

LG Ladakh meets Dr Jitendra, discusses upcoming Night Sky Sanctuary

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The work on India's first-ever Night Sky Sanctuary, being set up by CSIR under Union Ministry of Science & Technology, in Ladakh's Hanle is going on in full swing and shall be complete in over a month's time.

This was stated by Union Minister, Dr Jitendra Singh, when Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, R K Mathur called on him at North Block on Friday.

Mathur apprised the Dr. Jitendra about the Rozgar Mela held on October 31 in Ladakh where the UT Administration gave away appointment letters to around one thousand local youth, furthering the call of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to give jobs to the deserving youth of the



Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, R K Mathur calling on Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh at North Block, New Delhi on Friday.

country.

While discussing the various projects, Dr Jitendra Singh said, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always accorded highest priority to Ladakh

and other peripheral regions.

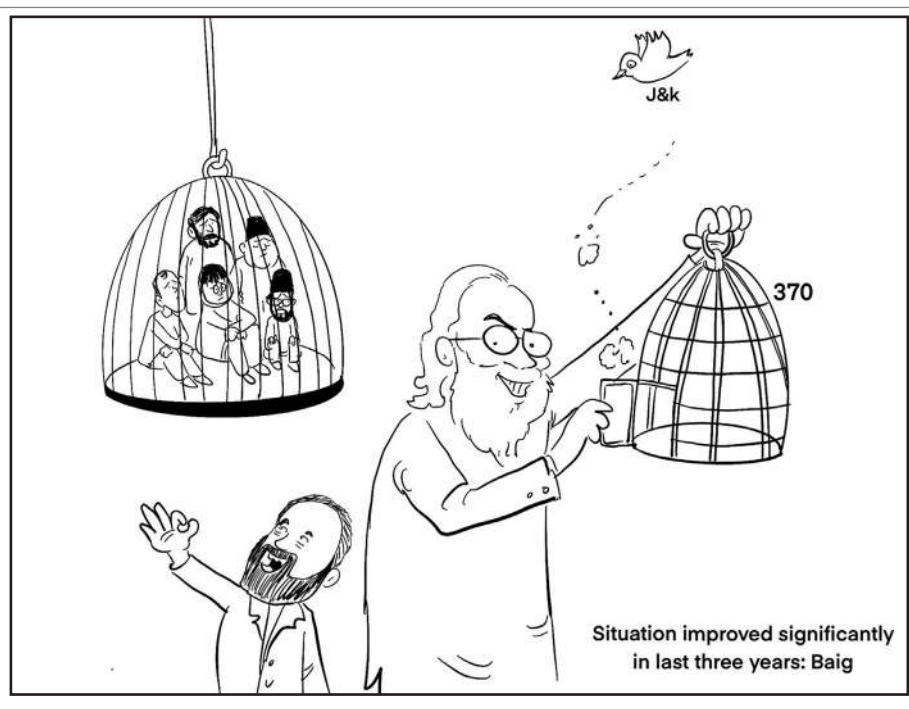
Dr. Jitendra Singh appreciated the efforts of RK Mathur-led Ladakh administration in carrying out development work in various spheres in

Ladakh. The Union Minister assured all possible assistance of the Centre in completion of developmental projects in the UT.

Mathur informed the Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh about the status of several public welfare and developmental projects in Ladakh.

In a unique and first-of-its-kind initiative, the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Govt of India, has undertaken to set up India's first-ever "Night Sky Sanctuary" in Ladakh.

The proposed Dark Sky Reserve will be located at Hanle in Ladakh as a part of Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary. It will boost Astro tourism in India and will be one of the world's highest-located sites for optical, infra-red, and gamma-ray telescopes.



JMC committed to welfare of its employees: Mayor



Mayor JMC, Rajinder Sharma addressing a press conference in Jammu on Friday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a major development, the long pending demand of casual employees of Jammu Municipal Corporation has been fulfilled as Jammu Municipal Corporation issued notice as per clause 10 of Jammu Municipal Corporation, class 4 of Service Regulations - 2014.

This is the first step towards regularisation of employees of Jammu Municipal Corporation announced on Friday by Mayor, JMC Rajinder Sharma at a press conference held in the Conference Hall of JMC.

He was accompanied by Deputy Mayor, Baldev Singh Billawaria and Chairmen of Standing Committees of JMC , Raj Kumar Tarkhan ,Hardeep Singh Mankotia and Ajay Gupta.

The Mayor said about 600 employees whose

regularization demand was long pending will soon be regularised and this will be the biggest gift from JMC to its employees specially the Safaisathis. As per rules, those who have completed seven years of service as casual wagers are to be regularised in their respective departments, added the Mayor.

"I believe the step being taken is going to be historic. This is the first time such mass regularisation will take place," the Mayor added further.

The Mayor said "We are committed to resolve all the issues of the employees of JMC and steps are being taken to sort out the genuine grievances of all the employees."

Responding to the Media queries, the Mayor assured that JMC will take every step to provide better facilities to the Jammuites.

Rana calls for united efforts in bringing harmony, promoting peace

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

AKHNOOR: Praying for universal brotherhood, the essence of Sanatan Dharma's eternal philosophy of Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, senior BJP leader Devender Singh Rana on Friday called for putting united efforts for harmonious growth of the society besides promoting peace and tranquility.

"The basic tenets of Sanatan Dharma and the great Indian civilization considers the world as a family and this ethos holds promise for global peace, especially now when the cold war is gripping the continents", Rana said while interacting with devotees after participating in the Puran Ahuti of Maha Vishnu Yagya of eleven days at spiritually blessed Akhnoor this afternoon.

The Yagya was performed by Suresh Shastri which attracted thousands of



Senior BJP leader Devender Rana addressing devotees during Maha Vishnu Yagya.

devotees from various parts of Jammu all the eleven days. Rana joined Suresh Shastri and hundreds of devotees in Parikrama.

Devender Rana said in the recent years India has been taking a leading role for forging universal bonding in true spirit of "Vasudeva Kutumbakam", be it the crisis unfolded by COVID pandemic or the Russia Ukraine conflict.

This is because of the deeply ingrained Vedic philosophy, which does not dif-

ferentiate between the people on regional, religious or continental basis but treats them as one. This effort has been appreciated globally.

He said every Sanatani begins the day with the prayers of everyone to be happy, everyone to be in good health and everyone to prosper as they believe God in every particle, least to speak of human beings.

Rana stressed the crucial need of strengthening the bonds and amity and brother-

hood, saying this has been the cornerstone of Indian ethos.

He said the spiritual land of India has emanated the message of humanity from times immemorial and guided humanity to peace, prosperity and spiritual bliss. He urged the devotees, present in the congregation, to spread the message of love, peace and compassion, which, he said is imperative for national integration and promoting inclusiveness across the

country and in Jammu and Kashmir.

He hoped that everyone will play a role towards the growth of the society based on social justice and equality.

Suresh Shastri addressed the congregation and referred to the week-long event being held annually to promote spirituality.

He said the hallmark of these discourses is to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood. He made a special reference to various evils inflicted to the society and stressed the need for imparting values among the youngsters.

Those present were Prem Sagar Aziz, former Minister and Sr BJP leader, Baba Chanchal Singh, Sanjeev Singh, Sarpanch, Rajan Singh (Happy), Kuldeep Singh Langleh, Rekha Manhas, Kabal Singh, Dayal Singh (Lucky) and others.

Many eminent political activists join Ghulam Nabi Azad's party



DAP Chairman, Ghulam Nabi Azad with newly joined members and other leaders.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A large number of delegations of several political and social organizations called on Ghulam Nabi Azad, former Chief Minister and Chairman Democratic Azad Party on Friday and many of them joined the party. Senior leaders who were also present on the occasion included R S Chib, Mohd Aslam Goni, Vinod Misra, Vishal Chopra, Anoop Khajuria

and Dr S K Bali.

Prominent among those who joined the party included Mohinder Singh Chib NC District President Jammu, Sukhdev Singh PDP District President Samba, Sikander Singh, Raj Kumar, Rohit Sharma, Tarsem Lal, D S Bajju, Karan Singh, Ankush Gupta, Naveen Kumar, Romesh Chander, Subash Chib, Jagattar Singh and Rajveer Singh.

Sawhney calls on AICC leaders, discusses J&K's political scenario

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Former Minister J&K and Senior Congress leader Yogesh Sawhney on Friday met AICC General Secretary, MP Rajya Sabha K C Venugopal at AICC headquarters and AICC Incharge J&K, MP Rajani Patil in New Delhi to discuss present political scenario. He also met Dinesh Gundu Rao, AICC Incharge Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Goa. During his visit, Sawhney apprised national leadership regarding political situation prevailing in Jammu & Kashmir and related issues, challenges and opportunities. Sawhney had shared a long association with both KC Venugopal and Dinesh Gundu Rao since Youth Congress days. He, later in a statement, affirmed Congress' commitment towards gaining strength in J&K adding that people want a change.

The former Minister further stated J&K is



Senior Congress leader Yogesh Sawhney with AICC General Secretary, K C Venugopal.

quite important to Congress party, which is clear from the fact that national leadership of party is keen and interested in local needs and demands of people, and wants to raise J&K's issues on national podium, whether it is demand of statehood or other local issues.

Manoj Sinha too has opined that both Public Services & Infrastructure need be made efficient

A large majority in India can still not voluntarily buy Health Cover from Private Sector & depends on PSEs

Why not start with Performance Audit of J&K H&ME Department for further betterment?

■ DAYA SAGAR

To some extent it appears that how far the common man without additional out of pocket expenses and community support is able to easily receive the health cover is not made the first subject of study by government for assessing the success of inputs made from public exchequer. Whereas, how far the new medical colleges reduce the shortage of doctors / availability of doctors for common man and how far increasing the MD/MS/ Super Specialisation seats (particularly in private colleges) helps the masses which mostly depend upon the services from the government sector / public sector (particularly those in the distant / backward areas) needs be kept in the immediate focus. No doubt in case the affairs are taken with real truthfulness scope could be generated through new institutions / increasing PG seats for availability of more specialist doctors.

One of the most frequently pulled out subjects is of that health care infrastructure in respect of shortage of qualified doctors for which so often announcements / sanctions are made for new medical colleges in public sector / increasing the number of medical colleges in private sector as well as increasing post graduation (MD/MS) seats in the exiting medical colleges. Opening new medical colleges does increase production of doctors but the way affairs have shaped in J&K so far, it has been more for creating some employment opportunities for some retired doctors

from J&K government medical colleges and less with focus on giving sound teaching faculty to the new youth entering the medical profession. One thing that is sure is that increasing PG seats in private / government medical colleges surely does more of good to the 'benefit' private college managements. No doubt while processing proposals for medical colleges and additional PG seats in private colleges statistics are quoted mentioning availability of doctors per thousand souls in India for justifying the lack of health care cover. Recently the PSC UT of J&K issued Notification No: 01- PSC (DR-P) OF 2020 Dated: 30-07-2020 inviting online applications upto 04.09.2020 for 900 posts of Medical Officers (minimum qualification MBBS degree) with service conditions like Jammu and Kashmir Probationer (Condition of Service, Pay and Allowances) and Fixation of Tenure Rules, 2020 S.O 192 dated 17.06.2020 and against that 2584 applications (including many with MS/MD degrees) were received even with inferior terms of employment like no allowance and increment till probation (min 2 years) is removed, no transfer from the place / post first appointed for 5 years).

Other aspect that needs to be kept in view before the discussions are taken further is that as per the international health institutions / common cause studies have shown that more than 90 to 95 % of the ailing people / common diseases could be even in general served only by allopathic doctors possessing MBBS

degree from institutions served with adequate facilities and facilities. So in countries like Bharat, keeping in view population size, in case the government health infrastructure delivers / or is made to deliver to its installed capacity there would be some indirect generation of additional health cover in actual practice for the people from the existing manpower itself. Where as it is observed that even for normal route ailments which could be attended by even a MBBS doctor (at the most MD) most of the patients do not prefer visiting a government hospital even in cities and go to private clinics or even private clinics of government doctors (where private practice is allowed to government doctors by relaxation of conduct rules for civil servants) and that too even to doctors holding DM qualification. The position in J&K UT can be well imagined from the fact that even MBBS classes in AIIMS' Jammu are said to have been started but there is no AIIMS level hospital available for the residents of UT of J&K & UT of Ladakh and people are still running to PGI Chandigarh or AIIMS Delhi for dependable consultations/treatments.

Not only that let us have an intimate view of health and medical education sector even for the minimum needed efforts for effectively promoting the government ventures. The PM Narendra Modi's flag ship programme Prime Minister Bhartiye Jan Aushadi



Pariyojna (started as back in 2008 by UPA Government) which can save an average house hold of atleast a few thousands every year of undue expenditure on medicines & appliances due to prevailing practice of marketing drugs with unfairly inflated MRPs but the JA Pariyojan has not that purposefully taken off conceptually as well as availability wise even after 14 years since even most of the government doctors in J&K do not prescribe medicines by chemical name (but brand name) and the Jan Aushadi outlets are still not adequately near to the common man. Imagine had the Doctors prescribed even Paracetamol 650mg by chemical name and not by DOLO 650 (DOLO MRP Rs.34.27 for 15 Tab and Jan Aushadi MRP is Rs.15 per 15 Tab) how much of common man money would have been saved. Should not H&ME Department atleast now take implementation of prescription writing by chemical name on first priority and mobilise the "Prescription Audit" cells (that were created somewhere in 2017 when Mr. Bali Bhagat was Minister) which would save common man & even govt. of lot of money without spending anything additional from public exchequer. Is not there a need to investigate how far the policy as regards Prescription Audit has been carried and if not who should be held responsible for ?

It is not fair for governments to measure their performance only in what they

spend from the state exchequer. Performance has to be measured from in how efficiently the material infrastructure and the government machinery delivers after the expenditure is made. January/ February 2014 UPA Government at Centre had sanctioned opening of 5 Government Medical Colleges in J&K and for that in 2016-17 & 2017-18, Rs 19203 Crore (Central Share) and Rs 5.70 Crore (State Share) was to have been released under Capex Budget during 2016-17 and 2017-18. J&K State Cabinet headed by Mehbooba Mufti on 04-10-2017 accorded sanction to the creation of 3375 posts for 5 colleges @ 575 posts per college. On 5th Oct 2019 Ministry of H& FW GOI accorded sanction to two more new GMCs for Leh and Udhampur districts at an estimated cost of Rs 325 crore each (Rs115 crores for ` construction of GMC, Rs 80 cr for hostels and residences of students and faculty, Rs 70 cr for equipments and Rs 60 cr for the upgradation of the `existing hospital for teaching and proposals for GMC Handwara were also under consideration of GOI. So in J&K 8 new government medical colleges were in line in 2020 in terms of the programme of GOI to establish 75 new medical colleges in India. Now in 2022 there are GMCs in Kathua / Rajouri/Doda/Anantnag but patients are still coming to private clinics/ GMC Jammu & Srinagar. Govt. is opening of GMCs and making them functional with contractual temporary faculty comprising mostly of retired fac-

ulty from Jammu / Srinagar GMCs, does not the status of quality of teaching one could imagine come under more question mark?

Why cannot J&K Government open appointment route for people from outside J&K? Why cannot Government take the young Doctors with PG/ Super specialisation (agile & upto date with research) qualifications working in the field for new GMCs at lecturer level on regular basis through a summary appointment route ?

Hope LG UT of J&K Manoj Sinha also takes leads from the J&K PSC communication like PSC/Exam-WT/MO/2020/6 of 14-12-2020 addressed to Administrative Department J&K H&ME conveying that PSC could not find eligible candidates fulfilling requirements even for Rule-51 of PSC (Business and Procedure) Rules 2005 which also includes the minimum academic performance slated for public services and questions discussed here for taking remedial measures ensuring quality educational standards/guiding levels in the existing & new medical colleges keeping the interests of trainee students &J&K community they have to serve instead of opening more colleges and the colleges simply becoming a place for providing employment/ promotions to retired/ exiting faculty.

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