

CM inaugurates Raabta: Transforming Citizen-Govt Interface

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, accompanied by Nasir Aslam Wani, Advisor to CM, on Friday inaugurated the CM's Public Services & Outreach Office, marking a significant step toward transparent, citizen-centric governance.

The office, designed as a single-window platform, aims to ensure efficient grievance redressal, informed decision-making through data-driven monitoring and strategic communication.

The grievance redressal system under the office, aptly named Raabta (meaning 'connection'), serves as a bridge between citizens and the government, combining robust digital systems with on-



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah interacting with officers at CM's Public Services & Outreach Office.

ground engagement to ensure timely service delivery and responsive governance. During his maiden visit, the Chief Minister toured the

facility, reviewed its operations, and interacted with officers.

Commending the initiative, the Chief Minister emphasized the importance of citizen engagement and directed officers to ensure timely grievance resolution and proactive communication with the public.

Chief Minister was informed that office will adopt a hybrid communication approach, including an online grievance portal, dedicated helpline, and periodic in-person interactive sessions to cater to all citizens effectively. This innovative initiative underscores the government's dedication to fostering public trust and ensuring a seamless interface between the administration and citizens.



After five-day 'severe' spell, Delhi's air quality improves to 'very poor'

Labour Com J&K urges Media Industry to implement Majithia Wage Board Norms Meets Newspaper Establishment Owners of Jammu Division



Labour Commissioner, J&K Charandeep Singh interacting with representatives from various newspapers.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Labour Commissioner, J&K S. Charandeep Singh on Friday held an interactive meeting at Shram Bhawan Jammu regarding implementation of the Majithia Wage Board recommendations for Journalists and other staff employed in the media industry. The meeting was attended by representatives from various newspapers. Also present at the meeting were the Deputy Labour Commissioner Jammu, Deputy Director (PR) Information, Jammu, and the Assistant Labour Commissioner Jammu.

During the interaction, the Labour Commissioner emphasized upon the importance of implementing the Majithia Wage Board recommendations in full, thereby fostering a fair and just work environment within the media industry in

J&K. "Full implementation has been slower in Jammu and Kashmir compared to some other states/UTs, however, some of the mainstream newspapers in J&K have made efforts to align their pay scales with the revised wage recommendations, for their journalists and other staff" he said.

Outlining some of the key provisions of the Majithia Wage Board recommendations related to wage structure, allowances and working conditions, the Labour Commissioner urged that all newspaper owners and managements must take steps to ensure compliance with the Majithia Wage Board norms.

The Government of India had constituted two Majithia Wage Boards, one for working journalists and other for non-journalists newspaper employees in 2007 as sixth Wage Board

under the Chairmanship of Justice Majithia. The Majithia Wage Boards submitted their final report to the Government of India in 2010. The Government accepted the recommendations of the Majithia Wage Boards and accordingly notified it in the year 2011.

In order to monitor the implementation of the notification, a Central Level Monitoring Committee (CLMC) was also set up, which meets regularly.

The CLMC comprises representatives from various stakeholders, including government officials, newspaper owners, and employee representatives. Its primary role is to monitor the compliance of newspaper establishments with the wage and working condition norms set by the Majithia Wage Board. This includes ensuring that newspaper organizations adhere to minimum wage standards, make timely payment of wages, and maintain appropriate working conditions for their employees.

In the recently held meeting of the CLMC, it was emphasised that State / UT Governments should conduct special drives for speeding up the process of full implementation of the Majithia Wage Board recommendations.

J&K Bank launches Virtual ATM facility in collaboration with Paymart India Pvt. Ltd We have to listen to our customers, address their concerns; then only we can earn their trust: Baldev Prakash

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Committed to enhancing digital convenience for its customers, J&K Bank has launched a Virtual ATM Facility (vATM) - a cutting-edge technology platform.

MD & CEO Baldev Prakash inaugurated the innovative facility in Friday in the presence of Director & CEO Paymart India Pvt. Ltd. Amit Narang, Bank's Executive Director Sudhir Gupta, General Managers, IT Head (Paymart India) Suvir Chopra, DGMs and other senior officers at the Bank's Corporate Headquarters. Bank's Divisional Heads and Zonal Heads from Kashmir, Jammu and Rest of India also joined the inaugural ceremony through VC.

Speaking on the occasion, MD & CEO Baldev Prakash said, "In today's fast-evolving digital banking landscape, we continue to innovate in extending convenience to our customers. Launching of the Virtual ATM facility (vATM)



MD & CEO J&K Bank Baldev Prakash launching Virtual ATM facility.

demonstrates our strong focus on leveraging technology for financial empowerment of people especially in rural areas with no presence of ATMs or other banking channels. Developed in collaboration with Paymart, the initiative is a win-win for all the stakeholders particularly for the customers and the merchants."

"This collaboration with Paymart India Pvt. Ltd. aligns perfectly with our vision to create a more accessible and customer-centric banking ecosystem. And through these vATMs we can cater to customers near their doorsteps in the ATM-deficient locations", he added.

He, however, underscored the importance of remaining

in constant touch with the customers to strengthen the mutual bond. "No technology intervention can replace the importance of being in constant touch with the customers. We have to listen to our customers and address their concerns; then only we can earn their trust and retain them", he said.

Highlighting the significance of the partnering with the Bank, Amit Narang said, "We are delighted to partner with J&K Bank in launching the Virtual ATM facility. With mobile banking taking over, cardless and hardware-free has become a future. With India currently the world's biggest cash economy, virtual ATMs will become an integral part of banking. The

services provided by these virtual ATMs are convenient, hassle free and more importantly safe and secure."

"We have integrated with the Bank system through secure mechanism and are committed to live upto the expectations of J&K Bank, which has remarkable legacy of trust and emotional equity particularly in J&K and Ladakh", he added.

In his remarks on the occasion, ED Sudhir Gupta hailed the launch as game-changer in extending easy and secure banking facility to people living in rural areas and far from banking touchpoints. "vATM is a leap forward in creating an easy, secure and cardless cash withdrawal experience for

our rural customers. We need to make most of the facility and ensure its utility is taken to full effect" he said.

The Bank's Chief Digital Officer Naveed Zargar gave a detailed presentation on the features and benefits of the facility. He said that the initiative is expected to enhance Bank's digital offerings, ensuring a seamless and secure banking experience for its diverse customer base across regions especially in ATM deficient areas.

Notably, the Virtual ATM facility enables the customers to withdraw cash seamlessly through the enrolled merchants of Paymart India by generating digital tokens using the Bank's mobile application (mPay Delight+). While enabling customers to avail cash withdrawal facility from nearby merchant locations, it also results in increased footfall at these locations translating into more business along with commission on transactions as additional earnings.

KPDCL raises alarm on spike in DT damage rate 158 transformers damaged in 4 days, 143 replaced

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL), on Friday again issued a fervent appeal to its consumers to use electricity judiciously so that localities Distribution Transformers (DTs) are protected from damage and subsequent power outages.

As many as 49 DTs were damaged across Kashmir valley on November 21 alone, indicating a steep rise in unsanctioned heating load across all Divisions of Kashmir valley. Expressing serious concern over increase in DT damage rate early in winter, a KPDCL spokesperson advised domestic consumers to strictly adhere to their sanctioned load and avoid using crude heaters and boilers, which have been banned by the Government. "While 49 DTs were reported damaged on November 21, 32 were damaged on November 20, 37 on November 19 and 40 on November 18," he added. The spokesman, however, clarified that KPDCL's Central Workshop at Pampore and Divisional Workshops are operating in double shifts to reclaim the Buffer Stock by repairing the damaged DTs. "Against 158 DTs damaged across Kashmir valley over the last 4 days, 143 were also repaired and restored during the same period," he stated.

Attributing rising DT damage rate and power outages to rampant use of crude heaters/boilers and illegal hooking on bare conductor in metered areas, the spokesperson stated that KPDCL has intensified its inspection and disconnection drives across all Electric Divisions of Kashmir valley to curb power theft. "As many as 1484 inspection drives were conducted across all 18 Electric Divisions by KPDCL on November 21, during which 1396 domestic and 514 commercial installations were disconnected for unauthorised use of power," he said, adding the inspection drives will be further accelerated on daily basis in all districts of Kashmir Division. Anticipating DT damage in peak winter months, KPDCL has maintained a buffer stock of 1554 DTs. "We have also kept a reserve stock of DTs to meet any eventuality on account of higher DT damage," he said, adding Buffer Stock was pegged at 1412 last year. Reiterating KPDCL's commitment to replace the damaged DT within the stipulated timelines, the spokesman, however, clarified that repeat damage of DT by increase in unsanctioned load shall attract longer duration timelines, factoring in limited manpower available at Central Workshop Pampore and Divisional Workshops of KPDCL.

IIM Jammu hosts Int'l Conference on Next-Gen Supply Chain

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu inaugurated its International Conference on Next-Gen Supply Chain: Trends, Innovations, and Best Practices on Friday, in collaboration with Montpellier Business School, France, and Liverpool Business School, UK. The event, held at the Mandapam Auditorium, IIM Jammu, will run from November 22-23, 2024, bringing together leading global experts to discuss the latest trends, innovations, and best practices in supply chain management.

The conference was inaugurated by Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director of IIM Jammu, who also serves as the Conference Chair. Prof. Rameshwar Dubey, Head of Supply Chain Management at Montpellier Business School, joined the ceremony online as Conference Co-Chair.

The conference attracted distinguished speakers,



Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director of IIM Jammu and others at conference.

including Prof. Cyril R.H. Foropon, Montpellier Business School; Dr. H. M. Belal, Liverpool John Moores University; and keynote speaker Prof. Debjit Roy, IIM Ahmedabad. Other prominent attendees included Prof. Surya Prakash Singh from IIT Delhi; Shri Kamal Sharma, Senior Vice President, SCM, Vodafone Idea Ltd; and IIM Jammu faculty members Dr. Pratik Maheshwari and Dr. Praveen Vijaya Raj, Program Chairs for NGSC 2024.

In his welcome address, Prof. B.S. Sahay emphasized the growing importance of supply chain management, which accounts for 16% of India's GDP, and its role in driving national economic development through cost reductions.

He also highlighted IIM Jammu's achievements, including collaborations with IIT Jammu and AIIMS Jammu, and its unique position as the only city with three Institutes of National Importance.

Prof. Sahay underscored the relevance of integrated multi-modal transportation in enhancing trade and connectivity, aligning these insights with the infrastructure initiatives led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Prof. Rameshwar Dubey spoke about the significance of collaboration between academic institutions and industries to bridge gaps in supply chain management. He emphasized quality research and case-based methodologies to overcome operational challenges and foster sustainable solutions.

Prof. Cyril R.H. Foropon highlighted the need for academic-industry partnerships and breaking silos to drive supply chain innovation. Dr. H. M. Belal focused on integrating digitalization and sustainability into supply chain practices to meet evolving market demands.

Kamal Sharma discussed the transformative impact of digitization on supply chain

management, citing technologies like IoT and AI as tools for cost optimization and efficiency.

The conference also featured thought-provoking keynote addresses by Prof. Debjit Roy and Prof. Surya Prakash Singh, offering insights into emerging trends in supply chain strategies. Following these sessions, researchers presented papers in Aryabhata and Arjuna Classrooms, contributing to discussions on innovative solutions for real-world supply chain challenges.

On the second day of the conference, additional paper presentations, panel discussions, and interactive sessions are scheduled, further fostering global collaboration and knowledge exchange. This conference underscores IIM Jammu's commitment to advancing research and facilitating international dialogue in the field of supply chain management.

JMC launches QR Code-Based Android POS System for Door-to-Door Solid Waste Collection charges

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) on Friday introduced an innovative Android QR Code-Based Point of Sale (POS), provided by J&K bank, to streamline the collection of door-to-door solid waste management charges. This initiative is a significant step towards modernizing waste management practices and ensuring transparency in transactions.

The newly launched system enables residents to make instant digital payments using QR codes through UPI enabled mobile apps/wallets.

Equipped with Android-based POS devices, the sanitation supervisors will collect charges seamlessly while generating e-receipts for the residents, ensuring a secure and efficient process. This technology eliminates manual handling of cash, reducing errors and enhancing



Commissioner JMC Dr. Devansh Yadav launching Android QR Code-Based POS.

accountability.

Speaking at the launch event, Commissioner, JMC Dr. Devansh Yadav stated that "This initiative reflects JMC's commitment to leveraging technology to provide better services to citizens while promoting a clean and green Jammu. We encourage residents to adopt this digital payment method to contribute to a transparent and efficient waste management system."

Key benefits of the new POS system include Convenient Payment Options: QR code-based

payment ensures hassle-free and cashless transactions, Receipts: Residents receive instant digital receipts, reducing disputes and confusion, Transparency & Accountability: Automated data tracking fosters trust and minimizes revenue leakage, Support for Swachh Bharat Mission: By enabling efficient waste collection, the system aligns with national cleanliness initiatives.

On the launch the following officers remained present: Dr. Vinod Sharma,

Health officer, JMC, Ankush Kapoor; Informatics Officer, JMC, Parshotam Kumar, Sanitation Officer etc. The JMC has urged residents to support this progressive move and help the city advance towards cleaner and smarter waste management practices. The rollout of the POS system will be conducted in phases, starting with selected wards and eventually covering the entire city.

For further details or assistance, residents can contact JMC's helpline at 18001807207.

Governance reforms focus on 'ease of living', transparency: Dr Jitendra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAIPUR: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, speaking at the two-day Conference on Good Governance, reaffirmed the government's commitment to simplifying governance, enhancing public service delivery, and ensuring transparency.

Held in collaboration with the Department of Administrative Reforms & Grievance Redressal (DARPG) and the Government of Chhattisgarh, the conference gathered policymakers, bureaucrats, and experts to discuss reforms aimed at improving governance and public service.

Dr. Jitendra, who was the chief guest at the event, highlighted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of making governance more accessible and inclusive.

He stressed that holding such conferences outside Delhi, in states like Jammu & Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, ensures that governance solutions are tailored to regional needs. "This approach fosters collaboration between the



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh addressing Conference on Good Governance at Raipur on Friday.

Centre and States, ensuring that solutions are locally relevant," he said.

Dr. Singh outlined key reforms introduced under the Modi government, including the abolition of over 2,000 obsolete rules and regulations, aimed at reducing bureaucratic red tape. A standout reform was the scrapping of the requirement for attested documents, which he described as a gesture of trust in the youth.

The Minister also highlighted the adoption of technology to enhance governance efficiency. One such initiative is the use of face-recognition technology for

pensioner verification, which eliminates the need for physical visits or biometric systems. "Pensioners can now complete their verification in seconds with just a mobile phone and camera," he said.

Another significant reform discussed was the digitization of pension and family entitlement systems, ensuring timely and hassle-free disbursement of benefits. Dr. Jitendra Singh also emphasized the government's decision to eliminate interviews for Group B and C posts to promote fairness, transparency, and reduce corruption.

The conference also focused on collaborative governance, with Dr. Singh citing the example of Tamil Nadu and Jammu & Kashmir working together on river and ocean cleaning initiatives. This, he said, demonstrates the power of knowledge-sharing and cooperation between states to address common challenges.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai of Chhattisgarh, who also addressed the conference, praised the event as an important platform for fostering innovative governance. He emphasized the role of cooperative federalism in solving unique regional challenges and creating replicable governance models.

The discussions centered on the goal of improving "ease of living" for citizens, a core focus of the Modi government. Dr. Singh also touched upon amendments to the Prevention of Corruption Act, highlighting that treating the act of giving a bribe as seriously as taking one strengthens transparency and accountability.