

Tricolour waving with pride due to gallantry of our soldiers: Sukhnandan

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a simple but impressive function, Bhartiya Janta Yuva Moreha (BJYM) workers under the leadership of BJYM president of Distt. Rural Jammu Deepak Panday and in the presence of Former minister & Ex MLA Marh Ch. Sukhnandan Kumar paid tributes to BSF jawans of Jammu frontier at village Sarora who sacrificed their life in a mine blast at border village Gharana in R S Pura sector on 25th April 2000.

On the occasion former minister while paying tributes to the martyrs, told that on 25th of April 2000 six Jawans had lost their lives in a mine blast during patrolling on border in R S Pura sector. Among all six Jawans



Former Minister, Ch. Sukhnandan Kumar felicitating NoK of martyr.

three belongs to Sarora village of Marh constituency namely Shamsher Singh, Pawan Singh & Ashok Saini. "All three were of same village, same

school and fortunately serving in a same battalion of BSF and unfortunately got martyrdom together", he added.

I bow to all the heroes, their valour and supreme sacrifice in the defense of the motherland and also salute the undaunted courage of their families. Today, the tricolour is waving with pride due to the gallantry of our soldiers who had sacrificed their life for the nation," he asserted.

Among others who were present on the occasion DDC Marh Balbir Lal, Corporator Krishan Lal & Mohinder Kumar, ex Sarpanch Akalpur Varinder Singh Sunny, Distt Sec. BJYM Rural Raman Bhagat, Vice President BJYM Jammu rural Naresh Kashyap & Pardeep Chouhan, Rashpal Singh, Amit Saini, Panch Yashpal, Panch Raj Kumar and prominent people of the area.



Indefinite strike by J&K EPFO employees enters day 7



STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The indefinite strike of J&K Employees Provident Fund Staff Welfare Association has entered its seventh consecutive day on Monday. The staff members of Association raised slogans in support of their long pending demands which include HIR issues (merger of staff from JK EPFO to Central EPFO) as per CAC recommendations, Conduct of pending DPC, Release of budget/salary and Disposal of SRO-43 cases.

Today various labour unions like Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) and State Central Labour Union (SCLU) extended their full support for fulfillment of the genuine demands of J&K Employees Provident Fund Staff Welfare Association. Harbans Choudhary, Working President, Sh. Ashok Choudhary, Sangathan Mantri, BMS and Nar Singh Nariania, President, SCLU, warned the Govt, that if the demands of the employees are not fulfilled within a week's time positively, the unions shall be compelled to protest on roads and the consequences of which shall be at the risk and responsibility of the Central EPFO as well as Govt, of UT of J&K. The pensioners of J&K EPFO also participated in the protest as their pension was also not released till date. The Association appealed the Government that despite elapse of more than two & half years, their fate is yet to be decided. The main demand of the Association is to resolve the HIR issues as it is not known whether the Central EPFO is going to adopt the J&K EPFO employees or not. The Association once again appeals to the LG to intervene in the matter to resolve the issues at the earliest.

Unprecedented blackouts in J&K haunting people

SHAKEELA ANDRABI

SRINAGAR: Due to collapse of coal inventory of domestic thermal power plants in 12 states like Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Jharkhand and Haryana, which are facing power cuts of 3 to 8.7 percent, the domestic power demand reportedly hit a 38-year high for the month in first fortnight of April 2022. This high demand put Kashmir in darkness and this time whole valley is grappling with power outages as National Grid is facing rising demand forcing Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL) to resort to load-shedding even during peak hours, particularly during Sehri and Iftaar time.

The National Grid is high-voltage electricity transmission network in India, connecting power stations and major substations and ensuring that electricity generated anywhere in India can be used to satisfy demand elsewhere. The National Grid is owned and maintained by the state-owned Power Grid Corporation of India and operated by J&K-owned Power System Operation Corporation. Of 1,600 Mega Watt demand in Kashmir, authorities have lined up only 900-1100 MW. The power department-owned plants generate 170 MW, while 200 MW come as part of royalty from NHPC projects. "There is a huge deficit even though imports from NHPC and others take supply to 1100 MW," explained officials.

Currently, power plants in the Chenab region generate only half of their capacities. This is because there have been scanty rains and as a result, low discharge of water is affecting power generation. "Our hydro power projects are currently operational at 50 per cent," said experts, adding that power situation in J&K will improve once coal shortage is sorted out.

The coal imports due to Russia-Ukraine war have also affected thermo stations. "Situation is not bad in just

Rana calls for societal role for preservation, promotion of Dogri

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Senior BJP leader Devender Singh Rana on Monday called for big societal role in preservation and promotion of Dogri, suggesting that a corpus fund could be a viable initiative to put this sweet language on a wider canvas through various mediums like film and music industry.

He said: "Language is the identity of any nation, community and ethnicity and therefore we must bequeath our posterity the sweetest and richest mother tongue of their ancestors".

Former ministers and senior BJP leaders Pawan Gupta, Rajiv Jasrotia, Prem Sagar Aziz, Nayan Singh and Chairman Team Jammu, Zorawar Singh Jamwal also spoke on the occasion.

Devender Rana was speaking after releasing a Dogri album 'Dudu Basantgarh Di Guchhi', penned and directed by Mohan Singh Slathia, sung by Raman Slathia, Nirbhay Singh Slathia, Surinder Manhas and



Prominent BJP leader, Devender Singh Rana along with others releasing a Dogri album in Jammu.

Vanshika Jaral, composed by Nirbhay Singh Slathia, Music Directed by Surinder Singh Manhas while DOP Editing and Grade is by K K Malhotra Films.

Rana also pleaded for formulating a SPV for preservation and development of Parmandal - the Chotta Kashi- Devak, Old heritage temples, heritage ponds and Durbargarh, the Mubarak Mandi Complex, saying that these are the real treasure which have been inherited and, therefore, these need to be preserved and developed in a big way.

On the vehement demand for adequate slot for Dogri on Jammu Doordarshan, Rana said that he has taken up the matter with the

Referring to the popularity of Punjabi beyond regional and continental boundaries, the Senior BJP leader said this has been possible because of the overwhelming support of the people, diasporas, film and music industry. Similarly, the Dogri language has to be promoted at a larger scale with sincerity of purpose by one and all, irrespective of region, religion or caste, he added.

On the vehement demand for adequate slot for Dogri on Jammu Doordarshan, Rana said that he has taken up the matter with the

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mr Anurag Thakur, who has assured that this will be examined earnestly.

He called for introspection, saying if Dogri has to be preserved and promoted, the first prerequisite is use of the mother tongue in regular day to day interactions. He said death of language amounts to the death of the soul and exhorted intelligentsia, artists and folk singers to play their designated role in restoring the pristine glory of this rich language in the larger

interest of bringing Dogras together.

Speaking on the occasion, Former Minister, Pawan Gupta suggested pro-active approach by intellectuals and artists in promoting Dogri.

He observed that perhaps it may be easy to deliver sermons and indulge in rhetoric about the promotion and preservation of the mother tongue but there is a need for a collective effort to work in this regard.

Former Minister, Prem Sagar Aziz lauded the efforts of artistes in pro-

moting Dogri and urged the intellectuals to redouble their efforts in restoring Dogri to its pristine glory.

Saying that Dogri is rich in content and lucid in delivery, Former Minister, Rajiv Jasrotia that the language has huge potential to grow and bring communities together.

Jasrotia exhorted intelligentsia to work out a multi-pronged strategy to sustain and promote the sweet language of the Duggarland.

Chairman Team Jammu, Zorawar Singh while speaking on the occasion stressed upon the need of including Dogri subject in the school syllabus.

He said languages are essentially to bind the people and the mother tongue can play a great role in this regard. He also complemented the Slathia brothers and his team for this album.

Prominent among those present on the occasion included Jagdish Khajuria, Randhir Singh Manhas, Chander Sekhar, K K Sharma and others.

PHQ issues In-situ promotion orders of 11 officers/officials

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police Headquarters Jammu and Kashmir has issued two different orders for in-situ promotion in respect 11 officers and officials that include one Inspector (S), three SIs(S), two SgCts and four Cts and one Follower.

As recommended by the Departmental Promotion Committee after thorough scrutiny of the service records, PHQ has issued orders regarding the in-situ promotion in respect of 11 police officers and officials of different cadres.

Those who were granted in-situ promotion are Insp(S), Mohammad Latief, SIs(S) Rajesh Kumar; Mohinder Pal Singh and Qazi Asif Hussain, SgCts Shiv Kumar and Gh. Hassan, Cts Mohammad Irfan, Anuj Singh, Irshad Ahmad and Naresh Kumar, Follower Gh. Mohd Lone.

Director General of Police J&K Shri Dilbag Singh has congratulated the promoted personnel and their family members. He has expressed his hope that the promoted officers and officials will perform their duties in the service of people with more dedication and zeal.

Freedom of speech can't be stretched to question status of a part of country: HC

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Justice Sanjay Dhar of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court ruled that questioning fact of State, being a part of the Country, by using expression 'occupation of military or people being slaves etc.' the court said.

Justice Sanjay Dhar passed these observations while dismissing a plea of a lawyer, Muzamil Butt challenging FIR registered against him for uploading social media posts regarding a bomb blast at a gunfight site at Laroo village in Kulgam on October 21, 2018, during which six civilians were martyred and more than 60 persons including men, women and children were injured.

The court underscored that it is one thing to criticize the government for its negligence and express outrage on the violation of human rights of the people, but it is quite another to advocate that the people of a particular part of the country are slaves of the government of India or that they are under occupation of armed forces of the country. "While the former i.e. expression of outrage at the negligence and inhuman attitude of security forces, police and establishment would come within the ambit of freedom of expression of an individual, which includes freedom to criticize the government of the day which is permissible under law, but the same may not be the position if an individual questions the fact of a state

being a part of the country by using the expression 'occupation of military or people being slaves etc.' the court said.

Justice Sanjay Dhar passed these observations while dismissing a plea of a lawyer, Muzamil Butt challenging FIR registered against him for uploading social media posts regarding a bomb blast at a gunfight site at Laroo village in Kulgam on October 21, 2018, during which six civilians were martyred and more than 60 persons including men, women and children were injured.

The petitioner advocate, who is practicing at district court Kulgam for last 10 years, while terming the incident as 'Karbala in Laroo' had wrote in a long thread 'genocide and mayhem in my native hamlet Laroo. One of the most intense gunfights in my village culminated into mass massacre, bloodshed, cries, wailings, and brutal carnage. A military operation culminated into an organised state negligence which led to killing of eight teenagers and injuring 60 others.' He had said in his English post, "For the first time in my life, I felt broken and weak and I could acknowledge that we are slaves and slaves have no life of their own."

While quoting, PhD Scholar, Dr Manan Bashir Wani, who later

turned terrorist and was killed in an encounter in 2018, he said, "occupation is like a cancer which will consume everyone of us." In another post, the petitioner while commenting on Dr Wani said, "Manan's finger on trigger is more than the mechanism that sets off the firing action of a gun. It is not an isolated incident. It reflects the culmination of systemic failure. It reflects on those heartless structures that celebrate occupation of military bonhomie in cozy champagne circuits and page three parties of Gupkar."

After taking note of the posts uploaded by the petitioner, the Police Station, Kulgam booked him for offences punishable under Section 13 of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (ULAP). The court noted that the petitioner, who happens to be an advocate, can very well understand the import of these expressions.

By making these comments, Justice Sanjay Dhar recorded, he is certainly advocating and supporting the claim that J&K is not a part of India and that it is occupied by Indian military with the people having being reduced to the status of slaves. "Thus, he is questioning the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country," the court observed.

The court further observed that the petitioner by uploading these posts

has crossed the 'Lakshman Rekha'

which demarcates the freedom of expression guaranteed under Article 19 of the Constitution of India from the reasonable restrictions imposed on such freedom on the ground of sovereignty and integrity of India. "Intention of a person can be gathered from the words spoken or written or other expressions. Therefore, the expressions used by the petitioner, who happens to be a law-knowing person, clearly show that he intended to advocate a particular ideology which supports the claim of cession of Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral part of India," Justice Dhar underscored.

"This act of the petitioner, therefore, prima facie, falls within the definition of 'unlawful activity' as contained in Section 2(o) of the ULA (P) Act punishable under Section 13 of the Act," the court said. The court said that it cannot be stated that no offence is made out from the contents of the impugned FIR and the material of the proceedings at this stage," the court said and dismissed the plea, adding that quashing the proceedings at this stage, would amount to stifling a genuine prosecution, which is not permissible.

Puri felicitates Fin Deptt for infrastructure development

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Minister for Housing & Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri on Monday felicitated J&K Finance Department for its contribution in development of infrastructure projects in J&K.

The contribution of Jammu & Kashmir Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation (JKIDFC) was especially recognized for its significant contribution in the development of core infrastructure across the length and breadth of J&K.

It is worth mentioning that last year Finance Department has funded infrastructure projects and more than 50,000 projects have been completed and on the other hand JKIDFC has completed 1300 projects in a span of just two years.

Director General, Budget, M.Y Ito along with Joint

Sadhotra expresses disappointment over PM's Palli visit

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Former minister and senior National Conference leader Ajay Kumar Sadhotra on Monday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi disappointed the people of Jammu and Kashmir by not spelling out any roadmap for safeguarding the jobs and lands of the permanent residents, granting statehood, addressing the burgeoning unemployment problem, ending developmental inertia and tackling the selective attacks by terrorists in the Valley.

Reacting to the speech delivered by the Prime Minister at Palli Panchayat in Samba District on Sunday, the former minister, in a statement, said that the youth were expecting a big employment package, given the promises held out by the BJP in 2014 and 2019 but not speaking a word is anti-climax

max of the visit. He said the educated employed are not only struggling for some sort of sustenance but are also worried about their share in the jobs being usurped by the outsiders. The youth find themselves in a very precarious situation with no hope in sight in the near future. Much disappointing fact about the speech was the stoic silence of the Prime Minister over the regularization of about 80,000 daily wagers, casual labours, need based, adhoc based in various departments who along with their families are suffering for decades, he added. Mr Sadhotra said Jammu and Kashmir is continuing to suffer from developmental inertia; not only because the earlier so-called Prime Minister's Package of Rs 70,000 crore did not yield dividends on ground but the developmental scenario remained all time low in the

recent years. The power and drinking water crisis during the obtaining searching heat has pushed the residents to wall and the accountability within administrative hierarchy is far from desired. The utility services are in shambles with road networks presenting a grim picture of administrative apathy. The civic scenario in the urban and semi-urban areas, especially in the much hyped Smart City of Jammu is pathetic. Development has remained subject matter for propaganda material confined to flavoury handouts issued from the government, he said. The former minister expressed dismay over the lackadaisical attitude of the Centre in satiating the urges and aspirations of the people.

The Prime Minister continued to remain muted over the promised restoration of statehood to J&K and

instilling a sense of confidence among the people about restoration of the democratic process, which stands denied for nearly three years. He said J&K was awaiting a big reach out by the Prime Minister but the central leaders are continuing with their gimmick and rhetoric, which people are increasingly realising. Mr Sadhotra said that the Prime Minister did not list measures on how to ease peoples' pain, their anxieties over fast growing inflation, rising fuel and LPG prices. The supply chain for transporting essentials has almost collapsed and prices are witnessing steep and alarming hike in the past few months. This speaks about the indifference of the central leadership over the concerns of the common people; he said adding that the Prime Minister's visit to Jammu was a huge disappointment.

Director General, Budget, M.Y Ito along with Joint