

# JDA holds interactive stakeholders' workshop to review Jammu Master Plan 2032

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: An interactive Stakeholder workshop was organized by JDA in association with Town and Country Planning Organization Govt. of India on Wednesday in the office of the Divisional Commissioner, Jammu.

The interactive workshop was organized to gather public feedback and suggestions on the 5 year periodical review of Jammu Master Plan 2017-32 which has been initiated by JDA.

Divisional Commissioner,

Jammu Dr. Raghav Langer in the inaugural session gave broader vision and perspective on the Jammu Master Plan-2032 and initiated discussions among the Public Representatives and HoDs of various line Departments on the expected outcomes of the Master Plan Review exercise.

Vice Chairman JDA, Pankaj Magotra, conducted the proceedings of the workshop and made public representatives aware about steps initiated by

JDA for facilitating faster online building permissions, allowing Agriculture Land for conversion to Land-use prescribed in the Master Plan and finding out the land-use of their land by the visitors on JDA website.

In this workshop, DDC Chairman Jammu and Samba, Officers from JMC, Urban Local Bodies, Police and Civil administration, Chief Engineers of various depts, Director AIIMS, Director IIT/IIM, Regional Director NHAI and representatives of

Chamber of Commerce and Industries participated.

Besides, Town & Country planners, Delhi Associate Architects, Chief Town Planner, JDA were also present who made the representatives aware about the process for review of Master Plan.

Some important points on which opinion & suggestions were taken were to prioritize the solution of important problems of Jammu Town, identification of localities which need improvement in terms of traffic and trans-

portation, Solid Waste Management, sewerage, drainage, telecommunications, social, cultural, River Front Development, conservation of environment etc. of the overall Jammu Master Plan Area.

Future vision of Jammu city in terms of IT, Industry, Pilgrimage Tourism, Economy etc in next 20 years was also discussed during the workshop and feedback taken by the Town & Country Planning experts for consideration during the review exercise.



## DB seeks fresh comprehensive affidavits regarding slaughter houses

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a much publicized Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by an NGO 'SAVE' (Save Animal Value Environment) through its Chairperson Devinder Kaur Madaan alias Rumpy Madaan seeking closure of unregulated and unregistered/un-licensed slaughter houses/meal shops in Jammu & Kashmir including both the capital cities, a Division Bench of Jammu & Kashmir High Court comprising Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice Sindhu Sharma after hearing Adv. Sheik Shafeek Ahmed for PIL, directed Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) and Srinagar Municipal

Corporation (SMC) to submit a fresh comprehensive affidavit, within two weeks, clearly stating whether existing slaughter houses are to be upgraded, or some new slaughter houses have to be constructed and what is actual state of affairs in respect of both matters.

DB further directed that in addition to it, presence of Avny Lavasa, Commissioner JMC is also sought, who shall appear fully prepared on above subject to assist the Court. When PIL came up for hearing, Division Bench observed that it was informed that in Jammu, two slaughter houses, one at Dogra Hall and other at Gujjar Nagar are in existence and efforts are being made to upgrade them.

## Revival of VDCs as VDGs to boost security grid: J&K BJP

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The J&K BJP on Wednesday said the revival of Village Defence Committees (VDCs) as Village Defence Groups (VDGs) will ensure their financial empowerment, besides boosting the security grid in the Union territory. The party demanded that VDGs should be equipped with modern weapons so that they can give a befitting reply to terrorists in mountainous and remote areas.

"The revival of VDCs by renaming them VDGs and considering other genuine demands, including financial empowerment, will boost Jammu and Kashmir's security grid," said BJP general secretary Sunil Sharma told reporters here. "People from hilly and far-flung areas were migrating to safer places. BJP leaders, particularly Atal Behari Vajpayee and L K Advani, launched the 'Doda Bachao Andolan' and raised their voice for the constitution of VDCs in 1990s. Their struggle culminated in setting up of VDCs in all the 10 districts of Jammu province with arms to counter terrorism," the former minister added. Sharma claimed that once in an interview, a terrorist had admitted that he was most scared of the VDCs. He said that despite the important role played by the committees, their salary distribution system was not streamlined and some members did not get their salaries. "Many VDCs are now non-functional or disbanded. Many VDC members had submitted their resignations and deposited weapons, so that they could avail benefits under the BPL category," he added. Sharma said J&K BJP chief Ravinder Raina had consistently taken up the cause of VDCs at different levels. He said now that the Union Home Ministry has revived the committees as village defence groups (VDGs), it will go a long way in meeting the genuine demands of their members who will be entitled to one rank and equal salary that will directly be transferred into their accounts. He also stressed on the need to equip them with modern weapons to give a befitting reply to any terrorist attack in the future.

"We are not sure as to whether in addition to existing slaughter houses, there is any proposal for construction of a new modern slaughter house in Jammu. The record also revealed that one modern slaughter house is coming up in Srinagar which was expected to be completed within 7-8 months as per the previous order but S S Nanda, Sr AAG informed that there is resistance by local people and work has to be stopped," the Bench observed. Expressing displeasure over the way things are moving and every time except for giving assurances, nothing is being done, the Court directed Adv Harshwardhan Gupta, appearing for JMC and Sr AAG S S Nanda, appearing for SMC to submit a fresh comprehensive affidavits in this regard.

Prominent among those present on the occasion include JKPCC Refugee Cell Vice Chairman Amrit Bali, Madam Gurmeet Kour, Punjab Singh, Natha Ram, Kapoor Lal, Dhanwant Singh, Mohinder Singh Khalsa, Vicky Kumar, Teja Singh, Swaran Singh besides others.

Addressing largely attended public meeting as a part of party's mass contact programme to mobilize public opinion against BJP's wrong policies and programmes at Hakal, Bhalla cornered BJP government

over various issues. He slammed the BJP government for using public money for polishing their own image through massive advertisement. The fact is that the BJP government has failed to deliver to the people on all fronts and would be wiped out of J&K whenever assembly elections take place here.

He said Congress will create awareness among the general public about the failures of the government and the drawbacks of not having the status of being a state. He said that Jammu has witnessed huge setbacks due to the revocation of statehood by the BJP Government including the seizing of jobs, land, and the suppression of political and civil rights. The economy

has also suffered immensely due to the government's irrational policies and decisions. Therefore, it is high time that the Centre keeps its promise of giving back statehood so that people can exercise their political rights by choosing a democratic government.

The Centre should accept the demand for restoration of statehood to J-K in the interest of the Constitution and democracy, he stated.

Launching a scathing attack on the government, Bhalla further added that without a dedicated government elected by the people Jammu and its people are being neglected and overlooked.

JKPCC Working President said that Congress has been on fore front to oppose the anti-people policies being

imposed on the people through back door by the bureaucrats Govt, as there is no elected Govt in J&K for three and half years, now the people of different sections are being forced to swallow the bitter pills, as they have no representation or forum to raise their voice against the anti people policies of the

BJP through bureaucratic system. Having failed to give employment to highest number of percentage of educated unemployed youth, the Centre Govt and UT administration is beating about bushes and finding faults in the past Govts, he added.

He said that Congress is the only option left before the people of Jammu and Kashmir as people have bitter experience of Double Engine Govt of BJP.

## J&K BJP President speaks to Jammu student stranded in Ukraine

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir BJP president Ravinder Raina Wednesday spoke to a local medical student stranded in the war-torn Ukrainian city of Kharkiv and told him that he was in touch with his family.

Raina's conversation with Nazim Choudhary, a resident of Mendar sector of J&K's Poonch district, was shared on social media.

"Have you left Kharkiv or are you still there? Don't worry about anything and I am in touch with your family," Raina told the MBBS student.

Meanwhile, J&K BJP announced helpline numbers -- Arvind Gupta on 9419187131 in Jammu and Manzoor Bhat on 9469000077 in Kashmir -- for Indian nationals stranded in Ukraine.

## Dr Jitendra inaugurates exclusive 'Orientation Programme' for J&K Corporators, Councillors

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh on Wednesday inaugurated the first of its kind, exclusive 3-day 'Orientation Programme-cum Workshop' on Urban Governance, for Mayors/ Chairpersons and Municipal Commissioners/ Chief Executives Officers from Urban Local Bodies of Jammu & Kashmir. The programme is being organised by Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), of which Dr Jitendra Singh is the National Chairman.

Director General IIPA, S.N. Tripathi is coordinating the programme, which is being attended by Mayor Jammu, Chandra Mohan Gupta, Deputy Mayor Purnima



Sharma along with other Corporators and Councillors from different Municipal bodies. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Jitendra said, for the first time, this year's union budget talks about urban planning and development in a 25 year perspective when 50% of India will be living in urban areas. He said, Union Budget of 2022-23 allocated the highest ever grant of Rs 76,549.46 crore and announced several measures including setting up a high-level committee of planners,

economists, and institutions to steer a paradigm change in the approach towards urban sector policies, planning, implementation, capacity building, and governance. The Minister pointed out that like the country as a whole, Jammu and Kashmir is also undergoing a changeover from 27% urban population in 2011 to half way mark in coming decades. He, however added that this journey poses a challenge to carry out urban sector reforms effectively as initiated by our urban missions. He said,

the role of Jammu which is one of the oldest municipalities, created in 1930, and is the gateway of state is crucial to expedite economic development in the state. Dr Jitendra Singh said that in the overall context, he is happy to note that the municipal corporation of Jammu which was created in 2000 has taken appreciable steps in the last few years, which include online payment gateway and approval procedure, checking illegal construction, banners hoardings and

## ► Delimitation Commission Order cannot be questioned in any court & hence DC has 'extra' responsibility ►

## Do Kashmir valley leaders accusing DC mean to say BJP is working in interest of Kashmir Valley ?

## ■ DAYA SAGAR

For execution of the task of delimitation of the single member segments of the Legislative Assembly of UT of J&K the Delimitation Commission-2020 needs to have a very close and in depth study of the constitutionally laid down guiding parameters and the related ground data / information for which commission has to minutely identify the needed information & data regarding UT of J&K, history of proceedings/orders of earlier delimitation commissions, and then analyse the same through ground intimate exercises. No doubt the Delimitation commission has been provided extreme immunity since its final orders cannot be challenged in any court of law (Section-60(5) of the Act-34) but at the same time it also reflects from the Act 34 of 2019 that the Delimitation Commission shall leave no possible scope for any short fall / deficiency since it is required that after sharing the draft proposals with associate members & considering their wisdom the Delimitation Election Commission shall (a) publish its proposals for the delimitation of constituencies together with the dissenting proposals, if any, of any associate member who desires publication thereof in the Official Gazette and in such other manner as the Commission may consider fit, together with a notice inviting objections and suggestions in relation to the proposals and specifying a date on or after which the proposals will be further considered by it; (b) consider all objections and suggestions which may have been received by it before the date so specified; and (c) after considering all objections and suggestions which may have been received by

it before the date so specified, determine by one or more orders the delimitation of constituencies and cause such order or orders to be published in the Official Gazette, and there upon such publication, the order or orders shall have the full force of law/force of law and shall not be called in question in any court. Hence a Delimitation Commission (DC) is not a simple court where people have to place their case for redressal of grievance & plead and if not satisfied there is scope for appeal in higher court.

Although the Delimitation Commission-2020 has not yet officially shared in public domain any draft proposals on delimitation still it has been reported in media quoting sources that Commission shared some draft proposals with Associate Members on 20th December, 2021, 4th February 2022 and 27th February 2022 and may be any time after 4th March 2022 it shall place the draft delimitation proposals in public by publication in the government gazette inviting objections and suggestions. It is hoped that the gazette notification will also include the description of model used by the commission for making use of the specified parameters for the purpose so that those who have to make any suggestions / observations on the draft proposals for a fair delimitation order can do that in a specific manner since that is otherwise also very much needed to set aside any otherwise apprehensions and misunderstandings carried by some that population is the only criteria for deciding the limits of MLA constituency because had population been the main/ ultimate measure then J&K/UT of J&K would have only 30 or so con-

stituencies keeping in view that UP has only 403 MLAs. Now since 90 constituencies have been pre decided in law and in a democracy like ours the Government is drawn from Legislature only so for keeping balance of voices in legislature / government for the related areas limits of constituencies do matter & must be decided strictly as per instructions laid in law.

More so in the meantime some statements of Kashmir valley leaders have appeared in media questioning the "draft proposals" even when the proposals referred in media are for distributing 47 seats over areas in Kashmir Valley and only 43 seats over areas outside Kashmir valley, whereas briefly discussed here in earlier areas outside Kashmir valley qualify for more MLAs than valley and in fairness to laid down law numbers may reverse since as per section-50 of J&K Constitution areas outside Kashmir valley had two MLAs more than Kashmir valley out of total 26 elected MLAs. Not only that some people have even accused the Delimitation Commission (DC) of having come under the influence of BJP for distributing 43 MLAs out of 90 over areas outside Kashmir Valley and for them 'Question' is how could anybody accuse DC of having come under influence of BJP; do Valley leaders mean that BJP is working in the interest of Kashmir Valley since otherwise in fairness to laid law figures should be reverse. It is not only Section-50 of constitution of erstwhile State of J&K that reflects the real physical status of Kashmir Valley, reality of status of Kashmir Valley can also be assessed

by anybody from the fact that in 1978 Kashmir valley had only 3 districts and areas outside Valley including Ladakh region had 6 districts and present numbers of 10 district each are illusive. Any how it is expected that since Delimitation Commission is still working the Associate Members (AM) and the Chief Election Commissioner J&K would surely not be failing in their duty of providing needed data / information to DC so as to see that all deficiencies, if any, in referred "draft proposals" are removed before proposals are published in the Government Gazette. The Associate Members ( Lok Sabha MPs ) who do not have voting rights but surely have more feel of the requirements of lands & people of J&K as well as understanding of the data/ information that may be needed by DC (& how Commission can get that) for conducting fair exercise in unbiased & free manner. Election Commissioner of J&K who has a voting right also has to ensure that DC gets all information from the Government as regards the areas, topography, terrains, etc. etc.

No doubt as reported the approach of categorisation of districts (as A, B, C) and in its pious wisdom Commission having devised some working model in relation to population & other 4 guiding parameters is worth leading to a revealing exercise but the basis for weightage to the parameters like geographical compactness, the terrain, the communication network, public conveniences (including administrative conven-

iences in the form of administrative districts) etc has not been made known yet officially; and it is hoped that the commission will also make that known at the time of publishing the draft proposals in the government gazette along with the data as used regarding geographical areas of districts, populations, road network, black top roads region/ district wise, percentage area covered by roads region/ district wise (separately for black top roads / metalled roads/ fair weather roads), terrain/ negotiability, areas covered by forest, limits of District administrative units and public conveniences so that meaningful comments / observations could be made on the proposals by stake holders on proposals prepared by commissions in nearly two years.

Some differences are often noticed in the figures on the websites of some districts, the census documents 2011 and books of statistics as regards the areas etc. Hope the Delimitation Commission too would be getting the data cross checked / double certified by source government agencies.

In this regard it can only be submitted that the irrational wrongs done in the past as regards carving the Assembly Segments have been so huge that the delimitation processes so far adopted in other states may not fit for correcting the wrongs done in J&K over last 7 decades where the people well represented and their MLAs had not been fairly made 'near' to each other in terms of convenience in time & distance. The spirit under lying the delimitation law could be well read from the fact that although

a member of Lok Sabha is nearly taken proportional in population for all the Indian states but that is not the case for a MLA where the average population backing a MLA is different for all states (based on 1971 population UP MLA is valued at 208 value units and J&K MLA was valued 72&MLA Sikkim is 7 units).

Even with Census- 2011 data & Delimitation law truthfully applied areas outside Valley can still get more than 45 MLAs. In the instant case redrawing boundaries of the MLA Segments is otherwise also required in addition to adjustments in view of changed census data & SC/ST population since MLAs have been increased from 83 to 90, boundaries of earlier 83 constituencies were drawn in 1995 when there were 14 districts and in 2007 the districts were increased to 20. So also will be need for adjusting the extent of individual Lok Sabha constituencies over MLA constituencies. But the needed macro level corrections as regards proportions of number of MLA segments in and outside Kashmir valley is the real and sensitive task before the Delimitation Commission. So, no part corrections please, corrections have to be total and as due under law. But in case wrongs like that in 1995 delimitation order are not completely undone in line with laid down law that would surely disappoint masses who started hoping for fair delimitation after in 2019 Narendra Modi Prime Minister of India provided clear opportunity for doing corrections.

(The author is Sr Journalist & leading scribe J&K affairs dayasagr45@yahoo.com)