

## !! Continuations from Page 1 !! Cong, NC, PDP..

Jana Sangh founder Syama Prasad Mookerjee had sacrificed his life for this. "National Conference came out with a manifesto which was supported by Congress They are talking about reinstating the flag and restoration of Article 370, dialogue with Pakistan without finishing terrorism, resumption of LoC trade, release of stone-pelters and terrorists...do you agree?" he said.

He alleged that the NC manifesto also talks about renaming the two hillocks in Srinagar and revoking reservations.

"(Congress leader) Rahul Baba, whether you agree with the NC agenda or not, I will tell you that Article 370 has become history and cannot be restored.

"I also want to tell you that only one flag will remain in the country and that is our beloved tricolour," he said at the rally in support of the BJP candidates -- Mohan Lal, a retired police officer who recently joined BJP, and former MLA Rajeev Kumar.

Seeking votes for the BJP, he said it would boost the morale of youth, safeguard the rights of women and reservation for Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes, strengthen the future of India, and speed up the development in J-K.

Also, "the vote will be a befitting reply to Pakistan", he said.

Earlier, addressing a rally at Mendhar, Shah said there is peace along the borders in Jammu and Kashmir as Pakistan fears Prime Minister Narendra Modi and would not dare to open fire knowing fully that India's response will silence its guns.

Shah said the Centre wiped out terrorism by replacing guns and stones in the hands of youngsters with laptops and added the government would not allow gunfire to resonate in the hills of Jammu region.

"We will construct more bunkers along the borders for the safety of people. I want to remind you of cross-border firings in the 1990s... Is cross-border firing happening today?" Shah asked.

"It is because the earlier rulers here were frightened of Pakistan, but now Pakistan fears Modi. They would not dare to fire but if they did, they would be given a befitting reply," he said at the election rally in Poonch district in support of BJP candidate Murtaza Khan.

He alleged that the three families of Gandhis, Abdullahs and Muftis pushed J-K into the fire of terrorism while the Modi-led government buried terrorism.

Accusing Congress of being "anti-Dalit", he said the party never thought of honouring B R Ambedkar with the Bharat Ratna.

Highlighting various developmental works undertaken by the BJP in Jammu and Kashmir including the Akhmoor highway, he said the Centre has utilised over Rs 75,000 crore on developmental works in J-K over the past few years.

"I want to tell you that the Abduhallis will not be able to discriminate with Jammu region," he said.

Addressing an election rally at Mendhar, the Union Home Minister said there is peace along the borders in Jammu and Kashmir as Pakistan fears Prime Minister Narendra Modi and would not dare to open fire knowing fully that India's response will be befitting to silence its guns.

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Shah said that "terrorism erupted in 1990 and continued till 2014, claiming the lives of 40,000 people".

"These three families failed to stop terrorism and instead encouraged it. The B-P and Modi put an end to terrorism and replaced the guns and stones in the hands of the youth with laptops," he added.

Shah claimed that National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah is frightening people about revival of terrorism.

"I want to tell from here that despite your tutelage, Modi and Shah will not allow them to resonate in these beautiful hills again," said Shah.

"Terrorism is of no benefit to anyone. Guns were handed over to our children and we too will be providing guns to Pahari youth by recruiting them in the police and army. For that we will held special recruitment drive on the borders," he added.

Accusing the National Conference, Congress and PDP of encouraging terrorism, the senior BJP leader said this election will ensure an end to the three families rule in the Union Territory.

"It is necessary because these families never allowed the democracy to grow in J&K," he said, adding had the BJP government not formed in 2014 and elections to different panchayat Raj Institutions held, the 30,000 elected panchayat members would have never got an opportunity but instead would have worked to further strengthen their 'kingdom'.

The home minister said he is a person from Gujarat and had never thought of visiting Mendhar, which is just a few kilometers from the Line of Control.

"The people of the nation are proud and salute Paharis, Gujjars and Bakervals who safeguarded the borders in 1947 and took bullets on their chest when terrorism erupted in 1990 because of the kindness of Farooq Abdullah, who fled to London to enjoy holiday," he added.

Referring to the National Conference (NC) manifesto that they will review the reservation given to different communities, Shah said, "I want to assure you that we will allow them to touch the reservation under the scheduled tribe status to you. We will extend the reservation to promotion (avenues of the government employees)."

## BJP committed for..

terror. We will hold special recruitment drives (for border youth). The youth, who were holding guns for terrorism, will safeguard the country and will take on Pakistan," he added.

Seeking votes for BJP candidate and former minister Syed Mushtaq Ahmad Bukhari, who joined the saffron party in February after his Pahari community was granted the Scheduled Tribe status, Shah said, "We are committed to the development of J&K. Enough already, now is the time for development."

"I want to ask the Congress and the NC which governed J&K for decades, leading to the eruption of terrorism that consumed 40,000 lives and closed the valley for 3,000 days and shrouded J&K into darkness. These parties are responsible for all this," he added.

Shah said that terrorism was wiped out and nobody will be allowed to revive the menace.

"The development in J&K was hit for the last 35 years. Crores of rupees pumped into the region for the welfare of the people was utilized fighting terrorism," he said, adding "the BJP is working for the welfare of people and Modi's 'dil aur jolee' is very big and we will take Jammu and Kashmir to new heights of development, peace and prosperity".

The senior BJP leader said over two crore tourists visited Jammu and Kashmir last year.

"The number is more than the tourists, who visited J&K during the rule of Farooq Abdullah," he added.

Alleging discrimination with Poonch by the previous governments to tap the tourism potential of the area, Shah said there is snowfall and beautiful locations in Surankote but why people only prefer Pahalgam (hill resort in south Kashmir) and nobody is visiting this place.

"We will fully tap the tourism potential of the area which is your right," he added.

The home minister also lashed out at the National Conference over its poll promise of reviewing the reservation and said nobody will be allowed to touch the reservation granted to various communities, especially Pahari, Gujjars and Bakerwals.

"National Conference opposed the bill introduced in the Parliament for ST status to Paharis and also tried to provoke Gujjars. I came here and assured the Gujjars that granting ST status to Paharis will have no impact on their reservation and we kept our promise," he added.

Shah said that he has been in politics for 40 years and has come across many big leaders but Bukhari never sought anything for himself.

"Bukhari led a delegation of the Pahari community on December 16, 2019 to my residence and raised the demand of Pahari status," he said, asking the people to vote him in large numbers to make him their legislator.

## NC-Congress, Pakistan..

Thakur also slammed Rahul Gandhi for insulting Sikhs on foreign soil. "In the past 10 years, have you been barred from wearing turban, have you been barred from wearing Kada, have you been barred from going to Gurudwara?" Thakur asked people of the Sikh community.

He said, Rahul Gandhi has insulted Sikh Community. "Cong Party is responsible for 84 Sikh riots," Thakur said, while adding, "Many senior leaders of Cong namely Jagdish Tytler, Sajjan Kumar and others were involved in anti-Sikh riots".

Cong owes an apology to the nation, he said, and urged the people to reject NC-Cong in these elections.

## J&K will defeat..

their links with the Pakistan ISI, Chugh said it was reprehensible that an anti-national alliance has been dancing to the tunes of Pakistan forces to fool the people of J&K.

Chugh said the Modi government has evolved a vision of development and growth for the Union Territory where the anti-national forces would be made to take a back seat.

"The J&K, today, is looking for a new sky after the abrogation of Article 370", he said, adding that there is a new hope and positivity that has come about for which the Modi government has played a big role.

In this election all separatist forces are going to lick the dust the way they did during the last Lok Sabha election, Chugh added.

## Soldier dies, 6...

the officials said. The Rising Star Corps of the Army held a wreath-laying ceremony and paid tributes to the deceased soldier.

"Rising Star Corps deeply regrets the unfortunate and untimely demise of brave-heart Sep Ramkishor, while on operational duty. In this hour of grief, the Indian Army stands in solidarity with the bereaved family & is committed to their support," it said in a post on X.

## Justice Tashi Rabstan...

Kashmir and Ladakh High Court has been made its chief justice.

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait of the Delhi High Court has been elevated as chief justice of the High Court of Madhya Pradesh.

## Air Marshal Amar...

as against the authorised strength of at least 42.

The air warrior played a key role in the IAF's hosting of the multinational wargame 'Tarang Shakti' recently.

Known as a fine strategist, Air Marshal Singh, in a message to the DRDO and other agencies apparently over delays in delivery of Tejas jets and other military systems, said publicly at an event in July that self-reliance in defence cannot be at the cost of national security.

Born on October 27, 1964, Air Marshal Singh was commissioned into the fighter pilot stream of the Indian Air Force in December 1984.

In his long and distinguished service spanning nearly 40 years, he has served in a variety of command, staff, instructional and foreign appointments.

An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Defence Services Staff College and National Defence College, the air officer is a qualified flying instructor and an experimental test pilot with more than 5,000 hours of flying experience on a variety of fixed and rotary-wing aircraft.

The officer has commanded an operational fighter squadron and a frontline air base.

As a test pilot, he led the MiG-29 upgrade project management team in Moscow.

He was also the project director (flight test) at the National Flight Test Centre and was tasked with flight testing of the light combat aircraft, Tejas.

Air Marshal Singh has held important staff appointments of Air Defence Commander at the South Western Air Command and Senior Air Staff Officer at the Eastern Air Command.

Prior to assuming the charge of Vice Chief of the Air Staff in February last year, he was the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Central Air Command.

The air marshal is a recipient of the Param Vishisht Seva Medal and Ati Vishisht Seva Medal.

## PM's vision will...

progress witnessed after abrogation of article 370 will secure support from the valley in forming the government.

**Q: Has the BJP left any seats for allied parties or independent candidates in Kashmir?**

**Ans: India is a democratic country, and our constitution gives every citizen the right to contest elections from any part of the country. The Bharatiya Janata Party is contesting elections independently in Jammu and Kashmir, and we have not formed an alliance with any party.**

**Q: What is your stand on the recent statement by Pakistan's Defense Minister in support to the National Conference and Congress on restoring Article 370 in J&K?**

**Ans: The open support of Pakistan's Defense Minister for the NC and Congress's agenda of restoring Article 370 in J&K is nothing but an endorsement and validation of their manifesto being crafted at the behest of the ISI. NC and Congress are promoting anti J&K and anti India propaganda. The BJP remains committed to ensuring that J&K remains free from any interference by external & internal forces seeking to destabilise peace and progress in the region.**

## Atishi takes oath...

predecessor and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal, former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, and other party leaders and MLAs.

Delhi Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel, Leader of Opposition Vijender Gupta, BJP MPs, including Union Minister of State Harsh Malhotra, and Delhi Police Commissioner Sanjay Arora also attended the ceremony.

South Delhi BJP MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said that the Atishi government should fulfill the promises made by the AAP to the public.

"The new government should give relief to the public by reducing electricity and water bills; property tax should be waived in Delhi rural. Apart from this, The Central government's Ayushman Bharat scheme should be implemented in Delhi," Bidhuri said.

The new Delhi Cabinet headed by Atishi has a long list of pending projects, schemes and new initiatives to be launched in the next few months.

She will have to hit the ground running to accelerate the city government's functioning and ensure that the flagship projects and schemes are back on track after being slowed down for months due to the imprisonment of Kejriwal.

Due to the five-month-long judicial custody of Kejriwal in the excise policy case, the AAP government had been struggling to address issues related to basic services and infrastructure that include roads, water supply and sewer, and medicines owing to alleged fund crunch.

Atishi will have to deal with these issues during her short span of chief minister-ship, apart from ensuring implementation of Kejriwal's promise to provide Rs 1,000 honorarium to eligible women in Delhi under proposed 'Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana'.

## Reservation cannot be scrapped until there is untouchability: Kharage

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Terming the remarks as attributed to Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi as "untrue", Congress president Mallikarjun Kharage on Saturday said that reservation would continue until there is untouchability and a lack of social justice for various sections of the society in the country.

Kharage sidestepped a direct reply about the National Conference's (NC) resolve to restore Article 370 and said their agenda is to restore "statehood".

"Reservation cannot be scrapped until there is casteism in the Hindu religion. Until there is untouchability and lack of social justice, reservation will continue. It will continue till my death. I will tell my children to fight for it," Kharage told a press conference here.

Responding to a question about Gandhi's remarks on reservation, Kharage clarified, "He has not said so. He will not even say so. We will not even allow him to say (anything like this)".

The Congress president emphasized that his party fully supports reservation. "It will not go. We will fight for it," he said.

Gandhi, who is in the US, told the students of Georgetown University that the Congress would think of scrapping reservations when "India is a fair place" but added that this is not the case right now. When asked whether his party would support the National Conference's resolve to bring back Article 370, Kharage said, "You know our agenda (on Article 370). You should go through our working committee resolutions. What we have said, we will go by that. Our one aim is to restore statehood. Other things later."

Kharage also revealed the eight-point promises in their recently released manifesto, reiterating, "Our first agenda is the restoration of statehood. After ensuring that, other matters can come later."

Regarding the elections, Kharage expressing optimism said, "The first phase of elections went well. We are hopeful that the NC and Congress will get maximum seats. In the upcoming phases too, the NC and Congress alliance will gain good seats and form a government that works for all sections of the people. We expect a majority in this election." Replying to another question whether it was surrender for the Congress to give maximum seats to the National Conference (NC), Kharage said, "No, it was neither a surrender nor a compulsion for the Congress. The alliance is nationwide. It can be seen in Parliament too."

## Srinagar's spirit of co-existence: A symbol of unity amid historical challenges

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: In a striking display of communal harmony, a Kashmiri Pandit temple and a mosque stand just 100-200 metres apart in the heart of downtown Srinagar, symbolising the enduring spirit of co-existence in a region often overshadowed by conflict and violence.

Despite the tumultuous history of Kashmir, the bond between the majority Muslim community and the minority Kashmiri Pandits remains strong, embodying the ethos of "Kashmiriyat" -- a cultural concept promoting brotherhood and mutual respect.

Local Muslims have taken an active role in supporting the Purushyar temple in the Habba Kadal area, fostering an atmosphere of respect for each other's beliefs.

Babloo Jee Bhat, the temple's caretaker for the past 18 years, expressed gratitude for the Muslim community's support.

"I live in a Muslim neighbourhood and they have always been supportive. I have never faced harm from anyone," he told PTI Videos.

Reflecting on the challenges faced by Kashmiri Pandits since their migration to Jammu in 1990, Bhat noted a significant improvement in the region's atmosphere since 2018, marked by the end of stone pelting and curfews.

"Life is returning to normal now," he said, countering negative stereotypes by empha-

sising that only a small number of individuals had disrupted the peace in Kashmir.

Sushil Kaul, the caretaker of another Hindu temple in the same area, echoed Bhat.

"I travel between Kashmir and Jammu, my family has always lived here. Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits have coexisted peacefully," he said, expressing hope for a future rooted in humanity rather than religion.

Rakesh Tiku, who oversees another Hindu temple nearby, highlighted the close proximity of the Valley's oldest mosque, just 50 metres away.

"We have never encountered any trouble," he affirmed, reinforcing the message of co-existence.

As the region gears up for the final two phases of the assembly elections on September 25 and October 1, residents are hopeful for a reaffirmation of their shared values.

"We want to see a Kashmir where people live together in peace and harmony," Kaul emphasised, underscoring the importance of community support and unity.

The experiences of Bhat, Kaul and Tiku serve as a poignant reminder that, despite the historical challenges, the essence of "Kashmiriyat" continues to thrive, fostering resilience and hope for a harmonious future in the Valley.

## Justice Tashi Rabstan visits only Govt Inclusive School at Chuchot Yokma, Leh

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: In a step towards

ensuring the well-being and holistic development of specially-abled children in UT of Ladakh, Acting Chief Justice (A), High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Tashi Rabstan, on Saturday visited the only Government Inclusive School at Chuchot Yokma, Leh.

The visit aimed at reviewing the quality of care, educational standards and the infrastructure available to the students who require specialized attention.

Upon his arrival, Justice Tashi who was accompanied by M. K. Sharma, Principal Secretary and Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority also holding the charge of Member Secretary, Juvenile Justice Committee, High Court of J&K and Ladakh was warmly received by Phunsung Angmo, Secretary, DLSA Leh, Chemit Youngiyal, Secretary, DLSA Kargil, Nema Stanzin, Deputy Chief LADC, Leh, Sonam Wangehuk, Chief Education Officer, Mohsin Ali Khan, Head Master, Ladol, Sign Language Special Teacher, other staff members and students of the school.

During his visit, Justice Tashi closely examined the infrastructure in the school including classrooms, activity center, residential facilities, Multipurpose hall etc and praised the school administration for creating an environment where all the children, regardless of their abilities can learn and grow. He also acknowledged the school's efforts towards ensuring that students with special needs are not only provided with a quality education but also have access to extracurricular activities such as cultural programs, sports and arts. These initiatives play a crucial role in



Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan along with faculty and students of school at Leh.

fostering self-confidence and holistic development among the children, he added.

On the occasion, the specially-abled students also presented a cultural program.

Justice Tashi also reviewed the residential facilities being provided by the school to cater to the students coming from distant villages. He appreciated the arrangements made for their accommodation and urged upon the school management to continue offering a safe and nurturing environment. He also stressed the importance of regular medical check-ups for the students and directed the authorities to maintain consistent access to healthcare services, including therapeutic support and counseling to enhance overall well-being of the children.

Justice Tashi interacted with both the staff and students of the school which has a total strength of 98 students, out of which 35 are specially-abled and for their well-being, 04 special teachers have been appointed for providing specialized education tailored to meet their needs. The school offers four days a week of targeted therapy sessions, including occupational and physical therapy aimed at addressing the unique needs of these children.

During the interaction, various issues were raised including the deficiency of

teaching staff, speech therapists, physiotherapists, drivers, sweepers for the hostel, and a permanent warden.

Justice Tashi assured that all the issues raised would be taken up with the administration of UT of Ladakh at the highest level for their prompt redressal. He further emphasized the need for continuous improvement in the care and educational support provided to the children and lauded the dedication of the teachers and management, and encouraged them to continue their efforts towards creating an inclusive atmosphere where every child is valued and given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Justice Tashi appreciated the warden of the hostel, Lamo for her efforts in taking care of the specially-abled children besides fostering an inclusive learning environment and assured the institution of continued support in enhancing its facilities and programs.

The visit marks a significant step in promoting inclusive education and highlights the ongoing efforts to address the unique challenges faced by specially-abled children in Ladakh and reflects the judiciary's broader commitment to ensuring that marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society, particularly specially-abled children are supported and empowered.

## Farooq hits back at BJP over 'Pakistani agenda' barb

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah on Saturday hit back at the BJP, alleging that it was labelling the opposition parties as agents of Pakistan to hide its own mistakes.

The former chief minister also urged the Election Commission to provide a level playing field, alleging that the BJP was providing resources and other support to independent candidates in the Kashmir Valley.

Responding to the allegations of BJP leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, that NC, PDP and Congress were implementing Pakistan's agenda, Abdullah said the BJP keeps on raising the bogey of Pakistan to divert attention from its shortcom-

ings. "They raise Pakistan now and then. They commit mistakes themselves but accuse us of being Pakistanis. They allege that Rahul Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah's alliance has been formed because of directions from Pakistan."

"What do we have to do with Pakistan? We are Indians. How can they say such things? I think they themselves are Pakistanis but are portraying us as a danger," he told reporters here. Referring to the recent spike in terror incidents in the Jammu region, the NC president asked whether the BJP will still blame Article 370 for it.

"They used to say that Article 370 was responsible for terror here. Today, they are in power, has terror ended? There was an encounter in Reasi. So, is

Article 370 responsible even today?"

The former Union minister alleged that the BP government bifurcated and downgraded J-K into two union territories because of its Muslim majority character.

"I will say this on their face that they downgraded us into a UT because we were a Muslim-majority state. They divided this state," he said.

Asserting that J-K's statehood will be restored, Abdullah said the BJP was on "crutches", apparently referring to the support of JD(U) and TDP to the BJP-led government. "A time will come when we will get our statehood back. The whole of India stands with us. Today, the BJP is on the crutches. They say one nation, one election, I want to ask them if this is a federal structure or not.