

Ritika Trehan meets Union Minister Nitin Gadkari in New Delhi

Discusses issues crucial for J&K's economic growth and connectivity

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Chief Spokesperson BJP Mahila Morcha J&K UT Ritika Trehan met with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari to discuss pressing issues in Jammu and Kashmir that fall under his ministry's purview especially infrastructure development, which is crucial for J&K's economic growth and connectivity. By engaging with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Ritika Trehan aims to ensure that J&K's concerns are addressed, and the region benefits from the Ministry's initiatives.

Ritika during the meeting highlighted J&K's rugged terrain and limited connectivity hinder its economic progress urging Gadkari's Ministry can play a vital role in improving road networks, highways, and bridges. She said J&K's roads are prone to accidents due to challenging terrain and weather conditions urging Union Minister to focus on implementing road safety measures and improving emergency response systems.

Ritika said infrastructure development projects can



Chief Spokesperson BJP Mahila Morcha J&K UT Ritika Trehan calling on Union Minister Nitin Gadkari.

generate employment opportunities for local youth, contributing to J&K's economic growth and stability. She brought to Union Minister Nitin Gadkari's attention the alarming frequency of road accidents in Jammu and Kashmir, which have resulted in the loss of precious lives demanding enhancing safety measures, such as installing crash barriers, improving road lighting, and enforcing traffic regulations. Ritika sought to ensure that the government takes concrete steps to prevent road accidents and save lives in Jammu and

Kashmir.

Ritika emphasized the need for good roads in rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir to boost the local economy. She said better roads will facilitate the transportation of goods, services and people, thereby increasing economic activity and job opportunities in rural areas. Good roads will enable easier access to essential services like healthcare, education and markets, significantly improving the quality of life for rural residents. Upgraded roads will connect rural areas to major towns and cities, making it easier for people to access

amenities, services and opportunities, added Ritika. Ritika appreciated Gadkari for playing significant role in strengthening India's road network, including the construction of flyovers and national highways across the country, including Jammu and Kashmir. Gadkari's initiatives have transformed the region's infrastructure, including upgradation and widening of this critical highway has improved connectivity between the two capital cities. Udhampur-Banihal Highway has enhanced road connectivity in the region, facilitating smoother transportation of goods and people. Srinagar-Leh Highway has improved connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh region. These projects have not only improved road connectivity but also boosted economic growth, tourism and job opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir, added Ritika.

Ritika said Nitin Gadkari's tenure as the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways from 2014 to 2025 has been marked by significant

achievements and transformative initiatives. Under his leadership, the Ministry has achieved unprecedented growth in highway construction, with an average annual construction of over 10,000 km. Bharatmala Pariyojana developed 83,677 km of highways, including economic corridors, inter-corridor routes and feeder routes.

Ritika further said that Gadkari has introduced various measures to improve road safety, such as the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, and the implementation of intelligent transportation systems.

He has encouraged the adoption of alternative fuels, like ethanol, bio-CNG, and electric vehicles, to reduce India's dependence on fossil fuels.

Gadkari's vision, leadership, and commitment to infrastructure development have had a profound impact on India's growth story. His efforts have improved connectivity, boosted economic growth, and enhanced the quality of life for millions of Indians, added Ritika.

Modi Govt took bold, historic decisions on J&K: Balbir



BJP Spokesperson Balbir Ram Rattan chairing meeting of party workers in Jammu on Friday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The Narendra Modi-led government has taken bold and decisive steps to bring stability, progress, and inclusive development to Jammu & Kashmir. From the abrogation of Article 370 to large-scale infrastructure development, these initiatives have ushered in a new era of peace and prosperity in the region.

Balbir Ram Rattan, Spokesperson, Jammu and Kashmir BJP & former Vice Chairperson, said this while interacting with a group of retired senior officials at party headquarters.

Balbir Ram Rattan shared that on August 5, 2019, the Modi government revoked Article 370, which granted special status to Jammu & Kashmir. This historic move integrated the region fully with the rest of India, allowing national laws and schemes to be implemented without legal hurdles.

He said that in the past five years, the security situation in J&K has improved significantly. The government has strengthened counter-terrorism measures, dismantled terror networks, and ensured a drastic reduction in incidents

of violence.

The government's focus on infrastructure development has transformed J&K. Major projects include the construction of highways, rail connectivity, and the world's highest railway bridge over the Chenab river. The Srinagar-Leh tunnel, upgraded airports, and smart city initiatives have boosted connectivity and economic activity.

Balbir further said that the Narendra Modi government has also attracted substantial investment, boosting tourism, creating employment and development.

The government has taken concrete steps to empower local governance. The successful conduct of Panchayat and District Development Council (DDC) elections has given people a stronger voice in decision-making. Women, youth, and marginalized communities now have greater participation in governance.

Tourism in J&K has witnessed an unprecedented boom, with record-breaking number of visitors.

Bollywood industry is making a comeback here, enhancing the region's global appeal.

The Modi government's bold decisions have put J&K on a path of peace, prosperity, and integration. With continued development, better governance, and a focus on security, Jammu & Kashmir is emerging as a model of growth and stability in the country.

L. D. Gorkha, Hans Raj Loria, Rashpal Digna, Waryam Singh, Ved Prakash Bhagat, Ram Lal Sapolia we're among those who held interaction with Balbir.

CCI thanks CM for extension of Amnesty Scheme for domestic consumers



Arun Gupta, President CCI and other members during meeting.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Arun Gupta, President Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCI) on Friday expressed thanks to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for extension of Amnesty Scheme for Domestic Consumers of Power Development

Department which is a welcome step and will help the domestic consumers to clear their power dues.

He further said that we had time and again requested the government to announce power amnesty scheme for the commercial consumers

which is still awaiting. We request that power amnesty for commercial users should also be announced at the earliest.

Arun Gupta also said that we had a number of times discussed with the government the issue relating to expiry of lease deeds in respect of the properties of Jammu Development Authority Housing Board and state properties including the properties of the Horticulture Department but the decision in this regard is still awaited. We request the government to constitute a special committee for framing the policy to finalize the lease deed issue.

KIIT-DU, University of Tulsa, USA sign MoU to launch dual degree programme

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
BHUBANESWAR: The KIIT-DU has signed an MoU with the University of Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA on Friday to establish a dual degree program in B.Tech. The signing ceremony took place in the presence of Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder of KIIT and KISS, marking a significant step towards international collaboration in higher education.

Dr. Samanta, in his address, emphasized that this MoU opens up opportunities for KIIT students to experience education in an international context, thereby enriching their academic journey.

According to Prof. Saranjit Singh, Vice-Chancellor of KIIT, this ini-



Officials of KIIT DU and University of Tulsa USA signing MoU.

tiative introduces a unique 2+2 program where students will spend two years at KIIT and two years at the University of Tulsa. Upon completion, they will graduate with two degrees at the same level. This program is part of KIIT's broader strategy to enhance

the internationalization of its educational offerings.

In addition to the dual degree program, 40 students from various disciplines, including engineering and liberal studies, will participate in short courses at the University of Tulsa during the summer. This initiative aims to foster further collaboration in research, faculty exchanges, and sabbaticals between the two institutions.

Dr. Vivian Wang, Vice Provost for Global Engagement at the University of Tulsa, expressed enthusiasm for this collaboration, highlighting that it would strengthen ties between India and the United States. She noted that her previous visit to KIIT last year left a lasting impression regarding its commitment to providing quality education, particularly for

tribal students.

Prof. Singh added that the University of Tulsa is known for its robust support for student placements, boasting a 100 per cent placement rate, which aligns with KIIT's achievements in campus placements.

Prof. Debashis Bandyopadhyay, Vice Chancellor of KISS, concluded the event with a vote of thanks, underscoring the significance of this partnership for both institutions.

Among others, Prof. Jyana Ranjan Mohanty, Registrar, KIIT-DU and directors, deans and faculties of various schools were also present.

JKAACL showcases vibrant dances of J&K at International Himalayan Cultural Festival in Dehradun

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
DEHRADUN: The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (JKAACL), under the expert supervision of Secretary Harvinder Kaur, enthralled audiences at Lychee Bagh, Dehradun, with a mesmerizing cultural presentation at the prestigious International Himalayan Cultural Festival. Organized by Kalashray Cultural and Social National Institution, the festival celebrated the diverse artistic heritage of the Himalayan region by bringing together performers and cultural institutions from across the country. JKAACL's breathtaking performance was curated by Natya Rang, led by Mohd. Yaseen. The artistic team, spearheaded



Artists performing dance item during the cultural event.

by Sanjeev Gupta, Special Officer for Cultural Activities at JKAACL, presented a flawless and captivating showcase, leaving the audience spellbound with the rich and soulful dance traditions of Jammu and Kashmir.

A talented ensemble of

artists, including Kananpreet Kaur; Radhika Sharma, Sakshi Gupta, Palak Devi, Priya Sharma, Harsimran Kaur; Muskan Thakur; Isha Sharma, Taniya Thakur, and Divya Sharma, brought the vibrant folk traditions of Jammu and Kashmir to life. Their energetic

and graceful performances authentically portrayed the region's cultural essence, making a lasting impact on spectators. Speaking about the event, Sanjeev Gupta highlighted the importance of showcasing the cultural richness of Jammu and Kashmir on prestigious platforms. "Folk traditions are the soul of our heritage, and it is our responsibility to preserve and promote them. The International Himalayan Cultural Festival provided us with a wonderful opportunity to present the vibrant dances of Jammu and Kashmir to a larger audience. We are committed to continuing our efforts in keeping our cultural legacy alive," he said.

The International Himalayan Cultural Festival is an annual celebration that serves as a vital cultural exchange, bringing together artists, performers, and organizations from various

Himalayan states. This year's festival received an overwhelming response, with audiences enthusiastically applauding JKAACL's performances.

Recognizing the academy's efforts, Kalashray Cultural and Social National Institution commended JKAACL for its exceptional contribution to preserving and promoting Jammu and Kashmir's artistic heritage. The festival organizers lauded the academy's role in enriching the event with its unique and authentic cultural expression.

JKAACL remains steadfast in its mission to safeguard and promote Jammu and Kashmir's rich artistic legacy through performances, workshops, and cultural collaborations. By actively participating in national and international festivals, the academy continues to keep the region's traditions alive while fostering global cultural connections.

Randhawa reaffirms BJP's commitment to infrastructure development, better civic amenities



MLA Vikram Randhawa inaugurating civic works at Ward No 48.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Senior BJP leader and former MLA Vikram Randhawa on Friday reaffirmed the party's commitment to infrastructural development and better civic amenities.

He was speaking after inaugurating several upgraded lanes and drains at Ward No. 48 (Shiv Nagar) in the presence of concerned officials, including AEE Rajan Mengi, JE Khalid Hussain, and Supervisor Rashpal Sharma. The event was also attended by prominent BJP

leaders, including Mandal President Surjeet Singh, Ajay Gupta, Sajjan Gupta, Tony, Moti Lal, Mukhtiar Singh, Vipan Kumar, Rakesh Kumar, Leela Chhetri, Deepak Charak, Mayank Charak, Kartik, and others.

Randhawa said that the BJP-led government at the Centre is committed to modernizing civic infrastructure and ensuring that basic facilities reach every household. He highlighted the importance of well-maintained lanes and drainage systems in improving the

quality of life for residents.

"These upgrades were long overdue, and I am glad that the demands of the people have been addressed. The BJP remains dedicated to ensuring holistic development across all wards, and we will continue working towards the betterment of civic infrastructure," Randhawa said.

The MLA also urged residents to actively participate in maintaining cleanliness and utilizing government schemes meant for urban development. Expressing gratitude to the administration and local representatives, he assured that similar development projects would be undertaken in other areas to enhance urban infrastructure.

Residents of Ward No. 48 expressed their appreciation for the initiative, stating that improved lanes and drainage would significantly ease their daily lives.

Tributes paid to Pt. Prem Nath Dogra on death Anniversary



Parshotam Dadhichi, Chairman of Pt. Prem Nath Dogra Trust and others senior leaders of BJP paying tributes.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Sher-e-Duggar Pt. Prem Nath Dogra was fondly remembered and paid floral tributes after traditional Hawan, on his 53rd Death Anniversary at Pt. Prem Nath Dogra Bhawan, Kachi Chavni, Jammu.

Parshotam Dadhichi, Chairman of Pt. Prem Nath Dogra Trust (Regd.), Sat Sharma, President J&K BJP, Ashok Koul, General Secretary (organization), J&K BJP and others were amongst the prominent to pay their humble respects to the great son of the soil. The trustees, members of the Pandit ji's family and

prominent personalities while paying Shradhanjali recalled the resolution adopted by the trust during the last few years i.e. allocation of special budget for the development of Smailpur; the birthplace of Pt. Dogra Bhawan, Kachi Chavni, Jammu.

Prem Nath Dogra and also to establish a chair in Jammu university in the name of Pt. Prem Nath Dogra ji. Further the state administration was asked to implement its resolution which was adopted in the state assembly to rename the mini stadium, Parade as Pt. Prem Nath Dogra Stadium.

The Chairman of the trust Parshotam Dadhichi made an appeal to the people of Jammu

and Kashmir to remain vigilant and aware of the anti national forces and work for the unity and integrity of the nation, the cause for which Pt. Prem Nath Dogra dedicated whole life. Sat Sharma, while paying tributes, stated that Pandit ji's legacy was not only limited to J&K state as he guided the Jan Sangh as National President also. The movement of 1953 was started and made successful under his guidance. Ashok Koul highlighted the life and works of Pt. Prem Nath Dogra and his dedication and devotion for the cause of people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Kavinder Gupta, S.S. Nanda, Aseem Gupta, Adv. Daya Ram Sharma, Adv. Rajesh Gupta, MLAs Yudhvir Sethi, Arvind Gupta, Dalip Parihar and Sham Lal Sharma, Sanjita Dogra, Prabhat Singh, Ayodhya Gupta, Naresh Dogra, Vinay Gupta, Shakti Dutt Sharma, Purnima Sharma, Chander Mohan Sharma, Adrash Jathiar and others were also present on the occasion.

Congress to intensify statehood movement in Jammu city

Hamari Riyasat - Hamara Haq' movement in Jammu city from March 24

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: JKPC President Tariq Hameed Karra on Friday reviewed preparations for intensifying the movement for restoration of statehood in Jammu City, starting from March 24 to 29, 2025 by taking out evening March from different locations in a phased manner.

Carrying forward the JKPC campaign "Hamari Riyasat, Hamara Haq" besides AICC abhiyan - 'Jai Bapu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan' JKPC Chief said that Congress will continue its struggle for statehood, which is the demand and right of everyone in J&K but it shall also highlight the issues of common people faced by them in day today life to seek their redressal from the admin-



JKPC President Tariq Hameed Karra briefing media.

istration.

The meeting organised by DCC Jammu Urban led by Th Manmohan Singh was attended by block Presidents, ward Presidents & representatives of frontal cells besides Working Presidents Tara Chand, Raman Bhalla, Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma, Former Minister Yogesh Sawhney, Ved Mahajan, Th Hari Singh Chib, Rajnish Sharma,

Narinder Sharma, Satish Sharma, Suresh Dogra, Zahida Khan Gajan Singh, Sanjeev Panda, Rajveer Singh, Neeraj Gupta, Kapil Singh, H L Pandita, Sajad Tariq, Vijay Shastri, Jatin Raina, Sonu Dogra, Ricky Dalotra, Bhavishya sudan, Anirudh Sawhney, Amit Sayal, Divyansh Jamwal, Adv Sunny Parihar, Sohlt Sharma Divyash Jamwal, Bodh Raj Bhagat, Shashi Sayal,

Janak Mehra, Sekhar Sharma, Ram Mangotra Pardeep Bhalla, Nageshwar & others.

The meeting decided to intensify statehood movement alongwith misgovernance of the BJP led centre & LG administration during the past one decade leading to multiple hardships being faced by the common people.

The speakers highlighted the water crisis in the city and acute problems faced by the citizens. They also supported the demands of daily wagers regarding regularisation.

The issue of huge power bills and the disconnection of power connections of poor people also vehemently surfaced in the meeting. The meeting stressed for amnesty scheme as referred by Chief Minister in order to

give relief to the suffering people. The issue of ration, property tax, Gair Mumkan Khads, huge increase in different fees and arbitrary enhancement of stamp duty rates etc by the government figured for raising in the peaceful protest marches ahead. Meanwhile rich tributes were paid by JKPC President Tariq Hameed Karra to Ayub Khan, former President JKPC, on his death anniversary today.

He recalled the great services rendered by Khan throughout his long public life and in the party. He was member of constituent Assembly, Minister for several times and member Lok Sabha besides President of JKPC.

Two minutes silence was observed in the meeting in the honour of Ayub Khan.