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Over 1.6 lakh...

in establishing 20,772 units under the PM Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) generating employment for 1,66,172 people," an official spokesman said.

He said the information was given at the 106th board meeting of the KVIB, chaired by J&K Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta here.

The meeting was informed that the board has achieved its target by more than five fold thereby achieving first rank in the country in implementation of this programme, the official said.

Under the J-K Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP), he said the board has established over 3,000 units from 2018-2022 thereby generating employment for nearly 18,000 people.

Addressing the meeting, the chief secretary advised the board to look into hand-holding of youth in establishment of leather processing units, for which the raw material is available locally.

Mehta asked the KVIB to identify certain products, give them a brand name and promote them in the market. He also asked the board to take innovative measures in value addition and creation of market linkages.

Top BJP leader...

selves for the organizational duties till all the elections are over" said Santhosh.

"This is the first major election campaign after historical changes and hence we need to contest these elections with total companionship, in one voice, taking all together and ensuring that not even a single vote gets slipped out of our kitty", added Santhosh.

Barun Chugh, in his address, laid stress on understanding the new scheme of things in minimum time after delimitation and reorganization of the party at various levels. He termed party leaders as commanders who have to lead the party to a big win in all coming elections.

He said that the party leaders have to work out their plan in advance in their minds, then implement them in a perfect harmonious way on ground to attain the goal. He laid repeated stress on the Pravas by Prabhari and senior leaders of the party.

Ravinder Raina, in his presidential address, welcomed all the senior party leaders into the meeting saying that this meeting is sort of a workshop for the party leaders in preparation for the approaching elections.

He also remembered the Dhangri victims after which all the participating BJP leaders observed 2 minutes of silence praying for the departed souls. He reiterated the party's slogan of Booth Jeeta, Chunarv Jeeta and asked all the party leaders to concentrate on the election preparations.

Ashok Koul said that the party strength lies on the devoted work by the party activists and all activists must take their responsibilities with dedication. He also discussed the forthcoming party programmes in detail.

Dr. Jitendra said that only BJP has truly cared for the rights of the residents of J&K. He said that abrogation of controversial Articles has paved the way for the development and grant of rights to every single community.

J&K BJP General Secretary Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal conducted the meeting proceedings.

IMF sees India...

ease of living and ease of doing business, he said.

"The IMF sees India as a bright spot in the global economy while the World Bank says India is in a better position to deal with global headwinds than many other countries," Modi said.

"When we talk about a developed India, it is not just our expression but it is the resolve of every Indian," he said.

India has been on the path of "reform, transform and perform" since 2014, the PM said.

The Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan has imparted greater momentum to it. As a result, India has become an attractive destination for investment, he said.

"In eight years, we have doubled the speed of construction of national highways. During this period, the number of operational airports in India has doubled. India's port handling capacity and port turnaround have improved phenomenally," he said.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has said India will be among the fastest growing economies in the G20 group this year, he noted.

According to Morgan Stanley, India is moving towards becoming the world's third largest economy in the next 4-5 years, while the CEO of McKinsey has said this is not only India's decade, but India's century, the PM added.

The key objectives of the Global Investors Summit are - showcasing industrial ecosystem of the state, promoting the state policies, consultation with industrial organisations to formulate industry-friendly policies, collaboration opportunities, promoting export potential and buyer-seller meets and vendor development, an official earlier said.

Court directs Crime...

2007-09 etc which are pending disposal.

The court after hearing preliminary arguments deferred framing of the charge in the case and observed that for doing substantial justice in the case, further investigation in the case is inevitable. Accordingly, it directed so to be completed within two months. Special DG Crime, UT of J&K has been directed to constitute a SIT for further investigation.

As observed in the order, the foundation of this unprecedented fraud in the field of education dates back to 2002/2003 when the then Director Academics Bashir Ahmed Dar and Dy Director academics R K Jalali (now expired) issued permissions to 22 institutes to

run ETT course by referring to emergency powers of the Chairman BOSE as envisaged under section 13(iv) of Board of School Education Act 1975. All these permissions were issued without any policy in place, guidelines and without conducting any inspections. In 2003, government had issued order whereby a committee was constituted to deal with any application of any promoter for opening ETT. Court observed that if government had constituted committee for accord of NOCs for establishing ETT, then how come Board members, including Secretary Education accorded 22 permissions by illegally invoking emergency powers of the Chairman. Court further observed that permission of opening any such training school for teachers was in exclusive domain of the government under section 11 read with sec 2(n)(i) of the School Education Act 2002. Thereafter a flood gate of such institutes got opened in length and breadth of the state which at the time of their closure were around 499. However, when a complete mess was noticed in 2007 in said institutes, a committee was constituted. Later another committee was constituted in 2010 in Jammu division led by A K Sen, the then Director Academics BOSE. As per report, he inspected randomly 40 such institutes in 5 districts of Jammu province like Jammu, Kathua, Samba, Reasi and Rajouri. He made startling observations that no such institutions virtually existed on ground and it is mockery of the things when one finds degrees on sale in J&K. However, the scam surfaced when a one man enquiry committee, constituted on the direction of the High Court in a public interest litigation filed at Srinagar bench against said ETT institutes submitted its report to the then Chairman JKBOSE in 2011. It was observed that a huge scandal in the history of J&K, where hundreds of crores of rupees are given and taken as bribe and almost all concerned persons are involved in loot. Based on one man enquiry report, two FIRs got registered at Srinagar and Jammu and investigation commenced. The High Court was also monitoring the said investigation and has passed catena of directions to ensure fair and comprehensive investigation in the case which was finally closed in the year 2019 on account of filing of charge-sheets in the case at Srinagar and Jammu.

In this court the main charge-sheet was filed in 2015, based on 2002 - 05 admission session followed by supplementary charge-sheets based on session wise admissions. Now after having a preliminary hearing on the framing of charge, the court observed unpteen lapses in the charge-sheet which inevitably warrant further investigation in the case for doing complete justice.

Kharge invites 21...

non-violence, and to defend the constitutional values of liberty, equality, fraternity and justice for all. At this time of crisis for our country, where public attention is systematically diverted from people's issues, the yatra has emerged as a powerful voice. I hope you will participate and further strengthen its message," he said.

The yatra, which started from Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu on September 7, will conclude in Srinagar on January 30, with Rahul Gandhi hoisting the national flag there.

The march has so far covered more than 3,300 km passing through Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.

Kharge said, "Today, India faces an economic, social and political crisis. At this time, when the Opposition's voice is being suppressed in the Parliament and the media, the Yatra is connecting directly with lakhs of people."

"We have discussed the grave issues affecting our nation inflation, unemployment, social divisions, weakening of democratic institutions and the threat on our borders. All sections of society have also participated and shared their problems youth, women and elderly, farmers, labourers, small businessmen and industrialists; Dalits, Adivasis, and linguistic and religious minorities; activists, artists and spiritual leaders. This direct conversation with the people has been a major achievement of the Yatra," the Congress chief also said.

Three soldiers martyred...

tweeted. Giving details, a defence spokesman said the incident took place at around 5.30 pm on Tuesday when a team of soldiers was on a routine operational task along a narrow winter track.

"While moving towards the forward post, snow along the narrow track broke, leading to slipping of one JCO and two jawans into a deep gorge," the spokesman said.

He said a search and rescue operation was immediately launched with troops from the nearest post.

"Inspite of adverse weather condition and rough terrain, sustained efforts of the search party led to the recovery of mortal remains of the three brave soldiers today morning between 04:15 to 04:45 AM," he added.

The deceased soldiers were identified as Naib Subedar Parshotam Kumar; Havildar Amrik Singh and sepoy Amit Sharma.

Kumar (43), a native of Jammu and Kashmir's Bishnah area, had joined the Army in 1996. He is survived by his wife and two children.

Singh (39) had joined the Army in 2001 and hailed from Una district in Himachal Pradesh. He is survived by his wife and one son.

Sharma (23) had joined the Army in 2019 and belonged to Hamirpur district in Himachal Pradesh. He is survived by his mother:

"The mortal remains of the three bravehearts will be taken for last rites to their respective native places, where they would be laid to rest with full military honours," the spokesman said.

Lt Governor Manoj Sinha paid tributes to the three army personnel.

"I salute the resolute courage of our braveheart army personnel who laid down their lives in the line of duty in the Machil sector, Kupwara. My deepest condolences to the bereaved families of martyrs. Their sacrifice and selfless service to the nation will always be remembered," Sinha wrote on Twitter:

Chief spokesperson of Jammu and Kashmir Congress Ravinder Sharma also expressed

grief over the death of the soldiers in the "unfortunate accident".

"We offer glowing tributes to the slain soldiers and express our sympathies with the bereaved families," he said.

Patrolling, troops deployment...

forcefully," said Ashok Yadav, the inspector general of the BSF Kashmir Frontier.

"Our alertness doubles whenever there is an event like this (Republic Day). We have strengthened our patrolling and deployment. Many of our companies are also deployed for law-and-order duties and the endeavour is to prevent any such incident," he told reporters here.

He was addressing an event to flag off the educational-cum-motivational Bharat Darshan Tour to Mumbai of 29 Kashmiri students of different schools.

Asked if there was any input about the possibility of any terror incident like the recent one in Jammu, the IG BSF said he had no such knowledge.

Budget 2023-24...

time bound manner. He directed for making necessary inclusions in the budget 2023-24 for implementing these ideals set for the UT.

It was set out that the agenda of this year's conference was based upon the broad counters of Viksit Bharat that were decided after extensive deliberations between nodal Ministries, NITI Aayog, States/UTs and domain experts. The discussion during the Conference were held on six identified themes viz Thrust on MSMEs, Infrastructure and Investments, Minimising Compliances, Women's Empowerment, health, nutrition and Skill Development.

The Chief Secretary encouraged the officers to continue strengthening MSME sector as being significant for attaining the goal of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and to popularise local products. Further the ideals of 'Ease of Living' and 'Ease of Doing Business' also needs to be focussed upon.

He called upon them to focus on ending mindless compliances and those laws or rules which are outdated. He remarked that in a time of unparalleled reforms, there is no scope for over regulation and undue restrictions. So time has come to reduce the compliance burden (RCB) on common citizens as much as possible, he added.

Besides the meeting held focused deliberations on incorporation of themes like Vocal for Local and use of new emerging technologies. It was decided that districts being the fulcrum of development should be given more autonomy in utilization of funds through PRI's to enable their unrestrained growth and progress. It also discussed the idea of circular economy and UTs being model of development for all other states.

Dr Mehta impressed upon all the Administrative Secretaries to create a single helpline as envisaged in the conference. He asked them to integrate the helplines related to women and children like 181 and 1098 with 112 Emergency Response Support System.

It was further made out to create women hubs in each district and women exclusive shopping centres, women tourist guides and taxi drivers for their greater role in such men-dominated activities. Promotion of women SHGs for carrying out their entrepreneurial activities was also promulgated as a priority area for the budget. Hostel for working women and pink bus service to be used as transport was also discussed in this meeting.

With regard to Health sector the Chief Secretary declared that whole adult population should be screened for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) besides children and girls for malnutrition and anaemia respectively. It was targeted to have 100% institutional births and maintenance of fertility rate at national average of 2.1 here in the UT as well.

For skilling of youth the standardization across skill ecosystem came under discussion. Launch of Skill India Digital Platform as a single skilling interface in the UT for mapping of infrastructure and skilling schemes. Formulation of district skill plans, use of artificial intelligence in skilling, industry partnership in ITIs, on-the-job training, counselling, degree apprenticeship, implementation of PMKVY 4.0 is the way forward to achieve skilling and gainful employment of the youth in the long run, the meeting discussed.

In sustainable energy development establishment of solar plants and sustainable renewable energy models was envisaged to be the key areas of focus for future. For promotion of tourism a comprehensive tourism policy for J&K to bring back film industry and eco-tourism, adventure tourism and sustainable tourism combined with promotion of homestays was identified as areas for inclusion into the upcoming budget.

J&K: Snow in...

J-K is likely to take place, while the weather will remain mainly dry after that till January 17.

The night temperature increased and settled above the freezing point across the valley, except in Pahalgam and Gulmarg, providing relief from the intense cold conditions.

Srinagar recorded a low of 3.5 degrees Celsius Tuesday night, up from 1.8 degrees the night before, the officials said.

Qazigund, the gateway to the Valley, registered a minimum of 1.6 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag in south Kashmir recorded a low of 0.7 degrees, the officials said.

The minimum in Kupwara, a frontier district, settled above the freezing point at a low of 1.5 degrees. The tourist resort town of Pahalgam in Anantnag district, which also serves as a base camp for the annual Anarnath Yatra, registered a low of minus 0.3 degrees Celsius up from minus 3.2 degrees.

The minimum temperature in Gulmarg in Baramulla district was at minus 3 degrees Celsius, they said.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chillai Kalan', the 40-day harshest weather period when the chances of snowfall are maximum and most frequent.

Chillai Kalan begins on December 21 and ends on January 30. The cold wave continues even after that with a 20-day-long 'Chillai Khurd' (small cold) and a 10-day-long 'Chillai Badhla' (baly cold) following it.

Govt forms 14-member UTLSC headed by CS

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The government on Wednesday constituted a 14-member Union Territory Level Sanctioning Committee (UTLSC) for approval of Flexi Fund component under PMDP (MIDH).

As per an order issued by Secretary, General Administration Department, Dr Piyush Singla, Chief Secretary has been appointed as Chairman of the UTLSC.

The order issued under number 37-JK(GAD) of 2023, dated 11-01-2023, reads that sanction is hereby accorded to the constitution of Union Territory Level Sanctioning Committee (UTLSC) for approval of Flexi Fund component under PMDP (MIDH) on the lines of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY).

Other than Chief Secretary as Chairman, Administrative Secretary, Agriculture Production Department has been appointed as Vice Chairman of the committee while Administrative Secretary, Finance Department Member, Administrative Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, representative of Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare, Government of India (Officer not below the rank of Joint Secretary), Administrative Secretary, Department of Forest, Ecology & Environment, Administrative Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Administrative Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring Department, Director, Agriculture, Jammu/Kashmir, Director, Horticulture, Jammu/Kashmir, Director, Animal Husbandry, Jammu/

Kashmir, Director, Fisheries, J&K and representative of SKUAST, have been appointed as members of UTLSC.

Secretary in the Agriculture Production Department has been appointed as member Secretary of UTLSC, the order further reads.

UTLSC may co-opt two more members from Agricultural Research Organizations, reputed NGOs working in the field of Agriculture, Deputy Commissioners of important districts and leading farmers. The quorum for the UTLSC meeting shall not be complete without the presence of a representative from the Government of India, the order reads.

It added that UTLSC shall be responsible for sanctioning the projects, under Flexi fund Component under PMDP (MIDH).

It shall monitor the progress of the sanctioned projects/schemes. It shall review implementation of the schemes' objectives and ensure that the programmes are implemented in accordance with the guidelines laid down.

It shall ensure that no duplication of efforts or resources takes place. It shall ensure commissioning/undertaking field studies to monitor the implementation of the projects.

It shall initiate evaluation studies from time to time, as may be required. It shall ensure that there are no inter-district disparities with respect to the financial patterns/subsidy assistance in the projects, the order further said.

The UTLSC shall meet as often as required but shall meet at least once in a quarter.



55 bovines rescued; 4 smugglers arrested

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Continuing its drive against bovine smuggling and illegal trafficking of animals, Jammu Police laid special Nakas at three different locations in District Jammu in the areas under the jurisdictions of Police Stations Nagrota, Jhajjar Kotli and Akhnoor respectively and rescued 55 bovines.

As per the details, a team of Police Station Nagrota led by SHO Nagrota Inspr: Vishav Partap Singh while on Naka duty at Ban Toll Plaza area rounded up a vehicle (JK02BP/5228). During search of vehicle 23 bovines were rescued. FIR 12/2022 under sections 188 of IPC, 11 of PCA, 50/52/54/56 of Transport Act 1978 was registered at Police Station Nagrota. Accused was arrested who was identified as Mohd Abass, son of Mohd Hussain, resident of Mithrian Tehsil Kalakot District Rajouri.

Similarly at another Naka by police teams of Police Station Jhajjar Kotli near Suketar area, police teams rounded up two suspects namely Amardeep, son of late Sanjeevdeep, resident of Rambin Tehsil Lumbing (Assam) and Mohd Shakeel, son of Ab Gani, resident of Miran Sahib, Tehsil Nowshera in a vehicle (HR55 AE8937). During search, 27 bovines were rescued from vehicle. FIR 07/2023 under sections 188 of IPC, 11 of PCA Act, 50,52,54,56 of Transportation of animal rule 1978 Act was registered at Police Station Jhajjar Kotli and accused was arrested. The overall arrests and recoveries in both the cases were made under the supervision of SDPO Nagrota Pardeep Kumar. Also at another Naka by team of Police Post Chowki Choura, police team of Police Post Chowki Choura led by SHO Akhnoor Inspr Harjeet Singh assisted by Incharge Police Post Chowki Choura PSI Pankaj Katoch rounded up two vehicles (DL6CN-1818) and (JK12A-3723) which were on their way from Jammu towards Poonch. During search of the vehicle 5 bovine animals were rescued. In this regard cognizance of the case taken by Police post Chowki Choura and accused got arrested. Accused arrested was identified as Mohd Umar, son of Mohd Yakooob, resident of Chandak Dingla Poonch. The arrest and recoveries in this case were made under the supervision of SDPO Akhnoor Mohan Lal.

Drug peddler arrested; contraband recovered

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KUPWARA: Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police in Kupwara arrested a drug peddler and recovered contraband substance from his possession.

Acting on specific information regarding hoarding of narcotic substances by one person namely Fareed Ahmad Sheikh son of Ab Rehman Sheikh a resident of Hajitra Taad at his residential house. Accordingly, a police party alongwith Executive Magistrate 1st class Tangdhar raided the said house. During search, 580 gm heroin like narcotics substance was recovered. The accused person has arrested and shifted to police station where he remains in custody. Accordingly, FIR 06/2023 under relevant sections of law was registered at Police Station Karnah and investigation started.

3 notorious drug peddlers arrested; 2.4 Kg Charas, heroin recovered

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

REASI: Continuing drive against drug abuse launched by District Police Reasi under supervision of SSP Amit Gupta, Reasi Police arrested three notorious drug peddlers and recovered 2.4 Kg Charas and 1.5 gm heroin from their possession. During routine checking and frisking at zero Morh Tahwara party of police station Reasi led by Insp Vijay Sharma under supervision of Iltkhari Ahmed Dysp Headquarters apprehended two drug peddlers and recovered 2.4 Kg Charas from their possession. The accused were identified as Nazir Hussain, son of Abdul Rehman, resident of Bathindi and Mohd Nazir alias Bulli, son of Furqan Ali, resident of Jedd Reasi. FIR 6/2023 under sections 8/20 of NDPS Act was registered at Police Station Reasi and investigation started.

In another incident, a party of Police Station Reasi while checking and frisking at Thapa chowk apprehended a drug peddler Manik Sharma, son of Satpal Sharma, resident of Trinthra, Reasi and recovered 1.5 gm Heroin (Chitta) from his possession. FIR 08/2023 under sections 8/21/22 of NDPS Act was registered at Police Station Reasi and investigation started.

Youth found hanging

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBHA: A youth was found hanging in Ramgarh area of Samba district.

According to information, 23-year-old Akash, son of Hidiya Ram, resident of Uttar Pradesh, working in a factory in Ramgarh area, was found hanging with a tree. Police was informed which rushed to the spot and took body into custody. A case has been registered in this context and investigation started.

Man dies in accident

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A man died in an accident in Kanachak area on Wednesday.

According to information, Atul Singh, son of Jagatar Singh, resident of Malpur, while walking on road, got hit by a car, due to which he got injured. He was taken to the hospital where he died during treatment. Police has registered a case and started investigation.

Two brothers injured in assault

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Two brothers got injured in a brawl in Sandwa area under Pouni Chak police post.

According to information, there was a dispute between two groups in the area and matter increased so much that both groups attacked each other in which two brothers got injured. They were identified as Rahmat Ali, resident of Sandwa, son of Maskeen Ali and Zahoor Hussain. They were admitted to GMC for treatment. Police has registered a case and started further action.

ACB arrests Patwari from Udhampur for accepting bribe

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Wednesday said that a Patwari from Halqa Rasli Gandhera, Basantgarh, Udhampur was trapped and subsequently arrested for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 30,000 for issuance of Fard. As per a statement issued, ACB received a complaint alleging therein that he wanted to sell his piece of land and concerned Patwari, Halqa Rasli Gandheran, Udhampur namely Darbinder Singh is demanding bribe of Rs 50,000 for issuance of Fard.

"On receipt of the complaint, a case under FIR number 01/2023 under section 7 PC Act 1988 in Police Station ACB Udhampur and investigation taken up," the statement added. "During the course of investigation a trap team was constituted.

The team caught accused officer Darbinder Singh along with his driver while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 30,000 in presence of independent witnesses. Both of them were arrested on spot after completing necessary legal formalities. The bribe amount was also recovered in the presence of independent witnesses," ACB said, adding that further investigation is going on.

Drug peddler arrested with 135 gm Charas, Rs 95,500 cash

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police on Wednesday nabbed a drug peddler and recovered 135 gms Charas, cash Rs 95500 from his possession.

As per the details, a team of Police Post Narwal led by SHO Bahm Fort Inspr Nayat Ali assisted by In-Charge Police Post Narwal SI Lalit Kumar while on patrolling duty at Narwal area rounded up a suspect namely Bilal Ahmed Dar, son of Bashir Ahmed Dar, resident of Hanja colony Karan Nagar Batmaloo, Srinagar. On search of his belongings, 135 grams of Charas and cash Rs 95500 were recovered from his possession. On this, case FIR No. 15/23 under section 8/20/27A stands registered at PS Bahu Fort and accused was arrested.

Intensive questioning is going on to know about the other accomplices in the crime. The overall arrest and recoveries were made under the supervision of SDPO East Syed Zaheer Abbas Jafari.