

IG Kavinder celebrates Diwali with Army jawans

Says UT Administration, GoI committed to their and families' welfare

GY CORRESPONDENT

LEH, OCT 20

The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, today celebrated Diwali with jawans of the Indian Army posted in Ladakh. In an event organised by Fire & Fury Corps at Rinchin Auditorium, the Lt Governor was joined by Lieutenant General Hitesh Bhalla, General Officer Commanding (GOC), 14 Corps; Major General Praveen Chhabra, General Officer Commanding, 72 Sub Area; Brigadier Umesh Parab and Brigadier Ajay Katohi in celebrating the festival with uniformed services. Wishing the jawans on the auspicious occasion of Diwali on behalf of the people of Ladakh, the Lt Governor saluted the bravery, dedication and courage of the Indian Army as they serve in hostile conditions, braving extreme cold, to guard the



border areas. He emphasised that while others are celebrating festivals like Diwali with their families and friends, the jawans of the Indian Army, away from their families, maintain a high state of alertness to ensure the safety of the country. He saluted the sacrifices made by the jawans of the Indian Army to ensure the safety and well-being of the citizens of the country,

some even sacrificing their lives in the line of duty. He paid homage to the Indian Army for their exemplary bravery and courage against enemy forces during the Kargil War in 1999 and for standing firm, undeterred, while guarding the nation at Siachen Glacier-one of the highest battlefields in the world, where the temperature plummets to below minus -50 degrees.

admiration for the bravery and resilience of soldiers. The Lt Governor emphasised that the entire nation remains indebted to the Army jawans for ensuring the safety and security of citizens, allowing them to celebrate Diwali peacefully with their families. He stressed that the Army jawans are like diyas that cannot be extinguished by enemy forces, expressing deep

The Lt Governor, citing Bhagwan Ram, also known as Maryada Purushottam, for choosing the path of righteousness (dharma) and truth (satya), emphasised that Diwali, which exemplifies victory of good over evil and light over darkness, showcase the celebration of India's unity in diversity. He reiterated the Government of India and UT Administration's commitment to the welfare of armed forces and ex-servicemen along with their family members. He also urged the people to contribute to nation-building so that India can become a Viksit Bharat by 2047. Later, the HLG interacted with the jawans and shared sweets with them. He wished all the Army jawans a bright and prosperous year ahead filled with peace, happiness, and collective progress.

J&K Police Observes Police Commemoration Day with Blood Donation Camp at Police Auditorium, Jammu



GY CORRESPONDENT

JAMMU, OCT 20

As part of the observance of Police Commemoration Day, the Jammu and Kashmir Police organized a Blood Donation Camp at the Police Auditorium, Gulshan Ground, Jammu, on Monday. The camp was inaugurated by Sh. Bhim Sen Tuti, IPS, Inspector General of Police, Jammu Zone, and was organised under the supervision of IRP 15th Battalion.

The initiative was a humble tribute to the brave martyrs of the Jammu and Kashmir Police who laid down their lives in the line of duty. It also aimed to promote the values of service, sacrifice, and compassion, which form the foundation of the Police force. Police personnel from various wings, battalions, and district units across Jammu Zone participated with great enthusiasm, donating blood as a gesture of solidarity and

humanitarian commitment. A total of 125 police personnel voluntarily donated blood during the camp. The event was graced by senior officers including Dr. Ajay Misri, Sh. Vinod Kumar, IPS, DIG IRP Jammu; Sh. Shiv Kumar Sharma, IPS, DIG Jammu-Kathua-Samba Range; Mrs. Sargun Shukla, IPS, Commandant IRP 15th Battalion; Sh. Joginder Singh, JKPS, SSP Jammu; Sh. Shamsheer Hussain, JKPS, SO to IGP Jammu and several other officers of Jammu Zone, whose presence added encouragement and significance to the occasion.

The camp was organised in coordination with the Police Hospital, Jammu, under the guidance of the Medical Superintendent, whose team of doctors, nurses, and paramedical staff ensured proper medical care, hygiene, and safety protocols throughout the event. Speaking on the occasion, IGP Jammu, Sh. Bhim

Sen Tuti, IPS, appreciated the overwhelming response and voluntary participation of police personnel in the camp. He stated that holding such an event on the eve of Police Commemoration Day is a noble way to remember and honour the supreme sacrifices of J&K Police martyrs by serving humanity and saving lives in their memory. He further highlighted that the Jammu and Kashmir Police continues to remain at the forefront of humanitarian and community welfare initiatives, reflecting its enduring ethos of service, sacrifice, and compassion. The event concluded with expressions of gratitude for all the donors, officers, and medical staff whose collective efforts made the Blood Donation Camp a meaningful tribute to the valour, dedication, and selfless service of the Jammu and Kashmir Police martyrs being commemorated on this solemn occasion.

IGP Jammu Zone Promotes 1,520 Police Personnel on Diwali

GY CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR, OCT 20

On the auspicious occasion of Diwali, a festival symbolizing light, hope, and new beginnings, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Jammu Zone, Sh. Bhim Sen Tuti, IPS, today issued promotion orders for 1,520 police personnel across various ranks in the Jammu Zone. This significant move recognizes the dedication, competence, and professional excellence of the officers/officials. The promotions encompass multiple ranks across the force, reflecting a structured career progression for deserving personnel. These include 10 Assistant Sub-Inspectors promoted to



Sub-Inspector, 4 Head Constables elevated to Assistant Sub-Inspector, 874 Selection Grade Constables promoted to Head Constable, and 632 Constables elevated to Selection Grade Constable. These advancements mark an important milestone in the professional journeys of the officers, acknowledging their

years of service, tireless efforts, and commitment to upholding the values and reputation of the Jammu Police. The IGP said that through initiatives such as these promotions, the Jammu Zone Police remain committed to nurturing talent, recognizing merit, and motivating personnel to continually perform their duties with enthusiasm, professionalism, and a deep sense of civic responsibility. He encouraged all officer/officials to continue setting benchmarks of excellence in public service, contributing not only to the safety of society but also to the enduring prestige of the Jammu Police.



Jammu and Kashmir Panchayat conference President Anil Sharma after files his nomination papers for the upcoming by-election for Nagrota Assembly as an Independent Candidate at Nagrota in Jammu on Monday

Sonamarg Development Authority seeks night closure of Bypass to curb illegal material transport



GY CORRESPONDENT

GANDERBAL, OCT 20

The Sonamarg Development Authority (SDA) has sought the closure of the Sonamarg bypass road after 6:00 PM to curb the movement of vehicles allegedly transporting illegal construction materials under the cover of darkness. Reports suggest that some miscreants have been using the bypass road at night to ferry unauthorized building materials, taking advantage of the limited night-time monitoring by the authorities. The Tourism Authority has acknowledged its inability to effectively patrol the stretch due to the absence of shelter or night-duty facilities for staff, creating what officials describe as a "serious security loophole."

Confirming the development, Chief Executive Officer of Sonamarg Development Authority, Dr. Mantasha Rashid told the news agency Kashmir News Trust that the authority has formally approached the Sonamarg Police and the district administration for immediate intervention. "We have requested the Sonamarg Police to close the bypass road after 6:00 PM for all tipplers and material-carrying

vehicles to prevent illegal movement," she said.

Dr. Mantasha Rashid added that the authority has also written to the Superintendent of Police (SP) Ganderbal, seeking his intervention and directions to the Station House Officer (SHO) Sonamarg to deploy additional police personnel at the tunnel exit to ensure enforcement. "In addition, a request has been made to the Tunnel Administration to restrict movement through the bypass after 6:00 PM," Dr. Rashid said, emphasizing that the joint coordination of police and administrative agencies is crucial to plug the loopholes being exploited by unscrupulous elements. Sources said that the bypass road, primarily meant for tourist and controlled vehicular movement, has increasingly been misused during night hours by tipplers and trucks transporting construction materials without valid permits. Traffic activity, according to officials, not only violates construction norms but also poses environmental and safety concerns in the ecologically fragile Sonamarg area.

GOC Rising Star Corps Reviews Operational Preparedness Of Troops In J&K's Kathua

GY CORRESPONDENT

JAMMU, OCT 20

Lieutenant General Rajan Sharawat, General Officer Commanding (GOC), Rising Star Corps of the Indian Army, on Monday visited Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua and reviewed operational preparedness of the troops on ground. "The GOC, Rising Star Corps, reviewed the operational preparedness of troops deployed in the Bani-Macchedi sector in Kathua, and lauded their courage, dedication, and high state of readiness," the defence PRO said.



The Bani-Macchedi mountainous belt in Kathua district has witnessed several attacks and encounters in the last one-and-a-half years. It is considered an infiltration route to Doda, Kishtwar

and Udhampur districts from the International Border (IB). To prevent infiltration, the Army deployed several companies in the high-altitude Bani-Macchedi area last year.

Four-way fight likely in Budgam Bypoll 4 Agas in election fray

GY CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR, OCT 20

The upcoming Budgam Assembly bypoll is shaping up to be a high-stakes, four-cornered political contest. Scheduled for November 11, with counting on November 14, the by-election has emerged as a crucial test for the National Conference (NC), People's Democratic Party (PDP), Awami Ittehad Party (AIP), and an independent candidate—each aiming to make their mark in the politically sensitive constituency. The Budgam seat fell vacant after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who had won both Budgam and Ganderbal in the 2024 Assembly elections, chose to retain Ganderbal and resign from Budgam. His decision has triggered an intense battle that could reshape political alignments and influence in the Shia-majority district.

The PDP has fielded Aga Muntazir Mehdi, son of senior Shia cleric and Hurriyat leader Agha Syed Hassan, while the AIP has nominated Nazir Ahmad Khan. Muntazir Mohiuddin, who recently quit the Apni Party, is contesting as an independent, and the National Conference has announced Agha Syed Mehmoos, son of noted Shia scholar Syed Yousuf Al-Moosavi Al-Safavi,

founder of the Anjuman-e-Sharie organization. Although several others have filed nominations, political observers believe the main contest will be between these four candidates. Meanwhile, the BJP has named Agha Syed Mahmud, another son of a Shia cleric, making this bypoll unique as Budgam will witness multiple candidates from prominent Shia families. Another Ag is fighting as an independent candidate. Given the constituency's strong Shia presence, clerical influence and community loyalties are expected to play a decisive role. NC's influential MP Agha Ruhullah Mehdi, who commands deep roots and respect in the area, is seen as a crucial figure in determining the final outcome. Whether he actively campaigns for the NC candidate or chooses to remain neutral could significantly alter the political balance. Political analysts suggest that Ruhullah's active support could consolidate NC's traditional vote base, while his silence might dent the party's chances. "If Ruhullah stays distant, NC could face challenges in mobilizing its cadre. But if he campaigns energetically, and the Mehmoos could gain clear advantage," Feroq Ahmad, political observer, told news agency. As campaigning gains

momentum, the Budgam bypoll is being viewed as a litmus test for political strength in central Kashmir. "Voter turnout, clerical endorsements, and grassroots mobilization will determine who emerges victorious in one of the region's most closely watched political contests," he added. However, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah exuded confidence in the NC's prospects, reiterating the party's unity behind its candidate. "Aga Sahab has already said he considers him like his son, and I expect Agha Ruhullah to support him," Omar told reporters on Monday. He added that the eve after vacating the Budgam seat, his government continued developmental works in the area. "We never abandoned Budgam. My ministers and I carried out several works there, and we hope the people will support our candidate based on that record," Omar said. In the 2024 Assembly elections, Omar Abdullah had defeated PDP's Agha Muntazir Mehdi by a margin of 18,485 votes, underscoring NC's strong organizational base and Omar's personal appeal in Budgam. However, with several influential Shia candidates now in the fray, this bypoll promises to be far more competitive and unpredictable.

Flash floods in J-K pushed end dates of hydel power projects by 3 to 5 months: J-K Bank MD

GY CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR, OCT 20

Jammu and Kashmir Bank MD and CEO Amitava Chatterjee on Monday said the flash floods caused by heavy rains a couple of months earlier have delayed the completion of hydel power projects in the Union Territory by three to five months. He, however, said that while there was no direct impact of it on the bank as of now, there was a possibility of cost overrun in these projects. Jammu and Kashmir has been battered by a series of natural calamities like cloudbursts, extremely heavy rains and huge landslides in the past couple of months, which left several dead, battered infrastructure, and upended normal life. "Most of the infrastructure projects, like the hydel (power) projects which are in progress in the state, are being delayed by three to five months. That is the negative impact that has happened (due to rains and floods)."

"We had a review



recently. The DCCO (Date of Commencement and Commercial Operations) has been impacted by three to five months, which will impact the commercial production, and that will again have a negative impact," Chatterjee told PTI in an interview. However, he said, there is no direct impact of it on the bank. "Our funding is in place. Mostly, in all these units, we have a share from our bank. The progress has been halted, but I don't see a major cost overrun. I have spoken to these (executing) companies, and they can fund it on their own."

There are five major

power projects with a combined generation capacity of nearly 3,100 megawatts, which are currently at various stages of construction in Jammu and Kashmir. These projects include Ratle (850 MW), Pakal Dul (1,000 MW), Kiru (624 MW), Kwar (540 MW) and Parnai (38 MW).

Four of these five projects are on the Chenab river or its tributaries in Kishtwar district, which was severely affected by the cloudburst and heavy rains in August this year. Only the Parnai power projects are located in Poonch district. More than 60 people died while 300 others were injured in the cloudburst at Chhosti in Kishtwar district on August 14. Asked if the bank has seen any surge in borrowings from the flood-affected areas, Chatterjee said there has not been any indication of such a thing. "They have not come as an opportunity yet. All (rehabilitation) efforts are being taken care of at a level where they have not asked for any funding from the bank," he added.

"A serious security loophole." Confirming the development, Chief Executive Officer of Sonamarg Development Authority, Dr. Mantasha Rashid told the news agency Kashmir News Trust that the authority has formally approached the Sonamarg Police and the district administration for immediate intervention. "We have requested the Sonamarg Police to close the bypass road after 6:00 PM for all tipplers and material-carrying

Rahul Gandhi Tries His Hand At Making 'Imarti', 'Besan Laddoo'

NEW DELHI, OCT 20

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday put out a video of him trying his hand at making 'imarti' and 'besan laddoo' at the famous Ghanetwala sweet shop in old Delhi, as he greeted people on Diwali and asked them to share how they are making the festival special. Gandhi posted the video on X and said the true sweetness of Diwali lies

not just in the 'halhi', but also in relationships and community. "Tried my hand at making imarti and besan laddoo at the famous and historic Ghanetwala sweet shop in old Delhi," the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha said. "The sweetness of this centuries-old, iconic shop remains the same - pure, traditional, and heartwarming," Gandhi

said. "Tell us, how are you celebrating your Diwali and making it special?" he said. In another post on X, Gandhi extended greetings to the people of the country on the auspicious occasion of Diwali. "May India be illuminated with the lamps of joy, may the light of happiness spread in every home," the former Congress president said.