

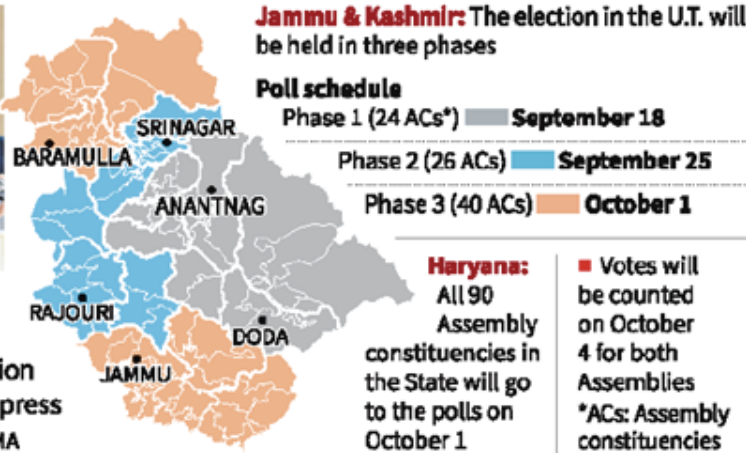
J&K POLLS TO BE HELD IN 3 PHASES

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Making it count | A look at key dates of the two States heading to the polls



Battle lines drawn: Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar with fellow Election Commissioners addressing a press conference. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA



“Mobilisation, deployment and disengagement of these forces with minimum criss-cross movement and optimal utilisation involved complex planning and detailed analysis, carried out over several rounds of consultations with the senior officers of the Ministry of Home Affairs/[Central Armed Police Forces] CAPFs/Police Nodal Officers of the State/UT.”

Rajiv Kumar.
Chief Election Commissioner.

The Election Commission (EC) announced the schedule for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections, which will be held for the first time in a decade and since the revocation of Article 370 in 2019. The elections are scheduled in three phases on September 18, 25, and October 1. This is the first Assembly election since the last one held in November-December 2014. The Supreme Court had directed that the polls be held by September 30, while upholding the scrapping of Article 370 last year. Jammu and Kashmir has 87.09 lakh voters, with 44.46 lakh men, 42.62 lakh women, and 3.71 lakh first-time voters. The first phase will cover 24 Assembly constituencies, the second phase 26 seats, and the third phase 40 seats. Mr. Kumar noted that conducting the Assembly election in J&K requires a considerable deployment of Central and State police forces to ensure peaceful, free and fair elections with fearless participation of voters, especially in vulnerable areas.

Haryana will vote in a single phase on October 1, and the counting of votes for both Assemblies will be held on October 4. In Haryana, 2.01 crore voters — including 1.06 crore men, 95 lakh women, and 4.52 lakh first-timers — will exercise their franchise in 90 Assembly constituencies. The last day to file the nominations of Haryana is September 12, the date of scrutiny is September 13, and the date of withdrawal of candidatures is September 16. The current Haryana Assembly’s term ends on November 3. In 2019, the BJP had won 40 of the 90 seats and formed the Haryana government in alliance with the Jananayak Janta Party.



“If you invest more in your education, then you are likely to get more interest in it.”

—Benjamin Franklin

NATIONAL FILM AWARDS

PERSONALITY

Category	Winner(s)	Film/Language
Best Feature Film	Aattam (The Play)	Malayalam
Best Actor	Rishab Shetty	Kantara (Kannada)
Best Actress	Nithya Menen Manasi Parekh	Thiruchitrambalam (Tamil) Kutch Express (Gujarati)
Best Editing	Mahesh Bhuvanend	Aattam (Malayalam)
Best Screenplay	Anand Ekarshi, Arpita Mukherjee, Rahul V. Chittella	Aattam (Malayalam), Gulmohar (Hindi)
Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment	Kantara	Kannada
Best Choreography	Jani Master, Sathish Krishnan	Thiruchitrambalam (Tamil)
Best Direction	Sooraj R. Barjatya	Uunchai: Zenith (Hindi)
Best Supporting Actor	Pavan Raj Malhotra	Fouja (Haryanvi)
Best Supporting Actress	Neena Gupta	Uunchai: Zenith (Hindi)
Best Debut Film	Fouja	Haryanvi
Best Hindi Film	Gulmohar	Hindi
Best Costume Design	Niki Joshi	Kutch Express (Gujarati)
Best Production Design	Ananda Addhya	Aparajito: The Undefeated (Bengali)
Best Make-up	Somnath Kundu	Aparajito: The Undefeated (Bengali)
Best Lyrics	Naushad Sadar Khan	Fouja (Haryanvi)
Best Music Director (Background Music)	A.R. Rahman	Ponnyin Selvan-Part 1 (Tamil)
Best Tamil Film	Ponnyin Selvan-Part 1	Tamil
Best Cinematography	Ravi Varman	Ponnyin Selvan-Part 1 (Tamil)
Best Sound Design	Anand Krishnamoorthi	Ponnyin Selvan-Part 1 (Tamil)
Best Music Director (Songs)	Pritam	Brahmastra-Part 1: Shiva
Best Male Playback Singer	Arijit Singh	"Kesariya" from Brahmastra-Part 1: Shiva
Best Female Playback Singer	Bombay Jayashri	"Chaayum Veyil" from Saudi Vellaka CC 225/2009
Best Malayalam Film	Saudi Vellaka CC 225/2009	Malayalam
Best Film in Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming & Comic	Brahmastra Part 1: Shiva	
Best Non-Feature Film	Ayena: Mirror	Hindu/Urdu



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ISRO'S SSLV-D3 SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHES EARTH OBSERVATION SATELLITE EOS-08 INTO ORBIT

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

The Indian Space Research Organisation on Friday launched the EOS-08 Earth Observation Satellite on board the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV-D3) from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) in Sriharikota. The SSLV-D3, in its final development flight, lifted off from the first launch pad of SDSC at 9.17 a.m. was injected into a 475-km circular orbit as intended placing the spacecraft in a very precise orbit as planned. The mission aims to advance satellite technology and explore various remote sensing applications.

EOS-08, first-of-its-kind mission was built on a standard ISRO's Microsat / IMS-1 bus with a suite of advanced payloads for observation in the IR range, novel GNSS-R Payload and SiC UV dosimeter. The satellite boasts a host of new technological developments in satellite mainframe systems like an Integrated Avionics system — Communication, Baseband, Storage and Positioning (CBSP) Package, Structural panel embedded with PCB, embedded battery, Micro-DGA (Dual Gimbal Antenna), M-PAA (Phased array antenna) and Flexible solar panel & Nano star sensor etc., for on-board Technology Demonstration. The spacecraft with a mission life of one year carries three payloads:

- **Electro Optical Infrared Payload (EOIR):** Captures images in the Mid-Wave IR (MIR) and Long-Wave IR (LWIR) bands, both day and night.
- **GNSS-R:** Demonstrates remote sensing capabilities using GNSS-R for applications like ocean surface winds, soil moisture, cryosphere monitoring, and flood detection.
- **SiC UV Dosimeter:** Part of the on-board technology demonstration.



SC HAS CAMPAIGNED FOR UCC, BUT REFUSED TO ENFORCE IT

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for a "secular Civil Code" in his Independence Day address has brought the issue into focus. The Supreme Court has pushed for a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) over the years, calling it "desirable", but refused to "enforce" it. The apex court has held that Article 44, which enjoins upon the state to endeavour to secure to its citizens a UCC, corresponds to Part IV or the Directive Principles of State Policy, which are only guidelines and do not create any justiciable rights in favour of any person.

Looking back

The Supreme Court in its 13 - judge Bench in the Kesavananda Bharati case in 1973, reminded the then Government to endeavour for securing the citizens a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India. But the court had also held back, observing that “desirable as it (UCC) is, the government has not been able to take any effective steps towards the realisation of this goal”. The court’s awareness of its limitation in enforcing a UCC could be seen clearly voiced by Justice E.S. Venkataramiah in the 1982 Constitution Bench judgment of National Textile Workers versus P.R. Ramakrishnan.



“Would this court enforce a UCC in respect of all citizens, without the aid of an appropriate legislation even though the concept of equality is enshrined in the Constitution and Article 44 specifically requires the state to endeavour to secure for all citizens a UCC? It may not do so.”

Justice Venkataramiah.
Supreme Court of India.

JUDGEMENTS

The Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court in the Shah Bano case (1985) noted UCC as a “dead letter”, lamenting no official activity for framing a common civil code for the country. A two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in Sarla Mudgal case made a direct exhortation to the government to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC). Justice Deepak Gupta in Jose Paulo Coutinho (2019) recorded that no action has been taken to secure for the citizens a UCC. The Supreme Court in Pannalal Bansilal case cautioned a one-stroke implementation “may perhaps be counter-productive to the unity and integrity of the nation”.

MODI SPEAKS TO YUNUS, CALLS FOR SAFETY OF HINDUS IN BANGLADESH

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday spoke to Muhammad Yunus, Chief Adviser of the new interim government in Bangladesh, and reiterated his call for safety and security of “Hindus and all other minority communities” in the neighbouring country. The two leaders spoke for the first time against the backdrop of the fast-moving developments in Bangladesh. Mr. Modi invited Professor Yunus to the third Voice of Global South Summit to be hosted virtually by India on Saturday.

Mr. Modi made a forceful mention of the minority communities in Bangladesh amid reports that they have been targeted following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government. Muhammad Yunus, Chief Adviser of the new interim government in Bangladesh reiterated its commitment to safeguard every citizen of the country including the minorities when the Indian Prime Minister raised the issue of protection of the minorities.”

Muhammad Yunus described the change of government through the student movement as the “Second Revolution” in Bangladesh and pledged that his government would “fulfil the desire of the democratic aspirations of the students and people. India’s relation with Bangladesh has been on top of New Delhi’s neighbourhood activities as the collapse of the Hasina government has hindered much of the essential activities between the two sides like trade and visa activities.

India extended three lines of credit to Bangladesh worth US \$ 8 billion and additional grant assistance for several infrastructure projects, including roads, railways, irrigation, shipping and ports over the last eight years. Interestingly, Bangladesh had asked India for \$2 billion earlier this year to help pay the oil dues, but the deal never got finalised. India is worried about the fate of \$ 4-5 billion it has disbursed to Bangladesh for various development projects. India may be forced to write them off upon rejecting the lines of credit are backed by sovereign guarantees.

“Received a telephone call from Professor Muhammad Yunus. Exchanged views on the prevailing situation. Reiterated India’s support for a democratic, stable, peaceful and progressive Bangladesh. He assured protection, safety and security of Hindus and all minorities in Bangladesh.”

Mr. Narendra Modi.
Prime Minister, India



CENTRE UNVEILS NEW SYSTEM TO STUDY WEATHER, CROP PATTERNS

AGRICULTURE RELATED MATTERS

“With crop mapping and monitoring, we will be able to understand cropping patterns by analysing parcel-level crop maps over different years. This helps in understanding crop rotation practices and promotes sustainable agriculture by encouraging the cultivation of diverse crops.”

Union Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer’s Welfare.

The Union Agriculture Ministry launched a digital geo-spatial platform, Krishi-Decision Support System (DSS), here on Friday which will share real-time data-driven insights on weather patterns, soil conditions, crop health, crop acreage, and advisories with all stakeholders such as farmers, experts, and policymakers.

The platform provides seamless access to comprehensive data, including satellite images, weather information, reservoir storage, groundwater levels, and soil health information.

“Doing nothing is very hard to do. You never know when you’re finished.”—Leslie Nielsen

PAKISTAN RECORDS ASIA'S FIRST CASES OF M-POX

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Salim Khan, the Director General of Health Services for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa confirmed detection of m-pox for two patients on their arrival from the United Arab Emirates, while a third patient's samples had been sent to the National Health Institute in Islamabad for confirmation. All three patients belong to the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province in the northwest, the militancy-whacked region bordering Afghanistan.

GLOBAL RESPONSE:

- **The World Health Organization (WHO)** declared the spread of 'monkey pox' (m-pox) as a global health emergency. The WHO declared the outbreak of m-pox in parts of Africa as a cause of international concern and a threat to public health. The highly contagious disease, formerly known as 'monkey pox', killed at least 450 people in the Republic of Congo. It is caused by the monkey pox virus, which belongs to the same group of viruses as smallpox but is less harmful. The virus was originally transmitted from animals to humans, but now it is also transmitted from humans to humans.
- **Pakistan's Ministry of Health** also issued an advisory on the disease calling for further strengthening of the screening system and entry points at airports. Prime Minister's Coordinator for Health Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Bharath instructed Federal Hospitals to take precautionary measures and the Ministry of Health and Border Health Services are "alert to deal with any kind of situation."
- **China** announced screening people and goods entering the country for m-pox over the next six months. China's customs administration cautioned people travelling from countries where virus outbreaks have occurred, who have been in contact with m-pox cases or display symptoms should "take the initiative to declare to customs when entering the country."
- The **European Union Health Agency** on Friday urged its member states to get ready for more cases of a deadly strain of m-pox, a day after Sweden announced the first case outside Africa.

REGULATORY CURBS FAIL TO DAMPEN NBFC GOLD LOANS IN FY25

ECONOMICS & DEVELOPMENT

Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) will likely post a robust growth of almost 15 % in gold loan business in FY25 despite the recent regulatory actions taken by the Reserve of India (RBI).

NORM 'VIOLATION'

Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) remain optimistic despite increased scrutiny from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). In March, the RBI barred IIFL Finance, a major NBFC, from sanctioning gold loans for failing to adhere to the 75 % Loan-to-Value (LTV) norm and the regulation prohibiting cash disbursements of over ₹ 20,000. While most gold loan NBFCs have now transitioned to disbursing amounts over ₹ 20,000 through digital channels, Crisil Ratings

analysis indicates that previously, up to 95 % of such disbursements were made in cash. The transition to digital channels has only slightly increased turnaround times, allowing NBFCs to maintain their competitive edge over banks. However, gold loan NBFCs must regularly assess LTV ratios and conduct timely auctions if gold prices drop. Despite intense pricing competition, the margins of these NBFCs are expected to remain static.

THAI LAWMAKERS ELECT SHINAWATRA HEIRESS PAETONGTARN AS PM

PERSONALITY

Paetongtarn Shinawatra, the 37-year-old daughter of billionaire Thaksin Shinawatra, became Thailand's Prime Minister, making her the third member of her influential family to lead the country. She is the youngest leader in Thailand's history as a constitutional monarchy and the second female Prime Minister after her aunt Yingluck. Paetongtarn, from the Pheu Thai party, was approved as premier by a parliamentary vote of 319 to 145. Her rise to power follows the Constitutional Court's removal of former Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin for appointing a Cabinet Minister with a criminal conviction. Paetongtarn will aim to avoid the fate of her father and aunt, both of whom were ousted by the military during a long-standing power struggle with Thailand's conservative, pro-military, pro-royalist establishment.



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