

# All preparations set for Counting of Votes DEO Shopian reviews Counting arrangements at SKICC-Centaur for 8 ACs of Srinagar

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**SRINAGAR:** Ahead of Counting of votes of Eight 8 Assembly Constituencies of Srinagar District for General Elections to Legislative Assembly-2024, the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat today visited SKICC-Centaur to review the arrangements being made for the seamless Counting process. The DEO also took stock of the security measures made in and around the Counting Centres. During the visit, the DEO along with the concerned Officer took a thorough inspection of the arrangements with regard to the preparations made in and around the counting centres for a smooth and well organized counting process. The DEO also finalized the surveillance & security



measures, seating arrangements, transporting of EVMs and the technical setup at the Counting Halls to ensure transparency, accuracy and the timely announcement of counting results. On the occasion, the DEO gave directions to the Officers of different line Departments for ensuring uninterrupted power supply, adequate water supply, proper Internet facility, Media management, entry

centres, strong rooms, CCTV links and training of manpower for upholding the sanctity and integrity of the democratic ethos. The DEO emphasized that the counting process will be done as per ECI guidelines under video recording. The EVMs are presently kept under three-layer security cordon in strong rooms at SKICC-Centaur, after the voting process was completed on September 25, 2024. Pertinent to mention that Counting of votes for all Eight Assembly Constituencies of Srinagar District is scheduled on (Tuesday) October 08, 2024 at designated Counting Halls at SKICC-Centaur. Returning Officers, various Nodal Officer, Deputy District Election Officer Srinagar and other concerned accompanied the DEO during the visit.



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**SHOPIAN:** The District Election Officer (DEO) Shopian, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar today chaired a meeting of officers at Mini Secretariat Shopian in order to review necessary arrangements being put in place for counting of votes, scheduled on October 8. The DEO took appraisal of department wise duties and

responsibilities fixed for each department. He also took stock of all arrangements including magisterial duties, seating arrangements, establishment of media centres, help desks and other arrangements for the hassle free counting process. He called for exhibiting the optimal coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders for the efficient culmination of counting. The DEO instructed concerned officers to follow all procedures of Election Commission guidelines while performing their duties and instructed for expediting the preparedness level. ADC, Zakir Hussain Faaz, Returning Officers of Shopian and Zainapora and other nodal officers attended the meeting.

## DEO B'la reviews arrangements at Counting Center

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**BARAMULLA:** Ahead of the counting day for General Elections to Assembly Elections 2024 on October 8, District Election Officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today conducted a thorough inspection of the designated counting center at the indoor sports stadium in Baramulla. During the visit, the DEO reviewed the arrangements and facilities at counting centers for all seven Assembly constituencies, viz. 07-Sopore, 08-Rafiabad, 09-Uri, 10-Baramulla, 11-Gulmarg, 12-Wagoora Kreeri and 13-Pattan. The inspection was carried out to ensure that all facilities at the counting center are meticulously planned and put in place, guaranteeing a smooth and transparent counting process. Meanwhile, the DEO inspected the physical infrastructure and security infrastructure, including the barricading for a hassle-free counting process, the provision of IT and communication systems, and proper spacing arrange-



ments for contesting candidates and their agents. During the visit, the DEO directed the heads of the respective departments to ensure round-the-clock availability of power supply, health facilities, implementation of fire-safety measures, drinking water, and other facilities, all aimed at ensuring a smooth counting process with no hassle. Meanwhile, the DEO instructed the

## NCORD implements robust strategy to tackle rising drug abuse among students in Srinagar

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**SRINAGAR:** The District Level Committee for NCORD has devised a comprehensive strategy to address the rising complaints and evidence of drug and substance abuse, particularly among students residing in hostels and paying guest accommodations (PGs). In a recent NCORD meeting, chaired by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, the district's action plan and progress in combating substance abuse and dismantling the illegal narcotics trade were discussed. The minutes of the meeting reveal a significant focus on the issue, particularly regarding students. During the meeting, the Drug De-addiction Centre at SMHS Hospital shared alarming statistics. From April

to August 2024, there were 708 new outpatient department (OPD) registrations, with a cumulative total of 6,818 registered patients. The centre also recorded 120 in-patient admissions (IPD) for treatment and a staggering 29,357 follow-up consultations over a five-month period. Similarly, the Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) at SKIMS, Bemina, reported 158 new patients seeking help, with 14,781 cumulative follow-up sessions during the same timeframe. Law enforcement agencies in Srinagar shared that between April and August 2024, 20 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act were registered, resulting in 35 arrests. Additionally, 11 individuals

were detained under the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (PIT NDPS) Act. Regarding seizures, 139.65 kg of heroin, 15.105 kg of poppy straw, bhang, 2.69 kg of Charas, 17.8 grams of brown sugar, 36 bottles of psychoactive syrups and capsules, and 3.5 kg of ganja were confiscated in the district during the same period. The committee also reviewed efforts to eradicate wild cannabis and poppy cultivation. Over 82 Kanals of wild cannabis were reported to have been destroyed. During the meeting on the awareness front, it was informed that 15 drug de-addiction seminars were conducted this year. The Deputy Drug Controller of Srinagar reported that 100

## Climate change leads to decline in apple production for second year in Kashmir

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**SRINAGAR:** Apple production in Kashmir has plummeted by at least 30% for the second consecutive year due to climate change and erratic weather patterns. Growers across the region said that a series of adverse weather conditions during the critical fruit set season led to a huge drop in their yields. Farmers said that March was characterised by dry, high temperatures, followed by a wet, cool April and a prolonged dry spell that adversely affected fruit production. These erratic conditions disrupted essential spray schedules and led to outbreaks of scab and other diseases which further diminished an already low harvest, they said, adding that recent hailstorms and the prevalence of leaf miners have severely impacted both the quantity and quality of apple production. Irshad Ahmad, a grower from

Anantnag district, said that in some areas, production has dropped to just 70% of last year's yield. Jahangir Ahmad Dar, a fruit grower from Watchi Shopian, reported a drastic decline in his harvest. "I went from around 1,200 apple boxes last year to barely 300 this year," he said. He explained that many marginal farmers are struggling to cover the costs of pesticides and fertilizers, particularly since more expensive treatments were necessary to combat diseases. After years of challenges, including untimely snowfall and hailstorms, growers had hoped for better returns this year, but those hopes have been dashed. Recent hailstorms in south Kashmir have caused huge damage to apple crops, compelling growers to call for immediate government action, including the implementation of a crop insurance scheme to mitigate their losses.

Bashir Ahmad Bashir, president of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers and Dealers Association, confirmed that overall production has decreased by approximately 30% this year due to erratic spring weather and recent hailstorms. "The apple industry has been facing several challenges," Bashir said, adding that there is a dire need for a crop insurance scheme to protect growers from future losses. While last year's production was also low, higher prices provided some relief, a situation that has not repeated this year due to decreased demand. Kashmir typically produces over 20 lakh metric tonnes of apples annually, occasionally reaching up to 25 lakh metric tonnes. The 2017 economic survey of J&K indicated that half of Kashmir's population relies directly or indirectly on the apple industry, with over 3.5 lakh hectares dedicated to apple cultivation.

## Final Phase of trainings for Counting Staff culminates in Srinagar

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**SRINAGAR:** The Final Phase of Trainings for the Counting Staff whose services shall be utilised for counting of Electronic as well as Postal Votes in Srinagar District concluded here today. The Trainings were conducted on the directions of District Election Officer (DEO), Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to ensure fair and hassle-free counting of Votes for General Elections to Legislative Assembly-2024 in all Eight Assembly Constituencies of Srinagar District. Earlier, District Election Authority Srinagar imparted training to general Counting Staff, Counting Supervisors, Counting Assistants and Micro-Observers for counting of votes in all Eight Assembly Constituencies of Srinagar District Srinagar. The counting of votes is scheduled on October 8, 2024. The District Election Office Srinagar had prepared a comprehensive Training Schedule for Counting Staff with an objective to lay a base of well-skilled, competent and able manpower for counting of votes in free, fair and convenient manner. During the training sessions, the



Counting Staff was trained with skills like procedures and safety measures to be taken during the process of counting of Electronic as well as Postal Votes. In addition to this, they were also trained how to handle emergencies, maintain discipline and to address issues of security and privacy on the day of counting. Coordinator Trainings, Dr. Manzoor Reshi, who delivered several sessions at different venues, made sure that each member of Counting Staff is fully prepared for the counting without any problems. Throughout the training sessions, he stressed on strictly following the rules and procedures established by the Election Commission of India

(ECI) during the counting of Postal Votes in district Srinagar. While dividing the participants in different groups, Dr. Reshi conducted several Mock Exercises for counting ETBPS/Postal Votes and EVM Votes, visualising the entire process of counting Postal Votes. The counting staff was also oriented towards holding free and fair counting while strictly following the on-going Model Code of Conduct (MCC) in the district. The employees were also given instructions for effectively managing and handling Poll Machinery, Postal Voting Documents and other Stationary items for transparent counting of votes in Srinagar.

## Police arrests drug peddler in Sopore

**SOPORE:** Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police have arrested drug peddler in Sopore and recovered contraband substance from his possession. A police party led by Incharge Police Post Watergam under the supervision of SDPO Rafiabad Shri Aabid Rashid Mir-JKPS and SHO PS Dangiwaicha during patrolling at Behrampora apprehended one person identified as Jahangir Ahmad Tantray son of Fayaz Ahmad Tantray resident of Behrampora Rafiabad. During search, 96 capsules of banned SPASMO-PROXYVON Plus were recovered from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to police station where remains in custody. Accordingly, a case under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Dangiwaicha & investigation has been initiated. Police urges the common masses to give information regarding narcotics or any other crimes to the nearest police establishment or dial 112.

## Piping Ceremony held at District Police Headquarters Sopore

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**SRINAGAR:** Today, a Piping Ceremony was held at District Police Headquarters Sopore where Superintendent of Police Sopore Smt. Divya D-IPS alongwith ASP Sopore Shri. Mir Mur-taza-JKPS adorned newly promoted Sub Inspector Yousuf-Ul-Umar with the new rank of Inspector. On the occasion, SP Sopore and ASP Sopore offered their sincere congratulations to the newly promoted officer. They commended his accomplishments and underscored the significance of maintaining a consistent level of enthusiasm and dedication in all his future endeavours. SDPO Sopore Sarfaraz Bashir-JKPS and SHO PS Sopore Ayaz Ghealani were also present during the ceremony.



## DEO Shopian inspects Counting Centres



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**SHOPIAN:** The District Election Officer (DEO), Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar and Senior Superintendent of Police, Anayat Ali today made a joint visit to Counting Centres at Mini Secretariat Shopian in order to review the arrangements for counting of votes, scheduled on October

8 for Shopian and Zainapora Assembly Constituencies (ACs) of the district. During the inspection, the DEO reviewed all facilities being put in place at the Counting Centres, including seating arrangements, establishment of media centres, help desks and other facilities for hassle free counting process. The DEO along with SSP also

took stock of security protocol in place along with welfare measures for staff, agents of political parties and media persons. Among others, the DEO was accompanied by ADC, Zakir Hussain Faaz; RO Shopian, Shaikoor Ahmad; Dy.DEO, Jahanger Ahmad; DIO, Showkat Hussain; Dy.SP, Javed Ahmad and other officers and officials.

## Arrangements for Dastgeer Sahab Urs reviewed in Srinagar

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**SRINAGAR:** In connection with upcoming Urs of the revered saint Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA), the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Dr. Khalid Hussain Malik today visited the Shrine of Dastgeer Sahab at Khanyar to take stock of the arrangements made for smooth observance of the Urs. During the visit, the ADC took a detailed review of the arrangements being made at the Shrine by different Departments for the annual Urs observance. On the occasion, the ADC also interacted with the Shrine Management and sought details about the requirements for the Urs. The Senior Officers of Police and line Departments who accompanied the ADC on the occasion briefed him about the arrangements their respective Departments are making to ensure smooth observance of the Urs. The ADC stressed the Officers and other stakeholders to ensure all requisite facilities and arrangements are made available for devotees well in advance.