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has taken, one of the most important decisions that Parliament has blessed us with their full support..."

The Supreme Court has also held that the abrogation of Article 370 was constitutionally correct, he added.

Goyal highlighted that the abrogation of Article 370 has led to the generation of economic activities in the Union Territory, besides a huge influx of tourists.

The Narendra Modi-led government, on August 5, 2019, abrogated Article 370, thus ending the special status given to J&K, and bifurcated it into two Union Territories -- Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh.

He also talked about the Prime Minister's recent successful visit to Kashmir.

"All of this has encouraged us to aspire for 370 seats for the BJP, as a fitting tribute to this great decision. We are not overconfident. We are not arrogant about our victory. We are coming from a position of conviction. We have the courage of conviction that we have done good for the nation," Goyal said.

The senior BJP leader, who is also the leader of Rajya Sabha, said the Modi government has brought a paradigm shift in the nation's journey of progress during his tenure in the last 10 years.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken India on the path of progress, development and inclusive growth, he added.

"This is a country which is in turbocharge mode today. And I think clearly, the 2024 elections will spring a surprise to the world even beyond what we are currently hearing and seeing as different estimates," Goyal said.

Asked whether the NDA includes BJD, the BJP leader said that it would be clear in a couple of days which all parties are part of the NDA.

"NDA is an inclusive alliance of well-meaning good parties, and all good parties are invited to be a part of this journey to make India a superpower," Goyal said.

The Election Commission is expected to announce the poll schedule soon and the elections are likely to be held in April-May.

The BJP won 303 seats in the 2019 polls but currently, it has 290 members in Lok Sabha for various reasons, including some MPs recently resigning after winning assembly polls.

The ruling BJP has named 34 Union ministers in the first list of 195 candidates.

Three anti-personnel...

found from the bushes on the banks of a stream in Chowkian village in the Darhal area and was subsequently removed by the bomb disposal squad, they said.

Preliminary investigation suggests the grenades and the live bullets were lying in the stream for a long time, they said.

In another incident, police seized a Pakistani flag with balloons near the International border on the outskirts of Jammu on Saturday morning, officials said.

The flag was found by a villager in his field at the Kool Kalan village in the Arnia sector in Jammu, officials said. It is suspected that the flag tied to balloons flew in from across the border; they said.

DGP for stringent...

multiplying skills, it should be remembered that the ultimate goal is to serve the people better as 'we are from the people and we are duty bound to protect them from crimes and criminals'.

During his visit to the Centre, besides presiding over an interaction with trainees, the DGP inspected the firing range, and other training facilities at the centre also witnessed an impressive anti-terror operation demonstration by the trainees.

The DGP praised them for their sincerity, dedication and hard work, particularly during their intensive training course and added that witnessing the impressive demonstration was highly satisfying and appreciable.

He said that it is very heartening and a matter of pride that the selected trainees have gained valuable skills during the training. He added that the demonstration showcased the spirit with which trainees have got trained.

"It is highly commendable that you have got trained in multiple tasks of security and skill development in such a short period of time", he added.

He also hailed the instructors' efforts of transmitting the skills in best possible training methods to the trainees.

He said the welfare of Police Pariwar including SPOs, who are working shoulder to shoulder with regular force is the top priority of Police Headquarters, adding that as the leader of force his heart beats for the SPOs.

He said that as a welfare measure 15 percent reservation provision has been kept for the SPOs in the forth coming recruitment of constables and PHQ is planning more welfare measures in future as well.

He said the SPOs will be made aware about the provision and prepared for the tests.

The DGP later presented cash rewards to four trainees for performing exceptionally well in training.

Earlier, the Principal CTC, Lathpora, Tanveer Jeelani, in his welcome address, gave a detailed resume of the training activities conducted during this specialized training course.

DIG, South Kashmir Altaf Ahmad Khan, Commandant IR 23rd Bn Bakar Hussain Samoon, AIG (Training/Comm.) PHQ, Manoj Kumar Pandith SSP Avantipora Aijaz Ahmad Zargar, and other gazetted officers of training centre were present on the occasion.

CS gears-up...



Chief Secretary, Aial Dullloo chairing a meeting with civil and police administration on Saturday.

He further informed that as per the guidelines of the ECI each polling stations should have assured minimum facilities. He revealed that each polling station should have facilities like toilets, ramps, power, drinking water and furniture.

It was also disclosed that necessary measures ought to be taken for inclusion of voter education in the regular curriculum in the colleges and universities. The meeting also discussed the connectivity issues in polling stations, approach roads to them in addition to the transport and other amenities to be made available for transportation of electoral machinery and staff during the election days here in the UT.

1.43 lakh cases...

also under the guidance of Justice Sindhu Sharma, Chairperson, High Court Legal Services Committee.

Chief Justice inaugurated the National Lok Adalat at District Court Complex Srinagar in august presence of Justice Javed Iqbal Wani, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh (Administrative Judge, District Ganderbal) and M. K. Sharma, Principal Secretary to the Chief Justice. The Pr. District & Sessions Judge, Srinagar Jasad Ahmed alongwith other Judicial Officers, Deputy Commissioner as well as SSP Srinagar received the dignitaries and a Ceremonial Guard of honour was accorded to the Chief Guest. During the Lok Adalat, Chief Justice inspected different benches and interacted with the Presiding officers, members of the benches, Advocates and litigants.A couple of matrimonial cases were settled on the spot with the intervention and advice of the Chief Justice.

In the afternoon, the Chief Justice alongwith Justice Javed Iqbal Wani, also visited District Court Complex Ganderbal to have first-hand information regarding the progress of Lok Adalat. During inspection of the Lok Adalat, the Chief Justice found that there were a couple of cases which could be settled amicably by the party who were adamant on their respective pleas.

The Chief Justice intervened and had ice breaking interactive session with the parties due to which the said cases were amicably settled on the spot. While interacting with the Judicial officers, Lawyers and Litigants the Chief Justice highlighted the benefits of settlement of disputes through ADR Mechanisms. Speaking on the occasion, Justice Javed Iqbal Wani emphasized that matrimonial disputes among the parties have taken a shape of monster in the society and the parties should take maximum benefit of lokAdalats in resolving these disputes which is not only cost effective and affordable but also ensures quick and amicable settlement of disputes besides saving a family from disintegration.

Likewise, Justice Tashi Rabstan, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh inaugurated National Lok Adalat at District Court Complex Reasi in presence of Justice Mohd. Akram Chowdhary, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh (Administrative Judge, District Reasi) and Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority.

Pr. District & Sessions Judge, Reasi, Sonia Gupta along with Deputy Commissioner and other Judicial Officers received the Chief Guest. A ceremonial guard of honor was accorded to the Chief Guest. With the intervention of Justice Tashi and Justice Mohd. Akram Chowdhary, two matrimonial cases and one MACT case were settled on-spot. In his address, Justice Tashi appreciated the role of Judicial Officers, Advocates, Insurance Companies, Bank Authorities, Civil and Police Administration in participating in the Lok Adalat. He said that all the stakeholders are obliged under law to work in coordination in organizing LokAdalats to achieve the object of Legal Services Authorities Act in providing relief to the Legal Aid Seeker. Justice Mohd. Akram Chowdhary while speaking on the occasion stated that the holding LokAdalats does not mean that the Judiciary shirks from deciding cases but it shows that the courts want the parties to settle their disputes amicably as it places both the contesting sides in a win-win situation.

This ensures peace in the society and saves relationship between the parties. On this occasion, Justice Tashi also inaugurated a recently revamped Legal Aid Care & Support Centre at Pouni,Reasi.

As per the information received from different Legal Services Institutions of various districts of UT of J&K, out of total1,52,551 cases taken up by 110 Benches in the day long National Lok Adalat at various courts across the UT of J&K, 1,43,406cases were disposed of as settled and an amount of Rs. 51,62,62,618/- was awarded as compensation/settlement amount in Motor Accident Claims, civil, criminal, labour disputes, Electricity and Water Bills cases, Land Acquisition, Family matters, cheque dishonor and Bank Recovery cases.

Talking to media persons at Reasi, the Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority appreciated the efforts of all the Judicial Officers, Secretaries DLSA's, Advocates, staff of the district and tehsil courts as well as Legal Services Institutions as also litigants for their whole hearted participation in the National Lok Adalat. He also highlighted the role of Para Legal Volunteers and the media, both print and electronic, in creating and spreading awareness amongst the masses regarding the initiatives of Legal Services Authority and about welfare schemes launched by the Govt. and Legal Services Authority.

He further informed that the 2nd National Lok Adalat is scheduled to be held on Saturday, May11, 2024.

Election Commissioner Arun...

in February and Goel's resignation, the three-member EC has now only one member: CEC Rajiv Kumar.

According to the new law on appointment of CEC and ECs, a search committee headed by the law minister and comprising two union secretaries will shortlist five names.

Then a selection committee -- headed by the prime minister and comprising a Union Cabinet Minister to be nominated by the PM and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha or the leader of the single-largest opposition party in the House picks one name.

The CEC or EC then gets appointed by the President.

Ashok Lavasa had resigned as Election Commissioner in August 2020. He had given dissent notes on various model code violations decisions taken by the EC in the last Lok Sabha polls.

Originally, the commission had only a CEC. It currently consists of the CEC and two election commissioners.

Two additional commissioners were first appointed on October 16, 1989, but they had a very short tenure till January 1, 1990. Later, on October 1, 1993, two additional election commissioners were appointed.

The concept of a multi-member EC has been in operation since then, with decision made by a majority vote.

Assembly election in...

state. This is routine," he said. The former Union minister said Jammu and Kashmir's statehood would be restored.

He took a dig at National Conference (NC) leader Omar Abdullah over the latter's remarks on Azad targeting his father, NC president Farooq Abdullah.

Azad said those who go on vacations for months together should not question him. "I am in my senses 24 hours a day. Only those people do not remain in their senses who have time to take holidays. I do not go on vacations. I do not have time to take a holiday. For the first time in 18 months, I went to Gulmarg for half a day because a meeting was cancelled. Those leaders, who are on vacation for months together, what can they say?" he asked.

Asked about the split in the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), the former Congress leader said it was the concern of the constituent parties and "I have nothing to say about that".

To a question on whether the split in the PAGD would benefit political parties like the BJP, Azad said people are clever and they understand which party or candidate to vote for.

"So it remains to be seen who will benefit or not benefit from it," he added.

Asked whether he would contest the Lok Sabha polls, likely to be held in April-May, from the Anantnag-Rajouri seat, Azad said he has not decided yet.

Earlier, addressing a public gathering in Chera Pora Shangus, Anantnag, Azad emphasized the urgent need for the establishment of thermal power projects to address the region's energy needs effectively.

He also highlighted the critical role of well-maintained roads in facilitating connectivity and fostering socio-economic progress.

In addition to infrastructure concerns, Azad appealed for a reduction in electricity tariffs, advocating for measures to alleviate the financial burden on the local populace.

He stressed the significance of affordable electricity in ensuring the well-being and prosperity of the community.

He reiterated DPAP's unwavering commitment to championing the interests of the people and pledged to continue advocating for initiatives that prioritize the welfare and progress of Anantnag and its inhabitants.

Azad reminisced about his pivotal role against revocation of Article 370 in Parliament and securing assurances on the restoration of statehood for Jammu and Kashmir.

He recalled how he stood as a lone voice in the Parliament, championing the cause of the region while others remained silent.

He emphasized that it was through his relentless efforts and steadfast determination that the government was compelled to provide assurances regarding the reinstatement of statehood for J&K.

He underscored the importance of robust infrastructure in bolstering education and healthcare services across the region.

He denounced divisive slogans of "self-rule" and "autonomy" propagated by other parties, and expressed concern over the misleading nature of slogans that often served to sow discord and division among communities.

He underscored his unwavering stance against such divisive rhetoric, emphasizing the importance of unity and solidarity in fostering progress and development.

Among others present on the occasion included Ch Haroon Khatana Gen Secretary, Zonal President Gulzar Wani, Salman Nizami Chief Spokesperson, Mir Altaf Provincial Gen Secretary, Sujada Bashir Spokesperson, Zameer Ahmed Distt President, Ab Rashid Working Distt President and others.

3 held with...

said. The officer said a case under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act was registered and an investigation is going on to unearth the backward and forward linkage of the arrested accused.

She said police are working on a multi-pronged strategy to deal with the problem of drug abuse in the district.

Modi holds roadshow...

showered flowers on the prime minister during the roadshow amid playing of drums, he said.

Modi is also scheduled to visit Atulanand School located in Gilat Bazaar and Kabir Chaura, among other places on the route of the roadshow, Patel said.

Patel said the prime minister will make a night halt at the BLW Guest House here. On the second day of his visit on Sunday, he will leave for Azamgarh from Bareka helipad at around 10 am.

Mutual fraternity necessary...

of the district courts and to transform their buildings to suit the modern era," he added.

Highlighting the technological advancements over the years, the CJI said the potential of technology is also being used to spread legal awareness and legal services.

"The Supreme Court of the country has worked to enhance its capacity through technology," he added.

The CJI said that hearing through video conference was started a few years ago

and many lawyers attend the hearing and argue through video conference.

He said the judgements are being translated through technology and it is his endeavour to make judgements available in more regional languages.

Union Minister of State for Law Arjun Ram Meghwal also addressed the programme.

J&K Bank organises...

centres to make more people avail the real benefits of this initiative.

"The two-day mela has been conducted on weekends to ensure participation of more and more people. I urge the people to visit the venue and get a first hand experience of J&K Bank's innovative and public friendly housing loan and other schemes," she said.

Pertinently, hundreds of people from Jammu and Srinagar districts along with those from adjoining areas visited the loan-mela venues throughout the day.

IAF airlifts over...

With this, a total of 1,251 persons were airlifted between Janmmu and Kashmir, and Ladakh this week.

Earlier on Monday, 331 passengers were airlifted in separate sorties of AN-32, also known as Kargil courier, by the IAF between Jammu and Kashmir to Kargil.

The Kargil courier was launched by the IAF on January 22 following closure of 434-km Srinagar-Leh national highway owing to heavy snowfall.

The Kargil courier service operates three days a week between Jammu and Srinagar, and twice a week between Srinagar and Kargil to facilitate the stranded passengers.

The passengers have expressed their gratitude to all authorities, particularly the IAF, for facilitating their movement.

Centre inks MoU...

toward improving support systems for 'Divyangjan' with speech and hearing impairments.

One of the primary objectives of this collaboration is the establishment of a centrally-maintained, user-friendly short-code helpline. This initiative addresses the challenge of various departmental organisations operating disparate helplines, causing confusion and inefficiency in accessing services, the statement said.

Department of People with Disabilities Secretary Rajesh Aggarwal said the collaboration underscores its commitment to fostering inclusivity and accessibility for all individuals, including those with speech and hearing disabilities.

"By leveraging technology and strategic partnerships, we aim to create a more inclusive society where every person has equal access to essential services and support," he said.

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities has also inked an MoU with the Electronics Sector Skills Council of India.

The MoU, spearheaded by Aggarwal, was formalised to equip people with disabilities with the necessary skills for various job roles within the electronics sector.

Judicial Academy organises 2 day training on ‘New Criminal Laws’



Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Judge, HC of J&K and Ladakh speaking at a training programme.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Under the stewardship of Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, N. Kotiswar Singh, the J&K Judicial Academy organized a two day training programme on "New Criminal Laws" at J&K Judicial Academy, Janipur, Jammu for Judicial Officers, Prosecution Officers, Police Officers and Officers from Forensic Science Laboratories of Jammu Province including Research Assistants of High Court of J&K and Ladakh at Jammu Wing.

The training programme was inaugurated by Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Judge, High Court of J&K and Ladakh in presence of Sakal Bhushan, an eminent lawyer from Jammu now practising in Supreme Court of India who was also the resource person in the training programme.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, in his inaugural address, pointed out that earlier Indian Penal Code, as the name itself suggested, was introduced with a view to penalize the Indians. He also gave an overview of the three new laws; Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS), Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 (BSA) and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023(BNSS) and highlighted that these new laws are in tune with the spirit of the Constitution and have been introduced in keeping with the aspirations of 'we the people'.

Elaborating further Justice Kumar said that British-era is punishing and enforcing allegiance to foreign rule whereas, the soul of new laws is Indian and for the first time our criminal justice system will be governed by the laws of India, made by the Indians and for the India. He highlighted that these new laws are not just to punish but to impart justice with equal consideration to the rehabilitation of the victim and provide justice to one and all particularly the marginalized.

Justice Kumar added that the new way of inflicting punishments like community service reflects changing sentiments of public. It's not just about punishing people but also about making them do something constructive for the community. He emphasised that idea was to make them learn from their mistakes and contribute positively to the society. He described the BNSS to be aimed at providing faster and more efficient justice system to address the issues of delays, huge pendency, low conviction rates, minimal use of technology in legal system and inadequate use of forensics. He further lamented that all these changes in laws would not work unless there was corresponding upgradation in the infrastructure.

Director, J&K Judicial Academy, Y.P. Bournay presented the welcome address and highlighted the core of the programme. He said that Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Act, 2023 was presented in the Lok Sabha on August 11, 2023, with the primary goal of overhauling the existing Indian Penal Code, 1860, as well as two other bills aimed at replacing the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.

He emphasised that the Act proposes significant changes, including streamlining certain IPC provisions to reduce its length. It also introduces new offenses such as hate speech and terrorism. Additionally, the Act replaces the sedition with a more stringent offence of treason (Desh Droh or Rashtarya Droh). He described that BNS, 2023, not only replaces the old Penal Code but also consolidates legal provisions making the crimes against women and children to be more stringent for better administration of justice. In short, the passing of the new laws in the words of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi 'is a watershed moment in the history of free India' and would mark the end of laws of colonial era and beginning of a new era of modernization of our legal, policing and investigative system consistent with the soul of India and also with the greater use of technology and forensic science to bring it at par with that of the most advanced countries of the world. With the coming to force of these laws, there would be uniform justice system throughout the country. He went on to add further that by pursuing these progressive legislations, we as a nation can work towards a criminal justice system that upholds the rule of law, protects human rights, and effectively serves the needs of its diverse population particularly the poor and the marginalized. We at the judicial academy are committed to the cause of justice and are doing our bit to the best of our ability.

The working sessions on the first day were chaired by Sakal Bhushan, Advocate, who gave an overview on additions, deletions, modifications and reorganization of chapters and sections under Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023(BNSS). The learned resource person discussed various newly added provisions and those amended provisions for the benefit of the participants. All the sessions remained very interactive during which the participants actively participated and shared their experiences, difficulties and also discussed various aspects of the subject topics. They also raised a number of queries which were answered satisfactorily by the resource person.