

Educational institutions should build on experience of online classes: CS



Chief Secretary A K Mehta chairing a virtual meeting.

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JAMMU: Chief Secretary A K Mehta on Monday said the educational institutions should build on the experience of online classes and adopt an ideal blend of IT-based offline teaching curriculum to boost students' learning.

Students resumed offline classes on Monday in many districts of the Jammu region after authorities ordered a phased reopening of educational institutions across the Union Territory.

Students of Classes 9 to 12, dressed in uniforms and carrying vaccination certificates, were seen thronging the schools in the morning, officials said.

Mehta, who chaired a meeting to take stock of the arrangements for the reopening of educational institutions and resuming of the offline mode of teaching in the UT, said the academic session 2022-23 shall be the year of educational transformation for Jammu and Kashmir.

Mehta asked the officials to ensure proper maintenance, upkeep and cleanliness in educational institutions besides electricity and water supply.

"There is a need for the institutions to build on the experience of online classes and adopt an ideal blend of IT-based offline teaching curriculum to boost students' learning outcomes and successfully train them for national-level examinations," he said. He emphasised that heads of the institutions

will be personally responsible for Covid management and a healthy teaching environment. "There should be no tolerance for unhealthy activities in places of learning."

The chief secretary said the COVID-19 positivity

rate in the UT has been contained to 0.7 percent and impressed upon the heads of all educational institutions to remain vigilant to any signs of infection, especially among unvaccinated students, besides ensuring adherence to Covid management protocol.

Mehta asked vice chancellors of universities, principals of colleges and heads of schools to submit Covid prevention and mitigation plans taking into account capacity of classrooms, staggered teaching plan, Covid protocol, vaccination, screening, and emergency SoP within two days, an official statement said.



CBI Court rejects bail pleas of Patwari; JE, AGE in bribery cases

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JAMMU: Special Judge Anti-Corruption (CBI cases) J&K, R K Wattal while disposing of different applications, dismissed bail applications of Patwari, Junior Engineer and Assistant Garrison Engineers in trap cases.

According to CBI, FIR No RC0042022A0002 dated January 15, 2022 was registered by CBI, ACB, Jammu under section 7 of PC Act, 1988 on basis of a complaint dated January 13, 2022 lodged by one Harbinder Pal Singh, son of Ajit Singh, resident of village Kotli Arjun Singh, Tehsil R S Pura, alleging demand of bribe of Rs 50,000 by an accused namely Ashok Kumar, Patwari, Patwar Halqa Jassore, Tehsil R S Pura for issuing Fard in respect of land owned by his father. The verification of complaint was carried out wherein demand of bribe by accused from complainant was confirmed and accordingly, case was

registered against accused Ashok Kumar, Patwari. Further, on January 15, 2022, a trap was laid down and accused Ashok Kumar Patwari, Patwar Halqa Jassore was caught red handed while demanding and accepting bribe of Rs 35,000 from complainant in presence of independent witnesses.

While rejecting the bail application of Ashok Kumar Patwari, Special Judge CBI R K Wattal observed that when there are possibilities that accused will use his influence in shutting mouth of persons who are likely to depose against him in investigation for further disclosures in support of crime, it seems unfit to grant bail. "Considering bail only on the premises that accused is behind bars for three to four weeks is not justified. As per prosecution, the witnesses, verifying officials are yet to be examined and persons in the organisation of accused acquainted with facts relat-

ing to crime are yet to be recorded, besides some more documents are required to be collected the accused in case released on bail may use his connections and influence which may hamper the remaining investigation and compel witnesses not to depose against him. These circumstances have to be weighed while considering bail in trap cases," the Court observed.

In another case, as per CBI, FIR No RC0042022A0001 dated January 6, 2022, was registered by CBI, ACB, Jammu under section 120-B of IPC read with section 7 of PC Act 1988 on basis of complaint dated January 5, 2022 lodged by one Sameer Ajrawat, son of Ramesh Kumar, resident of 208, Sector-4, Channi Himmat, alleging demand of bribe of Rs. 25,000 by accused Mahesh Chandra Gangwar JE and Mohd Imran Ullah, Assistant Garrison Engineer (AGE) both offi-

cials of GE, MES Satwari, Jammu for issuance of completion certificate for processing of pending. Verification of complaint was carried out according to which demand of bribe from the complainant, by both the accused persons, was confirmed. Accordingly, case was registered against accused engineers and on January 7, 2022, a trap was laid and both accused Mahesh Chandra Gangwar JE and Mohd Imran Ullah AGE, were caught red-handed while demanding and accepting bribe of Rs 10,000 each from complainant. Both the accused were arrested and taken into custody as per procedure established by law. While rejecting bail applications of JE and AGE, Special Judge CBI R K Wattal observed that bail can't be construed in routine manner. "Corruption is a menace in society and like a termite which hollows a society from within. It is the

one of the biggest road blocks in the development and progress of society and the nation. It is true that often in a system sometimes the biggest crocodiles escape with impunity and small fries are entrapped. But the authority of law is required to be imposed without making a distinction between big and small offenders when the nature of criminality of corruption in public servants largely affects public with whom they deal particularly when such cases are on rise and the public dealing with the authorities of the government are the victim of this evil. It is in this context that matter of bail has also to be considered in the background of the abovementioned factors and prima-facie consideration of these factors for limited purposes cannot be said to be a comment prejudicial to the rights and interests of the accused," the Court directed.

Police detains 35 dental surgeons protesting for jobs in Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: At least 35 dental doctors were detained Monday after they staged a protest here in support of their demand for jobs by creating new posts of dental surgeons in hospitals across Jammu and Kashmir, police said.

The protesters, both men and women, assembled under the banner of Dental Surgeons Association J&K at Dogra chowk and tried to block the vital Tawi bridge near the statue of Maharaja Hari Singh when police moved in and detained them, the police officials said.

General Secretary of the association, Robin Tikoo said their employment woes have not been addressed since 2008 when the government last officially advertised posts for dental surgeons in the health department.

He said thousands of dental doctors are unemployed across the Union Territory and more than 500 of them have already crossed the age



Police detaining protesting dental doctors at Jammu.

limit without facing the J&K Public Service Commission examination even once.

"We reject the financial assistance scheme announced by the Lt Governor administration for the dental doctors to set up their own clinics. We do not need the financial assistance offered by the government but a proper job. For financial assistance, we can go to a bank, he said.

He said the government has announced a loan of Rs 8 lakh with a condition that the clinic should have two

dental surgeons and one technician.

Many of us are still repaying the education loan and it is not possible for us to set up a private clinic with another bank loan, the doctor said.

Tiekoo claimed the association has given several representations to the authorities time and again but nothing has been done till date for their welfare.

He said the association appeals to the Lt Governor to take note of their plight and address their issues without any further delay.

Martyred CRPF Jawan's widow honoured

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A widow of a CRPF personnel martyred in the Pulwama terror attack was honoured by the paramilitary force at an event here, an official said.

The event was organized by the 76th battalion of the CRPF at Channi to pay tributes to the 40 personnel who made supreme sacrifice in an attack by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists at Lethpora village in south Kashmir's Pulwama on this day in 2019, he said.

Veer Nari Shazia Kouser, the wife of head constable Naseer Ahmed -- one of the 40 slain jawans -- was honored by Second in Command, 76 Battalion, Kamal Sisodiya, by presenting a shawl and Bonsai plant, a CRPF spokesperson said in a statement.

A terrorist driving an explosive-laden vehicle had hit the Srinagar-bound CRPF convoy in Pulwama, causing the casualties.

In a retaliatory strike, the Indian Air Force carried out an airstrike in Pakistan's Balakot on February 26, 2019, targeting terrorist camps.

The cowardly suicide attack of Pulwama 2019 was very sad and painful, but after that attack, in the last three years, we have defeated terrorists on every front and many terrorists were killed in Jammu and Kashmir. This is our true tribute to our Martyrs, Sisodiya said.

She said the jawans sacrificing their lives for the country belong to the whole nation and we should remember them with open heart and keep politics aside.

Different political parties and social groups also organised separate functions across the Jammu region and paid rich tributes to the CRPF personnel killed in the attack.

Gurdwara Mahant Sahib holds special prayers in memory of Ex-MLC Yashpal Sharma



A speaker paying homage to Sher-e-Poonch Yashpal Sharma.

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JAMMU: As an interfaith gesture, the organising committee of Gurdwara Mahant Sahib Poonch organised two-day special prayer (Path) ceremony, followed by remembrance of ex-MLC Yashpal Sharma, who had been instrumental in bringing different communities together, thereby preaching the philosophy of Sarva Dharma Sama Bhava.

On the occasion, orators from different walks of life highlighted contributions of Yashpal Sharma, who was known as Sher-e-Poonch. They specifically highlighted his role in 1978 agitation, through which mass recruitment was done. Speakers also threw light in his role to mitigate grievances of terrorist affected population, border residents, displaced persons of 1947 besides upgra-

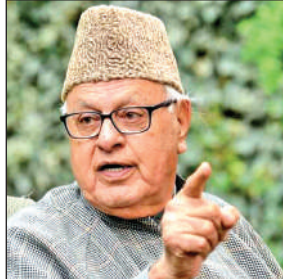
dation and modernisation of Poonch, both as Chairman, Municipal Council Poonch in 1980 and MLC.

Prominent among those who spoke on the occasion included Amresh Sharma, Adv Sanjay Raina, Adv Mohd Zaman, Taj Mir, Parvinder Singh (Councilor), Mohd Bashir and Naresh Chander (Councilor). The program was organised by Annol Singh, Balbir Singh and Narinder Singh. Adv Sunil Sharma, President Municipal Council (brother of Yashpal Sharma) and Dr Udeshpal Sharma (son) also shared their experience and learning they acquired during all these years from Yashpal Sharma. They also expressed commitment to keep serving the masses, as shown by Late Yashpal Sharma.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir Farooq Abdullah was on Monday prevented from leaving his residence here in view of security concerns on the anniversary of the Pulwama terror attack, prompting him to lodge a strong protest.

Sources in the National Conference, of which Abdullah is the president, said that he was scheduled to travel to Jammu by road, a stretch of nearly 300 kilometers. The information about the programme had been con-



veyed to authorities concerned five days ago, but to his dismay, Abdullah found that the exits from his house were barred.

Abdullah, a former three-time chief minister and a sitting Lok Sabha member from Srinagar, managed to walk out of

his house in the afternoon and is said to have hitched a ride from a passerby for a short distance before the security team persuaded him to return home in a police vehicle.

Police officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said that no VIP movement is advised on the day of the Pulwama attack anniversary.

On this day in 2019, 40 CRPF personnel lost their lives when a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist rammed an explosive-laden car into a bus carrying security personnel.

As COVID-19 cases dip, offline classes resume in J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: As the third wave of COVID-19 shows signs of ebbing, schools here resumed offline classes on Monday after the Jammu and Kashmir administration ordered phased opening of educational institutions across the union territory.

Students of classes 9 to 12, dressed in uniforms and carrying vaccination certificates, were seen thronging their institutions in Jammu and other districts of the region on

Monday morning, officials said. In an order issued on Sunday, the state executive committee had said all universities, colleges, polytechnic institutes and ITIs, and classes from 9 to 12 can commence their routine offline teaching by following Covid Appropriate Behaviour and standard operating procedures from February 14.

However, most of the educational institutions, including universities and colleges, remained closed and are likely to resume activities in a day or two after making necessary arrangements. The officials said the attendance in both private and government high and higher secondary schools on Monday was low, but it was expected to pick up in the coming days. A Jammu University official said since the order was issued on Sunday evening, they were finalizing the arrange-

245 new COVID cases recorded in UT

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 245 fresh COVID-19 cases on Monday, taking the infection count to 4,51,016, even as no death due to the virus was reported in the past 24 hours, officials said. Of the fresh cases, 160 were from the Jammu division and 85 from the Kashmir division of the Union Territory, the officials said.

The officials said Doda district recorded a maximum of 65 new cases, followed by Jammu district which logged 38 such infections. There are 4,903 active COVID-19 cases in the union territory, while the number of recoveries stands at 4,41,368, the officials said. The death toll from the pandemic remained unchanged at 4,745 in the Union Territory. Meanwhile,

Ladakh has reported 77 new Covid cases, taking the infection tally to 27,477, officials said.

The total number of active cases in Ladakh stands at 537, including 403 in Leh and 134 in Kargil district, they said. The Union Territory has recorded 226 Covid-related deaths -- 167 in Leh and 59 in Kargil, they said. No death was reported from Ladakh on Sunday, they said. As many as 110 patients -- 90 in Leh and 20 in Kargil -- were cured and discharged from hospitals, taking the overall recoveries to 26,714, they said. Of the 77 fresh cases, 60 were from Leh district and 17 from Kargil district, they said, adding that a total of 1,042 sample reports were found negative in Ladakh, officials added.

ments to reopen the university.

In summer zone schools, the offline mode of teaching for the remaining junior classes shall begin from February 21, allowing the students to attend school after over two years.

Offline teaching at all schools

in the winter zone will commence after February 28.

The schools situated in the winter zone of Kashmir and snow-bound parts of Jammu region are currently on winter vacation.

Welcoming the decision of the

administration to open educational institutions, principal of Shiksha Niketan Higher Secondary School, Rajeev Nagar, Rameshwar Mengi said, "...it is a happy moment for all of us that the students are back in their classrooms.

Vedic Shanti Path commences at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATRA: The five-day long Vedic Shanti Path at Vaishno Devi Shrine began from today with chanting of Vedic hymns organised by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board under Covid guidelines.

The Vedic Shanti Path, which is being performed at the Holy Cave Shrine, is to pray for the peace, prosperity, health, safety and well being of mankind, will conclude on February 18, 2022. This Shanti path is headed



Padam Shri Dr. Vishwamurti Shastri leading Shanti Path at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine.

by Dr. Vishwamurti Shastri Padam Shri Recipient, 2022. The Shanti prayer is prayer for peace which is derived from Vedas done for the peace as per the prescribed Vedic rituals.

21 Priests are performing this Puja for Sadgati and Moksha and grant happiness of both this Loka (Earth) and Parloka (Heavenly abodes). The Shrine Board is creating positive vibrations by praying for peace and prosperity of the world.