

SIR is constitutional, not new: Dr Tahir Chowdhary

Cong misleading voters for political gains, says BJP spokesperson at Rajouri workshop

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: The Bharatiya Janata Party organised a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) awareness workshop at its Rajouri district office on Friday, aiming to counter what it described as a sustained misinformation campaign by the Congress over the electoral roll revision process.

BJP state spokesperson Tahir Chowdhary, who addressed the gathering, said SIR was neither a new exercise nor unconstitutional, asserting that it has been conducted regularly since 1952 under governments of different political parties, including the Congress.

He said the exercise is a routine constitutional process carried out by the Election Commission to



BJP state spokesperson Tahir Chowdhary speaking at a programme.

ensure accuracy and integrity of voter lists.

Chowdhary explained that Special Intensive Revision exercises were undertaken during the tenures of Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, P.V. Narasimha Rao, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh, adding

that the same transparent and democratic process continues under Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2025.

Highlighting the objective of SIR, he said the exercise focuses on Matdata Suchi Shuddhikaran-the purification of electoral rolls by identifying and removing illegal entries. He asserted that foreign nationals, including Bangladeshi,

Burmese and Rohingya infiltrators, have no constitutional right to vote in India and that democratic institutions must be elected solely by Indian citizens.

Chowdhary accused the Congress of attempting to legitimise illegality for electoral advantage and claimed that changes in Election Commission guidelines introduced in 2010 weakened the authority of returning officers, making repeated SIR exercises necessary.

Clarifying issues surrounding the appointment of Election Commission officials, he said there was no constitutional provision involving the Chief Justice of India in the appointment process prior to 2023.

He added that following the Supreme Court judg-

ment in Anoop Baranwal vs Union of India, the BJP-led government introduced greater transparency by including the Leader of Opposition in the selection committee.

The programme was chaired by Rajouri district president Dev Raj Sharma, who said awareness initiatives like these were essential to protect the sanctity of democracy and counter false narratives.

He urged party workers to carry the message to the grassroots level to strengthen public confidence in constitutional institutions.

The workshop was attended by senior BJP leaders and workers, including Dinesh Sharma, Karamat Malik, Puspinder Gupta, Samreen Khan and other party functionaries.

ASCOMS organises free health check-up camp

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Acharya Shri Chander College of Medical Sciences & Hospital (ASCOMS), Jammu, organised a free health check-up camp at Government Gandhi College of Science & Arts with the objective of promoting preventive healthcare and early diagnosis among students and staff.

The camp will continue on December 20 and 21, 2025, and has received an encouraging response from the college community.

Renowned specialists from ASCOMS provided expert medical consultations across multiple departments. The team included Dr. Sanjay Bhat from General Medicine, Dr. Shafiq Hacla from



Doctors at health check-up camp.

Orthopaedics, Dr. Apurab Gupta from ENT, and Dr. Ajay Puri from Biochemistry. The camp was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Sumedha Mengi.

Free Random Blood Sugar (RBS) tests were offered to all attendees, along with a 50 per cent discount on radiological and pathological investigations conducted at the hospital premises.

Senior consultants remained available throughout the camp to provide professional medical advice. The initiative was successfully organised under the guidance of facilitator and Director ASCOMS, Dr. Jatinder, with active support from trustees Dr. Gautam Mengi and Rakesh Raman, reaffirming ASCOMS' commitment to community health.

Col. Pathania seeks end to discrimination against ECHS beneficiaries at Narayana Hospital

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: SSP Col. S.S. Pathania (Retd.), Chief Convener and President of Sainik Samaj Party (JKUT), has expressed deep concern over the discrimination faced by beneficiaries of the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) vis-à-vis Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) beneficiaries at the Gandhi Nagar centre of Narayana Hospital, Katra.

The Gandhi Nagar centre, opened a year ago with OPD, laboratory, ultrasound, and other facilities, was intended to provide easy access and convenience to patients. Narayana Hospital, known



for its modern infrastructure, state-of-the-art machinery, excellent doctors and nursing staff, diagnostic facilities, ventilated patient rooms, and high hygiene standards, is regarded as one of the best super-speciality hospitals in JKUT and has been providing exemplary health-

care services.

However, Pathania highlighted that while CGHS beneficiaries enjoy the facilities at the Gandhi Nagar centre, ECHS beneficiaries-comprising a large number of senior citizens, their families, and dependents-are denied similar access. This, he stated, reflects unwarranted discrimination.

The facility director of Narayana Hospital has assured that ECHS beneficiaries will soon be extended access to all facilities at the centre.

Pathania also noted that the Officer Commanding of the ECHS Regional Centre has shown little interest in resolving this sensitive issue.

Delegation meets Billawaria, seeks early redressal of civic issues

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A delegation of prominent citizens from Jammu Municipal Corporation Ward Nos. 57, 22, 23 and Babiliana Panchayat met Bharatiya Janata Party Jammu-Kashmir General Secretary and former Deputy Mayor of Jammu, Baldev Singh Billawaria, to seek early redressal of long-pending civic infrastructure issues in their respective localities. The delegation urged immediate intervention to address pressing problems affecting the daily lives of residents.

The citizens highlighted that during the rainy season, their areas face severe waterlogging due to damaged drains and poor drainage systems. They also pointed to dilapidated



Delegation of prominent citizens calling on BJP J&K General Secy Baldev Singh Billawaria.

lanes, weak connecting roads and inadequate sanitation facilities, which have led to inconvenience, health risks and disruption to normal life. The situation, they said, particularly impacts traders, senior citizens and school-going children. The delegation demanded a comprehensive action plan, regular maintenance and time-bound execution of works to ensure lasting

relief.

Baldev Singh Billawaria listened patiently to the concerns and acknowledged the seriousness of the issues raised. He assured the delegation that the matters would be taken up with the Jammu Municipal Corporation and other concerned departments on priority. He said that he would press for adequate financial allocations and time-

bound repair and development works to address the problems effectively.

Billawaria emphasized that sustainable solutions can be achieved only through close coordination between elected representatives, municipal engineers and local residents. He noted that safe roads, proper drainage and efficient sanitation systems are basic civic necessities

essential for public health, safety and dignity. The delegation also stressed the need for fixing clear time-lines for project execution and holding regular review meetings to monitor progress, while ensuring community participation in planning so that development works reflect actual local needs.

Agreeing with these suggestions, Billawaria assured that municipal engineers would be directed to conduct inspections at the earliest and prepare detailed proposals for lane repairs, drain reconstruction, improved drainage capacity and better sanitation facilities. He reiterated that the BJP in Jammu and Kashmir remains committed to acting as a strong voice for local communities.

IIM Jammu concludes SMF 2025 with deliberations on Strategy, Governance and SDGs

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The three-day Strategic Management Forum (SMF) 2025 at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu concluded on December 19, marking the culmination of intensive academic, policy, and strategic deliberations. The forum underscored IIM Jammu's emerging stature as a hub of thought leadership, policy engagement, and nation-building aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

The final day featured a high-powered panel discussion on "Strategy and Governance for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Innovation, Inclusion and Impact." Eminent academic leaders, including Prof. Bhimaraya Metri, Director, IIM Nagpur; Prof. Vinita S. Sahay, Director, IIM Bodhi Gaya; Prof. Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor, Shri Mata



Panelists and dignitaries at the valedictory session of SMF 2025 at IIM Jammu.

Vaishno Devi University, Katra; and Prof. B. S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, participated in the session, moderated by Prof. Shyam Narayan Lal, Chairperson, Nandam and Media & Publication Division, IIM Jammu. Panelists emphasized that sustainability should be embedded as an institutional culture, driven by innovation, inclusion, minimalism, and measurable societal impact. They highlighted climate-responsive

campuses, renewable energy adoption, wellness-focused education, responsible digitization, and strong academia-government collaboration as key enablers of the SDGs, noting India's civilizational values as foundational to sustainable development.

The Valedictory Session was graced by Santosh D. Vaidya, Principal Secretary, Finance Department, Government of Jammu & Kashmir. In his keynote, he highlighted India's critical

transition toward becoming a developed nation by 2047, emphasizing inclusive growth, globally competitive manufacturing, human capital development, digital infrastructure, and sustainability as strategic opportunities. He praised IIM Jammu's partnership with the Government of J&K, its training of over 500 officers, and initiatives such as CITAG and Mission YUVA for generating 4.25 lakh jobs.

Prof. B. S. Sahay welcomed Vaidya on his first in-person visit, highlighting IIM Jammu's upcoming Srinagar campus, EFMD and BGA accreditations, and progress toward AACSB accreditation. Awards, including the SMF Lifetime Achievement Award, SMF Alumni Award, Best Paper, and Outstanding Paper Awards across nine technical sessions, were presented.

Prof. Arunaditya Sahay reflected on SMF's evolution into a robust platform shaping strategic thinking, while Prof. Ravij Seth presented the SMF 2025 report summarizing the rich scholarly discourse. The forum concluded with a vote of thanks, the National Anthem, and the ceremonial passing of the SMF baton to IIM Ranchi, leaving a lasting imprint on strategy, governance, and sustainable development discussions.

NDPP Chairman felicitates Vishal Chopra on appointment as NATF Chairman

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chairman of the National Democratic People's Party (NDPP), Navneet Mishra, felicitated and congratulated Vishal Chopra on his appointment as Chairman of the National Anti-Terrorism Front (NATF). The felicitation marked a warm and respectful interaction between NDPP leadership and Chopra, highlighting the importance of collective efforts in safeguarding national security.

Addressing the gathering, Navneet Mishra termed the appointment as "the need of the hour" and expressed pride that a personality from Jammu & Kashmir has been entrusted with such a significant national responsibility. He conveyed strong confidence in Chopra's leadership, stat-



Chairman NDPP, Navneet Mishra felicitating Vishal Chopra on his appointment as Chairman NATF.

ing that his vision and determination would further strengthen the country's fight against terrorism and anti-national activities.

In his remarks, Vishal Chopra reaffirmed his unwavering commitment to combating terrorism in all its forms, including Over

Ground Workers and white-collar terrorism. He emphasized that no compromise would be made on national unity and security.

Mishra assured full cooperation and support from the NDPP to the NATF in its mission to promote peace, security, and stability across the nation.

DBPS organises religious function on Gayatri Mahamantra Mahima

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha (DBPS) on Friday organised a religious function based on Gayatri Mahamantra Mahima at the Sabha premises, under the chairmanship of Ved Parkash Sharma, President, DBPS. The programme witnessed the participation of eminent Vedic scholars and a large gathering of Sanatanis and members of the DBPS family. The congregation imbued the spiritual essence of the discourses delivered by Swami Prukhar Ji Maharaj, Head, Gayatri Shakti Peeth (Mani Vedic Peeth), Pushkar, Rajasthan. The atmosphere was deeply charged with religious fervour as the audience collectively chanted Gayatri Mantras, creating an environment of devotion and spiritual upliftment.

During his discourse, Swami Prukhar Ji Maharaj stated that India has attained a prominent position in the global order and, in his view, has become worthy of being declared a Hindu Rashtra.

He also informed the gathering that the Peeth will organise a 41-day 200 Kundiya Shat (100) Gayatri Purshcharan Maha Yagya from March 8 to April 19, 2026.

On the occasion, Ved Parkash Sharma, Supreme, DBPS, appealed to members of the Brahman community to participate in large numbers in the forthcoming programme to seek the blessings of Maa Gayatri Ji.

Prominent personalities present on the occasion included DBPS Chairman P.C. Sharma, Nanak Chand Sharma, Senior BJP Leader and Tawi Andolan Chief Advocate Chander Mohan Sharma, M.L. Sharma, Subash Shastri, Captain Lalit Sharma, Sunil Sharma, B.S. Jamwal, Jagannath Sharma, M.L. Padha, Brita Ram Sharma, Shiv Ram Sharma, K.L. Sharma, Kewal Krishan Sharma, Satpal Sharma, Gurdas Sharma, Ramesh Sharma, Soujanya Sharma, Vijay Sharma, Surinder Sharma, Ritiz Khajuria, Raman

Sharma and Prem Balotra, who also sought blessings by gracing the religious function.

Nitish Kumar must resign, apology not enough: Rajesh Gupta

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Senior National Conference (NC) leader Rajesh Gupta on Friday demanded the immediate resignation of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar over the alleged veil-pulling incident, saying the act has stripped the office of moral authority.

Gupta said touching a woman's attire during an official function was a grave abuse of power and could not be dismissed as a mistake.

"When a chief minister crosses personal boundaries in public, an apology becomes meaningless. Accountability begins with resignation," he said.

Gupta asserted that the issue was not religious but ethical, adding that governance must be guided by restraint and respect.

Gaurav calls on LG; seeks Semiconductor Fab, IT expansion, eco-tourism push in Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: BJP Spokesperson and Convener, International Affairs, Gaurav Gupta on Friday called on the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha, and submitted a detailed memorandum outlining a future-oriented development roadmap for the Jammu region. The proposal focused on three key growth pillars-semiconductor manufacturing, expansion of the IT sector, and eco-tourism development-to ensure balanced and sustainable regional development.

In his memorandum, Gupta urged the LG-led UT administration to pursue the establishment of a semiconductor fabrication unit in Jammu under the Government of India's India Semiconductor Mission. He highlighted that several semiconductor and allied projects have recently been approved across the country, with earlier proposals in Gujarat and land allotment in Assam, reflecting the Centre's geographically diversified push for high-technology manufacturing.

He also referred to the ₹4,500-crore modernisation



BJP Spokesperson Gaurav Gupta and JKHCB AJ members calling on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

and expansion of the Semiconductor Laboratory in Mohali as a major step toward strengthening domestic fabrication and R&D capacity, stressing that Jammu and Kashmir must also find a place in the national semiconductor ecosystem. Gupta emphasized that Jammu offers strategic advantages such as improving connectivity, availability of land, reliable infrastructure and a stable, investor-friendly environment.

He further noted that the presence of IIT Jammu, with growing expertise in micro-electronics and VLSI design, strengthens the case for setting up a semiconductor or allied manufacturing facility in the region.

The BJP spokesperson also called for rapid expansion of the IT and technology sector in Jammu. He proposed inviting leading Indian and global IT firms, including TCS, Infosys, Wipro and IBM, to establish IT parks, innovation hubs, R&D centres and corporate offices.

According to him, such initiatives would generate large-scale employment for local youth, reduce migration and integrate Jammu into India's expanding digital economy. Additionally, Gupta proposed eco-tourism development in the Sudhmahadev-Mantalai belt on the lines of Jim Corbett National Park. He suggested eco-friendly infrastructure, trekking routes, nature trails and community-based tourism models to

boost rural employment and promote environmental conservation.

The Lieutenant Governor assured that the proposals would be examined seriously, reiterating the administration's commitment to balanced regional development, employment generation, high-value investments and sustainable tourism in line with the Government of India's long-term vision.

Meanwhile, office bearers of the Jammu & Kashmir High Court Bar Association Jammu including President Nirmal K. Kotwal, Vice President Baldev Singh, General Secretary Pardeep Majotra, Joint Secretary Anshu Mahajan and Treasurer Rahul Aggarwal also called upon the

Lieutenant General Manoj Sinha at the Lok Bhavan, Jammu.

JKHCBAJ deliberated upon the issue of newly enacted The Jammu & Kashmir Tenancy Act 2025, vide which the powers of adjudication are conferred upon Revenue Officers. Bar apprised the Lieutenant Governor that the matter was pending before the High Court, and during the pendency of the litigation, new act has been enacted.

JKHCBAJ also took up the issue of shifting of traffic courts, which directly affects the public and the young lawyers.

Lieutenant Governor patiently deliberated upon both the issues and assured the Association of all possible cooperation.