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STATE TIMES

THE BOLD VOICE OF J&K

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SOWING SKILLS
SHAPING INDIA

03 How fair was it to name "Roshni Act 2001" as amended upto 2007 as a Rs 25000 Cr Scam?

05 Properties of two women drug peddlers worth Rs 42.5 lakhs seized

10 Wrestlers Surjit, Amir share 51st Panassa Dangal title

Website : www.statetimes.in, Email: statetimes1@gmail.com

Three-tier security deployed for counting of votes in Jammu, Kathua



STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A day ahead of the counting of votes for the Jammu and Udhampur Lok Sabha constituencies along with rest of the country, three-tier security has been activated in and around the counting centres in the two districts.

The counting of over 23.94 lakh votes in these constituencies, scheduled for Tuesday, will determine the fate of 34 candidates, including senior BJP leader and Union Minister Jitendra Singh, current Jammu MP Jugal Kishore Sharma and former ministers Choudhary Lal Singh and Raman Bhalla of the Congress.

"All arrangements are in place for the June 4 vote counting. Three-tier security has been implemented," said Returning Officer and Jammu District Magistrate Sachin Kumar Vaishya.

Vaishya, who reviewed the security measures, logistics and essential amenities at the counting venues, **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

Jammu City Traffic Police issues advisory for today

JAMMU: Traffic Police Jammu City on Monday issued traffic regulatory advisory in connection with the counting of votes of Jammu Parliamentary Constituency being held on June 4, 2024 at Government Polytechnic College for Boys Bikram Chowk/ MAM College Jammu University Road Jammu and Government Women College Gandhi Nagar Jammu (Migrant Votes only) from 0700 hours.

To facilitate the officials on duty as well as others for parking their vehicles, besides to ensure smooth traffic regulation at these centres, there shall be traffic restrictions on these route(s). The public in general has been requested to cooperate with the Traffic Police and to avoid **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

Tight security arrangements in Kashmir

SRINAGAR: Stringent security arrangements have been made for the counting of votes for three Lok Sabha constituencies of Kashmir as additional security personnel have been deployed at key places in the valley, officials said on Monday.

A three-tier security blanket has been thrown around the counting centres in Srinagar, Baramulla and Anantnag to ensure that no unauthorised person enters the premises, they said.

A tight vigil has been maintained around the strong rooms where electronic voting machines have been kept since the close of polling in respective constituencies. Polls for the five parliamentary constituencies in **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

Will start process of holding assembly polls in J&K very soon: CEC

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The Election Commission (EC) on Monday said it will start the process of holding assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir very soon.

Addressing a press conference here, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar said the EC was very enthused by the voter turnout in Jammu and Kashmir during the Lok Sabha elections, which showed the eagerness of the people to participate in the democratic process.

"We will very soon start the process of assembly elections in J&K. We are very enthused. It is one of the most satisfying moments," the CEC said.

The voter turnout in Jammu and Kashmir during the Lok Sabha elections was 58.58 per cent, the highest in four decades. The voter turnout in Lok Sabha seats in the Kashmir valley was



CEC Rajiv Kumar briefing media at New Delhi on Monday.

Count of postal ballots will commence first: CEC

NEW DELHI: Citing the Conduct of Election Rules, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Monday said the count of postal ballots will start first across all counting centres and asserted that there was "no doubt about it".

Responding to questions at a press conference here, he said after half-an-hour of the start of the postal ballot count, the counting of votes recorded in the electronic voting machines will commence.

A delegation of the opposition parties had on Sunday met the Commission to demand that postal ballot count should start first and the results of postal ballots should be announced first.

"Rules clearly state (Rule 54A) that postal ballot count will start first. On all centres in the country **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

51.05 per cent, he said.

While announcing the schedule for the Lok Sabha elections in March, Kumar had said that holding assembly and parliamentary elections simultaneously was not practical due to logistical and security reasons.

Whenever assembly elections are held in Jammu and Kashmir, they will be the first since the August 2019 abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution and the division of the erstwhile state into two union territories.

The electoral exercise in Jammu and Kashmir is usually spread over a month.

Following a delimitation exercise, the number of assembly seats in the union territory has gone up from 83 to 90, excluding those allocated to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. In December, the Supreme Court had directed the poll panel to hold assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir by September 30.

Fire engulfs forest, urban areas across six districts in J&K

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Several fire incidents in the past 24 hours have devastated vast tracts of forest land and urban areas across six districts in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Monday.

No injuries or loss of life occurred during any of the incidents, which were reported in Jammu, Udhampur, Reasi, Rajouri, Kathua, and Poonch districts, they added.

In Poonch district, a blaze, which spread from across the Line of Control (LoC) on Sunday night, triggered multiple mine explosions along the Salotri forward area, the officials said. **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

Key LeT 'commander' among 2 terrorists killed in Pulwama

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: In a major breakthrough, two terrorists of banned Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), including a self-styled 'commander' who had been operating for the longest period, were killed in an encounter with the security forces in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

The anti-terror operation started at 11.45 PM on Sunday when Jammu and Kashmir Police along with the army and paramilitary forces laid a cordon around a house in the Nihama area of Pulwama district following



The encounter with the two holed-up terrorists started at 7 AM on Monday after the duo identified as Riyaz Dar alias "Sathar" and Rayees Dar refused to surrender, they said.

DM Jammu issues prohibitory order within, around counting centres

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: To maintain public peace, order and tranquility on the day of counting, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, District Magistrate, Jammu in exercise of the powers conferred upon section 144 Cr.P.C. do hereby prohibit; Procession and Sloganeering of any kind within the premises of the counting centres; Use of P.A. System/loudspeakers and celebration by any political party or candidates within the premises of the counting venue; Carrying of sticks either with or without flags, lathis, processions

An order issued here on Monday stated "Whereas, the counting of votes for the General Elections to the Lok Sabha 2024 is fixed on the 4th June 2024; whereas, there exists every apprehension of problems related to law and order, public peace, order and tranquility on the day of Counting; Therefore, in order to maintain public peace, order and tranquility on the day of counting, I, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, District Magistrate, Jammu in exercise of the powers conferred upon me under section 144 Cr.P.C. do hereby prohibit; Procession and Sloganeering of any kind within the premises of the counting centres; Use of P.A. System/loudspeakers and celebration by any political party or candidates within the premises of the counting venue; Carrying of sticks either with or without flags, lathis, processions **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

intelligence input about the presence of terrorists, they said.

The encounter with the two holed-up terrorists started at 7 AM on Monday after the duo identified as Riyaz Dar alias "Sathar" and Rayees Dar refused to surrender, they said.

During the operation, which was overseen by Deputy Inspector General of Police (South Kashmir) Altaf Khan, precaution was adopted to ensure that there was no collateral damage or any harm to any civilian life, they said.

The firing intensified in the afternoon following which the house in which the two terrorists were holed up caught fire.

The operation was called off at 4 PM after the recovery of the bodies of **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

NHAI's revised toll rates come to effect across highways

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The revised toll charges for motorists on national highways across the country have come to effect from Monday, an official said.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has hiked the toll charges by an average of 5 per cent.

The hike is part of NHAI's annual exercise where the state-owned body calculates new rates factoring in several parameters, the senior NHAI official told PTL.

Every year, it is implemented from April 1 but this year the implementation was deferred due to general elections. The average hike this time was 5 per cent. The revised user fee has been implemented from today, the official said.

From Monday, motorists using national highways/expressways will have to shell out more money for their road journeys.

"The fuel costs were already high. The increased toll rates will make **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

Gangster slapped with PSA; 3 properties of narcotic kingpin attached in Jammu

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A hardcore gangster was detained under the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA), while three properties of a narcotic kingpin were attached here on Monday, police said.

Kulbir Bhagat alias Rinku Kumar, a resident of Miran Sahib's Langotian, has been booked under the PSA on the orders of the district magistrate, Jammu for his continuous involvement in criminal activities in an organised manner; thus posing a threat to public peace and order, a police spokesperson said.

He said the accused did not

area of Jammu district", he said.

In another action, the spokesman said police froze three properties, worth over Rs two crore, belonging to alleged drug kingpin Chirag Attri alias "Chetan" in Bishnah area of Jammu.

The properties were attached under relevant sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, he said, adding several NDPS cases have been registered against Attri in the past and has been recently detained under **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

FIR lodged against driver, conductor in Kaleeth accident

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A Matador (mini bus) travelling from Akhnoor to Naryana met with a tragic accident at Kaleeth in the Khour subdivision yesterday. The accident resulted in the death of two passengers, while several others sustained injuries.

In response, District Magistrate Sachin Kumar Vaishya on Monday announced that financial relief would be provided to the next of kin of the deceased. He also confirmed that an FIR has been lodged against the driver and conductor of the mini bus, **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

CS reviews preparations for Shri Amarnathji Yatra Asks for completion of pending works before commencement of Yatra

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, on Monday chaired sub-committee meeting of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) attended by the senior functionaries of civil administration and police to review the preparations being made for a safe and hassle-free Shri Amarnathji Yatra (SANJY), 2024.

Dulloo reviewed in detail the facilities for safe, smooth and secure movement of pilgrims particularly along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway besides both the axis leading to holy Cave from Baltal and



CS Atal Dulloo chairing sub-committee meeting of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board at Srinagar on Monday.

culmination on 19th August, 2024.

Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor and CEO SASB, Dr Mandeep K Bhandari, made a detailed presentation on **CONTD ON PAGE 9**

WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 42.7°C Min: 25.6°C

Humidity
Max: 30 Min: 18

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 31.7°C Min: 14.4°C

Humidity
Max: 46 Min: 26

Sunset: 19:34 Hours
Sunrise: 05:22 Hours

LS poll counting: Modi eyes record-equalling feat, Oppn hopes for rebound

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi eyes a record-equalling third straight term in power amid the INDIA opposition bloc's hope of springing a surprise as the counting of votes for the Lok Sabha election is set for Tuesday, bringing an end to a marathon polling exercise stretching over 80 days.

While most experts have long seen the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) as the favourite in the polls, a lot is at stake for the ruling combine in terms of the scale of victory it can pull off and new territories it can conquer. The opposition's stakes are higher still amid its reducing national footprint.

Exit polls have been, however, unanimous in their prediction that the NDA is closer to realising Modi's ambitious target of "400 paap" for his alliance than the INDIA bloc is to crossing even the



180 mark, one-third of the total number of seats.

Though electoral verdicts have historically been accepted, even though grudgingly, by all parties, there has been a sharper edge to the questions being raised by opposition parties this time over the polling process, including the Election Commission (EC).

In the run-up to the counting, the campaign acrimony between the two battling camps has spilled over into the post-poll trading of accusations after the exit polls predicted a massive win for the incumbent alliance, a forecast summarily dismissed by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi as "Modi media poll".

INDIA bloc leaders, who have been raising doubts over the electronic voting machines (EVMs), have accused the prime minister of sending a signal to the bureaucracy through these "fantasy" exit polls and marched to the EC, urging the poll watchdog to follow the counting guidelines.

In its counter-attack, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has accused its rivals of trying to undermine the integrity of India's electoral process and asked the EC to prevent any attempt of "violence and unrest" during the counting of votes.

The results will show if the Congress has it in its organisation and leadership to challenge the BJP amid its reducing footprint across the country since 2014. It has failed to get even the main

threat to the Constitution from an all-powerful saffron onslaught, and will get popular support.

Modi will equal the country's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's record of leading his party to three straight electoral victories if the BJP retains power.

An uncertain future also hangs over the fate of the Left, besides many regional parties including the Trinamool Congress (TMC), Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and YSR Congress, which are in power in West Bengal, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh respectively.

Modi has spearheaded a concerted BJP push to gain further in strength in the two eastern states, where the party surprised everyone by emerging as the powerful second force in 2019, and the exit polls have suggested that it may topple the two regional parties from the top position in these polls.

Assembly polls were held in Odisha alongside the national elec-

tion and the BJP and the BJD, which has been in power in the state since 2000 under Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's leadership, are locked in a fierce battle for power. Assembly polls were also held simultaneously in the YSRCP-ruled Andhra Pradesh.

Another issue that has drawn the limelight is whether the BJP will be able to emerge as a strong force in Tamil Nadu and the Left-ruled Kerala, two states where it has currently no seats but is predicted to win a few this time.

A poor show by the Left will further darken its prospects nationwide as Kerala is the only state where it remains a strong force after being knocked of reckoning in its former strongholds of Bengal and Tripura.

Always confident of his return to power, Modi has already penned an article about his vision for the country, posted on X about people's support **CONTD ON PAGE 9**