

Dr Jitendra addresses India-Sweden Innovation meet, emphasises 'Green' transition

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NEW DELHI: Addressing the India-Sweden Innovation meet today, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said that India and Sweden cooperation in Energy Sector will go a long way in achieving the ultimate goal of fossil fuel free economy.

Delivering the Inaugural Address at the 8th India-Sweden Innovation Day meet on the theme 'Accelerating India Sweden Green Transition', Dr Jitendra Singh said, cooperation in the energy sector was identified as an important area during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Stockholm in April 2018, as India is looking for technology solutions for clean energy. The Minister noted with satisfaction that the Department of Science & Technology and the Swedish Energy Agency have worked out and launched a Call for Industrial R&D proposals in this sector and received 20 joint industry led proposals which are in an advanced stage of consideration and we may implement shortlisted projects soon.

Dr Jitendra informed that follow-



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh delivering the Inaugural Address at the 8th India-Sweden Innovation Day meet on Tuesday.

ing the visit of Prime Minister Modi, the scientific cooperation was reviewed at official level by the Joint Committee held on 2 May 2019 and they had identified several important themes for S&T cooperation such as Smart Cities, Clean Technologies, Digitalization including Internet of Things, Machine Learning, Circular economy etc and both Department of Science and Technology and Swedish Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation are implementing.

The Joint Call was announced by Prime Ministers of both countries during their bilateral meeting on 5th March 2021, which resulted in 22

projects and three joint projects have been recommended from both sides for funding.

Dr Jitendra noted with satisfaction a new joint call on Circular economy including the themes such as Hearth Science and Waste to Wealth by the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Biotechnology and Swedish Vinnova during 2021-2022.

He said, the ICMR India and Swedish FORTE have also agreed to launch the new call in 2021-2022 on broad themes viz., Public health, prevention, and health promotion Organization and provision of care for the elderly.

In addition, The Department of Bio Technology is already engaged with Swedish Partners on Incubator Connect, Digital Health Care and Global Bio India programmes, enhancing the partnerships in the field of Bio Technology, the Minister added.

Congratulating Indian and Swedish scientists for successful 8 years of the India-Sweden Innovation Day celebrations, Dr Jitendra said, the Science and Technology cooperation between two countries forms the important component of the bilateral cooperation, which was initiated through the Indo-Swiss Inter-

Governmental Agreement signed at Stockholm on 9th December 2005. This agreement has provisions for cooperation through. It includes exchange of scientists, graduate students, research workers, technologists, other specialists and scholars among others.

In his address, Ibrahim Baylan, Swedish Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation said that Indo-Swedish cooperation continued even during the challenging times of COVID pandemic. He said, that the number of scientific collaborations has increased since 2018 and called for finding new solutions, new resilience for developing a sustainable society. He said, Sweden is working hard on becoming fossil fuel free economy and developing new climate neutral technology products.

Tannaya Lal, Ambassador of India to Sweden and Latvia, Ambassador Klas Molin, Swedish Ambassador to India, Dr. Renu Swarup, Secretary, Dept of Science & Technology & Dept of Biotechnology, Government of India, Darja Isaksson, Director General, Vinnova, Sanjoo Malhotra CEO India Unlimited & Robin Sukhia, Secretary General and President Sweden-India Business Council and senior officials from both the sides took part in the conference.



Rajni Patil discusses current situation, crop damage with JKPCC leaders

➤ Demands adequate compensation for farmers

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JAMMU: AICC Incharge JK Affairs Rajni Patil on Tuesday discussed the current situation including the huge damage to crops and orchards and loss of some precious lives with Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress (JKPCC) leaders and impressed upon the government to announce adequate ex gratia relief and compensation to the affected people.

Patil shared the grief of the families whose family members lost their lives due to heavy rains and snow besides expressing solidarity with the farmers and the orchardists who suffered huge damage to their crops.

The meeting impressed upon the Govt to immediately announce the ex-gratia relief and compensation to the affected people and free seed and fertilizers for the next crop.

Patil and JKPCC President G A Mir briefed the senior leaders about the various nationwide pro-



CM, Mula Ram and Raman Bhalla, Ravinder Sharma, Balwan Singh, Yogesh Sawhney, Abdul Majid Wani, Ashok Sharma, Shiv Dev Singh, A.S Micky, Balbir Singh, Rajnish Sharma, Manmohan Singh, Shabir Ahmed Khan, KC Bhagat, Ashok Dogra and Uday Chib.

The party leaders apprised the leadership about the resentment amongst the people over the statement of the Home Minister Amit Shah whereby he said that elections will be held in UT only and statehood will be considered later on.

These vague statements of the centre government are not acceptable to the people of Jammu and Kashmir who feel they have been deprived of their status and identity and same should be restored in the shape of full statehood.

Reiterating the demand for early restoration of statehood, the meeting rejected the statement of the home minister about the statehood to be considered after the elections.

Rising prices of fuel, essential items spoil household budget ahead of festivities: Bhalla

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JAMMU: Skyrocketing prices of essential commodities hit the common man hard. "It is not hard enough to describe how badly the middle classes and the poor families have been affected by the spiralling prices of essential commodities, which refuse to stabilise as no concern shown and promises made by the Prime Minister, finance minister, Planning Commission remained only on papers.

This was observed by JKPCC Vice President and former Minister Raman Bhalla at Ratnal in Bishnah Constituency while addressing public gathering particularly women folk in large number



JKPCC Vice President Raman Bhalla addressing a gathering.

facing severe brunt of managing family affairs organized by Kuldeep Mahajan Kalla Shah.

Prominent among those present on the occasion include PCC Secretary Shashi Sharma, Manhor Lal Mottan,

Tara Singh, Mohinder Kumar, Paras Ram, Varinder Singh Deepu, Mull Raj beside others. Speaking on the occasion, Bhalla said that earlier, people is suffering high prices of pulses or onions or petrol badly

impacting their lives, but now there is long list of items under BJP Rule which has badly impacted all sections of society.

Therefore, not only commodities that one purchases for household use but prices of things that one consumes just like that as they come out of office with friends or when they feel a little hungry are also reaching a point that one thinks twice before taking his friends to a tea stall. He said, worst affected lot is the middle class, especially salaried working class, which has to maintain a reasonable standard of living in a fixed income. Now, due to rise in prices of commodities espe-

cially food, it is becoming difficult for them to bear all the expenses comfortably. He said, "It's hard for them to follow the same budget during the whole month because the prices of petrol, vegetable and fruits increase twice or thrice in a month. The soaring price of vegetables is really a source of worry. Now, they can't think of savings and outings because they have to maintain our budget in limited income. They have resorted to reducing the quantity of things that they usually purchase. They have started compromising with the quantity of nutritious food they used to buy for their children."

Pankaj Udhas enthralls Jammu audience at Zorawar Singh Auditorium

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JAMMU: Iconic Week Festival started by the Jammu & Kashmir government to promote tourism activities in the region continued well through the day.

An initiative of the Tourism Department, the day witnessed a stellar performance by renowned Ghazal singer, Pankaj Udhas at Sham-e-Ghazal

event held in the General Zorawar Singh Auditorium, Jammu University. The event was organised in collaboration with the divisional administration.

Mesmerizing performances by the singer were enjoyed by people from all walks of life. The performances were filled with patriotic, melodramatic and nostalgic songs by the legendary singer.

Vice Chancellor JU, Manoj Dhar was the Chief Guest on the occasion, while VC Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology, JP Sharma was the guest of honour. Among others present on the occasion also included Director Tourism, Vivekanand Rai and other senior officers.

Nupur Pant's performance marks grand culmination of Iconic Week celebrations at Basohli



Dignitaries presenting memento to Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rahul Yadav.

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KATHUA: The Grandeur of 'Iconic Week Festival' scaled up as the Bollywood Singing sensation Nupur Pant performed on the final day of the 'Iconic Week Festival' giving the audience an enthralling experience in Jam packed Tourism Reception Centre, Basohli.

The Kathua leg of 'Iconic Week Celebrations' has witnessed an array of activities including Rowing, Kayaking, Canoeing under Water Sports category on the waterfront of Ranjit Sagar Lake, besides final day matches of Volleyball and Kabaddi at Purthu Valley.

The day started with the Flaggging off a Cyclothon from Iconic Atal Setu bridge; the only cable stay bridge of North India, which passed through Basohli town and culminated at Purthu Valley also known as Mini Goa. The young Boys and Girls riders took part in the Cyclothon held in the wee hours of Tuesday morning.

The Chief Guest, Mahan

Singh (DDC, Chairperson Kathua) in his address said Basohli has seen 1046 years of glorious past under the reign of Paul dynasty where Basohli was a hub of economic and social activities and named Vishwasthali. He said with the coming up Water Sports Academy in Ranjit Sagar Lake, Basohli will once again attain new heights this time on the tourist landscape of the world. He appreciated JK Sports Council, Divisional and District Administration for their concerted efforts to bring Water Sports to Basohli. He said such events will not only provide local youth a chance to pursue Water sports but also increase footfall of tourists in Basohli to have a close glimpse of world renowned Basohli paintings and Pashmina work.

While speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner, Kathua, Rahul Yadav said that maiden Water Sports Festival under the aegis of 'Iconic Week Celebrations' will benefit local young play-

ers to encash this opportunity. He said efforts will be made to make Water Sports a regular calendar activity in Basohli. He also appreciated players who took part in this maiden mega event.

Secretary, JK Sports Council, Nuzhat Gul said the Water Sports Academy set up at Basohli will soon emerge as a popular and dream destination for Water Sports lovers. She said the local youth can avail the best opportunity to train themselves and compete in National and International events.

Later, the chief guest gave away prizes to winners and participants of different sports competitions.

The Duggar Folk artists including local talent of Basohli got cheers from the audience numerous times.

Later in the evening, massive Fireworks amid the beautifully illuminated and decked up TRC building and Famous Atal Setu bridge marked the grand culmination of the event.

Lekhi visits Baramulla, interacts with public representatives

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BARAMULLA: Continuing the Central Government's public outreach programme in Jammu and Kashmir, Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture, Meenakshi Lekhi on Tuesday visited Baramulla.

The Minister participated in a plantation drive at Government Girls Higher Secondary school Baramulla premises. She was accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Bhupinder Kumar along with other concerned officers who also participated in the drive.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister stressed upon



Union MoS for External Affairs and Culture, Meenakshi Lekhi chairing a meeting at Baramulla.

the need for plantation of more and more trees for maintaining ecological balance and called it a sign of a healthy and progressive society. She stressed on planting maximum saplings in the premises of all the other offices and institu-

tions. The Minister also felicitated the meritorious NEET qualifiers and complimented students for their performance. Urging students to work hard in their respective domains, the minister advised them to get

acquainted with the modern means of education adding that the Central Government is very keen to upgrade the employability of students by means of different skill development and job oriented courses. A cultural program was also organised on the occasion.

Earlier, the Minister conducted an interactive meeting with public representatives and listened to their concerns and developmental aspirations. The concerned stakeholders apprised their grievances and put forth their demands meant for the overall development of the region. Assuring the representatives of timely resolution of their issues,

she said that the Union Government is actively working for the development of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory.

The minister also extended congratulations to the PRIs for successful establishment of a decentralized system and said that the present Govt. is working to strengthen the PRI mechanism with more financial autonomy. She instructed them to identify their role and co-operate in the field of development.

Vice Chairperson JK KVIB, Dr. Hina Shafi Bhat, DDC members, BDC Chairpersons, MC Presidents and PRIs were also present on the occasion.

J&K BJP celebrates Accession Day with vigour

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JAMMU: J&K BJP led by its President Ravinder Raina and other senior leaders celebrated Accession Day (Vilay Diwas) with vigour, at Maharaja Hari Singh Park, near Tawi River, Jammu.

Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh also joined the BJP leaders on the occasion and paid tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh.

The National Flag was also hoisted on the occasion while paying glorious tributes to the great Maharaja.

MP Jugal Kishore Sharma, JMC Mayor Chander Mohan Gupta, Ashok Kaul, Shamsher Singh Manhas, Yudhvir Sethi, Aseem Gupta, Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, Priya Sethi, Devender Singh Rana, Surjit Singh Slathia, Charanjit Singh Khalsa, Arvind Gupta, Purnima Sharma, Sanjita Dogra, Baldev Singh Billawaria, Rekha Mahajan, Vikram Randhawa, Satish Sharma, Sanjay Baru, Rajeev Charak, Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, Ayodhya Gupta, Arun Jamwal, Prem Gupta, Brahm Jyot Satti, Shaileja Gupta, Vinay Gupta, Munish Khajuria, Karan Singh and other party leaders were present on the occasion.

Ravinder Raina accused PDP President Mehbooba Mufti of having "Talibani ideology" and said anyone who celebrated Pakistan's recent win over India in a T20 World Cup match would be jailed for "conspiring" against the country. He said "Some leaders need security cover and are protected round-the-clock by our forces but their heart beats for



J&K BJP leaders paying tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh on Vilay Diwas.

Pakistan. Mehbooba is of Talibani ideology and she is answerable to the people for supporting an enemy nation which is pushing armed terrorists, conspiring against us and bleeding J&K. She has committed a grave sin". He said those who have conspired against the country by celebrating Pakistan's win cannot be spared. "Anyone who poses a threat to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of our motherland will be bulldozed and crushed..

Raina said that whole J&K is celebrating this day as it has come after

many sacrifices by Nationalist workers of Bharatiya Jana Sangha and Praja Parishad. He recalled Maharaja's role in 1st and 2nd round table conferences and conspiracies of NC and Congress.

"Vijay Diwas is like Republic and Independence day for us as this was the day when our maharaja made J&K an integral part of Indi. Some parts of Jammu and Kashmir are still under the illegal occupation of Pakistan and China and the day is not far when we will hoist the Tricolour there as well," he said.

Rao Inderjit Singh paid rich tributes to the last Dogra ruler of J&K Maharaja Hari Singh. He recalled the historic movements of the signing of accession and the defeat of Pakistani raiders who tried to control the Srinagar airport and said the work started by the maharaja was completed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi by revoking the Article 370 on August 5, 2019. He said that today is very auspicious day when J&K became part of India.

He stressed that Taliban, China or Pakistan cannot think of taking J&K from us.

Jugal Kishore Sharma thanked everybody for their active participation and said that the Accession Day marks the signing of the instrument of accession by the maharaja with the governor-general of India, Lord Mountbatten, on October 26, 1947 to join the then dominion of India.

Chander Mohan Gupta provided insight on the historic events during the accession of J&K with Union of India.

Devender Singh Rana said Pakistan is not learning the lessons from history and repeatedly attempting to disturb the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. He said present dispensation under PM Modi strengthened J&K and the country.

Yudhvir Sethi highlighted the contribution of the maharaja and said Jammu and Kashmir was and will remain the integral part of India. He managed the whole programme with the Vinay Gupta and Munish Khajuria.