

CM Dhami among first to cast vote as Uttarakhand goes to polls

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Taapsee Pannu reviews Vidya Balan, Pratika Gandhi, Ileana-Sendhil's Do Aur Do Pyaar

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Mercury falls as rains lash Jammu

Temperature dropped as rains lashed Jammu region last night and today, bringing residents relief from the scorching heat.

It rained last night but, after a halt, the downpour started again in the morning. It continually lashed the region till tonight.

Due to rains, the water level in Tawi and Chenab rivers witnessed an increase. The MeT office had yesterday said that weather would generally remain cloudy with light to moder-

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2 fall into trench, die

Two labourers were killed and two were rescued after they slipped into a trench in Chakpora area of Kashmir's Kulgam district today.

The incident took place while they were working near the trench, officials said.

Soon after they fell into the trench, they were evacuated by locals to hospital, where they were pronounced brought dead by doctors, the officials added.

The dead were identified as Maqbool Dar of Kulgam and Azizur Rehman of Bengal.

Police had taken cognizance of the incident.

ED files prosecution complaint against 9 in court

The Enforcement Directorate has filed a prosecution complaint under the provisions of PMLA, 2002 before the special court, Srinagar, against nine accused.

In post on X, ED said that complaint was filed against nine accused in special court, Srinagar.

The accused included Mohammad Akbar Bhat, Mrs. Fatima Shah, Altaf Ahmad Bhat, Qazi Yasir, Mohammad Abdullah

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Vice-Admiral Tripathi appointed Navy Chief



NEW DELHI, APR 19: The government has appointed Admiral Dinesh Tripathi as the next chief of the Indian Navy. Tripathi is presently the vice-chief of navy staff after having done multiple important assignments in his around

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Prabhat appointed as NSG chief



NEW DELHI, APR 19: Senior IPS officer Nalin Prabhat has been appointed as the chief of National Security Guard (NSG), the country's counter-terrorism force, according to a Personnel Ministry order.

Prabhat, a 1992 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of Andhra Pradesh cadre, is presently working

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Phase 1 of LS polls

Kathua-Udh constituency records 65.08 pc voting till 5 pm

Himalayan Mail News
JAMMU, APR 19

Amid heavy down-pour & multi-tier security arrangements, voters turned up at polling stations in plains & on higher reaches to exercise their right to franchise in Kathua-Udhampur parliamentary constituency which went to polls today in the first phase of general elections in the country, recording a turnout of 65.08 pc till 5 pm.

The voting started at 7 am on a dull note but picked up later despite incessant rains that lashed the region since morning. Long queues of voters were witnessed at the polling stations in the constituency. There was no report of any untoward incident from anywhere in the constituency and the voting passed off peacefully,



according to officials.

As per the office of Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, by 5 pm, 66.9 pc polling was recorded in 48-Inderwal AC, 62.51 pc in 49-Kishtwar AC, 60.81 pc in 50-Padder Nagseni AC, 60.85 pc in 51-Bhaderwah AC, 65.78 pc in 52-Doda AC, 66.62 pc in 53-Doda West AC, 64.76 pc in 54-Ramban AC, 56.62 pc in 55-Banihal

AC, 67.33 pc in 59-Udhampur West AC, 69.96 pc in 60-Udhampur East AC, 66.33 pc in 61-Chenani AC, 64.79 pc in 62-Ramnagar AC, 60.65 pc in 63-Bani AC, 64.51 pc in 64-Billawar AC, 63.57 pc in 65-Basohli AC, 68.65 pc in 66-Jasrota AC, 70.8 pc in 67-Kathua AC and 68.06 pc in 68-Hiranagar AC.

Over 57.09 per cent voter

turnout was recorded till 3 pm in the constituency. An estimated 43 per cent of voters exercised their right to franchise by 1 pm in the constituency.

Meanwhile, 'Nari Shakti' (women power) was on display at the all-women staffed booths known as 'pink booths', in the Doda district of the constituency.

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Amid war-like situation, only BJP govt can keep India safe: Modi

DAMOH (MP), APR 19: At a time when the threat of Iran-Israel war is looming large, Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted the need for India having a BJP government with a complete majority that will work on a war-footing to keep the country safe.

"Clouds of war are hovering in the world, when there is a war-like situation globally, then India needs a strong government that works on a war footing. The country needs a government which can defend the country in any situation. This can be done only by



the BJP government having complete majority," Modi said, while addressing a Lok Sabha polls rally in Damoh district of MP's Bundelkhand region on Friday.

Damoh and Khajuraho seats of the region will vote in the second phase on April 26.

He went on to accuse the

Congress government of weakening the country's defence sector and not looking beyond their self-interest in defence/weapon deals.

"Entire country has seen how Congress put all its power to prevent the Indian Air Force (IAF) from getting the Rafale fighter craft. Had there been a Congress regime even now, India's indigenous light combat aircraft (LCA) Tejas would not have been in the sky. Under the BJP government, our defence establishment isn't just becoming Atmanirbhar

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Govt will never touch reservation policy: Shah



NEW DELHI, APR 19: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday made it clear that the Narendra Modi government will never touch the reservation policy or let anyone else do it.

Shah also said that the government will do its best to eradicate Naxalism from the country.

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Undercurrent brewing against Modi govt: Congress

NEW DELHI, APR 19: The Congress today claimed that a "silent undercurrent" is brewing across western Uttar Pradesh against the "failures" of the Modi government, as it flagged issues such as "neglect" of sugarcane farmers and examination paper leaks.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh attacked the BJP-led central government ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's poll rally in Amroha.

"Today's questions for

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7 killed in Pakistan by 'gunmen'

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (PAKISTAN), APR 19: Five Customs Intelligence officials and two civilians, including a five-year-old girl, were tragically killed in an ambush by unidentified 'gunmen' in Dera Ismail Khan city in Pakistan.

According to police, the incident occurred as the Customs Intelligence team conducted routine checks at Saggu in Dera Ismail Khan district, where they encountered heavy gunfire from attackers hiding in the nearby bushes.

"As a result of the ambush, the casualties occurred, comprising five Customs Intelligence officials and two innocent civil

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LS polls

Phase 1 voting ends with 60 pc nationwide turnout; TN records 72 pc

NEW DELHI, APR 19: The first phase of Lok Sabha elections concluded at 6 pm on Friday, marking the commencement of the world's largest democratic exercise. With a staggering 970 million eligible voters, this monumental election is set for a long and winding path across 44 days before culminating in the seventh phase on June 1.

The biggest chunk of seats in the first phase were from Tamil Nadu, where all 39 seats went to the polls.

Top leaders from Tamil Nadu who were on the ballot included the DMK's Kanimozhi (Thoothukudi), Dayanidhi Maran (Chennai Central), TR Baalu (Sriperumbudur) and BJP's K Annamalai (Coimbatore).

Among the prominent leaders in the fray who tried their luck in phase one were, Union ministers Nitin Gadkari from Nagpur, Kiren Rijiju from Arunachal Pradesh (West), and Arjun Ram Meghwal from Bikaner.

Polling was held for all seats of Tamil Nadu (39), Uttarakhand (5), Arunachal Pradesh (2), Meghalaya (2), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (1), Mizoram (1), Nagaland (1), J&K (1), Puducherry (1), Sikkim (1) and Lakshadweep (1).

Besides, voting was held in 12 seats in Rajasthan, eight in Uttar Pradesh, six in Madhya Pradesh, five seats each in Assam and Maharashtra, four in Bihar, three in

West Bengal, two in Manipur, and one seat each in Tripura, Jammu and Kashmir, and Chhattisgarh.

Polling began at 7 AM.

Simultaneously, assembly elections are being held in Arunachal Pradesh (60 seats) and Sikkim (32 seats).

The Election Commission deployed over 18 lakh polling personnel across 1.87 lakh polling stations. An aggregate 62.37 per cent voter turnout was recorded till 7 pm in the phase.

A spokesperson said the figure was tentative.

Officially, polling ended at 6 pm, but voters who were in the queue by that time were allowed to exercise their franchise.

Incidents of firing, intimidation, destruction of EVMs at some polling booths and allegations of booth capturing were reported from conflict-hit Manipur that recorded a turnout of over 68 per cent.

Both the BJP and the Congress accused each other of unleashing violence and breaching the election Model Code of Conduct.

The state, which has been reeling under the conflict of ethnic violence since May last year, has traditionally seen a very high voter turnout.

In the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, the state had recorded a turnout of 82 per cent.

Voting took place in two constituencies-

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LG chairs high-level meet, reviews labour welfare

**Himalayan Mail News
JAMMU, APR 19**

In a high-level meeting held here today, LG Manoj Sinha today reviewed skill development, entrepreneurship and labour welfare and emphasised on vital need for upskilling and reskilling of youth & labour workforce as per the evolving skill development landscape to meet the requirement of industries.

He discussed various issues such as creating convergence of skill development schemes, opportunities and strategy for employment generation



across the sectors through entrepreneurship, skill gap analysis and skill mapping for upskilling, reskilling of labour force and youth, and effective, efficient implementation of healthcare, social security schemes for labour welfare and livelihood generation schemes for youth and women.

The LG laid special em-

phasis on vital need for upskilling and reskilling of youth and labour workforce as per the evolving skill development landscape to meet the requirement of industries. He called for a whole of government approach towards skill development and providing opportunities for budding entrepreneurs.

He also called for strengthening the measures for protection of workers, including unorganized workers in terms of statutory minimum wage, social security and healthcare of workers.

He directed for stream

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As Parray files nomination from Anantnag LS seat, Azad hopes for his victory

**Himalayan Mail News
JAMMU, APR 19**

As DPAP leader Mohammad Saleem Parray today filed his nomination papers from Rajouri-Anantnag Lok Sabha constituency, which is going to polls in the third phase of elections on May 7, party chairman and former J&K chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad hoped that people would vote him to victory.

Accompanied by Azad and other leaders of the party, Parray filed his nom-



ination papers before Anantnag DC Syed Fakhrudin who is the returning officer of the constituency.

Talking to reporters after Parray filed his nomination papers, Azad expressed hope that Parray would win

from the seat and represent Jammu and Kashmir and its people in the Lok Sabha.

"This 40-year-old youth, an advocate, who used to fight individual cases in high court, lower court and district court, will now represent our state and its people in the India's highest seat of democracy - Lok Sabha," he said.

Asked why he backedtracked from contesting from the seat as people wanted him to contest, Azad said, "Parray is my representative and voting

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Congress becoming outdated, losing relevance: Rajnath

HYDERABAD, APR 19: Criticising the Congress for becoming 'outdated' and losing its relevance in the country's political spectrum, senior BJP leader Rajnath Singh on Friday said the BJP does politics for the sake of the nation building and not merely for coming to power.

Addressing a party gathering before Union Minister Kishan Reddy filed his nomination for Lok Sabha polls, Singh also attacked the Congress party alleging that former Reserve Bank Governor D Subbarao in his book wrote that there was pressure to present a "rosy



picture" with regards to the economy during UPA rule.

He claimed that due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's intervention the war between Russia and Ukraine was stopped for over four hours to facilitate India to evacuate its citizens. "I want to say that the Congress has become completely outdated. Congress

is continuously losing its relevance from Indian politics. Congress indulged in appeasement politics.

When it comes to politics, BJP doesn't do politics on caste, creed, and religion, but it is based on justice and humanity," Singh said. "When it comes to BJP, we don't do politics just to form the government. We are the party who does politics for the sake of national building," he asserted.

Taking on the Congress and BRS, Singh said the ruling party in Telangana has no moral right to seek quotes without fulfilling the

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NC, PDP, Cong no match to BJP in J&K: Kavinder

**Himalayan Mail News
JAMMU, APR 19**

Saying that BJP's position was 'unrivaled' in J&K politics, ex-deputy CM Kavinder Gupta today claimed that NC, PDP and Congress were no match to his party as the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre had won hearts of lakhs of people in the last 10 years.

Addressing public meetings ahead of Lok Sabha polls in Jammu constituency, he said other parties in the region were no match to the BJP's growing



influence and organisational strength.

"There is no other political outfit in J&K which can guarantee what the PM Modi has in offing; therefore, people should support BJP in the upcoming phases of polls in J&K in the way

the electorate had supported the party in Udhampur constituency where over 65 pc votes had been cast till 5 pm," Gupta said and added that BJP would remain triumphant on this seat.

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