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India to stand...**

give a new energy to our relations. We will work to create avenues in the connectivity, infrastructure, trade and energy sectors," Modi said in his address after being bestowed Bhutan's highest civilian award.

"Aspirations of Bharat and Bhutan are similar. We've decided to build Viksit Bharat by 2047; Bhutan has decided to become a 'high-income' nation by 2034. To fulfil your goals, India stands with you in 'Brand Bhutan' and 'Bhutan Believe'," Modi said.

"The Bharat-Bhutan partnership is not limited to land and water... Bhutan is now a partner of Bharat in its space missions. Scientists of Bhutan have launched satellites in collaboration with ISRO. We celebrate each other's achievements," he said.

Modi was conferred the Order of the Druk Gyalpo, making him the first foreign Head of the Government to receive the honour.

The award recognises Prime Minister Modi's contribution to strengthening the India-Bhutan friendship and his people-centric leadership.

"Honoured to be conferred with 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo' Award by Bhutan. I dedicate it to 140 crore Indians," Modi posted on X soon after.

King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the Fifth King of Bhutan, who presented him with the honour, and members of the royal family were also present on the occasion.

Starting his address after receiving the honour with the same sentiment, dedicating the award to 140 crore Indians, Modi said the affinity between the people of India and Bhutan makes their bilateral relationship unique while emphasising that "Bharat" resides in people's hearts in this Himalayan nation.

Modi addressed the gathering as "My dear friends of Bhutan" and greeted them with a 'namaskar', receiving applause from the audience.

"We collaborate and celebrate each other's successes. When India's mission Chandrayaan was successful, the people of Bhutan were as happy as the people of India were," he said.

"Your Majesty, you're taking forward the rich culture of Bhutan with a modern vision. Your efforts are promoting 'innovation' along with 'inner joy' in Bhutan.

Bhutan has given the world the concept of 'Gross National Happiness'. I am confident that Bhutan's 'Mindfulness City' will also become an inspiration for the world."

Modi, speaking in Hindi, asserted that "Our ties are inseparable. Our friendship is inseparable. Our mutual cooperation is inseparable. And, the main thing is our faith is unwavering. And, that is why this day is very special for me."

People from Bhutan dressed in their native wear and holding flags of both countries clapped intermittently as Modi addressed them.

Enscenced between the mighty Himalayas and India, sharing its border on west, south and east, Bhutan and India share "a unique and enduring partnership which is rooted in mutual trust, understanding and goodwill.

Modi's visit to Thimphu came against the backdrop of China and Bhutan looking at an expeditious resolution of their festering boundary row that could have implications for India's security interests.

India has been keeping a close eye on the negotiations between Bhutan and China on their boundary row as it could have implications for New Delhi's security interests, especially in the Doklam tri-junction.

Earlier, Modi thanked Prime Minister Tobgay for the "exceptional public welcome accorded to him, with people greeting him all along the journey from Paro to Thimphu," India's Ministry of External Affairs said here in a statement.

Modi also received an audience with the Fourth King of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, here.

The Fourth King of Bhutan extended a warm welcome to the Prime Minister, who in turn, thanked The Fourth King for his leadership, vision and contributions to the strengthening of India- Bhutan relations.

Modi was accorded a ceremonial welcome upon his arrival at the Paro International Airport where he was warmly received by Prime Minister Tobgay.

Dressed in their traditional best, the Bhutanese people lined up the entire 45-kilometre route from Paro International Airport to Thimphu, which was decked up with Indian and Bhutanese flags.

Later, a group of Bhutanese youngsters, dressed in traditional Indian attire, performed a dance on a Garba song written by Modi to welcome him to their country.

After watching them perform with rapt attention and applauding at the end of the performance, Modi posted on X along with photos from the occasion: "I am grateful to the people of Bhutan, especially the young children, for the memorable welcome to their beautiful country."

Court sends Kejriwal...

associates. Senior Advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Kejriwal, claimed there was a conspiracy to keep the AAP leader behind bars so he cannot campaign in the upcoming general elections.

He said the level playing field for the polls has been disturbed with Kejriwal's arrest and his remand will further jeopardise the opposition's electoral campaign.

Kejriwal was produced before the special ED court after he withdrew from the Supreme Court the plea against his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate. The apex court had said the petition would be heard during the day.

The move came soon after the Supreme Court refused to grant bail to BRS leader K Kavitha, who has also been arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in the Delhi excise policy scam case. The ED has claimed that Kavitha, a BRS MLC and daughter of former Telangana chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao, was a key member of the south cartel.

The ED claimed Kejriwal "took advantage" of being the chief minister of Delhi to facilitate money laundering by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which is a "major beneficiary" of the proceeds of crimes generated.

"Arvind Kejriwal, chief minister of NCT of Delhi is the kingpin and key conspirator of the Delhi Excise scam in collusion with ministers of Delhi government, AAP leaders and other persons," the federal agency claimed before the special PMLA court while seeking his custody.

It claimed in its remand papers that "Arvind Kejriwal was involved in the conspiracy of formulation of the excise policy 2021-22 to favour certain persons and also involved in the demanding of kickbacks from liquor businessmen in exchange of favours granting in the said policy."

The ED alleged Kejriwal was directly involved in the use of the proceeds of crime generated in the Goa election campaign as the "ultimate decision maker".

The agency claimed before the court it has recorded the statements of various people engaged in the election campaign-related activities of the AAP during the Goa polls and found that "cash payments were made to them for work like survey workers, area managers, assembly managers etc".

"These persons and activities related to the election campaign were overall managed by Vijay Nair (former AAP communications chief arrested in this case) and Durgesh Pathak, AAP MLA."

The agency claimed these charges were also corroborated by one of the AAP candidates.

The ED has, for the first time in the about two-year-old probe, said the AAP was the "major beneficiary of the proceeds of crime generated in the Delhi liquor scam".

It is for the first time that a political party has been accused of money laundering, and if proved, stringent action like freezing of its accounts may follow.

The ED alleged that a part of these "proceeds of crime", to the tune of about Rs 45 crore in cash, was utilised in the AAP's election campaign for the Goa assembly polls. "In this manner, AAP has committed the offence of money laundering through Sh Arvind Kejriwal and the offences thus are covered by section 70 of the PMLA," it said.

Three more candidates...



nomination papers by three candidates today, the total number of candidates who have filed their candidature for 4-Udhampur PC goes to five. The last day for filing of nomination papers is March 27, 2024 upto 03:00 PM.

Jolt to Cong...

The Congress has challenged initiation of proceedings under Section 153C (assessment of income of any other person) of the Income Tax Act for assessment pertaining to assessment years 2014-15 to 2016-17.

It has contended that Section 153C action was based on searches which were conducted on four individuals in April, 2019. It said that on the basis of the material which was gathered in those searches, the AO also drew corresponding satisfaction notes for initiation of proceedings against the Congress party.

The petitioner's counsel submitted that the assessment which was proposed to be undertaken for Assessment Years (AY) 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 would be barred by the period of limitation and the I-T department could have gone back to a maximum of six assessment years.

The counsel contended that assessment under Section 153C of the Act could have at best covered the period of AYs 2017-18 to 2020-21 and the three additional AYs 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 would be barred by limitation.

The I-T department, however, asserted there was no violation of any statutory provision by the tax authority and that as per the material recovered, the "escaped" income of the party is more than Rs 520 crore.

The high court, in its judgment, said the material which is taken note of in the satisfaction note referred to unaccounted transactions with respect to the Lok Sabha Elections 2019, Madhya Pradesh assembly elections 2018 and MP assembly polls 2013.

"The search documents recovered from the MEIL Group appear to indicate unaccounted transfers to the political party during AYs 2017-18 to 2020-21. The material which forms part of the satisfaction note also captures details of disbursements made to candidates vying in upcoming elections together with signed receipts. There is a detailed reference to payments allegedly made to MPs/MLAs and candidates," the court said.

It added that the note also carries material suggesting payments and contributions made by government departments and corporations, liquor manufacturers, industry entities and individuals to the petitioner.

It said the Congress has "woefully failed" to establish that the material which forms the bedrock for recordal of satisfaction is not founded on any data, material evidence or documentation pertaining to three assessment years from 2014-15 to 2016-17.

"We also take into consideration the indubitable fact that the cumulative figure attributed to income which has allegedly escaped assessment would stand at approximately Rs 520 crores, the bench said.

CS reviews functioning...

Shabnam Kamili, highlighted different works being performed by the department, including administrative inspection of various offices. It was given out that schedule of inspections is notified for the calendar. It also took note of the revenue realized by both the government presses at Jammu and Srinagar. Besides, the meeting discussed finalization of recruitment rules and their placement before the standing committee meant for the same.

Intention behind bringing...

but the names (of donors) are not disclosed because "problems arise if the party in power changes".

The road transport and highways minister said just like a media house needs a sponsor to finance an event, political parties also require funds to run their affairs. "You need to see the ground reality. How are parties supposed to fight elections? We brought this system of electoral bonds to bring transparency. So, our intention was good when we brought electoral bonds. If the SC finds any shortcomings in it and asks us to rectify it, all parties will sit together and unanimously deliberate on it," emphasised the former BJP president. "In the interest of our country and value-based democracy, everyone needs to find a transparent way (of financing parties). Because without funds, parties can't do undertake any activity," asserted the minister. The Supreme Court, in a landmark judgment last week, annulled the electoral bonds scheme ahead of the April-May Lok Sabha polls. The top court said the scheme violates the constitutional right to freedom of speech and expression as well as the right to information. Since then, the State Bank of India (SBI) has released different sets of data pertaining to the electoral bonds, containing details about funds received by political parties under the scheme, to the Election Commission.

Four arrested for...

persons. After meticulous track-following, with the help of technical team & consistent hectic efforts, team of Police Station Katra zeroed upon the location of the accused.

During the search, all the 04 accused persons namely Sunil Sharma alias Sunil, son of Parshotam Sharma; Himanshu Sharma alias Rajju, resident of Ramesh Sharma; Rohit Kumar alias Rotu, son of Parshotam Sharma and Mukesh Kumar alias Mukesh, son of Kushal Chand all resident of Village- Aghar jitto, tehsil Katra district Reasi, were arrested and recovered sharp edged weapons on their disclosures i.e. Dharat 01, Toka 01 & cricket bat 01. The whole operation is led by SHO Katra insp Nishant Gupta. SSP Reasi expressed that such barbaric act done by Criminals is rarest of the rare, such Criminals a black spot on our social fabric. She further stressed that investigation shall incorporate each and every evidence to ensure justice is done in this heinous act at an earliest.

NISD Beauty & Designing Institute organizes empowering session with students

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: NISD Beauty & Designing Institute Canal Road, Jammu branch recently organized an

empowering sessions where students from various disciplines such as Fashion Designing, Makeup, Hair Styling, and Hair Dressing interact with media professionals.

This initiative aimed to bolster their confidence and inner abilities, crucial for thriving in the modern era dominated by social media.

The interactive session provided students with practical insights into leveraging social media Platforms effectively to showcase their talents and skills.

Through discussions, workshops, and hands-on activities, students learned the nuances of creating compelling content, building a personal brand, and engaging



Management and students of NISD during the event in Jammu.

ing with online audiences automatically.

By embracing media interaction, students gained valuable exposure and confidence in presenting themselves to the public eye. They emerged equipped with the necessary tools to navigate the competitive landscape of the beauty and fashion industry in the digi-

tal age, ensuring their preparedness for success in the ever-evolving world of social media.

On this media interaction NISD Beauty & Designing Institute Director Manju Bala said our institute not just provides training to students but we also care about their future planning after completion of this course.

We strongly believe that if you are not on social media in today's social media based era, it means you are not exist. It is very important to know that how to face camera, how to give interview and how to present yourself on different social media Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Youtube and lots of others.

BJP Jammu District South organises Social Sampark Abhiyan at St. Mary's Garrison Church

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Under "Social Sampark" Programme,

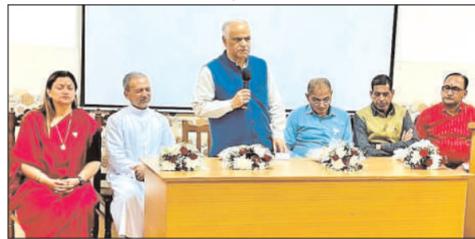
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) organisational general secretary J&K Ashok Koul interacted with the Christian community at St. Marys Garrison Church, Gandhi Nagar along with former Dy

CM Kavinder Gupta, BJP District President Jammu South Rekha Mahajan, Seh Prabhari Jammu North Vinay Gupta, Rikki Gupta

Programme Conenor, Rahul Kumar, Ritika Mahajan Co conenor, Satbir Singh, Vishal Gupta and others were present on the occasion.

BJP leaders were warmly received by the church authorities and the congregation, who appreciated the gesture of solidarity and fraternity.

A gathering of prominent Christian leaders headed by FR.Sebastian, FR. Zafat at St. Mary's Garrison church in Jammu South has expressed support and commitment towards India's development initiatives under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They also expressed commitment towards the vision of



BJP Organisational General Secretary J&K Ashok Koul speaking during a programme in Jammu.

'Developed India by 2047.

While interacting with the Christian community, Ashok Koul said Jesus Christ has been a source of inspiration for humanity. He also urged the people to follow the teachings and preaching of Jesus Christ for peace, harmony and progress of the society.

Ashok Koul has underlined the minority community's growing connection with the BJP by citing the party's ideology and the last ten years of good governance. During the social spark abhiyan, Ashok Koul highlights that PM Modi has underscored his government's commitment to the motto of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas' and development for all without

any discrimination.

Kavinder Gupta recalled the sacrifices of Jesus Christ and stated "may the thoughts of the Lord Christ keep inspiring people." He emphasized the BJP's commitment to the principles of inclusivity and respect for all religions. He asserted that today, we are here to celebrate the social sampark these universal values with our Christian brothers and sisters," he said, adding "India's strength lies in its diversity, and it's essential that we respect and celebrate the rich tapestry of faiths that make up our nation."

Rekha Mahajan said social solidarity with the public from all segments of society are a testament to our dedication to

strengthening the bonds of brotherhood and understanding among all communities in Jammu and Kashmir. Rekha Mahajan emphasized that the outreach to the St. Mary's Garrison church in Jammu South is part of a broader initiative by the BJP to strengthen inter-community dialogues and foster a spirit of harmony and understanding across different religious and cultural groups in the region. Rekha Mahajan recounted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has maintained a special bond with the Christian community which is evident by his historic visit to the Vatican City –the first by an Indian Prime Minister in over two decades. The socio-economic upliftment of all the minorities Including the Christian community has been ensured by imparting quality education and subsequently providing them with job opportunities.

Rikki Gupta conducted the proceedings of the programme and noted that PM Modi's governance ensures the comprehensive development of every community in India. Rahul Kumar presented a vote of thanks.

Ajatshatru lauds Indian Govt's decision to abrogate Art 370 in J&K at Geneva Convention

STATE TIMES NEWS

GENEVA: Ajatshatru Singh, senior BJP leader and former minister, commended the Government of India's bold decision to abrogate Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir.

This historic move corrected the longstanding injustice endured by the people of the region over the past seven decades.

Speaking in his address at UN, the senior BJP leader said "Since the constitutional reforms in 2019, there has been a significant decline in terrorist incidents in the region. From 2004 to 2014, Jammu and Kashmir experienced a total of 7,217 terrorist incidents. However, thanks to the reforms, terror incidents have decreased by over 70%. This improvement



underscores the effectiveness of the government's actions in restoring peace and stability to the region."

"Moreover, on the socio-economic front, the reduction of poverty in Jammu and Kashmir from 40.45% in 2005-2006 to a mere 2.81% in 2022-2023 is a testament to the optimal utilization of development funds. The recent interim budget for 2024 allocated a substantial \$14 billion for Jammu and Kashmir, fur-

ther demonstrating the government's commitment to the region's prosperity," he added.

Ajatshatru Singh said over the past nine years, Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a remarkable revolution in infrastructure development, including the establishment of new medical colleges, tunnels, railway lines, and civic infrastructure. These advancements have been achieved while preserving the rich cultural heritage of the region, he added.

However, it is essential to acknowledge that not all parts of Jammu and Kashmir have benefited equally. Recent protests in regions under Pakistani occupation highlight the growing awareness of economic disparities compared

to those under Indian administration. As the son of Dr. Karan Singh, the titular king of undivided Jammu and Kashmir and Grandson of Maharaja Hari Singh ji, he expressed deep concern for the plight of those living under Pakistani occupation.

The former minister appealed to the United Nations to take concrete steps in accordance with Security Council resolutions to ameliorate the situation faced by the people of Jammu and Kashmir under Pakistani occupation. It is imperative that the international community addresses their grievances and ensures their fundamental rights are upheld, he concluded.

DIPR Kathua gets creative to boost voter turnout

STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: The District Information Centre Kathua, a unit of Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) has taken a creative approach to boost voter participation in the upcoming elections.

In a bid to engage citizens and make the message of voting more relatable, the department has infused humour into its SVVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) campaign.

The campaign aims to grab the attention of voters and encourage them to exercise their democratic right.

Speaking about the innovative approach, DIO Kathua Neeraj Bhargava who is also the Nodal Officer for SVVEEP, stated, "We understand the importance of voter turnout in ensuring a robust democracy".

DEO flags off SVVEEP Van for voter awareness in Udhampur

STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: In an effort to generate awareness among the public regarding the significance of Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVVEEP) in the district, the District Election Officer, Udhampur, Saloni Rai today flagged off a voter awareness van from DC Office Complex, Udhampur.

Additional District Development Commissioner Rajinder Singh, Additional Deputy Commissioner Joginder Singh Jasrotia, Deputy District Election Officer Dr. Anirudh Rai, Assistant Commissioner Development Dr. Ranjeet Singh Kotwal, District

Panchayat Officer Dr. Preeti Sharma, Nodal Officer SVVEEP, Chief Education Officer Geetu Bangotra and other officers/officials were present on the occasion.

While briefing the media, the DEO informed that the initiative aims to educate the public on the significance of systematic voters' education and electoral participation (SVVEEP) to foster informed decision-making during elections. She emphasized the critical role of voters in democracy, urging increased turnout for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Highlighting the objectives of SVVEEP, the DEO stressed the importance of widespread awareness and urged citizens to exercise their vot-

ing rights for a robust democracy. She called upon individuals to actively engage in spreading awareness within their communities to strengthen democracy and improve socio-economic conditions.

She directed officers to ensure comprehensive outreach efforts, targeting every household for information dissemination and voter enrollment.

Emphasizing the importance of Pwd, Women, First time, Old age voters and youth participation, she urged officers to work diligently to enhance voter turnout and ensure error-free electoral rolls for the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections.