings and express our faith," he said.

Another devotee, Farooq from Nowgam shared, that every year, this Urs brings them together in faith and devotion. "We are thankful for the smooth arrangements, allowing us to focus on our prayers without

any disruptions," he said.

In the meanwhile, the authorities have ensured necessary preparations to facilitate a smooth and serene observance of the Urs. "From sanitation to traffic management, authorities have been working to provide an uninterrupted experience for the visitors," a devotee from Habba Kadal said.

Moreover, Mohammad Yousuf, a local shopkeeper near the shrine, said "This is a time when people from all corners of Kashmir come here not only to seek blessings but also to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood," he said adding this gathering also helps me and as a result my sales also got boosted.

In the meanwhile, an official communiqué from Dargah Hazratbal shrine, a copy of which lies with KNO, reads, the administration has also released a detailed prayer schedule, with the Fajr prayer at 5:50 AM, Dhuhr at 1:30 PM, Asr at 4:45 PM, Maghrib at sunset, and Isha at 7:55 PM.

"The Friday sermon will be held at 1:45 PM each week during the Urs period," he said—(KNO)

### Exit Polls Predict

to emerge as the largest party:

- C-Voter Exit Poll (2014):
- PDP: 32-38 seats
- BJP: 27-33 seats
- National Conference: 8-14 seats
- Congress: 4-10 seats
- Others: 2-8 seats

Similarly, ABP-Nielsen and News Nation Exit Polls reflected these trends, suggesting a close contest between the PDP and BJP. Back then, the National Conference under Omar Abdullah was predicted to suffer major losses, with the Congress trailing even further.

The 2014 exit polls proved to be relatively accurate. PDP did become the largest party with 28 seats, followed by the BJP with 25 seats, while the National Conference and Congress together managed just 15 seats and 12 seats respectively.

The Reliability of Exit Polls: Despite providing a snapshot of voter sentiment, exit polls have often missed the mark, especially in regions with complex and volatile political climates like Jammu and Kashmir. Several factors, including low voter turnout in certain regions, voting pattern shifts, and the dynamics between alliance partners, often lead to discrepancies between poll predictions and actual outcomes.

Exit polls rely on voter responses as they leave the polling booth, collected by survey agencies. This data is analyzed using mathematical models to predict seat allocations for different parties. However, the accuracy of these predictions can be influenced by the sampling methods, timing, and regional nuances.

In Jammu and Kashmir, factors such as voter turnout in militancy-affected areas, regional allegiances, and alliances could heavily impact the final results. This was seen in 2014 when exit polls failed to account

for the eventual PDP-BJP alliance that governed the state until its collapse on June 18, 2018.

Looking Ahead to October 8: As the countdown to the official results begins, these exit polls provide insights into what could unfold on October 8. With NC-Congress predicted to lead and BJP maintaining a strong foothold, the possibility of a coalition government looms large. Smaller parties and independents are expected to play a key role in shaping the next government in the region.

Exit polls may guide public discourse, but they remain estimates. Given the lessons from 2014, only the actual election results will confirm the political direction of Jammu and Kashmir. Until then, the wait continues to see whether these predictions hold true or if the electorate delivers a surprise once again—(KNO)

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# PM accuses Cong of keeping Dalits, poor, tribals away from mainstream

IAN S

**WASHIM :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday slammed the Congress party saying that it does not consider Dalits, tribals, poor and backward people as its own and keeps them away from the mainstream.

"The Congress wants to keep Dalits as Dalits, the poor as poor. So beware of the Congress. Urban Naxals are running the Congress. The party wants to divide the country. So it is trying to divide us. So be one and united to foil the Congress party's plot. This is the time to be together," he said at the public rally.

The Prime Minister referred to the recent seizure of drugs worth thousands of crores in Delhi saying that the main accused turned out to be a Congress leader.

"The Congress is pushing the youth to consume drugs. They want to contest elections from the money earned through drug business," he alleged.

He called upon the youth and the people in general to be aware of the Congress party's tactics and unitedly fight against it.

"The Congress gave promi-

nence to a particular family which wanted to rule the country. The Congress party always took a duplicitous stance towards the Banjara community. Our Banjara community has played a major role in the formation of India and in the social life of India. Great men of this society have done everything in art, culture, Defence and trade," said PM Modi.

"It was the responsibility of the Indian government to restore the name and pride of the Banjara community after Independence. However, the Congress governments alienated Banjaras from the mainstream communities," claimed the Prime Minister.

"The Banjara community has played a significant role in enriching the cultural heritage of India. In every sector, be it art, tradition, spirituality, trade and commerce, people from the Banjara community have made immense contributions," he said.

"However, those who are being neglected, Modi worships them. The BJP-led government at the Centre took a slew of decisions for the development of the Banjara community," said PM Modi.

He further added that Deven-



dra Fadnavis during his Chief Ministership had launched the Banjara Virasat Museum but it was blocked by the Congress and Maha Vikas Aghadi government.

However, he noted that it was further revived and completed

by the Eknath Shinde-led Mahayuti government at an expenditure of Rs 700 crore," said the Prime Minister.

PM Modi said polling is underway in Haryana, adding that the people of Haryana should vote in large numbers

to push the state's development.

Earlier, the Prime Minister performed Darshan at Jagdamba Mata Temple, Poharadevi. He paid tribute to the Samadhis of Sant Sevalal Maharaj and Sant Ramrao Maharaj in Washim.

He inaugurated the five floor Banjara Virasat Museum, celebrating the rich heritage of the Banjara community.

Poharadevi is one of the important and well-known pilgrimages of Maharashtra.

The PM also launched a slew of initiatives for the agricultural and animal husbandry sector worth around Rs 23,300 crore.

In line with his commitment to empower farmers, the Prime Minister disbursed the 18th instalment of the PM-KISAN Samman Nidhi worth about Rs 20,000 crore to around 9.4 crore farmers.

With the 18th instalment release, the total funds released to farmers under PM-KISAN will be around Rs 3.45 lakh crore.

Further, he launched the 5th instalment of NaMo Shetkari Mahasnan Nidhi Yojana disbursing about Rs 2,000 crore.

The PM showered praises on the Mahayuti government in Maharashtra for providing additional Rs 6,000 to farmers annually under the Namu Krishi Samman Nidhi.

He criticised the Congress and Maha Vikas Aghadi government for blocking several irrigation schemes.

He claimed that while the Centre was sending funds to

the state for farmers' welfare, the Congress and Maha Vikas Aghadi leaders were allegedly involved in corruption.

The Prime Minister dedicated to the nation more than 7,500 projects under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), worth over Rs 1,920 crore.

The major projects include custom hiring centres, primary processing units, warehouses, sorting and grading units, cold storage projects, post-harvest management projects among others.

The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation 9,200 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) with a combined turnover of around Rs 1,300 crore.

Further, he launched the Unified Genomic Chip for cattle and indigenous sex-sorted semen technology.

He also dedicated five solar parks with a total capacity of 19 MW across Maharashtra under Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Vahini Yojana - 2.0.

During the programme, he will also honour beneficiaries of the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana.

He also distributed cheques to some women beneficiaries under the scheme.

## Set aside political tactics, join hands with PM Modi: TN BJP chief to Stalin

IAN S

**CHENNAI:** Tamil Nadu's BJP spokesperson and senior leader A. N. S. Prasad has asked Chief Minister Stalin to shun partisanship and work with Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the growth and development of Tamil Nadu.

In a statement on Saturday, he called upon the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister to prioritise progress over party lines.

The BJP leader said that the recent meeting of Stalin with Prime Minister Modi has yielded a significant breakthrough for Tamil Nadu, with the Central government approving the Chennai Metro Rail Project Phase 2 and allocating Rs 7,425 crore.

He said: "This development underscores the importance of cooperation between the state and Central governments in implementing critical infrastructure projects."

The BJP leader said that the Chennai Metro Rail Project Phase 2 has been facing significant delays and financial roadblocks, despite its potential to transform public transportation in Chennai.

A. N. S. Prasad said that with an estimated cost of Rs 63,246 crore, the project was initiated as a State Sector Project by the Tamil Nadu government



before receiving financial approval from the Centre.

He said that the Chennai Metro Rail Phase 2 project has finally received the Central government's approval which will expedite its completion, and added that this development was a significant milestone especially since Tamil Nadu Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu had requested the centre for classification and the release of Rs 7,425 crore.

The BJP Tamil Nadu spokesperson said that Prime Minister Modi's approval came after a meeting with Chief Minister Stalin, who highlighted the project's importance for Chennai and Tamil Nadu.

He said: "This clarification puts to rest earlier misconceptions about Central government funding."

The BJP leader further said that the Chennai Metro Rail Phase 2 project is expected to be completed

by 2030, with a total length of 173 km.

However, Prasad said that DMK as a political party has been unfortunately politicising the issue, claiming the Centre has ignored Tamil Nadu's requests.

The BJP leader said that the facts reveal a different story and added that the Central government has made substantial investments in upgrading the state's infrastructure over the last decade, demonstrating its commitment to Tamil Nadu's development.

He said: "Key areas for cooperation between the state and Central governments include infrastructure development, economic growth, and social welfare."

Making a request to the Chief Minister, the BJP leader said: "Honorable Chief Minister Stalin, on behalf of the Tamil Nadu BJP, for the growth and prosperity of Tamil Nadu,

and for the welfare of its people, please set aside unnecessary political tactics and join hands with Prime Minister Narendra Modi."

He said that the Prime Minister has allocated numerous projects worth lakhs of crores to Tamil Nadu and said that the state BJP believe that the Chief Minister will work with the Prime Minister for the development of Tamil Nadu despite political differences for the betterment of Tamil Nadu.

Prasad said: "Recognise the good deeds of PM Modi for Tamil Nadu and refrain from spreading false narratives. The DMK should acknowledge its past mistakes, including forming an anti-BJP alliance and spreading false propaganda against PM Modi."

He also said that the BJP welcomes constructive criticism and differing opinions, but requests the Chief Minister to prioritise Tamil Nadu's growth over self-interest.

He also said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has demonstrated his unwavering commitment to Tamil Nadu's development and added that the Chennai Metro Rail Project Phase 2 will cover 118.9 km of new lines and 128 stations, transforming Chennai's public transportation landscape by 2027.

He also said that CM

Stalin has acknowledged PM Modi's support, thanking him on social media for approving the project and added that this cooperative approach would ensure Tamil Nadu's progress and well-being.

The BJP leader said: "In conclusion, it's crucial for the DMK government to put aside politics and work collaboratively with the Central government to complete this project."

He said that by prioritising development and collaboration, Stalin can cement his legacy as a leader who truly cares for his state's prosperity.

The Tamil Nadu BJP leader said that the Centre has provided continuous support through investments in upgrading state infrastructure.

He said: "On behalf of BJP Tamil Nadu and the people of Chennai, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to Honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi for securing Cabinet approval for funding Phase 2 of the Chennai Metro Rail project."

The BJP leader further said that PM Modi's leadership has been instrumental in revitalising Tamil Nadu's growth, addressing the shortcomings of the past and added that the Tamil Nadu BJP looks forward to the project's swift completion, transforming the lives of Chennai's citizens.

## India successfully tests 4th generation VSHORADS Missile



IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** In another major achievement for point protection against aerial threats on the battlefield, India has successfully conducted three flight tests of the fourth-generation, technically advanced miniaturised Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS), the Defence Ministry announced on Saturday.

The flight tests were conducted by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) at the Pokhran Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan on Thursday and Friday.

The tests were carried out against high-speed targets, demonstrating very critical parameters of maximum range and maximum altitude interception. These development trials

showcased the repeatability of the hit-to-kill capability of the weapon system in various target engagement scenarios covering approaching, receding, and crossing modes.

"The development of VSHORADS missiles has been completed and two production agencies have been engaged in the Development cum Production Partner (DcPP) mode. In these trials, the missiles realised through DcPPs have been successfully used, thus paving the way for early user trials and production in a short time span in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Government's vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'," the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

VSHORADS is a man-portable air defence system designed and developed

indigenously by Research Centre Imarat (RCI) in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and DcPPs. The three Services have been associated with the project right from the beginning and participated during the developmental trials.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has congratulated the DRDO, the armed forces and the industry involved in the successful development trials. "This new missile equipped with modern technologies will give further technological boost to the Armed Forces against aerial threats," he said.

Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and DRDO Chairman, Dr Samir V. Kamat also congratulated the DRDO team, industry partners and users for the successful flight tests.

## Employment in India up 36 pc with 17 mn jobs: Centre

IAN S

**NEW DELHI :** Contrary to the claims of "jobless growth," the latest government data shows that employment in India increased by 36 per cent (17 million jobs) between 2016-17 and 2022-23.

During the same period, the gross domestic product (GDP) grew at an average rate of over 6.5 per cent.

Employment data from the Reserve Bank of India's KLEMS database, which relies on surveys like the Employment and Unemployment Survey (EUS) and Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), indicates a steady rise in employment since the 1980s, according to the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

"India has witnessed significant employment

growth over the years. India's economic trajectory demonstrates sustained job creation across key sectors. With a robust economy, a dynamic culture that celebrates diversity, India's journey toward becoming a global powerhouse continues to inspire the world," said the ministry.

The PLFS data from 2017 to 2023 also suggests that Worker Population Ratio (WPR) has increased by 9 percentage points or almost 26 per cent during this period.

Therefore, the rhetoric of "joblessness" really does not hold water in terms of cross-comparison of databases, the ministry noted in a statement.

Moreover, the growth has been driven by con-

sumption, which is closely tied to employment. A rise in consumption implies that employment generation is occurring, as consumption would decline if employment were paid predominantly in unpaid or low-wage jobs.

As per the ministry, "employment elasticity" is a rational measure for checking the causal relation between growth and employment generation in an economy.

The estimates, based on a linear econometric model, show that for the period 2017-23, there was a 1.11 per cent increase in jobs for a per cent increase in value added.

Also, the labour-capital ratio in the economy as a whole is around 1.11 and that for the services sector is 1.17.

## Toll in Maoist encounter in Dantewada rises to 31; HM dials Chhattisgarh CM

IAN S

**RAIPUR :** The toll in the encounter in Dantewada district touched 31 as the search operations continued on Saturday and the security forces found more bodies of the Naxalites they had engaged earlier.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai late on Friday night, hours after the security forces killed over 30 Maoists in Dantewada district.

The operation by the security forces and the call to the CM Sai by Amit Shah came just days ahead of the Union Home Minister's high-level meeting with Chief Ministers and Home Ministers of Maoist-affected states on October 7 in the national Capital.

During the telephonic conversation late on Friday,

CM Sai apprised the Home Minister of the successful operation by the security forces and its details. The encounter took place on Friday afternoon between 12.30 P.M. and 1 P.M.

The security forces have recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition from the spot.

In a post on microblogging site X on Saturday, Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma said: "Our security forces have scripted history by killing 28 Naxals. Today, four to five more bodies can be recovered."

"Vishnu Deo government has come forward with a good surrender policy. Everyone should return to the mainstream... Bastar's water, forest and land belong to its people. The IEDs laid on the path of Bastar's development should be eliminated now,"

his post read.

"Home Minister Amit Shah Ji has also announced from the land of Chhattisgarh that Naxalism will be eradicated by 2026. Maoism is now counting its last breaths, he said.

Earlier on Friday, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister posted on X, "There are reports of 28 Naxalites being killed in an encounter between security forces and Naxalites in the border area of Narayanpur-Dantewada district."

Saluting their "courage" and "indomitable bravery", he said that this great success achieved by the soldiers is "commendable".

"Our fight to end Maoism will now rest only after reaching its conclusion, our double-engine government is determined for this. We aim to eliminate Naxalism from the state," he added.

## Khattar expresses confidence in BJP victory amid good voter turnout in Haryana

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**PANIPAT :** Former Haryana Chief Minister and Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has exuded confidence in the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) prospects of securing a victory in the Assembly elections.

He pointed to the significant voter turnout as a key indicator of support for the party, highlighting the increasing number of people casting their ballots across various constituencies.

Speaking to media persons in Panipat, Khattar emphasised that the bustling activity at polling booths, especially in the Karnal and Panipat districts, reflects strong public backing for the BJP.

"The long queues and the enthusiasm of voters clearly show that the BJP is receiving the majority of votes,"

he stated, adding that this trend positions the party to form the government for a third-consecutive term.

The former Chief Minister underscored the importance of high voter turnout in ensuring a decisive win, remarking, "The better the voting, the stronger the victory for democracy."

Khattar, who cast his own vote early in the morning in Karnal, urged all voters to exercise their right to vote, encouraging BJP workers to mobilise and assist voters in reaching polling stations.

Addressing speculation surrounding Opposition parties, Khattar dismissed Congress leader Kumari Selja's claim of becoming the Chief Minister if the Congress wins, questioning the party's internal unity and ability to agree on a leader.

# Lt Gen Prashant Srivastava takes command of Srinagar-based Chinar Corps

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai, Saturday handed over the reins of the Chinar Corps after being at the helm for the last 16 months to Lieutenant General Prashant Srivastava.

According to a statement, issued, the period witnessed a strong security architecture facilitating peace and stability in the region. "It saw the conduct of two incident free Amarnath Yatras, the Parliamentary Elections in May 2024 and the Assembly Elections after a period of 10 years, in September to October 2024," reads the statement.

It reads that the Corps achieved numerous successes in Counter Infiltration Operations on the Line of Control and in Counter Terrorists Operations in the valley, thereby dealing a significant and crippling blow to the terror network.

"Today, the region stands at the doors of a new dawn. Various programmes to reach out to the Kashmir people were notable during this time and the outgoing Corps Commander will be remembered for his humane and friendly approach. He now moves to Army Headquarters where he will assume the



appointment at the Director General of Military Operations."

It added that Lieutenant General Ghai extended his greetings to the people of Kashmir and wish them the very best for a bright and promising future. The statement further reads that Lieutenant General Prashant Srivastava, assumed command of the strategic Kashmir based Chinar Corps.

"On assumption of command, he paid obeisance at the Chinar War Memorial at Badami Bagh Cantonment, Srinagar, honouring the sacrifices of the Bravehearts for the Nation. A battle hardened

soldier, Lieutenant General Prashant Srivastava, during his 34 years of illustrious military career, has held numerous prestigious command and staff appointments."

It added that the General Officer possesses extensive operational experience in Counter Insurgency and Counter terrorist Operations having served in both Jammu and Kashmir as well as the North East. "He has commanded the Counter Insurgency Force (Victor) in South Kashmir.

On assuming command, Lieutenant General Srivastava extended warm greetings to the

people of Kashmir, reaffirming his commitment to work closely with the Civil Administration and the community, to build a peaceful and prosperous future. He urged members of the society to join hands with the security agencies in overcoming the challenges posed by terrorism."

It reads that as the mantle of leadership passes on, the Chinar Corps remains a symbol of unity, resilience and hope, dedicated to securing the region, ushering peace alongside nurturing its cultural heritage and future aspirations—(KNO)

# IGP chairs crime, security review meeting at PCR

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Range, V.K. Birdhi Saturday said that Jammu and Kashmir Police is committed to maintaining safety and security in the region.

A police spokesperson in a statement issued said that the IGP has asked the officers to ensure transparency & accountability to safeguard rights, safety of citizens of the region.

IGP chaired a crime & security review meeting of Kashmir Zone at PCR Kashmir today. At the outset, IGP Kashmir took an overall assessment of the security situation of the Kashmir Zone.

This was followed by the presentations of district SSPs highlighting their efforts in crime prevention and maintenance of law & order in their respective districts. The discussions revolved around disposal of



general crime, NDPS, UAPA and other cases. Actions taken under preventive laws and pending inquest proceedings were also discussed.

IGP Kashmir appreciated the efforts of the district chiefs in preventing crime and emphasized the need for improving the quality of investigation. He also underscored the need to improve the conviction

rates by way of establishing a robust follow-up system for securing convictions in narco and terror related cases. IGP Kashmir also reviewed the current security situation and took stock of the preparations put in place for the upcoming counting day of the Assembly Elections-2024.

At the end of the meeting, IGP Kashmir reiter-

ated the commitment of the J&K Police in maintaining safety and security in the region. He urged the officers to work for ensuring transparency, accountability and swift resolution of cases to safeguard the rights and safety of citizens.

The meeting was attended by all the range DIGs, district SSPs and other senior officers—(KNO)

## JK ELECTIONS

### Baramulla College, ITI to Close for Vote Counting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Deputy Commissioner's Office in Baramulla has announced the suspension of classes at Government Degree College Boys Baramulla and Government ITI Baramulla on October 7 and 8, in preparation for the vote counting of the assembly elections. Vote counting will take place on 8th October at Showkat Ali Stadium, Khawajabagh.

The suspension of classes is to ensure the smooth conduct of vote counting and maintain order. An official statement explained that clearing the campuses is necessary for logistical and security reasons.

Parking arrangements for vehicles involved in the vote counting process have been made at locations including FCI Godown, DIC Complex Baramulla, and ITI Baramulla (Kral-

har). Transportation will be available to ferry counting staff and political agents to and from the stadium.

The Deputy Commissioner's Office highlighted that security arrangements are being coordinated with the police and transport departments. The Sr. Superintendent of Police, Baramulla, will oversee security during the vote counting, which will involve political representatives, media, and staff.

**MAZBOOTI SE BANI HAR**  
— DEEWAR SE JHALAKTE HAI —  
**DIL KE EHSAAAS**



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