

LG conducts on-site inspection of transit accommodation at Zewan



Lt Governor Manoj Sinha conducting on-site inspection and reviewing ongoing construction work of the transit accommodation for PM Package employees at Zewan.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha conducted on-site inspection and reviewed ongoing

construction work of the transit accommodation for PM Package employees at Zewan, on Thursday.

The Lt Governor directed the officials to complete 10 Blocks comprising 240 residential units by March 20, 2024.

He further directed the officials for installation of CCTV cameras, and to complete the work on the approach road to the

Transit Accommodation and boundary wall, simultaneously.

It was informed that over 70 percent target under the project has been achieved with the completion of civil works on 26 blocks comprising 624 flats.

Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Vidhi Kumar Birdi, IGP Kashmir; Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar and other senior officials were present.



Anti Crime Bureau appeals Excise Deptt to implement New Excise Policy on ground

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

BISHNAH: Anti Crime Bureau, NGO, Chairman Sham Lal Gupta on Thursday along with the team members appealed Govt to implement new Excise Policy properly on ground.

Gupta, during his press conference, said "Excise Department to implement the Excise Policy 2024-2025 in letter and spirit."

He said that earlier distance of liquor shops from educational institutions (from nursery class onwards) and religious places was by 500 meters. But it was later reduced to 200 meters and then 100 meters. And, now it has been reduced to 50 meters only, said Gupta, urging that though distance of 50 meters is quite less in city of temples still a compromise on this will create a bad taste among the masses shattering their faith on the government.

The government must implement this new excise policy strongly now and no wine shop be opened near any religious place or educational institution. The distance must be now 50 meters as mentioned in new excise policy, he said.

Gupta further alleged that liquor is



Anti Crime Bureau, NGO, Chairman Sham Lal Gupta talking to reporters.

being sold above the rates fixed by the government though Excise Department is there to check the overcharges.

This time the government has imposed huge fine and punishment over the overcharging giving a strong and strict signal to the department to curb the menace of overcharging. Gupta said officers of Excise Department should take the matter very seriously.

Pension reforms introduced with sensitive concern for elder citizens, women: Dr Jitendra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Union Minister; Dr Jitendra Singh on Thursday said, ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi took charge in May 2014, a series of pension reforms had been introduced, one after the other, with a sensitive concern for elder citizens and women in particular:

Latest technology tools were employed to seek ease of living for these sections of society, he said.

Chairing the 33rd meeting of the Standing Committee of Voluntary Agencies (SCOVA) and 10th Nation-wide Pension Adalat in New Delhi, Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Department of Pension is constantly engaged in formulating policies for achieving the goal of women empowerment thereby ensuring a dignified life and ease of living for women.

Dwelling on the Women-Centric reforms in the Department of Pensions and



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh chairing the 33rd meeting of the Standing Committee of Voluntary Agencies (SCOVA) and 10th Nation-wide Pension Adalat at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on Thursday.

Pensioners' Welfare, Dr Jitendra Singh said, orders were issued wherein a divorced daughter, in whose case a decree of divorce was issued after the death of her parents, will be eligible for family pension if the divorce petition was filed before death of the parents.

Similarly, the Minister said, the families of missing employees covered under NPS can now get a family pension within 6 months of lodging FIR and not wait for 7 years after which

the employee considered deemed dead. Even in cases where the Government servant dies before completing a service of 7 years, family pension shall be payable to the family at an enhanced rate of 50% of last pay for the first 10 years and thereafter @ 30% of last pay.

Even the pension for Divyangs were resolved to bring ease of living for all, the Minister added.

Dr Jitendra said that the Department of Pension under Prime Minister Narendra Modi

has become the Department of Reforms with huge social implications. He asked the SCOVA body which consists of 15 non-official members, representing Pensioner Welfare Associations and Official Members to come out with suggestions and new ideas for the benefit of the department. The Minister informed that it was on his suggestion that a single pension form was introduced instead of the earlier practice of three forms.

Dr Jitendra also presided

over the Nation-wide Pension Adalat, which covered pensioner grievances of 12 Ministries/ Departments including Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Defence Finance, CBDT, Department of Economic Affairs, Department of Ex-Servicemen's Welfare, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs, Ministry of Culture. 105 Pensioner Grievances have been listed for discussion comprising of Superannuation cases, Family Pension Cases and Voluntary Retirement Cases. 60 percent of the cases were resolved on the spot.

In 2023, Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare had organized two Pension Adalats on 17th May, 2023 and 23rd October, 2023. During these Adalats, 603 cases were taken up, out of which 440 cases were resolved on the spot.

CCI delegation meets with VC JDA, discusses traders issues

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A delegation from the Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCI), led by President Arun Gupta, met with Bhawani Singh Rakhwal, Vice Chairman of the Jammu Development Authority (JDA), to address longstanding concerns regarding urban development in Jammu.

Gupta expressed dismay over the lack of progress in establishing new commercial and residential areas over the past 25 years, emphasizing the pressing need to accommodate unemployed youth and middle-class families. Additionally, he highlighted bureaucratic hurdles, such as the delayed execution of lease deeds for shops at



CCI Jammu delegation calling on VC JDA Bhawani Singh Rakhwal on Thursday.

Shiv Market Railway Station and the failure to provide possession and execute lease deeds for shops at Bahu Plaza.

Gupta also raised safety concerns regarding the old bus stand building and proposed its repair and redevelopment.

Furthermore, he urged the resumption of the stalled process of granting freehold rights to plot holders of Trikuta Nagar Housing Colony and the expedited clearance of pending Change of Land Use (CLU) files.

In response, Rakhwal assured the delegation of JDA's ongoing efforts in developing new residential colonies and commercial sites and pledged personal attention to resolving the issues with lease deeds.

He requested CCI to provide a concrete proposal regarding the Bahu Plaza Shopkeepers issue for further consideration.

The meeting concluded with a commitment from both sides to address the challenges raised and work collaboratively towards viable solutions.

Other attendees included senior office bearers of CCI, namely Anil Gupta, Rajeev Gupta, Manish Gupta, Rajesh Gupta, and Arun Gupta.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Reiterating the commitment of Modi government to benefit each and every needy person across the lines of region and religion, Ravinder Raina said that for the first time in history, every needy person in the society has been benefitted by the public welfare schemes initiated by the Modi government. To further strengthen its approach to the needy and the neglected, the BJP will undertake "Labharthi Sampark Abhiyan" in J&K, in which the party workers will approach the existing beneficiaries of Modi government schemes to know the exact application, pursuit, and implementation of the schemes till the direct benefit is delivered to the actual beneficiary. Ravinder Raina, President, J&K BJP, Ashish Sood, Seh-Prabhari J&K BJP, Ashok Koul, General Secretary (organization) and Sham Lal Sharma, Vice-President BJP & Incharge "Labharthi Sampark Abhiyan" addressed the meeting, while being accompanied by party general secretaries Sunil Sharma, Adv. Vibodh



Ravinder Raina, President, J&K BJP speaking at party workers meeting.

Gupta & Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, Abhiyan Co-Incharges Amar Singh and Reema Padha on the stage. Raina said that BJP workers have worked tirelessly in all these years to extend the benefits of the Modi government's welfare schemes to the deserving population in letter and spirit. He further asked the senior leaders, especially those who are assigned with the "Labharthi Sampark Abhiyan" responsibilities, to leave no stone unturned to identify every individual who is in need of public welfare schemes of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Union government.

He further prompted them to gear up

their activities in view of the approaching Parliamentary elections. Ashish Sood sought the details of works being undertaken by the party leaders to achieve success in the Abhiyan. Ashok Koul prompted the party leaders to have regular 'Pravas' and conduct the meetings of party workers at the ground level. Sham Lal Sharma said that the party workers are sincerely involved in identifying the needy persons, listing them, assisting them in filing their applications, and further assisting them till they get the benefits of the schemes. Amar Singh conducted the stage proceedings and Reem Padha presented the note of thanks.

‘We’ must remind ‘Ourself’ that it is now 77 years of POJK lands being under Enemy/Foreign occupation

Parliament Resolved on 22nd Feb 1994 Demanding that Pakistan Must Vacate POJK & it is for GOI to Execute Narendra Modiji made a fair use of Art-370 in 2019 - Hope he also executes 22nd Feb 1994 Parliament Resolution 1947-POJK DPs who were "promised" return to their 'parental' hearths might have grown to 1,50,000 Families

■ DAYA SAGAR

The February 1994 Resolution of Indian Parliament had demanded that Pakistan must vacate the areas of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir, which "they" have occupied through aggression; and resolved that all attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of India will be met resolutely.

In reply to Rajya Sabha unstarred question NO.2957 by Shri Javed Ali Khan MP (" Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state : (a) whether Government is still committed to the resolution on Jammu and Kashmir passed by the Parliament on 22nd February, 1994; and (b) if so, the measures taken to liberate Pakistan Occupied Kashmir from Pakistan"> Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs (Shri Hansraj Gangaram Ahir) had replied on 21 March 2018 <" The Government of India's principled and consistent position on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir is that the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union. A part of the territory of the State is under the forcible occupation of Pakistan. This position has been reaffirmed by the Resolution on Jammu & Kashmir adopted by the Parliament of India on 22 February, 1994. India is committed under the Shimla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration, to resolve all issues with Pakistan peacefully through bilateral discussions">. But Government reply did say about progress made in

nearly 24 years even after 1994. The reply was also not much different to Lok Sabha Q* NO.32 (Illegally Occupied Areas) of Dr. Kirit Somaiya: MP { (a) whether the Government has asked Pakistan at diplomatic level to vacate all illegally occupied areas of Kashmir; (b) if so, the details thereof; (c) the details of the areas in Kashmir under illegal occupation of Pakistan till date;(d) whether Pakistan has reverted and taken initiative to vacate the illegally occupied areas of Kashmir; and (e) if so, the details thereof} The Minister for External Affairs (Shrimati Sushma Swaraj) had tabled the reply on December 12, 2018 by as <" India's consistent and principled position, as also enunciated in the 1994 Parliament Resolution adopted unanimously, is that the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir has been, is, and shall be an integral part of India. Pakistan has been in illegal occupation of approximately 78,000 sq.kms of Indian territory in the State of Jammu & Kashmir: Under the so-called 'Boundary Agreement' signed between China and Pakistan on 2 March 1963, Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 sq.kms of Indian territory in Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir to China. We have repeatedly and consistently called upon Pakistan to immediately vacate all areas under its illegal occupation, most recently on 30 November 2018. Pakistan continues to be in illegal and forcible occupation of a part of the Indian State of Jammu and

Kashmir."> Minister did not tell where & when India had asked Pakistan to vacate occupied areas by a nominated date ? Once again in reply to Lok Sabha unstarred Q. No 2977 from SHRIMATI MALA ROY { asking :a) whether the Government is aware of a Parliament resolution on PoK; (b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to realise the resolution; and (c) the details of steps taken till date on PoK? } The Minister of State MEA Shri V. Muralleedharan on 11th March 2020 in a written had said t<" . Government's consistent and principled position, as also enunciated in the Parliament resolution adopted unanimously by both Houses on 22 February 1994, is that the entire Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh have been, are and shall be an integral part of India. Government monitors all developments taking place in the territories of India including in territories that are under illegal and forcible occupation of Pakistan. We have consistently called upon Pakistan to immediately vacate all areas under its illegal and forcible occupation, and to put an end to the human rights violations and desist from continued attempts to bring material change in these territories.">. But here too no specific details were given of steps taken and complicate by Pakistan.

After 1994 once again war was initi-



A Look Through the Mist

ated by Pakistan in 1999 along Ladakh region of J&K but that too ended in only throwing out the intruders / forces from areas intruded in 1999, the 1947 POJK areas still remained un retrieved and 22nd Feb 1994 resolution demanding that Pakistan must vacate POJK too remained un executed.

22nd Feb is being observed as Sankalp Divas and every year and many leaders/ societies/ association/ institutions do observe this day holding seminars / public functions and some in their wisdom appear to profess that on 22 Feb 1994 Indian Parliament had resolved that 'The State of Jammu & Kashmir has been, is and shall be an integral part of India where as in real spirits Parliament had declared (in a way reiterated) "That The State of Jammu & Kashmir has been, is and shall be an integral part of India " (see Art-1 of Constitution of India 1950 / Section-3 of J&K Constitution). Where as resolution was that " Pakistan must vacate the areas of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir, which they have occupied through aggression;".

So, observing 22nd Feb as Sankalp Divas is to remind that People of India had about 3 decades back through a parliamentary resolution demanded that Pakistan must vacate the occupied areas of J&K & resolution is still unexecuted by the Government of India.

It is now more than 3 decades of the said Resolution and nearly 7 decades about 45000 to 50000 families facing communal genocide were displaced from the areas of the Indian (princely) State of J&K who have not been even given the claims of the properties / assets left behind in POJK since their return to their 'ancestral' hearths has been promised by GOI .It is not out of place to mention here that the then Prince of State of J&K had acceded to India nearly 75 days after 15 Aug 1947 and that too after the Princely state was attacked by 'Pakistan' on 22nd Oct 1947 from Muzaffrabad side, had he acceded in August 1947 there would have been no POJK. POJK DPs 1947 had to run for life leaving behind almost all of their physical assets, almost some member of every household losing a parent / becoming a victim of rape / losing a kin / living in relief camp separated from others family members. No any regular registration count was neither made by GOI nor State government after POJK DPs managed to reach safer areas in J&K /other India states. Many of these families who were denied claims of properties left behind (GOI pleading POK is a part of India but any action to register the property claims could give rise to the feeling that Government have given up the hope for the return of the territory held by Pakistan) were not given a meagre ex gratia relief of even equivalent of Rs.3500 per family in 1960s. Not only that some of the families who were

though recorded as from POJK areas (Mirpur/ Muzaffrabad/Poonchi/ Kotli/ Blimber /GB etc) but had reached Indian states other than J&K had been disowned as residents of 'J&K state' even by J&K Government. These '1st.Victims' of Pakistani atrocities/ aggression have not been given even any type of socio economic support like reservations/ concessions and they too are still hoping after 22Feb1994Parliament Resolution that soon GoI will get POJK areas vacated. So, this day 'We' must remind 'Ourself' that it is now 75 years of POJK lands being under enemy / foreign occupation and the 1947-POJK DP families might have grown to atleast 1,50,000 family units .It is now nearly 3 decades since even Parliament of India had demanded that Pakistan must vacate the areas occupied through aggression. 'IT' is the duty of Government of India to execute the Demand of Parliament made on Pakistan so that when ever now after 22nd Feb 2024 a question in reference to 22nd Feb 1994 comes for reply in Parliament GOI is able make a specific pointed reply as regards (a) GOI having asked Pakistan to vacate all illegally occupied areas of J&K by an appointed date (b) if so, has Pakistan reverted back and taken initiative to vacate the occupied areas (c) if not what action next.

(The writer is a Sr Journalist & analyst of J&K Affairs).