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## Exit polls predict BJP win in Assam, edge in Bengal

to retain power by thwarting the challenge from AIADMK-BJP and the debutant party - Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam that is led by actor-turned-politician Vijay.

The Mamata Banerjee-led TMC is looking to retain West Bengal and thwart the challenge from the BJP.

## LG directs to fortify security grid ahead of Amarnath Yatra

progress of 100 days campaign of the 'Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan' and preparations regarding the conduct of different pilgrimages in their respective districts, including Shri Amarnathji Yatra, Shri Kausar Nag Yatra and Shri Budha Amarnathji Yatra.

The LG directed the DCs and the SSPs to ensure seamless coordination between police, civil administration and security forces. He also asked them for conducting the block and thana diwas regularly for resolving the general grievances of public.

He also directed for outcome-based efforts with whole of society approach for fighting the drug menace. He called for stringent action against the drug smugglers and peddlers in coordination with all the stakeholders.

Sinha emphasised on the need of identifying narco-corridors in Jammu division to dismantle hotspots and networks operating in those areas completely. He also stressed the need to conduct a study on region-wise substance abuse trends and a Vulnerability Index, using WHO's standard methodology.

With respect to the arrangements of Shri Amarnathji Yatra and other upcoming pilgrimages in Jammu division, the LG directed DCs and SSPs to conduct a comprehensive review in their respective districts.

He also directed the DCs to drive seamless execution of the Vibrant Villages Programme to deliver rural health, development, economic transformation, and social upliftment and to mandate 100 pc screening for non-communicable diseases.

He directed for the strictest possible action against individuals and OGWs harbouring terrorists, vowing zero tolerance for those who shelter threats to national security.

## Summer zone schools start at 8 am from May 1

schools would function from 8 am to 2 pm and the revised timings would remain in force till September 30, 2026, in view of the summer season.

## 4 teachers suspended

school.

The committee, which conducted the inspection, reported that out of a total of five teachers posted in the school, only one was present while four were found absent, officials said.

The absentees were immediately placed under suspension. They included Ayaz Ahmad, Mohammad Jhangeer, Vikram Bali and Mushtaq Ahmad.

## Govt hikes passenger fare by 18 pc

under the Motor Vehicles Act and partially modifies an earlier notification of March 19, 2021.

The government has also fixed separate fares for electric vehicles, with e-rickshaws to charge Rs 15 per km, while e-autos will charge Rs 25 for the first km and Rs 20 for each subsequent km.

## CBSE launches 'Parenting Calendar'

"In alignment with the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, CBSE had undertaken this initiative in the academic session 2025-26 with a clear objective to strengthen the partnership between parents and schools and to promote holistic student well-being," the board said in a statement.

The board said the initiative received an encouraging response and witnessed active engagement from stakeholders across the country, reaffirming its relevance, efficacy and impact.

Building on the feedback, the 2026-27 edition expands the framework with enhanced engagement strategies, teacher-led activities and focused psycho-social interventions to support students' emotional, social and academic development.

"Building on this momentum, the CBSE Parenting Calendar 2026-27 further strengthens and expands this vision by institutionalising structured engagement be-

tween schools and parents. The current edition introduces enhanced engagement strategies, teacher-led activities and focused psycho-social initiatives to support students emotional, social, and academic growth, while addressing challenges faced by parents in today's evolving environment," the statement read.

New components have been added to improve its scope, including dedicated sections on inclusion to promote equitable practices for diverse learners, and "coping with changes" to help parents and students adapt to evolving curriculum and academic expectations.

The parenting workshops section has also been strengthened with a developmental approach, enabling schools to design age-appropriate and context-specific engagement programmes.

According to CBSE, the calendar is designed to foster meaningful parent-child interactions, strengthen the home-school partnership, and serve as a practical guide for parents to actively participate in their child's developmental journey.

"Overall, the initiative aims to create a nurturing, inclusive and supportive ecosystem that promotes the holistic development, well-being and resilience of every learner," it added.

The board said the calendar is available on its official website and urged affiliated schools to adopt and implement it to create a nurturing, inclusive and supportive ecosystem for students.

## People voting fearlessly in West Bengal this time: Modi

participating in large numbers, calling it a positive sign for democracy. He urged voters to continue participating in the electoral process with the same enthusiasm throughout the day.

Referring to recent political developments, Modi said the BJP and NDA had secured a strong mandate in Bihar and performed well in Gujarat local body elections, claiming it reflected growing public support.

He added that the final results of ongoing elections, scheduled to be declared on May 4, would further strengthen the vision of a developed India and accelerate the country's growth trajectory.

The West Bengal Assembly elections are being held in multiple phases, with the first phase completed on April 23. Counting of votes across West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Assam, and Puducherry will take place on May 4.

He asserted that the assembly poll results on May 4 would further strengthen the resolve of a developed India.

The prime minister said this is a powerful symbol of the country's Constitution and the strengthening of democracy.

"I express my gratitude to the great people of Bengal for being so aware of their rights and participating in large numbers," he said.

## Vaishnav to flag off Jammu-Srinagar Vande Bharat

would commence on May 2.

The direct train services between Jammu & Srinagar will reduce the travel time between the twin capitals of Jammu and Kashmir, and boost tourism, besides providing an all-weather surface transport link.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first direct train service between Katra and Srinagar on June 6, 2025. This service is now being extended up to the Jammu Tawi Railway Station.

The work on the Rs 28,000-cr rail project, linking Kashmir to the rest of the country, began in the late 1990s with the first train operating in the Kashmir valley in October 2008.

While the train services had reached Udampur by 2005, the treacherous terrain through the mountainous Pir Panjal range made it tough to link the valley with the rest of the country till 2025.

"The modern 20-coach Vande Bharat train will commence its maiden journey from Jammu Tawi (JAT), traversing the route up to Srinagar while connecting the challenging geographical terrains of the valley," officials said.

Officials said, simultaneously, a train from Srinagar will start moving towards Jammu.

Before the commencement of this significant service, a trial run of the Jammu-Srinagar Vande Bharat was conducted on Tuesday from Jammu to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra, officials said.

The inaugural Vande Bharat train, equipped with state-of-the-art amenities and comprising 20 coaches, would

cover a total distance of 267 km on Thursday.

The train service will operate six days a week from Jammu to Srinagar and Srinagar to Jammu. There will be no train service on this route on Tuesdays.

"Constructed using indigenous technology, this Vande Bharat Express will offer passengers a world-class travel experience," Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Uchit Singhal said.

"It features amenities such as the 'Kavach' safety system for passenger security, a GPS-based information system, and comfortable rotating seats. This service will not only reduce travel time but also provide a massive boost to the local economy and tourism," he added.

## Highest ever poll percentage in Bengal since Independence: CEC

foiled their plot of posting around 2,000 false votes in an hour."

He thanked IPS officer Charan Singh Meena for teaching the goons a lesson.

The ruling Trinamool accused the central forces of intimidating their voters, of beating up women and children.

A clutch of exit polls showed an intensely fought battle; most predicted a BJP win but with margin or error and extremities included they showed a tight fight. A couple of bigger agencies have said they will give their projections for Bengal on Thursday evening.

"I don't know what they are showing," TMC leader Kirti Azad said when asked about the exit polls. "During general elections, they had claimed '400 paar' [above 400 for BJP]. We know the ground realities, Mamata Didi is the biggest leader here, we are comfortably getting two-third majority. We will win, and form the government."

Mamata also said the BJP would lose and her party would win two-thirds majority.

## Existing laws sufficient to tackle hate speeches: SC

report of March 2017.

Rejecting the plea that hate speech remains outside the scope of statutory law, the Bench said: "The contention that the field of hate speech remains legislatively unoccupied is misconceived. The existing framework of the substantive criminal law, including the provisions of the IPC (now BNS), and allied legislations, adequately addresses acts that promote enmity, outrage to religious sentiments, or disturb public tranquility. The field is, therefore, not unoccupied."

The court underscored that the core concern raised by petitioners relates to weak enforcement rather than the absence of legal provisions. It noted that procedural safeguards already exist under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, including mechanisms for registration of FIRs in cognisable offences and recourse before magistrates if the police fail to act.

## Panchayat Electoral Roll revision extended

ule, claims and objections for addition, deletion, correction or transposition in the electoral rolls can be filed from March 27 to May 5. Special camps will be held at polling booth locations on May 2 & May 3, where panchayat election booth officials, including VLWs, MPWs & GRS, along with assembly BLOs, will be available with requisite forms and the draft electoral roll to assist voters.

The electoral registration officer will dispose of all claims and objections by May 14 and the final panchayat electoral roll-2026 will be published on May 21, according to officials.

The commission has directed the district panchayat election officers to strictly follow the revised timeline and ensure wide publicity at the grassroots level through field staff of all departments, including Numberdars and Chowkidars, so that no eligible voter is left out.

The PEBOs have also been asked to conduct house-to-house surveys to enroll left-out and new voters in their respective panch wards and panchayats, and to organise remaining special camps at panch ward level.

## Targeting ships in Hormuz highly deplorable, unacceptable: India

the global seafaring workforce.

"India remains deeply concerned about the safety and welfare of its seafarers. Any disruption, obstruction or purported closure of vital waterways has direct consequences for global economy, energy and humanitarian supply chains," Patel said.

The Ministry of External Affairs said last month that eight Indian seafarers had died in the Strait as a result of the conflict, adding that the whereabouts of one is "not known" yet.

Two Indian-flagged merchant vessels, the Sanmar Herald (crude oil tanker) and Jag Arnav (bulk carrier), were fired upon by Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) gunboats in the Strait of Hormuz around April 17-18, 2026. The vessels were forced to turn back, though no injuries were reported, and the crews remained safe. India protested the incident.

## Holy Buddha relics arrive in Leh, LG accords ceremonial welcome

Khenpo Thinlas Chosal of Matho Monastery in a special Air Force aircraft, were received by the LG in the presence of prominent religious and public figures, including Khamtak Rinpoche, Rigyal Rinpoche, President Ladakh Gonpa Association Dorje Stanzin, President Ladakh Bud-

dhist Association Chering Dorjey Lakruk, former Members of Parliament Thupstan Chewang and Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, former CEC LAHDC Leh Tashi Gyalson, and representatives of various social, religious and political organisations.

Ladakh police accorded a ceremonial guard of honour, while monks performed special prayers. The LG offered khataks and prayers on behalf of the people of Ladakh, invoking peace & well-being of all.

Following the ceremonial reception, the relics were taken in a grand procession to Jivetsal, the designated venue for public exposition, beginning May 1, which marks the 2,569th Buddha Purnima.

The event witnessed overwhelming community participation from across Ladakh, reflecting unity, faith, and collective reverence, as thousands of devotees, dressed in traditional attire, lined the route up to Jivetsal to catch a glimpse of the sacred relics.

Describing the occasion as highly auspicious, the LG stated that the arrival of the holy relics had blessed the entire region.

"While the relics have been exhibited internationally in the past, this is the first time they have been brought out of their original place of preservation for exposition within India," he said and expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for choosing Ladakh for this sacred event and highlighted the region's deep-rooted connection with Buddhism and spirituality.

He urged people to participate in large numbers to seek the blessings of Lord Buddha.

Over the years, the sacred Piprahwa relics of Lord Buddha have been exhibited in several countries, including Thailand, Mongolia, Vietnam, Russia, Singapore, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar, drawing global attention and devotion.

In Ladakh, the relics will be available for public veneration at Jivetsal from May 2 to May 10, followed by exposition in Zanskar on May 11 and 12, and thereafter at the Dharma Centre in Leh from May 13 to 14, before being flown back to Delhi on May 15.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, apart from union ministers, ambassadors, chief ministers of Buddhist-majority states, and representatives of various Buddhist organisations, would be visiting Leh for the veneration.

The Piprahwa relics have gained renewed global significance in recent years. After 127 years in colonial possession, a significant collection of associated gems and offerings was repatriated to India in July 2025, from a British family and a private collection.

In anticipation of the influx of devotees and tourists, LG Saxena has been closely monitoring preparations and has directed extensive beautification and infrastructure measures across Leh.

Plantation drives, placement of flower pots, and city-wide cleanliness initiatives have been undertaken in a mission mode to ensure a pleasant, aesthetic, and spiritually enriching experience for all visitors.

## Weather radars increased from 14 to 50: Jitendra

India Meteorological Department (IMD), with 50 more planned under Mission Mausam.

This was stated here today by Union Minister Jitendra Singh speaking to the media after inaugurating a Selfie Point, depicting Weather Radar, at the entrance gate of India Meteorological Department (IMD) headquarters, at Lodhi Road, here. The event was held in the presence of the Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, M Ravichandran, and Director General of Meteorology, IMD, Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, along with senior officials and scientists.

The minister said this transformation was made possible due to the high priority accorded to the sector by the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, leading to greater accuracy, accessibility and public trust in forecasts.

Dr Singh said that India's meteorological services have undergone a remarkable transformation over the last decade.

From a time when weather forecasts were often met with scepticism, the system today provides highly reliable and precise predictions used by a wide spectrum of users, from farmers and homemakers to pilots and event planners, he added.

## Kavinder takes stroll on ridge, interacts with tourists

natural environment. "Himachal is extremely beautiful, and nature has bestowed abundant beauty upon this land. It is our collective duty to preserve and protect this natural heritage," he said.

During his visit to the ridge, the governor also visited the Himachal Pradesh Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation (HPMC) outlet, where he purchased locally produced food items and appreciated the quality of Himachali products.

He later visited Ashiana Restaurant, where he enjoyed a cup of coffee and spent some time interacting informally with citizens.

The visit reflected the governor's close connection with people and his appreciation for the rich cultural, religious and natural heritage of Himachal Pradesh.

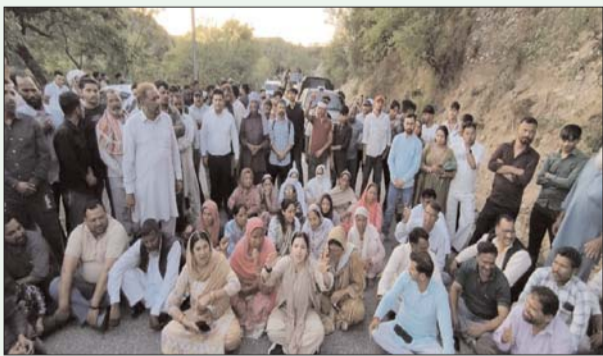
## MLA Devyani Rana Leads Road Blockade Against Acute Water Crisis Across Nagrota Constituency

**DANSAL, APR 29:** Devyani Rana, MLA Nagrota, today led a road blockage to protest against the acute and escalating water crisis in the Nagrota constituency, terming it a direct consequence of administrative negligence and failure on the part of the Jal Shakti (PHE) Department.

"This is a clear case of prolonged negligence, administrative apathy, and systemic failure, which has severely disrupted the water supply and caused immense hardship to the people of Nagrota," she said.

During her visit to Badsoo Panchayat in Nagrota, the MLA staged a warning protest against the department. She highlighted that more than 13 PHE stations and dug wells across the constituency have remained defunct for several months, severely affecting water supply to thousands of residents.

Citing specific instances, she pointed out that the PHE dug wells at Hurnali and Kah Pohita have been non-functional since August following flood damage, with no meaningful restoration efforts undertaken so far.



Expressing serious concern, Ms. Rana stated that despite substantial allocations in the 2026-27 budget to the PHE sector of ₹3,500 crore along with financial assistance from the Central Government of an additional approximately ₹3,000 crore under SASCI, the UT administration and the department have "miserably failed" to utilize these funds effectively.

"It is deeply unfortunate that despite such liberal funding, there is a visible lack of planning, monitoring, and accountability. Resources have not been translated into results," she asserted.

Taking strong exception to the functioning of the Mechanical Wing of the PHE department, she said the de-

partment has failed to ensure timely repair and maintenance of pump sets and motors.

"In many cases, motors are repaired and reinstalled only to get burnt again within days. This clearly points towards substandard repair work, lack of technical oversight, and absence of preventive maintenance. Such inefficiency is unacceptable," she said.

She further added that over the past six days, the department has been repeatedly repairing and re-installing motors, pumps, and transformers at PHE stations in Galali and Gharota, only for them to develop faults or burn out again the very next day. "This recurring failure reflects sheer mismanagement, poor

quality control, and a complete lack of accountability within the system," she asserted.

She further noted that water tanker services, which had been providing temporary relief, have also been discontinued without any alternative arrangements, aggravating the hardships faced by the people.

"At a time when the existing infrastructure is already crippled, stopping tanker services reflects utter insensitivity towards the suffering of the people, especially during peak summer days," she added.

Ms. Rana asked the department to act immediately and restore all defunct water supply systems on a war footing.

"If the authorities continue to remain indifferent, the patience of the people will wear thin. They will have no option but to come out on the streets and protest against this blatant neglect and administrative failure," she warned.

She urged the UT administration to intervene at the highest level, fix responsibility, and ensure time-bound restoration of water supply systems.