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Focus on ramping...

emergency contact numbers.

Vivek Bhardwaj, Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department gave a detailed briefing on the district-wise analysis of Covid-19 situation, status of testing, contact tracing and vaccination across the UT, besides the status of bed occupancy in the designated hospitals.

It was informed that five districts - Kulgam, Shopian, Anantnag, Ganderbal and Poonch have completed the 100% coverage of 1st dose of vaccination in the 15-18 years age group, besides 70% of the total targeted population in the 15-18 years age group has been inoculated with the first dose across the UT.

The chair also took stock of the implementation of directions passed in previous meetings.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lt Governor; Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department; Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Government, Public Works (R&B) Department; Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lt Governor; besides Senior officers of Civil and police administration attended the meeting, in person and through virtual mode.

J&K reports 4354...

positive cases, 45156 are Active Positive (11110 in Jammu Division and 34046 in Kashmir Division), 374282 have recovered and 4647 have died; 2268 in Jammu division and 2379 in Kashmir division.

Till date 5694035 persons have been enlisted for observation which included 16973 persons in home quarantine including facilities operated by government, 45156 in isolation and 424424 in home surveillance. Besides, 5202835 persons have completed their surveillance period.

While 916 cases have been recorded in the Srinagar district, 763 cases were reported from the Jammu district.

Meanwhile, Ladakh has reported 133 fresh Covid cases, taking the tally to 25,348, while the active cases in the union territory came down to 1,250 with 191 more people recovering from the disease, officials said.

The union territory has recorded 223 Covid-related deaths -- 164 in Leh and 59 in Kargil -- since the outbreak of the pandemic nearly two years ago, they said.

No fresh death was reported from the union territory, they said.

As many as 191 patients recovered from the disease and were discharged from hospitals, they said. With this, the total number of recoveries has reached 23,875, they said.

With this, the total number of COVID-19 active cases in Ladakh has come down to 1,250 including 953 in Leh and 297 in Kargil district.

Of the 133 fresh cases reported from the Union territory, 87 were from Leh district and 64 from Kargil district, they said.

Two JKAS officers...

District Pulwama and Ghulam Nabi Bhat, JKAS, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, shall hold the charge of the post of Registrar, District Kupwara, in addition to their own duties, till further orders.

No one can...

come at the rally not just as a prime minister but also as a former cadet.

"The government is taking many steps to join the country's education system with NCC," he said.

Under the new National Education Policy, the country's 90 universities have started offering NCC as an elective subject to their students, he noted.

"I am seeing so many girl cadets here. This is a sign of how our country is changing," he said.

"Country needs your contribution and there are ample opportunities for that," he told the girl cadets.

He said now the daughters of the country are taking admission in Sainik Schools and women are getting major responsibilities in the army.

The daughters of the country are flying fighter planes in the Air Force.

"In such a situation, it should be our endeavour that more and more daughters should be included in NCC," he added.

When a country's youth starts working with the motto of "nation first", no power in the world can stop him, he mentioned.

He said cadets should apply the principles -- which they learn at NCC -- when they go back home.

Rahul's Punjab visit...

other parts of the country.

Rahul's Punjab visit, Chugh said, had also exposed that the Congress was a divided house as five senior MPs of the party boycotted him to express their resentment against his style of working.

The Congress has failed Punjab miserably under the leadership of Gandhi family and was set to bite the dust in the coming Assembly elections, Chugh added.

Some Kashmiri politicians...

dissuaded from their chosen path by any incitement or provocation.

The divisive leaders are making highly inflammatory statements during their picnics to this region and leave with sowing the seeds of hatred.

He wondered how these leaders who were swearing by Jammu's secular ethos and hospitality since years, but now see everything in danger.

"There is no danger or threat to any religious or ethnic group in Jammu", Rana declared while recalling the BJP's solemn pledge about 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas', saying if there is any danger to anyone, it is those myopic political leaders who sustain on division in the society.

By creating fear psychosis, these leaders are actually harming the interest of the people they pretend to be the Messiahs of, he added.

Batting strongly for an elected government in Jammu and Kashmir, Devender Rana said that bureaucratic governance cannot be a replacement to a political government.

Bureaucratic governance is no replacement for a political government, Rana said.

"Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha is a veteran politician. He has been MP six times and also been minister. He has a lot of experience in governance. The adminis-

stration is being run in a good way," he said.

"The bureaucracy in Jammu and Kashmir is efficient. They are hardworking people. We are proud of the bureaucracy and police in Jammu and Kashmir," Rana said.

Stressing the need for an elected government, Rana said people have easy reach to elected representatives and elected representatives also have a responsibility towards the people.

"The elected representatives serve as a bridge," the BJP leader said.

Rana said that leaders of different political parties should play their roles and become bridges between the people and the administration to resolve problems.

"They should listen to the voice of the people. They should take up issues raised by the people with the government and find their resolution," he said.

"We want the voice of Jammu division to be strengthened and Jammu should get its rights. We will continue to fight for our rights. There will be no compromise," the BJP leader said.

"We have to carve out a better Jammu for inclusive Jammu and Kashmir, which will eventually make our great nation strong and vibrant", he said adding that the land of broad minded people has all along played crucial role as a unifier and shown political will in maintaining high traditions of amity and brotherhood, even during most testing times.

He said Jammu interest cannot be compromised and strongly pleaded for a level playing field in respect of opportunities in governance besides resources, saying nobody should nurture a feeling, even remotely, of deprivation, exploitation or discrimination.

"History will judge us by our actions and not just by assertions", Rana said and exuded confidence that the people in large will appreciate the importance of coming together for harmonious growth of all the regions with appeasement to none.

Referring to burgeoning unemployment, Rana said this is the biggest issue of Jammu and Kashmir:

"We want opportunities of jobs and employment for our youth," he said.

Prominent among those present on the occasion included Dharamveer Singh Jamwal, Saudagar Singh Sarpanch Barn, Ex Sarpanch Gani Mohd, Ex Sarpanch Shamsher Singh, Sarpanch Sanjeev Singh, Ex Sarpanch Balwant Singh, Numbardar Swarn Singh, Ex Sarpanch Mumtaz, Kabla Singh, Narinder Singh Bahu, Bhramu Panch, Gurbachan Singh and others.

Virtual hearing in...

coordination with the CPC e-Courts shall create a link for each Bench in their respective wings and provide the same to the advocates/ litigants by making it available on the official website of the High Court or through any appropriate electronic mode", the order read, adding, "Filing of cases shall be in accordance with the Electronic Filing (e-Filing) in the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and in Subordinate Courts and Tribunals of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Rules, 2021 either through e-Filing portal of the High Court or through e-mail address of the respective filing counters of the High Court".

According to the order, the entry of litigants and public into the court premises from the very outer gate shall be strictly prohibited. Similarly, the entry of clerks of the advocates shall be restricted to the chambers of advocates and their entry into the court building and sections/offices shall be prohibited. In order to decongest sections/offices/courts, the officials shall be permitted to function in batches with 50 per cent reduction on rotation basis.

Moreover, the Registrars Judicial of both wings of the High Court shall ensure sanitization of entire High Court Complex on every Saturday and Sunday and staff on duty and the counsel, if any permitted for physical hearing, shall take necessary precautions, ensure physical distancing, wearing of masks and observance of COVID SoPs and guidelines issued by the Government from time to time.

"On account of virtual hearing, entry of lawyers in the High Court premises is not required unless any advocate is permitted for physical hearing in any extremely urgent matter", the order said, adding "In District and Subordinate Courts and Tribunals in UTs of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, the Presiding Officers shall hear the cases through virtual mode from their respective court rooms/chambers during court hours". However, physical hearing in respect of any such listed matter will be at the discretion of the Presiding Officer concerned subject to satisfaction of Presiding Officer regarding urgency involved in such matter and thereafter such matter can be taken up for physical hearing on the date fixed by Presiding Officer. Other directions in respect of both the wings of the High Court will also be applicable in respect of District and Subordinate Courts and Tribunals, the order added.

Determination of inadequate...

inadequate representation of SCs and STs in services under a State is left to the discretion of the State, as the determination depends upon myriad factors which this Court cannot envisage.

"Laying down of criteria for determining the inadequacy of representation would result in curtailing the discretion given to the State Governments. In addition, the prevailing local conditions, which may require to be factored in, might not be uniform," a three-judge bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao said.

The apex court said it should leave the decision-making to other branches of government after directing their attention to the problems rather than itself entering into the remedial field.

Referring to its verdict in the M Nagaraj case, the bench said that this Court made it clear that the validity of law made by the State Governments providing reservation in promotions shall be decided on a case-to-case basis to establish whether the inadequacy of representation is supported by quantifiable data.

"Therefore, we are of the opinion that no yardstick can be laid down by this Court for determining the adequacy of representation of SCs and STs in promotional posts for the purpose of providing reservation," said the bench, also comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna and B R Gavai.

The top court said the percentage of posts reserved for Backward Classes, as prescribed by the State, has to be strictly followed and cannot be varied or changed simply because some members of the Backward Class have already been appointed/promoted against the general seats.

The vacancies arising in the cadre, after the initial posts are filled, will have to be filled from amongst the category to which the post belonged in the roster, it said.

The bench said that it had observed in earlier judgements that the appropriate Government has to apply cadre strength as a unit in the operation of the roster to ascertain whether a given class/group is adequately represented in the service.

"The entire service cannot be considered to be a cadre for the purpose of promotion from one post to a higher post in a different grade. Promotion is made from one

grade to the next higher grade, in relation to which cadre are constituted," the bench said.

It said before providing for reservation in promotions to cadre, the State is obligated to collect quantifiable data regarding the inadequacy of representation of SCs and STs.

"Collection of information regarding the inadequacy of representation of SCs and STs cannot be with reference to the entire service or 'class/group' but it should be relatable to the grade/category of posts to which promotion is sought.

"Cadre, which should be the unit for the purpose of collection of quantifiable data in relation to the promotional post(s), would be meaningless if data pertaining to the representation of SCs and STs is with reference to the entire service," the bench said.

The top court noted that there is near unanimity amongst the counsels that the data collected to establish the inadequacy of representation, which forms the basis for providing reservation for promotions, should be reviewed periodically.

"We are not inclined to express any view on discontinuation of reservations in totality, which is completely within the domain of the legislature and the executive. As regards review, we are of the opinion that data collected to determine inadequacy of representation for the purpose of providing reservation in promotions need to be reviewed periodically.

"The period for review should be reasonable and is left to the Government to set out," it said.

The bench said collection of quantifiable data for determining the inadequacy of representation of SCs and STs is a basic requirement for providing reservation in promotions and the State should justify reservation in promotions concerning the cadre to which promotion is made.

"Taking into account the data pertaining to a 'group', which would be an amalgamation of certain cadres in service, would not give the correct picture of the inadequacy of representation of SCs and STs in the cadre in relation to which reservation in promotions is sought to be made. Rosters are prepared cadre-wise and not group-wise," the bench said.

The top court had earlier said that it would not reopen its decision on the issue of the grant of reservation in promotion to SCs and STs and said it was for the states to decide how they are going to implement the same.

Attorney General K K Venugopal had referred to the apex court judgements right from the Indra Sawhney verdict of 1992, popularly known as the Mandal Commission case to the Jarnail Singh verdict of 2018.

The Mandal judgement had ruled out quota in promotions.

Venugopal had said that till 1975, 3.5 per cent SCs and 0.62 per cent of STs were in government employment and this is the average figure.

In 2008, the figure of SCs and STs in government employment rose to 17.5 and 6.8 per cent respectively, which are still low and justified such quota, he had said.

Former Div Com...

120-B of Code as also for offence under Section 5(2) of J&K Prevention of Corruption Act Svt 2006 read with Section 5(1)(d) of Act, which is sub-judice against him and others. Applicant, namely Basharat Ahmad Dhar- the accused No. 1, commenced the present application, on virtual mode, with the prayer for grant of bail inter-alia on grounds of innocence and false implication. It is further submitted that the investigation of case stands completed and, therefore his presence is not required by the Investigating Authority for any purpose. Court further observed that no resistance is offered to the present application by the Prosecution in its 'Statement of objections'. It is submitted that the applicant fully cooperated with the Investigating Authority during the investigation of case and, therefore, he was never arrested. Court after hearing both the sides observed that although, the offences for the purported commission of which applicant stands charge-sheeted are non-bailable yet the same are not punishable either with death sentence or imprisonment for life and, therefore, the embargo laid in Section 497 of J&K CrPC, is not attracted in the present case. "The fact that applicant is not arrested is taken care of by the fact that he has appeared and placed himself at the mercy of this Court. Taking that into account coupled with fact that the investigation of case stands completed and charge-sheet against accused persons is already instituted as also the facts and circumstances of the case, the applicant is admitted to bail subject to conditions that he furnishes personal bond in the sum of Rs 50,000 and one surety of an equal amount to satisfaction of this Court," it observed.

Ex-Dy CM's...

filed detailed reply to the appeal as well as application for stay wherein JDA has branded the construction as 'Major Violation' as Dr Nirmal Singh and his wife Mamta Singh did not obtain the building permission from JDA despite the area coming under purview of JDA. It may be recalled here that JDA issued Demolition Order only after the matter came in public domain through an RTI Information obtained by Adv Muzzaffar Ali Shah.

Govt constitutes Committee...

of J&K," reads an order issued by Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Principal Secretary, General Administration Department.

As per order, the committee will be headed by Principal Secretary, Agriculture, Production & Farmer's Welfare Department as its Chairman while Commissioner/Secretary, Floriculture, Parks & Gardens Department; Director General, Horticulture Kashmir (Nodal Officer, Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture); Director Agriculture, (Nodal Officer, Mission Director RKVY), Kashmir; Director, Floriculture Kashmir; Director, Floriculture Jammu; Extension Officer, SKUAST, Jammu/Kashmir; Deputy Director, Floriculture (Central), Directorate of Floriculture, Kashmir; Deputy Director (In-charge Nodal Officer CSS) Directorate of Floriculture, Kashmir; Deputy Director (In-charge Nodal Officer CSS) Directorate of Floriculture, Jammu; An Expert in the Commercial Floriculture to be empanelled by the Floriculture, Parks & Gardens Department as per requirement will be its Members.

"The Committee shall submit a Proposal/Action Plan within 30 days to the Government," it added.

Two IFS officers....

posted as Member Secretary, Pollution Control Committee, J&K has been transferred and posted as Chief Conservator of Forests, Jammu vice Ramesh Kumar, IFS who has been posted as Member Secretary, Pollution Control Committee J&K.

Villagers protest over non-construction of road in Katli Panchayat



Villagers raising slogans during protest.

STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: "Kathua Administration is busy in patting its own back, claiming development all around but even after 74 years of independence but people are forced to walk in the mud due to non-construction of road in Shivpuri and Upper Katli locality of Katli Panchayat of Sub District Hiranagar" said residents during the protest.

They said that the biggest irony is that this Panchayat comes under the Constituency of Former Deputy Chief Minister and Speaker Dr Nirmal Singh and hardly 32-35 km away from the District Headquarters but Admin is paying no heed towards the

GDC Kathua organises webinar on Cyber Jaagrookta

STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: Department of Computer Applications, Government Degree College, Kathua (Boys) organized a webinar on Online Cyber Crimes (Forgery & Fraud) under the series of "Cyber Jaagrookta (Awareness) Diwas", to strengthen the cyber security for the prevention of cyber crime. Dr. M.S. Pathania, Principal, GCW Kathua, was the Chief Guest for the occasion.