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Incessant rainfall: Schools...**

of their respective institutions. Some areas of Handwara and Kupwara towns have been waterlogged, prompting authorities to launch an evacuation operation for the affected residents. Water levels in water bodies across Kashmir have been rising due to the continuous rainfall over the past 48 hours. A danger warning has been issued for Pohru Nallah in Kupwara, according to officials. The water level in other water bodies, including the Jhelum river, is still below the alert mark. The rain has led to waterlogging in some areas of Handwara and Kupwara towns, prompting the authorities to launch an operation to evacuate the affected residents. The meteorological department has forecast wet weather till Tuesday evening. "The weather will improve from Tuesday. The weather will be generally dry with no major activity from May 1 to May 5," a Met department official said. Meanwhile, the Jammu-Srinagar national highway was closed following multiple landslides triggered by rains that lashed wide parts of Jammu and Kashmir overnight, officials said. The highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with rest of the country, was blocked by landslides at Mehar, Gangroo, Mom Passi and Kishtwari Pather in Ramban district. The rains are continuing, hampering restoration works, they said, advising commuters to avoid journey on the highway till it is cleared of the debris. Mughal road, an alternate route linking Poonch and Rajouri districts in Jammu with south Kashmir's Shopian district, remained closed for the third day owing to snowfall in Peer Ki Gali and adjoining areas, the officials said. Amid the incessant rains, authorities in Kishtwar have ordered closure of schools in the district. The decision to suspend class work for the day has been taken in the interest of prioritising the safety and well-being of students, staff, and the broader community given the current challenges posed by the adverse weather conditions, an official said.

He said efforts are on to restore water supply to Kishtwar town which was snapped following significant damage to the main 250 mm diameter water supply pipes of the Naigad Water Supply scheme at Hunjala on Sunday. Police officials said two houses were damaged due to landslide at Basha-Simbool village of Kishtwar, while dozens of livestock perished in incidents of lightning and flash floods in Ramban and Samba districts overnight. Rains lashed many parts of Jammu and Kashmir for the second day on Monday. STATE TIMES correspondent adds that after land sinking in Parnote area of Ramban, yet another incident of natural calamity occurred in Kherkot area of Banihal where huge loss of livestock has been reported due to cloudburst, an official said.

According to reports, torrential rains lashed Sub Division Banihal since last 2 days. In the meantime, a cloudburst strikes in the Kherkot area of Banihal resulting into the killing of the livestock including Horses, sheep and goats of a nomadic family, who take shelter in the area during their annual migration to Kashmir. This scribe also reached the spot to know the situation after cloudburst in the area. While sharing details, Tehsildar Banihal said that in Kherkot area of Banihal, five horses of a nomadic family have been killed while two horses are missing due to cloudburst in the area followed by flash flood in a local canal. "Beside, 35 sheep and goats have also been washed away in the canal due to flood," Tehsildar added.

According to reports, the livestock was owned by Abdul Hameed Bakrwal son of Haji Mir, resident of Bakrwal Chak Qazigand. Immediately after the incident, Tehsildar Banihal, local people of Nowgaam and Kherkot along with Police, Revenue Department and Animal Husbandry Department teams reached the area for rescue and relief. The locals have appealed to the administration for immediate help and compensation.

Div Com assesses...

also directed HoDs to depute one senior officer each at Integrated Command & Control Centre, HMT for close synergy and coordination to monitor the situation besides dissemination of correct, factual and timely information. The Div Com directed DCs to work on a need based evacuation plan of people from low lying areas in case of inundation by flood in their respective districts. He also directed for identification and activation of safe shelter centres to house the affected families. He also directed them to review updation of IRDN with inventory and resources to make information available to stakeholders and agencies. He said resources shall be mobilized promptly, smoothly and with certainty to ensure execution of plans. He instructed DCs to issue advisory regarding the condition of roads in their district to keep the public informed so that the public doesn't get stranded. Meanwhile, as precautionary measure, Div Com directed closure of Schools on Tuesday in all districts of Kashmir Division. The meeting was informed by Director IMD that the weather situation will improve from mid-night today while CE I&FC informed that water level in Jhelum is below danger level.

INDIA bloc vanquished...

its tainted history, Congress is once again dreaming of snatching power in the country but they do not know that in the first two phases of polls, the INDI alliance is vanquished," said Modi. You have tested Modi for 10 years, you have seen his every step and measured his every word. On the other hand, a 'mahayudh' is going on in the INDI alliance over leadership, he said. "Will you give the reins of the country in someone's hand who has not decided the name or face (of PM candidate)? Will anyone make that mistake?" he asked. Targeting the opposition bloc, Modi said some people have been creating rifts in the country to snatch power and have come up with a formula of "five PMs in five years". "One year, one PM. The first one will loot as much as he wants, the second will continue to loot, and then the third, fourth and fifth will also do the same," he said. Taking a jibe at Uddhav Thackeray, Modi said the "nakli" Shiv Sena says they have multiple options for leadership. "Can the country run on this formula of 'five PMs in five years'? In reality, they don't want to run the country and are not concerned about your future. They just want to eat 'malai' (alluding to corruption)," he said. In the last 10 years, the emphasis of the Central government was on "true" social justice, whereas Congress worked to stall the rights of SCs, STs, and OBCs in its 60-year rule, Modi said. He said Maharashtra is the land of social justice. "You have seen Congress' rule of 60 years and also seen 10 years of Modi's seva kaal. The kind of work done in the last 1 decade for social justice had not taken place after Independence," Modi said. He said it is their (Congress's) policy to do nothing for backward sections so that they remain 'aashrit' on them, and votes can be sought. "We granted constitutional status to OBC commission, implemented OBC quota in medical exams, increased political quota for OBCs which is supposed to be raised by 10 years," the PM said. Without taking away the rights of Dalits, adivasis, or OBCs, the government granted a 10 per cent quota to poor people in the general category, which was welcomed by everyone including Dalit leaders, he said. "As every child cannot get education in English medium, we allowed students to become doctors in Marathi medium. If they want to become engineers, they can study in Marathi. You can run the country, even if you do not know English," he said. Modi said Congress never wanted Dalit, adivasi and OBC leadership to lead the country and insulted Dalit leaders. "Babasaheb Ambedkar got the Bharat Ratna when a BJP-backed government was in power at the Centre. BJP endeavours to give a maximum representation to Dalits and adivasis," he said, adding that NDA made a son of a Dalit (Ram Nath Kovind) and an Adivasi daughter (Droupadi Murmu) Presidents in 2014 and 2019. Modi claimed Congress and the INDI alliance are "spreading lies" on OBC representation as they have become irritated after being exposed. "In entire elections, the INDI alliance has only agenda to abuse Modi. They invent new abuses every day. I want to ask them to speak for the Nation. They lacked vision. We have the vision and can transform it into reality," he said. He alleged the Congress-led opposition is also "spreading lies that the Constitution will be changed (if BJP comes to power again). Even if Dr Ambedkar comes and wants to change the Constitution, he won't be able to do so," the PM said. He said it was the opportunity for him to redeem the sins committed by ancestors who had meted out injustice to Dalits and people from backward communities. Modi claimed the INDI alliance wants to give the share of Dalits and OBCs to minorities. "I won't allow this ploy. They have already played a game in Karnataka by giving

a major share of the quota to minorities. I will not allow this. People from SC, ST and OBC communities faced hardships," he said. The Congress didn't allow Babasaheb Ambedkar's Constitution to be implemented in Kashmir. "They insulted the Constitution by inserting Article 370, but Modi abrogated it and gave the people of J&K the right of social justice," he added. Solapur (SC) seat will see the contest between Congress' Praniti Shinde and BJP nominee Ram Satpute.

Rivals spreading fake...

any fake video, inform the police," he said. "There is a plan to create a big incident in next one month. I am making these allegations with a lot of seriousness. Games are being played to create social tension so that some untoward incident takes place," Modi claimed. "It is our responsibility to save the society from such fake videos. I request EC to take stern action against those behind such fake videos," he said. The PM cautioned citizens against forwarding such videos as the laws are strict, adding that he did not want innocent people to become victims of it. Asserting that the 21st century was a technology driven one, Modi said he was a supporter of technology and had used social media to know about people's aspirations and wishes as well as gain first hand information on whether benefits of welfare schemes were reaching the masses. "But recent incidents (of misuse of technology) are disturbing. These will make any person who loves democracy hang his head in shame," Modi said. Abrogating Article 370 from Jammu-Kashmir was a guarantee he had given and he had fulfilled it, the PM said. "I want to ask those who are speaking lies about reservations and misleading the people that weren't Dalits and Adivasis living in J-K entitled to reservations. Why was the Constitution not implemented there? Because vote bank politics was being played," he said. By removing Article 370, the Constitution drafted by Babasaheb Ambedkar was implemented in J-K and Dalit and Adivasi brethren are now getting benefits of reservations, the PM said. The Constitution does not allow reservations on the basis of religion but the Congress declared Muslims as OBCs overnight and accommodated them in the 27 per cent quota for the segment, the PM said. "The Congress wants to implement this model across the country after they come to power. Till I am alive, I won't allow any change of Constitution and religion-based reservation. I have the blessings of the people," Modi said. Modi said the Congress kept families of soldiers deprived of "one rank one pension" scheme for 40 years but his government fulfilled that guarantee. During NDA rule, the Navy unveiled epaulette designs having the imprint of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (replacing the colonial Nelson's Ring), he added. Modi said the public health system would be strengthened by setting up more AIIMS campuses in the country. Speaking about his government's decision to provide free ration to 80 crore persons, the PM said tonnes of food grains used to rot in government godowns when the Congress was in power. Despite this, the Congress was not ready to give it to the poor and the Supreme Court had to intervene to set things right, he said. The Congress was insensitive while in power and is now uneasy when the Centre is distributing food grains to the poor, the PM asserted. Attacking the Congress over wealth redistribution and inheritance tax, Modi said that party would "conduct house searches, X-ray your properties and seize them". "Their intention is to loot your property and redistribute it among their 'khaas' (favourite) vote bank," the PM said.

24 candidates in...

Similarly, the independent candidates who remain in the fray for the Lok Sabha Constituency include Sheeban Ashahi, Nissar Ahmad Ahangar, Mirza Sajad Hussain Beigh, Jibran Dar, Shahnaz Hussain Shah, Amin Dar, Riyaz Ahmad Bhat, Fayaz Ahmad Bhat, Sayim Mustafa, Waseem Hassan Sheikh, Ghulam Mohammad Wani, Wahida Tabasum, Dr. Qazi Ashraf, Javaid Ahmad Wani, Jehangir Ahmad Sheikh and Sajad Ahmad Dar. It is worth mentioning here that a total of 39 candidates had filed their nomination papers before the Returning Officer 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency till last date of filing the Nominations (Thursday-25 April 2024), out of them, the Nomination papers of 10 (Ten) Candidates were rejected during Scrutiny held on Friday (April 26, 2024). And now with the withdrawal of five candidates, 24 candidates are now in fray.

Parties seeking postponement...

Ravinder Raina, Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari, DPAP candidate Saleem Parray, Peoples Conference leader Imran Reza Ansari and two Independent candidates. In response to a question, Abdullah said it was the job of the media to tell the people whether the statements made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi were true or false. "The prime minister is making statements; he has a right to do so. It is your job to check whether his statements are true or false," he said. On the prime minister asserting that the National Conference "will not raise" the issue of Article 370, Abdullah said, "When the storm will come here, that day they will also know". On the BJP's claim of crossing the 400-seat mark in the Lok Sabha elections, Abdullah said, "They may win all 543 seats, you are ready for your murder. When you will be stabbed, then you will recall what Farooq Abdullah was saying. If you did not rise to save the Constitution, India will not last. There will be conflict and turmoil everywhere in India." He also hit out at the BJP for claiming credit for the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya. "You talk about Ram temple construction. Did they construct the Ram Mandir? Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, everyone has contributed to the construction of the Ram temple. "But it is unfortunate that they claim that it belongs to only them. Like, Allah sent the Quran. It is for everyone, it is not only for Muslims. We Muslims are at fault that we kept the Quran at home but never tried to understand it," he said. On the Centre's assertion that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir has improved after the abrogation of Article 370, the former chief minister said people have been pushed into poverty. "The situation has improved dramatically, they have improved so much that I do not have words to describe it. We should be thankful to Allah that the edible oil prices are touching the sky, poverty has also risen skywards, and the poor have been crushed by electricity prices. "Look where the LPG prices have gone. Ask all this to a poor man. Why are you asking me? Educated youths are sitting at home without any employment. They have reached the state of suicide. "Look at the prices of medicines. I am a diabetic. I used to take insulin which used to cost Rs 400, then it went to Rs 700 and now it has gone to Rs 1100. What will a poor person do? Where will he get the money from? And you are saying we are developing," he said.

Search operation to...

the border. He said the strength of the two groups, as per preliminary investigation, is between four and six and the security forces are working on various inputs to flush them out. According to official sources, the terrorists had reached Basantgarh from adjoining Kathua district after managing to sneak into this side from across the border and were heading for Chenab valley when they were confronted by the police and VDG members. The Police and VDGs fanned out in the forest area late Saturday evening after information about movement of terrorists.

Panchayat Secy selection...

16 and 24, 2022 in all the above-stated writ petitions are hereby vacated and the official respondents are directed to finalize the selection process, expeditiously. Court further ordered that the selection/appointment of the selected candidates shall be subject to the final outcome of the instant writ petitions.

INDIA bloc leaders...

Sharad Pawar, Mamata Banerjee, Lalu Prasad, all of them may become PM for a year each. Rahul baba will settle for whatever is left of the tenure," Shah said. The home minister, who is often credited with abrogation of Article 370, also accused the Congress and its allies with having protected special status to Jammu and Kashmir like an "auras Putra" (one's own offspring). "Rahul Gandhi had tried to scare us by claiming that scrapping Article 370 will cause rivers of blood to flow. But, when the Modi government made the move, nobody even dared to throw a pebble," said Shah. Slamming Gandhi for his "new-found concern for OBCs", the home minister said "the Congress party has always been against the Other Backward Classes. It had

opposed the Mandal Commission. Modi has emerged from among the OBCs and the community has been empowered during his tenure as never before". He also showered encomiums on Modi for abrogation of Article 370 and strong counter-terrorism steps like surgical strikes in contrast with the previous Congress-led UPA regime, "when for 10 years, terrorists struck at will". Attacking the opposition for alleging misuse of central agencies, Shah said, "Should there be no action against the corrupt? Whoever is found guilty of swindling money meant for the poor people of the country, must be in jail". He also said the opposition camp had neither leaders nor resolve, alleging "Sonia Gandhi's sole concern is making her son the prime minister, while Lalu Prasad wants to make his son the chief minister of Bihar". Shah alleged that the Congress and the RJD supremo did not give due respect to former Bihar CM Karpoori Thakur, but the BJP recognised his contribution and conferred the Bharat Ratna on him. In Begusarai, where Union minister Giriraj Singh seeks to retain the seat for BJP, Shah mockingly referred to main rival CPI as "laal bhai" and urged the people to vote for the sitting MP "in huge numbers so that the next time they do not muster the courage to enter the fray".

DG NIA visits...

M.K Sinha, ADGP Law & Order Vijay Kumar, ADGP Jammu Zone Anand Jain, ADGP CID Nitish Kumar, IGP NIA, Vijay Sakhare, DIG NIA Amit Kumar, SP NIA Jammu Sandeep Chaudhary were present during the interaction.

Martyr VDG laid...

the terrorists who fled after the initial gunfight. A massive search operation by police, army and paramilitary forces is underway in the dense forest to track down and neutralise the fleeing terrorists. Hundreds of locals from the villages and adjoining areas, including VDG members, joined his funeral prayers despite heavy rains. He was later buried at his ancestral graveyard. Mourners made a beeline outside Sharief's house to express their sympathies with the family and expressed their hope that the government will announce a rehabilitation package for the poor family which lost its only bread-earner. Fatima Begum, the wife of Sharief, said she is proud of the sacrifice of her husband for the country but is also pained at his loss. "Who will take care of my five minor daughters now?" she said as his shell-shocked daughters -- aged between five and 15 years -- sat in front of their mother in a room of their house at Lower Panara. Begum said she was preparing breakfast for the family when Sharief came and told him that he is leaving for an operation, 'never to return back alive'. Naseema Bano, sister-in-law of Sharief, said it is now the responsibility of the government to take care of the poor family who lost its bread-earner. "He laid down his life for the nation and we are proud of his sacrifice but his loss is painful as well and cause of concern for his wife, five minor daughters and elderly mother. The government should come forward and assure the family," Bano, who resides in Ram Nagar, said. She said they came to know about the firing and tried to contact Sharief on Phone but "some policeman picked up the phone and said he had suffered a bullet injury. The reality was that he was dead with at least six bullet wounds on his body". Mohd Abaaz, brother of Sharief and also a VDG member, said they were together when terrorists opened fire on them during area domination patrolling. "There were two groups of terrorists with nine members. I told him to be careful but he was caught in an open area and became a direct target. I along with another member took a shield in a nearby house. They rained about 50 bullets non-stop (before fleeing)," he said. Abaaz said the encounter had taken place after a gap of more than 15 years. "We had encounters in the past and we are ready to take on them (terrorists)". He said the government will take care of his family, especially the minor daughters and also equip the VDGs with automatic weapons besides ensuring timely release of their monthly allowances. Begum expressed hope that the government will announce the ex-gratia relief for the family including a government job for one of the daughters.

88th Avtaran Diwas of Sant Asharamji Bapu celebrated

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The 88th Avtaran Diwas (incarnation day) of Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu



was celebrated on Monday at the Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu Ashram and Gaushala in Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu. Sadhaks (devotees) from far and wide gathered at the ashram to commemorate this auspicious occasion and seek blessings from their revered Guruji. The day commenced with devotees arriving at the ashram in the early hours, demonstrating their devotion and reverence for Sant Asharamji Bapu. The atmosphere was filled with spiritual fervor as path (religious recitations), sankertan (devotional singing), and satsang (spiritual discourse) took place, enriching the souls of all present. In the spirit of selfless service and compassion, Shri Yog Vedant Sewa Smiti, a charitable organization associated with the ashram, distributed packets of food and other essential materials to the underprivileged members of society. This act of kindness exemplifies the teachings of Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu, emphasizing the importance of serving humanity with love and humility. Furthermore, a Langar (community kitchen) was organized to provide nourishment to both the needy and the devotees, fostering a sense of unity and togetherness among all participants. As part of the celebrations, members of various ashram organizations, including Yuva Sewa Sangh, Mahila Sewadhari, Bal Sankar Sewadhari, and Rishi Prasad Sewadhari, pledged to intensify their social service activities in the coming year. Guided by the teachings and ideals of Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu, they vowed to double their efforts in serving society and spreading love, compassion, and harmony.

Army rescues school children, passengers

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
POONCH : Army at about 0930 hrs on 29 Apr 2024 was on their operational area recee. They noticed that a Tata Sumo carrying school children met with an accident



and toppled down the hillside near Balnoi. The vehicle was moving from Tain village to a local school in Balnoi when it toppled due to slippery road conditions on the narrow road. Indian Army immediately sprung into action and rescued the children, injured passengers and driver from the accident site to safety. First aid was provided to the injured children and other passengers. Simultaneously Indian Army doctor coordinated for an ambulance from PHC, Mendhar to ensure timely evacuation of the injured to hospital. No fatal casualty occurred due to the timely rescue of the children from accident vehicle.