# **!!** Continuations from Page 1 **!!** 'Everything cannot be ...

said. It said, "Everything cannot be suspected. You (Bhushan) cannot be critical of everything. If they (the EC) have done something good, you have to appreciate it. You don't have to be critical of everything."

Bhushan said he is not casting any aspersion on the poll panel but possibility for mprovement exists.

Justice Khanna told him, "Agree. But if they have improved things within four corners of law, then it is fine. Bulb or no bulb, how does it matter? If an explanation s given, then you must appreciate it. Over suspicion of everything is a problem. A oter has to satisfy himself, that's all. They gave the explanation for the improvement, you heard them and everyone heard them.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who was in the courtroom, said as an officer of the court he is submitting that these efforts by petitioners, of doubting the efficacy of EVMs, on the eve of election has an impact on voter percentage

"By these efforts the vote percentage gets affected. People may think that something is wrong. Democratic choice of voter is being made into a joke despite repeated rebukes to them (petitioners) by this court. I have asked my side to be ready for planted news reports and articles. Every time there is an important hearing, planted news reports and articles comes up," Mehta said.

The bench asked him to leave it at that and clarified that the ADR petition was filed last year and it was the court's fault that it could not be heard.

"Yes, some new petitions have come now but the one in which Mr. Bhushan is appearing was filed long back. We have learnt to deal with comments on social media and people have freedom to post their opinion on social media," Justice Khanna told Mehta.

During the nearly day-long hearing, the bench posed several questions to the election commission official and said, "There seems to be some gap between what is available in public domain and what should be available in public domain. That needs to be bridged.

Emphasising that voter's trust has to be maintained and protected, the bench said the integrity of the entire electoral process must be ensured

On the prayer of the petitioners that paper ballots should be used instead of EVMs, the bench said, "Paper ballots have huge drawbacks and we don't want to think about it. Instead, we were thinking of using barcodes for political parties in future but that would be a humongous task."

Senior advocate Santosh Paul, appearing for one of the petitioners, said several developed countries have gone back to using ballot papers in elections.

"The Indian system is working well and voting percentage is increasing in every election which shows people are having faith in the system. We all know what used to happen with ballot papers," the bench said referring to rigging and booth capturng during elections in the past.

Senior advocate Maninder Singh, appearing for the poll panel, said EVMs are standalone machines and cannot be tampered with but possibility of human error annot be ruled out

Underscoring that the electoral process has to have sanctity, Justice Datta told Singh, "You have to allay the apprehensions, both in the court and outside the court. Let nobody have the apprehension that something which is expected is not being done.

On April 16, the top court had deprecated criticism of EVMs and calls for reverting to ballot papers, saying the electoral process in India is a "humongous task" and attempts should not be made to "bring down the system".

The seven-phase Lok Sabha polls begin on April 19.

The ADR has sought matching the count in EVMs with votes that have been verifiably "recorded as cast" and to ensure that the voter is able to verify through VVPAT slip that his vote, as recorded on the paper slip, has been "counted as recorded".

### IGP Kashmir seeks...

at Jablipora in Anantnag district's Bijbehara area.

"Enhance anti-terrorist operations to neutralise the remaining threats and keep strict vigil on terrorist associates and anti-national elements," Birdi said at the meeting which was attended by officers of the Jammu and Kashmir Police. Central Reserve Police Force, Border Security Force and other agencies.

A police spokesperson said the officers delved into the strategies aimed at ensurng the safety and security of the people while maintaining the integrity of the electoral process

"The IGP directed the district heads to analyse and reassess the existing strateries to prevent any potential terror incidents," he said.

The spokesperson said the importance of revisiting and reinforcing area domination strategies to address any gap areas was emphasised at the meeting.

Birdi stressed the need to keep inimical elements and terrorist associates out of erculation and to neutralise their threats effectively.

He also directed strict adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), including guidelines for the movement of security personnel across the valley, to ensure operational efficiency and safety.

"The range DIGs were tasked to meticulously monitor respective areas to facilitate safe passage for Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) across districts. Coordination with counterpart DIGs of CAPFs for route planning was also discussed," he added.

The spokesperson said special emphasis was laid on intensifying cordon and search perations and generating actionable intelligence inputs, particularly in areas near highways, to counter potential threats.

The officers were directed to establish checkpoints at the different entrances to ringgar and inter-district boundaries adjoining the city

facilitating them for early voting. Additionally, there will be voter help desk, manned by concerned Booth Level Officer (BLO) to extend necessary help to the needy.

There will be 19 polling booths manned by women (also called as pink polling stations), 14 polling booths manned by specially abled persons and 17 will be looked after by youths. Also in order to spread message about environmental concern, there will be 20 green polling stations.

Aimed to facilitate voters in identification and increase voter turnout, all voters have been provided with voter information slip with all requisite details like Polling Station name, date and time of poll, serial number of voter in the list, his full name, QR code but not the photograph of the voter. Hence, Voter Information Slips will not be allowed as proof of the identity of voters. The concerned BLOs have already distributed voter information slips among all the electorates. Also, the citizens can view details of the Polling Station, Parliamentary Constituency, and get the contact details of the Booth Level Officer, Electoral Registration Officer among other services, through Voter Helpline App (VHA). This mobile app is available on the Google Play store and Apple App Store.

In addition to Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC), 12 types of documents will also be allowed to verify a voter and allow him for voting as EPIC card is not mandatory for voting. These documents included Aadhaar Card, MGNREGA Job Card, Passbooks with photograph issued by Bank/Post Office, Health Insurance Smart Card issued under scheme of Ministry of Labour, Driving License, PAN Card, Smart Card issued by RGI under NPR, Indian Passport, Pension document with photograph, Service Identity Cards with photograph issued to employees by Central/State Govt/PSUs/Public Limited Companies, Official identity cards issued to MPs/MLAs/MLCs and Unique Disability ID (UDID) Card, issued by Union Ministry for Social Justice and Empowerment.

The Voter Turnout App will be used to display estimated provisional voter turnout details of each Parliamentary Constituency entered by the RO. The media can also use the same application to capture estimated voter turnout data. Approximate voter turnout data of each phase of the elections will be displayed through this app. There will be two hourly reporting of voting percentage from 9.00 am to the end of poll. The concerned ARO and RO will share the data with media accordingly. Even the updated figures will be placed in voter turnout app.

Around 1440 polling stations in phase I will have CCTV camera for live webcasting to control rooms established at District and CEO office. Besides, 200 polling stations will have two cameras, for inside and outside surveillance. Around 2100 vehicles of polling parties and sector officers will be equipped with GPS system so as to locate the vehicle and monitor movement. Also, Satellite Phones, Wireless sets and Special Runners have been put in place for about 95 polling stations which are in communication shadow areas.

In the entire Union Territory, from the date of announcement of election to till date material/ cash of around Rs 5.34 crore has been seized by various enforcing departments.

The J&K Election office is implementing Model Code of Conduct in letter and spirit by facilitating the general masses to exercise their right to vote in a free and fair manner. The public campaigning in areas of Udhampur Parliamentary Constituency has concluded on 17th April evening, allowing the voters a peaceful break from being influenced by the election campaigns. Till date, 75 grievances have been received on C-VIGIL app and more than 50 % resolved in time while others are under resolution. For filing Model Code of Conduct Violation cases by the citizens, C-VIGIL app provides time stamped evidentiary proof of the Model Code of Conduct/ Expenditure Violation by empowering every citizen to click a photo or video using his or her smartphone.

Likewise, to monitor various election related activities and check model code of conduct compliance, a 24\*7 working Command and Control Room has been established at CEO office, Jammu and similar mini control rooms have been set up at every DEO office. Apart from looking for MCC violations, the Control room also has live feed of more than 55 % polling stations and all vehicles being used for poll parties movement.

## Overstaying in Govt...

of allotment within 10 days.

On April 3, the division bench headed by Chief Justice N Kotiswar Singh had directed both the directors (estates), Jammu as well as Kashmir to deal with each and every person and to pass specific individual orders either for cancellation of accommodation and eviction from there or allotment thereof by giving specific reasons for doing so

The bench had further clarified that if the accommodation of any individual mentioned in the report is continued, specific reasons supported by necessary materials must be provided before this Court so that it can examine as to whether the authorities have taken an appropriate and fair decisions as regards government accommodation being presently provided to these persons.

Nanda filed the application seeking modification of the division bench order on the ground that the Estates Department without losing time proceeded in the matter and issued notices to the occupants under reference in the PIL.

The senior additional advocate general further submitted that in view of the enforcement of Model Code of Conduct after the announcement of the Lok Sabha election schedule, there may be legal impediment in calling such occupants and passing appropriate orders on merit, in furtherance of the directions passed by the high court.

The Estates Department has sought the permission to defer the proceedings till June 4 and thereafter the process will be taken to its logical conclusion to meet the directions issued by the Court, he said.

The division bench had also directed both the directors of estates department to inform the court about the rentals being paid by the occupants with supporting documents since the time they ceased to hold the offices on the basis of which they were allotted these official accommodations and why they have not charged rental at com mercial rates since they are not holding any office as of now The case will come for hearing on May 8 again.

in all the Govt. Ayurvedic & Unani Hospitals.

## No need for...

creation but religion, he said. "The victory of this society would empower other societies and (therefore) benefit the universe. RSS wants to create people who try to bring about reforms in society in such a way. It is not about patting your back. Bhagwat asserted.

Bhagwat said it was worrisome that the RSS took 100 years to achieve certain goals but added that the slow pace of transformation was due to "battling against 2000 years of societal downfall".

"Foreigners have completely brainwashed our people. We have a bad habit of for getting what we are. There is a psychological difference among our people because we were ruled by many for centuries," the RSS 'sarsanghchalak' pointed out.

Bhagwat said the country over the past 1000-1500 years successfully fought back foreign invasions from time to time, but the nation would end up in slavery time and again due to mistakes and traitors from within.

"This disease needs to be addressed or else it will keep happening. To give a per manent message to invaders, we must treat some of our basic mistakes and that is what (RSS founder Keshav) Dr Hedgewar did," the RSS chief said.

Bhagwat said there was lack of knowledge in the country about who we are, adding that years of slavery had brought about a mental suppression due to which there was lack of courage to speak and think clearly.

"Hence, we need to organise society with a sutra that unites us all. We should know our identity clearly and tell the world as well. That identity is Hindu and we should say with pride that we are Hindu," he asserted.

Speaking about the journey of the organisation, he said the first RSS workers faced stiff opposition, lack of resources and difficulty connecting people.

"Compared to it, the situation is favourable now for the organisation. RSS work ers need to keep doing their work irrespective of the situation," Bhagwat asserted

Whether the situation is friendly like now or unfriendly like in the past, a "swayam sevak" will always be there and should move ahead without ever leaving his ideals Bhagwat said.

**RO Srinagar Parliamentary...** by the Candidates will take place on April, 26, 2024 (Friday) at 10:30 AM at Deputy Commissioner's Office Srinagar.

The Candidates have the option to withdraw their candidature by or before Apri 29, 2024 (Monday) until 03:00 PM.

The Polling day for the 2-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency is scheduled for May 13, 2024 (Monday) and the Polling will be conducted from 07:00 AM to 06:00 PM.

Later, in a Press Conference addressed in this regard, the Returning Officer (RO 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat informed that as many as 1743845 registered electorates are exercising their franchise in the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections-2024 in Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency including 873426 male 870368 Female and about 51 Transgenders.

The RO added that, the Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency comprises of 02 Assembly segments of Ganderbal District including 17-Kangan and 18-Ganderbal 08 Assembly segments of Srinagar viz. 19-Hazratbal, 20-Khanyar, 21-Habbakadal 22-LalChowk, 23-Chanapora, 24-Zadibal, 25-Eidgah 26-Central Shalteng, 03 Assembly Segments of Budgam District viz. 29-Khansahib, 30-Char-i-Sharief and 31-Chadoora, 04 Assembly Segments of Pulwama District including 32-Pampore 33-Tral, 34-Pulwama and 35-Rajpora and 01 Assembly segment of Shopian Distric viz. 37-Shopian.

Similarly, Returning Officer informed that 2135 Polling Stations have been setup up at 1323 designated location across all 18 Assembly Segments of the 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency including 260 Polling Stations in two Assembly Segments of Ganderbal District, 929 Polling Stations in eight Assembly Segments of Srinagar District, 345 in three Assembly Segments of Budgam District, 479 Polling Stations in 4 Assembly Segments of Pulwama District and 122 Polling Stations in one Assembly Segments of Shopian District.

The RO also informed that Model Polling Stations have also been set up at various locations across the Parliamentary Constituency to facilitate the voters on the Poll day and welcome them to experience a festive-like environment. He added that dedicated facilities for voters including clean drinking water and ramps for persons with disabilities (PWDs) are also meticulously arranged to enhance the voting expe rience

The RO urged all eligible Contesting Candidates and stakeholders to adhere to the guidelines of Election Commission of India and election schedule and procedures outlined in the Election Notification. He also appealed for active participation and cooperation of all concerned parties to ensure a free, fair and transparent election in 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency.

The RO also emphasized encouragement of first-time voters so that they exercise their democratic right and make the poll process more participative. He said in 02 Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency has more than 2.0 lakh first-time voters in the 18-20 age group who are eligible to vote in the Lok Sabha Elections on May 13 2024 in the Constituency.

# Stage set for first phase of Lok Sabha polls in 102 seats

#### STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The 2024 Lok Sabha polls will kick off Friday with polling for the first phase scheduled in 102 seats spread across 21 states and Union territories and among those in the fray are Union ministers Nitin Gadkari, Sarbanada Sonowal and Bhupendra Yadav, Gaurav Gogoi of Congress, DMK's Kanimozhi and K Annamala of BJP. Simultaneously, assembly elections in Arunachal Pradesh (60 seats) and Sikkim (32 seats) will also be held. Voting will begin at 7 AM and end at 6 PM. The Election Commission has deployed over 18 lakh polling personnel across 1.87 lakh polling stations where over 16.63 crore voters will exercise their franchise.

The meeting was attended by officers of Police, Intelligence agencies, CRPF, SSB, TBP, Army & BSF including JD IB Srinagar, IG BSF Ftr HQR Srinagar, DIG NKR Baramulla, DIG SSB Srinagar, DIG CKR Srinagar, DIG SKR Anantnag, DIGs of CRPF South Srinagar, North Srinagar, Ops Srinagar Sector & Ops Kashmir Sector, Col. GS (IS) 15 Corps, DC SB Srinagar, All District SSsP/PDs, SSP Srinagar, SSP PCR Kashmir, SSP Traffic City Srinagar, SSP Security Kashmir, SSP CID SBK /CIK, SP PC Srinagar and other officers.

# LG calls for...

Industrial Estates. The Lt Governor also reviewed the progress achieved under New Central Sector schemes, One District One Product, PMEGP, PM Vishwakarma, Ease of Doing Business/ Gati Shakti, development of new industrial estates, Handloom and Handicrafts sector, development of Tattoo Ground, promotion of MSMEs, activities of JKTPO etc.

**Mian Altaf, Mehbooba...** the DC (returning officer). We are hopeful that Mian sahib will emerge victorious. On behalf of NC president Farooq Abdullah, we are very thankful to G A Mir who came here from Delhi especially for this," the NC vice president said.

Reacting to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's statement on destruction caused by gun culture in Jammu and Kashmir, Abdullah said the National Conference has been the worst victim of violence.

On former chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad withdrawing from the contest in Anantnag Lok Sabha seat, Abdullah said he knew about it beforehand.

"We knew that he would not contest. He did not contest from his Doda seat, why vould he contest from Anantnag. Now his party has fielded a new candidate. How much support they have among the people you will come to know in near future," he said

On the BJP not fielding any candidates on the three seats in the valley, Abdullah said, "There are still 24 hours left. Who knows they might just do it!"

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti also filed nomination papers from the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha constituency in Jammu and Kashmir which is going to polls in the third phase of elections on May 7.

Accompanied by several party leaders and hundreds of supporters, Mehbooba arrived at the office of Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag, Syed Fakhruddin, who is he returning officer for the constituency, to file her papers.

## Govt employee placed...

suspension with immediate effect.

Needful to mention that the Model Code of Conduct is a set of guidelines issued y Election Commission of India to provide a level playing field in favour of all politcal parties

The Model Code of Conduct comes into force from the day and time the election schedule is announced by the Election Commission of India and remains in operation till the completion of election process as per the election notification.

District Election Officer, Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi ud Din has issued instructions for strict adherence to the Model Code of Conduct and dealing strictly with any violation by any employee which comes to the notice of the authorities

# 16.23 lakh voters...

The ballot units will have list of contesting candidates in brail script. Where ever equired there will be separate que for senior citizens and specially abled persons

# Union Ministry official...

further improve and maintain the service standards of the aforesaid Hospitals in compliance to National Accreditation Board for Ayush Hospitals so that this Hospital can achieve the NABH Certification.

He assured all the support for the up-gradation of the Hospital for providing seamless services.

Union Secretary also visited the Demonstration Herbal Gardens established in the Directorate of Ayush and Charak Vatika in Govt. Ayurvedic Hospital Jammu.

He appreciated that Directorate of Ayush J&K has done a commendable job in establishing Herbal Garden in the Directorate of Ayush J&K. Director Ayush J&K informed Union Secretary that the purpose of establishing Herbal Garden is to educate Ayush fraternity to establish Herbal Gardens in all the Ayush Institutions of UT of J&K, wherein about 90 species of different Medicinal plants have been planted.

Union Secretary was impressed with this concept and termed it as the Best Practice of J&K Ayush. He further advised to share the pictures of Demonstration Herbal Gardens of the Directorate and Hospital complexes with the Ministry of Ayush, GOI, so that the same can be replicated in other States/ UT's of the coun- $\operatorname{try}$ 

Secretary AYUSH was highly impressed and appreciated the Artwork on the walls of Directorate of Ayush and Hospitals depicting all the components of Ayush.

Secretary AYUSH also advised Director Avush. J&K that the in-service Post Graduate Doctors should avail the opportunity and appear in National Teachers' Eligibility Test for serving in the Govt. Ayush Colleges of UT of J&K.

Secretary AYUSH was highly impressed with the functioning of the Panchkarma and Ksharsutra units in the Hospital.

He appreciated the Specialist doctors working in the said units and advised them to document their extra-ordinary works for the purpose of testimony.

He also advised to establish Separate Specialized Panchkarma units for the Male and Female patients having all the facilities including pantry and washrooms.

Director Ayush informed that awareness of AYUSH Poshan Aahhar is provided to all the patients in the Hospital and this Directorate is also planning to provide the same in the Hospital Canteen in the interest of public, on which Secretary Ayush advised to share all the details of Ayush Poshan Aahar to Ministry of Ayush, Govt. of India for further improvisation.

Union Secretary, Ministry of Ayush appreciated the micro-management approaches of Directorate of Ayush J&K viz-a-viz Rogi Kalyan Samitis, Peripheral OPDs, Outreach camps on thematic areas of Public Health including Anemia Mukt Bharat Campaign, NashaMukt Bharat Program, Har Ghar Ayush Program, Promotion of Millets, Geriatric Health Care, Women Health Camps, Child Health Camps, Suvarna Prashana Camps etc. and conducting of Sri Amarnath Ji Yatra & other Yatras, de-centralization of Annual Maintenance of funds for improving the patient care service delivery at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs.

Union Secretary was informed about the constitution and registration of Institutional Ethics Committees at Govt. Ayurvedic Hospital Jammu and Govt. Unani Hospital Shalteng, Srinagar, with the Department of Health Research Govt. of India, for conducting evidence based clinical studies on efficacy and safety of various treatment protocols of Ayurveda & Unani. He appreciated this innovation of the Directorate of Ayush J&K which is required to be emulated all across the country

Voters include 8.4 crore men, 8.23 crore women and 11,371 from third gender There are as many as 35.67 lakh first time voters, besides 3.51 crore young voters in the age group of 20-29 years.

While the BJP-led NDA under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is seeking a stronger majority, the constituents of the opposition INDIA bloc are hoping for a rebound after facing reverses in the 2014 and 2019 elections.

Polling will be held in all seats of Tamil Nadu (39), Uttarakhand (5), Arunachal Pradesh (2), Meghalaya (2), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (1), Mizoram (1) Nagaland (1), Puducherry (1), Sikkim (1) and Lakshadweep (1).

Besides, there will be voting in 12 seats in Rajasthan, 8 in Uttar Pradesh, 6 in Madhya Pradesh, 5 seats each in Assam and Maharashtra, 4 in Bihar, 3 in West Bengal, 2 seats in Manipur, and one seat each in Tripura, Jammu and Kashmir and Chhattisgarh.

Campaigning for the first phase ended Wednesday evening.

Besides Gadkari, Sonowal and Yadav, six other Union ministers - Kiren Rijiju Sanjeev Baliyan, Jitendra Singh, Arjun Ram Meghwal, L Murugan and Nisith Pramanik are among the contestants besides two former chief ministers - Biplab Kumar Deb (Tripura) and Nabam Tuki (Arunachal Pradesh), and former Telangana governor Tamilisai Soundararajan.

In 2019, the UPA had won 45 of these 102 seats and the NDA 41. Six of these seats have been redrawn as part of the delimitation exercise.

# SPPND GDC samba organizes extension lecture on Indian Knowledge System

### STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA: Career Counselling Cell of SPPND Govt. Degree College, Samba in col laboration with Centre for Comparative Religions and Civilizations (CCRC), Central University of Jammu organised an extension lecture on "Career Opportunities in IKS"

The programme inaugurated with the welcome address by the Principal of the college, Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri. In her address, she highlighted the importance of Indian Knowledge System (IKS) and its relevance to contemporary society. Earlier. Dr. Joginder Singh, Convener, Career Counselling Cell, introduced the worthy speakers of the occasion, Dr. Arvind Rituraj, Associate Professor, CCRC, CUJ and Dr. Ashwani Kumar, Asssistant Professor, CCRC, CUJ.

Dr. Ashwani Kumar focussed upon the profound impact of the Indian Knowledge System, including its contributions to Science, Philosophy and other disciplines. The session emphasized the key concepts of our traditional philosophical ideologies such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Darshan, Buddhism, Jainism etc. The teachings and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda on different aspects of youth, education and character build ing were also discussed in the session. The next speaker of the occasion, Dr. Arvind Rituraj talked about benefits of IKS for spiritual growth of students. He further discussed various career opportunities of IKS in the field of Defence Services, Higher Education and Research. About 60 students of semester 6th participated in the event. Dr. Shaweta Chowdhary, compered the proceedings of the programme, while Dr. Ajay Shree gave the formal vote of thanks

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