

# BRO Chief briefs Dr Jitendra about Chattergala, other Udhampur LS constituency projects

## STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Border Roads Organisation (BRO) Chief, Lt Gen Raghu Srinivasan on Wednesday called on Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and briefed him about the Chattergala tunnel project as well as the other upcoming Road & Bridge projects in the Udhampur-Kathua-Doda Lok Sabha constituency.

Dr Jitendra lauded the BRO for undertaking and completing a maximum number of projects in his Lok Sabha constituency including a number of difficult road and bridge projects in the last nine and a half years on the request of public representatives or demand of the public. For the first time, the BRO had accomplished road connectivity up to the Zero Line on the International Border (IB), he said.

In this Lok Sabha constituency alone, Dr Jitendra said,



BRO Chief, Lt Gen Raghu Srinivasan calling on Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh at New Delhi.

BRO had constructed around 200 big and small bridges.

Udhampur-Kathua-Doda Lok Sabha constituency had witnessed unprecedented progress in road and bridge construction in the last over nine years, the notable among them being the Atal Setu at Basohli, Keediyar Gadyal and Juthana bridges in Kathua, Devika Bridge at Udhampur, new National Highway from Khilani-

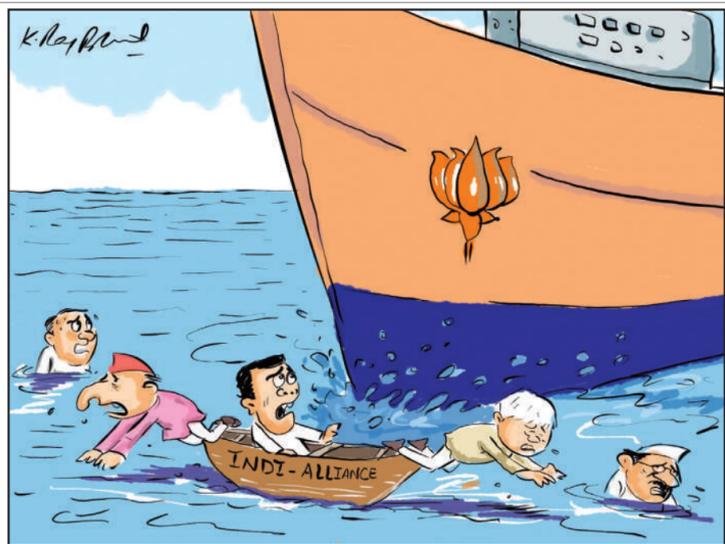
Marmat in Doda to Sudhmahadev, Kaljugar tunnel etc. About the proposed Chattergala tunnel, Dr Jitendra said, is a historic landmark project providing all-weather alternate road connectivity between the two distant regions and reducing the travel time from Doda to Lakhampur to just around four hours, he said. The tunnel is likely to take about 4 years for completion after the execution work starts

and its construction cost is around Rs. 3,000 to Rs 3,500 crore.

Since the BRO was facing some constraints of funds, Dr Jitendra Singh had also met the Union MoRTH Minister, Nitin Gadkari and requested for financial support to BRO through Bharatnala or any other appropriate channel from the MoRTH. Gadkari's response was positive and he issued instructions to work out how best this could be done, he added. Dr Jitendra impressed upon the BRO Chief Lt Gen Srinivasan to expedite the Chattergala project as fast as

possible. Dr Singh said, the demand for the tunnel at Chattergala had been pending for several years, but somehow not taken up by earlier governments because of their different priorities.

Dr Jitendra informed that while Benadi bridge had been constructed in just 90 days by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) which is a BRO record till date, the Pakka Kotha bridge, which is 181 metres long multi span bridge, had been built in 102 days. The BRO projects also included construction of Ramban bridge and Brihan bridge.



# Utsaah-The Club, JU hosts valedictory function of Protsaahan: Multi-Arts Festival

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Utsaah-The Club Consortium, University of Jammu on Wednesday organized the closing ceremony of the ten-day multi-arts festival, Protsaahan, at Brig. Rajinder Singh Auditorium.

The festivities began with the ribbon cutting to "Jambu Haat" organized by Heritage and Tourism Club in collaboration with the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

This included a Turban tying competition, showcasing Jammu region's cuisines, and an exhibition of handicraft stalls by students and alumni of the University. Cultural and musical performances were presented by the Heritage and Tourism Club, adding an enriching cultural touch to the event.

The Turban tying competition was judged by Chhankar Singh Slathia, Radhir Singh Raupuria and Manish Singh Jamwal. The first prize was



Principal Secretary, Higher Education, Alok Kumar with JU faculty at a programme.

won by Navdeep Singh, second prize by Sumriti Slathia and the third prize was bagged by Atul Singh Rakhwal.

On this occasion, a three-months certificate course by the Translation Club was also launched by the dignitaries.

Alok Kumar, Principal Secretary, Higher Education, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, with Prof. Umesh Rai presiding over the event.

Alok commended the JU

and praised the Vice-Chancellor for orchestrating an event that beautifully showcased the rich cultural tapestry of the Jammu region. He also expressed his appreciation that it was unprecedented that the various clubs functioned as a consortium and this synergy made them more effective in engaging students.

He also recommended these clubs to align their activities with the vision of NEP.

In his presidential remarks,

Prof. Suman Jamwal presented the vote of thanks. The programme was conducted by Swati Vijay from the Department of English, Those who coordinated with the clubs in organizing various events during the ten-day Multi Art festival includes Prof. Seema Langer, HoD Department of Zoology, Prof Anil Gupta, Director SHTM and Bharat Singh, Secretary, JKAACL.

Among those who were present on the occasion include Prof. Prakash Antahal, Dean Students Welfare, Prof. Pankaj K. Srivastava, Director, DDOE, Prof. Seema Langer, HoD Department of Zoology, Prof. Savita Nayyar, Law Department, Prof. Sanjana Koul, Dr. Anil Gupta, Director SHTM, Dr. Vijay Saigal, President JUTA, Dr. Ab. Rashid Manhas, Dr. Jaspal Singh Warwal and Dr. Sarita Sood.

# Saints played vital role in uniting Bharat: Yudhvir



Yudhvir Sethi, J&K BJP Vice President at religious programme.

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Yudhvir Sethi, J&K BJP Vice President today underscored the profound role played by saints in preserving the essence of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' for thousands of years in India.

Emphasizing the enduring impact of these revered spiritual figures, he said their vital contribution to cultivating a collective ethos that transcends time, unifying the diverse fabric of the nation under the timeless principles of unity and excel-

lence. He was speaking at the annual religious program organized by Mahant Shri Niwas Jangam at the Jangmeshwar Mahadev Temple in Prem Nagar, Jammu. He actively participated in the Hawan Yagya conducted within the temple premises. Brij Lal and Rinku Kumar also accompanied the senior BJP leader. The senior BJP leader said that the teachings and unwavering commitment of Saints towards to unity have not only withstood the test of

time but have also become an intrinsic part of India's cultural and spiritual heritage. The ethos of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' resonates as a timeless principle, advocating for a harmonious synthesis of diversities and emphasizing the collective strength that arises from unity. Yudhvir Sethi also stressed the crucial need of strengthening the bonds and amity and brotherhood, saying this has been the cornerstone of Indian ethos. He said the spiritual land of India has emanated the message of humanity from times immemorial and guided humanity to peace, prosperity and spiritual bliss. He urged the devotees, present in the programme, to spread the message of love, peace and compassion, which, he said is imperative for national integration and promoting inclusiveness across the country and in Jammu and Kashmir. He hoped that everyone will play a role towards the growth of the society based on social justice and equality.

# Group Commander NCC Group Jammu inspires Cadets at NCC Training Academy Nagrota



## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Brigadier PS Cheema, Group Commander NCC Group Jammu undertook a visit to the NCC Training Academy at Nagrota to review the ongoing Combined Annual Training Camp being conducted by 4 J&K NCC Battalion.

During his visit, the Commander took stock of the

training imparted to the enthusiastic cadets.

Expressing admiration for the cadets' unwavering enthusiasm, despite the challenging cold weather conditions, the Group Commander acknowledged their efforts in instilling discipline and instilling a sense of purpose in the cadets.

In a motivational session, the Commander engaged with the

NCC Cadets, sharing valuable life lessons through anecdotes.

He emphasized the importance of goal setting, maintaining focus, and steering clear of automatic negative thoughts.

Diving into the qualities of a successful student, he offered insights on navigating challenges and encouraged the cadets to discover their passions and align them with their purpose.

As part of the visit, the Group Commander witnessed an Inter-Company Volleyball Competition, highlighting the importance of sportsmanship and teamwork. He participated in the distribution of prizes to the deserving winners, acknowledging their dedication and competitive spirit.

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A delegation of Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCI) led by its President Arun Gupta called on the Commissioner State Taxes Department P.K.Bhat, and apprised him about the various issues/problems being faced by the Business community which include enhancement of present limit of e-way bills from Rs. 50000 to Rs. 1 lakh, goods shifted from go-downs/cold storage to the shops be treated at stock transfer and the GST reimbursement to the Industrial Units should be in a time bound manner. Arun Gupta also requested the Commissioner State Taxes that the members who could not claim the reimbursement of GST from 2017 onwards due to some unavoidable circumstances should be given one last chance to apply for reimburse-



CCI delegation calling on Commissioner STD P.K.Bhat.

ment claims and there should be no need to generate a fresh e-way bill if shifting of stock is mentioned on the bill as it is a technical points and needs to be understood. Further he briefed the Commissioner State Taxes that some businessmen who were doing their business since VAT regime by carrying the goods for delivery in other districts door to door are not allowed to carry on their business after the introduction of GST, these businessmen should

be allowed to carry on their business with some specific guidelines. He also said that the scrap dealers who collect the scrap from door to door and are paying GST at the time of selling their goods should not be harassed unnecessarily. He also pointed out that there should be no penalty on technical fault and also take decision regarding e-way bill expiry with no penalty on humanitarian grounds. Arun Gupta further briefed the Commissioner State

Taxes about restructuring of GST for Dhabas, Halwaies, Tea Stalls and Bakeries and requested him to reexamine the whole issue and consider charging of GST at 1% of their sales or charging of a lump-sum amount from these traders as was being charged before implementation of GST.

Arun Gupta requested the Commissioner State Taxes to take up the matter with the Union Finance Minister for allowing opening of one time window as an amnesty for sending the information of e-invoices on the Invoice Registration Portal (IRP) for the dealers having annual turnover of Rs. 100 crore or more. Arun also requested the Commissioner to take up the issue with GST Council that if any seller does not file his return GST-1, the buyer does not get the input of that bill. This is a punishment

to the honest taxpayers and this should not happen as he has a proper bill in this regard and a change in the law is required.

The Commissioner State Taxes assured the delegation that the issues raised by CCI Jammu are well taken and we will see that no innocent businessmen are harassed unnecessarily and the issues pertaining to the GST council shall be taken up with the concerned authorities for their early redressal. He also said that the revenue collection in the shape of penalties is not our motto, we just want to educate the business community to work and pay the taxes honestly. The other office bearers who accompanied the delegation include Anil Gupta, Sr. Vice President, Manish Gupta, Secretary General, Rajesh Gupta, Secretary and Rajesh Gupta, Treasurer.

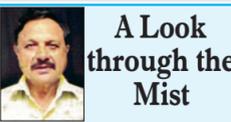
# Educational empowerment of socially-economically-administratively 'Depressed Citizens' can only reduce their exploitation

With Govt. Schools available still Child Education Allowance @ Rs 2250 & Child HSA @ Rs 6750 is paid to Government Employees

## DAYA SAGAR

Even after 75 years of independence a very big segment of the Indian people is living under crushing economic backwardness which well reflects from the official disclosures that India have about 81 Cr (81,00,000,00) Indian citizens who still need to be provided / are being provided / will be needing atleast for another 4 to 5 years just 5 kg of food grains free of cost per month for their survival, and surely a very large population in that consists of SC/ST/OBC for whom India has already kept reservation in legislature/ services/ professional institution but they have not been able to avail that due to continued poor economic status and poor quality of education which the government institutions even in cities like Jammu / Srinagar are not providing to them in spite of the government paying much higher salaries to teachers there in comparison to private schools. Even the teachers working in government schools are found sending their children to private academies.

Not only that one would hardly find a senior officer of school education department / Director education/ Secretary School Education Department/ Deputy Commissioner sending his / her children to government schools even where they are posted in Cities like Jammu or Srinagar or Kanpur. This sends a wrong message to common people about the quality of education imparted in Government Schools to the extent that these days even a labour earning just Rs.500 a day through his / her hard labour is seen rushing to a local private school / academy where he / she pays a tuition fee of Rs 300 to Rs.1000 per month per child and also spends similar amount for private tuition after school even when Government pays atleast Rs. 50000 plus other special allowances to a lowest level undergraduate school teacher where as the teachers in private academies are mostly being paid not more than Rs. 10000 to Rs.15000 per month with almost no job security. The teachers teaching higher classes in government schools are paid much higher. Hence the socially and most of the economically poor parents are not able to afford to provide competitive education to their children and where ever they manage some college education they cannot afford to improve the competitive quality of the education of their wards through further coaching / private tutoring in comparison to economically equipped parents and hence where ever any special assistance is provided through reservations etc to even SC/ST/OBC majority cannot be made use of



A Look through the Mist

quality higher education or / and superior positions in government services what to talk of economically poor parents / wards from general categories.

Most of the under privileged parents do not demand well furnished schools / air conditioned class rooms / busses and like for their children but they surely want that the teacher in government schools should seriously and regularly teach the students on day basis and that should surely be possible when the teachers in government schools are comparatively given much higher salary / job security ( See Table - A ) and at many places teachers in government schools could be found much better qualified than those in most of the academies where the general masses from social and economically weaker sections could be found sending their children in government schools.

TABLE - A Basis > (1) Dearness Allowance @ 46% of basic pay wef 01 July 2023 (2) TA- Transport Allowance/PM G.O No. 472-F of 2019 of 28.11.2019 Cities like Jammu (3) HRA-House Rent Allowance @16% of basic pay (4) CHA- \*\*\*Child Education Allowance @Rs.2250/pm /per child Max 4500 G.O No. 473-F 28.11.2019 (5) CHSA- \*\*\*Child Hostel Subsidy Allowance 6750 per child Max 13500/pm G.O No. 473-F 28.11.2019

Level of staff	Pay Scale	Min Basic.	DA	T. Allowance	HR 16%	***Child EA	***Child HSA	Total Min Salary/pm
Driver Level 2	19900-63200	19900	9154	900x1.46=1314	3184	4500	13500	Rs. 33552/pm
Teacher (UG) L 4	25500-81100	25500	11730	1350x1.46=1971	4080	***4500	***13500	Rs 43281 plus ***18000 max
Teacher (G) L 5	29200-92300	29200	13432	1800x1.46=2688	4672	***4500	***13500	Rs 50184 plus ***18000 max
Master Level 6	35400-112400							
Dir School Edu / IAS or KAS L 12	78800-209200	78800	36278	3600x1.46=5256	12608	***4500	***13500	Rs.132942 plus ***18000 max
Dir School Edu IAS or KAS L 13	123100-215900	123100	56626	3600x1.46=5256	19696	***4500	***13500	Rs.204678 plus18000 max

Responsibility for government schools not attracting the children of even

economically / socially weaker sections rests no less on the supervisory / senior officers like Directors/ Secretaries/ Administrators. It is not out of place to mention here that a government employee is too an 'economically' poor 'servant' otherwise why a government employee with basic salary of even Rs 60000 per month is being additionally dearness allowance w.e.f 1st July 2023 additionally Rs.27600 (46 percent) dearness allowance, child education allowance @Rs.2250 per child for two and Child hostel subsidy allowance @ Rs 6750 per child for two ( even those in school education too are entitled when government schools are available ) ?

Why do not they send their children to government schools.? With the present norms for recruitment and promotion of civil servants like IAS/JKAS/PCS an officer in age group of 30 to 35 yrs ( even earlier ) of age could be easily found posted as Director School Education/ Deputy Commissioner / Secretary School Education who would have children needing primary school education and in case such officers send children to government schools surely the feedback they would receive would ensure that they 'mediate' the suffering school education sector worth becoming capable of delivery due services to the community , particularly to the under privileged and SC/ ST/ OBC /E/OBC who include over 60 percent of India's population which is economically down so down the ladder that the population there cannot even take one step ahead without educational empowerment worth laying hands on ranking socio administrative positions/seats/ jobs in society and in social democratic republic of India only State owned schools can provide such competitive education without any economic liability on parents. Hence where ever any special assistance is provided through reservations etc to even SC/ST/OBC majority has not been able to make use of quality higher education seats or / and superior positions in government services what to talk of economically poor parents , otherwise whatever social support is there in terms reservations for SC/ ST/OBC/E/OBC/ EWS would make the subjects under reference only to be amongst the class IV junior jobs accept for a few amongst them who may be mostly from economically better subjects from amongst the "reserved categories".

(The writer is Sr Journalist, social activist and analyst J&K affairs).