

# TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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## BRIEFLY

### Man found dead in river Jhelum in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, Apr 15 (Agencies): A male dead body was found floating over waters in Jhelum river in central Kashmir's Srinagar district on Monday morning.

An official told news agency Kashmir Scroll that a male dead body was sighted by some locals at Mujkund area in Shalteng Srinagar today morning, who intimidated the authorities about it.

### Election officials check Rahul Gandhi's helicopter in TN

NILGIRIS, Apr 15 (Agencies): Election officials here on Monday conducted checks in a helicopter carrying Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

The flying squad officials conducted the search after the helicopter landed here, police said.

Gandhi was on his way to his parliamentary constituency, Kerala's Wayanad, where he has a slew of campaign activities, including public meeting.

He is fighting the April 26 Lok Sabha polls from Wayanad, seeking a successive term.

### LED lamp manufacturing unit damaged in overnight blaze at Sanat Nagar

SRINAGAR, Apr 15 (Agencies): An LED electric lamp manufacturing unit was damaged in an overnight blaze at Sanat Nagar area of central Kashmir's Srinagar district, officials said on Monday.

An official said that a factory named Rafiqee Sounds, constructed on a plot area of approximately 4000 square feet, was damaged in the fire incident due to an electrical short circuit.

He added that it was a manufacturing unit for LED electric lamps, compressor machines, strap machines, laser machines, assembly lines, and SMT machines. A portion of the unit was used for storing electrical and electronic goods. Accessories like geysers, rice cookers, and induction heaters were severely damaged, he said.

The two-storey building was completely damaged in the fire," said the official, adding that no loss of life or injuries were reported

## Retired Judges write to CJI against attempts to 'Undermine' Judiciary

NEW DELHI, Apr 15 (Agencies): A group of 21 retired judges of the Supreme Court and high courts have written to the Chief Justice of India on the escalating attempts by "certain factions to undermine the judiciary through calculated pressure, misinformation, and public disparagement".

These critics are motivated by narrow political interests and personal gains and are striving to erode public confidence in the judicial system, they said.



Though the retired judges, including four

from the apex court, did not specify the incidents which prompted them to write to the CJI, their letter came amid a war of words between the ruling BJP and opposition parties over the actions against some opposition leaders in corruption cases.

With affected leaders and their parties moving courts to seek relief, the BJP has often accused them of using judicial

decisions selectively and cited any lack of relief for several arrested leaders to rebut the opposition's criticism.

The retired judges, including justices (retired) Deepak Verma, Krishna Murari, Dinesh Maheshwari and M R Shah, accused the critics of having insidious methods with clear attempts to sway judicial processes by casting aspersions on

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## Advance registration begins in Jammu for Annual Amarnath Yatra

JAMMU, Apr 15 (Agencies): The registration for the annual Amarnath pilgrimage began on Monday with a large number of people turning up at designated bank branches here to secure a permit.

The 52-day pilgrimage to the 3,880-meter-high cave shrine in south Kashmir is scheduled to start on June 29 and conclude on August 19, according to the announcement made by



the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB).

The journey can be

undertaken through two routes — the traditional

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## Kashmir lashed by widespread rains, snowfall over higher reaches: MeT

SRINAGAR, Apr 15 (Agencies): Kashmir valley lashed by widespread light to moderate rain while some higher reaches experienced a fresh light snowfall for the second consecutive day on Monday, bringing down the temperature, officials said.

Srinagar and other parts of Kashmir Valley experienced widespread light to moderate rainfall

during the past 24 hours, disrupting normal life and bringing down the temperatures, forcing tourists and local people to wear warm clothes.

Many low-lying areas were waterlogged due to the rainfall in Srinagar and other parts of the Kashmir valley, making life miserable for the people living in these areas.

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## LS Polls | ECI cracks down on money power in J&K; Cash, Liquor, Drugs, Freebies worth Rs 4 cr seized

SRINAGAR, Apr 15 (Agencies): The Election Commission of India (ECI) Monday stated that in its crackdown on money power, it has seized cash, liquor, drugs and freebies worth Rs 4 Crore in Jammu and Kashmir and that it will continue its drive ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

The ECI said that with



underway, ECI is on track for the highest ever seizures of inducements

recorded in the 75-year history of Lok Sabha elections in the country ECI cracks down on money power: Rs.100 crore seizure each day since 1st March Rs. 4650 crores seized even before polling begins:

Higher than total seizures in 2019 polls, the ECI said that the action will continue to be strict

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## If Kejriwal can provide free electricity, why can't we: Waheed Parra

SRINAGAR, Apr 15 (Agencies): PDP Youth President and Parliament candidate for the Srinagar-Pulwama-Ganderbal constituency, Waheed ur Rehman Parra, here on Sunday visited many areas of Srinagar and Pulwama districts during his trail campaign, addressing numerous public meetings.

These meetings held

in various areas of Habakadal, Pulwama, Pampore, and Rajpora constituencies.

During his trail campaign, Parra urged party workers to reach out to the people, aiming to strengthen the party and spread vision of Party President Mehbooba Mufti to the doorsteps of the people.

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## BJP manifestoes have always brought destruction for J&K: Omar Abdullah

SRINAGAR, Apr 15 (Agencies): Scoffing at the BJP's 'Sankalp Patra', its manifesto for the Lok Sabha elections, National Conference leader and former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, Omar Abdullah, on Sunday said it is aimed at the 'destruction' of the erstwhile state.

Speaking to ANI on Sunday, the former CM



said, "I have been busy campaigning since morning. I have not read their manifesto as yet. But

from what I have gathered, their manifesto has nothing for Jammu and Kashmir. The BJP's manifestoes have always brought destruction to Jammu and Kashmir."

He claimed that the INDIA bloc will win all five Lok Sabha constituencies of Jammu and Kashmir and one in Ladakh.

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## India likely to experience Above-Normal Rainfall this Monsoon: IMD

NEW DELHI, Apr 15: India is likely to experience above-normal cumulative rainfall in the 2024 monsoon season with La Nina conditions likely to set in by August-September, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said on April 15.

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## Man kills mother with sharp-edged weapon in Baramulla, arrested: Police

SRINAGAR, Apr 15 (Agencies): In a heartbreaking incident that shook Rafiabab village in North Kashmir's Baramulla district, a son allegedly murdered his mother in her late 40s.

According to officials speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the tragic event occurred during the intervening

night of Sunday and Monday in Hadipora village of Rafiabab.

The victim, whose identity has not been disclosed, was reportedly attacked with a sharp-edged weapon by her son. The accused, identified as Amir Wani alias Gajini, and reported to be a driver by profession, was swiftly arrested by

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## Beginning of 'Ram Rajya' has started in India, nobody can stop it now: Rajnath

KATHUA, Apr 15 (Agencies): Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said the "Ram Rajya" has started taking roots in the country and nobody can stop it in becoming a reality.

Addressing an election rally in support of Union Minister Jitendra Singh at Basohli in Kathua district, he highlighted the fulfillment of all promises made by the BJP like abrogation of Article 370, construction of the Ram temple and implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

He said the BJP is not doing politics for formation of the government but for the country which was pulled out from a big trouble caused by the trust deficit between the people and politicians.

Singh assured people that nobody who is an Indian national is going to lose his citizenship after the implementation of the CAA, while the BJP will keep its promise to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) as promised in the party manifesto in the next five years.

He also referred to the banning of triple talaq and said "whether we form the government or not, attack on the dignity and honour of the women is not acceptable to us".

"I have a feeling that the establishment of Ram Rajya has started in the country and nobody can stop it from becoming a reality. Ram Rajya means that the people have realisation and awareness

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# MBA MOTORS

## MERCEDES - BMW - AUDI

DEALS IN SALE, PURCHASE, REPAIRING AND SERVICING OF USED CARS AND ORIGINAL SPARE PARTS

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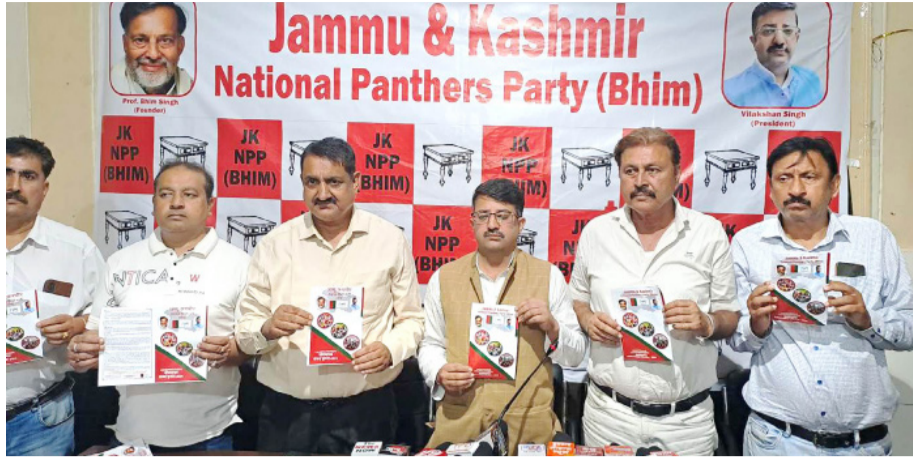
## JKNPP (Bhim) releases Manifesto for 2024 LS Elections

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: Vilakshan Singh, President of the J&K National Panthers Party (Bhim), officially released the party's manifesto for the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The manifesto outlines a comprehensive plan aimed at restoring statehood and addressing key issues affecting the residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

Singh said that the Panthers Party (Bhim) is committed to the immediate restoration of statehood. He said that the party would ensure that the rights in jobs and land shall be reserved exclusively for the original residents of J&K. The party has laid out clear promises to ensure a fair and prompt recruitment process, as well as the regularization of daily wage workers.

In a strong stance against corruption and crime, particularly those crimes committed against women and



children.

J&K National Panthers Party (Bhim) has vowed to adopt a zero-tolerance policy. Furthermore, the manifesto highlights the party's determination to eradicate the burgeoning drug menace that continues to claim the lives of the youth in the region.

Recognizing the critical need for judicial reforms, the party promises measures to ensure that justice is swift and not delayed. The manifesto also includes a commitment to the dignified rehabilitation of Kash-

miri migrants. Party also promised to continue its fight for the migrants of Jammu region.

A key feature of the party's vision is the establishment of an Accountability Commission aimed at ensuring that corrupt officials cannot harass the citizens. The manifesto ensures that there will be no detention without trial and promises to fight for those who have been incarcerated for political reasons.

J&K National Panthers Party (Bhim) promised

to work for upliftment of the vulnerable sections of society, with specific promises aimed at improving the welfare of senior citizens, the specially abled persons and farmers.

"This manifesto is a blueprint for the restoration of rights and dignity to the people of Jammu and Kashmir," said Vilakshan Singh. "Our commitments are not just promises, but a roadmap to a just and prosperous future for all residents of J&K."

The J&K National Pan-

thers Party (Bhim) invites all citizens to join in their campaign as they work towards a prosperous Jammu and Kashmir.

Singh also informed the media that security has not been provided to the leaders and star campaigners of the party and the party has approached ECI against the discriminatory attitude of the administration. Party also announced the appointment of Hakim Arif Ali (State Secretary) as Election Incharge for Kashmir Province.

Others who are present on the occasion included Hakikat Singh (State General Secretary and candidate from Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency) Naresh Chib (State General Secretary and candidate from Jammu Lok Sabha constituency), Rajesh Gondhi (State General Secretary), Ravinder Jamwal (State Secretary) Sham Gorkha (Provincial President), Rakesh Gupta (District President Jammu) and others.

## SSDS to take out Shobha Yatra on April 17



Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: Shri Sanatan Dharam Sabha (SSDS) Jammu Kashmir President of Parshotam Dadichi said that a Shobha Yatra will be taken out on 17 April, 2024 on the occasion of Ramnavmi in Jammu.

"Shri Snatan Dharam Sabha along with Dhar-amarth Trust J&K will monitor this Shobha Yatra," Parshotam Dadichi said in the press conference here on Monday. He said that Jhanki of

"Shri Ram Darbar will be taken out by Natak Samaj of Sabha.

The pooja of Rath/Jhanki will be done at the Gate of Geeta Bhawan and then onwards the Rath will go towards Shri Raghunath Temple from where other Jhankis the Shobha Yatra will be taken out from Residency Road, Rajendra Bazar, Kanak Mandi, Bharat Mata Chowk (City Chowk), Purani Mandi, Link Road, Jain Bazar, Chowk Chabutra, Pacca Danga, Moti Bazar, Geeta Bhawan, Ranbireswar

Temple, Shalamar, Indira Chowk, and concluded at Hari Market. Parshotam Dadichi said that the Elections are also like festival in Democracy so people should celebrate Election like Festival and should vote. "Every Voter should vote in National interest. Every Voter should think that his/her vote will make India a Vishwa Guru. So People Should Vote for the preservation of Sanatan Values," he said.

Sanjay Gupta, Gen Secy was also present in conference.

## Ensuing Lok Sabha polls will be between nationalist & anti-national forces: Bali Bhagat



Top News Report

RAMNAGAR, Apr 15: Former BJP Minister Bali Bhagat asserted that the ensuing Lok Sabha polls in the country will be held between nationalist and the anti-national entities and it becomes necessary for the party to decimate opponents completely to ensure victory of true and patriotic Indians.

The former minister was speaking at the election campaign meeting in support of BJP Lok Sabha candidate in Ramnagar Constituency here today. Former legislators RS Pathania and Baldev Sharma, BJP

leaders Sheel Mangotra, Sumit Gupta, DDCs Mool Raj, Jattu Ram and Amit Sharma, Mandal Pradhans Rajinder Sharma, Mohinder Sing and Yog Raj were also present.

The former minister Bali Bhagat said that ensuing Lok Sabha polls are the real test for the BJP as nothing short of clean sweep is the aim of the party in the upcoming political battle and to achieve the goal hard work and dedication are the keys. He urged the party workers and supporters to prepare themselves for the elections and to work diligently to ensure the party's success at the polls. He

highlighted the need for the party cadre to create awareness among the people of Jammu and Kashmir about the Modi Government's achievements in its ten years of rule in the country.

Bali Bhagat believed that the pro-people policies of the Modi Government have contributed significantly to the transformation of Jammu and Kashmir. He cited the rollout of several developmental projects, including road, railway lines and bridge constructions, as well as major reforms in the health and education sectors, as examples of the Government's commitment to the welfare of

the people. Bhagat emphasized the need for the party cadre to work diligently and with dedication to strengthen the party's presence at the grassroots level. He highlighted the importance of securing the trust and confidence of the people.

The senior BJP leader appealed to the people of Jammu and Kashmir to support and vote for the BJP candidates to ensure that the nation's interests are always protected. He said that the BJP is the only party that has a proven track record of standing up for the nation's interests, even in the face of adversity.

## Manjit Singh demands restoration of statehood to J&K before LA polls

Top News Report

RAMGARH, Apr 15: Apni Party Provincial President, Jammu, and Former Minister, Manjit Singh has demanded restoration of statehood before the holding of assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Former Minister was addressing a worker's meeting at Ramgarh which was organized by District President, Legal Cell, Samba, Adv Sahil Bharti.

District President Samba, Raman Thappa, Block President, Bachan Choudhary among others attended the meeting to discuss the party's working and present political situation.

The party workers raised various issues faced by the people in Ramgarh especially related to the farmers, canal water and road connectivity.

Speaking on the occasion, Manjit Singh issued certain instructions to the party workers on intensifying the public outreach program to educate about the policy and agenda of development to the people of



Ramgarh.

He appreciated the workers for their hard work. Meanwhile, he referred to the concern of the people in Jammu and Kashmir regarding the downgrading of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into a Union Territory.

"The Jammu and Kashmir was a historic state. It was injustice to continue J&K as a Union Territory. Therefore, it becomes imperative for the Govt of India to restore the statehood to Jammu and Kashmir before the holding of assembly elections," he said.

He said that Jammu and Kashmir is considered as a crown of the

country and its glory must be restored before the assembly polls.

He however expressed concern over delay in the elections for Jammu and Kashmir's Legislative Assembly although the democratic activities have increased in the wake of the scheduled parliamentary elections.

He said that the party is committed to keep the two regions united and provide equal opportunity to the youth for employment.

He said that the elected Govt must restore the confidence among the people which is lost because of the bureaucratic system in Jammu and Kashmir.

"In the present style of governance, the public opinion is not considered and hence, it has resulted in the widening of gap between the people and the bureaucracy," he said.

In this regard, he said the holding of the assembly elections in J&K is necessary because an elected Govt can address public issues.

He referred to the issues of border residents in Ramgarh, compensation, KCC loans, canal water for irrigation purposes at the tail-end villages, unscheduled power cuts, construction of bandh along the rivers for the protection of the agricultural land etc.

## CEO Shrine Board inaugurates Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra at SMVDU



Top News Report

KATRA, Apr 15: Chief Executive Officer of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, Anshul Garg, on Monday inaugurated Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra in the Medical Aid Centre, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University in presence of the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Pragati Kumar, along with other dignitaries, present on the occasion.

This Aushadhi Kendra will provide affordable medicine to the staff, faculty, and students of the university and outsiders.

On the occasion, Prof. Pragati Kumar and Anshul Garg visited various Labs and Wards of the Medical

Aid Centre and interacted with the staff members of the Medical Aid Centre. Dr. Pallav Sharma, Medical Officer of the university briefed Prof. Pragati Kumar and Anshul Garg about the Medical Aid Centre. It is pertinent to mentioned that Medical Aid Centre is organizing a health Check-Up Camp for the students as well as all the employees of the University in which various official Neeraj Gupta, Finance Officer, Prof Balbir Singh, Dean Academic Affairs, Dr. Ashutosh Vashishtha, Dean, Faculty of Management, Dr. Anju Sharma, BMO, Katra and other staff members of the university were present.

## BLSKS celebrates Dr Ambedkar Jayanti

Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: To celebrate the Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Jayanti & to promote the traditional folk cultural of J&K, Bhartiya Lok Sangeet Kala Sansthan (BLSKS) presented its 416th Regular Series Musical Play "Baba Saheb Ambedkar" as well in collaboration with Ministry of Culture, Govt of India & Sangam Tru Art Production at Durga Bhawan, Janipur, Jammu.

The function was inaugurated after lighting the traditional lamp by the Chief Guest J.K. Raina, Freelancer Producer Director, V.K. Magotra, former Regional Director, Directorate of Field Publicity, Government of India, and Dr. Anju Dogra from Health Department, J&K Government, Mukesh Singh, Media Person Jammu were the Guests of Honour.

Speaking on the occasion Chief Guest highlighted the life history of Bhim Rao Ambedkar, he was born on the 14th of

April 1891 in Mhow in the Central Provinces which is now a part of the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh.

He was born in a Dalit family and had to bear the problems faced by people belonging to this caste since his childhood. Ambedkar's father and ancestors worked for the army of the British East India Company and were not involved in menial tasks. However, they were still considered untouchables because of their caste. Though he went to school he was not allowed to sit with the students belonging to the upper caste groups. He, along with other children from the Dalit class, was made to sit separately and was treated badly. There was discrimination everywhere around him. This discrimination at school and in the society in general inspired him to work for the rights of the Dalits as he grew up. As you know we are engaged in mobilizing the youth for promotion of traditional folk & the role of Bhartiya Lok



Sangeet Kala Sansthan (NGO) has become very significant in generating awareness among the masses about various social evils through Musical Play / Theatre / Drama which are still very powerful medium of communication. The musical play written, produced and directed by Dr. M.L. Dogra (Chairman BLSKS) & highlighted the importance of the play, the music was composed by Mr. Raju Bajgal which revolves around this festival.

Welcoming the digni-

taries M.L. Dogra, chairman BLSKS explained aims & objectives of the programme and said the people of India remember him for his continual efforts for the upliftment of the Dalit community. Ambedkar Jayanti is thus celebrated each year with immense zeal particularly by the people belonging to the Dalit class.

Various big and small events are held in different parts of the country on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti. Dr. Ambedkar and his con-

tribution to the society is remembered on this day. Evidently, Dr. Ambedkar attained success in convincing the assembly about the importance of equality among the members of the society and the advantages of the eradication of religion and caste inequality. As a result of his tireless efforts and crystal clear vision, reservations were established in colleges, government jobs etc for the people of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes for the upliftment and betterment of the

people who were considered to belong to lower castes. These people remember him fondly on Ambedkar Jayanti.

M.C. Kotwal, General Secretary BLSKS said Ambedkar Jayanti is a day to remember the good deeds of our great political leader who also happened to be a historian, teacher, writer, editor anthropologist and orator. Above all, he was a noble soul who did not only rise and shine but also helped those around him get what they deserved. The singers, musician, actors and students of Music and Computer institute who performed in the musical play were Usha Raina, Mahesh Chander Kotwal, Rajni Gupta, Zulekha Bano, Sanjeev Kumar Sodhi, Sudesh Kumari, Sudha, Lovisha, Bhumika, Suryansh, Karn, Puspah and many others presented the enthralled performance. Deepak Kumar presented vote of thanks for successful conduction of the program.

## EDITORIAL

Benefits OF  
PARKS

For many people who lives in cities, park are an important part of the landscape. They provide a place for people to relax and play sports, as well as a refuge from the often harsh environment of the city.

A public park is an area of land designated for public use, usually featuring open spaces and natural plant life. On the larger end of the scale are National and State parks, which can cover areas of thousands or even millions of acres, and serve as large reserves of undeveloped land, where people can go for recreation and animals can live in their natural ecosystems. Smaller parks, often controlled by states or individual counties, help to break up suburban sprawl and give children and adults alike places to play sports, relax, or attend cultural events. Urban parks are often some of the smallest, but they still have a big impact. Parks located in the dense interiors of cities may be smaller than a block, or a thin ribbon of grass and trees snaking along an old rail line, but they provide significant benefits to the millions of people who live in urban areas. Parks and green spaces inside cities improve the health of the people live near them, the economy of their neighborhoods, and the environmental impact of the city as a whole.

The physical and mental health of the residents of a community should be one of the main considerations when analyzing any aspect of urban design. The impact that the built environment has on those who live within it is huge, and it is worth the effort to make it as positive as possible. Living near a park in an urban environment makes people physically healthier, mainly by increasing the amount that they exercise. Parks and greenways, long, thin stretches of park land, provide a space where people can go to play sports, walk, and bike with a view of nature and without having to dodge traffic. This increases the number of opportunities to exercise and makes it more enjoyable.

In addition to the mental and physical benefits of exercise, it has also been shown that mere exposure to natural plants and greenery can improve mental health and even help children cope with ADD. One theory for the mechanism behind this is that humans naturally seek out and prefer spaces that seem lush and fertile, as those would have been prime areas for finding food in the ancestral environment. Areas of dense vegetation can often be hard to come by in a city, and giving people a place to go where they can experience nature and relax is an essential function of urban parks.

Spending time in parks around other people, and especially participating in activities such as gardening or community service, helps to create connections between people in a neighborhood. This builds a stronger, safer community, where people can more easily trust and rely on each other. Parks don't just help the health of the individual, but of the community as a whole.

All populated areas have to deal with the problem of pollution. Industry, construction, and day-to-day human activity all release chemicals that decrease the quality of the air and water. In cities, where the population is so concentrated, pollution can easily become a major issue if it is not dealt with seriously and intelligently.

Public parks are good for the environment because they passively remove pollutants from the air and the water. Trees remove harmful gases such as carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and ozone from the atmosphere. In addition to directly filtering the air, trees help to cool the air, reducing the impact of the urban heat island effect.

The soil in parks, bound together by the roots of trees and grass, plays a significant part in filtering and slowing the flow of water through a city. Asphalt and concrete will hold pollutants like paint, oil, and gasoline in cracks and holes, releasing them all at once during periods of rain. Soil acts like a sponge and a filter, slowing down the flow of this water and removing some of the chemicals that it carries with it. Parks, especially those next to streams and rivers, are a natural and cost effective ways to significantly reduce the levels of pollutants that make it into these bodies of water. Of course, there are other ways to filter and clean the water and the air, but these methods often require massive facilities that consume energy, space, and money. Not only are parks more efficient, but the space they occupy is positively utilized and appreciated by the community, in a way that a water purification plant could never be.

## Has China replaced Japan as the new 'Yellow Peril'?

By: Sanjaya Baru

The first fortnight of April was an eventful one for Japan. The Hollywood movie Oppenheimer was finally screened in Tokyo. In the same week Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida arrived in Washington DC on a state visit and renewed his country's dependent relationship with the United States, the foundation of which was laid by World War II.

The movie opened old wounds raising afresh questions regarding the American decision to drop atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki even as the war in Asia had almost come to an end. Was the bombing and killing of thousands warranted by the events on the ground or had a defeated Japan become a laboratory in which to test these new weapons of mass destruction? Most war historians now agree that the United States did not need to drop the bomb to declare a victory that was already at hand.

For three quarters of a century after the war, Japan had not only eschewed nuclear weapons but had also decided not to re-arm itself and maintain regular defence forces. Opting to remain subdued as a defeated, occupied power, Japan focused all its energies on becoming an economic superpower. A geo-economic and not a geopolitical player on the world stage.

Then came the oil shocks of the 1970s and the 1985 decision by the United States to impose a devaluation of the dollar against the Japanese yen which was aimed at improving US trade competitiveness. Apart from using the exchange rate as a weapon against Japanese imports, the US used tariff and non-tariff barriers,

including what was euphemistically termed as "voluntary export restraint" (VER) to reduce Japan's trade surplus.

In response to this long list of humiliations heaped on Japan by the US, two eminent Japanese, Akio Morita and Shintaro Ishihara, wrote a bestseller titled The Japan That Can Say No. It was a polemical tract aimed at Washington DC and a message to the US that it could not take Japan for granted. Matters did not settle there.

Just in case the Japanese had not got the message, a distinguished American historian and strategic thinker, Harvard University's Samuel Huntington, decided to write an essay ("Why International Primacy Matters", 1993) in which he warned the American political leadership that a Japan blooming again had to be nipped in the bud.

Japanese strategy, behaviour and declarations, warned Huntington, "all posit the existence of an economic cold war between Japan and the United States. In the 1930s Chamberlain and Daladier did not take seriously what Hitler said in Mein Kampf. (Harry S.) Truman and his successors did take it seriously when Stalin and Khrushchev said: 'We will bury you'. Americans would do well to take equally seriously both the Japanese declarations of their goal of achieving economic dominance and the strategy they are pursuing to achieve that goal."

The Japanese challenge to American economic primacy, said Huntington, could threaten "American national security", if the Japanese expand their lead in a variety of militarily important technologies. The US should avoid becoming dependent on Japanese technology, especially in semiconductors, video display equipment, circuits

for missile guidance systems, and other key electronic products.

Moreover, said Huntington, "the growth of Japanese economic power threatens American economic well-being. The loss of markets means that American factories close and jobs migrate offshore. Profits go down, business go bankrupt, investors suffer... The economic decline and even collapse manifest in so many industries targeted by the Japanese will appear in still others. The Japanese government, for instance, has targeted aerospace for rapid development with government subsidies, loans, and political support. If Japan is successful, the future of Seattle can be seen in Detroit."

I quote Huntington at length only to make the point that a bigger China now is viewed in the same way that a smaller "Japan" was in 1993. The "Yellow Peril" has become bigger. The rise of China has also sent Japan into a funk. In 2010 China overtook Japan to become the world's second biggest economy. This economic demotion came over forty years after Japan's political demotion by the US when in 1972 President Richard Nixon shook hands with Chairman Mao Zedong in Beijing. The US-China detente of 1971-72 contributed to China's rise as an economic superpower, dwarfing Japan.

In the 1980s the US complained about Japanese subsidies to its exporters and today US treasury secretary Janet Yellen complains about China's "over-capacity". In 1980s the US asked Japan to exercise "voluntary export restraint". Last week Ms Yellen asked China to scale back its industrial production, eliminate "over-capacity" and reduce the import pressure on US manufacturers.

The difference between Japan

then and now, however, lies in the fact that in the late 1980s there were some in Japan who felt Japan could say "No". Today, the rise of China has dwarfed that personality of Japan. It once again behaves as a subdued power, dependent on the West, rather than as an independent, Asian power. This is Fumio Kishida's Japan. A far cry from Shinzo Abe's.

As many of my co-authors and myself suggested in our tribute to the late Prime Minister Abe (The Importance of Shinzo Abe; HarperCollins, 2023), Abe did try to shape a new personality for Japan by seeking to tweak its constitution and make Japan politically, economically and militarily stronger. Within a year of his tragic death the Abe legacy has been diluted beyond recognition by his own disciple, Prime Minister Kishida.

We have seen a nervous Japan in 1971 and then again in the 1990s. During Abe's decade in office Japan appeared more sure-footed and sought to regain its individual personality. His outreach to India in 2007, to Southeast Asia subsequently and even to Africa and Russia suggested that Abe wanted Japan to acquire a personality of its own. That process may now be delayed as Japan embraces the Anglosphere in Asia and quietly buries the Quad -- Abe's historic contribution -- and embraces AUKUS.

By aligning itself with the Western powers out of fear of an assertive China, Japan has become a lesser power under Fumio Kishida, compared to the high profile it seemed to acquire during Abe's tenure. If rising Asian powers remain suspicious of each other, they will only help the West to retain its presence in Asia.

## Increasing Problems due to Solar Waste

By: Vijay Garg

The current solar panels being adopted to overcome power shortages are designed to last for twenty-five to thirty years, but due to weather conditions, accidents or other reasons, they may fail even before the expected time. Bad solar panels become the cause of environmental pollution as soon as they stop working. After plastic, vehicles, factories and e-waste, solar panels are considered to play an important role in polluting the environment. It is noteworthy that solar panels contain silicon, glass, aluminium, lead, cadmium, copper and cadmium, which is not easily recycled. Therefore, from now on, there is a need for intensive research and increased understanding on this. According to the International Renewable Energy Agency, due to the production and installation of solar panels in large quantities, there will be a significant increase in the waste generated by it by 2030, which is expected to cause environmental problems. Therefore, there is a need to make such panels which can last for a long time i.e. the process of waste generation is extremely slow. According to research, India's hundred The amount of waste is expected to be six hundred kilotons by 2030. This quantity will increase thirty-two times by 2050, due to which approximately nineteen thousand kilo tonnes of cumulative waste will be generated. This share will increase to 74 percent by 2040, as existing solar panels reach the end of their life. Similarly, 77 percent of the cumulative waste generated by 2050 will be due to new capacities. According to the study conducted by the Ministry of

New and Renewable Energy and the independent research institute Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), this is Olympic-sized water.720 is equal to filling a swimming pool. According to the research report, 67 percent of the waste will be generated from five states Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. By 2030, Rajasthan's share in the waste generated will be 24 percent, Gujarat's 16 percent and Karnataka's 12 percent. The study titled 'Enabling a Circular Economy in India's Solar Industry: Estimating Solar Waste Volume' states that the current installed capacity of 66.7 GW in India is already generating 100 kilo tonnes of waste, which is expected to increase by 2030.Rs will be 340 kilo tonnes. It will contain approximately ten kilo tons of silicon, 12 to 18 kilo tons of silver and 16 tons of cadmium and tellurium. Recycling solar waste to recover these elements will reduce import dependence and increase India's mineral security. The remaining 260 kg of waste will be generated from new capacities to be installed between 2024 and 2030, the research found. According to the study, solar waste will increase to 19,000 kilotonnes by 2050, of which 77 percent will be generated from new capacities. CEEW has said that solar in India There is an opportunity for the industry to ensure a circular economy leading and dynamic solar supply chain. Scientists are estimating the potential for 78 million tons of solar photovoltaic waste to be generated over twenty-five years, which could be reused or recycled by 2050, however, this will be a major challenge, as comprehensive recycling of solar panels is still not implemented globally. Could

be done. The reason for this is the lack of proper infrastructure and national regulations in the world markets. Obviously, solar wasteIn future, it will play a major role in increasing environmental pollution. To overcome the power problem, solar panels are being installed in large quantities all over the world including India. Therefore, it is important to think now about disposing of solar panel waste. The proper management, recycling and disposal of solar systems is guided by government policies and laws in many countries around the world. The United States, the European Union, Japan, and Australia have private or mandatory programs for solar panel recycling. In India also its There is a need to make better policies and rules and implement them. It is noteworthy that India plans to achieve approximately 292 GW of solar capacity by 2030, with solar PV waste management being important for environmental, economic and social reasons. The development of eco-friendly waste management has led to the expansion of EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) programs, which hold producers responsible for the management of their end-of-life products. According to scientists, environmental effects of solar wastelt is necessary to develop a better solution closed loop system to reduce R. By developing a safe solar system, the problems arising from it can be reduced. It is also important for the person installing solar panels to know the age of his solar panel and the quality of the elements used in it. How and where should they be disposed of when they get damaged. It is important to know what is the better solution for solar waste disposal. There is a

need to pay attention to better maintenance. This increases the lifespan of solar panels. of this There should be continuous research and development on easily recycled solar panels along with solar system waste management. Only modern and durable models of solar panels should be allowed to be sold in the market. Two better methods of solar panels can be adopted. This involves traditional bulk material recycling, which involves crushing, sifting and shredding the waste. But if the panel is made of a mixture of glass, copper, aluminium, silver and silicon, it cannot be recycled in this manner. Another way is high value recycling, Thermal, chemical and mechanical methods are adopted in this. This method is better in every way, in this, silver and silicon can also be recycled through chemical method. Solar panels have been adopted as a better alternative to electricity in running government and non-government enterprises in India. This is reducing the expenditure on electricity. Both common and special are getting convenience at the domestic level, but until the disposal of panel waste is ensured easily, without impacting the environment, it will be used as if it is safe.It cannot be said that doing this is good. Therefore, the government should run a public awareness campaign to use the best design of solar panels. The solar panels installed on houses under government schemes should also be better from the environmental point of view.

(Vijay Garg Retired  
Principal Educational  
Columnist Malout  
Punjab)

## Mutahhary Public High School Saliskote conducts Election for Governing Body of its Association

### Top News Report

KARGIL, Apr 15: Mutahhary Public High School Saliskote, Kargil on Sunday held Election for governing body of its Association (Mutahhary Educational and Welfare Association Kargil) at Head office Saliskote under the Chairmanship of Aga Syed Mohammad Kazim Mosavi Saberi Chairman of MPHS & Election Authority).

The General Secretary presented the academic achievements of the association of last ten years tenure through Power point presentation. Haji Mohd Hussain Arzoo highlights the importance of active involvement of educated youths in the society and shared future vision of the Association among the presentees.

Mohd Younus, Vice President formally welcomed all the newly joined members and highlights the importance of cooperation of every individual on their own capacity and capability.



Prominent (40) educated youths from the village of Saliskote registered in the primary membership and were participated in the election process and showing their keen willingness to contribute their expertise and dedication towards continuous growth of the School in particular.

After a long dialogue and debate the election was held in a peaceful environment, ensuring transparency and fairness in the selection of

representatives. Some major change took place in the Association.

The result was announced by the Chairman/Election Authority and the following Candidates have been declared for prestigious position.

Aga Syed Mohammad Kazim Mosavi Saberi was elected as Chairman; Syed Akbar Mosavi (Selected) as Vice Chairman; Mohd Hussain Arzoo (Elected) as President; Mohd

Yunus (Elected) as Vice President; Mohd Hassan Malik (Elected) as General Secretary; Mohd Mujtaba Haidery (Elected) as Joint Secretary; Akhone Mohd Javeed (Selected) as Accountant; -Zakir Hussain (Selected) as Cultural Secretary; Akbar Ali Manchoo as Supportive Member to Cul. Sec; Mohd Ali Malik (Elected) as Chief Auditor; Villayat Ali Rahi as Supportive Member to Chief Auditor (Elected); Mohd Towhir (Selected)

as Sports Secretary; Sajjad Hussain Baba as Supportive member to Sport Sec. (Elected); Mujtaba Ansari (Selected) as Publicity Secretary; Dr.Mohd Hussain as Supportive Member to Pub. Sec. (Selected); Mohd Abass Mir (Selected) as Chief Organizer; Gulzar Hussain (Selected) as Organizer; Mohd Hassan Bagh (Selected) as Examination Secretary MEBS; Mohd Javeed Malik (Selected) as Joint Secretary Examination MEBS; Mohd Ali Arman (Selected) as Transport Incharge; Syed Hashim , Aijaz Hussain, and Mohd Hassan Hasi as Supportive member to Transport Incharge (Selected).

After declared the result, an oath ceremony were conducted.

The Chairman MPHS Saliskote extended his Greetings to all newly elected members and expressed gratitude's to all the stakeholders for their active involvement and commitment to the democratic process.

## GDC R S Pura students embark on Educational Trip to Mansar Lake



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: The students of the Department of Geography , GDC R S Pura, embarked on Educational Trip to Mansar Lake on April 12th, 2024, in Udhampur district, under the guidance and support of the Principal, GDC R S PURA Dr. Rajni Bhagat.

This trip was organized as part of their project report preparation. Accompanied by dedicated staff members, the students explored the surroundings of Mansar Lake, known for its serene beauty and

ecological significance.

The trip provided a valuable opportunity for hands-on learning, allowing students to observe and document various geographical features firsthand.

Throughout the day, students engaged in interactive discussions, conducted field surveys, and gathered data to enrich their understanding of resource geography and tourism management. The experience not only enhanced their academic knowledge but also fostered a deeper appreciation for the importance of sustainable practices.

Assistant Professor Geetika Goswami, Head of the Department of Geography,

GDC R S Pura and faculty members , Ms. Sonia Gupta and Dr. Hidayat Ullah expressed their enthusiasm for the trip, and believe that such excursions play a crucial role in bridging the gap between theory and practice.

The Principal of the institution congratulated the staff and students for the successful completion of this one day educational trip and encouraged the students for the holistic learning experiences.

## Civil Defence Wing of SDRF Jammu hosts awareness lecture cum demo for 500 Cdts instilling responsibility and citizenship



### Top News Report

NAGROTA, Apr 15: The Civil Defence Wing of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) in Jammu led by Chief Warden Civil Defence, Paramjit Kumar alongwith five Staff members organized a remarkable Lecture cum Demo event aimed at equipping 500 National Cadet

Corps (NCC) Cadets with life-saving skills and improvisation techniques.

During the engaging session, the cadets were introduced to a wide range of life-saving techniques, including first aid, disaster management, and improvisation in critical situations.

They learned how to respond effectively in emergencies, providing critical assistance when it matters most.

The highlight of the event was the hands-on demonstration of various rescue and improvisation techniques, showcasing the practical application of the skills learned during the lecture.

This event not only strengthens the bond between the Civil Defence Wing and the NCC but also empowers the youth to be proactive agents of change in their communities.

The knowledge gained during this Lecture cum Demo will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on the lives of these 500 cadets.

## Heritagian Punish Puri clinched gold at 67th National School Games Roller Skating

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: Puneesh Puri, a student of Class VIII D at Heritage School, has brought immense pride and glory to the institution by securing the Gold Medal in the 1000m rink race at the 67th National School Games, Under-14 category, in Roller Skating. The prestigious event took place in Satna, Madhya Pradesh, from April 11th to April 15th, 2024.

Puneesh's victory underscores his unwavering commitment to excellence. He has consistently outperformed in various local and national-level competitions, showcasing his exceptional talent and

dedication to the sport. His recent triumph adds to his impressive track record, further solidifying his position as one of the top skaters across India.

Notably, Puneesh currently holds the esteemed title of ranking no. 7 across all age categories and has the 2nd position in the 11-14 Boys Quads Category, as conferred by the Roller Skating Federation of India. His remarkable achievements serve as an inspiration to aspiring athletes and reflect his exceptional skill and determination.

The Heritage School family extends heartfelt congratulations to Puneesh Puri on his outstanding accomplishments.

## Sharda Buddh Vihar celebrates Ambedkar Jayanti with great enthusiasm



### Top News Report

JAMMU, April 15: To celebrate Baba Saheb Dr B.R.Ambedkar, Sharda Buddh Vihar organised a function in Colonel Colony in which a large number of people from all walks of life participated.

Paying tribute to Baba Saheb, Dr Jeet Bazala

said, today, we honor the profound legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution and a beacon of social justice.

His tireless efforts and visionary leadership continue to inspire generations, reminding us of the importance of equality, education, and inclusivity in our society.

Others who paid tributes to Baba Saheb and spoke included Messrs Advocate Rajan Radha, Darshan Bhagat, R.L.Kaith, Tilak Raj Bassa, K.L.Sharma, Vinay Dogra, Bachan Lal (urf Kali), Yadh Pal Shivgotra, Gurdas Kumar, Ujjagar Lal, Tilak Raj and Mannu Jalali.

## Punjab Wrestler Kamaljeet Lifts 67th Moori Kesari Dangal Title

### Top News Report

KATRA, Apr 15: Wrestler Kamaljeet of Doomchhari (Ropar), Patha Raju Pahelwan in Punjab lifted 67th Moori Kesari Dangal Title 2024 by defeating Pahelwan Abdul Gani of Mallerkotla in Punjab in the first main bout that lasted for 23 minutes at Village Moori.

The winner of first bout Kamaljeet was awarded with a cash prize of Rs. 55,000 by chief Guest Shiv Kumar Sharma, while runner-up wrestler Abdul Gani got a cash prize of Rs. 45,000.

Shiv Kumar Sharma, Former Joint Secretary J&K State Sports Council and President J&K Indian Style Wrestling Association was the chief Guest on the occasion who distributed cash prizes of Rs. 3,25,000 among the winner and runner-up Wrestlers.

Naresh Kumar (Pappu Lakri), Rajinder Kumar Ramotra, Deep Singh (Pinka) and Lochan Singh Guests of Honour.

In all, 49 bouts were played in the one day long "Kaanta Kushti" Dangal.

The bouts were officiated by Sat Paul Verma, Om Parkash Verma, Raj Singh, Tulinder Kumar, Deepak Wazir, Lochan Singh and Pappu Lakari. Dangal was organized by Peer Baba Dangal Com-



mittee Moori in association with J&K Indian Style Wrestling Association under the overall supervision of Former Sarpanch Ramesh Chander Sharma (President), Tarsem Kumar and Om Parkash.

Second main bout was won by kapil Dhamma of Guru Hanuman Akhara Delhi who defeated Mam Hussain of Domel. Winner Kapil got Rs. 9,000 while runner-up wrestler Mum Hussain got Rs. 6,000. Third bout was won by Surjit Singh of J&K Police Reasi who defeated Shakar Noor of U.P. The winner Wrestler Surjit Singh got Rs. 8,000 while runner-up wrestler Shakar Noor got Rs. 6,000.

Another third main bout was won by Neeru Gujjar of Chandigarh who defeated Bablu of Basantgarh. The winner wrestler Neeru got Rs. 8,000, while runner-up wrestler Bablu got Rs. 6,000.

Ajay Sharma of Udhampur beat Ankush of Rohtak, Munner of J&K Police beat Palwinder of Jakhwal Akhara of Mathura (U.P), Madan Singh of Roun Domel Akhara beat Arvind of Mathura (U.P) and Usman of Mathura (U.P) beat Amir Khan of J&K Police. Members of Peer Baba Dangal Committee Moori who helped for conduct of this one day long dangal were Former Sarpanch Ramesh Kumar (President), Tarsem Kumar,

Om Parkash, Mohan Singh, Devinder Singh, Ajit Singh, Hans Raj, Parveen, Mohinder Kumar, Naseeb Chand and Dharam Chand.

Proceedings of the Dangal were conducted by Anil Kumar while welcome address was presented by former Sarpanch Ramesh Kumar. The vote of thanks was presented by Tarsem Kumar.

Wrestler Muneer of J&K Police of Nagrota was honoured by President J&K Indian Style Wrestling Association Shiv Kumar Sharma by presenting him Mata Ki Chunari in presence of other association members for winning bronze medal in senior National Championship held at Harayana.

## Ramban Admin holds mega SVEEP event at Sanasar Tulip Garden

### Top News Report

RAMBAN, Apr 15: A Mega SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) event was organized by the District Administration, Ramban at the beautiful, picturesque, and scenic Sanasar meadow, adjoining the blooming Tulip Garden.

A colourful and mesmerizing programme was orchestrated by District Election Officer, Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, Chaired by ADDC Ramban Roshan Lal, attended by CEO PDA Devinder Singh Bahu, ACD Ramban Srinath Suman, ACP (District Nodal Officer SVEEP) Mohammad Ashfaq Khanji, DIO DIPR Ramban Mohammad Ashraf Wani, DSWO Rahul Gupta, other District and Sectoral officers besides mammoth gathering of enthusiastic locals, especially youth, women, PwDs, children, and tourists.

The event aimed to raise awareness about electoral participation and educate voters. The event being held in such picturesque locations to engage the community in the electoral process was thoroughly appreciated by the participants and tourists as well.

The ADDC interacted with the tourists and

participants encouraging them to participate in the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024 without fear or favour in an impartial manner to contribute their part in shaping the future development of our nation.

At beautiful meadow of Sanasar surrounding with forest besides beautiful lake, hundreds of tourists and locals captured memorable moments and relished the cultural, informative, and educative programme focusing on SVEEP and voters motivation to participate in the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024, scheduled to be held on April 19, 2024 in the district Ramban as a part of 04-Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency.

As part of the event Sangam Theatrical group from Reasi performed amid meadow, keeping the audience spellbound. Students of Government Degree College, Batote and other adjoining Schools presented patriotic songs, cultural items, speeches, and skits on the theme. Additionally, sports activities, Zipline, Zorbing, Shikara ride, Trampoline, Horse riding, Painting, Mehndi, Tug of War, Kabaddi competitions and other activities made the day of the students and tourists during the event.

## CPIM extends support to NC candidate in Anantnag – Rajouri Parliamentary Constituency

### Top News Report

ANANTNAG, Apr 15: In a significant move towards fostering unity among secular forces and combatting communalism, the Communist Party of India (CPI) announced its endorsement of the National Conference NC candidate for the Anantnag – Rajouri Parliamentary Constituency.

Speaking at a press conference held in Anantnag, the Secretary of CPIM in Jammu and Kashmir, Gh Nabi Malik, emphasized the critical need for solidarity among secular parties in the face of rising communal tensions. He underscored the imperative of standing against divisive forces for the betterment and progress of the nation.

Malik highlighted the dwindling influence of the Bharatiya Janata Party in rural areas, signaling a shift in the political landscape. He urged all secular forces to join hands in a collective effort to safeguard the values of inclusivity, diversity, and communal harmony.

"The time has come for all the secular forces to unite against the communal forces for the brightest future of the country," stated Malik during the conference.

This alliance between CPIM and NC exemplifies a broader commitment to uphold the principles of secularism and democracy, thereby ensuring the representation and rights of all citizens, regardless of religious or cultural affiliations.

The CPIM's decision to support the NC candidate underscores its dedication to fostering a political environment based on inclusivity, social justice, and equality. By aligning with the NC, CPIM reaffirms its stance against communalism and its resolve to promote a progressive and pluralistic vision for the nation.

As the electoral landscape evolves, CPIM remains steadfast in its commitment to championing the interests of the marginalized and advocating for policies that prioritize the welfare and empowerment of all sections of society.

## Diljit Dosanjh is unstoppable. After giving us chartbuster songs, he is now winning hearts as Amar Singh Chamkila

Diljit Dosanjh is on a high! Who wouldn't be? The singer-actor rules the roost with his slew of musical hits like Naina, Magic and Khutti, and now the Netflix movie Amar Singh Chamkila adds another feather to his cap. His concert in Mumbai on Saturday night was attended by almost all celebs from the Hindi film industry. That speaks of Diljit's phenomenal stardom. He is the man who could make Ed Sheeran sing in Punjab!

First thing first. Now that he has got rave reviews for playing the titular role in Amar Singh Chamkila, which is based on celebrated and controversial singer by the same name, we ask him what were the challenges in playing Chamkila as the role required him not just act but also perform live on the sets? He explains, "Playing a singer on screen may sound easy considering that I am a singer myself. But it was not so.



When I do stage shows, I only sing, not act. Similarly, when I act on screen, I don't sing. But to play the singer in this film, I had to perform on stage. It was a challenge to remember the dialogues as well as the lyrics. So, it was indeed difficult to be in the character while performing on stage. But it was altogether a different experience, unforgettable in many ways."

Director Imtiaz Ali incorporated the live footage of stage performances in the film rather than recording those songs later in a recording studio, which is the standard procedure in filmmaking.

In Ali's viewpoint, Chamkila is an eternal love story between a musician and his music.

Diljit too agrees with it and feels that Ali has been able to

capture the journey and passion of Chamkila. "This is a film for music lovers. The film will bring you closer to music," he says.

Happy to have made his mark on OTT, first with Jogi and now with Amar Singh Chamkila, he is comfortable with all mediums, but it's the infectious energy of the live audience that brings the best out of him.

Diljit says, "Performing live will always remain my favourite. Having said that, it doesn't mean acting or recording music is any less interesting. And as for the challenges, I do not find anything difficult as this is the path I chose voluntarily."

But then, for Diljit, challenges are needed for one to progress in life. "In my opinion, you won't be able to enjoy the journey if there are no challenges. It's a part of every profession and one has to work around them to enjoy the creative process."

## Richa Chadha reminisces about her schoolgirl gang Saste Qatil



Soon-to-be mother Richa Chadha reminisced about her school days on Sunday, sharing

ing a throwback picture of her 'best girl gang' named Saste Qatil. Richa took to Instagram

stories and reshared a picture posted by a fan page named "Richa Chadha \_merizindagi". The blurred picture shows the Madam Chief Minister actress wearing a white shirt and a black bandana on her head. She gives an intense look, posing alongside her two girl besties. Richa did her schooling from Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, New Delhi.

The post is captioned, "LOL! This photo is from school days, when we made up a gang (to kinda combat one stupid boy gang that was kinda toxic). We ironically named this girl gang Saste Qatil. Don't miss the bandana and the attitude. Pic was taken in Barista at Janpath, next to People Tree... Delhi peeps would know! Best years of my life. Best girl gang ever!"

## Vidya Balan shares 'mantra' for successful marriage

Vidya Balan, who is gearing up for her upcoming film Do Aur Do Pyaar with Pratik Gandhi, recently revealed the mantra to her successful marriage. The Parineeta actress spoke about the importance of open communication in relationships.

"I believe every couple has their own unique mantra, but in my opinion, if we openly communicate with each other about everything, it can be very helpful," the actress said.

Discussing her relationship with her husband Siddharth Roy Kapur, Vidya Balan shared, "Siddharth and I discuss everything, if someone feels bad or gets angry, or if there's love, we express it honestly to each other, which is very important. Sharing everything is crucial for a couple. And spending a lot of time together, especially enjoying biryani together, is very important."

Vidya Balan and Siddharth Roy Kapur got married in Mumbai on December 14, 2012, following a few years of courtship.

Do Aur Do Pyaar



directed by award-winning ad filmmaker Shirsha Guha Thakurta,

marks her feature debut and is scheduled to hit the theatres on April 19.

## In Chandigarh, the lead actors of upcoming Punjabi film Furteela, Jassie Gill and Amyra Dastur, say the movie took them back to college days

We often call out Punjabi filmmakers for bringing repetitive stories with repetitive faces. However, in the past two years, after a lot of introspection and reflection, there have been some positive changes. So, not just thought-proving subjects but also fresh onscreen pairs have made their way to theatres. One such new jodi — Jassie Gill and Amyra Dastur — will be seen in the upcoming Punjabi film, Furteela, a story of self-discovery, love and heartbreak, which will release on April 26.

Jassie Gill was last seen in Salman Khan's Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan, opposite Palak Tiwari. As for Punjabi films, he appeared in one more than five years ago. He clarifies, "The work I did in Bollywood is different, but I am always up for doing unique stories rooted in Punjab as well." Jassie feels he wanted to do comedy film, which also has romantic angle and offer well-etched characters, and this film has it all.

Leading lady



As for Amyra, Furteela is special, although she has worked in Punjabi films, Any How Mitti Pao and Chidiyan Da Chamba, before. She speaks highly of the shooting experience, filmmaker Amar Hundal and co-actor Jassie Gill, who in a way introduced

her to the Punjabi film industry. The other two films began later, but were released before Furteela.

Amyra says she is content doing what comes her way, "I have made enough debuts, be it Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and even in Chinese action

adventure film Kung Fu Yoga, back in 2017. But if you specifically ask about the Punjabi industry, I would love to work with Diljit once again, as the experience in the film Jogi was amazing. I have all the big names of Punjab in my list, including Amrinder Gill, Gippy Grewal and Binu Dhillon."

Talking about the off screen chemistry, Jassie teases Amyra for her singing talent, which is so good that she doesn't have to show it to the world! Amyra has no plans to make a career in singing like many Punjabi actors. "But I would like to be an entrepreneur someday, as I studied business as a subject during college years," she explains.

Young days Furteela too is a college love story and the casting is perfect, as Jassie and Amyra can easily pass off as college students. Amyra recalls, "I first met him (Jassie) on the sets of Furteela and made fun of his katori cut. I couldn't stop laughing seeing his get up for the

role. He is an amazing co-star and director's actor, as am I! No senior male actor goes to such lengths to transform for a role, especially when it comes to the hairstyle." Jassie remained in Furteela's look for more than 40 days and even had to do a few concerts in the same haircut. "When Amar narrated the concept of this film in a gym, I was immediately interested. He had this look in mind and the rest is history," he says.

Jassie believes that the audience has evolved during the Covid lockdown and many filmmakers are still recovering from the losses incurred during those times. According to him, the only parameter to judge if Punjabi cinema has revived is to witness releases of two big actors on the same day. "Last it happened in March, 2016, when Love Punjab, starring Amrinder Gill, and Ardaas, starring Gippy Grewal, were appreciated by the theatre-going audiences equally, even though the films were released on the same Friday."

## Shakira announces late 2024 tour dates after Coachella performance



Singer Shakira gave a surprise performance as she joined Bizarrap at Coachella and also

announced her tour for late 2024. Shakira joined Bizarrap about half-an-hour into his

set, suddenly appearing behind him, wearing a fiery red-orange dress and giant aviator sunglasses, on an elevated platform behind him. The music paused for a moment, as she spoke with the audience in Spanish and English, announcing the forthcoming tour and revealing the meaning behind the message she had teased earlier in the day — 'La loba se viene' (the wolf is coming).

The message appeared on the screen behind the stage, and as she announced the tour, it was revealed as the 'Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran World Tour', reflecting the name of her new album. "Finally, we're going on tour — starting here, in November, in this city! Can't wait!" she said.

## Meghan turns producer



Meghan Markle and her husband Prince Harry are producing two upcoming Netflix shows that will focus on cooking and a US polo championship. The projects are part of a multi-year deal between Netflix and Archewell Productions, which was founded by the royal couple in 2020 after they stepped down as senior members of Britain's royal family and moved to the US.

## Women aspire much more, says Shruti Choudhary

Essaying the role of Bulbul in Colors' Mera Balam Thanedaar, Shruti Choudhary believes it's a sad reality that women are often expected to be a 'mother' immediately after marriage.

She says, "I believe families must recognise and support that women aspire to much more than just starting a family."

While portraying the role in the show, I gained a deep understanding of the pressure women face when pushed to conceive. While babies are undoubtedly a blessing, it's equally essential to determine the right timing for such a significant life event. Playing Bulbul has been incredibly fulfilling for me as it allows me to empower women



to forge their paths and challenge societal norms. I'm profoundly

grateful to my fans for their unwavering support."

## Ten Years Of NDA Rule Only A Trailer, More Yet To Come: PM Modi

PM also promised that once the NDA government comes back to power for the third time, it will commence survey work for ensuring bullet trains in north, east, and south India similar to the service between Ahmedabad and Mumbai.

THRISSUR (KERALA), Apr 15 (Agencies): A day after the BJP released its election manifesto with a slew of promises, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that what was witnessed in the last decade of NDA rule was merely a trailer, asserting more was yet to be done for Kerala and the nation's progress and solicited the support of the southern state for the BJP-led alliance in the Lok Sabha polls.

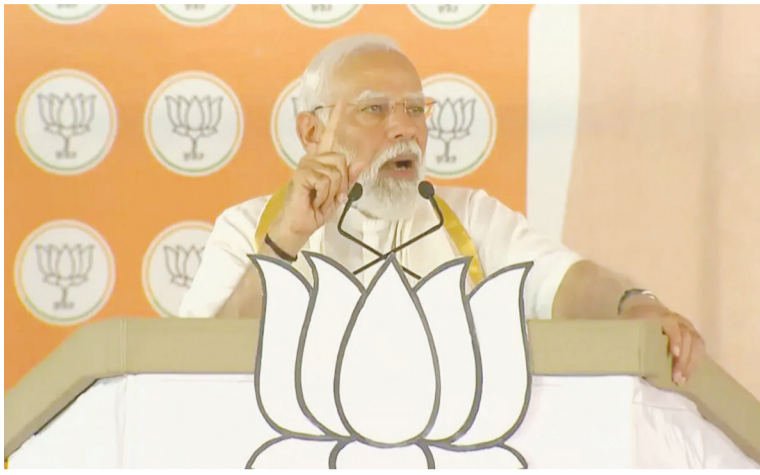
Addressing an election meeting organised by the NDA at nearby Kunnamkulam, PM Modi also attacked Rahul Gandhi, who is presently in Kerala to campaign for the Lok Sabha polls, accusing the Congress leader of being unable to protect his family's seat in Uttar Pradesh and being silent on the Karuvannur bank scam.

"What happened in the last 10 years was only a trailer; there is more to be done for Kerala and India," PM Modi said.

He said it will be a year of progress in Kerala and referred to the various promises and development programmes mentioned in the BJP's manifesto -- called 'Modi ki Guarantee' -- that was released on Sunday.

Without taking Rahul Gandhi's name, PM Modi said the "Congress yuvaraj" (prince) was unable to protect his family's pride by safeguarding their seat in Uttar Pradesh -- a reference to the Amethi LS constituency which was a Congress bastion for years -- and came to Kerala seeking votes.

The Congress leader will seek votes from the people of Kerala but will not raise his voice in their interests, as he was silent on the multi-crore scam in the Karuvannur Cooperative Bank controlled by the state's ruling



CPI(M), PM Modi said.

He also criticised the Congress over the support offered to it by the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), the political arm of the banned Popular Front of India (PFI), for the Lok Sabha elections.

The PM alleged it was a "backdoor agreement" between the Congress and the SDPI, which was the political wing of an organisation banned in India for anti-national activities.

He raked up the Karuvannur Cooperative Bank scam to attack the ruling CPI(M) in the state by accusing it of looting people's money and lying to the public about it.

PM Modi claimed that it was he who initiated an Enforcement Directorate (ED) probe into the scam, and now he was taking legal advice on how the money of the depositors could be returned from the amounts seized by the agencies.

He assured that everything possible will be done to provide assistance to affected people and said that the BJP candidate from Alathur constituency, T N Sarasu, had recently brought to his attention the plight of those suffering as a result of depositing money in the cooperative

bank.

PM Modi said that the Congress-led opposition UDF and the ruling LDF were hindering progress and development in the state.

"The Left has only one character, be it Tripura, West Bengal, or Kerala; nothing left and nothing right. Meaning, where the Left is in power, there is nothing left, and nothing good happens there." "What they did in West Bengal and Tripura, they are doing in Kerala also," he alleged.

He criticised the Left Front in the state over the law and order situation in Kerala as well.

"Violence and anarchy are common in Kerala. Political murders are carried out here. College campuses have become dens of anti-social movements. Our children are not safe," he alleged.

PM Modi, in his speech, also expressed confidence that Kerala will ensure its voice is heard in Parliament after the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

The PM also promised that once the NDA government comes back to power for the third time, it will commence survey work for ensuring bullet trains in north, east, and south India

similar to the service between Ahmedabad and Mumbai.

He said that a bullet train in south India will give impetus to development in the region and create thousands of job opportunities.

In the next five years, his government will work to make the heritage of Kerala more global by connecting it to the network of highways, expressways, and the network of Vande Bharat trains.

On the subject of Vande Bharat trains, he also referred to the interest shown by actor-politician Suresh Gopi, the BJP candidate from Thrissur LS constituency, in the same and how he would come up with various ideas and plans for it.

He assured that his government would work to implement these plans.

During his speech, he also blamed the Congress for allegedly creating a weak image of India in the world and said that the BJP has built the country into a strong nation.

PM Modi said that the coming elections will decide the future of the people and their children.

This is PM Modi's sixth visit to the state. He had last come to Kerala on March 19 and held a massive road show in Palakkad district.

His Palakkad road show followed his participation at a public meeting in Pathanamthitta town on March 15, where he rallied support for NDA candidates contesting in the southern Kerala constituencies.

Prior to that, he had visited the state twice in January and once in February. These visits included both official and party functions.

Election to 20 Lok Sabha seats in Kerala will be held on April 26.

## Lok Sabha Polls 2024: Yogi Adityanath's New Slogan For BJP, A Day After Party Releases Manifesto



LUCKNOW, Apr 15 (Agencies): Day after the BJP released its manifesto for the Lok Sabha polls, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath floated a new slogan, "80 banega aadhar, NDA 400 paar, Phir ek bar Modi sarkar."

Addressing the media in the party office, Yogi Adityanath said, "The BJP's Sankalp Patra is Modi's guarantee. It reaffirms our dedication to building a developed India while also reinforcing our firm stance against corruption."

He added that the pillars of the BJP's Sankalp Patra are the nation's impoverished, youth, farmers, and women (Gareeb, Yuva, Annadata and Nari).

Addressing the media in the party office, he said, "This sankalp patra is Modi's guarantee. It reaffirms our dedication to building a developed India while also declaring a firm stance against corruption."

The Chief Minister highlighted that on the birth anniversary of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, the architect of the Constitution, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the BJP's Sankalp Patra. Its first four copies are to represent the four social pillars of the country: Gareeb (poor), Yuva (youth), Annadata (farmers), and Nari (women), collectively known as GYAN, he stated.

The Chief Minister emphasized that the BJP is more than just a political entity today, embodying aspirations of 140 crore people with commitment to realizing India's vision on a mission mode.

"The aspirations of the nation today align with PM Modi's vision, which guides our mission. The country places its trust in Modi's Guarantee", he remarked.

He said that the manifesto reveals the BJP's commitment to continu-

ing and expanding the scope of all the poor welfare schemes, including free ration, Ayushman Bharat Yojana, Ujjwala Yojana, Awas Yojana. The Sankalp Patra also reiterates the party's resolve to achieve a developed and self-reliant India with the spirit of Nation First, he pointed out.

"This marks the inaugural election of the Azaadi Ka Amrit Kaal, where the focus lies on the ideals of a self-reliant and developed India. Modi's assurance concerning the nation's identity, security, faith, and economy forms the cornerstone of this Sankalp Patra", he stated further.

Yogi Adityanath emphasized that the BJP's Sankalp Patra serves as the blueprint for a 'Naya, Shreshth, Aatmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat (New, great, self-reliant and developed India)'. In addition to declaring a resolute war against corruption, it reaffirms the commitment to elevate India from Antyodaya to Sarvodaya and position it as a global leader.

"The sectors that this manifesto represents are based on Modi's guarantees. This general election stands as evidence of nationwide confidence and trust in Modi ji's guarantees. This resolution letter will become the basis of the aspirations of a developed India", CM Yogi asserted.

The Chief Minister outlined that the Sankalp Patra encompasses the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code, National Litigation Policy, changes in commercial and civil judicial systems, One Nation One Election, PM Surya Har Ghar Free Electricity Scheme, reducing the cost of house registration, resolve to create three crore Lakhpati Didis, doubling the cracking limit

of PM Mudra Yojana, as well as increase in MSP and expansion of PM Matsya Yojana.

In addition to the aforementioned initiatives, the Sankalp Patra includes plans to implement missions for irrigation, cold storage, and agricultural infrastructure nationwide. It also aims to integrate senior citizens and transgender individuals into Ayushman Bharat under the vision of a Healthy India, training of paramedics, strengthening health infrastructure, affordable insurance products for MSMEs, insurance to protect against fire, theft, natural calamities, to make India a toy manufacturing hub, to celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Lord Birsa Munda in 2025 as Tribal Pride Year, to make the country an electronic hub by 2030, to expand the Bullet train across the entire country, the resolve to expand 5G as well as develop 6G technology in the country.

Apart from this, the Chief Minister reiterated his commitment to expanding the capacity of large convention centers for global conferences and exhibitions, modernizing the police force, enhancing the technological capabilities of security forces, establishing new IITs and AIIMS institutions, implementing the One Nation One Student initiative, ensuring quality education, and promoting accessible education through technology.

Furthermore, he said that the Sankalp Patra also reiterates the party's resolve to host the Olympics in 2036, building new stadiums, state-of-the-art sports training centres, manufacturing of sports equipment, promotion of sports startups, science park for science and technology, conservation and rejuvenation of rivers, increasing the scope of Namami Gange, organizing Ramayana Mahotsav in the world.

Yogi Adityanath said that this resolution letter also reiterates the party's commitment to making the country a pharma hub, integrated military command center and cyber security with full strength.

## Mamata dares IT officials to check chopper of BJP leaders

COOCH BEHAR, Apr 15 (Agencies): West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee on Monday dared the Income tax officials to check the chopper used by BJP leaders for the election campaign, a day after a row erupted over the TMC's claim of a "raid" by income tax officials targeting a helicopter used by party leader Abhishek Banerjee.

Banerjee, while addressing a rally in Cooch Behar, alleged that the BJP is misusing central agencies against

the TMC ahead of the elections.

"Income Tax officials conducted a raid and searched Abhishek Banerjee's chopper before the trial run but found nothing.

Those I-T officials claimed that we had inputs that there was money and gold in the chopper, but they found nothing. We don't engage in such acts."

"It is the BJP that is involved in such things. But will the officials of the central agency ever dare to check BJP lead-

ers' choppers," she said.

The Trinamool Congress on Sunday said its general secretary Abhishek Banerjee's helicopter was raided by Income Tax officials in Kolkata's Behala flying club and alleged this was part of a deliberate ploy by the BJP to harass and intimidate opposition candidates whom they cannot engage with politically.

As a row erupted over the TMC's claim of a "raid", I-T department sources claimed that there was no enforce-



ment action such as a search or survey and the TMC leader wasn't even present in the chopper.

The TMC supremo also accused the BJP of misusing central agencies and not allowing a

level playing field for all political parties," in the elections.

"The BJP might use NIA just days before the election to arrest our leaders so that they can have a free run," she said.

## TMC providing shelter to 'anti-national forces': Anurag Thakur

SILIGURI, Apr 15 (Agencies): Union Minister Anurag Thakur on Monday accused the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) in West Bengal of providing shelter to "anti-national forces" and "supporting" those committing atrocities against women.

Speaking to reporters during his election campaign in Siliguri, the Union Information and Broadcasting minister questioned why actors of terror activities, committed in the state or elsewhere in the country, "find protection and shelter in West Bengal."

"Why is this so?" he asked. West Bengal minister and TMC spokesperson Shashi Panja refuted the allegations made by Thakur and accused him of "suffering from illusion".



The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday arrested two key accused, including the mastermind, in Bengaluru's Rameshwaram Cafe blast case from West Bengal, and the state's ruling TMC.

While the BJP alleged that the TMC had turned West Bengal into a "haven of terrorists",

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said the accused were arrested due to the state police's prompt action.

"Under the nose of Mamata Banerjee, corruption thrives, and atrocities on women are overlooked," Thakur said.

Thakur also referred to cases of extortion, land grabbing, and sexual assault on women in Sandeshkhali in the

North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal.

Reacting to Thakur's charges, Panja said, "It appears you are either caught in an illusion or attempting to create one. If not, then you are unaware of the reality. You must acknowledge that the police here have only made arrests, and that is the factual situation. Thakur, you are known to speak and propagate hatred."

She also raised the issue of Bengal's outstanding dues.

"Why has the disbursement of funds been halted?" she questioned. The TMC claims that the central government has withheld West Bengal's dues amounting to Rs 1.6 lakh crore, which are legitimate entitlements from the taxes collected from the state.

## SC refuses plea for voting facilities to 18,000 internally-displaced in Manipur polls

The polling for the two Lok Sabha seats of Manipur will be held in two phases on April 19 and 26.



NEW DELHI, Apr 15 (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea seeking voting facilities for around 18,000 people displaced internally due to the ethnic strife in Manipur for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

The polling for the two Lok Sabha seats of Manipur will be held in

two phases on April 19 and 26.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said interference of this court, particularly at this belated stage, would cause substantial impediments in the conduct of the ensuing general elections of the Lok Sabha for Manipur.

"You have come at the last minute. At this stage, what can be virtually done? We cannot interfere at this stage," the bench said.

The top court was hearing a plea by Manipur resident Naulak Khamsuanthang and others seeking a direction from the Election Commission of India (ECI) to make arrangements to enable internally displaced persons settled outside Manipur to enable them to cast their votes in the Lok Sabha elections by setting up special polling booths in the states where they are residing.

"There are 18,000 internally displaced people. They want to vote in the elections in

Manipur," the lawyer appearing for the petitioners said.

Manipur has been caught in a spiral of violence since May 2023.

More than 160 people have been killed and several hundred injured since ethnic violence first broke out in the state on May 3 when a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the majority Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Though the number and intensity of incidents of violence are slowly ebbing away, many people are still living in relief camps far from their homes.

## President Joe Biden to host Iraqi leader as Mideast tensions soar, raising more questions about US troop presence

*The talks will include discussion of regional stability and future US troop deployments but will also focus on economic, trade and energy issues*

WASHINGTON, Apr 15 (Agencies): US President Joe Biden is set to host Iraq's leader this week for talks that come as tensions across the Middle East have soared over the war in Gaza and Iran's unprecedented weekend attack on Israel in retaliation for an Israeli military strike against an Iranian facility in Syria.

The sharp rise in security fears has raised further questions about the viability of the two-decade American military presence in Iraq, through which portions of Iran's Saturday drone and missile attack on Israel flew or were launched from. A US Patriot battery in Irbil, Iraq, knocked down at least one Iranian ballistic missile, according to American officials.

In addition, Iranian proxies have initiated attacks against US interests throughout the region from inside Iraq, making Monday's meeting between Biden and Iraqi Prime Minister Shia al-Sudani all the more critical.

The talks will include a discussion of regional stability and future US troop deployments but will also focus on economic, trade and energy issues that have become a major priority for Iraq's government, according to US officials.

Biden and Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin are both expected to address the US troop presence in meetings with al-Sudani. "It is not the primary focus of the visit... but it is almost certainly going to come up," one senior US official said last week.

The US and Iraq began formal talks in January about ending the coalition created to help the Iraqi government fight the Islamic State, with some 2,000 US troops remaining in the country under an agreement with Baghdad. Iraqi officials have periodically



cally called for a withdrawal of those forces.

The two countries have a delicate relationship due in part to Iran's considerable sway in Iraq, where a coalition of Iran-backed groups brought al-Sudani to power in October 2022.

The US in recent months has urged Iraq to do more to prevent attacks on US bases in Iraq and Syria that have further roiled the Middle East in the aftermath of Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel. Iran's weekend attacks on Israel through Iraqi airspace have further underscored US concerns, although al-Sudani had already left Baghdad and was en route to Washington when the drones and missiles were launched.

The US has also sought to apply financial pressure over Baghdad's relationship with Tehran, restricting Iraq's access to its own dollars in an effort to stamp out money laundering said to benefit Iran and Syria.

Most previous Iraqi prime ministers have visited Washington earlier in their tenure. Al-Sudani's visit was delayed because of tensions between the US and Iran and regional escalation, including the Gaza war and the killing of three US soldiers in Jordan in a drone attack in late

January.

That was followed by a US strike that killed a leader in the Kataib Hezbollah militia whom Washington accused of planning and participating in attacks on US troops.

Al-Sudani came to power in late 2022 after a power struggle between prominent Shiite cleric and political leader Muqtada Sadr and opposing Shiite factions that are close to Iran after the 2021 elections.

Sadr ultimately withdrew from the political process, giving the opportunity to the remaining Shia politicians to form a government headed by al-Sudani.

Since then, al-Sudani has attempted to maintain a balancing act between Iran and America despite being seen as being close to Tehran and despite several incidents that have put his government in an embarrassing position in relation to Washington.

Early in al-Sudani's term, a US citizen, Stephen Edward Troell, was shot and killed by armed men who accosted him as he pulled up to the street where he lived in Baghdad's central Karrada district with his family. An Iraqi criminal court convicted five men last August and sentenced them to life in prison in the case,

which officials described as a kidnapping gone wrong.

A few months later, Elizabeth Tsurkov, an Israeli-Russian doctoral student at Princeton, was kidnapped while doing research in Iraq. Al-Sudani's visit will come about a year after Tsurkov's abduction. She is believed to be held by Kataib Hezbollah.

The senior US official said Tsurkov's case would also be raised. "We are concerned by and closely tracking this case," the official said.

"We have strongly condemned her abduction. We've urged... and continue to urge senior Iraqi officials to find Elizabeth and to secure her release as soon as possible."

Al-Sudani started his term with promises to focus on economic development and fight corruption, but his government has faced economic difficulties, including a discrepancy in the official and market exchange rates between the Iraqi dinar and the US dollar.

The currency issues came in part as a result of a US tightening of the dollar supply to Iraq, as part of a crackdown on money laundering and smuggling of funds to Iran. The US has disallowed more than 20 Iraqi banks from dealing in dollars as part of the campaign.

The al-Sudani government recently renewed Iraq's contract to purchase natural gas from Iran for another five years, which could lead to American displeasure.

The Iraqi prime minister will return to Iraq and meet with the Turkish president following his trip to Washington, which could finally lead to a solution to a long-running dispute over exports of oil from Kurdish areas of Iraq to Turkey. Washington has sought to get the flow of oil to resume.

## Macron says France 'to do everything' to have Olympic truce



PARIS, Apr 15 (Agencies): French President Emmanuel Macron said Monday he "wanted to do everything possible to have an Olympic truce" for the Paris Games despite war raging in Ukraine and Gaza.

"We want to work towards an Olympic truce and I think it is an occasion for me to

engage with a lot of our partners," he told in an interview with BFMTV news channel.

The truce is a historic tradition that peace reigns during the Olympics.

Referring to the recent escalations between Iran and Israel, Macron said that France would help do everything to avoid a "conflagration"

in the Middle East.

"We will do everything to avoid... a conflagration," he told adding that French jets helped repel an Iranian violation of Jordan's airspace during the attack late Saturday.

The French president also said that the opening ceremony of the Paris Olympics could move from the river Seine to the national stadium in the event of a security threat.

Macron said in an interview that instead of teams sailing down the Seine on barges, the ceremony could be "limited to the Trocadero" building in front of the Eiffel Tower or "even moved to the Stade de France".

## UK would consider more sanctions against Iran, says David Cameron

LONDON, Apr 15 (Agencies): Britain would consider more sanctions against Iran, foreign minister David Cameron said on Monday, following its drone and missile attack on Israel.

Asked whether the government would consider more sanctions on Iran, Cameron told the BBC, "Yes, absolutely. We already have 400 sanctions on Iran. We put in place a whole new sanctions regime at the end of last year, which is proving very effective.

"We've sanctioned



the IRGC, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, in its entirety, and we'll continue to look at what further steps we can

do," he added. He also said Britain would keep under review whether it should proscribe the IRGC.

## 'Neither region nor world can afford more war': UN chief at emergency meeting on Iran strikes

*Middle East on brink, UN Secretary-General Guterres calls for de-escalation in region*

NEW YORK, Apr 15 (Agencies): Addressing the emergency meeting of the UN Security Council, which was convened after Iranian drone and missile launches into Israel, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the 'Middle East' was on the brink, adding that neither the region nor the world can afford more war.

"We have a shared responsibility to work for peace. Regional--and indeed global--peace and security are being undermined by the hour. Neither the region nor the world can afford more war," Guterres said in his statement.

"The Middle East is on the brink. The people of the region are confronting a real danger of a devastating full-scale conflict. Now is the time to defuse and de-escalate. Now is the time for maximum restraint," he added.

He also condemned the Iranian air raids into Israel to avenge the attack on its embassy in Syria, which left three of its top military generals dead, while calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

"I strongly condemn



the serious escalation represented by the large-scale attack launched on Israel by the Islamic Republic of Iran this evening. And I call for an immediate cessation of these hostilities," the UN said.

"I remind all Member States that the Charter of the United Nations prohibits the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations," he added.

Guterres also dwelt on the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas, reiterating the UN's call for immediate ceasefire and unconditional release of all hostages.

"We have a shared responsibility to secure an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza, the immediate and

unconditional release of all hostages, and the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid," he said.

"We have a shared responsibility to stop violence in the occupied West Bank, de-escalate the situation along the Blue Line, and re-establish safe navigation in the Red Sea," he added.

Following the Iranian strike, Israel put in a request with the United Nations Security Council to immediately convene a meeting to unequivocally condemn Iran and designate its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organisation.

Israel said Iran poses a direct threat to the international peace and violated the UN Charter, adding that time has come for the Security Council to address the 'Iranian threat.'

## US Secretary of State Blinken calls Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi foreign ministers over Iran-Israel tensions

WASHINGTON, Apr 15 (Agencies): US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Sunday reached out over phone to the foreign ministers of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt, while Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin had calls with his Saudi and Israeli counterparts, amid signs of an escalating crisis in the Middle East following Iran's strikes on Israel.

Iran fired more than 300 drones and missiles at Israel, which Tehran said was in response to the April 1 strike on its consulate in Syria.

Almost all Iranian drones and missiles were shot down by Israeli, US and allied forces before they reached their targets.

The diplomatic overdrive to fight the crisis came soon after US President Joe Biden had a conference call with G-7 leaders and had separate telephonic conversations with King Abdullah of Jordan and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel.

In all the calls, the American leadership emphasised on the need to avoid further escalation in the region and reaffirmed America's ironclad commitment to the security of Israel.

They also reaffirmed the importance of diplomatic efforts to achieve an enduring end to the crisis in Gaza that provides lasting peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians alike,



the state department spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a readout of the calls that Blinken had with Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Ayman Safadi, Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan.

Blinken thanked Fidan for Turkey's ongoing engagement to prevent further escalation in the region, and discussed with Shoukry the importance of ongoing efforts to increase humanitarian assistance to Gaza and protecting Palestinian civilians, as well as achieve an immediate ceasefire that secures the release of all hostages.

"Blinken thanked Jordan for its leadership in providing life-saving humanitarian aid to Palestinian civilians, including through joint US-Jordan airdrops and overland deliveries," Miller said.

In his call with Saudi Arabia Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud, Blinken reiterated that while the US

does not seek escalation, it will continue to help Israel defend itself. The secretary and the foreign minister agreed on the importance of a coordinated diplomatic response, Miller said.

According to Pentagon Press Secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder Austin, in his call with Saudi Minister of Defense, Khalid bin Salman, emphasised that US does not seek escalation, and will continue to defend Israel and US personnel.

Austin underscored the importance of the enduring US defence partnership with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and reiterated the US commitment to working with the Kingdom and other partners to deescalate tensions in the region, Ryder said.

"Austin also briefed Galloway on his consultations with partners and allies to reinforce international resolve in the face of Iranian aggression," Ryder said.

Meanwhile, Biden reached out to the Congressional leaders on the greatest foreign policy crisis of his presidency.

"Biden convened a call this afternoon with Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Senate minority leader Mitch McConnell, Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries to discuss Iran's unprecedented attack against Israel. On the call, the president discussed the urgent need for the House of Representatives to pass the national security supplemental as soon as possible," said the White House.

At the UN headquarters in New York, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told members of the Security Council, during an emergency meeting, that it is vital to avoid any action that could lead to major military confrontations on multiple fronts in the Middle East.

"Regional and indeed global peace and security are being undermined by the hour. Neither the region nor the world can afford more war," he said.

Schumer told reporters in New York that Iran is becoming more and more isolated due to its "evil" actions.

"The best way to help Israel rebuild its anti-missile and anti-drone capacity is by passing that supplemental immediately. As I said, Israel expended about over a billion dollars in defending itself and the security supplemental would replenish the kind of anti-missile and anti-

drone defences that are in the Arrow, in the David's Sling, and in the Iron Dome," he said.

White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby joined several shows where he asserted that Biden and the US are 'making good on its ironclad commitment to defend Israel. He also made clear that the United States is not seeking a conflict with Iran.

"Several hundred drones and missiles launched in the course of several hours and all most every single one of them knocked out of the sky. That's not by accident. That's terrific testament to the superiority of the Israeli military and also to our own military superiority and the effort, the resources President Biden committed to helping defend Israel," Kirby told Fox News.

"It's an extraordinary example of military superiority that Israel demonstrated to the whole world and showed that Israel has friends and is not isolated on the world stage," Kirby told NBC News.

"Now, whether and how the Israelis will respond, that's going to be up to them. We understand that and respect that. But the president's been very clear. We don't seek a war with Iran and we're not looking for escalation here. We will continue to help Israel defend itself," he said.



## We are committed to ensuring political, economic empowerment of J&K people: Bukhari

### Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Apr 15: Reaffirming the Apni Party's commitment to ensuring the political and economic empowerment of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, its president, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, urged the people to vote for the party's candidates, Zaffar Iqbal Manhas in Anantnag-Rajouri, and Mohammad Ashraf Mir in Srinagar, in the imminent Lok Sabha polls.

He was addressing an event at the party headquarters in Srinagar today. The event was aimed at welcoming several political and social activists and workers from south Kashmir's Pulwama district into the party fold.

The new entrants included prominent social activist from Pulwama Waseem Ahmad Malik, BDC Awantipora

Abdul Ahad, Ubaid Bashir, Adil Bashir—all from the main town Pulwama—and others.

Addressing the occasion, Apni Party president reiterated the party's unwavering commitment to ensuring peace, prosperity, and development in Jammu and Kashmir and the political and economic empowerment of its people.

He said, "Our primary agenda is to establish lasting peace, foster enduring prosperity, and promote sustainable development in Jammu and Kashmir, besides ensuring the political and economic empowerment of its people."

Taking a dig at the traditional parties, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari said that the deceitful politics by the traditional parties caused tremendous damage to J&K and its people over the years and decades.

He said, "The traditional parties bear responsibility for the deaths and destruction in this land, as their deceitful political narratives and emotional sloganeering have paved the way for bloodshed and violence. These parties now stand exposed before the public, as people know that the deceitful narratives by these parties pushed our young generation onto the path of violence, and eventually, thousands of them ended up either in jails or in graveyards."

"Even after so much destruction and deaths over the past three decades, one of these parties still say that we will fight for the next hundred years. Are our youth for fighting and dying only?" he asked.

He went on to say, "These parties had established PAGD only to deceive people. Now, they have themselves

buried this so-called alliance for their individual political and electoral gains."

Besides Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, the prominent party leaders who were present on the occasion included party's Senior Vice President Ghulam Hassan Mir, Vice President Zaffar Iqbal Manhas, chairman of the party's Parliamentary Affairs Committee (PAC) Mohammad Dilawar Mir, Provincial President Kashmir Mohammad Ashraf Mir, Media Advisor Farooq Andrabi, District President Noor Mohammad Sheikh, Constituency In-Charge Pulwama Dr Mir Samiullah, DDC Harwan and Party's Provincial Organiser Kashmir Shabir Reshi, party's IT Head and In-Charge Social Media Ovais Mushtaq, Senior Leader Zaffar Habib Dar, and others.

## People's Hut Foundation conducts medical camp

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: People's Hut Foundation in collaboration with the Directorate of Fire and Emergency Services organized medical camps at Headquarters of Fire and Emergency Services, Gandhi Nagar Jammu focusing on providing essential medical check-ups and medicines to the Javans, local population, particularly elders, women, and children.

These camps Under Mobile Health Clinic Program are part of the People's Hut Foundation's commitment to contribute to the well-being and healthcare accessibility of citizens in the country, specifically J&K.

At these medical camps, patients had the opportunity to consult with specialist doctors, including Physicians, Physiotherapists and Orthopaedic specialists, Diagnostic Services ensuring a wide range of medical issues could be



addressed comprehensively.

The initiative by the NGO People's Hut Foundation highlights its multifaceted role in the region, extending to humanitarian and social welfare activities.

The Director and CEO of the foundation Dr. Rohit Koul said the availability of specialist consultations marks a significant step towards improving healthcare access and outcomes for the local population, who often face challenges in accessing quality medical care.

A total of 258 Patients were treated in the camp and diagnostic services were availed by 217 Patients. The initiative has been widely appreciated by the communities, reinforcing the positive impact of such outreach programs on the lives of the people in J&K.

From F&ES Dept Dr. Manju and her team organised the camp, The Ayush Department headed by Dr. Dheeraj Raina also disbursed their services in the camp. The Diagnostic services were provided by The SARA NGO headed by

Dr Raminder Jit Singh, The Physiotherapy camp was supported by the 4 Specialist Physiotherapists from KIRF headed by Dr. Imran Khan.

The NGO remains dedicated to its role in ensuring the well-being of the citizens, as demonstrated by the successful conduct of these medical camps. Such endeavours not only provide immediate health benefits but also strengthen the bond between the local communities, fostering a sense of trust and mutual respect for the non-profit organisations.

## FROM PAGE 1

### Retired Judges write to CJI against attempts to 'Undermine' Judiciary

the integrity of courts and the judges.

"Such actions not only disrespect the sanctity of our judiciary but also pose a direct challenge to the principles of fairness and impartiality that judges, as guardians of the law, have sworn to uphold," they said in the letter titled "Need to safeguard judiciary from unwarranted pressures".

The strategy employed by these groups is deeply troubling, ranging from the propagation of baseless theories intended to malign the judiciary's reputation to engaging in overt and covert attempts to influence judicial outcomes to their favour, they said.

"This behaviour, we observe, is particularly pronounced in the cases and causes of social, economic and political significance, including the cases involving certain individuals, wherein the lines between advocacy and manoeuvring are blurred to the detriment of judicial independence," they added.

The letter writers said they are particularly concerned about the tactics of misinformation and the orchestration of public sentiment against the judiciary.

"The practice of selectively praising judicial decisions that align with one's views while vehemently criticising those that do not, undermines the very essence of judicial review and the rule of law," they said.

They urged the judiciary led by the Supreme Court to fortify against such pressures and ensure that the sanctity and autonomy of the legal system are preserved.

"It is imperative that the judiciary remains a pillar of democracy, immune to the whims and fancies of transient political interests," they said.

### Advance registration begins in Jammu for Annual Amarnath Yatra

48-km route through Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag and the 14-km shorter but steep Baltal route in Ganderbal district of central Kashmir.

"The advance registration has started today at bank branches here. The exercise is being conducted at 540 branches of PNB (Punjab National Bank) across the country," an official involved in the registration process said.

It is Aadhaar authentication-based form generation for yatris rather than the manual procedure followed in 2022, the officials said, adding that forms will be system-generated now.

The designated PNB branch in Rehari opened this morning bedecked with flowers and bunting to welcome prospective Amarnath pilgrims, who were standing in queues since early morning for registration.

"We want to be part of the first batch of pilgrims undertaking the yatra to the cave shrine. We have been registered. It is a moment of happiness for us," said Suman Devi of Janipur.

The schedule of the pilgrimage was decided at the meeting of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) chaired by Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday.

The yatra would commence simultaneously from both the routes, the officials said.

The shrine board will also enable the live telecast of morning and evening "aarti" (prayers) for devotees across the globe.

A total of 542 bank branches across the country has been designated for the registration of pilgrims by the board, which is offering the facility also on its website.

According to the board, which manages the annual pilgrimage, no one below the age of 13 or above 75 years, and no woman with more than six weeks' pregnancy shall be registered for the yatra.

### Kashmir lashed by wide-spread rains, snowfall over higher reaches: MeT

Meteorological Centre Srinagar forecasts the weather will generally remain cloudy today with intermittent light rain or snow (higher reaches) at many places till the afternoon, and thereafter there will be a gradual improvement.

On April 16-17, the weather will remain cloudy with light rain in isolated places, while on April 18-19, there are chances of light rain and snow over higher reaches in many places with thunder and lightning during the period.

The weather will remain generally dry from April 20 to April 25, with afternoon thunder-shower activity that can't be ruled out.

The MeT office has also issued an advisory for the farmers to suspend farm operations until April 16 in view of inclement weather activity.

It was also said that due to prevailing weather conditions, there could be a temporary disruption of surface transportation over a few higher reaches today. Travelers and tourists have also been advised to plan their trips accordingly, while there is a possibility of landslides, mudslides, and shooting stones due to weather vagaries at high altitudes.

The rainfall data available with the MeT office said, Srinagar received 27.6mm, Qazigund 41.4mm, Pahalgam 22.2mm, Kupwara 28.5mm, Kokernag 23.2mm, and Gulmarg 39.8mm during the past 24 hours.

The night temperature at Srinagar recorded during the intervening nights of Sunday and Monday was 8.0 degree Celsius against 10.2 degree Celsius, and it was 0.4 degree Celsius above normal for the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir.

The maximum temperature at Srinagar was recorded at 11.5 degree Celsius on Sunday, which was 8.2 degree Celsius below normal of 20.1 degree Celsius. The daytime temperature at other weather stations of the Kashmir valley also 5 to 9 degrees Celsius below normal the previous day.

Pahalgam had a low of 5.7 degree Celsius against 9.4 degree Celsius the previous night, Kupwara had a low of 7.2 degree Celsius against the 8.9 degree Celsius a day ago and Gulmarg had a low of 1.2 degree Celsius against the 2.4 degree Celsius recorded the previous night, the MeT office said.

### LS Polls | ECI cracks down on money power in J&K; Cash, Liquor, Drugs, Freebies worth Rs 4 cr seized

and non-stop With General Elections 2024 underway. "ECI is on track for the highest ever seizures of inducements recorded in the 75-year history of Lok Sabha elections in the country."

"Enforcement Agencies have made a record seizure of over Rs. 4650 crores in ECI's resolute fight against money power even before the first phase of polling for the 18th Lok Sabha elections commences on Friday. This marks a sharp increase over Rs 3475 crores seized during the entire Lok Sabha election in 2019," the statement said.

"Significantly, 45% of the seizures are of drugs and narcotics, that are under the special focus of the Commission. The seizures have been possible by comprehensive planning, scaled up collaboration and unified deterrence action from agencies, proactive citizen participation and optimal engagement of technology."

Use of black money, over and above political financing and accurate disclosure thereof, may disturb the level playing field in favour

of more resourceful parties or candidates in specific geographies. The seizures are a critical part of ECI's resolve to conduct the Lok Sabha elections free of inducements and electoral malpractices and to ensure a level playing field."

The ECI states that the Commission during reviews had always emphasized that there will be multi-pronged surveillance on all modes of transport — check posts and nakas for road transport, Coast guard for coastal routes and DMs and SPs alongside agencies for air routes including checking of helicopters and non-scheduled flights.

The ECI stated that in January and February 2024, the months preceding the official announcement, countrywide seizures totalling another Rs 7502 crores were recorded in the form of cash, liquor, drugs, precious metals and freebies. This brings total seizure to over Rs 12000 crores so far with six weeks still left in the election period, the ECI said. As per ECI figures, in J&K, cash worth Rs 1.2466890 Cr, Liquor worth Rs 0.6300640 Cr, Drugs worth Rs 2.3529220 Cr, precious metal worth 0.0025800 Cr, freebies/other items worth Rs0.0559150 Crore. "Total seizures in J&K are worth Rs 4.2881700 Crore," the ECI statement said.

**If Kejriwal can provide free electricity, why can't we: Waheed Parra**

During public meetings, he interacted with people from far-flung areas of the Srinagar Parliament constituency and took stock of the problems faced by the residents, including the lack of electricity, water supply, and road connectivity.

Parra, while interacting with the media on the sidelines of a public meeting in Pulwama, questioned, if Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal can provide free electricity, why can't we. He promised to provide free electricity in Jammu during summer and Kashmir during winter if voted into power.

He said, "The day our party forms its government in the upcoming elections, we will provide free electricity like it is being given in the National capital, Delhi." He assured that he would represent the aspirations of the people of Kashmir in Parliament if elected and pledged to address all student and Kashmir community issues promptly by liaising with the respective governments.

Highlighting that the people of Kashmir entrusted sitting and current parliament members from the Kashmir valley with their hopes in 2019, believing they would be steadfast advocates of their rights in Parliament, he expressed disappointment in their performance since August 5th, 2019.

"For God's sake, tell me, why should people vote for these MPs when they've mastered the art of parliamentary disappearing acts since August 5th, 2019?" Waheed questioned.

### BJP manifestoes have always brought destruction for J&K: Omar Abdullah

As part of the seat-sharing agreement reached between the INDIA partners, the Congress will contest Jammu, Udhampur and Ladakh parliamentary constituencies, while the National Conference will contest from the Anantnag-Rajouri, Srinagar and Baramulla Lok Sabha seats.

"We have still not lost hope of restoration of Article 370. There are many like-minded parties such as the DMK and TMC, which are with us on Article 370. The BJP did not lose hope when it had just 2 Lok Sabha seats so why should we?" the former CM said.

In its election manifesto—"Sankalp Patra", the BJP vowed to implement the Union Civil Code (UCC) and bring lasting peace to the

Northeast, among other key poll promises.

The party released its manifesto on Sunday at its headquarters in New Delhi in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, with several Union Ministers and senior party office-bearers seated in the audience.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir was split into two Union Territories—Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh—following the Centre's landmark decision to revoke the special constitutional privileges under Article 370 in October 2019.

The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act 2019 was passed by the Parliament in 2019, resulting in the abrogation of Article 370.

The BJP had won three out of six seats in Jammu and Kashmir in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, while the National Conference won the remaining three seats.

Polling in Jammu and Kashmir will take place in the first five phases, between April 19 and May 20.

**Man kills mother with sharp-edged weapon in Baramulla, arrested: Police**

the police within hours of the crime. Following the incident, the body of the deceased was transferred to Sub District Hospital (SDH) Sopore for legal-medico formalities.

Meanwhile, the case has been registered at Police Station Dangiwaicha, with further investigations currently underway.

### India likely to experience Above-Normal Rainfall this Monsoon: IMD

However, normal cumulative rainfall does not guarantee uniform temporal and spatial distribution of rain across the country, with climate change further increasing the variability of the rain-bearing system.

Climate scientists say the number of rainy days is declining while heavy rain events (more rain over a short period) are increasing, leading to frequent droughts and floods.

Based on data between 1951-2023, India experienced above-normal rainfall in the monsoon season on nine occasions when La Nina followed an El Nino event, IMD chief Mrutyunjay Mohapatra told a press conference here.

India is likely to see above-normal rainfall in the four-month monsoon season (June to September) with cumulative rainfall rainfall estimated at 106% of the long-period average (87 cm), he said.

Positive Indian Ocean Dipole conditions are predicted during the monsoon season. Also, the snow cover in the Northern Hemisphere is low. These conditions are favourable for the Indian southwest monsoon, he said.

Moderate El Nino conditions are prevailing at present. It is predicted to turn neutral by the time monsoon season commences. Thereafter, models suggest, La Nina conditions may set in by August-September, Mohapatra said.

India received "below-average" cumulative rainfall — 820 mm compared to the long-period average of 868.6 mm — in 2023, an El Nino year. Before 2023, India recorded "normal" and "above-normal" rainfall in the monsoon season for four years in a row.

El Nino conditions — periodic warming of surface waters in the central Pacific Ocean — are associated with weaker monsoon winds and drier conditions in India.

Three large-scale climatic phenomena are considered for forecasting monsoon season rainfall.

The first is El Nino, the second is the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), which occurs due to differential warming of the western and eastern

sides of the equatorial Indian Ocean, and the third is the snow cover over the northern Himalayas and the Eurasian landmass, which also has an impact on the Indian monsoon through the differential heating of the landmass.

The southwest monsoon delivers about 70% of India's annual rainfall, which is critical for the agriculture sector. Agriculture accounts for about 14 percent of the country's GDP.

### Beginning of 'Ram Rajya' has started in India, nobody can stop it now: Rajnath

towards their duties. There is a problem when people start having a sense of authority," he said.

Kathua district is part of Udhampur parliamentary constituency which is going to poll in the first phase on April 19.

The senior BJP leader said a situation where people are realising their duties is taking shape in the country.

"When those sitting in the government do their duties responsibly, it will slowly create awareness among people as well. We are not doing politics to form the government but for the country," he said.

Expressing confidence about Jitendra Singh winning from the constituency for the third term with a huge margin, the defence minister appealed to the people to pick up the party's past manifestoes, since its origin from the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, and see to it that "we have fulfilled all our promises".

"We finished Article 370 (that provided special status to J&K) to bring it at par with other parts of the country. Opposition parties were talking about construction of the Ram temple since 1984 but it was done by us and our Prime Minister performed its 'pran pratishtha' on January 22," Singh said.

"We implemented the CAA but there are people who are trying to create misgivings but I want to clarify that no Indian citizen is going to lose his citizenship," he added.

Referring to the triple talaq, Singh said some people are saying why are you interfering in the religious affairs of others.

"I want to make it clear to them that any woman irrespective of her faith is our mother, sister and daughter. The attack on the dignity and honour of women will not be tolerated. Whether we form a government or not, how can we accept such a thing which will throw her out of her home," he said.

As far as the Narendra Modi government is concerned, Singh said not only India but the world acknowledges that India is moving ahead to become the third largest economy in the world and its image has also enhanced so much that the world listens carefully to what "we are saying unlike in the past when nobody was taking us seriously".

He said the BJP is doing what it is saying and it was not the case with Congress which ruled the nation for so many decades but failed to make the country a powerful nation which it should have done three decades ago.

"I want to tell you, Mehbooba Mufti, today the tricolour is being unfurled on all parts of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Referring to another remark that there would be a bloodbath on the roads of Kashmir, he pointed out that streams of milk and water are flowing in Jammu and Kashmir, showing the significant development and progress made since the abrogation of the Article 370 in August 2019.

"Modi has returned things with interest to Jammu and Kashmir. J&K is moving rapidly on the path of development and progress," he added.

Pointing towards Congress leader Rahul Gandhi playing with his sister Priyanka in the snow at Gulmarg in Kashmir early last year, Singh attributed it to the peace prevailing in the region after the abrogation of Article 370.



## Pollard defends Hardik Pandya, says 'sick & fed up' of people pinpointing individuals for team's losses

*The match on Sunday witnessed intermittent boosing of Pandya who struggled with both bat and ball*

MUMBAI, Apr 15 (Agencies): Mumbai Indians batting coach Kieron Pollard is "sick and fed up" of people pinpointing particular individuals for the team's losses as he urged fans not to "nitpick" struggling captain Hardik Pandya after MI lost to Chennai Super Kings by 20 runs in their Indian Premier League match here.

CSK legend MS Dhoni took 26 runs off Pandya's final over with the help of three consecutive sixes as the MI skipper struggled for right line and length while also bowling two wides at a crucial time.

Pandya finished with figures of 2 for 43 from his four overs and also had a tough time with the bat, managing a mere two runs off six balls at a crucial juncture of the game.

"You're going to have those days. I'm sick and fed up of just looking to pinpoint at individuals. Cricket is a team sport at the end of the day," Pollard said at the post-match press conference Sunday night.

"He (Pandya) is a confident guy. He has been great around the group. In cricket, you have good days and you have bad days. I'm seeing an individual who's working bloody hard to continue his skill and to ply his trade."

Pollard reminded fans about the possibility of Pandya being



picked for India's T20 World Cup campaign, saying if that happens everyone would be 'singing his praises'.

"This is an individual that's going to represent the country in less than six weeks' time. We're all going to be cheering for him and want him to do well," said the West Indian who himself is a MI legend.

"It's about high time that we try to encourage and try to stop nitpick. See if we can get the best out of one of the great all-rounders India could ever produce."

"He can bat, he can bowl, he can field. He has an X factor about him. I hope very well deep down within my heart that when

he comes out on top, I'll sit back and I'll watch everyone sing his praises."

The match witnessed intermittent boosing of Pandya who struggled with both bat and ball and also received criticism from former England captain Kevin Pietersen who claimed that the MI skipper has been 'smiling too much'.

Pollard said he is seeing Pandya evolving and backed him to turn things around.

"As an individual, you have to evolve as well. When you're young and there's that youthful exuberance, you go out and you do things in a certain manner. But the older that you get, at times, responsibility sort of kicks

in, accountability to teams sort of kicks in," he said.

"What I'm seeing is a guy that is evolving. Obviously, we as individuals, we want to see certain things, but sometimes the game does not demand certain things."

Pollard said while Mumbai Indians would revisit their plans on Dhoni but added that anyone could have been at the receiving end of the former CSK skipper's onslaught, like Pandya experienced Sunday night.

"Yes, three sixes, 20 runs, some runs in the last over, but anyone could have gone for 20 runs in the last over as well. MS has been world-class for years upon years. We love to see him on the cricket field, walking out into stadiums. We're all in awe of what he has accomplished."

"The scoreline (20 runs), that's the difference. But cricket is much more than what we see at the end. For us, it's much deeper than that. We're going to dissect and we have done before throughout the tournament and do our homework and try to come back better as a team," Pollard said.

"MS Dhoni, Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Hardik Pandya... you have plans of how you want to bowl to them, and you go back and you look to see if it was executed or not," he added.

## Candidates Chess Tournament: D Gukesh back on top after easy win against Vidit Gujrathi



TORONTO, Apr 15 (Agencies): India's D Gukesh bounced back with a finely crafted game to outwit compatriot Vidit Gujrathi and regain his joint lead with Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia after the eighth round of the Candidates chess tournament here.

On a day when R Praggnanandhaa played out a draw with Firouza Alireza of France, Hikaru Nakamura sealed his supremacy in the all-American duel against Fabiano Caruana to come back into the reckoning for top honours.

Nepomniachtchi faltered in the early stages to allow tailender Nijat Abasov to get away with an easy draw.

With six rounds still to come, Gukesh and Nepomniachtchi have 5

points apiece and they are followed by Nakamura and Praggnanandhaa on 4.5 points each. Caruana is sole fifth on 4 points, followed by Gujrathi on 3.5 points, Alireza on 3 points and Abasov on 2.5 points.

Gukesh had his task cut out and went for a rare variation wherein he surprised Gujrathi as early as his fourth move. Gujrathi sank into long thought and ended up losing around 20 minutes on the clock. In the middle game, Gukesh seized control of the only open file and used his queen and rook for absolute domination. Vidit tried hard to resist but the pressure was quite unforgiving especially when he had less time. The game lasted 38 moves.

"These kind of clean

games are rare at this level. In the opening, he had some inaccuracies and his position was unpleasant and I was in control," Gukesh said when asked if he was surprised how he won as black without much counterplay.

In the women's section, Koneru Humpy scored a victory over compatriot R Vaishali out of a queen pawn game to jump to 3.5 points.

The course of the event changed a bit in this section as Tingjie Lei of China accounted for her Chinese teammate Zhongyi Tan to throw the event open. Zhongyi's domination was halted as Aleksandra Goryachkina of Russia and Lei joined her in the lead on 5 points out of a possible eight.

Russian Kateryna Lagno is within striking distance of the three leaders on 4.5 points with Humpy and Nurgul Salimova sharing the fifth spot on 3.5 points each. Anna Muzychuk of Ukraine stands seventh on three points, while Vaishali is on the last spot on 2.5 points.

## Haryana's Palak Gulia bags Olympics quota place

NEW DELHI, Apr 15 (Agencies): Reigning Asian Games champion Palak Gulia bagged the 20th Paris Olympics quota place in shooting for the country, clinching the bronze medal in the women's 10m air pistol event at the ISSF Final Olympic Qualification Championship (Rifle and Pistol) in Rio de Janeiro.

The 18-year-old from Jhajjar, Haryana, who had won an individual gold and a team silver in the 10m air pistol event at the Hangzhou Asian Games, overcame a slow start in the 24-shot final, displaying nerves of steel to climb steadily up the leaderboard and eventually end up scoring 217.6.

Armenia's Elmira Karapetyan, who had already booked her quota in a previous event, won gold, while



Thai teenager Kamonlak Saenchai clinched the silver medal and the second available quota place.

India have now clinched a maximum of 16 Paris Olympics spots available to a country in pistol and rifle events.

The country's shotgun shooters can still earn four Paris berths in men's and women's trap

and skeet events when the ISSF Final Olympic Qualification Championship (Shotgun) commences in Doha on April 19.

Palak and Sainyam had qualified for the eight-woman final on Saturday placed sixth and seventh, respectively, with identical scores of 578. Sainyam finished fifth eventually.

## Stefanos Tsitsipas eases to 3rd title in Monte Carlo



MONTE CARLO, Apr 15 (Agencies): Stefanos Tsitsipas made short work of Norwegian eighth seed Casper Ruud as he seized a third Monte Carlo Masters title in four years with a 6-1 6-4 victory.

Tsitsipas dominated

proceedings against fellow 25-year-old Ruud from the onset, cruising through six consecutive games to wrap up the opening set in 36 minutes. The second set was a much closer affair but Tsitsipas proved too strong for Ruud, as the

Greek became the first player in the professional era to win his first three Monte Carlo finals in straight sets.

Tsitsipas, who handed Australian Open champion Jannik Sinner just his second defeat of the year in the semifinals on Saturday, secured his first title of 2024, taking his career haul to 11.

Tsitsipas joins Rafa Nadal, Bjorn Borg, Thomas Muster and Ilije Nastase to win at least three Monte Carlo titles.

"It's been very difficult. To be back on the podiums and winning tournaments feels amazing," Tsitsipas said. "This is purely unbelievable for me. I really wanted the trinity so I got it," he added.

## RCB vs SRH Preview: Struggling RCB set for another litmus test at home

BENGALURU, Apr 15 (Agencies): RCB will host SRH in Monday's IPL 2024 clash at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium where the Bengaluru-based side has struggled to find home comfort. Reeling at the bottom of the table with just one win in 6 matches, RCB don't have a lot of time for course correction and the visiting SunRisers side will not make it easy for them. Having already hit the highest-ever IPL total of 277, the SunRisers batters will be licking their lips at the prospect of facing a dysfunctional RCB bowling attack in Bengaluru, known for being one of the notorious venues for six-hitting.

RCB are heading into the contest after having been hammered by Mumbai at the Wankhede Stadium last Thursday. RCB had some signs of encouragement as they managed to post 195 despite losing their main man Virat Kohli cheaply. Captain Faf du Plessis and India batter Rajat Patidar returned to form, much to the relief of the team management after which Dinesh Karthik continued his glorious finishing form. However, their bowling weaknesses were exposed



so much so that captain Faf du Plessis conceded that RCB batters might have to score 10-20 extra runs every game to make up for it. MI chased down the target in just 15.3 overs.

RCB's bowling unit has been disappointing, to say the least. It all started when Kolkata gunned down 183 in just 16.5 overs at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium after which Rajasthan chased down 184 with 5 deliveries to spare on a not-so-easy pitch for batting at the SawaiMansingh Stadium in Jaipur. However, the hammering at the Wankhede Stadium raised concerns and the near future looks a bit bleak as there are no readymade fixes for the side. On the other hand, SunRisers are heading into the contest on the back of a thrilling 2-run win over Punjab in Mullanpur. The 2016 champions rode on a sensational batting

effort from young Nitish Kumar Reddy on a day when their big guns, including Travis Head, Aiden Markram, and Heinrich Klaasen, failed to trouble the scorers much. SunRisers, however, held their nerves as their bowling group stepped up and delivered to clinch their 3rd win of the season.

SunRisers's big guns will be keen on proving that the batting failure in Mullanpur was just a blip and they have a great opportunity in Bengaluru to flex their muscles again. Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma will be keen on maximising their power-play and it doesn't look good for RCB. Heinrich Klaasen will be targeting the roofs on quite a few occasions if he gets going against the RCB bowling unit.

RCB vs SRH: Head-to-Head  
RCB and SRH have met as many as 23

times in the IPL and the SunRisers have a slender lead in head-to-head meetings, having won 12 of them. RCB, on the other hand, have won 2 of their last 3 meetings. RCB also have won 5 of their 7 meetings against SRH at their home ground, the M Chinnaswamy Stadium.

RCB vs SRH: Team News

SunRisers are heading into the big game on the back of a week-long break and they are unlikely to tinker with their winning combination. Mayank Agarwal, who missed their last game, is fit and ready to go and might get a game at his home ground.

On the other hand, RCB team director Mo Babat hinted at a few more changes as the home side looks to arrest a slide and get back on track. RCB are short of options and their bench strength is not something that inspires confidence. Glenn Maxwell seems to be doing okay after recovering well from a finger injury he picked up in Mumbai and RCB need their all-rounder to fire.

RCB left out Cameron Green for their away game in Mumbai for Will Jacks. The England star is expected to retain his place as he showcased

a glimpse of his big-hitting prowess. Will it be his day in Bengaluru?

RCB vs SRH: M Chinnaswamy Stadium Pitch and Conditions

The weather in Bengaluru is expected to be clear for a full 40-over match. And the pitch at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium is expected to aid the batters, as usual. However, the team bowling first will look to make use of the two-paced nature of the pitch. The dew in the late evening has made the venue good for chasing. RCB will be hoping and praying that they get an opportunity to chase a total here.

RCB vs SRH: Predicted Playing XIs

RCB: Virat Kohli, Faf du Plessis (captain), Will Jacks, Rajat Patidar, Glenn Maxwell, Mahipal Lomror, Dinesh Karthik (wk), Reece Topley, Vijaykumar Vysakh, Akash Deep, Mohammed Siraj.

Impact Sub: Mahipal Lomror.

SRH: Travis Head, Abhishek Sharma, Aiden Markram, Nitish Reddy, Heinrich Klaasen (wk), Abdul Samad, Shahbaz Ahmed, Pat Cummins (captain), Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Jaydev Unadkat, T. Natarajan.

Impact Sub: Rahul Tripathi.

## KKR's Rs 24.75 Crore Pick Mitchell Starc Breaks Silence On Criticism Over Poor IPL Start

KOLKATA, Apr 15 (Agencies): Australian speedster Mitchell Starc is not bothered about the criticism directed at him for not living up to his high IPL price tag but on Sunday admitted that his lack of T20 experience could be the reason for taking longer time to find his rhythm. Starc, the IPL's highest buy at a whopping Rs 24.75 crore, came up with his best show this season, claiming 3/28, including two wickets in the final over, that helped KKR restrict Lucknow Super Giants to a below par 161 for 7. KKR then chased down the target in 15.4 overs with eight wickets intact. Prior to Sunday, Starc took just two wickets in four matches with an average of 77 and leaked 11 runs per over

as he drew widespread criticism.

"I don't read anything so that doesn't bother me," Starc said after KKR's win at the Eden Gardens here.

"I haven't played a lot of T20 cricket in the last couple of years, so it's probably taken me a little bit longer than I would have liked to get back into the rhythm of things and make a better impact. So today was nice in that regard." Managing workload in T20 cricket and adjusting to the rigours of the IPL is not tough for Test cricketers, said Starc.

"I'm 34, so I'm pretty good with my workloads. I've been doing this a long time, so that's fine."

"It's T20 cricket. For the guys that play a

lot of Test cricket, this is certainly a lot easier physically. It's probably more getting used to the tactical side of it." He said in T20 cricket, games come around so quickly that players can't really think about what has happened.

"We play again on Tuesday, and I think that's a feature of T20 cricket, whether you have a good day or bad day. You quickly focus on the next game."

"So far, we've started the season quite well as a group, and now we move on to Tuesday."

"We kept them (LSG) under par with the way we bowled, and that showed through with the way that our batters went out there and did it pretty clinically in the end. So a pretty solid day for KKR," he added.

# Shiv Sena protests against collecting registration fees from Amarnath pilgrims

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu and Kashmir unit has welcomed the start of registration and the announcement of the dates of the Holy Shri Amarnath Yatra 2024. Along with this, strongly protested against the continuation of charging the registration fees from the devotees. Led by the party state chief Manish Sahni at Press club, Jammu strongly protest holding placards written "Shri Amarnath Yatra registration should be free", "Stop collecting Jazia tax". Party state chief Manish Sahni said that the stubborn attitude of the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board regarding registration recovery from the pilgrims is condemnable. He said that he had fought a long battle to make the registration free in 2023 as well. Shri Amarnath Shrine Board



has given some relief and reduced the online registration from 200/- to 150 in 2024, but his demand is to make it completely free. Sahni said that registration from religious pilgrimages brings back memories of the Jizya tax of the Mughal rule. He said that the Shrine Board charges the pilgrims for providing buses, tents, and lockers for keeping their belongings. On

the other hand, registration for the world famous Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Yatra, which runs 365 days a year in Jammu and Kashmir, is completely free. The Shri Amarnath Shrine Board will also have to give up its insistence on charging registration fees from pilgrims coming for the Shri Amarnath Yatra, which runs only for 50-60 days a year. He said that the pil-

grims' pockets already get empty in completing the formalities set for the Shri Amarnath Yatra. Sahni has demanded from the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir (Chairman of Shri Amarnath Shrine Board) to make this registration fee free with immediate effect. He said that if it is not rolled back within a week, he will be forced to submit a memo-

random written in his blood to the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Along with this, a demand has been made to take necessary steps to keep the Holy ice lingam safe for the duration of the Yatra. An appeal has been made to reduce the formalities fixed for those providing langar service and to provide all possible facilities from the Shrine Board. It is worth noting that the registration process for Shri Amarnath Yatra 2024 has started. The Holy Yatra will start from June 29, 2024 to August 19. On this occasion, Gen secretary Vikas Bakshi, vice president Sanjeev Kohli, Balwant Singh, President Kamghar Raj Singh, Pawan Singh, Naresh Kumar, Vijay Chowdhury, Baba, Rajesh Handa, Shahsi Pal, Mangu Ram, Manish Sarma, Om Prakash, Jagbir Singh, Noor Ahmed and many others were present.

# DSS seeks public support to save Dogriyat



## Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: Th. Gulchain Singh Charak, former Minister and President Dogra Sadar Sabha J&K said that the issues and sentiments of Dogras of Jammu and Kashmir have been used, misused and abused. Hence, Culture, Heritage and Resources seriously eroded in the past. Addressing a Press Conference here today, the former minister said that Dogra Sadar Sabha as the 120-year-old organization of the Dogras consider ourselves morally and constitutionally duty bound to appeal to each and every eligible voter, particularly of Jammu region, to ensure to exercise his/her franchise in full conscience and wisdom to protect and promote their larger National and Dogra interests.

candidate seeking their vote about their commitment to fulfilling the following eleven-point charter of demands, which are crucial to every Dogra. These demands included the restoration of full statehood and enactment of provisions of Art.371 to secure jobs and land for the local population, domicile to Gallantry Awardees as in Himachal Pradesh, and establishment of an Ex-serviceman Colony in Srinagar. Preservation of the identity and beauty of the Jammu region's mountainous topography, rich biodiversity, ecology, and soothing environment during infrastructure development is also stressed. Furthermore, the Sabha calls for the unbiased inclusion of history of Jammu and Kashmir in textbooks at school, college and university levels including tales of valor and chivalry of Dogra warriors. Additionally, the Sabha emphasized the need for the development of comprehensive and integrated tourism circuits across all districts of Jammu region and fast-paced, time-bound restoration of Mubarak Mandi Heritage Complex as a focal point of Jammu's tourism, opening of General N.C Vij Road passing along the front gates of Civil Secretariat, Jammu with alternative security

arrangements along with the inclusion of historical Dogra Hall Bhawan under Smart City Project, Jammu. Upgrading the 120 year old Ranbir Canal and the Hydel Power House near Canal Road, Jammu, is highlighted as crucial, as well as constructing a befitting Memorial for Martyrs of Indian Armed Forces and Para-Military Forces at Srinagar. The Sabha also stressed the importance of upscaling Dogra Festivals like Jammu Festival as the Annual UT/ State level Duggar festival and fulfilling the decades-old demand for Upgradation of Doordarshan Kendra to a full-fledged Duggar Satellite Channel. Lastly, the Sabha sought a guarantee for fast-paced, time-bound restoration of historical forts, temples, and shrines, as well as a commitment to work for the elimination and eradication of the Drugs Menace from the society. In conclusion, the Dogra Sadar Sabha appealed to the public to press before the political parties, individuals, and contesting Leaders to refrain from resorting to and succumbing to religious slogans that can spoil the mutual trust and amity amongst communities. Instead, they must ensure to guarantee a time-bound resolution of the highlighted issues.

# Khatana hails BJP's election manifesto

## Top News Report

KISHTWAR, Apr 15: Member of Parliament Rajya Sabha Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana along with former Minister and state General Secretary Sunil Sharma & State secretary Tariq Hussain Keen, Member of Parliament Rajya Sabha Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana spoke during the interaction, various issues were discussed. He highlighted the memorandum which published by BJP as an election manifesto. He mentioned about four pillar of India which are women, poor, youth,



and farmers we have to focused on it. Many other issues also discussed in Press conference and said in future all the issues will be settled, party is working day and

night for the party to getting stronger, people are praising the way of working and saying that his actions are strengthening the Bharatiya Janta Party.

# GDC Samba organizes Poster Making on "The Value of a Vote"

## Top News Report

SAMBA, Apr 25: The Pravaad Electoral Literacy Club of SPPND Government Degree College, Samba organized an engaging Poster Making Activity with the aim of promoting voter awareness among the students. The event, held under the expert guidance of Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri, Principal of the college, centered around the theme "The Value of a Vote". The students showcased their creativity and passion for civic responsibility by creating informative and thought-provoking posters that emphasized the significance of each and every vote. Principal of the college commended the students for their exceptional efforts in raising awareness about the value of a vote and the responsibility that comes with exercising it as a legal right.

# Need to consolidate nationalist, socialist & secular forces' Rampaul urges voters to support INDIA Bloc candidates in LS elections

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: In view of the forthcoming General Elections 2024, the Central Zone of JKNC has appealed to the voters of J&K to exercise their franchise in a wise manner so as to elect a Government at Centre which will work for overall betterment of the country, in general, and society, in particular. In a message to people, President of JKNC Central Zone and former Minister, Babu Rampaul said, "There is a need to consolidate nationalist forces which uphold the idea of pluralistic society. Which have the ability to keep the nation together and not like the present dispensation which is divid-

ing people in the name of religion/caste/creed etc." He further appealed to people to strengthen the socialist forces which could ensure the equitable development of each and every section of the society and not the one like the BJP which worked on the agenda to benefit only the selected class of rich people. He said, "There is an urgent need to strengthen the forces which are saviour of democratic and secular tradition in India as there is an apprehension among the large number of people in India that BJP is going to change the Constitution, if it is elected to power this time." He asked the people to

understand the ideology of present dispensation at Centre, which was hell bent to destroy the democratic values and did not hesitate to amend the Constitution as per their whims and fancies. Babu Rampaul also expressed strong resentment against the alarming rate of unemployment in India. He asserted that the BJP led government at Centre disappointed the people with their anti-youth approach but now people have got the opportunity to uproot the BJP from Centre and elect the government which was capable of tackling the crisis of unemployment. On behalf of JKNC Central Zone unit, he

appealed to the voters to come out in large numbers to exercise their franchise and extend their support to candidates of INDIA Bloc namely Ch. Lal Singh, who is contesting from Udhampur-Doda Constituency and Raman Bhalla, who is candidate from Jammu-Reasi Parliamentary Constituency. He urged the voters to put their weight behind INDIA Bloc candidates so as to save democracy and uphold the secular and socialist values of India. Among others included Dr. Vikas Sharma Coordinator Jammu District (Urban) and Zonal Secretary, Adv. Rajinder Chanyal, Sham Lal Mehra, Rahul Mahajan, Sardar Sureet Singh Sassan, B.D Dalotra (Retd. SP), Som Raj Taroch, Raja Naveed, Ashok Tyagi, Hem Raj, Bharat Bhushan, Manohar Lal, Ramesh Lal, Devi Dass, Rajinder Kumar, Charan Dass, Arjun Tayagi, Amrish Sharma, Rehmat Ali, Dr. Y.P Singh, BD Sharma, Adv. Sat Pal Bhardwaj (Retd.DC), T.R Maandi, Baldev Singh Bhau, Narinder Bhagat, Manohar Lal, Adv. Ravi Kumar, Sureet Kumar and others.

# Students of GCW Bhagwati Nagar celebrate Baisakhi, Ambedkar Jayanti

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: NSS Volunteers and the students of Government College for Women (GCW) Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu, came together in a spirit of unity and celebration to mark the auspicious occasions of Baisakhi and Dr. Ambedkar Jayanti. The programme was organised under the patronship of principal of the college, Dr. Meeru Abrol the dual celebrations showcased the college's commitment to cultural diversity, social harmony, and community engagement. The Baisakhi celebrations at GCW Bhagwati

Nagar were a vibrant display of cultural heritage and traditions. Students participated in traditional dances like Bhangra and Gidda, sang folk songs, and showcased their artistic talents through various cultural performances. The festive atmosphere was enhanced with colourful decorations and traditional attire. The college also paid tribute to Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar on his birth anniversary with great reverence and pride. Students organized seminars, highlighting Dr. Ambedkar's contributions to Indian society,

his advocacy for social justice, and his enduring legacy as the principal architect of the Indian Constitution. The confluence of Baisakhi and Dr. Ambedkar Jayanti provided a unique opportunity for students to celebrate both cultural and social milestones. The dual celebrations emphasized the values of unity, diversity, and social equality, which are integral to the ethos of GCW Bhagwati Nagar. Speaking on the occasion principal of the college, Dr. Meeru Abrol said that "The celebrations at GCW Bhagwati Nagar were a testament to the

college's commitment to fostering an inclusive and harmonious learning environment. By coming together to celebrate Baisakhi and Dr. Ambedkar Jayanti, students reaffirmed their dedication to upholding the principles of unity, respect, and social responsibility." The programme was organized by Prof. Anju Bala, NSS P.O. of the college. She highlighted that Government College for Women (GCW) Bhagwati Nagar is a premier institution committed to providing quality education, fostering personal growth, and promoting cultural and social.

# Mehandi Art Competition under SVEEP held at GDC RS Pura

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Apr 15: Government Degree College R. S. Pura organized Mehndi art Competition on Monday as part of the ongoing Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) campaign. The programme organized by Electoral Literacy Club in collaboration with Department of Education. The aim of the competition was to raise democratic awareness



among the newly eligible voters. The activity, apart from beautiful designs, focused on themes like Mera Phala Vote-Desh Ke Liye, My Vote - My

Choice, My Vote -My Right, Vote for a Better India, etc. The female students of college, took active part in this activity and also pledged to cast

their vote without any fear or favour. Dr. Rajni Bhagat Principal of the institution appreciated students' enthusiasm and commitment towards democratic values and traditions. She also encouraged students to participate in democratic process of the country. The entire programme was coordinated by Prof. Neelam Kumari, Assistant Professor in Education. The programme was attended by the entire teaching faculty of the college.