

NASA chief meets Dr Jitendra, discusses launching joint Satellite with ISRO

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
NEW DELHI: India and the US will launch the joint microwave remote sensing satellite for Earth observation, named NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) in the first quarter of next year, said Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh during a meeting with a high-level delegation of premier USA agency NASA led by its Chief Administrator Bill Nelson who called on him here today. NISAR is targeted for launch onboard India's GSLV. Data from NISAR will be highly suitable for studying the land ecosystems, deformation of solid earth, mountain & polar cryosphere, sea ice and coastal oceans in regional to global scale.

It was informed that ISRO's S-band SAR was integrated with NASA's L-band SAR at JPL/NASA and integrated L & S band SAR is currently undergoing testing with the satellite at URSC, Bangalore with participation of NASA/JPL officials.

Congratulating Dr Jitendra Singh for the historic Chandrayaan-3 landing on the virgin South Polar region of the Moon, Nelson urged Dr Jitendra Singh for expediting the programme related to India's first astronaut aboard a NASA rocket to the International Space Station (ISS). During the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the US earlier this year, the two sides agreed to launch a two-week joint India-US Space flight next year. NASA is identifying an



A high-level delegation of premier USA Space agency NASA led by its Chief Administrator Bill Nelson calling on Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh at North Block, New Delhi on Tuesday.

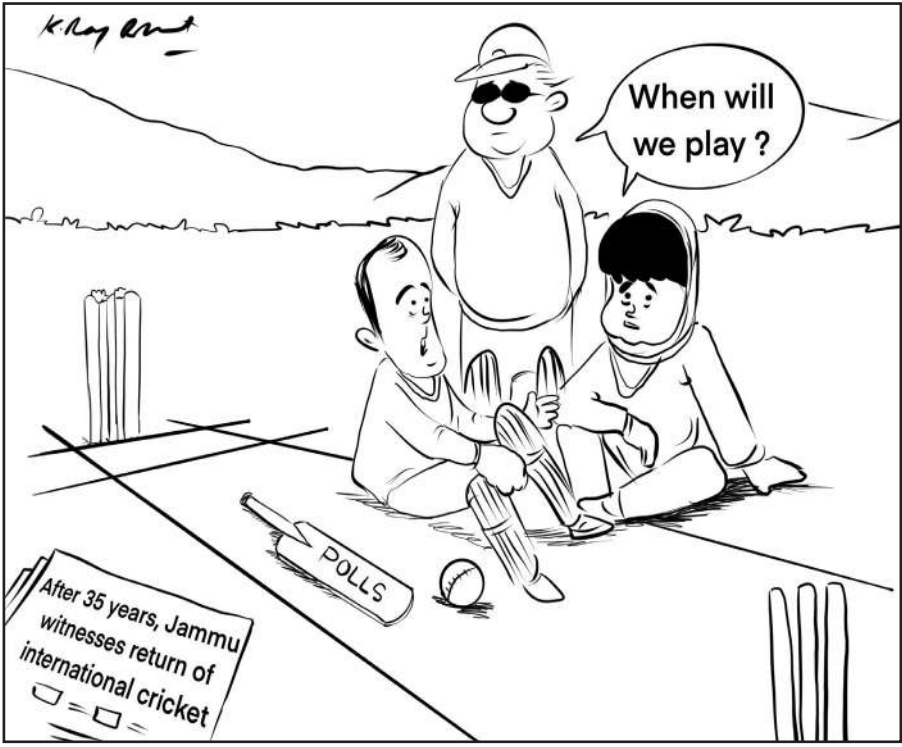
opportunity in the Private Astronaut Mission for Indian Astronauts in 2024. ISRO and NASA have formed a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Human spaceflight cooperation and are exploring cooperation in radiation impact studies, micro meteorite & orbital debris shield studies; space health and medicine aspects. The 8th meeting of India-USA Joint Working Group on Civil Space Cooperation (CSJWG) was held

in Washington DC in January 2023. ISRO/DoS is also in discussion with prominent US industries (like Boeing, Blue Origin & Voyager) on specific items of cooperation and also to explore joint collaborations with Indian commercial entities.

The Indian side informed that a concept paper on the Implementing Arrangement (IA) under consideration between ISRO and NASA. After a few iterations, both sides arrived at a mutually agreed draft and the same is processed for intra-Governmental approvals.

ISRO is also exploring the feasibility of utilising NASA's Hypervelocity Impact Test (HIVT) facility for testing Gaganyaan module Micrometeoroid and orbital debris (MMOD) protection shields.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, India has a booming Space sector Startups since PM Modi initiated reforms in the Space sector. Within a short span of just about four years, the number of Space StarUps has gone up from a mere single digit to over 150, with some of the earlier ones having turned into lucrative entrepreneurs. Nelson, himself an astronaut who flew with the crew of the 24th Space Shuttle flight onboard 'Columbia' in 1986, lauded ISRO for having launched 231 satellites from the US, onboard Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). Nelson said he was looking forward to meeting India's cosmonaut Rakesh Sharma in Bengaluru tomorrow. The US Ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti was also present in the meeting.



Due to losing mobile subscribers, BSNL net loss widens to Rs 1,482 Cr ‘J&K among 14 weak performing circles’

■ **SHAKEELA ANDRABI**
SRINAGAR: Due to poor performance, weak network signals and losing mobile subscribers, the net loss of Bharat Sanchar Nigam's (BSNL) has risen to Rs 1,482 crore in the July-September quarter, from Rs 1,470 crore in the April-June quarter, the company's financial statement shows.

About 14 out of 32 circles during the quarter as well as for the half-year ended September reported a fall in revenue for BSNL, sources said, adding that these circles include Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Punjab, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Jammu and Kashmir, parts of North-East, Telangana, Andaman & Nicobar and Chhattisgarh.

On a y-o-y basis, the revenue from the broadband segment rose 12 percent.

BSNL has been continuously losing mobile subscribers for the 20th straight month as of August end, owing to weak network services and absence of 4G services, according to data by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

The company's subscriber base was at 95.8 million as of August end. Its active subscribers are nearly half of its total subscribers, according to TRAI data.

In a recent letter, after the results, Chairman and Managing Director PK Purwar has asked all the circle heads to improve their performance in the remaining half of the year. Besides, the circles that performed weak have been asked to share a detailed plan. "Even while we are rolling out indigenous 4G and 5G services, there is a lot of scope for revenue generation in all existing services," Purwar stated in the letter.

The higher sequential loss during the quarter can largely be attributed to an increase in expenses on advertisement, business promotion and marketing, interconnect usage charge to other operators, higher revenue share to business partners, bad debt write-off, and expenses on construction contracts, among others.

On a year-on-year basis, the company's net loss narrowed from Rs 2,033 crore in the corresponding quarter last year largely due to a fall in employee benefit expenses, licence and spectrum

fee, finance cost, etc. A continuous fall in revenues for the second straight quarter in July-September, following three consecutive quarters of growth, also weighed on the bottom line.

BSNL's revenue from operations fell 5.1% quarter-on-quarter on Rs 4,071 crore. On a year on year basis, the revenue fell 6.6 percent. For the half-financial year ended September, the company's revenue rose marginally to Rs 8,360 crore, the standalone statements showed.

In the Lok Sabha in August, Minister of State for Communications, had said BSNL's operating profit rose 65 percent year on year in FY23 to Rs 1,559 crore.

The government has set the revenue target of the company at Rs 20,008 crore in FY24. For FY25 and FY26, the company has revenue targets of Rs 24,428 crore and Rs 28,476 crore, respectively.

BSNL has currently deployed the 4G network in pilot mode across 200 tower sites in three districts of Punjab - Ferozepur, Pathankot, and Amritsar.

Last month, Purwar said that BSNL will start rolling out 4G services commercially from December, with a target of pan-India rollout by June 2024. The company will first deploy the services in Punjab, followed by Haryana, Uttarakhand and other circles. After testing the 4G services on 200 tower sites, BSNL will complete installing another 3,000 4G sites by November end, and will continue to increase the number, Purwar had said.

CS, Secy DARPG release case studies of Good Governance Initiatives



Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta and Secretary DARPG, Gol, V Srinivas releasing case studies of Good Governance Initiatives.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta and Secretary Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India, V Srinivas on Tuesday released four case studies of Good Governance Initiatives of Jammu and Kashmir.

The four initiatives are Back to Village, Empowerment (Janbhagidari) Portal, Jammu and Kashmir Bank - A story of transformation and Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana.

While launching the case studies, the Chief Secretary highlighted the stellar journey of development during the last five years and said that the transformation has been phenomenal. He said that from a largely no tender system to a complete 100 percent e-tendering process is not a small transformation and the manner in which people have adopted the change is extremely commendable. He said that the engine of change since 2019 in JK has fundamentally changed JK forever and JK should probably be number one in terms of systems transparency.

Talking about the J&K Bank, CS said that in 2019 people were extremely sceptical about the bank but soon, the Bank figured among the top four banks in the country in achieving targets in digital payments.

As far as Back to Village is concerned, Chief Secretary said that it has evolved into

Aspirational Panchayat and there is a Prabhari which is there for the entire year and more. Dr Mehta highlighted that in terms of Good Governance, JK has been on the fore front on aspects. He said that JK is among the first to cross 1100 e-services and which we are really proud of. He said that JK is saturated on many schemes as we are No 1 in Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, No 2 in Nasha Mukti Abhiyan and No 3 in Amritsarovar. He said that JK has been on a ranking of 1-5 on many initiatives and we have hope to remain among the top five if not better than that.

V Srinivas who released the case studies through VC said that his team looks forward to circulate these case studies to all universities, government institutions and state governments. He thanked the Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta for his yeoman services to the nation which has brought in sweeping reforms in governance across the UT of J&K.

Professor and Director, Centre for Public Policy Governance and Performance, Harsh Sharma earlier gave a detailed presentation about the methodology, key elements, impact and way forward on each of the four initiatives.

He highlighted that the impact of Back to Village has been such that more than 4000 work worth of Rs. 8110 lakhs (approx.) has been completed across J&K and a Saturation coverage of 4291 Panchayats

has been achieved.

He asserted that the Empowerment portal provides detailed insights to citizens by enabling them to monitor works/projects being implemented and encouraging citizen to give their feedback about the quality and pace of work.

The impact of Janbhagidari has been such that number of works completed increased from about 9200 in 2018-19 to 21943 in 2020-21 and more than 50,000 in 2021-22 with a decrease of 20-30% cost of execution because of better supervision and oversight by the public. Talking about the transformation change of JK Bank he said that it registered an annual net profit of Rs 1197.38 Cr for FY 2022-23 witnessing 139% YoY growth. He said that total Business of the Bank as of 31st March 2023 stood at Rs. 212666 Crore registering a growth of 9.40%.

Talking about the impact of AB-PMJAY, he said that JK is the first UT in the country to insure its entire population and 26 lakhs (approx.) beneficiaries have been covered under AB-PMJAY. It was given out that 81 percent of beneficiary families have at least one e-card in AB-PMJAY. He said that JK has 100 percent redressal of grievances through Jammu and Kashmir - Integrated Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (JKI-GRAMS) and a fine of Rs. 45 lakhs (approx.) collected through Anti-Fraud mechanism for violation of SolP.

Yudhvir inaugurate Ayushman Bharat-cum-ABHA registration camp

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: Yudhvir Sethi, J&K BJP Vice President today inaugurated Ayushman Bharat-cum-ABHA registration camp here at Ward No 7, Kanji House, Jammu. The camp was organized by S Harvinder Singh, Ward Convenor with the support and guidance of Yudhvir Sethi. Speaking on the occasion, Yudhvir asked the people to avail the benefits of such camps as the purpose of these camps is to provide services to the common people at their door steps. He said that Aadhar card is the most significant identity document of a person in India and a gateway to avail any kind of benefit under the schemes rolled out by the government. Therefore it is not necessary to only obtain the Aadhar Card but also ensure that it contains correct details. He said that those who have already got the Aadhar cards issued should get these corrected if any discrepancy is found in them. "It helps individuals to access healthcare benefits and store their medical information digitally in one place. ABHA health card benefits users by letting them enjoy healthcare services, including registration, appointment scheduling with a doctor, and storing electronic medical records. The Health ID card can



Yudhvir Sethi, J&K BJP Vice President after inaugurating Ayushman Bharat-cum-ABHA registration camp.

also be linked to multiple health schemes and insurance plans, providing various benefits. Therefore, a Health ID card is a one-stop identification for all healthcare-related activities. It makes it easier for individuals to access and manage their overall wellness," he said.

Similarly, the senior BJP leader highlighted the benefit of the Ayushman cards issued under the Ayushman Bharat scheme that provides free of cost treatment to a family upto five lakh rupees. He said that the cover under the Ayushman Bharat to the needy patients in case of health eventualities comes as a great relief to the affected family. The senior BJP leader emphasized that the BJP Govt at the Centre led by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has rolled out multiple schemes for the people of this nation. Making the people aware about these schemes, he said that these schemes are meticulously tailored to suit every section of the society besides every age group. He appealed to the people to come forward and avail the benefit of the schemes launched by Central Government best suiting them. He appealed to people to further strengthen the hands of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party to ensure the unprecedented transformation of the nation where the last person in the cue receives the benefit of the welfare schemes. Sethi appreciated the efforts of S Harvinder Singh for organizing a camp and providing benefits of central government services to the people at their doorsteps. Among those who were present include Praveen Kerni Mandal President Jammu East, Sanjay Mahey former corporator, Jagjeevan Lal Booth President and BJP leader Amit Khanna.

People of Distant & Backward Areas lacking due Political & Adm. empowerment keep falling back in growth

No government should wait for genuine demand protests growing ‘wild’ before they are ‘heard’

■ **DAYA SAGAR**
On taking over as Chief Minister of J&K State Mufti Mohd Sayeed had on 1st March 2015 described the people of Kashmir Valley as 'North Pole' and outside Kashmir valley as 'South Pole'. Sure, it was time to do plain speaking as had been done by Mufti Sayeed but so unfortunately that did not happen thereafter.

In a democracy it is unfortunate that some times the popular government has to be replaced by President Rule /Governor rule. But when ever J&K has come under President Rule /Governor rule it has been observed that a occasions 'common' people started expecting some common good may happen, particularly those from the areas outside Kashmir valley since the extra territorial issues have not been finding takers there.

No doubt on March 1st 2015 also when BJP led the reins of governance in J&K in alliance with Mufti Mohd Sayeed's PDP it was hoped that 'this time the elected government will be with difference through which also a process would be set atleast for equitable political (as per Section -50 of J&K Constitution areas outside Kashmir Valley had more elected MLAs in Legislative Council where the Delimitation Commissions by then so erroneously had distributed lesser number

of MLAs for the Legislative Assemblies in areas outside Kashmir Valley , there was no provision for reservation of seats for Schedule Tribe in the Legislative Assembly in J&K where as in other Indian States it was) & Administrative Empowerment (Kashmir valley had only three Revenue Districts in 1978 when areas in Jammu Division had six Administrative/ Revenue Districts but by 2007 political governments had made 10 districts each in both Divisions) of the so far neglected areas & people of the state and for reducing the inter regional rivalries as regards aspirations. Of course for doing that the 'popular' Government was expected to some extent shed the shackles of inherited unfair inclinations towards Kashmir valley (no doubt such inclination had politically as well as administratively benefitted only a few of the ruling class & its allies in Valley and common voter citizen in Kashmir Division too had been instead pushed into more & more confusions/ controversies/ myths / misconceptions).

But even in more than 3 years , after 2015, what to talk of isolating the separatists and anti India elements in Kashmir Valley , the PDP lead government could not even apply the minimum & genuine corrections like till 2018 not accepting the demand of Nowshera, Sunderbani,

Kalakote Tehsils of District Rajouri for carving out atleast one more district out of the existing Rajouri district to which no one could have genuinely objected even from Kashmir Valley taking Shopian District as model that was created in 2006-07 out of just one Tehsil spread over not even 500 sq km area (exact area is being mentioned here since at different times different figures have been mentioned) when in 2006at that time (in 2006) there existed Rajouri district comprising of 7 tehsils (as against only 1 for Shopian) spread over 2630 sq km (as against less than 500 sq km of newly created Shopian District) but that was not split. But the alliance government so unfairly tried to settle the demands for one more district in 2018 by issuing orders like Government Order No.412-GAD of 2018, Dated:09-03-2018 not wisely seeing disposal in simply posting officers like Additional DCs. That time even Dr. Farooq Abdullah President J&K National Conference was reported to have met the Governor J&K around 7th March 2018 demanding carving out one more district out of Rajouri district. But the popular government did not apply the so genuinely needed correction of atleast one more

district in Jammu Division when genuinely 4 to 5 more districts could be created outside Kashmir valley (no other socio- political leader- ship from areas other than Rajouri supported with strength the people who were agitating in Nawshera, Sunderbani, Kalakote in 2018).

The demands may rise again. .It has to be kept in focus that Rajouri and Poonch are two Districts in Jammu Division that have a large part of Indo-Pak LOC as it exists in Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistani raiders had in 1947/48 more attacked along these borders.

The areas in these districts have like areas of Kathua, Udhampur, Doda, Kishtwar, Reasi, Ramban, Kupwara (170 km LOC), Bandipora district, lesser geographical compactness, have comparatively bad terrain and lesser facilities of surface communication and people are educationally as well as administratively backward even after 7 decades of Independence since they have also been victim of regular LOC disturbances as well as infiltration attempts from the across the LOC. Even in 2023 these areas have had signs of militant infestations & militant attacks. There education, agriculture, horticulture, tourism and local crafts too have not received that much attention

from the governments and in addition have been victim of displacements due to disturbances . These areas have been under serious militant threat right since early 1990s but the militants / separatists could not gather even minimal ideological support in these areas. These districts have a large Muslim population but have not gone along separatist lines.

Similarly the areas in and around the Districts like Doda, Udhampur, Kishtwar, Bhaderwah upper reaches of Kathua (progress / status on the Basohli Bhaderwah tourism promotion road speaks well) too have lived under administrative and economic neglect inspite of many areas there being Muslim majority but still there too the militants / separatists have not been able to find material and ideological grounds inspite of having remained neglected by those visiting them only for seeking vote during election times , some even using the religious or sectoral baits. So, the people who are / have been living under more administrative & political neglect that results in social stresses too should not be left unattended as otherwise may be one day they too are carried into agitations. In June 2018 J&K State once again came under governor rule/ president rule and since 31 Oct 2019 the said areas are under President rule as UT of J&K. Like earlier times as UT under Lt

Governor Administration has seen some better in comparison to times of earlier popular governments like scraping of anti youth SRO- 202 of 30 June 2015, creation of provision for ST reservation in the Legislative Assembly of UT of J&K and initiation of Delimitation for Legislative Assembly of UT of J&K though some more corrections are still needed which could be done only when another delimitation commission is appointed which would be then surely provided proper feedback on the ground information by local administration and leadership. Hopes are still there that LG Administration may also lay hands on correcting the irrational reorganizations of Districts Administrative Units as was done in 1979 (SRO 306 of 6/6/1979 <Anantnag, Baramulla, and Srinagar> reorganized into Baramulla, Kupwara, Anantnag, Pulwama, Srinagar, Badgam making number of districts in Kashmir Division equal to already existing districts in Jammu Division) & 2007 (SRO 185 of 22 May 2007 creating 4 new districts in both Divisions as against 3 recommended for Jammu Division and only 1 recommended for Kashmir Division by Wazir Commission in 1984) before return of popular government.

To be continued
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