

Gaurav calls on CS Mehta, submits memo; stresses for development of Jammu region

Advocates for establishment of a tourism circuit

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Gaurav Gupta, former General Secretary of Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Jammu, on Friday met Arun Mehta, Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir, and submitted a memorandum of demands highlighting key demands for the development of the Jammu region.

The former General Secretary appreciated the recent statement made by LG Sinha regarding the transformation of Srinagar into a Smart City.

However, he emphasized the urgent need for similar initiatives in the Jammu region, acknowledging its unique charm and cultural significance.

Gaurav Gupta outlined a series of crucial measures that, if addressed promptly, can significantly contribute to the holistic development of Jammu.

Among these measures is the expedited completion of ongoing projects under the Smart City initiative. Timely execution of these projects is seen as essential to fully realize the



Former General Secretary CCI Jammu, Gaurav Gupta submitting memorandum to Chief Secretary Arun Mehta.

benefits and potential they hold for enhancing the region's infrastructure and quality of life, he added.

He said tourism is a pivotal driver for local economies and a platform to showcase the natural beauty and cultural wonders of Jammu region. He stressed the pressing need for

increased promotion of the region to attract tourists. This would not only boost the local economy but also significantly enhance the experience of visitors to Jammu, he added.

He said that the Suchetgarh Border's retreat ceremony, symbolizing India's rich military heritage. He called for its wider publicization, as increased awareness and participation would pay tribute to the armed forces and unlock the tourism potential of the area. The memorandum also underscored the importance of timely completion of ongoing projects like the Tawi Barrage and Artificial Lake, which can provide recreational opportunities and address water resource management and flood control concerns.

He also highlighted the need to enhance the tourist appeal of Jammu Zoo through infrastructure upgrades and educational programs that connect visitors with regional wildlife and nature.

"The historic Mubarak Mandi Complex holds deep sentimental value for the people of Jammu," he

said, calling for its preservation and the expedited continuation of restoration and maintenance works.

Gupta also suggested the installation of prominent hoardings at locations such as the railway station, Jammu Airport, and the bus stand, providing information about the region's significant tourist attractions and cultural sites.

To ensure that visitors to Jammu are well-informed about the region's tourism potential, Gaurav advocated for the establishment of a tourism circuit, encompassing all major tourist destinations and providing a comprehensive experience for travelers.

He expressed confidence that, under the present dispensation, the Jammu region can achieve the same level of excellence and progress as Srinagar, setting a shining example for the rest of the country.

The Chief Secretary gave a patient hearing to the issues put forth by Gaurav Gupta, terming all the points as genuine and assured to take adequate measures in addressing the same on priority basis.

Bhalla visits Pak firing affected villages, listens to woes of firing victims

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Expressing concerns and sympathies with the people who are affected by firing from across the border during ceasefire violations by Pakistan, JKPC Working President Raman Bhalla along with prominent Congress leaders on Friday visited Pak firing affected villages Kanshipur, Changia, Treva, Arnia town, and assessed losses caused due to ceasefire violation by Pakistan in yesterday overnight firing.

He was accompanied by PCC General Secretary Shashi Sharma, Kailash Saini Councillor, Puri, Bharat Bhushan Bunt, Yash Saini Councillor, Sarpanch Balbir Kour, Sarpanch Rinku Langleh, Pardeep Bhalla, Naresh Kumar Councillor, KC Saini, Sat Pal Bhagat, Jeet Raj Saini Councillor, Rattan Lal, Kamal Kumar Keentii Bhagat, Rajesh Kumar, Major



JKPC Working President Raman Bhalla interacting with border residents.

Singh Saini, Tarsem Singh Saini besides others.

Bhalla said Government should make all out efforts to ensure their safety and security of the life and property of the border town. He also demanded district administration to ensure all basic amenities to the affected families. He also called upon affected family members that the people of entire J&K share their grief.

He said the time has come to silence the Pakistani guns

along the LoC and international border.

Lauding the role of BSF in safeguarding the borders, the Congress leader said "the force has done a good job and it has done what was required of it".

Expressing shock over shelling on civilians in Arnia village, Bhalla said that deliberately targeting civilians areas is the latest design of the Pakistan and seems to be aimed at creating fear all along the borders in J&K.

Sarveshwar Smile Foundation adopts poor girls for education from Pancheri area

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Sarveshwar Smile Foundation's commitment to improving the lives of women in the Meer area of Tehsil Pancheri, District Udhampur.

The foundation's initiatives, as described in the provided information, include providing free stitching and tailoring training, promoting financial literacy and income generation activities, and adopting poor girls for education up to the 12th class.

The foundation is actively engaged in social activities and has started a stitching and tailoring training center in the village of Meer in Pancheri, District Udhampur. The training center was inaugurated by Jyoti Pathania, the District Mission Coordinator, who emphasized the importance of such training in empowering women with skills and making them financially



Sarveshwar Smile Foundation members with adopted girls.

independent.

Pooja Gupta, the Chairperson of the Foundation, mentioned that the free training programs are being offered to women in the villages of Chulana, Meer, and Saddal in the Pancheri area, helping them upgrade their skills. She also highlighted the use of biodegradable materials in stitching designs.

The foundation has adopted ten poor girl students from the area and committed to providing them with

free education and uniforms up to the 12th grade.

The foundation also plans to start a similar programme focused on food processing activities in the village of Tyeli in Samba district. Sarveshwar Smile Foundation is actively involved in raising awareness among the farming community about organic farming, financial literacy, and income generation activities.

The foundation's work is centered around the concept

of "Rebuilding and Inspiring Lives," with a focus on providing optimal services to the women's community, promoting organic farming, and enhancing financial literacy among farmers and their families. Dr. Rakesh Gupta, the Project Director of Sarveshwar Smile Foundation, expressed gratitude to Khajoor Singh of Sanjeevini Jan Kalyan Seva Samiti for effective coordination in plantation and project execution.

The program received support and involvement from local dignitaries, including Jeevan Kumar Sharma, Chairman of the Block Development Council, and Jasveer Singh, a member of the District Development Council, Udhampur.

Mahadeep Singh, former SSP and Director Corporate of Sarveshwar Food Limited, conveyed his gratitude to all dignitaries and participants.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Bharatiya Janata Party MP Rajya Sabha, (Nominated) Er. Gulam Ali Khatana, has urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to expedite the selection process for aspirants of various government posts within the Union Territory especially Sub Inspectors, JEs, Compilers in Finance dept. and waited list candidates of Junior Statistical Assistants who are waiting since last two years.

Addressing a delegation of job aspirants, MP Khatana said that the transformative work done by LG Manoj Sinha in restoring normalcy in the region and fast tracking the developmental works in the short span of time.

He said the selection process for Sub Inspectors, Junior Engineers, Compilers in the Finance Department, and Junior Statistical Assistants has been lingering on for last



Delegation members calling on MP Rajya Sabha, Er. Gulam Ali Khatana.

more than 2 years and these positions are critical to the functioning of the government and the well-being of the Union Territory's residents.

By expediting the selection process, the LG's administration will further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the government's operations, he added. MP Khatana commended the relentless efforts of the Lieutenant Governor in bringing normalcy to Jammu and Kashmir. The

initiatives taken by LG Sinha, including development projects, outreach programs, and the creation of a conducive environment for businesses, have played a significant role in improving the lives of the people in the region.

He said that creating new job opportunities for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir is essential for the long-term prosperity of the Union Territory. By accelerating the selection process for various govern-

ment posts, the administration can empower the youth and provide them with opportunities for personal growth and development, which will contribute to the overall progress of the region.

MP Khatana said that during the recent meeting LG Manoj Sinha has assured to expedite the selection process and hoped to see swift progress in the selection process for the mentioned government positions.

PF Commissioner inaugurates Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0 programme

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Regional Provident Fund Commissioner, Rizwan Uddin, inaugurated a session to discuss the importance of social security, specifically the Employees' Pension Scheme 1995, and the Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme, 1976.

These social security schemes were extended to workers in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh from November 2019.

During the workshop, Commissioner Rizwan Uddin addressed issues faced by both establishments and employees, and there was an interactive session where various stakeholders learned how to deal with problems related to the Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952.

The session covered various aspects, including enrollment



Regional PF Commissioner, Rizwan Uddin, speaking at a programme at Rajouri.

of members, PAN activation, bank and Aadhaar seeding, online claim filing, filing of e-nominations, e-sign, and filing ECR. In the inaugural session, Commissioner Rizwan highlighted the need for more employees to enroll in the Provident Fund and Pension Fund, citing examples of accidents where only one month's contribution had

been remitted. He emphasized the benefits of these schemes, including monthly pensions for eligible dependents of deceased employees. Employers acknowledged the efforts made by the PF Commissioner and expressed their willingness to enhance membership.

The P F Commissioner thanked

Himalayan Degree College Rajouri, Md. Muslim Wani for elaborate arrangements and facilitating successful organization of the event "Nidhi Apke Nikat 2.0" at Rajouri, which aimed to provide information about the services and benefits of the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995, and the Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance

Scheme, 1976 to the employees of the Union Territory of Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Other dignitaries present in the programme were Md. Ishaq, Registrar, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University, Md. Azam Shah, Retired Head Master and Maulana Lal Uddin.

Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0 programme for the month of October, 2023 was held at Himalayan Education Mission College, Thandi Kassi, Rajouri by Amit Jakhmola, EO/AO and at Conference Hall, GD Goenka Public School, Baramulla by Suhail Khan, EO/AO. The programme was also held at Siddhartha High School, Choskor, Leh by Pawan Kumar, EO/AO where representatives of establishments and employees were present in the programme.

Bharat will not tolerate any violation on its territory: Kavinder

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and former Deputy Chief Minister, Kavinder Gupta, has vehemently condemned Pakistan for its unprovoked firing and shelling along the border.

He emphasized that despite various agreements and assurances, our neighboring country persists in engaging in such aggressive actions periodically, a situation that is deeply regrettable.

Kavinder expressed the BJP's unwavering support for the people facing this crisis due to unprovoked shelling on borders and lauded the robust response of the Indian security personnel, who are steadfastly protecting the nation's bor-



Kavinder Gupta.

ders.

He asserted that the armed forces have been granted the authority to respond firmly to Pakistan's aggression, sending a clear message on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that enough is enough. Bharat will not tolerate any violation of its territory, any

harm to its citizens, or any form of aggression.

While acknowledging that the Modi Government is taking significant steps to alleviate the problems faced by the border population and to respond fittingly to Pakistan's provocations, he expressed concern about certain leaders who are engaging in political maneuvering and attempting to tarnish the image of Prime Minister Modi through irresponsible statements.

The senior BJP leader called for unity and support for the government's efforts to protect the nation and its people, stressing the importance of standing together as a country in the face of external threats.

PIL seeking Toll Plaza at Sarore be declared as illegal

DB dismisses PIL as not maintainable

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A Division Bench of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court, comprising Chief Justice N. Kotishwar Singh and Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi, dismissed the PIL seeking the declaration of the Toll Plaza at Sarore as illegal. The basis for this decision was that the Toll Plaza had been established in violation of the provisions of the law. This significant order was passed in a Public Interest Litigation filed by Sanjeev Kumar Sareen, who sought the declaration of the Toll Plaza at Sarore as illegal, citing that it had been established in violation of the provisions of the law.

Respondents No. 1 & 2 filed objections, revealing that the issue raised in the current PIL had already been raised in an earlier PIL, registered as PIL No. 59/2019, which was filed by one Satam Arora and others. In that earlier case, the challenge was also related to the establishment of the Toll Plaza at Sarore, with the relief sought being the relocation of the Toll Plaza to a different location. The Court had considered and dismissed the earlier PIL on October 6, 2020, noting that the installation of a Toll Plaza falls within the realm of a policy decision made by the authorities. Such decisions require consideration of several factors for deter-

mining its location, and the Court lacks the expertise to evaluate these factors. Consequently, the Court proceeded to dismiss the earlier PIL.

The Division Bench observed that since the subject of the current PIL is the same, which is the establishment of the Toll Plaza at Sarore on the Jammu-Pathankot Highway, even though the grounds for the challenge are related to its establishment against the provisions of the law, they deemed the PIL as not maintainable due to the principle of constructive res judicata. As a result, the PIL was dismissed as not maintainable, according to the Division Bench's order.

Retired person cannot claim Revised Career Advancement Scheme: HC

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The High Court has ruled that retired individuals cannot claim benefits under the Revised Career Advancement Scheme. This decision was made by Justice Sanjay Dhar of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court while dismissing a petition filed by Sudesh Kumar Gupta.

Justice Sanjay Dhar noted that, according to the relevant notification, the Revised Career Advancement Scheme for technical staff in Science

Departments would have a prospective effect. This means that the scheme applies only to those officials who are in service as of the date of the notification, or thereafter. The pay scale under the scheme would be fixed notionally from the date an official becomes eligible, but this notionally fixed pay would not result in any retrospective financial benefits. In other words, officials become eligible for the pay scale under the Revised Career Advancement Scheme from the date they actually

meet the eligibility criteria under the scheme.

The judge emphasized that the Revised Career Advancement Scheme would apply only prospectively to employees in service as of the date of the scheme's notification. The retrospective notional effect of the revised scheme is extended only to those employees who were in service at the time of the scheme's notification.

In Sudesh Kumar Gupta's case, he had retired on January 31, 2005,

which was before the Revised Career Advancement Scheme came into operation. Therefore, he could not claim benefits under the scheme. The court found that his case was different from those of A. R. Mughal, Bhawanidutt, and Dr. Ashok Sahni, who were in service when the scheme was notified and were eligible for higher scales under the scheme on a notional basis. The court, therefore, dismissed Sudesh Kumar Gupta's petition, stating that it lacked merit.

DSRS organises talk on 76th Accession Day of J&K

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Department of Strategic and Regional Studies (DSRS), University of Jammu has organized a talk on the eve of 76th Accession Day of Jammu and Kashmir in the seminar hall of the Department.

The event was presided by the Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Goverdhan Singh Jamwal, a war veteran of Indian Army. The experts for the discussion comprised of Brig. (Retd.) Dr. Vijay Sagar

International Institute of J&K Studies and Analysis and Ranjan Chauhan, JKSC.

Prof. Virender Koundal, Director DSRS, underscored the importance of the events like Accession Day.

Ranjan Chauhan busted many myths regarding Jammu and Kashmir and put forward his arguments. He highlighted that the Maharaja of J&K never wanted to remain independent and Maharaja was always in favour of accession of Jammu Kashmir with India.

Chauhan explained the process of accession of Jammu Kashmir and constitutional procedure involved in it.

He highlighted that the process of accession of J&K was similar to the process adopted by other Princely States of India.

Brig. Vijay Sagar Dheman highlighted the role of British Govt. in the partition of India. He presented a geopolitical per-



Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Goverdhan Singh Jamwal and others at a programme.

spective through the presentation titled 'British Game in J&K.' Brig. Dheman mentioned few incidents of war fought between the Indian Army and the Pakistan Army in 1947.

Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Goverdhan Singh Jamwal, who has witnessed all the four wars fought between India and Pakistan, shared his experience regarding invasion of J&K by Pakistan Army in 1947.

He also showed a small

video clip and provided the explanation of battle tactics adopted by the Indian Army.

This event was hosted by Dr. Mohd. Monir Alam, Sr. Assistant Professor, DSRS. The vote of thanks was presented by Dr. Ganesh Malhotra. This program was attended by the Col. J.P. Singh, faculty from the different department of the Jammu University, members of civil society, journalists, Research Scholars and Postgraduate students.