

Assembly polls, Statehood assurance by PM closed opposition's shop: Khatana

Cong, NC, PDP inciting trouble in Ladakh: BJP MP

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Senior BJP leader and Member of Parliament (RS), Gulam Ali Khatana has said that after the assurance of PM Modi that Assembly elections will be held in J&K soon and the Statehood will also be restored, the opposition parties have now nothing to say and their shop has been closed.

"These opposition parties like Congress, National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) have always divided the people of J&K and Ladakh on regional lines," Khatana said while addressing a number of delegations which met him at his residence with certain issues.

The BJP leader said that things have changed now and the people have realised the evil designs of Gandhis, Abdullahs and Muftis and the public is presently pinning all hopes on BJP as far as public welfare and development are concerned. "The outcome of upcoming Lok Sabha elections will prove the popularity of BJP among the public as BJP is all set to secure over 400 seats to pave the way for PM Modi for the third term to helm the affairs of world's largest democracy," he maintained adding: "Whatever the BJP had said it has accomplished and the performance of the last ten years of PM Modi led government is a testimony for that."



MP (RS), Gulam Ali Khatana with delegation members at Jammu on Saturday.

"Taking a dig on Congress, NC and PDP, Khatana said that these political parties never digest peace and progress in J&K and Ladakh that is why they are triggering unrest in Ladakh and are dividing the people of Ladakh on regional grounds by making Kargil fight against Ladakh and vice versa.

"People of J&K and Ladakh should keep in mind that PM Modi has a special place for them in his heart and he thinks a lot about the welfare of these people," he further said adding that BJP will win all the five Lok Sabha seats

from Jammu and the one from Ladakh. The firebrand BJP leader has asked the people of Ladakh not to fall in the divisive trap of NC, Congress and PDP as the government led by PM Modi thinks a lot about these people while the inciters like NC, Congress and PDP have done nothing so far for these people.

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CSIR-IIIM, NHAI kick-start 'Lavender Hub Project' at NH 44

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

BANIHAL: In a unique joint initiative of CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM) and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), first-ever project for the beautification of the National Highway NH44 and sustainable development of this stretch as Lavender Hub was conceived earlier this year and the work on the same was kick-started here on Saturday near the south end of Banihal-Qazigund Road Tunnel (Navyug Tunnel), Banihal.

Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM and Ashok Kumar Jain, Advisor (Plantation and Clearances), Green Highways Division, NHAI, have jointly inaugurated the activities of the project by planting the Lavender Plants near Navyug Tunnel. Dr Zabeer Ahmed, while giving detail of the project, said that CSIR-IIIM through its efforts has been able to boost the economy of farmers of the region by Lavender Plantation and thus the region was brought on the world map.

By implementation of this project jointly by CSIR-IIIM and NHAI, not only the Banihal-Ramban stretch of National Highway would be developed as Lavender Hub but a sustainable model would be established for income generation, he added.

Dr. Ahmed also emphasized that



Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM planting a sapling.

this will add to the highway plantation and beautification efforts of NHAI, and will promote the ecotourism.

Ashok Kumar Jain said that NHAI has always been a leader in the sustainable development of highways and plantation in alignment of the

local vegetation. He further said that the project can become a model to develop the other highway stretches on the same line and also with the involvement of local people.

Pertinently, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for this project was signed between CSIR-IIIM and NHAI on March 18, 2024 in the presence of the Union Minister of Science & Technology and Vice President, CSIR.

This is a joint project costing Rs 283.80 lakh with 50:50 partnership from CSIR-IIIM and NHAI and will be implemented for the next five years to landscape about 200 kanals by CSIR-IIIM and PIU, Ramban.

The project is proposed to develop the Banihal Ramban Highway stretch as lavender hub that will serve the dual purpose of beautification as avenue plantation and long term sustainable model for post plantation operations including agri-enterpreneurship among local populations.

Several other officers from CSIR-IIIM and NHAI were present on this occasion including Ravi Kesar (Retd. IPS), Advisor Plantations, RO Jammu, Dr Dhiraj Vyas, Senior Principal Scientist and Head, Plant Sciences and Agrotechnology Division and PI of this project and Rajinder Sharma, Technical Assistant.

Women 'Embracing the vibrancy of Baisakhi' with yellow ethnic wear



NGO SUPPORT members celebrating Baisakhi at Jammu.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Baisakhi, also known as Vaisakhi, holds immense cultural and religious significance, particularly in the Sikh and Hindu communities. It marks the beginning of the harvest season in the Punjab region of India and is celebrated with great enthusiasm and fervour.

Women embracing the vibrancy of Baisakhi with yellow ethnic wear is a beautiful nod to the tradition of wearing bright colors during festive occasions.

Yellow holds special significance during Baisakhi as it represents prosperity, happiness, and the bounty of the harvest season. It symbolizes the joy and renewal that comes with the festival.

The celebration by members of NGO SUPPORT added another layer of significance to the occasion.

NGO SUPPORT play a crucial role in fostering community spirit and promoting cultural awareness and harmony.

By coming together to celebrate Baisakhi, they create a

sense of unity and solidarity among members and the broader community.

Dr. Navneet Kour, as the founder Chairperson of NGO SUPPORT, plays a pivotal role in organizing and leading such celebrations.

Her dedication to promoting oneness, joy, and equality aligns perfectly with the spirit of Baisakhi. Through events like these, communities not only celebrate their cultural heritage but also reaffirm their commitment to righteousness and equality.

Jammu's Pride Sana Dua appointed as State Director for Miss Universe India

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a remarkable advancement towards women's empowerment and the celebration of talent, Sana Dua, distinguished for placing Jammu and Kashmir on the global map, has been appointed as the State Director for Jammu and Kashmir at Miss Universe India.

This significant achievement not only underscores her personal success but also symbolizes a beacon of hope and opportunity for aspiring women across the region.

In 2017, Sana Dua won the prestigious crown at Femina Miss India, making history as the first Miss India from Jammu and Kashmir, representing the state on an international stage in Ecuador. Subsequently, she founded 'Image And Beyond By Sana Dua,' a grooming and



empowerment company that has transformed the lives of over 10,000 individuals, emerging as one of India's premier grooming academies.

Under Sana Dua's guidance, Image And Beyond has nurtured talents like Sargam Kaushal, who clinched the prestigious title of Mrs. World India 2022, hailing from Jammu and Kashmir. As the pageant

grooming expert for Sargam Kaushal, Dua's expertise and mentorship have garnered acclaim both nationally and internationally. Additionally, Sana's expertise has resonated globally, earning her roles as the grooming expert for esteemed pageant winners in the Teen, Miss, and Mrs categories and official partnerships with prestigious organizations like Mrs. India, Miss India Organization & more.

Beyond her individual achievements, Sana Dua's recent appointment as the State Director for Miss Universe India heralds a new era of possibilities for the women of Jammu and Kashmir. By assuming leadership of the pageant realm in the region, Sana is set to revolutionize the pageant industry in Jammu and Kashmir.

Her leadership promises to open doors for aspiring

women, providing them with world-class training and opportunities right in their homeland.

Commenting on her groundbreaking role, Sana Dua expressed her commitment to transforming the pageant landscape in J&K, stating, "This appointment is not just a personal triumph, but a testament to the potential and talent abundant in our region. I am dedicated to providing world-class training and opportunities for women right here in Jammu and Kashmir."

Sana Dua aims to provide accessible and top-tier training to aspiring pageant contestants, empowering them to realize their fullest potential. Additionally, her collaboration in the past with the top-notch

Pageant Organizations underscores her unwavering dedication to fostering talent and confidence among women.

As Jammu's own, Sana Dua's ascendancy to the role of State Director for Miss Universe India is a source of immense pride for the region. As J&K celebrates the elevation of one of its own to a global platform, Sana Dua's journey stands as a testament to the limitless potential of its daughters. Embraced by millions for her trailblazing accomplishments, with her at the helm, the future of J&K's pageant industry shines brighter than ever, promising a new era of empowerment and excellence.

In essence, Sana Dua's directorship represents a paradigm shift in the pageant industry, opening doors for inclusivity, diversity, and empowerment. As she continues to champion the cause of women's empowerment, her legacy serves as a guiding light for aspiring individuals across Jammu and Kashmir.

Ten-day NSS camp concluded in CSU

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The ten-day camp being run under the joint aegis of National Service Scheme Unit and Education Department of Central Sanskrit University (CSU) Shri Ranbir Campus concluded on Saturday.

Dr. Hema Gandotra, Program Coordinator of National Service Scheme of Jammu University, was present as the chief guest of the closing ceremony.

She said that through the National Service Scheme, students develop a sense of service towards the country and social cooperation along with their studies. By joining schemes like NSS, a feeling of social service arises in the person.

Campus Director Prof. Shridhar Mishra in his presidential address said that in



CSU faculty and students posing for a photograph at closing ceremony.

this ten-day camp, the work related to social service was done by the students will definitely infuse a new energy among the students and give birth to new values.

He further opined that the students of the university campus will get encouragement and will be helpful in giving a new direction to the society. Program Officer of NSS Unit of the campus,

Maninder Singh expressed his gratitude to everyone for their cooperation in successfully organizing the camp.

The closing ceremony was initiated by campus director Prof. Shridhar Mishra and chief guest Dr. Hema Gandotra by lighting the lamp and offering floral tributes Maa Saraswati. Invocation and welcome

song was presented by the students.

The guests were verbally welcomed by Dr. Rishiraj, Head of the Department of Education.

During the ten day camp, various speakers enlightened Shiksha Shastri first year trainee students on topics like cleanliness, yoga, tree plantation, environmental protection, organ dona-

tion, women empowerment, drug de-addiction, health and nutrition, voter awareness, my first vote campaign for the country etc. Every day, all the trainees took out awareness rallies at different places like University campus, Khangar Mod, Bhalwal village and also volunteered under the cleanliness campaign. Certificates were distributed to everyone by the guest. Dr. Anoop Kumar Pandey presented the detailed report of various programs organized during the ten days.

Dr. Devendra Mishra, Dr. Madan Singh, Dr. Shibashish, Dr. Snehlata, Dr. Praveen Mani Tripathi, Dr. Khemnaranay Regmi, Dr. Babita Hada were also present. Dr. Vivek Kumar presented the formal vote of thanks. The stage was conducted by Dr. Akhilesh Pandey.

Siachen Warriors celebrates 40th Siachen Day

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: Siachen Warriors on Saturday celebrated the 40th Siachen Day with traditional solemnity and reverence.

Deputy Commander Siachen Brigade laid a wreath on behalf of GOC Fire and Fury Corps and paid rich tributes to the Bravehearts at the Siachen War Memorial, Base Camp to commemorate their courage and fortitude in securing the highest and coldest battlefield of the World.

On this day in 1984, Indian Army troops first unfurled the tricolour at Bilafond La launching the Operation Meghdoot. Since then, it has been a saga of courage and grit in the



Dy Commander Siachen Brigade laying wreath on behalf of GOC Fire and Fury Corps at Siachen War Memorial.

face of enemy braving the extreme weather conditions and harshest of terrains. To this day, the Siachen Warriors continue to guard the Frozen Frontier with determination and resolve against all odds.

Siachen Day honours all the Siachen Warriors who served their motherland while successfully thwarting enemy designs over the years. The nation shall always remain indebted to these Bravehearts.

Supply all type of books before April 20: JKPSA asks JKBOSE



Members of JKPSA during a meeting at Jammu.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A meeting of Executive Members of Central body of Jammu and Kashmir Private Schools Association (JKPSA) was organized at Press Club Jammu here on Saturday.

The main agenda of the meeting included non availability of books from class 1st to 5th, abrupt enhancement/revision of fee for the various services for the students and delay in granting affiliation to all such schools whose affiliation period has lapsed since March 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Members showed dismay and

said that it was a breach of trust to all as JKBOSE has failed to supply the majority of books from class 1st to 5th to the vendors in Jammu division before the start of academic session i.e. April 1, 2024. They said JKBOSE despite of becoming a good facilitator to the society, now has become a profit growing establishment. The increase in fee viz the examination fee, R R fee, Reevaluation fee, eligibility fee, Dynamic Affiliation fee, name/parentage/caste/DOB correction fee etc. is unjustified and unreasonable.

Members showed dismay

about the callous attitude of JKBOSE authorities and unanimously appealed to the Dr.

Piyush Singla, Administrative Secretary, School Education Department to intervene to streamline the functioning of JKBOSE. They urged the Administrative Secretary for immediate review of the notification F (Acad-C)/E-7440817/Rev-Fee/24 of April 1, 2024 issued by JKBOSE. Immediate disposal of files which are lying pending in JKBOSE for affiliation since long was also demanded.

A provision to Refund of the Re-evaluation or Re-checking

fee to the students who qualify their result after Re-evaluation or Re-checking along with a provision to impose fine for such evaluators due to whose fault students were usually declared failed or Reappear category after the declaration of results without any fault at their part was also demanded.

Direction to JKBOSE from Administrative Secretary to supply of all type of books before April 20, 2024 to save the students for any further loss was also demanded.

Those who attended the meeting included Ajay Gupta, Sat Paul Mansotra, Lal Chand Gandotra, Sanjeev Luthra, Ajay Singh, Vineet Gupta, Vishal Singh, Gaurav Charak, Dr. Madan Mohan, Rashpal Singh, Manoj Sharma, Ram Parkash, Kamal Sharma, Rajat Kesar, Deep Dayal, Shabir Malik, Satya Paul Khajuria, Parshotam Sharma, Siddheshwar Sadotra, Laddi Kumar, Kiran Raina, Dr. Vikram Handa, Jugal Kishore and Naresh Kumar.

FFMA pays tributes to Jallianwala Bagh martyrs

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Freedom Fighters Memorial Association (FFMA) on Saturday paid tribute to the martyrs of Jallianwala Bagh massacre at Maheshpura Chowk, here.

FFMA Chairman Rajiv Mahajan, speaking on the occasion, described the Jallianwala Bagh massacre as one of the most brutal incidents in the history of India, which resulted in the martyrdom of nearly 1,000 people. Highlighting the incident, Prof. S. S Balwal, President of Association said, "On 13th April, 1919 people began to gather in Jallianwala Bagh to celebrate Baisakhi. On that day 1000 people were thronged in the Bagh. General Dyer had kept eagle eyes on all the developments and was prepared to pounce on his prey at any moment. As he saw small ferment in Bagh he intruded there by narrow lane led to Bagh. He came there with a picket of fifty Army Platoons



FFMA members paying tributes to Jallianwala Bagh martyrs at Jammu on Saturday.

comprising of twenty five Gorkhas and twenty five of Balochis. As he entered he sealed the only exit of Bagh. Without warning he ordered his picket to take position and fire on unarmed innocent civilians. The sound of guns and cries of crowd rent the air. Few people jumped over the wall, many dived into well, women bravely faced bullets while looking for their children, some old people took shelter under erected podi-

um and many laid down on ground to avoid the volley of bullets." Rajiv Mahajan further added, "The barbarity of General continued for consecutive ten minutes. After ten minutes when firing was ceased the appearance of Bagh was giving the glimpses of holocaust. Human blood was sprawling on the ground, human bodies strewn upon everywhere."

Paying rich tributes to the martyrs among whom many

were from J&K, Rajiv Mahajan observed that their sacrifice will be remembered by the generations to come and will always serve as an inspiration for people to safeguard their sovereignty which came after so much struggle and sacrifices.

Others present on the occasion included Karnail Chand (Working President), Pritam Sharma (Vice President), Parbhat Kapahi (Office Secretary) and others.