



Neebha
Multispeciality Institute

Dr. Shitiz Gupta
M.S., M.Ch.(Plastic Surgery)
Consultant Plastic & Aesthetic Surgeon

Dr. Shikha Dhawan
M.S.(Obs. & Gynae.), D.N.B.(Obs. & Gynae.)
Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist

24-A, Shastri Nagar
(at Dr.Bharat Bhushan Gupta's Clinic), Jammu.
☎ 9419114877



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03

President presents 'Rashtriya Vigyan Puruskar', Dr Jitendra hails recognition of India's scientific talent

03

To remain vigilant, proactive in addressing any challenges: ADGP Jammu asks officers

10

CUJ hosts 7th International Conference on Recent Innovations in Computing

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J&K ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

23.27 lakh electors eligible to vote in 24 ACs in Ph-I on Sept 18

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: More than 23.27 lakh voters including 5.66 lakh youths are eligible to exercise their electoral franchise during the Phase-I of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Election which is scheduled to be held on 18 September 2024 across the 24 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) in 7 districts of Jammu & Kashmir, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) J&K, Pandurang K Pole said on Thursday.

"As per the latest data of electoral rolls available, there is a total of 23,27,543 lakh voters, who are eligible to vote during the Phase I of the J&K Assembly. Out of them, there are 11,76,441 male voters and 11,51,042 female voters along with 60 Third Gender Electors," the CEO said in a statement.

Underlining the significance of the role to be played

Stay vigilant to counter fake narratives: EC to J&K, Haryana poll observers

NEW DELHI: The Election Commission on Thursday advised its over 400 observers being deployed for assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana to stay vigilant to false narratives trying to derail the election process and to ensure a quick counter.

Reminding the observers of their crucial role, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar emphasised that they, as representatives of the Commission, are expected to conduct themselves professionally and be accessible to all stakeholders including candidates and



■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

65542 of them male and 58380 female electors.

In the Phase- I, 28,310 Person with Disabilities (PwDs) and 15,774 voters above the age of 85 are eligible to cast their vote.

In the first phase, 24 Assembly Constituencies both in Jammu and Kashmir divisions are going to election on 18 September, 2024.

The notification has been issued for Anantnag, Pulwama, Shopian, Kulgam districts in Kashmir Division; and Doda, Ramban and Kishtwar districts in Jammu Division.

In Kashmir Division, 16 Assembly Constituencies comprising Pampore, Tral, Pulwama, Rajpora, Zainapora, Shopian, DH Pora, Kulgam, Devsar, Doorn, Kokernag (ST), Anantnag West, Anantnag, Srigufwara-

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Federation of All India Medical Association calls off strike

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) on Thursday decided to end its 11-day strike, called to protest against the rape and murder of a medic in Kolkata, following "positive directions" from the Supreme Court.

The apex court earlier in the day asked protesting

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Congress to forge pre-poll alliance in J&K: Kharge

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday expressed his willingness to forge an alliance with other opposition parties for the upcoming Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls and termed the ruling BJP's promises to the people of the Union Territory 'jumbal'.

Kharge, along with Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi,

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Rahul, Sonia should clarify stance on Art 370, NC resolution: Reddy



Union Minister G Kishan Reddy flanked by BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh briefing media at party Headquarters in Jammu on Thursday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Union minister G Kishan Reddy on Thursday asked the Congress to clarify its position on Article 370 and the resolution by its alliance partner the National Conference to revoke it.

Reddy, who chaired an organisational meeting to review the saffron party's preparations for the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, also questioned the Congress on the National Conference's manifesto and said the Farooq Abdullah-led

party sought to reverse the rights granted to various sections of people in the Union Territory.

Restoration of Article 370 and Jammu and Kashmir's statehood as well as implementation of the autonomy resolution passed by the erstwhile assembly in 2000 are among the National Conference's 12 guarantees announced in its manifesto.

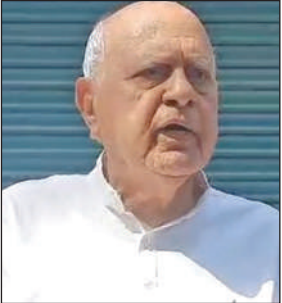
In June 2000, the National Conference government under Abdullah passed a resolution in the assembly, seek-

ing to restore the pre-1953 constitutional position in the state. It was, however, rejected by the Union Cabinet headed by then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

"Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi should inform the country about the National Conference's resolution. Tarun Chugh has already questioned them. They should also clarify the Congress' stand on Article 370," Reddy -- the BJP's election in-charge for

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Alliance with Cong final on all 90 seats: Farooq



■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: An alliance with the Congress is final on all 90 assembly seats in Jammu and Kashmir, National Conference president Farooq Adbullah said on Thursday.

The announcement came

after Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge called on the National Conference leadership at Abdullah's residence.

"We had a good meeting, in a cordial atmosphere. The alliance is on track and, God willing, it will run smoothly. The alliance is final. It will be signed this evening and the alliance is on all 90 seats," Abdullah told reporters.

The three-phase elections to the 90-member Jammu and Kashmir Assembly will be held on September 18, September 25 and

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Work in tandem to ensure implementation of MCC, level playing field for stakeholders: CEO



CEO, J&K, Pandurang K Pole interacting with Nodal Officers.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a bid to enhance the skills of its election machinery at District and Assembly Constituency level during the Assembly

Election 2024, the office of the Chief Electoral Officer J&K conducted a training program for as many as 296 Nodal Officers across the Union Territory, which con-

cluded on Thursday. Conducted under the supervision of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), J&K, Pandurang K Pole, the program trained the Nodal Officers for the effective implementation of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), Media Certification and

Monitoring (MCM), monitoring

of Paid and Fake News and Social Media Apps, and for Election Expenditure Monitoring (EEM) at district and Assembly Constituency (AC) level in both Jammu and Kashmir divisions of J&K

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Shree Machail Mata Yatra 2024 crosses 2 lakh Pilgrim Milestone

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KISHTWAR: The revered 45-day Annual Shree Machail Mata Yatra 2024, which commenced on 25th July 2024, has witnessed an overwhelming participation, surpassing the 2 lakh milestone by 21st August 2024.

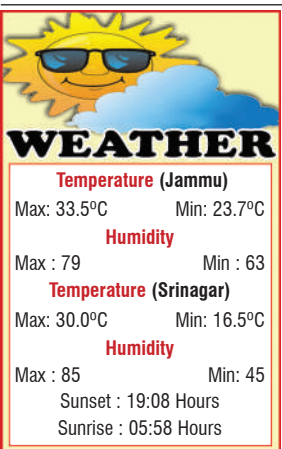
This year's Yatra has been marked by a remarkable turnout, reflecting the deep spiritual significance of the pilgrimage.

Under the exceptional leadership of the Divisional Commissioner Kishitwar, Ramesh Kumar, the Divisional Administration has been commended for its comprehensive arrangements, ensuring a seamless experience for all pilgrims.

The efforts of the District Administration spearheaded by Deputy Commissioner Kishitwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan, JKAS, have been pivotal in meticulously organizing the pilgrimage, in collaboration with local authorities.

On 21st August 2024, Deputy Commissioner

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9



WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 33.5°C Min: 23.7°C

Humidity
Max: 79 Min: 63

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 30.0°C Min: 16.5°C

Humidity
Max: 85 Min: 45

Sunset : 19:08 Hours
Sunrise : 05:58 Hours

J&K Bank's long-term issuer rating upgraded India Ratings enhances bank's rating to INDAA- from INDAA

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: India Ratings - a Fitch Group company and one of the country's leading rating agencies - has upgraded Jammu and Kashmir Bank's long-term issuer rating to INDAA- from INDAA+ with the outlook is stable.

The first among the key rating drivers, as per the agency's rationale behind the upgrade, is the bank's systemic significance for Jammu & Kashmir given its strong franchise and substantial market share in the UTs of J&K and Ladakh besides being the designated agent bank by the Reserve Bank of India for the UTs.

The bank has received continued financial support from the governments of the strategically important UTs as it plays a major role in the region's economy.

The other key drivers listed by the agency include its strengthened capital buffers and an improved profitability profile that the bank is expected to sustain. And with the CET 1 ratio improving to 12% in FY24, the asset quality metrics have consistently improved with GNPA of the bank declining to 3.9% and NNPA falling to 0.8% in line with peer banks. Having a deposit profile with a high proportion of low cost

deposits, the bank's CASA ratio has remained higher than it's peers at 49.8% and credit to deposit ratio remaining comfortable at 71%.

Expressing his pleasure over the upgrade, MD & CEO Baldev Prakash said, "The rating upgrade positions us favourably for future growth and encourages us to serve our customers with renewed vigour and confidence. While being a testament of our resilience and hard work as an institution, it also reflects our growing strength as we continue to align our strategies with

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Er Rashid-led AIP releases first list of 9 candidates

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Incarcerated Member of Parliament Sheikh Abdul Rashid-led Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) on Thursday released the first list of nine candidates for the first phase of assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir.

The names were announced by AIP chief spokesperson Imam Un Nabi at a press conference here.

He said the selection of the candidates has been done after extensive consultations with the people and civil society. "These candidates have been selected in

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Justice Tashi Rabstan inspires future judiciary at interaction with trainee Judicial Officers



Chief Justice (A) Tashi Rabstan interacting with trainee judicial officers in Jammu on Thursday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a significant event Justice Tashi Rabstan, Chief Justice (A), High Court of J&K and Ladakh engaged with 69 trainee judi-

cial officers present both physically and virtually in an enlightening and thought-provoking session held at the High Court Conference Room here on Thursday. The

interaction provided a unique opportunity for the trainees to gain insights from the highest echelon of the judiciary and to discuss key issues pertaining to their future roles.

In his address, the Chief Justice (A) emphasized upon the critical importance of judicial independence, impartiality, and adherence to the rule of law. He elaborated on the importance of training offering the trainees a comprehensive understanding of contemporary challenges and expectations in the judiciary.

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Restoration of Statehood, Congress-INDIA bloc's priority: Rahul

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Thursday sought to strike an emotional chord with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, and assured that the restoration of statehood was a priority for the Congress party as well as the opposition's INDIA bloc.

The former Congress president also said it is his party's aim that the people of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh get their democratic rights back.

Gandhi and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge were in J-K on a two-day visit to hold consultations with party workers ahead of the assembly elections in the UT.

As Gandhi concluded the Srinagar leg of his visit, he stiched up an alliance with Jammu and Kashmir's oldest regional party -- the National Conference (NC) -- holding consultations with the NC president Farooq Abdullah and vice president Omar Abdullah at their residence here.

The announcement of the alliance was made by the senior Abdullah after the Congress leaders left his residence for Jammu.

During the two-day visit, Gandhi also met a delegation of students in J&K, relished traditional Kashmiri cuisine 'Wazwan' at a famous restaurant, and had an ice-cream at a popular local parlour.

Speaking to reporters after holding an interaction with his party leaders and workers, Gandhi assured the people of J-K that his party and the INDIA bloc will work towards the restoration of the statehood to J-K, and the democratic rights of the people.

"It is our priority, and also of the INDIA bloc, to get statehood restored to J-K as soon as possible. We had expected this could be done prior to elections, but it is okay, elections have been declared.

"It is a step forward and we are hoping that statehood will be restored as soon as possible and the democratic



rights of the people of J-K will be restored," he said.

The Congress leader said he has "a very deep relation" with the people of J-K and it is always a pleasure for him to visit here. He assured them that the Congress is always there to help them in whatever way it can.

"My message to the people of J-K is that whatever way we can help you with, the Congress party is always

there. We understand that you are going through a very difficult period, a tough period. We want to end violence."

He reiterated that he wants to open "Mohabbat ki dukan nafrat ke bazaar mein" (shop of love in market of hate) with respect and brotherhood."

The LoP criticised the Centre's decision of downgrading J-K from a state to a UT.

"This has never happened before. UTs have become states, but it is the first time that a state has become a UT. We are very clear in our national manifesto as well that it is a priority for us that the people of J-K and Ladakh get their democratic rights back," he added.

Earlier, addressing his party leaders and workers here, Gandhi said he shares an old bond and a blood relation with Kashmir.

Referring to his late night visit to have a dinner and relish ice-cream here, he said he felt irritated when someone asked

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Excessive bail is no bail: SC

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Excessive bail is no bail, the Supreme Court said on Thursday while observing that granting the relief and then imposing onerous conditions is to take away with the left hand, what is given with the right.

The apex court said an order which would protect the person's fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution and at the same time guarantee his or her presence, would be reasonable and proportionate.

A bench of Justices B R Gavi and K V Viswanathan delivered its verdict on a plea filed by a man, against whom 13 FIRs have been lodged in several states for various offences including that of cheating.

The petitioner had contended before the apex court

that he was granted bail in these 13 cases and he has fulfilled the bail conditions in two of them.

The top court noted the main plea of the petitioner was that he was not in a position to furnish separate sureties, as directed in the remaining 11 bail orders.

"The situation today is, in spite of obtaining bail in 13 cases, the petitioner has not been able to furnish sureties," the bench said.

"From time immemorial, the principle has been that the excessive bail is no bail. To grant bail and thereafter to impose excessive and onerous conditions, is to take away with the left hand, what is given with the right," it said, adding that as to what was excessive would depend on the facts and

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9