

Homi Bhabha's pledge vindicated by PM Modi: Dr Jitendra

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: "When Homi Bhabha launched India's Nuclear programme, there was widespread scepticism about India's allegedly hidden designs, and Homi Bhabha had sought to clear the air saying that 'India's Nuclear programme was dedicated to peaceful purposes'. Today, Homi Bhabha's pledge stands vindicated by PM Narendra Modi with the launch of 'Nuclear Mission' to meet India's increasing requirements through environment friendly, clean energy.

The Union Government has announced a groundbreaking nuclear energy mission aimed at meeting India's growing energy demands while ensuring a clean and stable power source. This was stated here on Friday in the Rajya Sabha by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh who emphasised that the mission will be a



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh speaking in Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

defining moment in India's energy history, aligning with the vision of nuclear pioneer Homi Bhabha.

Dr. Jitendra highlighted that the recently announced nuclear mission aims to generate 100 gigawatts (GW) of nuclear energy by 2047, constituting 10% of India's total energy needs. To achieve this, the government has taken a bold step by opening up the nuclear sector to private players, a move

that was previously considered unthinkable.

"This is a historic decision that breaks past taboos. The nuclear program has traditionally operated behind a veil of secrecy, but under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we have now paved the way for private sector participation," Dr. Jitendra stated.

A key focus of the mission is the development of Small

Modular Reactors (SMRs), which range from 16 MW to 300 MW in capacity. These reactors are particularly suited for India's diverse energy needs, including remote areas and industrial clusters. "These small modular reactors will provide readily available, environment-friendly electricity across the country," Dr. Jitendra noted.

The Minister also outlined the significant budgetary boost for nuclear energy. "Since 2014, there has been a 170% increase in the budget for the Department of Atomic Energy. In the 2024-25 budget, Rs 20,000 crore has been allocated specifically for the indigenous development of at least five Bharat Small Modular Reactors," he said.

Dr. Jitendra stressed that India is collaborating with countries like France and the United States for nuclear technology advancements, while prioritizing indigenous research and development. He added

that the National Research Foundation, with 60-70% funding from non-government sources, will play a crucial role in accelerating nuclear research.

The Minister also highlighted India's long-term commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2070. "Nuclear energy is a cornerstone of India's transition to clean energy. This mission will not only help us meet our climate commitments but also establish India as a global leader in advanced nuclear technology," he asserted.

The government's ambitious nuclear expansion plan also includes the development of India's thorium reserves, which account for 21% of the world's total.

Dr. Jitendra pointed out that projects such as the Bhavini reactor and the Kudankulam nuclear plant, which had faced delays before 2014, have gained momentum under the current administration.



EPFO Jammu conducts 'Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0' awareness program in DC Office



PF Commissioner Jammu, Ajit Kumar Mishra and others during the programme.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO), Jammu, in collaboration with the District Administration Jammu, on Thursday conducted 'Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0', an awareness and outreach program at the Conference Hall, DC Office Jammu.

The program, presided over by PF Commissioner Jammu, Ajit Kumar Mishra, along with District Nodal Officer, Sunil Sharma, SSA aimed to educate employers, employees, and other stakeholders about various EPFO schemes and grievance redressal mechanisms.

District Magistrate Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, extended full support to the initiative. During the session, participants were sensitized about grievance filing through EPFGMS, CPGRAMS, and other digital portals, along with fraud prevention measures and employees' rights.

Detailed discussions covered Provident Fund (PF), Pension, and Insurance schemes, ensuring that all eligible employees receive

social security benefits from their first day of employment.

The programme focused on reaching out to the stakeholders and creating awareness about schemes of EPFO viz. important initiatives of EPFO such as PF, Pension, and Insurance, addressing queries and grievances of stakeholders, taking feedback and suggestions from stakeholders. Especially focused on the ECR submission by employer also informed the employer about the rejection of the claims.

Reviewing the EPF compliance status of various construction companies, firms, contractors, and subcontractors, the P.F. Commissioner directed all private schools and firms to ensure 100% enrollment of their employees and the timely deposit of EPF contributions to provide them with social security under insurance and pension benefit schemes. Companies were also advised to obtain EPF codes from Jammu to facilitate local staff.

Key district officers, including the ALCs,

Officers of PWD(R&B), Assistant Directors (PCS &CA, Jammu), Municipal Councils and Committees, and Directors/Principals of various Schools, were instructed to ensure the registration of employees working under different firms, agencies, and contractors operating under their jurisdiction.

A special focus was laid on sensitizing participants about the schemes covered under the EPF and MP Act. Hands-on training was provided on UAN activation, Aadhaar and bank seeding, e-nomination, online claim filing, and employer compliance requirements. Additionally, queries from employees, employers, and company representatives were addressed by the PF Commissioner and District Nodal Officers.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from various sectors, reinforcing awareness and implementation of EPFO schemes in Jammu.

PF Commissioner Jammu, Ajit Kumar Mishra expressed its gratitude to District Magistrate Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vishay, DIC Ankush Sharma, Functional Manager, for their outstanding coordination, assurance to increase the coverage and support for assuring the implementation of EPF and MP Act in all concerned establishments of District Jammu. Their collaborative efforts ensured a smooth and successful rollout of the initiative.

Dr Andrabi inaugurates new Mamber at historic Eidgah in Srinagar Development of Eidgah & restoration of its glory is our dream project: Dr Darakhshan



Chairperson Waqf Board, Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi after inaugurating new Mamber at historic Eidgah in Srinagar.

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRRINAGAR: Chairperson of Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board, Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi on Thursday inaugurated the Newly constructed Mamber at the historic Eidgah in Srinagar. A brief but grand event was organised by the Board for this significant inauguration. This construction was started by the Board a few months ago and Waqf Chairperson expressed her pleasure on the completion of the project.

"Development of Eidgah & restoration of its glory is our dream project and the construction of Mamber is the significant part of it", said Dr Andrabi. She said that we have to develop this place as per the needs of the times.

"Despite the opposition from many vested interests, we continued with our mission of making J&K Waqf Board the most ideal Board in whole of the country. Streamlining of the

management system ensured transparency and accountability which resulted in the work output which is quite evident at all shrines and Waqf managed assets throughout J&K", said Darakhshan.

Waqf Chairperson was accompanied by the members of Waqf Board Syed Mohammed Hussain and Dr Ghulam Nabi Haleem, Imam of Jamia Masjid Srinagar Mufti Ghulam Rasool, Imam of Hazratbal shrine Maulana Riyazul Haq, Waqf Board Executive Magistrate Ishtiaq Mohiuddin, Executive Engineer Qazi Mushtaq Ahmad and others.

BJP District President Srinagar Advocate Sheikh Salman was also present among many prominent citizens of Srinagar. Speaking to media, Dr Andrabi said that the Board has plans to continue the infrastructural development at all important places throughout J&K.

J&K Govt takes proactive steps to mitigate Glacial Lake Outburst Floods in UT

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Government of Jammu and Kashmir is taking proactive steps to mitigate the risks associated with Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) in the Union Territory.

The initiative involved a phased approach, including data collection, identification of high-risk glacial lakes and development of early warning systems. The region's unique geography, with its high-altitude glaciers and lakes, makes it particularly vulnerable to GLOFs. Rising global temperatures are accelerating glacier melting, leading to formation of numerous glacial lakes that are at risk of sudden breach, releasing millions of cubic meters of water and debris.

To address this threat, the J&K government has adopted a comprehensive, holistic and proactive approach, initiating numerous technologically advanced measures on this account. These included Expeditions and Data Collection; gathering detailed data through bathymetric surveys, water sampling and meteorological data collection to understand the dynamics and characteristics of glacial lakes.

Risk Assessment and Categorization; identifying high-risk glacial lakes based on

17 critical parameters including size, location and potential mass movement zones.

Early Warning Systems; establishing a fully functional Glacial Lake Outburst Flood Early Warning System (EWS) to enhance preparedness and response to potential GLOF events besides Mitigation Measures; developing and implementing specific mitigation measures, including lake-lowering techniques and site-specific mitigation measures.

The Focused Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) Monitoring Committee (FGMC) has been constituted to oversee implementation of the mitigation strategy. The committee has identified 14 high-risk glacial lakes, 3 moderate-risk lakes and 7 low-risk lakes. Expeditions have been conducted to high risk lakes, including Sheeshnag and Sonasar to enhance understanding and preparedness.

The government plans to continue its efforts to expand the mitigation program, improve predictive abilities for heavy rainfall events and sensitize the stakeholders, including NDR, SDRF and ITBP to be prepared for any emergent situation. Likewise, awareness generation has been specially focused upon and Aapda Mitras are being sensitized and activated to remain vigilant in

local areas.

Building on the momentum of its initiatives, the government of Jammu and Kashmir has undertaken a series of specialized expeditions to study critical glacial lakes in the region.

Led by Dr. Sunil Dhar from the Department of Environmental Sciences, Central University of Jammu, these expeditions have focused on three high-risk lakes in the Kishtwar district: Mundiksar Lake, Hangu Lake and an unnamed lake. The expeditions have provided invaluable data on lake conditions, environmental factors, and potential GLOF risks. This information will be crucial in developing risk mitigation strategies and enhancing early warning systems. A subsequent expedition to Gangabal Lake, a high-altitude glacial lake in the north-western Himalayas, assessed the lake's physical and geological characteristics, including local geomorphology, natural dam stability, and glacier conditions. Although classified as high-risk due to its location and feeding glacier dynamics, the field survey found Gangabal Lake to be currently stable. The lake's consolidated dam material, lack of piping activity and steady water discharge contribute to this stability.

Pasmanda Muslim Mahaz better express that 'Pasmanda' means Socially discriminated & not 'left behind'

Other Religion Priests' must accept that Socially Discriminated Castes existed in 'Them' too Government of India (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1936 had used term SC instead of Depressed Classes Politicians first like British divided Hindu in Castes & now are dividing Indians in name of Religion Let all Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist & Jain compete with each other as a unit

DAYA SAGAR

Ranganath Mishra Commission report (2007) too acknowledges that the criteria adopted for purposes of specifying the Scheduled Castes in C.O. 19 -The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 was based on the obnoxious practice of untouchability.

Earlier also in 1930s times justifying the identification/ classification like depressed classes in India it was in a way professed that the test applied was the social, educational and economic backwardness arising out of the historical custom of untouchability that 'prevailed only' in the Hindu society. Social and Political leaders of Hindu did accept the allegations/ blot of untouchability. Whereas the Social and Political leadership (particularly) of Muslims & Christians did not accept professing that there was no any caste/ sect/ occupation based social discrimination within their religious communities. They claimed that they held a fully supported society.

It was assessed that the socially discriminated castes/groups were suffering / had suffered of the worst social and educational backwardness resulting in marked and continued economic & administrative backwardness too. So in the Indian Constitution / and while drafting The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 such "socially & educationally" discriminated castes/only' from amongst Hindu were included.

The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 nearly adopted in full the

list drawn in 1936 for Schedule Caste from amongst the Hindu only. No doubt since the Sikh also accepted that caste system / social discrimination still exists in them even after conversions and hence in The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 Sikh was included in (: " no person who professes a religion different' from Hinduism shall be deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste: Provided that every member of the Ramdasi, Kabirpanthi, Mazhabi or Sikligar caste resident in Punjab or the Patiala and East Punjab States Union shall, in relation to that State, be deemed to be a member of the Scheduled Castes whether he professes the Hindu or the Sikh religion."); and later Buddhist also pleaded that caste system still exists in them their castes too were included in SC caste in 1990 (The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Orders (Amendment) A??, 1990 No. 15 OF 1990 where in Section -2 it was said "In paragraph 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1990 for the words "or the Sikh", the words, "the Sikh or the Buddhist" shall be substituted".

Unfortunately other religious leaders from Christians , Muslims did not accept the reality of caste discriminations but have been demanding religion based reservations which is totally out of constitutional spirits since keeping reservation with in reservation for a religious community/minority separately and then listing the castes of that religion as claimants for that part is surely wrong. Had 'they' in 1950 accepted such

discriminations like untouchability which was said to be prevailing in Hindu society and was constitutionally defined as social and educational backwardness also prevailed amongst them, I am sure the scope of schedule castes list would have been expanded long back (as has been the case for Sikh in 1950 itself & Buddhist in 1990) and the politicians would have been checked from cultivating caste / religion based differences amongst Indians. I may be corrected in case my inferences are wrong.

So Ranganath Mishra report recommending additionally 10% quota for Muslims and 5% for other minorities too is not at all acceptable keeping in view the spirits underlying the constitution of India as drawn in 1950 and do not appear to be made in fair wisdom. There can be no separate reservations as Muslims or Christians or as Jain or as Sikh or as Buddhists since there are no reservations as HINDU. There are no separate reservations section wise in SC Hindu or Sikh or Buddhist all listed in SC compete with each other.

Have also come across a private member bill said to have been introduced in Lok Sabha as Bill No. 226 of 2022 as The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2022 By Shri Abdul Khaleque MP proposing that In the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, paragraph 3 shall be omitted. In the statement of Objects and



A Look through the Mist Part-III

Reasons it was said<" the founding fathers of our Constitution made several provisions in the Constitution which ensured rights and equality to the citizens of this diverse country. Unity in diversity is one of the brightest aspects of our country. Para 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Caste) Order, 1950 states that no person who professes a religion different from Hinduism shall be deemed to be a member of the Scheduled Caste. Thereby, the Order ceased to recognise a person as the Scheduled Caste if he or she belonged to any religious minority groups. The order was amended later to grant Scheduled Caste status to those people of Scheduled Caste origin who embraced Buddhism and Sikhism. However, Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims have been kept out of the amended order thus denying them equality and fair justice. Meanwhile, several State Governments have recommended that Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians should be brought under the preview of the amended rule and provide a level playing ground to all. Further amendment of the original Order is necessary to establish an equilibrium amongst the religious minority communities and provide justice. Non-inclusion of Scheduled Caste Muslim and Christians is religious discrimination which is against the spirit of our Constitution">. But ofcourse the bill

was not taken further.

There for let all community / religious leadership, particularly other than Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist be clear and true to the cause of their innocent community members and pledge to be free from any of their self political ambitions well acknowledge the realities that the need for reservations/ special props for SC that were enshrined in Constitution of India was felt more for the reasons of alleged curse of caste based untouchability prevailing in Hindu society which was named in COI as social & educational backwardness which also existed.. So, if at all there are caste based socially discriminated people amongst the Muslims and Christians to they should ask for including such castes from them also in SC instead of raising demands for religion based reservations which would be supported by all. Even now , these castes could also be included in Schedule of Socially & Educationally discriminated 'castes'(SC).So had it been so in that case reservation for SC can be kept more than 12.5 % in 1950 itself , say15% (say 17% now) and the politicians thereafter would have been checked from exploiting the Hindu & Muslim in the name of religion. If it happens so , would also check the politicians from pushing the HINDU , Muslim, Christian , Parsi, Sikh of India into more and more conflicts every next day.

No doubt some politicians/ community leaders may be less interested for

such like one time remedial correction/ actions since the controversies may be more suiting their political game plans. Let allMuslim , Christian , Hindu , Sikh, Buddh and Jain Schedule Castes compete with each other as a unit.

The Muslims, Christian, Parsi , Sikh are now being also exploited by some in the name of minorities after the Hindu having been exploited in the name of Castes. I hope I shall not be misunderstood by my fellow countrymen. We must, atleast now after 77 years of Indian Independence, check our own 'people' from dividing us further in the name of RELIGION for their political gains. Pasmanda Muslim Mahaz leadership should also very plainly express that to them Pasmanda not means'left behind' but socially discriminated on caste basis and make public that they do not want reservation as a religious group but want on the basis of prevailing social discrimination over centuries from within the community so they as socially and educationally being backward worth inclusion in SC like those from Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist.

The debate on religion based reservations for minorities (/Muslims / Christians/ Jains / Parsi) need be ended. Rather it has to be foreedly ended by masses . But it cannot be done so unless pressure is mounted on the politicians to stop playing unfair divisive cards pitching an Indian against Indian simply for fleeing the vote.

(The writer is Sr. Journalist and Social Activist)