

CS approves UT Action Plan under NCAP

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta on Friday chaired the Apex Committee meeting and approved the action plan for implementing the National Clean Air Programme in Jammu and Kashmir.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health & Medical Education Department, Principal Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department, Commissioner Secretary, Transport Department, Commissioner Secretary, Forest, Ecology & Environment Department along with Director, Ecology, Environment & Remote Sensing, Chairman and Member Secretary, Pollution Control Board (PCB) and concerned HoDs participated in the meeting.

It was informed that no industrial cluster in J&K falls under the critically polluted area. The approved plan aims at eliminating the use of pet coke and furnace oil in red and orange category industries within one and two years, respectively; and simultaneously promoting the usage of alternate energy sources like CNG, PNG, and electricity.

Moreover, all 17 categories of highly polluting industries in J&K have



Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta chairing Apex Committee meeting.

installed online emission monitoring systems (OCEMS) linked with CPCB Server to help track the discharges of pollutants, emissions, effluents there from.

Further, it was informed that installation of Air Pollution Control Devices (APCDs) and tree plantation within unit premises have been made mandatory for all the Orange and Red category units.

The Chief Secretary emphasized the constant monitoring of air quality in Jammu and Kashmir and asked the Department to install a grid of Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS)

across all districts for real time assessment of PM10, PM2.5, SO2, NOx, NH3, CO, O3, and benzene in the Union territory.

Regarding the functioning of brick kilns, the Pollution Control Board has prescribed the use of adequate height of stacks, use of zig zag technology or vertical shaft, and use of coal/piped natural gas as fuel instead of charcoal and firewood; to check the air pollution associated with this sector.

The approved plan also includes a policy to set up e-waste and recycling units in industrial areas in compliance with the e-waste management rules. Accordingly, the Department of

Industry and Commerce is assisting establishment of e-waste dismantling and recycling units in the existing and upcoming industrial park, estates and industrial clusters.

To assist the efforts towards curbing air pollution, a policy for phasing out old commercial and private vehicles in 10 years and 15 years respectively, has also been notified. Under the policy, the Transport Department is providing a subsidy of Rs.5.00 lakh per bus to encourage replacement with fuel efficient and eco-friendly alternatives.

The Chief Secretary asked the concerned agencies to tighten the inspection drives and ensure compliance to the PUC norms by the private and commercial vehicles.

Besides, the enforcement agencies were also directed to sternly deal with the construction debris and abandoned material as per the policy norms.

Dr. Mehta also impressed upon the Housing and Urban Development Department to ensure 100% door-to-door waste collection throughout Jammu and Kashmir, and expedite solid waste segregation for scientific disposal, in addition to strict implementation of single-use plastic ban.



BJP intensifies public outreach drive; asks cadre to gear-up for big challenge

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NAGROTA: Bharatiya Janata Party on Friday intensified its public outreach campaign and urged the cadre to gear up for a big challenge in Jammu and Kashmir.



Senior BJP leaders at public outreach programme at Nagrota.

As part of the drive, senior leaders Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member Parliament, Devender Singh Rana, and the Pradesh Vice President Sham Lal Sharma addressed meeting of party workers of Nagrota, Mathwar and Bhalwal Mandals of the Nagrota Assembly Constituency at Nagrota and interacted with the functionaries, emphasizing the need for further strengthening the party and galvanizing it at the grass roots level.

"Jammu and Kashmir is at the threshold of transformation with large scale investments pouring in various sectors", said Jugal Kishore Sharma adding that this will open up vistas of opportunities in terms of jobs and economic upliftment across the Union Territory. He said rapid industrialization and infrastructure upgradation is the preamble for Naya Jammu and Kashmir under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Referring to the cherished agenda of Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said the BJP is

working towards realizing this vision by ending discrimination and ensuring holistic development of all the regions and sub-regions of Jammu and Kashmir, irrespective of caste, creed and religion.

Addressing party functionaries, Devender Singh Rana said BJP is a mass movement, standing for empowerment of the people and support from all sections of the society is the biggest strength that enables it to fight for the just cause of the people and stand steadfast in resolving issues confronting them. As a result of sustained efforts, the BJP has emerged as a force to reckon with, he added.

Rana said the BJP's focus would be to usher Jammu and Kashmir in a new phase of progress and development with restoration of complete normalcy and peace remaining a focal point. The BJP is committed to address the issues of the youth, the marginalized and weaker sec-

tions besides women, he said while asserting that the party will ensure to remove the disparity between region and sub regions with regard to allocation of funds for development and opportunities to flourish.

Addressing the functionaries, Sham Lal Sharma said the BJP has paved the way for the people to have access to all the privileges, rights and facilities available to their fellow citizens across the country. This is something not known in this part of the country due to wrong policies adopted over the decades, he said adding that continued support of the people to the BJP will help in expediting the development and making Jammu and Kashmir part of the country's growth story, he added.

Besides District President BJP Jammu Rural Rajinder Singh Chib, Mandal Presidents and prominent party functionaries participated in the meeting.

PM committed to strengthen local bodies in J&K: Dr Jitendra

■ 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 in Friday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to strengthen the local bodies in Jammu & Kashmir.



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh with Municipal Corporators and Councillors of Jammu region during valedictory ceremony of Orientation Programme on Urban Governance at New Delhi.

Jammu & Kashmir at the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) headquarters, New Delhi today, Dr Jitendra Singh, who is also the Chairman of IIPA, said that the smooth elections to the village councils and the first-ever elections to District Councils after seven decades, conducted in Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir are a symbol of commitment of the Government of India, led by Prime Minister Modi, to strengthen the local bodies.

The Union Minister said that there have been efforts to change the political culture since Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister of India in 2014. He said that Prime

Minister Modi has given the mantra of 'Reform, Perform, Transform' and today transparency in all spheres and at all levels of the governance can be seen.

Dr Jitendra said that honesty and accountability are the key words for the smooth conduct of the duties by people's representatives. He added that the local bodies' representatives should be in better coordination with the officials to be able to remove several obstacles easily. He urged the participants to inculcate vision, imagination and innovation.

Dr. Singh said that efforts are on to conduct a number of programs in Jammu and Kashmir such as start-up

based workshops which can open a new horizon for people, especially youth of the valley. Such programs will be based on themes, specific to the local area. Similarly, discussions are on with the M/o Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to organise Rozgar Mela.

Dr Jitendra referred to multiple roles of elected representatives like developing a bottom-up connectivity in city governance, promoting emergence of natural leadership from the grass-root level, community participation and mobilisation of local resources, and operating as intermediary link between city government and commu-

nity, and state leadership and city. He said, the urban reforms in Jammu are not only important for the city but are also important for other towns in the state.

Dr. Singh gave away certificates to 28 participants of the three-day programme and also released a booklet titled, 'Training Need Assessment for Virtual Training on Urban Governance for Municipal Engineers', penned by Professor KK Pandey, Faculty, CUS, IIPA and Dr. Sachin Chowdhry.

Senior officials of IIPA including SN Tripathi, DG, IIPA and Amitabh Ranjan, Registrar, IIPA were also present on the occasion.

Rajani Patil to begin six-day J&K tour from Mar 8

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: All India Congress Committee (AICC) J&K Incharge and Member of Parliament Rajani Patil will begin six-day J&K Tour from March 8 to 13, 2022. "AICC J&K Incharge will review organizational affairs and ongoing membership drive, besides reviewing the preparations for Digital Membership Drive to be launched across J&K, shortly," Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) spokesperson said.

"Rajani Patil during her tour will hold discussions with party Leaders, DCC Presidents and former legislators to receive feedback with regard to organizational affairs and activities in all the District of J&K," spokesperson adding that during six day tour Patil will address series of public meetings both in Jammu and Kashmir as well.

"She is likely to address party workers meeting at Srinagar Party Office on 12th of this month," he added.



UT Level Co-operative Conference on 'Vision Document 2047' held

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A One day UT level conference for Cooperative Department was held on Friday under the chairmanship of Secretary, Co-operatives Department, Yasha Mudgal on "Vision Document 2047" for Co-operatives in Jammu and Kashmir at Lemon Tree Hotel Jammu.

Managing Director, JKRLM, Dr Syed Sehrish Asgar; Registrar, Co-operative Societies, Shafqat Iqbal; GM NABARD, Surjeet Singh; Additional Registrar Co-operative Societies, Dr. Nirupa; MD, J&K State Co-operative Bank, Qazi Sarwar; Director Sheep Husbandry Jammu, Krishan Lal and other dignitaries were also present and gave their suggestions and views on Vision Document 2047. During the programme, various stakeholders from Cooperatives and other allied sectors shared views on growth of cooperatives in J&K. The conference was organized to prepare a Vision document for Cooperatives till 2047. The objective of the conference was to collect inputs for formulating of a concrete Vision Document on Growth of cooperatives for onward submission to Ministry of Cooperation GoI. The other departments which participated in this conference were



Secretary, Co-operatives Department, Yasha Mudgal chairing a meeting.

Animal and Sheep Husbandry, Tribal affairs and JKNRLM etc. Besides the above MD/CEO of Cooperative Banks also participated and gave their inputs for preparing the vision Document. Some important suggestions of Stakeholders were to include the Self Help Groups, village organisation & Cluster level federations to register as Cooperative Societies. Cooperative Societies could be formed by Milk Producers and Mutton Producers in an organised manner by providing Backward/forward linkages for branding and Marketing of the produce, fetching higher returns and eliminating the role of Middle Men. It was also suggested that success stories in the Cooperative movement will be replicated to form federations of

existing Cooperative Societies. It was also deliberated that Training of Cooperative Members is necessary for Capacity building and enabling societies to diversify their activities and contribution in the nation building process. Accordingly the revival of Cooperative Training institutes in J&K was also discussed. On the suggestion of Secretary Cooperative, MD NRLM agreed to work together with the department in promoting cooperative movement in J&K by signing an MoU on specific deliverables outlining the role of each department in the endeavour. Among others, senior officers of Co-operative and allied departments, representatives of co-operative societies besides, other stakeholders were also participated in the one day conference.

SMVDSB advises pilgrims against fraudsters selling fake helicopter tickets

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
KATRA: Ramesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) has taken serious note of complaints regarding booking of fake helicopter tickets by some unscrupulous elements to the pilgrims by adopting modus operandi of using their websites/Travel portals and Travel Agencies etc., despite of issuance of advisory through the medium of print media and display in shape of flex at prominent locations by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board.

The Chief Executive Officer informed that the complaint regarding fleecing of pilgrims by these fraudulent elements has already been filed with the Crime Branch and Cyber Branch of J&K Police who are investigating the matter.

The CEO has informed and appealed the pilgrims at large that the sale of helicopter tickets for pilgrims travelling from Katra to

Sanjichhat and back is the sole prerogative of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board and the Board has not authorized any agent, agency or person to use the Shrine Board's name to sell or undertake online bookings for any services which are being provided by Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, Katra. All the online services offered by Shrine Board are offered through the Official Website of Shrine Board: www.maavaishnodevi.org and Mata Vaishno Devi APP, only.

Ramesh Kumar further stressed that any misrepresentation of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board by any person or agency whatsoever shall be dealt strictly as per law.

He again advised all the pilgrims to use only the official website of the SMVD Shrine Board for booking services such as helicopter tickets and not to fall prey to the fraudulent advertisements issued by unauthorized websites offering confirmed Helicopter tickets, sale of Prasad etc.

J&K people suffering without Consumer Courts

■ SHAKEELA ANDRABI
SRINAGAR: People across J&K are suffering a lot as Consumer courts were closed since Consumer Protection Act 1986 became invalid in Jammu & Kashmir long time back, while establishment of courts under new Central Laws applicable to the region is still under process. Hundreds of consumers are facing difficulties in summer capital as consumer courts are yet to be notified under Consumer Protection Act 2019 in J&K. Consumers often complained that they are unable to file fresh complaints while already submitted filed are also awaiting settlement. The Consumer Protection Act 2019 came into effect on July 20, 2019, which replaced Consumer Protection Act 1986. "Complaints of nearly 2.50 lakh consumers are pending before courts across J&K. With implementation of the new Act, the existing con-

sumer courts of the time became inactive," it was revealed by an advocate, who were once associated with consumer courts. He further added that authorities must notify Consumer Courts under new Act. "A large number of clients are calling their counsels, asking if Consumer Courts have been made functional. However, they get disappointed to know that notification in this regard is yet to come," he asserted, adding that currently consumers are unable to file their complaints related to various disputes and claims, due to non-functionality of Consumer Courts. Expressing similar views, several consumers urged authorities to make Consumer Courts functional in J&K at the earliest.

"New Act enables a consumer to lodge a complaint from both places, where he resides or from where he works. It is more consumer-friendly and will help a lot in

settlement of consumer disputes. The new act consists provisions for strict penalties, including jail terms for adulteration and misleading advertisements. More importantly, it also prescribes rules for goods sold through e-commerce," he said, adding that new law also allows e-filing of consumer complaint.

He added that a concept of product liability has been introduced in new law, thereby allowing aggrieved consumers to claim significant compensation from manufacturer or service-provider. Now consumers have several protected rights, including right to safety, information, choice, redressal as well as right to be heard, to be educated and a mediated settlement, he informed.

Meanwhile, according to officials, a committee has already been constituted and process is at its final stage for granting consumer court to J&K.

Pakistan students using Indian flags for safe passage in Ukraine: Kavinder

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Indian Flag came to the rescue of not only Indians stranded in Ukraine but also helped Pakistani students flee the war-torn country.

This was stated by former Deputy Chief Minister and senior BJP leader, Kavinder Gupta after interacting with a student came from Ukraine here on Friday.

"Pakistani students were using the Indian Flag in the war-torn country. The Indian Flag was of great help to them as well. We were told in Ukraine that if we carry an Indian Flag with us, we won't have any problems," a student who arrived from Ukraine briefed Kavinder Gupta about his journey from Ukraine to India amidst the war crisis.

Kavinder Gupta today spoke to more than 10 fami-



Former Dy CM, Kavinder Gupta during meeting with a student who came from Ukraine in Jammu.

lies of students stranded in Ukraine amidst the Modi Government's ongoing Ganga Operation to evacuate Indian citizens from war zones.

The former Deputy Chief Minister asserted that the Indian Flag helped the Indian as well as some Pakistani and students of other foreign countries residing in Ukraine in safely crossing the various check-

points.

He reaffirmed that the BJP government led by Narendra Modi will do everything possible to ensure safe return of citizens from war-ridden Ukraine.

The family members appreciated the efforts of Modi Govt in bringing back the Indians by providing all necessary facilities. He asked people to have faith in the Modi Government as the

PM himself is committed for safe evacuation of Indians from Ukraine.

Meanwhile, Kavinder Gupta started development work of laying water pipes at Satwari Bazaar. He asked people of the area that BJP is committed to provide basic amenities as the party is committed for the overall development of the Union Territory. Kavinder Gupta also visited Guru Nanak Mission Hospital, Guru Nanak Nagar and reviewed medical facilities being provided to the people.

Gagandeep Singh, In-charge of the Hospital and also the J&K Incharge of Khalsa Aid, briefed Kavinder about the facilities being provided to the patients. Kavinder also appreciated the work done by Khalsa Aid in the country as well as in war torn areas

in Ukraine. He said that Khalsa Aid's contribution in helping the people in war-torn Ukraine is significant and is giving inspiration to others to come forward and help the people in distress wherever there is a conflict or similar situation in the world.

The senior BJP leader said that Indian culture has this unique feature to help out the people in pain as saints and seers in the country since times immemorial had taught this virtue and guided the population to remain helpful towards the needy and destitute.

He said that Khalsa Aid has set an example for others not only in India but across the world along with a message to work for humanity without discriminating in the name of region, religion or race.

