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**03** Ramban got highway facelift, flyover, railway line, tunnels, bridges, Colleges under Modi: Dr Jitendra

**10** Jammu boy ‘Rachit’ keeps J&K flag high in Horse Riding at national scene

**12** JKPS Panjtirthi holds prize distribution function-cum-Annual Result Day celebrations

Website : [www.statetimes.in](http://www.statetimes.in), Email: [statetimes1@gmail.com](mailto:statetimes1@gmail.com)

# Rajnath says Ladakh is India’s ‘capital of bravery’ Celebrates Holi with Army Jawans



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh celebrating Holi with soldiers in Siachen.

## STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday celebrated Holi with Army jawans in Leh and lauded them for protecting the country from enemies while braving extreme weather conditions.

Singh was earlier supposed to celebrate Holi with soldiers in Siachen, the world's highest battlefield, but his visit was cancelled due to inclement weather. The minister was accompanied by Chief

of Army Staff General Manoj Pande and General Officer Commanding, Fire and Fury Corps, Lt Gen Rashim Bali.

The defence minister applied tilak with 'gulal' on soldiers' foreheads. He also laid a wreath at the War Memorial here to pay tributes to soldiers who laid down their lives in the line of duty.

Addressing the soldiers after celebrating the festival of colours, Singh said Ladakh is the national capital of

courage and bravery.

"Like we have the national capital in Delhi, the economic capital in Mumbai, and the technological capital in Bengaluru, Ladakh is India's capital of courage and bravery.

"When everyone wants to hide in their homes due to extreme weather conditions, you stand up to protect the country from its enemies with unwavering willpower," he said.

The country will always be indebted to the soldiers for their devotion and service. The commitment of the soldiers posted in high altitudes is much stronger than the sub-zero temperatures, the minister said.

"You are doing divine work. You are ready to fire at the enemy and take a bullet to your chest and it is due to this that the people of the country can celebrate Holi peacefully," he said.

"I feel that all of you, while protecting us from the enemies, are no less than protector gods for us," he told the soldiers.

Singh reiterated the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led central government's commitment to the welfare of the armed forces

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In-service candidates deployed for election duties allowed to appear in CCE Mains

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The General Administration Department has directed all Deputy Commissioners (DCs), Senior Superintendents of Police (SSPs), and Head of Departments (HoDs) to permit the in-service candidates, working under their administrative control, to appear in the Combined Competitive (Mains) Examination-2023, scheduled from March 26, 2024 to April 3, 2024.

According to an order issued by GAD, the representations have been received from various in-service candidates who are not being granted leave to appear in the Combined Competitive (Mains) Examination, 2023, scheduled to take place March 26, 2024 to April 3, 2024, in view of their engagement in various assignments including election related duties.

The matter has been examined and it has been desired to advise all the

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# BJP names 111 more candidates for LS polls; fields actors Kangana Ranaut, Arun Govil

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Sunday named 111 more candidates for the Lok Sabha polls, dropping Union ministers Ashwini Kumar Choubey and V K Singh, besides MP Varun Gandhi, while fielding actors Kangana Ranaut and Arun Govil.

Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan will contest from Sambalpur and the party's spokesperson Sambit Patra will try his luck from Puri once again after losing out in a close contest in 2019.

The party fielded Maneka Gandhi from Sultanpur, while Uttar Pradesh minister Jitin Prasad has replaced Varun Gandhi in Pilibhit. Sita Soren will fight from Dumka (Jharkhand).

The party has dropped ex-Union minister Anant

Kumar Hegde from Uttara Kannada constituency.

Actor Arun Govil, who played Ram in popular TV serial Ramayan, has been fielded by the BJP from the Meerut Lok Sabha seat.



Former Calcutta High Court judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay, who quit the bench recently and joined the BJP, has been fielded from West Bengal's Tamluk seat.

Other prominent candidates include former IAS officer Aparajita Sarangi from Bhubaneswar, party spokesman Sambit Patra from Puri, Andhra Pradesh unit chief D Purandeswari

from Rajahmundry, and former Andhra Chief Minister Kiran Kumar Reddy, who quit the Congress, from Rajampet.

In Bihar, the party has fielded Union Ministers RK Singh from Arrah, Nityanand Rai from Ujainpur, and Giriraj Singh from Begusarai. Former Union Ministers Ravi Shankar Prasad from Patna Sahib, Rajiv Pratap Rudy from Saran, Radha Mohan Singh from Purvi Champaran, and Ram Kripal Yadav from Patliputra also figure in the list.

JMM's Sita Soren, who recently joined the party, has been fielded from Dumka (ST).

Former Karnataka Chief Minister Jagadish

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# LG greets people on Holi

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has extended his heartiest greetings to the people on Holi.

In a message, the Lieutenant Governor said: "On the joyous occasion of Holi, the festival of colours, I extend my hearty greetings and good wishes to all.

Holi is a harbinger of hope, joy and happiness. The myriad colours of this festival reflect our rich cultural diversity, strengthen brotherhood and instil the spirit of unity and harmo-



ny. The festivities inspire us to follow the path of righteousness, compassion and commitment to bring greetings to the people on Holi.

joy in the lives of downtrodden. Let us ensure that the vibrant colours, ideals and the values associated with the Holi touch the lives of one and all. May this festival fill everyone's life with good health and happiness".

## Four evading police for several years arrested

## STATE TIMES NEWS

BARAMULLA: Four persons, who were evading police for several years in different cases, were arrested from the Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

They have been identified as Manzoor Ahmad Shah, who is a resident of Eidgah in Srinagar; Mohammad Rafiq Khatana, Mohammad Yousuf Sheikh and Babar Bashir Pala, all from the Baramulla district, a police spokesman said Sunday.

He added that these four were evading arrest in

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# ‘A terrorist is a terrorist’, one should not allow terrorism to be excused or defended: Jaishankar

## STATE TIMES NEWS

SINGAPORE: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Sunday that "a terrorist is a terrorist" in any language and one should not allow terrorism to be excused or defended because of a different explanation of it.

Jaishankar's remarks came during his interaction with the Indian community members in Singapore.

Responding to a question on how Indian officials approach sensitive and linguistically different topics with their global counterparts, the minister said that



in diplomacy, different countries bring their own cultures, traditions and sometimes their language or concepts to debate.

"It's also natural that there will be different viewpoints. And what diplomacy is about is to find a way of reconciling it and coming to some kind of agreement," he said.

Jaishankar said however there are some issues when there is clarity and no confusion.

Giving the example of terrorism, he said: "You can take it in any language, but a terrorist is a terrorist in any language."

"Never allow something like terrorism to be excused or defended because they're using a different language or a different explanation," he said, without referring to any country.

He said there can be issues where two nations genuinely can have different viewpoints and there "will be issues when they are used as a cover as an excuse as a

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# Shiv Sena workers burn photo of Omar over Maharashtra Bhavan remark

## STATE TIMES NEWS

THANE: Activists of Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena on Sunday burnt a picture of Jammu and Kashmir National Conference leader Omar Abdullah in Thane alleging he has opposed the construction of Maharashtra Bhavan in Budgam.

Protesters shouted slogans against the former chief minister of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir at the main square in Thane city and attempted to set his effigy ablaze but police foiled their plan. The activists then set Abdullah's photo on fire. Shiv Sena spokesman Rahul Londe said Abdullah has made an anti-Maharashtra statement by opposing the proposed Bhavan.

At another location, a local leader of Shiv Sena tried to

lit the Holi bonfire with the picture of Abdullah mounted on the top, but police intervened.

Notably, Shiv Sena secretary and MLA Manisha Kayande on Friday told reporters that Omar Abdullah would not be allowed to enter Maharashtra if he "threatens" Maharashtrians.

"Why is Omar Abdullah opposing the Maharashtra Bhavan? He studied in Mumbai when the situation in Jammu and Kashmir was violent. It is Maharashtra where he stayed and completed his graduation. Has he forgotten that?" questioned Kayande.

She claimed that Abdullah while campaigning for Lok Sabha elections, had

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# PoK people also want to join Hindustan post scrapping of Art 370: MP CM

## STATE TIMES NEWS

BARWANI: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Sunday suggested that even people from Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) are keen to join Hindustan due to the improved situation in Kashmir post the scrapping of Article 370.

Addressing a meeting of BJP workers in Barwani, Yadav accused the Congress of raising the bogie of violence post the abrogation of the article that granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

"Congress makes Hindus and Muslims fight against each other. That party created fear of bloodbath when article 370 was revoked from Jammu and Kashmir (in



August 2019) but the lies of Congress were exposed under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said.

He also accused the Congress of trying to set a false narrative of potential clashes between Hindus and Muslims and the division of the country into pieces after

the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

No clash occurred between Hindus and Muslims. Article 370 washed away in the Jhelum river and it even crossed Pakistan, Yadav said.

"After the revocation of Article 370, the situation in Kashmir became so good that even the people of Pak

Occupied Kashmir are saying that we also have to...." he said amid replies of "Hindustan mein milna hai".

"I am not saying it, they (people of POK) are saying this," Yadav added.

The MP chief minister further said it was unfortunate that India was divided after Independence and the Congress made Hindus and Muslims fight against each other.

"Today's India wants to give a befitting reply to Pakistan in its own language," he added.

Yadav also attacked Delhi Chief Minister and AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal, saying the person who talked about eradicating corruption has landed in jail on charges of graft.

Ashok Koul told reporters here.

Asked if the BJP was considering supporting the grand alliance coming up in Kashmir, Koul said the BJP will field its candidates on all three seats of the valley.

"We will be fielding candidates on all three seats and we are not supporting any alliance. The alliance that is coming up or is going to come up, it is their thinking. There are so many alliances which have come up in the country, we cannot stop anyone," he said.

BJP cadres will follow whatever decision is taken by

the parliamentary board on the issue, he added.

Speculations are rife that BJP might not field candidates in the Lok Sabha constituencies in Kashmir and instead support a joint candidate from an anti-National Conference and anti-PDP front.

There have been indications that DPAP of Ghulam Nabi Azad and Apni Party of Altaf Bukhari might enter into a pre-poll alliance for these seats.

Earlier, several persons from Pulwama and Budgam districts joined the BJP at its office here.

## Police sets up election-related helpline in Jammu

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir police established a round-the-clock election-related helpline at police control room here in view of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, according to an official statement.

The 24x7 helpline was set up to ensure the smooth conduct of the electoral process, it said.

"In order to address election-related queries and concerns, J-K Police Jammu Zone established a dedicated 24x7 election helpline number 8899334482 at Police Control Room Jammu," the statement said.

"Citizens can now reach out to seek information or clarification regarding election related affairs," it said. According to the statement,

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**HOLIDAY NOTICE**

The offices of STATE TIMES Group of Publications shall remain closed on March 25, 2024 (Monday) on the occasion of Holi festival. Therefore, there will be no issue of your newspaper on March 26, 2024 (Tuesday). STATE TIMES wishes you all a prosperous and colourful Holi.

**WEATHER**

**Temperature (Jammu)**  
Max: 30.5°C Min: 17.2°C

**Humidity**  
Max: 62 Min: 40

**Temperature (Srinagar)**  
Max: 21.9°C Min: 10.2°C

**Humidity**  
Max: 71 Min: 29

Sunset : 18:44 Hours  
Sunrise : 06:28 Hours