

## MC LAUNCHES CLEANLINESS DRIVE IN Y'NAGAR, JAGADHRI

The MC has launched a special drive in the twin cities to get a good ranking in the Swachh Survekshan-2024. **P2»**



## DEEPENDER PROMISES TO BRING IMT TO KOSLI

Congress MP Deepender Hooda announced that an Industrial Model Township would be set up in Kosli. **P3»**



## FILMMAKERS' LATEST MUSE—SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

The route to Bollywood is no longer confined only to the ramp or beauty pageants. **P4»**



THURSDAY | 19 SEPTEMBER 2024 | HARYANA

## IN BRIEF

### 4 GET LIFE TERM FOR MURDER

**Mahendragarh:** A Nampul court of Additional Sessions Judge Yogesh Choudhary has awarded life imprisonment to four accused for abduction and murder of a man. The convicts are Ranjeet, alias Kalu, and Sampat of Jhunjhunu (Rajasthan), Ram Dulari, alias Dulari Devi and Kapil, alias Sonu, of Nampul. Fines have also been levied on them, said a spokesman of the district police. The police spokesperson said Jaswant and Pritam, alias Lal, of Sareli village went to Patikara on a bike on October 17, 2018, for some work. While returning to the village, they were waylaid by a car near Jorasi village. The convicts got off the car and manhandled Pritam, abducting him. Later, they left Pritam in a critical condition on the Singhana road, he added. The spokesman said Pritam was admitted to a hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries. A case of abduction and murder was registered against the accused on the complaint of Jaswant, and they were arrested. **TNS**

### SIRSA ADMN BANS CRACKERS

**Sirsa:** The district administration has imposed a ban on the production, sale and use of fireworks to control pollution. This restriction will be in effect from October 22 to January 31. However, the use of "green" fireworks will be allowed during special occasions like Diwali, Guru Purnima, Christmas and New Year's Eve. District Magistrate Shantanu Sharma announced that all fireworks, except for green ones and those containing barium salts, were prohibited. The order, issued under the Indian Citizens Safety Code-2023, the Explosives Act of 1884, and relevant regulations, specifies that green fireworks can only be used during designated times—from 8 pm to 10 pm for Diwali and Guru Purnima and from 11:55 pm to 12:30 am for Christmas and New Year's Eve. **TNS**

# Stalwarts, newbies, caste dynamics make Kalayat contest interesting



**PARVEEN ARORA**  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**KAITHAL, SEPTEMBER 18**

The Kalayat Assembly segment is heading for a four-cornered contest in the upcoming Assembly elections, with prominent candidates from the BJP, Congress, AAP and INLD locking horns. The constituency, which has been a political battleground, is witnessing an interesting competition among political stalwarts and fresh faces, with caste dynamics playing a major role in determining the outcome.

BJP candidate and former minister Kamlesh Dhandha is contesting against Congress Hisar MP's son and party candidate Vikas Saharan, AAP state senior vice-president Anurag Dhandha and INLD state president Ram Pal Majra. Congress rebels, including former MLA Satvinder Rana and Anita Dhull and BJP rebel Vinod Nirmal are also in the fray as Independent candidates, who may pose challenge to the BJP and Congress candidates.

"With major players in the ring, Kalayat is set for an intense and unpredictable electoral battle," said Ashok Atri, a political analyst and associate professor from RKSD College.

"We have worked tirelessly for the betterment of Kalayat, from improving infrastructure to ensuring access to essential



INLD candidate Rampal Majra campaigns at a village; and (below) Congress candidate Vikas Saharan during campaigning.

### INTENSE, UNPREDICTABLE ELECTORAL BATTLE ON CARDS

BJP candidate and former minister Kamlesh Dhandha is contesting against Congress Hisar MP's son and party candidate Vikas Saharan, AAP state senior vice-president Anurag Dhandha and INLD state president Ram Pal Majra. Congress rebels, including former MLA Satvinder Rana and Anita Dhull and BJP rebel Vinod Nirmal are also in the fray as Independent candidates, who may pose challenge to the BJP and Congress candidates.



BJP candidate Kamlesh Dhandha with her supporters; and AAP candidate Anurag Dhandha campaigns at a village.

services. If elected, my focus will be to continue this momentum and take the development work even further. Our government has provided jobs to youth on the basis of merit by abolishing the 'parchi and kharchi' (recommendation and bribe) system," said Dhandha.

"The BJP has failed to address the real issues of Kalayat, whether it's unemployment, rural development, or healthcare. My aim is to bring Kalayat the attention

and resources it deserves. I will implement the vision of my father by developing the constituency in an inclusive way," said Saharan.

Majra targeted both the BJP and Congress for failing to develop the constituency. "Both the BJP and the Congress have ignored the people of Kalayat for far too long. I know the problems and issues of the people of my constituency. I am available round the clock for the peo-

ple. I will bring major changes in development works if elected," said Majra.

Anurag Dhandha said, "Be it Kamlesh Dhandha, Saharan's father Jai Parkash or Majra, all had failed to bring real change what it deserves. If voted to power, I will try my best to bring about a change along with creating job opportunities."

Political analysts suggest that the caste factor will play a critical role in this election,

with a sizable presence of Jat, Rajput, and other communities shaping voter preferences. The constituency, which comprises the towns of Kalayat and Rajaund along with 64 villages, has a history of interesting contests.

"With the major players in the ring, Kalayat is set for an intense and unpredictable electoral battle," said Ashok Atri, a political analyst and associate professor from RKSD College.

# Litigants continue to suffer as Rohtak lawyers on strike

**SUNIT DHAWAN**  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**ROHTAK, SEPTEMBER 18**

Litigants continue to suffer due to the local lawyers being on strike for the last 17 days in protest against the registration of an FIR against an advocate.

While a number of lawyers are engaged in campaigning for parties/candidates, whom they support in the state Assembly elections, the litigants are suffering much harassment as even the urgent cases are not being heard at the local courts.

"Many prisoners require bail due to domestic exigencies. There are other urgent matters, too. However, we have no option but to wait for the strike to end," said a senior advocate requesting not to be named.

Contacted for comments, Rohtak Superintendent of Police Himanshu Garg said representatives of the District Bar Association (DBA) had met him twice in connection with the case.

"I had assured them that a thorough investigation would be conducted in a professional and transparent manner and nobody would be falsely implicated," he added.

Urgent cases not being heard by local courts

Regarding the inconvenience being caused to the litigants due to the lawyers' strike, Garg stated that efforts were being made by senior police officials of the district as well as other stakeholders to resolve the situation.

The DBA had decided to suspend work on September 2, following the registration of an FIR against a local lawyer. DBA president Arvind Sheoran said a 12-member committee of advocates had been formed to frame guidelines regarding the suspension of work.

The DBA had also sent a representation to the Chairman of the Bar Council of Punjab and Haryana in this regard. The Bar Council Chairman, Dr Vijender Singh Ahlawat, had written to the Haryana Director-General of Police (DGP), requesting a thorough and fair investigation.

"Efforts are being made to sort out the matter and it will be resolved soon," said Dr Ahlawat.



A meeting of District Bar Association in progress in Rohtak.

# Abolition of MEP boosts prices of basmati 1509 variety in Karnal dist

**PARVEEN ARORA**  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**KARNAL, SEPTEMBER 18**

The recent removal of the Minimum Export Price (MEP) of \$950 per tonne, which had been imposed a year ago, has brought major relief to farmers, leading to a significant rise in the price of the 1509 paddy variety. Over the past couple of days, prices have surged by Rs 300-400 per quintal. Exporters are now procuring paddy at Rs 3000-3100 per quintal, compared to Rs 2500-2700 previously. Farmers are elated by the price hike, which they believe will help them cover input costs.

"Basmati paddy 1509 was being sold at Rs 2600-2700 per quintal, compared to Rs 3200-3800 per quintal last year. After the cancellation of the MEP, prices have increased by Rs 300-400 per quintal. It is now being sold at Rs 3000-3100 in the past couple of days," said Sumit Chaudhary, an arhtiya who is also a farmer.

Amit, a farmer at the Karnal grain market, echoed the same sentiment, saying that



Labourers clean paddy at the grain market in Karnal. **VARUN GULATI**

### FARMERS, EXPORTERS RELIEVED

"The lifting of MEP on rice will boost exports and also ensure better prices for farmers. Now, we can compete more easily with Pakistan, which offers similar varieties at lower prices." — Vijay Setia, FORMER AIREA PRESIDENT

his paddy was procured at Rs 3000 per quintal, whereas just a few days ago, the price was Rs 2500-2600 per quintal.

Exporters have also welcomed the move, as it will enhance India's competitiveness in the global basmati rice market.

The All India Rice Exporters Association (AIREA) and the Haryana

Rice Exporters' Association (HREA) both expressed their happiness, saying that they had earlier requested former Chief Minister and Union Power Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to reduce or remove the MEP on basmati rice.

"The lifting of the MEP on

rice will boost exports and also ensure better prices for farmers. Now, we can compete more easily with Pakistan, which offers similar varieties at lower prices. We have repeatedly urged the Union and state governments to lift all restrictions on the export of both basmati and non-basmati rice in the interest of farmers. We are thankful to the government for this timely decision," said Vijay Setia, former president of AIREA.

Sushil Jain, president of HREA, said that the move has already increased the price of basmati 1509 by Rs 300-400 per quintal. He expressed hope that the abolition of MEP would help increase exports by 10 per cent.

"The Ministry of Commerce and Industry had set the MEP at \$950 per tonne on basmati rice exports last year, which negatively impacted both farmers and the industry. This MEP was particularly high compared to Pakistan. Now, with the MEP lifted, we will see a boost in exports," Jain added.

# BJP, Cong nominees eye first win in Pehowa

**NITISH SHARMA**  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**KURUKSHETRA, SEPTEMBER 18**

Eying their first win, both Congress and BJP candidates are going full throttle to woo voters in the Pehowa Assembly segment of Kurukshetra district.

While Congress' Mandeep Chatha, son of veteran Congress leader and former minister Hamohinder Singh Chatha, is working hard to regain the lost ground for the party and BJP candidate Jai Bhagwan Sharma is also going door-to-door to retain the seat for the BJP.

In the 2019, Assembly election, the seat was won by BJP's Sandeep Singh, however, he was dropped by the party and Kawaljeet Singh Ajrana was fielded. But as the party workers opposed his candidature, Ajrana surrendered the party ticket and the BJP fielded Jai Bhagwan Sharma, who was earlier eyeing the ticket from the Thanesar Assembly seat.

While addressing the gatherings, Mandeep Chatha focuses on issues such as unemployment, farmers, development of Pehowa and civic issues.

Mandeep, who is banking on his father's works, said, "Development has come to a



Congress candidate Mandeep Chatha surrounded by his supporters; and (below) Jai Bhagwan Sharma during campaigning.



standstill under the BJP rule and people have decided to bring a change. We have been getting tremendous response from the public. The Pehowa segment witnessed development under the tenure of my father and I want to work for the segment and develop the

constituency. Leaders from other parties are joining us everyday, which shows that there is a wave in favour of the Congress and it will form the next government in Haryana."

Mandeep had contested the Assembly election unsuccessfully on the Congress ticket

from Pehowa in 2014 and 2019.

Similarly, Jai Bhagwan Sharma, who contested the Assembly election unsuccessfully in 2014 is confident of retaining the seat for the saffron party. While addressing the public, he said, "During the Congress regime, development was restricted to Rohtak only but the BJP's double-engine government has ensured equal development of all segments in the state. We are appealing to the voters to form a double-engine government again in the state with a full majority to ensure smooth implementation of public welfare schemes of the Centre and state government. The party has declared that Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini is the CM face of the party and is contesting from the Ladwa segment. People shouldn't miss the opportunity to elect the BJP and speed up development works."

AAP's Gehal Singh Sandhu, INLD's Baldev Singh Waraich, JJP's Dr Sukhwinder Kaur, SAD (Simranjit Singh Mann) candidate Kuldeep Singh, Sanyukt Sangharsh Party's Gurnam Singh Charuni, and Independent candidates Rajat Sharma and Shyam Lal are also testing their fate in the elections.

## MC launches cleanliness drive in Y'nagar, Jagadhri

SHIV KUMAR SHARMA  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

YAMUNANAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18  
Municipal Corporation, Yamunanagar-Jagadhri (MCYJ), has launched a special cleanliness drive in the twin cities to get a good ranking in the Swachh Survekshan, 2024.

The special drive — 'Swachhata hi Sewa' — will continue till October 2. All areas of the 22 wards of the MCYJ will be covered under the initiative.

On the second day of the drive today, cleanliness work was carried out in the areas of zone-II of the MCYJ under the supervision of Chief Sanitary Inspector (CSI) Sunil Dutt.

Besides, this team also went from door to door in several areas, including the industrial area, market near the city police station and the main market of the camp to spread awareness about the importance of cleanliness.

The CSI also took feedback from shopkeepers and other people about the door



The Yamunanagar-Jagadhri Municipal Corporation has started the 'Swachhata hi Sewa' campaign in the twin cities; and (right) roads being cleaned under the drive.



to door garbage collection system and urged them to put garbage only in the vehicles of the MCYJ.

"This programme has been started on the instructions of Municipal Commissioner Ayush Sinha. Under this programme, special

cleanliness work will be carried out in every colony of the twin cities and every village falling under its jurisdiction. Besides, people shall be made aware about the importance of cleanliness," said CSI Dutt.

He said they were educating

people about the importance of disposing garbage through the door-to-door collection system instead of dumping it on empty plots.

He further said that they were urging the people to keep separate dustbins for wet and dry garbage.

In zone-I, the cleanliness work was carried out in several areas of Jagadhri by a team headed by CSI Harjeet Singh.

Deputy Municipal Commissioner Dr Vijay Pal Yadav said the MCYJ had now started a 'Swachhata Pakhwada' programme to

make the twin cities clean and beautiful.

"This programme will continue till October 2. Under it, special cleanliness work will be done in every colony of all wards and every village falling under MCYJ area," said Vijay Pal Yadav.

## CAMPUS NOTES

### NSS ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

Kaithal: The NSS unit of RKSD College, Kaithal, hosted an orientation programme, at which the community service initiatives of the new academic session were unveiled. NSS Programme Officer Sanjay Garg welcomed 150 new volunteers. He outlined the NSS objectives and told the volunteers about the importance of community service. Principal Sanjay Goyal emphasised the advantages of joining the NSS. The programme aimed to inspire volunteers to engage in meaningful community service, fostering social responsibility and nation-building.

### OZONE DAY CELEBRATED

Karnal: Dyal Singh College, Karnal, organised an awareness programme on World Ozone Day. The event aimed at raising awareness about the importance of protecting the ozone layer and encouraging collective action for a sustainable future. The students of BSc Life Sciences staged a street-play based on the theme 'Protecting the Ozone Layer: Our Collective Responsibility'. Principal Ashima Gakhar emphasised the significance of protecting the ozone layer and urged the students to work together to create a greener and healthier planet. The event concluded with a pledge ceremony.



## MBBS students seek withdrawal of state's bond-cum-loan policy

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

ROHTAK, SEPTEMBER 18

The MBBS students of the state's medical colleges have appealed to the Haryana Government as well as Opposition leaders to withdraw the bond-cum-loan policy in the larger interest of the students.

Addressing newsmen on the premises of PGIMS-Rohtak on Tuesday, representatives of the Joint Action Committee of MBBS Students of All Government and Aided Medical Colleges, Haryana, demanded complete withdrawal of the policy.

"This policy, introduced by the state government's Medical Education Department on December 21, 2022, burdens top-ranking National Eligibility-cum-Entrance-Test students with loans," said Pankaj Bithu, a spokesperson of the committee.

The MBBS students pointed out that IDBI Bank provided loans amounting to Rs 25 lakh to boy students and Rs 23 lakh to girl students, which was unacceptable to them.

"The meritorious students, who have secured top ranks in



Students submit a memorandum to Haryana Congress Manifesto Committee head and former Minister Geeta Bhukkal on Wednesday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

the NEET, are forced to bear the enormous burden of loans, leading to mental and financial distress," the students lamented, adding that no other state had such a policy.

They stated that the top-ranking students were forced

to seek admissions in the medical colleges of other states due to this unjust policy of the Haryana Government.

"This policy would have an adverse impact on the healthcare services of Haryana in the long run as meritorious

students are opting for colleges in other states," the medicos added.

They appealed to all political parties of the state to include their demand in their manifestos and repeal the policy on coming to power.

## Campaigning picks pace in Panipat City

MUKESH TANDON

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

PANIPAT, SEPTEMBER 18

Campaigning has picked up pace in Panipat City constituency as the day of polling — scheduled for October 5 — comes close.

The candidates and their supporters are leaving no stone unturned to seek votes. Members are still joining the BJP and Congress. However, the members of RSS and party leaders persuaded the rebels, including BJP's former councillor and ticket aspirant Lokesh Nangroo. Some BJP leaders joined the Congress after leaving the party on Wednesday.

Congress candidate Varinder Kumar Shah alias Bule Shah said the two prominent BJP leaders — including election in-charge of Samalkha Assembly constituency and former candidate for ward 22 Mahender Pratap Singh and Jugal Khurana, secretary, North Shahri Mandal, along with their supporters — resigned from the BJP and joined Congress.

The members of Haryana

Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Panipat chapter, also supported Congress candidate Varinder Kumar Shah. JJP leader Kuldeep Mann and INLD leader Praveen Tomar have also joined Congress.

Shah said that after getting the support of the industries, the pace of the campaigning increased. He assured all the industrialists to support them after the Congress attained power in the state. He said people have decided to bring a change in the state and city.

On the other hand, BJP candidate Pramod Vij held meetings to woo the voters in the city on Wednesday. Vij started his day with public meetings in Model Town, Amar Bhawan Chowk, talks with the taxi union members, Sector 12, Azaad Nagar, Purewal Colony, Kishanpura, Ward 9, Ansal and a meeting with the lab owners in the city.

"I have worked honestly to serve the people and brought several big development projects for the city. Congress never brought any big project for the city during its tenure," Vij said.

## Urban local bodies to run sanitation drive till Oct 1

HISAR, SEPTEMBER 18

Additional Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation Hisar (MCH) Pradeep Hooda directed officials of the Urban Local Bodies (ULB) in the district to launch a cleanliness campaign till October 1 in all the ULBs of Hisar, Barwala, Namaund, Hansi, Uklana and Adampur.

Hooda reviewed the progress of the ongoing work of all the ULBs of the district in the meeting. It was attended by officials, including Ashok Nehra, Amit Berwal from the MCH, Secretary of Uklana Sandeep Garg, Secretary of Adampur Rahul Saini, Secretary of Narnaund Pradeep Kumar, Secretary of Barwala Gaurav Sharma, Executive Officer of Hansi Suresh, Sanitary inspector of Barwala Deepak and others.

He directed all the ULBs of the district to run the 'Swachhata Hi Sewa' campaign from September 17 to October 1. For this, the district will organise cleanliness and awareness campaigns, plantation, painting and slogan competitions.

Hooda directed the ULBs of the district to update all the cleanliness works on the Swachhata portal. He said all the ULBs should update the

correct data on the portal for door-to-door works, road sweeping, etc.

The Additional Commissioner said that all the ULBs of the district must update information related to Solid Waste Management activities like employee deployment, vehicle deployment, cleaning and disposal of garbage on the SWM portal (Solid Waste Management Portal) as soon as possible. He said that ULBs of the district must select self-reliant wards and to take stock of the activities to be carried out in them.

He asked the ULB to get the civil societies and institutions of their area to engage in cleaning activities, tree plantation, rally, painting and slogan competitions. He also told the officials to honour the institutions or societies which are already working in the field.

He directed all the ULBs of the district to inspect the community toilets built in their area and ensure their regular cleaning. Besides, the ULBs must eliminate garbage points which have become an inconvenience for the public. He ordered that the garbage points on the roadside or unscheduled spots be cleaned and warning signboards be put up. — TNS

## Cong decries Meghwal's remark; lawyer lodges complaint with ECI

SUNIT DHAWAN

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

ROHTAK, SEPTEMBER 18

The Congress has decried a statement made by Union Minister for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal, in which he had asked Rohtak's voters to vote for the BJP to get more funds from the Centre.

Addressing a public meeting in Rohtak, Meghwal stated since the BJP is at the Centre, if the party forms the government in Haryana, it would be able to get more work done in the state. He urged the residents of the constituency to vote for BJP candidate Manish Grover in order to ensure better funding from the Central Government.

Congress MLA from Rohtak Bharat Bhushan Batra has termed the minister's remark as unethical. "Are the states where governments of Opposition parties in power not getting any support from the Centre? Does it not amount to the BJP government admitting discrimination in allocation of

developmental funds," he said. Meghwal had maintained that as BJP government is in power at the Centre, party's candidate Grover would be able to fetch more funds from Union Minister for Urban Development Manohar Lal Khattar as compared to the Congress candidate Bharat Bhushan Batra.

"The BJP government is at the Centre. The party should form the government in Haryana to get more work done in the state. Who will be able to fetch more funds from Union Minister Manohar Lal? Manish or Batra? Manish. You should know that," Meghwal said while addressing a public meeting at Rohtak on Monday.

A local lawyer has lodged a complaint with the Chief Election Commissioner (ECI), seeking action against Union Minister of Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal and Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal for open defiance of the Model Code of Conduct.

## Researchers discuss strategies to boost cotton productivity in North India

SIRSA, SEPTEMBER 18

The Central Cotton Research Institute, Sirsa, recently hosted a conference on increasing cotton productivity in North India, considering the region's changing climate. Chaired by BR Kamboj, Vice-Chancellor of CCSHAU, Hisar, and co-chaired by YG Prasad from Nagpur, the event gathered scientists, officials and progressive farmers.

Kamboj urged attendees to develop innovative techniques



Experts from various universities during the conference.

for pest and disease control and to effectively disseminate these findings to farmers. He emphasised the importance of

micro-irrigation and proper nutrient management.

The lead scientist, Rishi Kumar, welcomed participants

and shared insights on the current state of cotton crops in Northern India. Discussions included challenges in cotton production, pest management strategies, and the selection of suitable cotton varieties, especially Bt hybrids.

Experts from various universities presented their initiatives to enhance cotton yields, focusing on integrated management of pests like whiteflies and pink bollworms as well as identifying diseases affecting cotton crops. — OC

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### SIMIEN SCARE IN ROHTAK, AUTHORITIES LOOK THE OTHER WAY

MONKEY menace has become a big problem for the residents of Rohtak. Large troops can be seen roaming in residential areas. They damage household articles, snatch eatables and attack residents. The authorities concerned should take steps to provide relief to the residents. MANOJ BALHARA, ROHTAK

### POOR SANITATION IN AMBALA

GROSS insanitation prevails in Sector 9 of Ambala city. The recent spell of rain and subsequent waterlogging have worsened the situation. Stray cattle also add to the problem. The authorities concerned must take effective action, failing which residents may resort to agitation. GIAN P KANSAL, AMBALA

# Deepender promises industrial model township to Kosli voters

Rohtak MP campaigns for Congress candidate Jagdish Yadav

RAVINDER SAINI  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

REWARI, SEPTEMBER 18  
Congress MP Deepender Hooda announced that an Industrial Model Township (IMT) would be set up in Kosli, on the lines of IMT-Manesar, to bring development and employment opportunities to the region if the party came to power in the state.

Deepender today reached Kosli Assembly constituency to address an election rally in support of former minister and Congress candidate Jagdish Yadav. He claimed that a lot of efforts had been made to take the Kosli Vidhan Sabha area forward during the tenure of the previous Congress regime in the state.

Deepender said: "In order to fulfil the demand of withdrawing the Agnipath scheme and setting up the Ahir Regiment, a proposal will be made in the first Cabinet meeting after the formation of the Congress government in the state. This proposal will be sent to the Central Government, permanent recruitment will be done in the Army as before. We will oppose the scheme," he stated.

Repeating the slogan of the Agniveers, who were attending the rally, the MP said: "Agniveer Hatao- Indian Army Bachao". He added: "We have to save the country, not just jobs."

Deepender, referring to the 'Saat Vaade, Pakke Irade' of the Congress party, released today, said the Congress government would provide LPG cylinders at Rs 500 and



MP Deepender Hooda during a rally at Kosli in Rewari district on Wednesday. TRIBUNE PHOTOS



## WILL OPPOSE AGNIPATH SCHEME

“To fulfil the demand of withdrawing the Agnipath scheme and setting up the Ahir Regiment, a proposal will be made in the first Cabinet meeting after the formation of the Congress government in the state. This proposal will be sent to the Central Government. We will oppose the scheme.”

-Deepender Hooda, CONGRESS MP

also give Rs 2,000 through the Mahalakshmi Yojana to empower women similar to the Congress governments in Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh. To strengthen social security, the elderly, disabled people and widows would be given pensions of Rs 6,000. The old pension scheme would be restored for employees, he added.

"Under the Bharti Vidhan, 2 lakh youths will get permanent recruitment. We will make Haryana drug free. To bring prosperity to every family, 300 units of free electricity and free treatment up to Rs 25 lakh will be provided. Farmers will be given the guarantee of MSP and highest price, and immediate compensa-

tion for crop loss. Poor families will be given free plots measuring 100 square yards and 2 room houses at a cost of Rs 3.5 lakh, through Indira Awas Yojana. Caste census will be conducted and the backward class creamy layer income limit will be increased to Rs 10 lakh," Deepender said.

# Campaigning at peak, direct contest between BJP, Cong for Sonepat seat

MUKESH TANDON  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SONEPAT, SEPTEMBER 18  
Campaigning is at its peak in the Sonepat Assembly constituency. To win from here is a prestige issue for the ruling party as well as the Congress. After the withdrawal of nomination by BJP rebel and former media advisor to Chief Minister, Rajiv Jain, the contest seems to be between Congress and BJP candidates directly.

The BJP has fielded Mayor Nikhil Madaan from Sonepat while the Congress has trusted sitting MLA Surender Panwar. However, Panwar had been arrested by the Enforcement Directorate and was behind bars.

The BJP had won the seat five times — in 1977, 1982, 1987, 2009 and 2014 — while Mukhtyar Singh of Bharatiya Jana Sangh had won in 1968. BJP leader Devi Das led the constituency consecutively three times — 1977, 1982 and 1987. BJP leader Kavita Jain led the constituency in 2009 and 2014. Congress had won from here five times — including 1967, 1972, 1991, 2005 and 2019 — while Sonepat constituency was led by an Independent MLA Devraj Diwan in 1996 and 2000. Direct contests were seen among the BJP and Congress candidates in the last 25 years on this seat. However, this time the contest turned triangular after the entry of the BJP rebel in the electoral fray. But the CM persuaded him on September 16, on the last day of withdrawal of nomination. After a meeting with the CM, Jain withdrew his nomination and the contest again seemed to be between the Congress and BJP candidates.

Political experts said cam-



BJP candidate Nikhil Madaan opens his election office in Gur Mandi on Wednesday; and (below) Samiksha Panwar, daughter-in-law of Congress candidate Surender Panwar, campaigns in Sonepat.



paing for the BJP and Congress was at peak and both were going to people directly. BJP candidate Nikhil Madaan, his family members and supporters are organising meetings daily to woo voters. Similarly, campaigning is on peak in the Congress camp. Though Congress candidate Surender Panwar is in jail, his daughter-in-law Samiksha Panwar is leading the campaigning. Political experts said the contest is going to be

very interesting this time at Sonepat seat as it is very prestigious for the BJP as well as Congress. Samiksha Panwar held public meetings and door-to-door campaigns in Kabirpur, Garhi Ghasita, Kalan Mohalla, Geeta Bhawan Chowk, Saraswati Vihar, West Ram Nagar, and Tara Nagar on Wednesday. While addressing the gathering, she appealed to the voters to elect Congress candidate Surender Panwar. She said

that Congress was going to form a government in the state on October 8.

On the other hand, Nikhil Madaan opened his election office in Gur Mandi and held public meetings in Kabirpur, Jeewan Nagar, Vikas Nagar, Sector 15, Shyam Nagar, and Kakroi Road. He appealed to the people to vote for him. He said lotus was going to bloom on the Sonepat seat as the people want to bring the BJP government consecutively for the third time in the state.

# DC, SP inspect 20 polling booths of Radaur segment



DEO Captain Manoj Kumar and SP Ganga Ram Punia inspect a polling booth at a village in Yamunanagar district on Wednesday.

YAMUNANAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18  
District Election Officer-cum-Deputy Commissioner Captain Manoj Kumar and Superintendent of Police Ganga Ram Punia today visited various polling booths and took stock of arrangements made there.

According to sources, they inspected 20 polling booths in the Radaur Assembly constituency set up at various villages, including Government Senior Secondary School, Harnaal, Government High School, Bubka, Government Primary School, Sikandra and Government Senior Secondary School, Gundianna, falling under the Radaur Assembly constituency.

During the inspection, they found deficiencies at some booths and asked the heads of the schools concerned to rectify these deficiencies. The DC said there should not be any lack of basic facilities at any polling booth during the polling. He further said strict action would be taken against careless officials. He said as

per the instructions of the Election Commission of India, there must be toilets, ramps and other basic facilities at every polling booth.

"If there is any lack of basic facilities at any polling booth, the official concerned should immediately make arrangements so that no one faces any inconvenience at the polling booths," said Manoj Kumar.

Kumar and Ganga Ram Punia also inspected the check-posts set up at various places. During the inspection, they asked the employees present at the check-posts to work promptly and honestly.

They also visited the control room set up at the ITI, Yamunanagar, and instructed the officials present there to remain alert.

He said there should be tight security arrangements. He also said that a close watch should be kept on CCTV cameras from the control room at all times so that the elections were conducted in a transparent and fair manner. — TNS

# Will flag Ateli's issues in Vidhan Sabha: Arti Rao

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

MAHENDRAGARH, SEPTEMBER 18  
BJP candidate from Ateli Arti Singh Rao, daughter of Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh, today addressed a series of public meetings in Syana, Nautana, Pota, Sehlang, Talwana, Khedi, Agihar, Kharkara and Bas, Dhannouda, Jharli and Kaimla villages of the constituency. Outgoing MLA Sitaram Yadav was also with her on the occasion.

Addressing the villagers, Arti said the entire Ahirwal region was dear to her, but Ateli had given her family a distinct identity in the state and country by taking them forward in politics.

"My grandfather Rao Birendra Singh became the CM on being elected MLA from the Ateli region and in 1977 my father Rao Indrajit Singh too contested the first election from Jatusana and the Kanina



Arti Rao addresses a meeting at a village in the Ateli constituency.

area was part of this Assembly constituency at that time. Therefore, the Ateli region holds a special significance for my family," she added.

Arti promised the villagers that she would raise the

issues of Ateli and South Haryana prominently at Vidhan Sabha in Chandigarh. During the poll meetings, people felicitated Arti by garlanding her, presenting a turban and weighing her with fruits and laddoos.

# Congress campaign boosts hope for change in Ellenabad

ANIL KAKKAR

SIRSA, SEPTEMBER 18  
An outreach campaign was conducted by Santosh Beniwal, general secretary, Haryana Pradesh Mahila Congress, supporting Congress candidate Bharat Singh Beniwal at Mehnakhera on Wednesday. She emphasised the importance of loyalty to the party, stating that while many leaders switched parties, Bharat Singh remained a steadfast soldier of the Congress. The commitment had earned him the party's nomination, she said.

Santosh Beniwal criticised the INLD, stating that their elected representative had failed to engage with the community, only appearing during elections to solicit votes. She highlighted the disconnect between the politician and the people, asserting that constituents often felt neglected once the elections were over.

She further condemned the



Santosh Beniwal campaigns with Bharat Singh Beniwal in Ellenabad.

BJP government for its governance in the past 10 years, claiming that it had left no community untouched by its mismanagement, forcing citizens to protest for their rights. She urged the voters to choose a representative who genuinely cared for the people and remained accessible.

"Think carefully before you

vote on October 5," she urged, encouraging the residents to avoid past mistakes and select a candidate committed to his/her service. She warned while the opponents might return with sweet promises, the power of the vote should be used to hold them accountable for their past failures.

# Cong gains ground in Kaithal as two-time MLA Surinder Madaan joins

PARVEEN ARORA  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

KAITHAL, SEPTEMBER 18  
In a major boost for the Congress in Kaithal, former minister and two-time MLA Surinder Madaan has joined the Congress with his supporters. He extended support to party candidate Aditya Surjewala for the upcoming Assembly elections. Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Randeep Surjewala welcomed the former minister into the party fold and assured full respect.

Madaan had won the seat in 1987 from the Lok Dal



Workers welcome Surinder Madaan into the party fold in Kaithal.

ticket and in 1991 from the Congress ticket. Madaan's

support is seen as a major boost to Congress candi-

date Surjewala.

Randeep expressed his gratitude, saying, "Former MLA and minister Madaan has played a vital role in Kaithal's development. He has always been an advocate for unity and progress."

Madaan appreciated the working of Randeep and his father in the three consecutive terms when they represented the constituency, saying, "I represented Kaithal twice and worked for its development. When the Surjewala family took charge, they initiated record-breaking development projects,

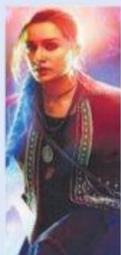
which brought immense satisfaction. The condition of Kaithal has deteriorated under the BJP rule. That's why we have decided to support the Congress candidate wholeheartedly. I am confident that he will break his father Randeep Surjewala victory record and secure a massive win for the Congress in Kaithal."

**Karnal AAP dist prez quits, extends support to Cong**  
Karnal: AAP district president Balwinder Singh has quit the party and extended his support to the Congress.

However, he did not join the Congress. "I have quit AAP, but have not joined any party. I will campaign for all five candidates of AAP in the district. I will try my best to ensure the meeting of the Congress candidates," said Balwinder.

Karnal Congress candidate Sumita Singh reached his residence and met him, his mother and wife. They also welcomed Sumita Singh at their residence. "AAP district president has extended support to us. We are thankful for his support," said Sumita Singh.

**STREE 2 MAKES HISTORY**



Shraddha Kapoor and Rajkummar Rao's *Stree 2* has etched its name in cinematic history by becoming the highest-grossing Hindi film ever, surpassing the lifetime collections of Shah Rukh Khan's *Jawan*. *Stree 2* earned a remarkable ₹453.60 crore net in its second week alone.

# Tribune Life Style

For the future

After Ganesh Visarjan, Ayushmann Khurrana took to Mumbai's Versova beach for a clean up drive. He said it was important to make efforts towards protecting the environment.

HARYANA | THURSDAY | 19 SEPTEMBER 2024

## Awesome ORRY!

Internet's darling and a prominent socialite, Orhan Awatramani, also known as Orry, skyrocketed to fame in 2023 after he shared his photos with Bollywood's biggest stars on social media. He quickly made headlines for his appearances at high-profile, star-studded events and shows.

Orry's conscious choice to keep his profession a mystery only heightened public curiosity, making him a favourite of both the paparazzi and his fans.

Seizing the moment, Orry transitioned into a full-time influencer, now highly sought after for event appearances and brand collaborations. With his popularity continuing to rise, it wouldn't be very surprising if we soon saw him starring in a Bollywood blockbuster!

The social media star was seen making a wild card entry in *Big Boss* last year. And guess what, Orry is the latest brand ambassador of PVR Inox! He recently took to Instagram to announce his cameo in a Hollywood movie. — TNS



SAHIBA BALI



PRAJAKTA KOLI



ANKUSH BAHUGUNA

ANANDIA GUPTA

**S**Ocial media influencers are driving dinner table conversations now; becoming pop culture references and taking over the reins of Bollywood with aplomb. Initially, it was models like John Abraham, Bipasha Basu, Aishwarya Rai and Sushmita Sen, who were envied for snatching up the actors' roles. And now, we have influencers like Kusha Kapila, Prajakta Koli, and Sumukhi Suresh grabbing a fair share of their Bollywood as well as OTT pies. One of the key benefits of casting influencers in movies is that they have millions of active fans. So, when they promote their movies on their platforms, filmmakers get to reach vast audiences. We talk to some of these feisty content creators.

**Billi Mausi chali Bollywood**

After acing the influencer game (with her satirical portrayal of a quintessential Punjabi aunty, Billi Mausi), 34-year-old social media star Kusha Kapila has her calendar choc-a-bloc with acting assignments. After an interesting cameo in hit Netflix series *Masaba Masaba*, and movies like *Thank You for Coming*, *Sukhee* and *Plan A Plan B*, the digital creator (with 3.7 million followers on Instagram) is seen playing lead in Disney+Hotstar's refreshing series *Life Hill Gayi*. "Shortform digital content is good, but it will be great to be in films or series which are remembered for long," she says.

**In sane space**

RJ-turned-comedy influencer Prajakta Koli melted everyone's heart with her performances as Dimple in Netflix romcom *Mismatched*. More acting gigs followed, including *Neejat* and family entertainer *Juggugg Jeejo*, where she was nominated for the Filmfare (Best Female Debut) award.

The 31-year-old digital sensation behind her immensely popular channel *Mostly Sane* (with seven million plus followers) looks towards her viewers for direction. "The comment section on my channel is where I look for direction. My viewers are brutally honest and their feedback has always been my guiding light, whether it's acting or content creation," says the dusky beauty, who believes that the authenticity in influencers bring to the screen is unmatched. Or *Mismatched*, do we say?

**Blossoming with Pushpavalli**

Coming from a traditional South Indian family, her decision to pursue comedy was a leap into the unknown. However, stand-up comedian, influencer and unapologetic showrun-

# Likes, camera... action

The route to Bollywood is no longer only through the ramp or beauty pageants. Filmmakers have found their latest muse, and it's the influencers



KUSHA KAPILA

ner Sumukhi Suresh kept on making people laugh, rising to fame with *Behti Naak*, a YouTube series created by her. She also acted in the mockumentary web series *Better Life Foundation* by Naveen Richard. Eventually, she created and starred in the acclaimed Amazon Prime Video show *Pushpavalli*, season one and two.

Sumukhi has created and acted in shows across OTT platforms, namely *Beauty and the Feast* for Hotstar, *Banake Dikha* for Zomato and *Lust Stories* for Netflix. She has starred in Kannada feature film *Humble Politician Nograj* and turned producer with *Notary*, a short film that's doing the rounds at festivals. And now, Sumukhi is all set to star in Netflix's new romcom series *The Royals*, starring Ishaan Khattar, Bhumi Pednekar and Zeenat Aman, among others. "The year 2024 for me started with acting in this beautiful show with the juiciest ensemble ever. It has been the most unexpected gift I have received," beams Suresh, adding, "Unlike actors who play scripted roles, influencers are known for their genuine, unfiltered personas. They bring relatability and vulnerability to the screen beautifully."

**Shining bright with Chamkeela**

Starting as a child actor in theatre, Sahiba Bali navigated her way through various fields — from cricket broadcasting, content creation and marketing to acting. Bom to a Punjabi Hindu mom and a Kashmiri Sikh dad, this

lovely young lady is a content creator, with a passion for travelling, food and wellness. Known for projects *Bard of Blood* (2019), *Tanaav* (2022) and *Laila Majnu* (2018), Sahiba was recently seen in Imtiaz Ali's critically acclaimed *Chamkeela*. "Influencers get eyeballs, but eventually they only deliver hits if they are good in the craft of acting. Mumbai is a fascinating illusion where dreamers get lost and achievers make it big," says the actress, emphasising the value of hard work and discipline over social media popularity.

**Winging it with Ankush**

Today, he is India's number one beauty content creator in the men's category. From having his own YouTube show, *Wing It with Ankush*, to walking the Cannes Red Carpet in 2024, Ankush Bahuguna has finally got the success he deserved.

With a plethora of skills under his belt (quite like his name suggests), Bahuguna made and starred in his own short film titled *Almost*, which was received well. "I was featured in a short film *Badboli Bhavna* and am now confident to embrace my Bollywood dreams," shares the effervescent Delhi boy, who has shifted base to Mumbai and is busy auditioning for meaty roles to make it big in Bollywood. "Acting was always Plan A and I'm finally at a place in life where I can give this dream my all. Along the way, I also realised how grateful I am to the audience I've built, and I'd never let that go."



SUMUKHI SURESH

The UP Govt's move to engage influencers to promote state schemes cheers the digital community, which would like to see influencing as a mainstream career option

SHEETAL

The UP Government has come up with the UP Digital Media Policy, 2024, which allows influencers to promote state schemes and earn up Rs 8 lakh per month... something that comes as welcome news for influencers. With newfound love and respect for this influencer generation, influencing has become a mainstream career option!

Lifestyle and fashion creator Muskaan Khandelwal calls UP government's announcement a recognition for digital content creators' community. "With this new initiative of the UP government, there will be a shift in how influencers are perceived. While there's a sense that 'we have arrived', there's still much more to do. As influencers, we face challenges like inconsistent income streams, the pressure to stay relevant and the constant need for creativity. It's still a relatively new career path and for it to be seen as truly mainstream, we need more stability and recognition across industries," she adds. Digital content creator and actress Miloni

## Growing influence

Jhonsa believes that the perception has definitely changed as people got platforms to showcase their skills and productivity. "The chances of experimentation in a creative space increase, and hence monetisation and the scope of work does too, which makes it as good as any other career choice for someone. Also, at this point it all comes down to a mix of hard work, luck and talent."

Actress Shivangi Verma also thinks that content creation is in. She says, "If the UP Government wants to incentivise the reach of influencers and social media, there is nothing wrong in it. Everything can co-exist. In the digital age, everyone is a consumer and government too



JEETUSRI



MUSKAAN KHANDELWAL



MILONI JHONSA



SHIVANGI VERMA

wants to reach out to the general public about their policies. What better way than spreading awareness through social media influencers or digital content creators."

Whereas Khandelwal opines that even though government grant is a great start, there's a need to hold workshops, mentorship programmes, and collaborations between the government and influencers. She adds, "By

providing resources for budding content creators, the government can help shape this evolving industry and encourage more young people to pursue it confidently."

On the other hand, Jeetusri, fashion, beauty and lifestyle influencer, is concerned how there are still many different states wherein influencers are not allowed to shoot at specific locations. She explains, "First and fore-

most, influencers need the support from the government with respect to permission to shoot. As per job categories, there are various roles which could be created for influencers as in there are so many breakthrough technologies government is using to make livelihoods easy and clean. So, showcasing that through influencers would make a bigger impact on citizens."