

Political leader, Member DDC Srinagar call on Lt Governor

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Shailender Vaid, Senior BJP leader; Er. Ajiaz Hussain, Member, District Development Council Srinagar on Saturday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha here.

Shailender Vaid on behalf of Patnitop Hotel Owners Association met Lt Governor and raised various issues related to development of Kud and Patnitop as preferred tourist destinations of Jammu and Kashmir.

Vaid put forth a number of demands and issues before the Lt Governor, which included repair of road and drains on Patnitop ring road and Kassal Morth to Nag Temple road; better water supply in Patnitop and village Karlah; improving traffic management in peak season and widening of ring



Senior BJP leader, Shailender Vaid calling on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

road, besides creation of dedicated parking slots, promotion of adventure sports activities like paragliding at Patnitop, all-weather road from Kud to Sanasar and tunnel from Kud to Batote.

He also discussed with the Lt Governor about the revision of the draft Master Plan, promotion of Tibetan culture and further exploring the potential of tourism of the region.

While interacting with Sh Vaid, the Lt Governor observed that the UT administration is dedicatedly working to fully explore the untapped Tourism potential of J&K, and is continuously improving the existing tourist spots, besides identifying the new ones to bring them on the tourist map.

He assured him that due consideration would be given to the points raised by him during the

meeting. Later, DDC member, Er. Ajiaz Hussain also met the Lt Governor and apprised him of the functioning of DDC Srinagar; besides presenting the demands of people pertaining to creation of posts for Biomedical Engineers in Hospitals across J&K and generating more employment opportunities for the youth.

He discussed with the Lt Governor various issues, includ-

ing proper maintenance of rural roads and providing Birth Certificates by Block Development offices in rural areas, besides other issues related to the welfare of Shia community of J&K.

The Lt Governor while interacting with the DDC member gave a patient hearing to all his issues and demands. He assured him of proper redressal of the genuine issues and demands on merit.

The Lt Governor observed that the UT administration is committed to holistic and equitable development of J&K involving the representatives of grassroots democracy and will of the common people of villages and cities. He urged the DDC member to continue his endeavors for furthering the welfare of the people of his constituency.

Artificial Intelligence, Digital Medicine critical to future healthcare: Dr Jitendra

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JAMMU: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said here on Saturday that Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Digital Medicine are critical to future healthcare.

During a visit to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Jammu for the inspection of the upcoming new blocks and inauguration of recently developed facilities, Dr Jitendra Singh suggested that in order to develop an exclusive identity for the institution, the focus should be on these futuristic areas. Tele-Medicine and Robotic Surgery have already taken over in a big way and the indispensable utility of these new options was realized during the pandemic times, he added.

The Minister announced that AIIMS Jammu will function in close collaboration with CSIR-IIIM Jammu. An MoU was signed in the presence of the Minister, between Director AIIMS Jammu Dr Shakti Gupta and Director IIIM Dr S. Reddy, on behalf of the two institutions.

Speaking on the occasion Dr Jitendra Singh said, it is an irony that CSIR-IIIM Jammu and Government Medical College Jammu existed in the close vicinity of just about 4 kilometers from each other and even though both the institutions were dedicated to medical



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh, flanked by Director AIIMS Dr Shakti Gupta and Director IIIM Dr S. Reddy, during the signing of MoU between the two institutions, at Vijaypur on Saturday.

JAMMU: The decision about holding assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir is the prerogative of the Election Commission, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said on Saturday and asserted that the BJP as a party is always in ready mode for any democratic exercise.

He also said that the Narendra Modi-led government has created ample opportunities for the youth to get employment in the country.

But the youth in Jammu and Kashmir did not get exposure to such avenues due to "constitutional barriers" of the past (now abrogated Article 370), Singh said.

"The Election Commission is an autonomous constitutional authority which will decide on the timing of the (assembly) elections in Jammu and Kashmir after getting the final report of the delimitation commission (set up to redraw the assembly seats of the Union Territory)," the Union minister of state in the

Prime Minister's office said.

"As an activist of the BJP, we remain ready 24x7 to participate in panchayat, DDC, BDC, assembly and Lok Sabha (polls)," he said.

Singh said he had nothing to add to the statement of Union Home Minister Amit Shah who has already promised to conduct assembly elections after the completion of the delimitation process and restore statehood at an "appropriate time". "The process (holding of assembly polls) stopped because of the delimitation commission which is an independent body. They will submit their report to the Election Commission and then it is its responsibility to decide the date of the polls," he said. On employment, Singh said there are a lot of alternative sources of livelihood available to the youth. "The government is creating such opportunities for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir," Singh said.

research, there was hardly any collaboration between the two in the past. He said, every effort would be made to bring in closer integration of IIIM with GMC and also between IIIM Jammu and AIIMS Jammu,

both of which happen to be the Central Government institutions. Dr Jitendra Singh noted that IIIM Jammu is one of the oldest CSIR laboratories in the country and even today it is conducting pioneering research

in Cannabis Medicinal Products and host of other drugs, which makes the institute a natural ally of the AIIMS which has also the mandate of research and medical education.

It is so surprising that LG's Administration which is very much particular about the civic works has gone into deep hibernation and has not been showing any interest in reviving this vital link to its previous glory. Isn't it surprising that the same government which is proactive in repairing other roads in the City of Temples is not showing any interest in restoring this important road, as if the same is not a part of Jammu city.

The residents of the areas which fall in the vicinity of this road and those people who park their vehicles on roadside along the Circular road are apprehensive about safety of their vehicles as already many vehicles got damaged when a significant part of the road caved-in twice at the same spot.

Talking with STATE TIMES, Jagdish Kumar Sharma, Corporator Ward-2, Jullaka Mohalla, raised serious concern over pitiable condition of Circular road. "I strongly opposed the sub-standard work carried out by NBCC regarding laying of pipes on Circular road. I took up matter with Mayor Jammu, Chief Engineer PWD, JMC Commissioner and Chief

Engineer Ueed and apprised all of them about problems being faced by the people of the area and commuters while passing through the aforesaid road," he said, adding that the whole road from the office of the Deputy Commissioner Jammu to Panjthirthi is in a deplorable condition.

The Corporator asserted that NBCC has carried out sub-standard work as the dirty stagnant water overflows from the manholes constructed by the construction company and enters many houses, causing a lot of hardships for people of the area. He appealed to LG Sinha to initiate enquiry regarding substandard work carried out by NBCC. The government cannot show such kind of neglect towards this road as it is very much part of Jammu and it is UT administration's responsibility to ensure that no road stretch remains under dilapidated condition because same will lead to persistence among people who are affected due to this road stretch's poor condition.

It is necessary that the government should start repair works on war-footing so that the road becomes fully functional again and people can get a sigh of relief.

Neglect of Circular road: Who's responsible?



JAMMU: The government has accomplished so much in the last few years in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir but the dismal situation of Circular road for quite some time is difficult to understand, as the indifference of concerned authorities has crossed all limits. The quantum of phlegmatic approach of Government with regard to this road can be well gauged by the fact that despite being highlighted by the fourth pillar of the democracy at several occasions, no one sitting at helm of affairs has taken pain to even utter a word in this regard. The people who happened to pass through this road on a regular basis are fed-up because condition of the road is deteriorating with each passing day due to sub standard work carried out by NBCC (India) Limited, a blue-chip Indian Government corporation, but adamant authorities are sleeping over the matter as if someone from outer space will come and repair this road stretch.

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■ SHAKEELA ANDRABI

Srinagar: Kashmir is known for its agriculture sector as 75 per cent of its domestic needs are met from local production during summer season, but for more than a decade, agriculture and horticulture sectors have been facing huge losses due to spurious pesticides and fertilizers.

The economic survey report, done in 2012-13, noted that the consumption of pesticides and fungicides has increased manifold. Horticulture and agriculture involve more than one million people directly or indirectly in Jammu and Kashmir regions while 3.5 lakh hectares area is under cultivation of various crops. Farmers also allege that over the years, due to lockdown and COVID curbs, traders sold substandard pesticides which spoiled about 80 per cent of apple crop and other agriculture production. To

curb the inflow of unregistered insecticides in Kashmir Division, the Department of Agriculture initiated a valley wide campaign and seized almost 37,800 liters of unregistered Tree Spray Oil (TSO)/ Horticulture Mineral Oil (HMO) from Pulwama.

Director Agriculture Kashmir Mohammad Iqbal told STATE TIMES that concerned enforcement officers are on work to ensure that no unregistered product is allowed to be sold in Kashmir. Director Agriculture further said to serve farmer's interests on and off the field is Department's paramount objective and therefore a vigil has been maintained on movement of spurious insecticides/pesticides besides ensuring that farmers get the genuine product which have a major impact on overall success of agriculture enterprise.

Director Agriculture said that the enforcement wing of the department, Plant Protection Officer Kashmir and Agriculture Chemist Kashmir are working in close coordination so that farmers get quality product. He further said that the concerned officers are being directed to uphold provisions of Pesticides Act 1968 besides ensuring that Act is adopted and implemented in letter & spirit.

Earlier, on the instructions of Director Agriculture Kashmir (Controller Insecticides UT of Jammu and Kashmir), a team comprising of Deputy Director Law Enforcement, District Law Enforcement Inspector Pulwama along with the officials of Enforcement Wing inspected godowns of M/s Himalaya Enterprises at Bus Stand Pulwama and seized a huge quantity of 37,800 lts of unregistered TSO/HMO.

Continuing drive against the distribution and sale of unregistered insecticides, Agriculture Department Kashmir (Enforcement Wing) inspected dealers of insecticides in various districts of Kashmir Division and seized 28,260 lts of unregistered TSO/HMO under various sections of insecticides act 1968.

Chowdhary Iqbal said that valley-wide campaign against unregistered insecticides will continue in coming days. He reiterated Department's commitment to ensure that only registered insecticides reach farmers. Director Agriculture directed the already constituted internal monitoring vigilance team as well as district-level monitoring teams to remain vigilant and increase random checking of markets so that a proper curb is put in place to ensure sale of unregistered insecticides.



Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha felicitating participants of Republic Day function during beating retreat ceremony at Jammu on Saturday.



Congress believes in politics of development based on communal harmony, peace: Bhalla

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JAMMU: Congress is committed to fight the politics of hate and divisiveness and promote harmony in the society.

This was stated by JKPPC Working President Raman Bhalla while interacting with Congress Seva Dal Chief for J&K UT Vijay Sharma newly appointed office bearers of Seva Dal at Booth level and state level on Saturday.

Prominent among those present on the occasion include Manzoor Ahmed, Shehzad Qazi, Rajesh Kumar, Javed Ahmed, Nazir Zahoor Din, Gh Abaas Rather and Atif Rather.

Bhalla said that Congress stands for unity in diversity which is basic strength of our nation.

"Those parties who create hatred and division for vote bank politics, are threat to the unity and integrity of the nation," he said adding that Congress Seva Dal is disciplined wing of the party, which has to spread the ideology and programmes of the party aimed at bringing unity and brotherhood in our multi religious, multi lingual and multi-cultural society.

He said Seva Dal shall play an important role in the party and the society to defeat the communal and fundamentalist forces in J&K which has made the lives of the people miserable. The people generally have complaints about lanes, poor drainage system, unscheduled power cuts, and irregular water supply in the area which has added to the routine issues," he said.

Bhalla said Congress will leave no stone unturned in highlighting & getting resolved the genuine problems of people from the concerned authorities on priority basis as well he explained in depth the policies and programmes of Congress.

He also appealed people to come forward and strengthen in the hands of Congress as



JKPCC Working President, Raman Bhalla during a meeting with Seva Dal members.

Gandhi and AICC Seva Dal Chief Lal Desai.

Bhalla asked the Seva Dal cadres to inculcate discipline amongst them and party men and spread the ideology of the party.

The Congress party and its wings have to counter the false propaganda against the party and its leadership which have a history of sacrifices for the nation, he said.

He said that BJP and its sister organizations are spreading hatred and falsehood against the Congress Party to distort history for future generations. Congress Seva Dal has to reach out to the masses with the real history of struggle and sacrifices by the Congress party for the nation and build a discourse for the politics of development, progress based on communal harmony and peace. The party has to effectively counter the divisionary tactics of BJP for vote bank politics in the country.

He congratulated the new office bearers and asked them to carry the message of Congress party and its leadership of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka

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this is the only party who believes in the politics of truthfulness, transparency

and has completely dedicated itself to the cause of people of Jammu and Kashmir.

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