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### Improving quality of...

of the smart parking initiative using modern solutions to considerably reduce parking on roads and generate revenue for the city.

Terming Community involvement key to revitalise and rejuvenate the cities, the Lt Governor said, with the help of people we can create healthy cities, create incentives for Swachh Abhiyan, protect natural assets and strengthen transportation, water and utility infrastructure.

He said that it is high time for Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to reinvent their economic base and fully utilize the assets to generate revenues and spur the local economy. Many under-utilised assets can generate employment, business opportunities with engagement of local community, Sinha added.

Sinha further observed that there is a need to focus on the concept of augmented city for the development of urban areas.

We have to add value to the potential of Jammu city, its tradition, heritage, culture, uniqueness and how it can grow economically, he added.

The Lt Governor also highlighted the unprecedented work being done in Jammu and Kashmir in the last three years through people's participation and proactive citizen-centric governance.

Last year, a record 3506 projects were completed in district capex only in Jammu. This financial year's budget of Jammu district capex has been increased to Rs 1442 crore as compared to Rs 700 crore in the last financial year, it was informed.

The elevation of the main building has been kept depicting "Dogra Heritage and Culture" in blend with the architecture of the surrounding Heritage buildings. The facility will provide parking space for nearly 400 vehicles, significantly decongesting traffic in the adjoining area of Jammu city by reducing street parking.

Rajinder Sharma, Mayor, Jammu Municipal Corporation, on the occasion appreciated the completion of Multi Level Parking and observed that the facility shall ease the traffic situation in the area. He further said that JMC is now focussing on solid waste management in addition to sanitation and enforcement activities.

Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member Parliament, said that the new projects are driving the transformation of Jammu city. He complimented the UT administration for the unprecedented developmental activities.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary congratulated the people and officials for the newly inaugurated facility. He further urged Mayor JMC, elected councillors and officials to move towards creating Ward Shabdas to facilitate large scale involvement of people in decision making.

Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary, H&UDD; Mukesh Singh, ADGP Jammu; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Vikramjit Singh, IGP Traffic, J&K; Avny Lavasa, DC Jammu; Rahul Yadav, Commissioner JMC, besides corporators of JMC, general public and officers of UT administration were present on the occasion.

### Calls for completing...

Mubarak Mandi is a symbol of our inherited traditions and priceless social values. Conservation efforts must reflect its true historical, artistic and aesthetic values.

The Lt Governor advised the officers to work in the integrated manner with top conservation experts, engineering and Institutions for strengthening of hill along circular road below the Mubarak Mandi Area.

The meeting also decided for establishing a Project Management Unit within two months. The chair was also apprised about various activities organised by the Heritage Society in the Mubarak Mandi Complex.

Directions were issued to officials to fully utilise the four buildings restored in the heritage complex, besides ensuring that nobody is allowed near the delicate structure that are undergoing restoration.

The Lt Governor also sought the status of works being undertaken by Archaeological Survey of India.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary, Public Works (R&B) Department; Sarmad Hafeez, Administrative Secretary, Tourism Department; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Dr Piyush Singla, Secretary, GAD; Avny Lavasa, DC Jammu; Deepika K Sharma, Executive Director, Mubarak Mandi Jammu Heritage Society, besides other concerned officers were present on the occasion.

### Two JKAS among...

Government Medical College, Jammu, vice Rajinder Kumar, who has been asked to await further orders of adjustment in the GAD.

Rohit Kumar, Jr. Scale JKAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the GAD, has been posted as Assistant Director, Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Jammu; and Tej Krishan Dhar, awaiting orders of adjustment in GAD, has been posted as Under Secretary, Department of Floriculture, Parks and Garden.

### 8 scribes working...

Srinagar in this regard.

"As reported, eight journalists working for Srinagar-based local newspapers received threat through terror blog "Kashmir Fight". Four media persons have reportedly resigned. The media persons who resigned belong to the media house 'Rising Kashmir', he said replying to a written question from BJP MP Sushil Kumar Modi.

The minister said the government has a policy of zero tolerance against terrorism and the security situation has improved significantly in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said the government has taken several steps to protect the lives of people, including media persons, from terrorist threat and attacks that include proactive security arrangements wherein security grid that includes the police, army, paramilitary and intelligence agencies remain deployed across Jammu and Kashmir to thwart any threat and attempt at the hands of terrorists or their handlers.

### Modi urges leaders...

they don't get to learn and understand due to disruptions and absence of discussions. Young MPs say they are not getting opportunities and, therefore, the functioning of the two Houses is very important, the prime minister said, adding this is the voice from young parliamentarians of all parties.

This session is important, Modi said, as the country is now in 'Amrit Kaal', a term used by him to describe the 25 year period till the centenary of India's Independence, and has got the opportunity to preside over the G20.

"India has made space in the global community and expectations from it have increased. India is also increasing its participation on global platforms. It is a huge opportunity to host the G20 Presidency at such a time," he said.

Noting that this will be the first session where Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar will preside as Rajya Sabha chairperson, he offered the "farmer's son" his best wishes.

### Robber of 1987...

outside interference in the polls is an insult to the one lakh persons who have died due to the turmoil in Jammu and Kashmir. It is not right that the one who is the cause of the turmoil is today crying about interference," he told reporters.

"There is outside interference but we will talk about it because it is directed against us. Farooq Abdullah talking about interference is an insult to the one lakh people who have died since 1987," he added.

Abdullah, after his re-election as the National Conference president on Monday had warned the government and the armed forces not to interfere in the assembly elections, whenever they are held.

### Full Court Reference...

He said that Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey has endeared one and all in the UTs of J&K and Ladakh by his conduct and behaviour.

Advocate General emphasized that with the superannuation of Justice Magrey, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh would lose a brilliant and illustrious judge.

President J&K High Court Bar Association Jammu, in his address, described Justice Magrey a kind hearted person having great qualities of head and heart. He expressed his gratitude to Justice Magrey for a full hearted support to the various initiatives taken by the High Court for the institutional upliftment.

Bhardwaj further said that Justice Magrey was very popular amongst the lawyers of entire two UTs of J&K and Ladakh for his amiable and intellectual aura.

Justice Magrey thanked everyone including Judges of High Court of J&K and Ladakh, officers of Registry and Judicial Officers for their undaunted professional commitment and the support extended to him during his tenure.

During his address, he recounted the upbringing and good wishes of almost all the people involved in his development specially his parents, teachers and family in making Ali Mohammad Magrey as Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey.

He also made special mention of his personal staff in successful discharge of his duties as Judge and as Chief Justice of the High Court. He emphasised upon the young lawyers to display patience and work hard to ensure success in the profession.

The dignitaries who were present on the occasion included Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, Dilbag Singh, DGP, Sr. Advocates, Achal Sethi, Secretary Law Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Avny Lavasa, Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Deputy Solicitor Generals, Government of India, Sr. Additional Advocate Generals, Principal District and Sessions Judge Jammu, Officers and staff of the Registry of the High Court.

The proceedings of the Reference were conducted by Shahzad Azeem, Director

J&K Judicial Academy and the event was live telecasted on YouTube Channel.

### Counting of votes...

years from 1977 to 2011.

The BJP, which won 99 seats in the 2017 polls, is projected to win in the range of 117-151 seats in a House of 182 and the Congress between 16 and 51 seats. It is also upbeat about the possibility of the AAP eating into Congress votes, which could be additionally beneficial for the saffron party.

The best showing for the BJP in Gujarat came in 2002 when the party had won 127 seats in the 182-member state assembly.

The poll outcome will determine if the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) gets a chance to establish itself as a pan-national party and a challenger to the BJP at the national level also.

The AAP, which is in power in Delhi and Punjab and had launched an aggressive campaign to make it a three-cornered contest for the first time in Gujarat, was projected to bag anything between 2 and 13 seats. The majority mark is 92.

For the Congress, its role as the main challenger to the BJP is at stake and Thursday's results will show if the party's silent campaign has cut ice with people. Top leaders of the party, which was projected to bag between 16 and 51 seats, were busy with Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra. The Congress bagged 77 seats in 2017.

Congress holds power only in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, both of which will go to polls in 2023, and party insiders say that any hopes for the party's revival has to start from Himachal Pradesh. It is expecting the electorate to go by the nearly four-decade old tradition of voting out the incumbent government in the hill state.

As the BJP battled anti-incumbency sentiments after 27 years of rule in Gujarat, Prime Minister Modi was the party's trump card and the ruling party banked on 'Brand Modi' in a bid to contain the anti-incumbency factor.

Among the key issues in Gujarat campaign were unemployment, price rise, water not reaching certain pockets of the state, land acquisition for big projects and farmers not getting proper compensation for crop damage due to excess rains.

While Modi led the BJP poll campaign holding several rallies and mega road shows in Gujarat, Home Minister Shah was in the state for almost two months, micromanaging the campaign and the election strategy.

Party president J P Nadda, chief ministers of BJP-ruled states including Yogi Adityanath, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Himanta Biswa Sarma and Pramod Sawant also addressed election rallies in the state. Almost all the Union ministers of the BJP took part in the campaign.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi took time off his Bharat Jodo Yatra to address two rallies in Gujarat where Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot led the party's campaign. The new party chief Mallikarjun Kharge also addressed poll rallies.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal steered an aggressive campaign for the AAP, holding several rallies and road shows in the last five months.

In Himachal Pradesh, it could be the Congress' turn to form the next government if one went by the state's 'riwaaj (tradition) and long history of voting out the incumbent government.

But with all but two exit polls predicting an edge for the ruling BJP it remains to be seen which way the voters have decided in the closely fought elections.

The hill state has not returned any incumbent government to power after 1985, a trend the ruling BJP, powered by Prime Minister Modi's personalised campaign, hopes to break.

The BJP slogan this time was "Raj nahin, riwaaj badlega", meaning the convention will change, not the government.

The BJP has bucked the anti-incumbency trend in the last Assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Assam, and Uttarakhand by repeating its state governments there, and is hoping to repeat its government in Himachal Pradesh, which is also the home state of Nadda. It is hoping for an encore on the back of its development agenda.

In the 2017 assembly elections in Himachal Pradesh with a house strength of 68, the BJP had won 44 seats and the Congress 21, with one seat going to the CPI-M, and two to independent candidates.

The Congress has been confident of its victory, saying the voters will decide on the fundamental issues of price rise, joblessness, the old pension scheme, and other challenges of life and livelihood the state residents have been facing.

With a muted campaign by the AAP and its former state in-charge Satyendar Jain lodged in Tihar jail, the Congress is upbeat that its vote share will only improve, while the BJP hopes to gain from a higher women vote percentage than men.

A higher women turnout has of late favoured the BJP, as seen in UP and Uttarakhand, with the party hoping that similar trends will hold in HP.

Both the BJP and Congress camps are learnt to have been in touch with independent candidates who might play a key role in the event of a close contest, predicted in several exit polls, with a slender edge to the BJP.

### Mask-men rob...

Aggarwal's wife Madhu Aggarwal, son Sahib Aggarwal, and daughter-in-law were also at home. Their mobile phones were also snatched by the mask men.

After that Rs 2 Crore were demanded from them but family members told them that they do not have that much money, the complaints stated.

The accused who came to commit the robbery searched the entire house for over five hours and got about six to seven lakh rupees in cash. After that, at 12:20 PM, they ran away from the house after locking all the family members inside.

After they escaped, the information was given to the police which rushed to the spot and immediately all the Nakas in the city were strengthened. FIR has been registered and we are working on some leads, said SSP Jammu Chandan Kohli while talking with STATE TIMES.

### SC status can't...

discriminates against Scheduled Caste converts to religions other than Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism.

The matter came up for hearing on Wednesday before a bench headed by Justice S K Kaul.

The bench was informed by advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for petitioner NGO Centre for Public Interest Litigation and others, that the Centre has filed an affidavit saying it wants to appoint another commission to examine the issue.

The Centre recently appointed a commission headed by former Chief Justice of India (CJI) K G Balakrishnan to examine giving SC status to new people who claim to "historically" have belonged to the SCs but have converted to a religion other than those mentioned in the Presidential orders.

Bhushan told the bench, also comprising Justices A S Oka and Vikram Nath, the government has said the new commission will submit its report within two years.

"The first aspect which has to be dealt with is whether this court should stay its hands till report of the commission comes or whether it should proceed on the basis of the material on record," the bench said.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, said the government has indeed constituted a commission headed by the former CJI which will submit its report in two years.

The bench has posted the batch of pleas on the issue for hearing in January next year.

One of the pleas has sought reservation for converted Dalits on the same footing as is extended to the Scheduled Castes following Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism.

In its reply filed in the apex court in October, the Centre had said the Constitution (Scheduled Caste) Order, 1950 "does not suffer from any unconstitutionality inasmuch as the exclusion of Christianity or Islam was due to the reason that the oppressive system of untouchability which leads to economic and social backwardness of some Hindu castes was not prevalent in Christian or Islamic society."

"There is no authentic data to suggest that the oppressive environment which existed in Hindu Society for hundreds of years qua Scheduled Castes also existed in Christian or Islamic society," it said.

It said the Constitution (Scheduled Caste) Order, 1950 was based on historical data which clearly established that no such backwardness or oppression was ever faced by the members of Christian or Islamic society.

"In fact, one of the reasons for which people from Scheduled Castes have been converting to religions like Islam or Christianity is that they can come out of the oppressive system of untouchability which is not prevalent at all in Christianity or Islam," the government said.

The reply said once they have come out and ameliorated their social status by converting themselves to Christianity or Islam, they cannot claim to be backward since backwardness based on untouchability is only prevalent in Hindu Society or its branches and not in any other religion.

"At the outset, it is submitted that the report of Justice Ranganath Misra Commission is flawed since the report bases its findings without any field studies. The findings of the Commission therefore cannot be corroborated by actual situation on the ground since no field study was done," it said.

"The Commission further has taken a myopic view of the social milieu in India and does not contemplate the impact of inclusions in the SC list on the present castes listed as Scheduled Castes. The findings of the said Commission have been therefore, not accepted by the government," it noted.

The reply said the Centre has examined the matter and noted that certain groups of persons who have historically suffered social inequality, discrimination and the consequent backwardness resulting therefrom, have been declared to be Scheduled Castes by Presidential Orders issued from time to time under Article 341 of the Constitution.

"It is noted that the said issue is a seminal and historically complex sociological and constitutional question, and a definite matter of public importance," the government said, adding, given its importance, sensitivity and potential impact, any change in definition in this regard should be on the basis of a detailed and definitive study and extensive consultation with all stakeholders".

The Centre said the limited question in this case would be whether Scheduled Caste converts to other religions suffer from the same degree of oppressiveness as suffered by Scheduled Castes practicing Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism.

"It is submitted that unless the oppressive severity of such backwardness is conclusively established by the petitioners, the present petition deserves to be dismissed," it said.

### Tradition of change...

going to be change and this tempted some BJP aspirants to contest elections as independents with the thought that it would be better to be MLA at least. This temptation prompted the BJP aspirants, who were denied mandate, to try their luck as independent candidates, Azad concluded.

### Night temperature falls...

the base camp for the annual Amarnath yatra, was the coldest recorded place in the valley at minus 5.6 degrees Celsius, down from minus 3.8 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund, the gateway town to the Valley, recorded a minimum of minus 3.6 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag registered a low of minus 1.9 degrees Celsius. Kupwara in north Kashmir recorded minus 3.1 degrees Celsius.

The meteorological department has forecast dry weather but haze till December 8.

A fresh western disturbance is likely to affect Jammu and Kashmir and adjoining areas from December 9, under