

Stop online shopping, stimulate businesses of local traders: CCI

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) Jammu on Monday asked the people to avoid online shopping to give a boost to local business to support traders in the region as business has been affected badly due to coronavirus and law and order situation in the UT.

This was stated by Arun Gupta President CCI Jammu while addressing a meeting of Chamber office bearers at Chamber House Jammu. Anil Gupta, Sr. Vice President, Rajeev Gupta, Jr. Vice President, Gaurav Gupta, Secretary General, Rajesh Gupta, Secretary and Rajesh Gupta, Treasurer were also present in the meeting.

Arun Gupta said that to save the business in the Jammu region people



President CCI, Arun Gupta chairing a meeting of office bearers.

should discourage online shopping because this has already dented the interests of shopkeepers and especially during the festive season the online shopping can prove to be deleterious for the traders of the region. He said saving local traders from devastation is also the responsibility of the people of the region therefore it is

advisable that people should buy goods from local shops. He said that online shopping is not the alternative to local shops and if the trend will continue the days are not far when local shops will disappear leading to inconvenience to the public and livelihood loss to traders.

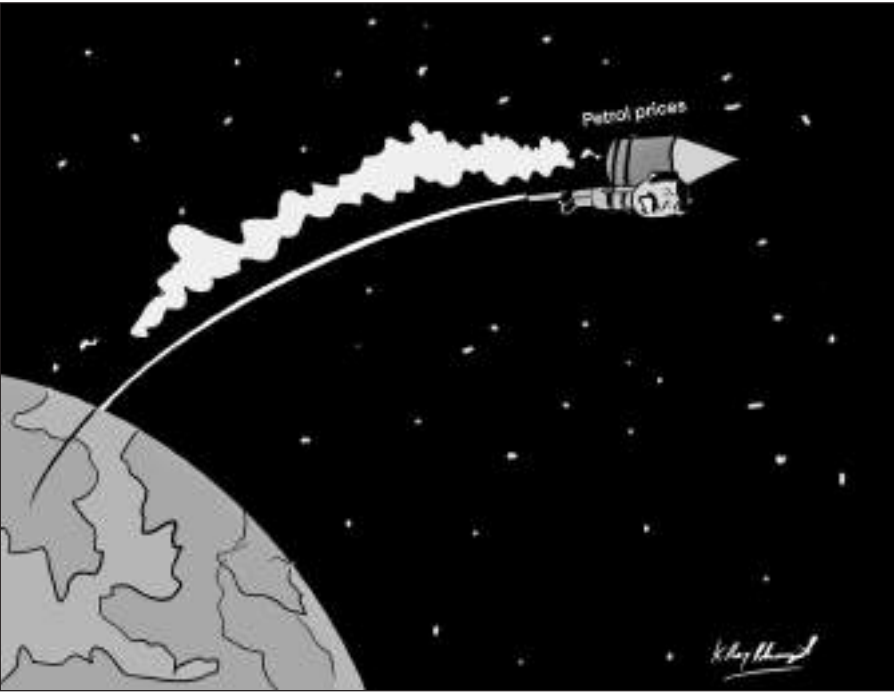
Gupta appealed to the

people of Jammu in general not to discourage the local vendors as it has been observed many times products are much cheaper than the online shopping sites.

Gupta also took up a significant issue of administration harassing the traders on petty issues during peak festive season. He said that government

should understand the fact that already businessmen are facing lots of problems due to coronavirus, etc and harassing them in the name of petty rules like showcasing goods outside shops etc is totally unjustified and therefore government should take a considerate view by allowing such minor alterations during the peak of business season.

Gupta said that still the threat of coronavirus is looming large therefore it is advisable that people should follow SOPs invariably without any carelessness. He said that CCI Jammu is standing shoulder to shoulder with the people of Jammu region especially the traders fraternity and assured that the Chamber will continue to serve the people with strong resolve.



BJP Govt insensitive towards problems of Kisans: Sadhotra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A public meeting was held at Smailpur in Marh Assembly Constituency to felicitate Rattan Lal Gupta and Brij Mohan Sharma on their election as President & Vice President respectively of Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Jammu Province.

Addressing the public meeting, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, former Minister and senior leader Jammu & Kashmir National Conference welcomed the newly elected Provincial leaders and assured that workers of National Conference Marh Assembly Constituency shall always stand by the Party and its leadership to mitigate the problems of common people.

Further addressing the public meeting, Sadhotra and Rattan Lal Gupta said National Conference is committed to welfare and upliftment of Kisans. They alleged that BJP Govt is insensitive towards the problems of the Kisans.

On 23rd of October 2021 due to heavy rains & hail storm the paddy and vegetable crop was totally damaged resulting in 100



Former Minister, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra and other NC leaders addressing a gathering.

per cent loss but unfortunately to utter surprise till date no compensation has been given, they said adding that Kisans are disappointed and disgusted.

The National Conference leaders urged the Govt to wake up from deep slumber and give compensation to the Kisans on war footing.

They also demanded that the farmers who have taken agriculture land on rent/contract and the labourer should also be taken care of while giving 100% crop loss compensation.

They further alleged that BJP Govt has failed to provide and make available inputs to Kisans.

DAP fertilizer is in acute shortage in the market and Kisan is forced to take on

black on much exuberant rates.

Brij Mohan Sharma condemned the anti-Kisans policies of the BJP Govt.

Others who spoke on the occasion include Sub Gasita Ram, Choudhary Dewan Singh, Randir Singh Chib, Rakesh Sharma Pehlwan, Ch. Keemat Lal, CharanDass Bhagat, Ram Lal Lakotra, Capt. Kamal Nath, Bali Ram, Ravi Sharma, Jagdish Singh, Inderpal Singh, Ch. Govind, Pt. Suraj Parkash Sharma, Prof. Nasib Chand, Raghubir Singh, Vinay Gupta, Aman Singh Manhas and Joginder Lal.

Senior Leaders of National Conference Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, Rattan Lal Gupta, Brig Mohan Sharma at felicitation function at Smailpur in Marh Assembly Constituency.

CBSE, SCERT to collaborate on NAS; survey to be held across India

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Central Board of School Education (CBSE) and State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Jammu and Kashmir, are all set to collaborate on conducting a sample based National Achievement Survey (NAS) for classes 3, 5, 8 and 10 in the Union Territory on November 12.

The CBSE will conduct the survey on behalf of the Education Ministry in all 733 districts across the country.

Pertinently, the survey is a competency based national-level large scale assessment conducted with an aim of providing information about the learning achievement of students to have a system level reflection on effectiveness of school education in the country.

Giving details, Director SCERT, Professor Veena Pandita, on Monday said the survey will aid educational planners, policy makers and researchers in understanding the interdependence of assessment, pedagogical process and learning outcome in improving the quality of education.

She said the prolonged school closure in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic has affected students' learning in terms of their socio-emotional and cognitive development in more ways than one.

"NAS 2021 will help us in systematic understanding of the consequences that prolonged closure of schools has had on students' learning," Prof Pandita maintained. She said that results will help us to make out the students' performance in different learning outcomes vis-à-vis the contextual variables.

SCERT has issued a string of instructions in this regard to hold the survey in a methodical manner. The heads of District Institutes of Education and Trainings (DIETs) have been nominated as district nodal officers (DNOs) who, in turn, have

been authorised to appoint field investigators (FIs).

The field investigators will carry out sampling of sections and students in the assigned grade as per the procedure and complete other responsibilities in association with the observers.

"The number of FIs to be appointed has been made available on DNO's login on the NAS portal," a SCERT official said. He added that the DNOs will issue instructions relating to conduct of the survey, set protocols, issue training schedules and ensure mandatory reporting for duty and attending the trainings arranged by the NAS Cell, CBSE HQ/DLC.

He said the SCERT has entrusted all the school heads of sampled schools, government as well as private, to ensure the participation of students in the survey.

"All the staff of sampled schools shall be fully Covid-vaccinated with strict instructions to abide by all the necessary protocols," he said.

Pertinently, the SCERT conducted a survey of classes 3, 5 and 8 on September 30 aimed at identifying gaps in the students' learning caused due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The survey, which was conducted across all the districts of J&K UT, has acted as a dress-rehearsal for the ensuing NAS," the official said. He added that since the survey was conducted on similar lines as laid out in the NAS, the task ahead has relatively been made easy.

He further informed that the SCERT distributed unused question booklets of the survey among the students from time to time to familiarise the students with the assessment format.

The last NAS was held in 2017/2018 for assessing the competencies of children at the grade levels 3, 5, 8 and 10, however, the next round scheduled in 2020 could not be held due to the school closures in the wake of Corona Virus.

Private Security Guards at J&K Bank hold protest against salary cuts



Private Security Guards at J&K Bank raising slogans during a protest.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Hundreds of security guards, including ex-servicemen, working for a private company engaged by a bank, on Monday staged a protest here against alleged salary cuts without any notification.

The guards providing protection to Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs), cash vans and bank branches assembled outside the zonal office of J&K Bank at Bahu Plaza and staged a sit-in, seeking intervention of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and the bank management to ensure proper wages to them.

"We have assembled here to lodge our protest against the salary cut at a time when the prices of essential commodities, including kitchen goods, apart from petrol and diesel, have skyrocketed making the lives of the common man miserable," ex-paramilitary serviceman Balbir Singh, who was leading the protest, said.

Singh, who is posted as a security guard in the zonal office, said the salary cut of nearly Rs 2,000 to Rs 2,500 to both unskilled and skilled guards was not acceptable to them.

"A gunman would get Rs 11,500, while the ATM guard was given a salary of around Rs 7,000. After the salary cut, how will we feed our families in the prevailing situation? This is grave injustice and the J&K bank management should end its contract with this company immediately," he said.

He demanded a monthly salary of Rs 15,000 for ex-servicemen working as guards providing security to bank branches and cash vans and Rs 10,000 for ATM guards who work from 5 am to 10 pm daily.

"The contractor changes every three years and this time a Chandigarh-based company has got the contract. They have shown insensitivity and left thousands of guards, who are risking their lives, distressed," he said, requesting the intervention of the bank management and the LG in reversing the pay cut and also ensuring proper wages to them.

Later, a delegation of the protesters met the bank officials and the protest was ended on their assurance that they will take up the issue with the company concerned.

DC Jammu reviews status of grievances disposal, assessment of crop damage

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Deputy Commissioner Anshul Garg on Monday reviewed the status of disposal of public grievances pertaining to the Revenue department and assessment of the damage of crops in the recent hailstorm, here at a meeting.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, L&O Ghanshyam Singh; ACR Vijay Kumar Sharma; District Informatics Officers Sanjay Gupta; ACG Rakesh Dubey; SDMs, Tehsildars besides other officers of the concerned department were present in the meeting.

The concerned officers apprised the Deputy



Deputy Commissioner Anshul Garg chairing a meeting.

Commissioner about the pending and resolved grievances by the revenue department.

Expressing concern over the slow rate of disposal, the Deputy Commissioner set a 15 day deadline for disposal of

complaints from the time of its posted. He also emphasized upon daily disposal of the grievances in order to reduce pendency.

The Deputy Commissioner also instructed the officers to gear up their men and

machinery and work in synergy with other departments in order to get the redressals of the grievances in a time bound manner. Later, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the process of assessment and disbursement of compensation for damaged crops to the farmers.

The Deputy Commissioner asked the officers from Agriculture and Revenue departments to expedite the process to provide early relief to the affected farmers.

He asked for joint assessment by Agriculture and Revenue departments to ensure that no eligible farmer is left behind and everyone is compensated.

TNWS seeks LG's intervention for slashing rates of Freehold Rights

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: To discuss the issue regarding slashing rates of Freehold Rights for resident of Trikuta Nagar colony, an urgent meeting of executive members of Trikuta Nagar Welfare Society (TNWS) was held on Monday under chairmanship of its President, Rajinder Parshad Kakkar, which was attended by a number of members and residents of colony.

During the meeting threadbare discussions were held over the issue and a resolution was passed to write a letter to the LG, highlighting all pending and genuine demands of the residents besides seeking directions for the Board of Directors of Housing & Urban Development Department J&K UT to review rates of Freehold Rights in favour of Trikuta Nagar residents.

Speaking on the occasion, Kakkar said, "During our meetings with the then Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, K K Sharma, he accepted that rates of Freehold Rights should be Rs 1 lakh per Kanal and issued



TNWS members during a meeting at Jammu.

telephonic directions to the then VC JDA Jammu for issuing a notification at the earliest. But, it's surprise for residents of Trikuta Nagar that as per notification issued by VC JDA, they have to pay an amount of Rs 7 lakh per Kanal for getting Freehold Rights. It has been disclosed by VC JDA during a meeting held with TNWS delegation few days back." President TNWS further said that while Freehold Rights were granted in favour of Gandhi Nagar residents at no extra cost and for Channi Himmat, Rs 1 lakh per Kanal has been charged, then how JDA can charge so high for granting Freehold Rights from Trikuta Nagar residents despite fact

that JDA has done nothing in respect of development since establishment of Colony. "JDA has already charged handsome amount at the time of allotments of plots. Now, TNWS Jammu once again request to LG for issuing directions to Board of Directors of Housing Board over the matter for providing justice to the residents of Trikuta Nagar; where most of the residents are pensioners and senior citizens and unable to pay such huge amounts," he asserted. Those who spoke on the occasion included Ashok Kumar Arora, S N Kaul, Vijay Gupta, Dr T R Gupta, R K Kakroo, K K Mahajan, O P Sharma, Krishan Gupta and Varinder Kumar Suri.

CS reviews implementation of Samagra Shiksha in J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta on Monday chaired a meeting to review the implementation of the centrally sponsored scheme, Samagra Shikshain Jammu and Kashmir.

Administrative Secretary of School Education department, Directors School Education of Jammu and Kashmir divisions, Project Director, SamagraShiksha and other senior officers of the School Education Department participated in the meeting.

It was informed that the although educational indicators in J&K have shown improvement over the past two years, there is still considerable ground to cover to come up to the national benchmarks.

Giving details, Administrative Secretary informed that the gross enrolment ratio in the primary and upper primary levels have increased from 79.93 and 68.06 in the year 2019-20 to 93.16 and 72.77 respectively in the year 2020-21.

While reviewing the educational indicators in J&K, the Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Mehta observed that there is a very significant drop in the gross enrolment ratio and net enrolment ratio from primary to upper primary level.

"Every fifth students seems to be dropping out at the time of moving from primary to upper primary school. This calls for a concerted action from the depart-

ment to arrest this trend," he added.

The Chief Secretary advised the department to rope in Panchayats in the monitoring of the primary schools and institute a mechanism of obtaining monthly reports on the performance of the schools, besides seeking feedback from the students about their experience of teaching in the classes.

Dr Mehta directed the department to prepare a framework for assessing the competency of the teachers based on the achievement of learning outcomes by the students during the year so that capacity building of teachers, wherever necessary, is also made a part of overall focussed policy action in the education sector.

While directing the department to take steps to increase the enrolment ratio in the schools, he advised the department that increase in drop out ratio beyond an acceptable level in a given school should be made an area of responsibility of the teachers in that school and accountability of the teachers fixed in case the enrolment declines below the acceptable level.

Stating that virtual / online teaching has been a great enabler during the Covid times, the Chief Secretary directed the Education department to explore the feasibility of building capacities towards virtual /online learning in all schools, besides emphasising that the department should also increase the sweep and spread of the vocational education in J&K.

that J&KERA has already completed black topping on the 7.186 km Hajin-Ajas and 6 km Shadipora-Khanpeth roads under the project and work on the protection works is underway.

He added that work on the Hamrey-Sultanpora-Nowgam road section had been impacted due to the issue over supply of the construction materials which has now been sorted out and works on the strengthening of the road surface and protection work is underway in full swing and blacktopping of the road will be taken up during the forthcoming working season.

Director, ERA asked Project Manager, Transport, JKERA to further expedite the pace of work on the project and ensure full compliance to all the quality control parameters. He also directed Project Manager to immediately start the construction of one of the dilapidated culverts on Hajin-Ajas road after seeking no objection certificate from the Irrigation and Flood control department.

The integrated road upgradation project will benefit around 1.5 lac souls living in the more than 30 villages along both the sides of the road and will provide them with all-weather road connectivity with improved riding surface and improved access to market for their agricultural produce and better access to health, education etc.

The villages to be benefited include Koshum Bagh, Rakhi Hajin, Sadurkote, Sadunara, Gund Prang, Ajas, Hamray, Trambgund, Rakhi Heggam, Wussan, Gundi Jehangir, Sadatpora, Sumbal, Tangapora, Bulagam, Shadipora, Rakhi Shilvat, Najin, Tirmgam, Gund Khalil, Parihaspora, Turgam, Khanpeth etc.

Project Manager, Transport further informed