

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Govt to promote...

and Baramulla and with the expressway allowing travellers to bypass Jammu City, tourism in Jammu may be affected. However, developing tourism destinations alone is not enough. Sites like Jammu's heritage landmarks, the upcoming Jammu Lake, and the Jammu Zoo are significant attractions, but they need better branding and visibility," he said.

"We must give these destinations a distinct identity and promote them effectively. It is true that there has not been adequate publicity so far, but we are committed to addressing this," he asserted.

Earlier, in response to a starred question of the Legislator, the Chief Minister highlighted the ongoing efforts of the Tourism Department in developing infrastructure to attract more tourists to Jammu City.

"Several projects have been implemented under the State Capex Budget and Swadesh Darshan Scheme," he informed the House.

Among the notable projects undertaken, the government has focused on enhancing major tourist attractions.

A musical water fountain with a sound and light show has been installed at Bagh-e-Bahu to enrich visitor experiences.

Additionally, tourist facilities have been developed at Bhagwati Nagar and Sidhra Golf Course to accommodate and attract more travelers.

Further, an amusement park has been constructed near the Sidhra Golf Course in Jammu to provide more recreational options. To improve connectivity, the much-anticipated ropeway project from Mohmaya to Bagh-e-Bahu has been implemented, offering tourists a scenic and efficient travel option.

The Jammu Smart City Limited (JSCL) is also spearheading multiple initiatives to modernize Jammu's infrastructure and enhance its appeal as a tourist destination.

As part of its heritage conservation and beautification efforts, JSCL has undertaken the restoration and beautification of iconic landmarks such as Bahu Fort, Mubarak Mandi, Raghunath Bazaar, and various temples and ghats under the Smart City initiative.

To improve urban mobility and accessibility, major road upgrades are underway, along with the development of pedestrian-friendly pathways. In a bid to promote sustainable transportation, the city has introduced electric buses under the eBus project, making public transport more eco-friendly.

A key initiative under JSCL is the redevelopment of the Tawi Riverfront, transforming it into a vibrant recreational hub with promenades, cycling tracks, and leisure spaces for residents and tourists alike.

Furthermore, heritage sites such as Bahu Fort, the Army Headquarters at Mubarak Mandi, Maha Maya Temple, and Tawi bridges have been enhanced with façade lighting, adding to their visual appeal.

To make historical and cultural experiences more engaging, the government has also introduced digital and immersive light and sound shows at Bahu Fort heritage sites.

The Chief Minister emphasized that JSCL's vision aligns with making Jammu a modern, tourist-friendly, and sustainable city while preserving its rich cultural and historical essence.

4.40 Cr tourists...

sector employs a significant workforce in Jammu and Kashmir, no formal survey has been conducted to ascertain the exact number.

The chief minister also told the House that 59 assets of the Tourism Department have been outsourced in the past two years.

India reach ICC...

pace with the asking rate.

Kohli's struggle point in an ODI innings is his inability to force the pace against spinners, but here the champion batter negated leg-spinner Adam Zampa, who had his number on a few occasions in the past, quite effectively.

The 36-year-old used the pull and drives, two of his most productive shots, to optimum effect. He placed him in the wide area between sweeper cover and mid-wicket for easy, risk-free runs.

He lost the company of both Iyer, who played some delectable shots, and Axar Patel (27) in rather quick succession but Kohli went past his 50 in 53 balls.

Glenn Maxwell dropped him on 51 off left-arm spinner Cooper Connolly, a perceptible early signal of an inevitable Kohli hundred.

But it did not arrive as an ugly hit off Zampa ended in the hands of Ben Dwarshuis near long-on when India were 40 runs away from victory.

KL Rahul (42 not out) and Hardik Pandya (28) played some smart and aggressive cricket as India cantered home without much ado.

However, the Indian bowlers too deserve some credit as they kept the Aussies batting on a tight leash despite well-paced fifties from Smith and Carey.

Australian skipper Smith (73, 96b, 4x4, 1x6) won a good toss, but the batters could not exploit fine batting conditions, throwing their wickets away through silly shots.

Throughout his stay, Smith was the pillar of Australian innings, and was involved in three 50 stands -- 52 with Travis Head for the second wicket, 56 for the third wicket with Marnus Labuschagne and 54 for the fifth wicket with Carey (61, 57b, 8x4, 1x6).

Australia would have been in a much better position had two of those alliances bloomed into something more substantial.

Few batters have a higher fortune quotient than Head and his cameo of 39 had several slices of fortune -- a dropped catch by Mohammed Shami (3/48) off his own bowling in the first legal delivery of the match, a near run-out, and a couple of inside edges that missed the stumps by a whisker.

But Chakravarthy mitigated Hea's threat when the left-hander skied him to a running-in Gill in the deep.

Labuschagne played back and across to a straighter one from the impressive Ravindra Jadeja (2/40) to get trapped in front.

However, Smith chugged along nicely with excellent control and his thumping straight six off Jadeja was a work of art in timing and power.

However, a rather mindless charge at a full toss from Shami ended his stint, as the ball crashed onto the stumps.

Glenn Maxwell came in a perfect situation for him at 198 for five with 13 overs to spare, but an inexplicable back-foot punch off Axar curtailed his stay prematurely.

Carey carried on with determination at one end, and was engaged in a useful 34-run alliance with Dwarshuis for the seventh wicket to see them past the 250-run mark.

But the target was way too feeble to give any real test to this Indian batting unit.

G.H Sheikh...

with all the Chief Education Officers of all districts and sought their cooperation and collaborative efforts in ensuring smooth and transparent conduct of examinations. He also visited various sections of the Divisional Office, Jammu including the evaluation halls.

Interacting with the staff and examiners, the Secretary said that as assessment of students' performance forms a critical step in their academic career so utmost care and caution is required while evaluating their answer sheets.

32,474 posts vacant...

said JKPSA collected over Rs 8.44 crore and JKSSB over Rs 5.72 crore as application fees from the candidates since October 16, last year.

"Presently, no such proposal (to make job application forms free for aspirants) is under consideration," Abdullah said.

Discussion on 'Motion...

holistic roadmap for the development of Jammu and Kashmir. He called for development of healthcare facilities as well as educational infrastructure in his constituency. He enjoined upon all legislators to work collectively for the restoration of the Statehood.

Farooq Ahmad Shah in his address said "We have to maintain the dignity of the house and work for the welfare of people". He also called for framing of a policy to further promote sustainable Tourism in Gulmarg, Industrial growth as well as creating employment avenues for the youth.

Dr. Rameshwar Singh also spoke during the motion of thanks tabled by the Speaker. He said that the Government should frame a policy for the regularization of NRHM employees. He also called for creating job opportunities for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir, besides timely action on illegal mining activities.

Modi to participate...

translate the transformative Budget announcements into effective outcomes, the statement said.

With a focus on empowering citizens, strengthening the economy, and fostering innovation, the deliberations will aim at paving the way for sustainable and inclusive growth; leadership in technology and other sectors; and a skilled, healthy workforce working towards realising the goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047, it added.

J&K halts decline...

saffron-growing area has remained stable at 3,715 hectares-3,665 hectares in Kashmir division and 50 hectares in Kishtwar-with new areas identified for expansion," Dar said.

The National Saffron Mission has successfully revived saffron cultivation in Jammu and Kashmir, significantly increasing productivity and prices for farmers, he said in reply to a question from National Conference member Justice Hasnain Masoodi during Question Hour in the House.

However, key challenges such as irrigation infrastructure and land encroachments persist, the agriculture minister said.

The government launched the mission in 2010-11 under a flagship scheme devised by SKUAST-K, with a financial outlay of Rs 400.11 crore, he said.

"Of this, Rs 315.99 crore was contributed by the Government of India and Rs 84.12 crore by farmers. So far, Rs 269.91 crore has been released, with Rs 259.67 crore spent," he added.

The minister highlighted that the implementation of modern techniques has led to a rise in saffron productivity from 2.50 kilogram per hectare in 2009-10 to a peak of 4.42 kilogram per hectare in 2023.

"The establishment of the Indian Institute of Kashmir Saffron and Technology Centre (IIK-STC) and the introduction of scientific post-harvest methods have significantly benefited farmers," he said.

Dar said that the price of saffron increased from Rs 80,000 per kg to Rs 2,20,000 per kg in 2021-22, while saffron stigma recovery improved from 22 grams per kilo to 28 grams per kilo, enhancing overall yield.

On the export and revenue trends, he said saffron production has increased 14.87 metric tonnes in 2022 to 14.94 tonnes in 2023 with the value of production hovering up to Rs 291.33 crore in 2023 to Rs 261.38 crore in 2022.

Various members of the parties raised supplementary questions about the further course of action and increase in the area of saffron cultivation.

BJP's Sunil Sharma alleged discrepancies in the answer and called for the Minister to rectify it. Some members alleged a probe into spending on the mission program.

Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather intervened, pointing towards the members' concerns.

Minister further said in the reply to supplementary questions, "The quality of saffron colour has also improved from 8 per cent (traditional drying) to 16 per cent (scientific drying) due to advanced processing at IIKSTC".

To eliminate middlemen and ensure fair pricing, the government introduced an e-auction system.

"This has enabled transparent transactions, ensuring fair farm-gate prices for saffron growers across India," Dar added.

Despite these successes, the minister acknowledged significant gaps in irrigation infrastructure.

The National Mission on Saffron had planned to construct 124 community bore-wells, each serving 30 hectares, to provide sprinkler irrigation for 3,665 hectares of saffron fields.

Another challenge is the recurring operational costs of bore-wells, which farmers are reluctant to bear. "Many farmers find the maintenance expenses too high, further delaying full irrigation coverage," he added. The minister also highlighted threats to saffron cultivation from real estate developers and land grabbers.

"There have been instances of sprinkler irrigation systems and bore-wells being damaged. Complaints have been lodged with revenue officials regarding encroachments," he said.

A government committee found that 77 bore-wells remain non-functional, while only eight-four each in Srinagar and Budgam are operational.

Despite these hurdles, Dar emphasised that the National Mission on Saffron has achieved most of its objectives.

"While challenges remain, especially in irrigation, we have made significant progress. The government remains committed to addressing these gaps," he said. To ensure farmer participation in policy decisions, the government has formed committees of saffron growers, traders, and civil society members to incorporate their views. "The success of the saffron mission depends on continued farmer engagement, improved irrigation systems, and protection from land encroachments," Dar said.

Mapping, demarcation of...

protection and preservation of wetlands.

In response to another question about the details of the environmental impact assessment report of a proposed road for the Amarnath Yatra from Baltal and Pahalgam, the minister said the tracks leading to the cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas had been developed according to the Supreme Court's December 13, 2012, order.

Aao Pakistan Chalein...

subdued,whose at least three generations have suffered under the Army Boots;and religiously, a hardline one- can I say a fanatic one? - with our liberal, well- educated, open- minded classes?With all respect Sir, please permit me to disagree.So, should we keep on suffering due to the proxy war unleashed by Pakistan, especially on Jammu and Kashmir and do nothing? My humble suggestion would be:

Aao Pakistan chalein!

Before I elaborate myself, I believe the main cause of animosity between the two countries is hatred propaganda unleashed by certain vested interests on both sides. In India, and that too in Kashmir, "Muslims are persecuted; they are not allowed to perform their religious activities; their lives and properties are not safe; in India, Islam khatrey mein hai: thus, we must launch Jihad to save Muslims." This has been the brain-wash all along that gives birth to hard core terrorists. And we are ever fed the concept that Pakistan is our enemy country and all her people must be hated. The false propaganda machines have been churning fake narratives non-stop. But does the common man of one country indeed hate his erstwhile brother? I again disagree.

I have personally seen on my visit to Pakistan that the general people have expressed love, respect and regards for us. They were all help and gave special treatment to me and my family just because we belonged to Jammu, India. The same feeling is clearly visible when some guests arrive from Pakistan. We are too happy to meet them and feel honoured with their presence among us.

I am always perplexed when I read about the fall of Berlin Wall. For decades, the world powers kept feeding hatred among East and West Berlin which completely got vanished with the fall of the Wall. For everlasting peace, why is it not possible between the two parts of Jammu and Kashmir; first as a pilot projectand later for the whole country? Let us make borders open for all with free movement of everyone from here to there and there to here. Let our people feel the restrictions imposed upon their counter-parts; let them see how PoK walas are not allowed to raise their voice; let them see the footprints of Military Boots of the Establishment Democracy; let them bear the gallows of strangulations of minorities; let them face the deficiency of medical, education and daily basic facilities; let them be aware in how many areas our erstwhile brethren are indeed deprived of.

And when they come to our part of Jammu and Kashmir, their propaganda myths shall be shattered.

They shall see for sure how everyone has full freedom to follow his own religious rituals; how we enjoy the freedom to boot-out any government we are not happy with; how economically, socially, medically, educationally, and above all, constitutionally we are far, far better off than them; let them realise that the idea of so-called liberation of persecuted Muslims in India is the most absurd thing fed to them in their ill-education; and how we all can reap the benefits of the better of each other if we meet, mix and understand. Let them feel the fragrance of their Lahori Culture intermingled our Vasudev Kutumbakam.

Sounds very good, indeed. But it is Utopian. Will the hawks on both sides let this ever happen? Will those who flourish from the terror-trade let their bounty suffer? Will those leaders who try to befoul people by hate-speech take risk of losing their so -called popular base? I seriously doubt.

But then this is new India. Things that never happened before we see them happen now. If Uri and Balakot can happen, opening up of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and Indian Jammu and Kashmir borders is also possible.

Modi Hai, to Mumkin Hai !!

(The author is former Principal GGM Science College and former Chairman, J&K BOSE)

Sajjad Lone walks...

Question Hour, saying "I am not convinced by the speaker's reply and I believe they are trying to muzzle us".

As the assembly was preparing to discuss the Lt Governor's address after the Question Hour, the People's Conference chairman drew the attention of the speaker to the amendments moved by him, including restoration of Article 370.

The speaker told the member that the House has already passed a resolution about the special status and there is no need for such a move, before dismissing the motion.

"I have moved some amendments with regards to Lt Governor's address but five of the seven amendments were rejected by the speaker. I have demanded restoration of Article 370, repeal of Public Safety Act, recent civilian killings, police verification and a probe in 1987 rigging in assembly elections which were rejected," Lone told reporters outside the assembly.

He said it is ironic that this is the same National Conference, which highlighted these issues during its election campaign, but after forming the government "they do not want to listen and have imposed a ban on talking about these things".

The Centre revoked the special status of J-K under Article 370 and bifurcated it into two UTs - J-K and Ladakh - in August 2019.

The speaker said the House cannot take a call on revoking the Public Safety Act and police verification as these are beyond the control of the government and are under the purview of the Union Home Ministry.

On the alleged poll rigging in 1987, Rather said over 37 years have passed since and it was not possible to go for a probe.

SSP Doda grants 1st Insitu promotion to 38 police personnel

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: SSP Doda Sandeep Mehta, has granted 1st in-situ promotion to 38 police personnel of District Police Doda, recognizing their hard work and dedication. This promotion is a testament to their exceptional service and commitment to the department.

The in-situ promotion, granted to 01 lady Constable and 37 followers, acknowledges their outstanding performance and contributions. These personnel were appointed between July 1, 2015, and December 31, 2015 and have completed 9 years of service without any major misconduct.

This promotion aims to boost morale and motivate the personnel to continue delivering exceptional service to the community. SSP Doda extended his warmest congratulations to the promoted personnel and their families, expressing appreciation for their tireless efforts in maintaining law and order in the district.

All the promoted officials expressed their gratitude to the SSP for issuance of their promotion order.

The Departmental Promotion Committee headed by SSP Sandeep Mehta that ordered promotion of 38 personnel comprised of ASP Hqrs Shakeel Rehman; DySP Hqrs Ajay Anand and 03 members of DPO Doda.

Udhampur Police organizes PCPG meeting in Basantgarh, Udhampur

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: Udhampur Police conducted a Police Community Partnership Group (PCPG) meeting today in village Lodhra,



under the jurisdiction of Police Station Basantgarh. The meeting aimed to discuss cybersecurity, public safety, and the implementation of new laws. It was chaired by DYSP PC Basantgarh, along with SHO Basantgarh, and attended by police officials, the Sarpanch, Panch members, and local residents.

Officials emphasized the importance of cybersecurity and educated attendees on emerging digital threats. The discussion covered key provisions related to cybercrime laws, E-FIR, and Zero FIR, ensuring that the public understands the procedures for reporting incidents efficiently. Residents were encouraged to stay vigilant and report suspicious activities to law enforcement, fostering a proactive approach to crime prevention.

The meeting highlighted the importance of police-public collaboration in strengthening security and addressing increasing cyber threats. Officials reassured attendees of full police support in tackling these issues and urged them to actively participate in maintaining a safe and crime-free environment in the region.

Crime review meeting held to strengthen law enforcement

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DUDU: A comprehensive crime review meeting was conducted today at Police Post (PP) Dudu under the leadership of Dy:SP PC Latti, Sahad Hussain Malik. The meeting was attended by the SHO of Police Station Latti, the In-Charge of Police Post Dudu, and Investigating Officers.

During the meeting, a thorough discussion was held on under-investigation (UI) cases, missing reports, inquest proceedings, and their timely disposal. Officers were directed to expedite investigations and ensure prompt action in all pending matters.

Emphasizing the importance of digital initiatives in policing, officials were instructed to ensure strict compliance with e-summons and utilize the e-Sakshya platform for documentation in all cases. Additionally, directions were issued to register new History-Sheeters and Over Ground Workers (OGWs) as per legal provisions.

The officers were further advised to promptly lodge e-FIRs and adhere to proper procedures while handling cases under Narcotic Control Laws (NCL). The meeting underscored the commitment to enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accountability in policing.

All officers were instructed to adopt a public-centric approach and maintain a friendly and approachable attitude toward the public to ensure the redressal of grievances effectively. Authorities assured that such review meetings would be conducted regularly to maintain law and order and improve the delivery of justice.

Five days training programme on new criminal laws held

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: Police Kathua concluded a five days training programme/Crash Course on new criminal laws at Conference Hall District Police Lines Kathua for the officers/officials of Kathua Police/Traffic Police/CID which was commenced w.e.f. 28-02-2025.

The objective of the training programme is to acquaint the police officers & officials with the three new criminal laws. Master trainers of J&K Police Kathua have imparted training



to 77 Police officers/officials from Kathua Police/Traffic Police/CID. Special lectures have also been delivered by the Gazetted Police Officers and Sr. Prosecuting Officer DPO Kathua during the course of training programme.

During the training period, lectures were delivered on new criminal laws namely "Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita" (BNS), "Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita" (BNSS), and "Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniam" (BSA) which have replaced the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Indian Evidence Act.

The training programme was coordinated by DySP Hqrs Kathua (Nodal Officer) Ravinder Singh and conducted under the overall supervision of SSP Kathua Shobhit Saksena.

CRPF jawan dies inside Srinagar camp

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawan died inside a camp in the Wazirbagh area of the city on Tuesday, officials said here.

Head constable Jeetendra Devidas was found unconscious at the CRPF camp at Wazirbagh in the early hours, the officials said. They said the jawan was rushed to the SMHS Hospital, where the doctors declared him dead on arrival.

Police have started inquest proceedings to ascertain the cause of the jawan's death, they said.