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UPS ensures dignity...

length will be 25 years. However, he said, it would be proportionate for a lesser service period up to a minimum of 10 years of service. NPS subscribers can now opt for the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS), which offers assured pension applicable from the beginning of the next financial year.

Security enhanced at...

incidents of violence at the hospital. The deployment of security forces, including CRPF, has been made at Government Medical College (GMC) hospital and Sri Maharaja Gulab Singh (SMGS) hospital, they said. "GMC hospital in Jammu is among the first in the country to have armed security in the emergency premises for the safety of medical staff," a senior official of the hospital said. The administrations have successfully implemented these security measures after thorough discussions with the police authorities. A total of 34 police personnel, including 15 women officers, equipped with arms and communication tools, will be stationed for round-the-clock security, they said. These personnel will be stationed at the emergency wing, mortuary, indoor wards, as well as corridors, staircases, and OPDs.

Terrorist killed in...

grenades and two magazines, the officials said. The Jammu and Kashmir Police also posted about the incident on its X handle. "Exchange of fire at Watergam area of Sopore. Alert security forces retaliated," it said. The check post was erected on the directions of the EC to check illegal inducements like cash and drugs to lure voters in view of the forthcoming polls in the Union Territory. Jammu and Kashmir will have a three-phase polling beginning September 18. Votes will be counted on October 4.

J&K CEO exhorts...

Union Territory. District Nodal Officers and Assembly Constituency Nodal Officers of all the 22 enforcement agencies along with incharge officers of flying squads, static surveillance teams, video viewing teams and video surveillance teams participated in the training programme, organised by the J&K Election Department.

During the training programme, the officers from Expenditure Division of Election Commission of India (ECD) imparted an online session on Election Seizure Management System.

The trainee officers were given online sessions by the Special Secretary in the Office of Chief Electoral officer, J&K and national level master trainers from India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIDEM) and Election Commission of India. Moreover, a special session on the use of various IT Apps used during the election period was also conducted by the IT expert during the training program. Besides, the various resource persons also clarified on the spot queries raised by the trainee officers.

Apni Party rules...

neither support any party, nor take support from any other party. We are not a part of any camp," party chief Altaf Bukhari told reporters after kick-starting his campaign from the Chanapora Assembly seat, from where he will contest.

He said the Apni Party will contest on 60 out of total 90 seats, and would field 40 candidates from Kashmir and 20 from the Jammu division.

On the NC-Congress alliance, the Apni Party chief said it is an alliance of the NC, Congress, PDP, CPI(M) and the BJP.

"Some are openly doing it, while others (from) behind the curtains," he added. The Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir will be held in three phases - on September 18 and 25, and October 1, while the results will be declared on October 4.

Cong leader, retired...

success in the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. J&K BJP President Ravinder Raina welcomed the new entrants at two separate functions in the party headquarters. He described the pre-poll alliance of the Congress and National Conference (NC) as an outcome of the "growing popularity" of the BJP.

At the first function, former SSP Mohan Lal joined the BJP, a day after his application for voluntary retirement from service was accepted.

"Today, I am joining the world's largest political party which is nationalistic by its tradition and working for nation-building. I am influenced by the central and J&K party leadership and workers, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah," Lal, who is likely to be given a party ticket from the Akhnor Assembly constituency, said.

The former SSP said he will work to ensure the party achieves its target of 50-plus seats in the elections.

Welcoming Lal in the party fold, Raina said the continuous joining of prominent personalities like former minister Choudhary Zulfiqar Ali and former MLC Murtaza Khan in the BJP has unmerged the Congress and the NC, forcing the two parties to join hands in the run-up to the Assembly polls.

"Farooq Abdullah (NC president) and Congress leadership have time and again said that they will fight the Assembly elections on their own strength but what forced them to come together suddenly. They are frightened by the BJP's growing popularity and are staring at defeat," he said.

Later, Raina welcomed senior Congress leader and District Development Council Member Choudhary Abdul Gani along with dozens of his supporters, including former sarpanches and panches from the twin border districts of Poonch and Rajouri.

"The joining of Gani and his supporters is a major setback for the Congress... the Congress-NC combine will be cleared of the Rajouri-Poonch belt which has suffered lack of development under their rule. They have seen the reality of development under the leadership of PM Modi during the past 10 years," the BJP leader said.

"I am highly impressed by the working of our prime minister and his slogan of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas'," he said.

11-member gang...

assistance of the local police and counter-intelligence unit, leading to the arrest of 11 accused -- 10 residents of Haryana and one from Punjab.

The stolen vehicle belonging to the cab driver was also recovered, the officer said.

He identified the arrested accused as Gurpreet Singh alias Gopi, Sukhvinder Singh alias Preet, Gursavak Singh, Gurdeep Singh alias Bana, Lucky Singh, Sahil alias Tara Singh, Arjun alias Katiya, Lucky Singh, Gopal Kumar alias Gopi and Gurjeet Singh -- all residents of Nagal Tehsil Ratia of Fatehabad district of Haryana -- and Kuldeep Singh alias Kala of Khusha Sardulgarh in Punjab.

The gang conspired in Katra to abduct the cab driver and, with criminal intent, brutally murdered him near Bajalta, where they later disposed off his body, the officer said, adding that the body was recovered and handed over to his family.

PDP releases its...

relations between India and Pakistan, promising to advocate for diplomatic initiatives between the two neighbours, emphasising conflict resolution, CBMs, and regional cooperation.

The manifesto titled 'People's Aspirations' promised to establish full connectivity across the Line of Control (LoC) for trade and social exchange.

It advocated for a regional free-trade area and shared economic market.

The party strives for the opening of old and traditional trade routes to central and south Asia through Jamm and Kashmir, it said.

The manifesto strives for revocation of the Public Safety Act (PSA), Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and Enemy Act, and said it committed for the revocation of Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA).

It also promises to revisit and address the cases of "unjust" job terminations -- referring to the sacking of J-K government employees over terror abatement charges.

Promising to protect the land and employment rights of the people of J-K, the party said locals will have the first right in all government tenders as well as mining contracts.

It said, if elected to power, the party would accelerate the process to identify and fill all government vacancies on a fast-track basis within one year.

"Sixty thousand daily wagers to be regularised within one year," the manifesto read, adding to launch initiatives to create jobs in key sectors like tourism, agriculture, and technology.

On the issue of the return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits, the PDP's manifesto said the party is committed to the dignified return of Kashmiri Pandits to their homeland, "ensuring they are welcomed back as honoured members of our community".

"We will strive for taking all the stakeholders on board to secure an end to this humanitarian crises. This is not just a return, but a restoration of the cultural and spiritual essence of Kashmir," it said.

The party promised revoking the current one-BHK scheme to minimum allocation of two-BHK apartments for every returning family, and to strive that Kashmiri Pandits are the first beneficiaries of the Centre's scheme of five marlas of land for landless families.

It also said the party would advocate for the opening and promotion of Sharda Peeth across the LoC as a full-fledged religious pilgrimage site.

"This initiative aims to reconnect people with their cultural and religious heritage, fostering greater understanding and peace between communities on both sides of the LoC," it added.

The manifesto promised 200 free units of electricity to every household, free water, 12 gas cylinders every year to economically weaker sections of society, abolition of property tax for all households and stamp duty for women purchasing property.

Congress playing dirty...

back to the turmoil it once experienced. Congress should clarify whether it supports the NC's agenda of negotiating with Pakistan rather than engaging with the youth of India", Chugh said.

Case registered after...

said girl converted and married Sagar Pradeep Singh of Navi Mumbai (other details withheld), the police official said, adding a case of kidnapping was registered under relevant sections of the BNS.

However, he said, the police's cyber patrol unit has noticed that many miscreants and anti-social elements are creating/sharing posts attempting to use this incident to cause disturbance.

Sharing misleading/inflammatory content violates various laws and will lead to strict legal action, including initiation of criminal proceedings, he said.

"All are advised not to share misleading/inflammatory content about this incident. If such content has been shared/reposted, it is advised to delete the same," the police said.

J&K Judicial Academy...

of Sexual Harassment Probe Committees, and members of Gender Sensitization Internal Committees from all districts of Jammu province.

The training programme was inaugurated by Justice Sindhu Sharma, Chairperson, Sexual Harassment Probe Committee in the presence of Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Justice Rahul Bharti, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Member of the Governing Committee for J&K Judicial Academy and Anand Jain, ADGP, Jammu. Shiv Kumar DIG Jammu and Joginder Singh SSP Jammu also attended the inaugural session.

Delivering her inaugural address, Justice Sindhu Sharma, emphasized that there was a dire need of organizing such sensitization programmes to raise the awareness level of all the stake holders about the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized sections of society and sensitivities involved while dealing with the victims of POCSO and POSH Act.

She highlighted that a large number of such offences are neither specifically provided for nor are they adequately penalised.

The interests of the child, both as a victim as well as a witness, need to be protected. Justice Sindhu Sharma added that it is felt that offences against children need to be defined explicitly and countered through commensurate penalties as an effective deterrence.

She iterated that for the first time, a special law has been passed to address the issue of sexual offences against children.

India is home to the largest percentage of children in the world, out of which, about 42% are children below 18.

One of the biggest evils the country is battling is Child sexual abuse. In order to address the problem of CSA through less ambiguous and more stringent legal provisions, the POCSO Act was passed in June, 2012 which came into force on 14th November, 2012.

Justice Sindhu Sharma stressed upon the need of better implementation of the provisions of POSCO Act and POSH Act and added that Combating Gender Stereotypes; A Handbook released by the Supreme Court of India is a welcome gesture by the Supreme Court. Justice Sharma deliberated that Gender stereotypes perpetuate violence and discrimination, undermining the effectiveness of legal protections.

She emphasised on some commonly used phrases which are now prohibited and must not be used by anybody.

The handbook provides practical tools and strategies for educators, employers, and policymakers to address and dismantle these stereotypes, promoting a more equitable and just society.

Justice Rahul Bharti in his special remarks highlighted that our society has been compelled to make laws for protecting the children.

Justice Bharti gave various real-life illustrations and highlighted that incidents of sexual abuse against children do occur at schools, religious places, parks, hostels, etc and the security of children is not guaranteed anywhere. With such emerging dangers, it was significant to introduce a special legislation which could provide a reliable system for mitigating the number of such offences and punishing the perpetrators.

Justice Bharti said that POCSO Act has been instrumental in providing a robust justice mechanism for the victims of sexual abuse and has highlighted the significance of child rights and safety. His Lordship remarked that we need to be sensitive without actually told to be sensitized.

Justice Bharti appreciated the participation of Judges, Police, Prosecutors, Medical Officers, etc. in the Two Days sensitization Programme who constituted the workforce at the ground level.

Anand Jain, ADGP, Jammu while delivering his keynote address urged that necessity of having the special legislation like POCSO Act to be underscored by alarming statistics.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), over 16,000 cases of child sexual abuse were reported in 2022 alone.

He said that POCSO Act is instrumental in addressing this crisis, providing a structured approach for justice and victim protection. He remarked that the effectiveness of the act continues to depend on robust implementation and adequate rehabilitation facilities.

He added that amount of sensitization and the degree of streamlining is still the need of hour. Yash Paul Bourney, Director, J&K Judicial Academy welcomed the dignitaries, Resource Persons and participants delivered the introductory remarks.

He said that in India, crimes against children have been on the rise since the past decade or more despite all laws. As against the increasing incidents of such diabolic crimes, there has been a corresponding decrease in the conviction rate in such gruesome offences.

There is an increasing fear of re-victimisation and of cases being unheard. He deliberated that the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 makes provisions for avoiding the re-victimisation of the child at the hands of the legal system which provides for Special Courts to conduct the trial in-camera and without revealing the identity of the child, in a manner that is as child-friendly as possible.

He remarked that Sexual Harassment is a sinister facet of Gender discrimination which is grossly violative of a Women's basic human & fundamental rights and achieving gender equality is important at workplaces is need of the hour not because it is 'fair' and 'the right thing to do,' but because it is also linked to a country's overall progress.

Workplace gender equality is associated with improved national productivity and economic growth.

On the first day, the first session was conducted by Sunil Sethi, Sr. Advocate, High Court of J&K and Ladakh who explained the objective, nature & contours of the POCSO Act.

He highlighted that the Child Friendly Court Procedures must be adopted to ensure the best interest of the Child. The resource person said that traditional courts of law are not created with an eye for the special developmental needs of children. The courtroom environment can be intimidating to a child who is required to testify as a witness.

Therefore, a lot of sensitivities are involved in dealing with Child Victims. He lauded the role of the Courts and the Prosecutors in avoidance of Victims Personification, Mental Trauma, etc.

He further elaborated that keeping a child victim informed and explaining to him about procedures are best practices that go a long way in securing convictions in such cases. The second session of the programme was chaired by Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh who gave a detailed overview of Framing of Charges in POCSO Trials including recording and appreciation of evidence of victims in cases of Child Sexual Abuse.

Justice Rajnesh Oswal stated that process of framing charges is fundamental in setting the stage for a trial. Under the POCSO Act, this process must be meticulously handled to ensure justice and minimize trauma for the child involved.

He cited various judgements of the Apex Court which suggest that charges should be framed based on the material gathered during the investigation which must not be confused with mini trial and meticulous sifting of the evidence as is done at the final stage.

Justice Rajnesh Oswal said that recording and appreciation of evidence in

POCSO trials require adherence to specific procedures to ensure that the child's testimony is handled sensitively and effectively.

Justice Oswal also highlighted the statutory provisions including the protection of witnesses particularly the Vulnerable Witness against the fallacies of legal process. In the third session, Smt. Seema Khajuria Shekhar, Sr. Advocate. High Court of J&K and Ladakh deliberated that preferential treatment for men as opposed to women, because of their gender are known as gender discrimination and sexual harassment at the workplace is a result of such discrimination. Gender discrimination based on gendered biases and attitudes are a reality for many working/professional women and can occur in the workplace in one or more ways.

She gave an overview of important provisions of POSH Act and Rules. The resource person discussed about the importance of gender mainstreaming and workplace equality for checking effectively the sexual harassment. She also underlined the importance of the role of Internal Complaints Committees/Local Complaints Committees to prevent and redress sexual harassment complaints.

Sonia Gupta, PDJ Reasi conducted the proceedings of the two days sensitization programme.

All the sessions remained very interactive during which all the participants actively participated and shared their experiences, difficulties and also discussed various aspects of the subject topics.

They also raised a number of queries which were answered satisfactorily by the worthy resource persons.

The programme concluded with vote of thanks to one and all more particularly the Chairman and Resource Persons for sparing their valuable time for all round success of the programme.

Yogi Adityanath slams...

of opposition in the Lok Sabha, Adityanath said, "The Congress, which is leading the INDI alliance in this important election, has again put its anti-national intentions in front of the country by allying with the National Conference of Abdullah and Sons Family Private Limited."

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader said the Congress-NC alliance raises many big questions about national security and also worries every person who has true faith and loyalty towards the Constitution.

"I want to ask the Congress leader whether his party supports the NC's assertion for a separate flag for Jammu and Kashmir again? Does Rahul Gandhi and the Congress support the NC's declaration to push Jammu and Kashmir back to the era of unrest and terrorism by bringing back Articles 370 and 35A (of the Constitution)? Is the Congress again supporting separatist forces by negotiating with Pakistan, instead of the youngsters of Kashmir?" he asked.

"This conspiracy of the Congress forces us to ask questions. Rahul Gandhi should answer these questions before the country," he added.

Adityanath also alleged that the anti-reservation face of the Congress has been exposed before the country through its alliance with the NC.

Congress forged alliance...

conference. He also described the Congress as a party that always played with the country's unity and integrity due to its lust for power.

Dhami alleged that the alliance exposed the Congress' true intentions.

He said the Congress spread a lie during the Lok Sabha polls that if the Narendra Modi government returned to power at the Centre, the system of reservation would come to an end.

"Would he (Rahul Gandhi) explain if, by entering into an alliance with the National Conference, he supports its agenda of ending the quotas for Gujjar Bakarwals and the hill people of Jammu and Kashmir?" Dhami asked.

Polls to the 90-member Jammu and Kashmir Assembly will be held in three phases -- September 18, September 25 and October 1. The counting of votes will be held on October 4.

National Conference chief Farooq Abdullah on Thursday announced a pre-poll alliance with the Congress for the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, which is going to the polls for the first time since the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019.

The regional party's vice-president Omar Abdullah on Friday said the seat-share arrangement with the Congress had been finalised for a majority of constituencies and that parleys were underway to reach a consensus over the remainder.

Distt Level Committee...

peddling across the District, besides destroying the channels/ networks and sources of drug peddling.

During the meeting, DC showed the concern regarding the drug abuse by students at coaching centers, hostels besides around colleges and educational hubs in the District. He directed the Officers of District Administration and Police for proper regulation of Coaching centers, their Hostels and Households having Paid Guests.

The DC instructed for audit of coaching centers with respect to safety standards, availability of civic facilities besides verification of permission granted for running of Coaching Centers and hostels. He also directed to check the installation of CCTVs, availability of security guards, female wardens and conduct of Parent-warden meetings. On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner constituted a Task Force to ensure that the safety and preventive SoPs are followed in letter and spirit in all coaching centers and hostels/ PGs.

Cyber Cell of solves online fraud & recovers Rs 80,000

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Cyber cell DPO Jammu, a dedicated unit to deal with cases of online frauds and cyber crime who has been relentlessly working day in and day out for ensuring the safety and security of masses in general has once again successfully recovered an amount of Rupees Eighty thousand from a fraudster who used to deceive the people by adopting different tactics and extract money from them by luring them of huge return benefits. In this regard the complainant approached cyber cell Jammu of being fraudulently cheated.

Taking the cognizance of matter, the cyber cell Jammu took no time to start the investigations and acted swiftly while exhibiting the ultimate professional excellence through its dedicated skilled human resource which was put to task and in no time the lost amount of Rs.80,000/.was recovered from the erring fraudster.

Man booked for selling banned Nylon Thread

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Based on reliable information about sale of the dreaded Nylon thread, Chinese manja (Gattu), a police team of police station Akhnor conducted raids in the shops of kite sellers in Akhnor town and adjoining area.

During raid, Police party seized 19 rolls of Nylon thread (Gattu) from a person who was engaged in selling Synthetic Nylon thread made in China which is banned in District Jammu.

The seller has been identified Rohit Gupta S/O Lt. Bharat Bhushan Gupta R/O Manda Akhnor District Jammu. In this regard FIR under relevant section of law stand registered against above said person and further investigation is underway.

CIK announces reward for information on Pakistan-based LeT commander

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
KASHMIR: Counter Intelligence Kashmir (CIK) on Saturday announced a reward against who the CIK said is a Pakistan based LeT commander.

As per handout issued by police, In case FIR.No.02/2024 U/S 13, 38, 39, 40 UA(P) Act, 120-B IPC of P/S CI Kashmir. A Pakistan based Terrorist Commander / Handler @ Sumama @ Ilyas @ Babar R/O Pakistan of LeT Outfit (a proscribed organization) is wanted by CI Kashmir in case FIR. No.02/2024 U/S 13, 38, 39, 40 UA(P) Act, 120-B IPC of P/S CI Kashmir. The said Terrorist Handler is involved in radicalizing, motivating and recruiting the potential/gullible youth of UT of J&K in to terrorist ranks through different Social Media applications, including encrypted messaging applications and is using Kashmiri netizens as Couriers for raising and passing on funds to different Terrorist organizations for carrying out terrorist acts in the valley.

The CI Kashmir has declared a cash reward of Rs. 3,00,000/- (3.00 Lacs) against the above Pak based Commander /Handler of proscribed terrorist organization LeT.

If any person has any information regarding the above terrorist Commander/Handler leading to his arrest or apprehension, he may share the same on the following phone number and address and earn the required reward. (The Identity of the informer shall be kept secret).

