

# Bala Jyoti takes oath as Member (Law) of JERC for J&K and Ladakh

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Former Special Judge (Anti-Corruption) of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Bala Jyoti, on Wednesday took the Oath of Secrecy and Affirmation of Allegiance as Member (Law) of the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC) for the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

The oath was administered by Union Minister for Power Manohar Lal Khattar during a ceremony held at Shram Shakti Bhawan, Rafi Marg, New Delhi, in the presence of senior officials. Among those present on the occasion were Vijay Kumar, Principal Secretary and Chairman of JERC for the UT of J&K and UT of Ladakh, Lakshmi Murali, Joint Secretary to



Union Minister for Power Manohar Lal Khattar administering oath of the office to Bala Jyoti at New Delhi.

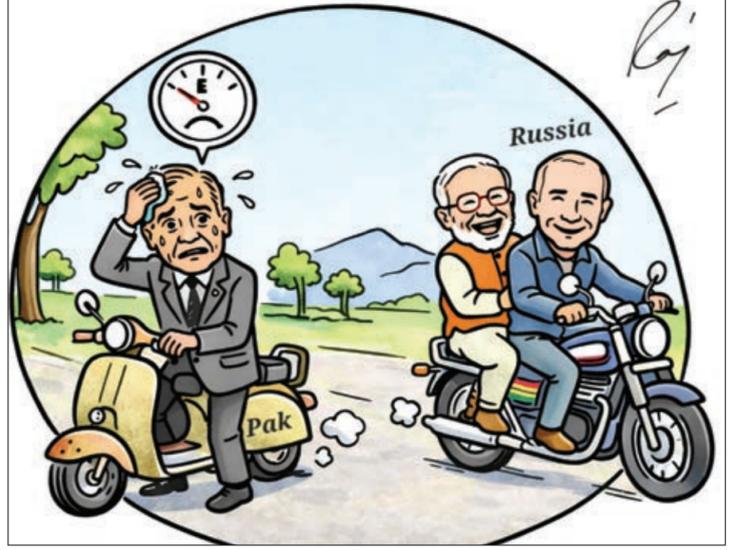
the Ministry of Power, and other officials. Bala Jyoti has been appointed as Member (Law) of JERC by the Government of India, Ministry of Power, on the basis of her merit, abil-

ity and suitability, recognising her extensive experience in judicial service. She has served the judiciary in Jammu & Kashmir in various capacities and has worked in several far-

flung areas during her judicial career. Known for her integrity and professional competence, she later served as Special Judge (Anti-Corruption) for the CBI in Jammu, where she handled several important cases.

Having served in different roles in the J&K judiciary, her vast legal and administrative experience is expected to strengthen the functioning of the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission. Her services will now be utilised in the capacity of Member (Law) in JERC, which regulates the power sector in the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

With her appointment, her expertise is expected to contribute significantly to the regulatory framework and legal oversight of the electricity sector in both Union Territories.



# Satish reviews petroleum stock position in J&K, calls for ensuring uninterrupted supply

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Transport, IT, Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting to review the stock position and supply of petroleum products across Jammu and Kashmir in view of the evolving situation in the Middle East.

The meeting was convened to assess the availability of essential petroleum products including petrol, diesel, kerosene and LPG besides evaluating preparedness in case of any potential supply disruptions arising from the ongoing geopolitical tensions. Legislators Zafar Khatana, Saif u din Bhat and Dr Shafi Wani, Commissioner Secretary FCS&CA, Saurabh Bhagat, Director FCS&CA Jammu / Kashmir Rifat Kohli, Dr Sagar Dattaraya, representatives of major oil marketing companies including Indian Oil Corporation



Cabinet Minister Satish Sharma chairing a meeting.

(IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), along with officers from Legal Metrology and the department's finance and distribution wings, participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, the Minister took a detailed review of the current stock level of petroleum products across the Union Territory, the operational status of fuel depots and LPG bottling plants, as well as the supply chain mechanism to ensure uninterrupted availability of

fuel to the consumers.

Satish Sharma emphasized the importance of maintaining adequate buffer stocks and strengthening coordination with the oil companies to address any potential logistical challenges. He directed the concerned authorities to closely monitor the supply situation and ensure that there is no shortage of essential petroleum products in any district.

The Minister also stressed the need for proactive planning and preparedness in light of the ongoing Middle East developments. He called upon the oil compa-

nies and departmental officials to keep contingency plans ready and maintain constant communication to ensure smooth distribution and timely replenishment of stocks.

Reassuring the public, Satish Sharma said that the government is fully vigilant and committed to safeguarding the interests of consumers. He maintained that the administration is closely monitoring the situation and all necessary measures are being taken to ensure that petroleum products remain readily available across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister further directed the officials to maintain strict vigilance against hoarding, black marketing or overcharging of petroleum products and LPG cylinders. He asked the Legal Metrology and enforcement teams to intensify inspections at fuel stations and LPG outlets to ensure compliance with regulations and consumer protection norms.

# CS reviews road safety measures across J&K

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Wednesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting of the Transport Department to assess the measures being taken for effective traffic management, reduction of road accidents and strengthening of road safety mechanisms across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting besides ACS Finance; ACS, PWD; Principal Secretary, Home; Commissioner Secretary, GAD; and Secretary, Transport was attended by IGP, Traffic; Transport Commissioner; Director, Motor Garages and other concerned officers.

Deputy Commissioners and representatives from NHAI, BRO, SAMPARK and NHIDCL attended the meeting through video conferencing. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary reviewed the implementation of key road safety initiatives, including enforcement drives by the Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) and Traffic Police, functioning of



the Integrated Road Accident Database (iRAD) portal, and the rollout of the PM Rahat Scheme aimed at providing immediate assistance to road accident victims. The Chief Secretary directed all departments concerned to ensure timely uploading and verification of accident data on the iRAD portal to facilitate accurate analysis and prompt corrective measures, particularly at identified black spots. He called for strict implementation of all the Supreme Court directions in letter and spirit with mandatory submission of reports of each major mishap happening on the roads here.

The Chief Secretary emphasized strict enforcement of the road safety policy on ground besides taking of engineering measures by the concerned executing agencies involved in construction of roads here.

The Chief Secretary stressed the need for stronger coordination among departments including Transport, Traffic Police, Health, Public Works and district administrations to ensure effective implementation of road safety measures. He directed for the utilization of road safety fund in favour of accident victims besides effectively implementing the PM Rahat scheme for saving the lives of such individuals. He also directed that District Road Safety Committees must hold regular meetings and prepare district-level action plans aimed at reducing accidents and improving traffic management. He also instructed road construction agencies to regularly conduct road safety audits of existing and new roads and ensure prompt rectification

of hazardous locations to minimize accident risks. The Secretary Transport, Avny Lavasa took this occasion to inform the meeting that the Transport Department, in coordination with other agencies, has been undertaking detailed analysis of road accidents through the iRAD portal, which helps identify accident hotspots and enables data-driven interventions. She elaborated that the Integrated Road Accident Database (iRAD) system digitally records accident data and supports scientific accident investigation besides helping in taking corrective measures eventually to reduce the occurrence of such mishaps leading to loss of precious lives. The Secretary Transport further informed that stakeholders have been directed to ensure timely punching and verification of accident data on the portal. Training programmes are also being conducted in coordination with the National Informatics Centre to improve the quality and timeliness of accident reporting, she added.

# Water being released in Ranbir, other Canals on March 16

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Irrigation Department has decided to release water in all major canals of Jammu province starting March 16, 2026. A notice issued today reads "As suggested by Director Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Jammu vide his letter No. Agri/DAJ/Dev-32/2025-26/9189 dated: 11-03-2026, it is notified for the information of public in general and farmers in particular that the water in Ranbir Canal, New Partap Canal, Kathua Canal and their distribution network of Jammu province shall be released from 16-03-2026. All the concerned Superintending Engineers and Executive Engineers are directed to plan their activities to ensure completion of the ongoing works well before the recharging of Canal.

The Executive Engineer of Irrigation Division No I Jammu, Irrigation Division No II Jammu, Irrigation Division Akhnour and Irrigation Division Kathua are further directed to frame teams which shall move along with water in the Canal/distribution Network during the opening as it reaches their jurisdiction to ensure safe passage of water up to tail end to avoid any untoward incidence."

# JU organises two-day workshop on "Give to Gain"

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The National Service Scheme (NSS), University of Jammu organised a two-day workshop to commemorate International Women's Day on the theme "Give to Gain." The workshop aimed to promote awareness about women's empowerment, gender equality and the role of youth in building an inclusive and progressive society. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from NSS volunteers, students and scholars who actively engaged in discussions and interactive sessions. The inaugural session was formally inaugurated by Prof. Suman Jamwal, Dean Social Sciences, University of Jammu, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion. In her inaugural address, Prof. Jamwal emphasized the significance of the theme "Give to Gain," highlighting how sharing knowledge, opportunities and support can lead to collective growth and empowerment. She also reflected on the historical struggles of women and highlighted their strength, power and capabilities. She encouraged participants to active-



Officials along with students during the workshop.

ly engage in the sessions and reflect on ways to uplift and mentor others in their communities and workplaces. Earlier, Prof. Vishav Raksha, Convener NSS Campus Units and Head, Department of Sociology, formally welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of such workshops for NSS volunteers. She also spoke on the theme "Give to Gain," emphasizing the need to enhance the capability and capacity of women. Dr. Hema Gandotra, NSS Programme Coordinator, presented the vote of thanks and highlighted the role of the NSS Office in organising programmes that commemorate important occasions and sensitize volunteers on themes of

social relevance. During the workshop, several expert sessions were conducted. On the first day, Prof. Sarika Manhas, Head, Department of Home Science, delivered a lecture on the topic "Empathy, Inclusion, and Empowerment: The Spirit of Give to Gain." She explained how empathy helps in understanding others' perspectives while inclusion ensures that everyone feels valued and respected. Another session was conducted by Dr. Suraj Mohini Jamwal, Assistant Professor, Cluster University, who spoke on the theme "Empower Her Today, Gain a Better Tomorrow." In her lecture, she highlighted several pressing social concerns and stressed the impor-

importance of awareness and education in addressing these challenges. The second day began with a session by Dr. Ellora Puri from the Department of Political Science, who spoke on "Give to Gain: Universalizing the Spirit of Care." She encouraged participants to critically engage with contemporary political and social challenges. Another session was conducted by Dr. Vikram Gulati, Vice Principal, Happy Model School, Udhampur, who emphasized the importance of happiness and personal values while highlighting the relevance of yoga in managing stress. He also shared insights on the struggles faced by women, citing examples from his personal experiences. The valedictory session was attended by Prof. Jasbir Singh, Head, Department of Philosophy, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion. He appreciated the initiative taken by the NSS in organising such a meaningful workshop and encouraged students and volunteers to continue working for the welfare of society while upholding the values of equality and service. He also distributed certificates among the participants.

# Healthcare reach being expanded across J&K: Sakeena Ito

STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Ito on Thursday dedicated a newly constructed Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Kharote to the public bringing healthcare closer to rural communities in the district.

Built at an estimated cost of Rs. 1.67 crore, the health facility is expected to ease the difficulties faced by residents of Kharote and nearby panchayats who earlier had to travel long distances for basic medical care. The centre will now provide accessible primary healthcare services at their doorstep.

Addressing a large gathering after inauguration ceremony, the Minister underlined that the government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is placing special emphasis on strengthening healthcare and education sectors, describing them as the backbone of public welfare.

"Our focus is to ensure that quality healthcare reaches every citizen, especially those living in remote and rural areas," she stated. She added

that upgrading and improving medical infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir remains a key priority of the government.

Highlighting recent healthcare initiatives, the Health Minister said that advanced diagnostic facilities like MRI, Cath Lab and CT Scan services are being installed in major hospitals on priority. She added that Dialysis units have also been set up in several hospitals to provide relief to kidney patients who earlier struggled for access to treatment.

The Minister stressed that government hospitals must become reliable and efficient institutions for common people and underlined the need to strengthen existing facilities by ensuring adequate doctors, paramedics and essential medical equipment.

Responding to public demands raised during the event, the Minister directed the Director Health Services to provide an ambulance for PHC Kharote. She also assured that the feasibility of starting an ultrasound facility, along with the required staff, would be examined.

She also instructed the dis-

trict administration to undertake blacktopping of the approach road leading to the health centre to improve accessibility.

Emphasising patient-friendly healthcare, the Minister said that additional ultrasound units are being planned for Government Medical Colleges to reduce waiting time and improve patient access.

Speaking regarding education sector, the Minister noted that college enrolment in Kashmir's winter zone has increased by nearly 12 percent, while examination results for Classes 10th, 11th and 12th have also shown marked improvement. She expressed optimism that similar progress would soon be seen in the Jammu region's summer zone.

The Minister also called for collective action against drug abuse, urging teachers and professors to play an active role in spreading awareness among youth. She said the health department is strengthening rehabilitation, counselling and treatment services, while police efforts remain crucial in tackling the menace.

# What People Opine About Their BJP Leaders?

The political momentum of the Bhartiya Janata Party in Jammu, once buoyed by sweeping promises of transformation, appears to be gradually dwindling as disillusionment grows wider across the region. While the party had projected itself as the harbinger of new era following the abrogation of Article 370, poor leadership structure, rising unemployment and perception of increasingly unresponsive attitude has begun to cast shadow because of its weak political structure across Jammu.



**Vijay Anand Gill, President of the All Jammu and Kashmir Valmiki Samaj** said, "Previously, the community faced severe issues with contaminated water due to old, decaying pipes. After raising the issue with MLA Yudhvir Sethi, half of the neighborhood's pipelines have been replaced, with the rest currently undergoing a tendering process. I express gratitude for the work done in our ward and urge for the speedy completion of the pending projects."



**Rajesh Kesari, President, Shivsena Hindustan J&K** said, "I am very sorry to say that our MLA is not doing his duty. There are no street lights, no proper drainage system in our ward. Numerous complaints have been lodged online and offline, but no action has been taken. The primary role of an MLA or corporator is to represent the people's concerns, but unfortunately our Leaders fail on every front. People voted for these MLAs based on their affiliation with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), but their inability is damaging the party's reputation."



**Kamaljeet Kour, a Homemaker** opined, "Under the leadership of MLA Yudhvir Sethi, Ward No. 9 has witnessed a remarkable transformation. Long-pending projects are finally moving forward, with significant advancements in road construction and essential repairs improving local connectivity. His proactive approach and dedication to public service highlights him as a hard-working leader."



**Rajesh Gupta** shared, "I feel frustrated with the performance of our local representatives. My concerns center on a disconnect between political promises and the reality on the ground. The older parts of Jammu city lack basic amenities like functional street lighting and proper drainage. This neglect isn't just an eyesore; it's leading to increased crime and safety risks for residents. I appeal all MLA's to stop focusing on the perks of their office and start being practical leaders. My message is clear: they need to serve the people who actually put them in power."