

J&K Cong aghast over downgrading of security of its leaders, threatens agitation

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Expressing serious concern over downgrading of security of senior party leaders including former ministers and legislators, Jammu and Kashmir Congress president G A Mir on Wednesday demanded an immediate review of the decision to facilitate a level-playing field to the opposition parties.

He threatened to launch an agitation on the issue, alleging that while ordinary political activists of the parties created overnight by the government or affiliated with the ruling party are enjoying adequate security, government accommodation and free movement, Congress leaders especially in Kashmir were only allowed to move out of their homes once in a week to meet the public.

Congress is about 137-year-old political party which has a history of sacrifice before and after independence to take the country to new heights. But today the government in power is withdrawing our security deliberately to stop us from



JKPCC Chief G.A. Mir talking to reporters at Jammu.

meeting the public or raising the public issues, Mir told reporters here.

The Congress leader said the security of senior party functionaries including former legislators, ministers, former Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) presidents and former Members of Parliament was downgraded, exposing them to the danger of terror attacks.

However, he said the party would not be cowed down by such measures and will continue to stand by the people.

Now by withdrawing and downgrading the security of our leaders, the government has crossed the limit and we will not stay silent as the lives of our

party leaders are in danger. We request the Lt Governor (Manoj Sinha) to stop differentiating people on the basis of their party affiliation, he said.

He accused officers involved in providing security to the political activists of taking unilateral and wrong decisions purely on partisan bias.

Congress party always tried to play the role of a constructive and vibrant opposition as we do not believe in negative politics, Mir said, adding the party despite the August 2019 development when the erstwhile state of J&K was bifurcated into union territories adopted a democratic way of protest to become the voice of the public.

We request the Lt Governor to review the security of all our

leaders otherwise we have no option but to flood the roads with our activists and supporters, he said.

Working President Raman Bhalla, Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma, Th. Balwan Singh (Ex-MLA), T.S. Bajwa (Ex-MP), Rajnish Sharma-Treasurer, Th. Mammooh Singh, Shahnawaz Choudhary and other were also present. Earlier, Congress chief spokesperson Ravinder Sharma said the security is related to the issue of threat and there should be no politics over it.

Congress has always remained in the forefront in the fight against Pakistani-sponsored terrorism. We are playing the role of constructive opposition and therefore our leaders should be given adequate security as per the threat perception, he said, adding there should be no pick and choose policy with regard to the security cover in a democracy.

Illegal felling of Khair trees: DB directs for ensuring strict compliance to set rules

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A Division Bench of Jammu & Kashmir High Court comprising Chief Justice Pankaj Mittal and Justice Sindhu Sharma disposed of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) with the directions to respondents to ensure strict compliance of Rules and not to allow any illegal felling of Khair trees, in sheer violation of rules. This significant order has been passed in a PIL filed by one L R Seghal seeking ban on felling of green trees of Khair and extracting roots of same. A further prayer has been made that respondents may not allow or permit any person from felling Khair trees and extracting its roots in violation of SRO No.111 dated March 31, 2016.

It was further pointed

out that aforesaid SRO, which is Annexure-VI to the petition, issued on 31.03.2016 provides for enactment of 'Jammu & Kashmir Non-Forest Land Khair Trees 'Acacia catechu' (Management Plan) Rules 2016'. The aforesaid Rules, inter alia, vide Rule 3 place restrictions on felling, conversion and utilization of Khair trees and specifically lays down that no Khair tree shall be felled without permission.

DB observed that in view of the aforesaid, as the statutes itself provides for protection of Khair trees, we are of the opinion that no direction is needed to be issued by us in exercise of discretionary jurisdiction and we expect that the authorities would ensure strict compliance of Rules in the right earnest and disposed of PIL.

regularization of Daily wagers and adhoc employees working in different departments of UT of Jammu & Kashmir and also to improve health infrastructures in country as well in Union Territory of J&K, which is need of hour. Explaining further Manohar said people had high expectations from the budget especially during the COVID pandemic. The budget disappointed the people. There is nothing in the budget for the general public. No Wealth Tax introduced to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. Pandemic has made life difficult for commoners but providing any relief is not on the government's agenda. The rich stands to gain more.

He said here local BJP leaders only give false promises as no budgetary allocation is proposed for

20 JKP personnel martyred in terror attacks last year

■ SHAKEELA ANDRABI

SRINAGAR: In Kashmir, terrorists are constantly targeting policemen and during first 33 days of year 2022, four attacks were held in which two policemen got martyred while one was critically injured and another had a narrow escape.

According to reports, on January 29, terrorists opened fire on a policeman in Batamaloo area of Srinagar but he escaped unhurt and after 24 hours, another policeman was targeted in Bijbehara area of Anantnag. On February 1, terrorists opened fire on another policeman in Amshipora, Shopian injuring him seriously and presently undergoing treatment. The martyrdom of a policeman in Bijbehara of Anantnag was the second to fall prey to terrorism during present year; while 20 cops were martyred in different terrorism-related incidents in Kashmir last year.

Likewise, the power supply to Saidpur, Khukhiali and Mirpur Ram shall remain affected on February 03 from 9 am to 2 pm.

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Similarly, the power supply to Roop Nagar, Janipur, Muthi, Subash Nagar, New Subash Nagar and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 03 from 9 am to 3 pm on rotation basis.

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The first incident took place on January 13 in Kulgam when a cop, identified as SGCT

Rohit Chib martyred during an encounter in Pariwan village. As per Police, he received bullet injury after a joint team entered a house to evacuate terrorists, where they had taken shelter. One of the biggest terrorist attacks took place in Pantha Chowk area of Srinagar on December 13, wherein a police bus was ambushed by terrorists and three policemen got martyred including an Assistant Sub-Inspector besides injuring 11 others. Three days before Pantha Chowk attack, two policemen were martyred in a surprise terrorist attack in Bandipora district. The attacker, whom J&K Police identified as a Pakistani terrorist, was caught on camera after he shot the cops. Later, police said the terrorist was also killed.

Last year, there was a series of targeted attacks on security personnel and civilians in Kashmir. October turned out to be the bloodiest month as 45 persons lost their lives in terrorism-related incidents in J&K.

In October, 20 terrorists were neutralised though the highest number of terrorists killed this year was in July, when the count was 31. On June 17, a cop, identified as Javaid Ahmad, was martyred in terrorist attack near his home at Saidpora, Srinagar. He was working as a Personal Security Officer of a retired judge and was on leave and unarmed, when attacked.

On 23 June, Inspector Parvaiz Ahmad Dar, working with Criminal Investigation Department (CID) wing of police, was attacked near his home in Nowgam, Srinagar when he was returning home after offering evening prayers.

On August 7, a policeman was martyred in a terrorist attack at Kulgam. On November 8, terrorists martyred a policeman, namely Tawseef Ahmad in Batamaloo area of Srinagar while on December 22, terrorists martyred an Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Muhammad Ashraf in Bijbehara area of Anantnag.

On behalf of the over 650 members of the association, the delegation raised many issues being faced by them. It pointed out the existence of an outdated 2012 SOR (Schedule of Rates) still being used by the Rural



DC Doda withholds salary of XEn, asks SE Hydraulics to blacklist non-performing contractors

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: District Development Commissioner Doda, Vikas Sharma on wednesday chaired the day-long meetings of RDD, PHE, PDD and Irrigation departments to review their performance under different vital heads including Area Development Plan of PRIS, NABARD and District Capex here at conference hall of DC office today.

Earlier in the morning the

DDC took the detail review of RDD under Area Development Plan under which DDC enquired about the updated status of tendering of works, status of allotment, physical and financial completion as of ending January 2022, besides reviewed the block wise review of works and expenditure incurred and other issues.

In addition to the expenditure the DDC directed the ACD and BDO's to ensure that all the bills pending for payment at treasury level shall be got released in coordination with the concerned treasuries with immediate effect, besides asked to mobilise the contractor of their respective areas to ex-

ecute the execution of works for time bound completion in all aspect. He instructed that in respect of works held up in snow-bound area the contractor should be in a state of readiness with men, machinery and material to be able to start / resume work on first opportunity where the weather conditions become conducive for work and complete all the works before 15th of March, 2022.

The DDC informed the BDO's to mobilise their field functionaries, besides asked them to expedite the framing of bills of all the physically completed works simultaneously so that timely expenditure shall be incurred on priority basis.

Moreover DDC directed the constitution of a fresh committee at Block levels for the material payment liability works verification of 2017-18,19,20. The process shall be completed within next 15 days, he asserted.

Meanwhile taking a strong cognizance of the poor performance shown by Ex En PHE Spl Sub division Gandoh, the DDC ordered withholding of salary

Contractors Association Leh meets LG Ladakh to brief local contractors' issues



Chairman Contractor Association presenting a memorandum to LG Ladakh

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: A delegation Contractors Association Leh Ladakh led by its chairman Tonyot Tashi Chuliehan called on the Lt. Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh R K Mathur on Wednesday and apprised him of the problems being faced by local contractors in Leh Ladakh.

The delegation included Senior Executive Member Dorjay Namgail Shangstot, Treasurer Tsewang Dorjay Gasha and Senior Member Sonam Gyaltson Barzi.

On behalf of the over 650 members of the association, the delegation raised many issues being faced by them. It pointed out the existence of an outdated 2012 SOR (Schedule of Rates) still being used by the Rural

Development Department (RDD) to execute its works. Whereas the PWD is working as per an updated SoR of 2020 of Jammu and Kashmir and it is being revised and adapted to UT structure, the delegation added.

Tonyot Tashi brought up the current phase of uncertainty among Ladakh based contractors in view of bigger companies taking over the conventional projects in the UT scenario. This, he said, is most detrimental to the morale of individual contractors in particular and an unhealthy trend being set having potential long term socio-economic ramifications. In this regard, he sought LG Ladakh's intervention towards involving the Ladakh contractors and evolving ways

such as encouraging joint venture (JV) approach enabling the contractors to work with bigger companies and thereby gain experience to enhance their level of experience in times to come.

"Ladakh based contractors have a unique experience of working in high altitude conditions of Ladakh, which must be taken into account while setting guidelines for participation in tenders," Tashi urged.

Contractors also demanded relaxations in work done experience, having experience on high altitude must be made mandatory for participating in the projects of UT Ladakh, every firm be registered with U T Ladakh GST Department to participate in UT Ladakh tenders, and reserve up to Rs 10 core of tender without any terms and conditions for the local contractors in (CPWD, WAPCOS, NHIDCL, NPCC, PWD, NHPC, PMGSY etc.).

The meeting was said to be a fruitful one. Lt. Governor is reported to have given a patient hearing to the issues raised and assured solutions.

Many long pending issues were also discussed in the meeting.

Power shutdown

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCL, Jammu has informed that the power supply to Gandhi Nagar, Augaf Market, Green Belt, Apsra Road RBI, Bahu Plaza, Vaishnvi Dham, Nanak Nagar, Gandhi Nagar Hospital, PHE Trikuta Nagar, Raghunath Bazar, Residency Road, Wazarat Road, Kanak Mandi, Rajinder Bazar and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 03 from 10 am to 2 pm.

Similarly, the power supply to Roop Nagar, Janipur, Muthi, Subash Nagar, New Subash Nagar and adjoining areas shall remain affected on February 03 from 9 am to 3 pm on rotation basis.

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