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CEC leads crucial 2-day review of Election preparations in J&K



CEC Rajiv Kumar, along with ECs Gyanesh Kumar and Dr SS Sandhu chairing a meeting at Srinagar on Thursday.

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Election Commission of India (ECI), headed by the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar, along with Election Commissioners (ECs) Gyanesh Kumar and Dr SS Sandhu commenced a pivotal two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir to oversee poll preparations for Assembly Elections in the Union Territory.

The visit underscores the

ECI's unwavering commitment to facilitating a seamless and transparent electoral process in the region.

The ECI team on Thursday engaged in extensive deliberations with a spectrum of stakeholders, including representatives from national and state recognized political parties to solicit valuable insights and understand their concerns, thereby fostering their active involvement in the electoral

process.

Later in the day, the ECI reviewed the poll preparedness with District Election Officers and Superintendents of Police (SPs) to deliberate on administrative and security arrangements crucial to the conduct of elections.

Additionally, an evening session was held with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Special Police Nodal Officer (SPNO), and Central

Police Forces (CPMF) Nodal Officer to review coordination efforts among various agencies involved in election management.

On August 9, the visit will culminate with a final meeting with the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police.

The ECI team will then travel to Jammu for review with enforcement agencies and culminating in a press conference.

Over 500 pilgrims leaves Jammu for Amarnathji Yatra

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: More than 500 pilgrims left the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu for the Amarnath cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas amid tight security on Thursday, officials said.

More than five lakh pilgrims have already offered their prayers at the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine during this year's yatra, surpassing the 4.5 lakh devotees who paid obeisance at the naturally-formed ice lingam last year.

The 41st batch of 574 pilgrims left the base camp

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AAP Govt hand-in-glove with gangsters: Chugh

STATE TIMES NEWS

CHANDIGARH: BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh on Thursday lambasted the Bhagwant Mann government in Punjab for facilitating the life of gangsters in prisons.

Reacting strongly to the SIT report submitted to the Punjab and Haryana High Court, Chugh said it clearly exposes the police-gangster nexus in the State.

Chugh said that such a situation could not arrive without political patronage to the gangsters. As the SIT report has indicated that Lawrence Bishnoi interview happened

at a time when he was in the custody of CIA in Kharar it

proves beyond doubt that the police has been hand-in-glove with the gangster, he added.

Chugh said the law and order situation in the State has completely collapsed as there has been a series of incidents of loot and ransom every other

day.

He said Chief Minister



Bhagwant Mann, who is also the state Home Minister, owes an explanation to the people of Punjab in view of the findings of the SIT report.

LG inspects progress of Balidan Stambh

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday reviewed the progress of the 'Balidan Stambh' at Pratap Park, Srinagar.

The Lt Governor made an inspectional visit to the prestigious project site and directed the Officials for accelerating the pace of works and timely completion of the project.

The Lt Governor was accompanied by Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; RR Swain, DGP; Vijay Kumar, ADGP Law & Order; Vidhi Kumar



LG Manoj Sinha inspecting progress of Balidan Stambh at Srinagar on Thursday.

Birdi, IGP Kashmir; Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Dr Owais Ahmad, CEO Srinagar Smart City Ltd. and other senior officials.

Watch out India! Congress wants repeat of Bangladesh to destabilize Bharat



JAMMU: Sir Allan Octavian Hume founded 'Indian' National Congress will have to decide whether it continues to be an Indian political party or owes allegiance to forces inimical to India that is Bharat. Having ruled India for better part of over seven decades since independence and continuing to swear by the Constitution, the Congress has developed a sort of inertia against the nation, which is dangerously more pronounced now than ever before.

After the fall of Dhaka amid bloody radicalized mayhem in the guise of student protests over 'quota reservation', New Delhi must watch out. Top aide of the Gandhi family, former external affairs minister and senior Congress leader Salman Khurshed has sent out a warning "...what's happening in Bangladesh can happen here (in India) also". Credited with having facilitated

settlement of illegal Rohingya Muslim immigrants in sensitive Jammu areas through coercive tactics, involving Raman Bhalla, the then J&K Minister for Revenue, Salman is known for pursuing communal politics. Bhalla has himself confessed this in private conversations with senior journalists, and at times, publicly bragged to satiate his vote bank.

Taking cue from his senior leader, chronic Modi baiter Mani Shankar Aiyer has also waded into muddy waters by terming Indian political situation akin to Bangladesh. This is not out of cuff remark but well calculated provocation at the behest of his mentors to engineer political instability in the country.

The warnings should not be brushed aside or put under the carpet just by describing it as 'signs of frustration or desperation on losing elections' as is being made out by some BJP leaders. The threat is for real. It has to be understood in the backdrop of certain recent developments if not what has been happening over the months and

years to finalise the 'regime change' script by inimical world powers in coalition with Indian political actors.

Self styled activist Yogendra Yadav is reported to have counseled Rahul Gandhi that the fight for 'preserving' democracy has to be fought on streets also. This might have bolstered the Gandhi scion so much that during the peak of Lok Sabha electioneering in April this year he threatened that the whole country will be on fire if 'the BJP wins these match-fixed elections'. India would have certainly been on fire had Modi's BJP crossed 272-mark. The script to bleed India went haywire when the election results made every political party to smile. Despite losing, the Congress and its INDI Alliance partners felt triumphant. They celebrated the Modi juggernaut halting at 240 seats. This must have, however, frustrated the script-writers of losing the opportunity to 'engineer' coup against the democratically elected government in India' because of the, what they must be believing, foolish

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J&K statehood may be restored in October: MoS Athawale

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir's statehood maybe restored and assembly elections may take place there in October, MoS Ramdas Athawale said here on Thursday.

"Assembly elections are scheduled to be held in Maharashtra, Haryana, and Jharkhand perhaps in October. So the announcement on the restoration of statehood as well as the conduct of assembly election could perhaps take place in October," Athawale, the Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, said at a press conference.

He appealed to the people



to come out to vote in large numbers when the election takes place.

"I congratulate the people of J-K for voting in large numbers in the Parliamentary polls. J-K is progressing well and record-breaking voting should take place in the assembly

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Govt schemes bringing positive change in lives of reserved community

SRINAGAR: Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, Ramdas Athawale on Thursday said that the Government has undertaken several initiatives for the socio-economic empowerment of the disadvantaged and marginalized sections of the society.

Union Minister said that the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has been implementing various schemes for the social, educational and economic development of the target groups.

He made these remarks during a meeting with the officers of the Social Welfare Department at Hari Niwas Guest House.

Ramdas Athawale said that the government has a mission that will ensure paradigm shift in the socio-economic condition of the people belonging to the weaker sections of the society. He said that the PM wants his ministers to assess on-ground situation and take feedback from the public to effect positive changes in the lives of marginalised groups.

Union Minister said that people should be made aware about the various central government

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Waqf Bill referred to joint parliamentary panel

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Waqf (Amendment) Bill was introduced in Lok Sabha on Thursday and referred to a joint parliamentary panel

after a heated debate, with the government asserting the proposed law did not intend to interfere with the functioning of mosques and the opposition calling it targeting of Muslims and an attack on the Constitution.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om

Birla said he will talk with leaders of all parties for constituting the joint parliamentary committee.

Soon after Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju sought leave to introduce the Bill, opposition INDIA bloc MPs strongly protested the introduction of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, calling it an "attack" on the Constitution and aimed at targeting Muslims.

Congress MP K C

Venugopal, who had submitted notice to oppose its introduction, accused the government of violating the right to freedom of religion and claimed the legislation was being brought with an eye on the upcoming assembly polls.

"This is a draconian law and a fundamental attack on the Constitution," Venugopal said. He said people taught the BJP a lesson -- in the Lok Sabha polls -- for

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Provide Ration Cards to e-Shram registrants as per SC directions: CS

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, on Thursday held a joint meeting of Labour & Employment Department; and Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs regarding providing Ration Cards to all E-Shram registrants.

Besides the Commissioner Secretary, FCS&CA; Secretary, Labour

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