

Detained Kashmiri Leader Hospitalised

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Srinagar: Politician Bilal Sultan was taken to the Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences (IMHANS) in Srinagar after he showed signs of aggravated depression following preventive detention of nearly seven months.

Sultan, 47, has been associated with the Awami Ittehad Party and People's United Front

His condition is bad. He is extremely depressed," Sultan's wife Muzammil, who lives with their 13-year-old son, told ET. Hospital officials refused to comment on the matter. Sultan, 47, has been associated with the Awami Ittehad Party and People's United Front, from which he resigned recently, and contested unsuccessfully against National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah from Srinagar constituency in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

BIG MESSAGE Register to improve delivery of welfare schemes

In NPR, 21 Departments, 50 Celebs Reach Out to Masses

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New Delhi: The Registrar General of India (RGI) has asked government departments to impress upon citizens across the country that the Population Register (NPR) will help improve delivery of welfare schemes such as the Bharat national health insurance scheme and the LPG subsidy programme Ujjwala Yojana.

In the midst of concerns being about the NPR, the RGI, which conducts the enumeration exercise, census and updation of NPR, has sent to 21 government departments including the health ministry. It has always and publicity wings in

asking them to spread the message, officials, household-welfare people to cooperate with data have been used extensively by rators as they approach every one of five of the government schemes such as about 50 celebrities, including Jan-Dhan Yojana, personnel, actors, singers, sportspersons, that it rural electrification to enlist to reach out to the masses.

Since 2011, the National Response Force such as Tamil Nadu and Odisha used the NPR data for improving many of their social rescue teams in flood-prone areas. These written to the health ministry rank high on implementation and child development schemes will be highlighted, to inform accredited government official, who did not activists (ASHAs) and



Aanganwadi workers to "know and educate" the masses on how the census and NPR will "empower the poor". Public messaging services of the All India Radio, National Highway Authority of India and Indian Railways in all stations will also be used to spread the message, said officials.

Census data has a confidentiality clause that prevents the government from using an individual's data and hence census data is largely used to design broad-based, area-specific schemes, mostly related to irrigation and health interventions, according to officials. "On the contrary, when it comes to schemes targeted at individu-

als or households, be it electricity or insurance, medical or gas subsidies is the NPR data that is being used along with the Socio Economic and Census (SECC) 2011," said the officials.

Letters have also been sent to sarpanches of villages, directing them to inform every household about the census. The idea is to present the census and NPR as a "usual administrative process that has been done before to avoid panic, the RGI has drawn words such as 'jaankari' (information) from its official campaigner stuck to 'jan-gannana' and 'Jan-hya' (population enumeration and population).

"If not for the NPR data and SECC, we may have to depend on old land records or an outdated data of 2011 which is not advisable. This be told to people," said an official.

The RGI decided to launch an awareness drive after two states—Kerala and West Bengal—refused to implement NPR. The bone of contention was three newly added questions in the NPR form that require citizens to provide details about language as well as the place of birth of their mothers, fathers and details of their parents. Aadhaar cards, ration cards and IDs. "Questions asked in the NPR are purely governance related.... Because NPR is based on voluntary information, one can always choose to not answer the three questions."

MARCH 26 RAJYA SABHA POLLS

Talk to AIUDF for Assam Seats

ably polls. The parties have a history of forging electoral alliances.

Former Assam chief minister Tarun Gogoi said "we will talk to the chief of the All India United Democratic Front, Badruddin Ajmal about a common candidate for the Upper House." Finance minister Himanta Sarma had recently said that the ruling coalition would consider a third candidate if opposition parties fail to reach a consensus on a candidate.

Of the three seats, two va-

cancies were caused after Congress leaders Bhubaneswar Kalita and Sanjay Singh joined the BJP and quit their RS seats. The third vacancy is due to Bodoland People's Front MP Biswajit Daimary completing his term. BJP has hinted on fielding Kalita and Daimary has been re-nominated by the BPF, an alliance partner of the BJP which governs the Sixth Schedule area of Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC).

In a related development, minister of state for edu-

cation Bhabesh Kalita that BJP will contest BTC polls on its own. Elections to the 40-seat territorial council are scheduled for next month. BPF faces a serious challenge from the United People's Party Liberal Front led by former Rajya MP Urkhao Gwra Brahma. In 2006 and 2011, BPF was part of the Congress-led government in Assam but lost ways before the 2013 Sabha polls. A senior BPF leader, who do not want to be named, said "while BPF is an old ally, UPPL is also willing to have an alliance with BJP. For the sake of the future, we have decided to go it alone in the pol-

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