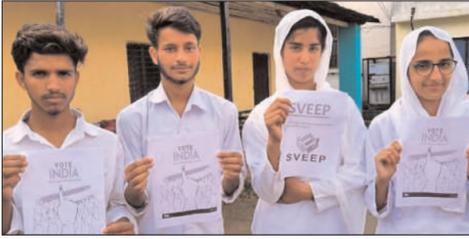


SVEEP awareness programmes mark successful voter engagement in Rajouri District

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: To encourage maximum voter participation in the forthcoming Assembly elections, a series of SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) awareness programs were organised across the Rajouri district under the directives of District Election Officer Abhishek Sharma and supervision of District Nodal Officer SVEEP (CEO), Bishamber Dass.

An awareness event was held in Mini Sports Stadium near the Youth Services & Sports Office, with the active participation of District Sports Officer, Zonal Sports Officers, and players from different zones. The program emphasized voter guidelines and



Students at awareness programme under SVEEP.

encouraged maximum participation in the upcoming elections. Attendees pledged to mobilize and motivate the masses to ensure robust involvement in the democratic process.

Similarly, the SVEEP Cell of AC-87 Thanamandi organized an awareness drive at GHS Azamatabad, focusing on

young voters. A signature campaign on the "Wall of Democracy" was initiated, where eligible voters pledged to vote. A lecture was delivered to instill a sense of responsibility among the younger generation. The event was led by SVEEP Nodal Officer Dr. Ather Aziz Raina with support from Suhail Malik and Jahangeer Alam

Khan.

Another awareness event was held at GHS Bhajnowa falling in AC-84 Nowshera. Nodal Officer J.P. Singh informed the participants about their civic responsibilities and the importance of casting vote. The event featured a Drum-Beating Rally and a plantation drive.

Returning Officer Dil Mir for AC-86 Budhal and Nodal Officer Prof. Tahir Nadeem oversaw a variety of voter awareness activities, including a skit titled "Democracy in Action" at Government Higher Secondary School Panilhad and an EVM awareness camp at Government Higher Secondary School Jamola.

Assembly Level Master Trainer (ALMT) Abdul Razaq provided hands-on demonstra-

tions of EVM use, targeting Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers, and local community members.

Meanwhile, the AC-83 Kalakote SVEEP Team hosted electoral awareness programs at Rajiv Public High School Dharamsal, GHS Thanna and GHS Gallan, involving students, staff, and local communities to ensure widespread voter education.

These initiatives, coordinated across various constituencies, aim to foster a strong voter turnout and promote the values of democracy. Through innovative approaches, community engagement, and targeted education, Rajouri is ensuring informed and responsible voter participation in the upcoming elections.

Kathua: Election Expenditure Observer reviews operational efficacy of Monitoring Teams



Expenditure Observer Atesham Ansari chairing a meeting.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: In preparation for the Assembly Elections, Expenditure Observer Atesham Ansari on Friday chaired a meeting with the members of Expenditure Monitoring Cell in the Conference Hall

of DC office complex, here today.

District Election Officer Dr. Rakesh Minhas, Liaison Officer with the Observer Shokat Mehmood, Nodal Officer for MCMC Neeraj Bhargav, Nodal Officer for

the Expenditure Monitoring Cell Anirudh Khajuria and other concerned officials were also present.

The Expenditure Observer emphasized the importance of strict adherence to the Election Commission of India (ECI) guidelines. "These guidelines ensure a level playing field for all contesting candidates by enforcing a maximum expenditure ceiling of Rs 40 lakhs", he added.

Ansari urged the teams to gain thorough knowledge of the relevant provisions of the Representation of People's Act to ensure proper conduct.

2nd phase of training for polling staff begins in Bhandarwah



General Observer Malikarjun A speaking in a training programme.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

BHANDARWAH: The second phase of Election Training Program for the polling staff for the upcoming J&K Assembly Elections 2024 commenced on Friday at the Community Hall Bhandarwah. The session brought together designated polling staff from across the region, focusing on preparing them for the crucial election process.

General Observer Malikarjun A. visited the training center, monitoring the activities closely. He provided guidance on various aspects of the election, including the handling of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs), and emphasized adherence to the Election Commission of India's guidelines.

Satisfied with the progress of the first phase, he reviewed the second phase of training, which covers polling staff such as Presiding Officers (P.O.) and officials design-

ated as P1, P2, and P3. The training aims to ensure smooth polling for Assembly Constituency 51, Bhandarwah, scheduled for the 18th of this month.

Master Trainer, Dr. Nazir Ahmed led the session with a detailed presentation on the election process, highlighting the importance of accurate voter identification and careful handling of EVMs. The session concluded with an interactive Q&A, allowing participants to clarify any doubts. Coordinator Arif Rana, along with other Assistant Master Trainers (ALMTs), was also present at the event. Following his interaction with the polling staff, General Observer Malikarjun A. conducted inspections of several polling stations, including Divisional Forest Complex, High School Nichlathra, Girls Higher Secondary School, and Government Degree College Bhandarwah, ensuring preparations are in place for the upcoming election.

Poonch: Election Observer visits villages across LoC fence to encourage voter participation

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: To boost voter morale and encourage participation in the upcoming Assembly elections, the Election Expenditure Observer for the Poonch Haveli constituency Bharat Ramchandra Andhale, on Friday conducted a visit to the border villages Malti, Guntrian and Shahpur, located across the Fence along the Line of Control in the district.

The visit aimed to directly engage with the villagers, aware them about their democratic rights and the importance of exercising their vote.

During the visit, the Election Observer interacted with local residents, educating them about the power and significance of their right to vote in shaping the nation's future. He emphasized the importance of participating in the electoral process, especially in



EEO Poonch Haveli constituency, Bharat Ramchandra Andhale visiting border area.

border areas, and urged the villagers to come out in large numbers to cast their votes on Election Day.

Later, the Election Observer held a meeting with the Army officials stationed in the area. He issued instructions to maintain close surveillance along the Line of Control (LoC) to keep check on any illegal movement, particularly involving drug peddlers or anti-national elements. He emphasized the need for close coordination between the administration and

security forces to safeguard the electoral process and maintain peace in the region.

Andhale further instructed the Army officials to strengthen their vigilance at

the entry gates used by villagers residing in the areas across the Fence. He stressed the importance of conducting thorough checks while facilitating easy access for these residents to

ensure their smooth participation in the electoral process. This measure aims to ensure that voters residing in these sensitive border areas can exercise their rights without any hindrance, contributing to a secure and inclusive election.

The Election Expenditure Observer, Bharat Ramchandra Andhale, was accompanied by Deputy SP Mohd Ajaz Choudhary, ARO Haveli Azhar Majeed, Liaison Officer Shafeeq Malik, and other officials from the district election authorities.

Expenditure Observer Samba reviews monitoring mechanism; assesses election arrangements in border areas

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBHA: Expenditure Observer Karthik Manickam M, for Samba district on Friday took a comprehensive review of election expenditure monitoring at a meeting here today in the Conference Hall of DC Office Complex, Nandan Hills. The Observer earlier toured border areas to take on spot assessment of arrangements for the Assembly Election.

The meeting brought together key officials overseeing the expenditure of candidates and political parties across all three assembly constituencies in the district. The Expenditure Observer was briefed by the nodal officer on the preparations for monitoring financial expenditures and enforcing the Election Commission of India's (ECI) guidelines. The focus was on ensuring compliance with the Model Code of Conduct and addressing any potential violations or malprac-



EO Karthik Manickam M taking review of election expenditure monitoring.

tices.

The meeting was attended by the nodal officer of the Expenditure Monitoring Committee, along with members of the Video Surveillance Teams (VSTs), Video Viewing Teams (VVTs), Model Code of Conduct Monitoring Teams, and Accounting Teams. Notable attendees included BDO Vijaypur and heads of Static Surveillance Teams (SSTs) and Flying Squad Teams (FSTs). Earlier, the Expenditure Observer conducted a thorough review of election preparations in the sensitive

border areas on the second day of his visit. He was accompanied by District Election Officer, Rajesh Sharma, SSP Vinay Kumar and other senior officers during the inspection. Manickam visited polling stations in Jerla, Rangoor and Pandour, focusing on security and infrastructure readiness. He also inspected bunkers and assessed security measures to ensure voter safety in these high-risk areas. Additionally, he visited the famous Baba Chamliyal shrine to review the surrounding security arrangements and preparedness.

Comprehensive SVEEP events held across Kathua to promote voter awareness, education

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: A series of impactful events were held across multiple locations in Kathua district on Friday under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) Program to spread voter awareness, promote electoral education and encourage maximum voter participation in the legislative assembly elections scheduled in the district on October 1, 2024.

A variety of activities including painting competitions, debates, slogan writing, Nukad Natak, and a voter awareness rally were held at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Hutt. Students and local community members enthusiastically participated in these initiatives.

Key highlights included discussions on voter registration processes, voter helpline services, and the use of the Voter



Students taking out awareness rally under SVEEP.

Helpline App for informed decision-making. The event concluded with a pledge-taking ceremony, where all participants committed to active participation in the electoral process.

In AC 68-Hiranagar, voter awareness rally was held at Government Higher Secondary School Marheen with participation from Girls High School Marheen and Government Degree College Marheen.

Slogans "1st October 2024, Voting Day" echoed through-

out the community, encouraging citizens to exercise their right to vote.

Besides, a "Chaupal Pe Charcha" session informed local residents of the importance of casting their votes. Government offices, including the Agriculture Extension Office, Tehsil Office, and PHC Marheen, were visited to facilitate voter pledges. Plans were finalized for disseminating voter awareness information via WhatsApp to local farmers, emphasizing the importance of voters from

rural areas.

Students from Government High School Govindsar took out a spirited voter awareness rally. Holding banners and flashcards, they promoted the significance of voter literacy and encouraged local citizens to participate in the electoral process.

This initiative was part of a broader campaign led by the District Election Officer and Returning Officer Vishav Partap Singh of AC 67-Kathua (SC).

A cultural program was held

at Higher Secondary School (HSS) Bhaddu under AC 64-Billawar engaging the students and locals in voter awareness activities. Mohinder Gupta, SVEEP Nodal Officer for the area, detailed the goals of the SVEEP initiative and encouraged responsible voter participation. Alongside SVEEP activities, an awareness session on the Soil Health & Fertility Scheme (RKVY) was held at GHSS Bhaddu. This pilot project, being executed in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, trained students in soil sample collection and analysis, promoting sustainable agriculture. The initiative aligns with the broader objective of fostering environmental stewardship among students and communities, emphasizing the role of informed citizens in democratic and environmental sustainability.

Voter awareness programme under SVEEP held at CDPO Office Udhampur



Participants at voter awareness programme at CDPO office.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: The District Election Cell Udhampur, under the guidance of District Election Officer Saloni Rai, organised a voter awareness

programme under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation initiative here on Friday in the CDPO Office.

The event was presided over by PO Poshan Subash Dogra, as the chief guest, while Dr. Preeti Sharma, Nodal Officer SVEEP oversaw the proceedings.

Addressing the participants, the chief guest emphasized the importance of voting and electoral participation, particularly educating Anganwadi workers about their pivotal role in the democratic process. He urged them to not only exercise their own right to vote but also to encourage the community to do the same. The event highlighted the empowerment of women in the electoral process, encouraging them to actively participate in shaping the nation's future.

General Observer visits Polling Stations in AC Kalakote Sunderbani & Nowshera

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: General Observer Mani Ram Sharma, on Friday conducted an extensive visit to polling stations in Assembly Constituencies 83-Kalakote Sunderbani and 84-Nowshera.

The visit was aimed at reviewing the overall preparedness ahead of elections scheduled to be held on September 25, 2024 in Rajouri—the second phase of the J&K Assembly Elections.

Mani Ram Sharma inspected the Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) at the polling stations, ensuring the availability of necessary amenities such as drinking water, electricity, toilets, ramps for Persons with Disabilities (PwD), and proper seating arrangements for voters.

He emphasized the importance of maintaining high standards of voter convenience and accessibility to encourage maximum voter participation.



General Observer Mani Ram Sharma conducting extensive visit to polling stations.

Sharma also assessed the security arrangements in place to ensure a safe and peaceful election process. He reviewed the *vulnerability mapping* of sensitive polling stations and examined the contingency plans prepared by local authorities to address any potential challenges during the voting process.

Furthermore, Mani Ram Sharma conducted a thorough review of the scrutiny of documents at the Returning Officer (RO) offices in both

Kalakote and Nowshera. This scrutiny is a key aspect of election preparation to ensure all legal requirements are met and election processes are conducted without any discrepancies.

As part of his role, Mani Ram Sharma will remain stationed at the Forest Guest House, Nowshera, until the culmination of the election process on October 8, 2024. Any political groups, candidates, or members of the public who have concerns or grievances can directly reach

him at his local contact number: 9906475160

Accompanying Mr. Sharma on this important visit were ARO Kalakote, Tanveer Ahmed; ARO Nowshera, Babu Ram Tandon; Liaison Officer Mohd Sayeed; Tehsildar Nowshera, along with other district and sectoral officers. Both Level Officers (BLOs) from the respective polling stations were also present, facilitating a thorough inspection and ensuring that all necessary measures were in place.

Mega SVEEP rally held at Thathri to boost voter awareness

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: A mega rally aimed at raising voter awareness was organized on Friday at Thathri under the aegis of Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP). The event was held under the leadership of District Election Officer (DEO) Harvinder Singh and with coordination from District Nodal Officer SVEEP Parkash Lal Thapa and Nodal Officer SVEEP for AC 52 Omar Sharif. The initiative saw enthusiastic participation from students, staff from various schools, and local residents, all joining forces to promote the importance of voting. Principal Government Higher Secondary School Thathri, B.D. Sharma, helped organize the rally, which featured a large turnout of students leading the

march. District Nodal Officer SVEEP presided over the event and urged participants to vote in large numbers during the upcoming elections. He emphasized the significance of youth involvement and encouraged students to become ambassadors of the Election Commission of India (ECI), spreading the message of electoral participation in their communities. The rally, which also included the presence of SDM Thathri and Anu Radha, in charge of the Cultural Cell Doda, was a major effort to remind the public to vote on September 18, 2024. District SVEEP team member Narayan Singh also supported the event, highlighting the role of such initiatives in empowering citizens to actively engage in the democratic process.