

Sham urges Sunderbani-Kalakote electorate to vote for development, justice under Modi's leadership

STATE TIMES NEWS

SUNDERBANI: Former Minister and State Vice President of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Sham Lal Sharma, addressed a massive gathering at the Sunderbani-Kalakote Assembly constituency on Wednesday, urging the people to vote in favor of BJP MP candidate Jugal Kishore Sharma.

In his address, Sham Lal highlighted the significant strides made by the Modi government, particularly emphasizing the sense of justice that the people of Jammu have experienced following the abrogation of Article 370.

He underscored that under previous regimes of the National Conference, Congress, and PDP, the people of Jammu felt neglected and cheated, with the lion's share of development and opportunities favoring Kashmir.

Sham further asserted that the era of dynasty politics, which had plagued both India



Former Minister Sham Lal Sharma and others BJP leaders at a public meeting.

and Jammu Kashmir, is now being replaced by governance that prioritizes the interests of the nation as a whole.

He credited the strength of Sanatan Dharma and the monumental achievements such as the construction of the Ram Mandir after 500 years and the establishment of a Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi to the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Sham emphasized that under the governance of the BJP, there has been a noticeable calmness along the borders, creating an environment of stability and tranquility in the border regions of Jammu. This

sustained peace has not only safeguarded the lives and livelihoods of the residents but has also paved the way for enhanced economic activities and social development in these areas.

Highlighting the incumbent government's transformative initiatives in the Jammu province, Sham enumerated a litany of landmark projects aimed at fostering prosperity and well-being. From prestigious educational institutions like IIT and IIM to critical infrastructure projects such as FCI, AIIMS, and the Shahpur Kandi Project, the government's unwavering focus on

holistic development stands testament to its commitment to the region's progress.

Encouraging the electorate to once again empower Prime Minister Modi, Sham Lal Sharma called for a resounding victory for the BJP, aiming for a historic achievement of securing over 400 seats in the upcoming elections.

Former Minister Priya Sethi, in a resounding show of support for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, lauded his transformative leadership, hailing him as a beacon of progress and a global statesman. Sethi emphasized the unparalleled strides made

under PM Modi's stewardship, propelling India into a new epoch of development and elevating its stature on the world stage.

She also emphasized the 33% quota for women's representation and highlighted the passage of a bill extending the provisions of the women's reservation law to Jammu and Kashmir, labeling it a "significant step" towards empowering women in the region. Sethi asserted that women's empowerment is synonymous with national empowerment, emphasizing that both women and the nation are poised to reach greater heights during the Amrit Kaal till 2047. As the electoral landscape takes shape, Former Minister Priya Sethi's impassioned endorsement of Prime Minister Modi's leadership and unequivocal support for Jugal Kishore Sharma resonate as a clarion call for unity and progress, setting the stage for a resounding victory in the Jammu - Reasi Constituency.



Govt schools in J&K not up to mark Over 16,179 schools have less than 50 students: MoE

SHAKEELA ANDRABI

SRINAGAR: The Union Ministry of Education (MoE) in its latest report has revealed surprising figures that less than 50 students are studying in around 16,179 schools in Jammu and Kashmir.

Last year, the Directorate of School Education also claimed that they had organised an enrolment drive and with the successful campaign, thousands of parents enrolled their children in government schools.

The Union Ministry also said that 18 percent of the schools have adverse PTR while of the total 23,173 schools in J&K, 848 are with zero enrolments while 2413 schools have only a single teacher.

The observations made by the MoE have raised concern about the functioning of the government schools in J&K as the School Education Department (SED) has been repeatedly claiming that no school with zero enrolment exists in the Union Territory.

As per the official document, the MoE has made this analysis as per the UDISE-2022 and has mentioned the total number of schools

across J&K as 23,173.

Project Director Samagra Shiksha J&K said that the observations made by the MoE were not as per the latest UDISE-2023-24 data.

"No school with zero enrolments exists on the ground after carrying out rationalisation of teachers, we also addressed the issue of single-teacher schools as well", he said

The SED in 2023 officially closed all the merged schools and removed their names from the UDISE data. Following this exercise, the actual number of schools reduced from 23,173 to 18,723 across J&K.

"We have removed the names and data of all these merged schools from UDISE which were officially closed. However, the latest UDISE data is yet to be certified by the Ministry of Education and that is why they have considered UDISE 2022 while making observations about schools with zero enrolment and schools with single teachers," officials said.

He said that the department has submitted the latest UDISE data to the Ministry of Education and is expecting

the data to be certified shortly.

According to the officials, the department is expecting that the report of MoE will be released by June and by that time latest UDISE data will be certified as well.

The MoE made these observations during the Project Approval Board (PAB) meeting held in February this year.

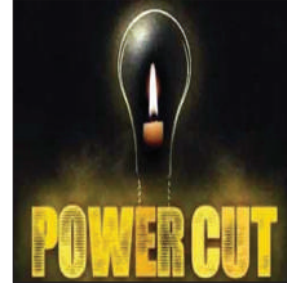
The PAB was convened to consider the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B), 2024-25, under Samagra Shiksha for J&K. The meeting was chaired by the Secretary of School Education and Literacy (SE&L), Government of India (GoI).

Meanwhile, the MoE observed that of the total 950 ICT laboratories approved for J&K, only 421 have been made functional so far.

"The benefits of digital education can be leveraged only when these pending ICT and smart classrooms are made functional," the MoE observed.

It said that the Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) was an important resource of QR-coded textbooks and specialised e-content.

Power shutdown



STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCCL, Jammu has informed that the power supply to Gangyal Industry, Parts of Preet Nagar, Greater Jammu, Anutham Hotel, Parts of Gangyal and its adjoining areas will remain affected on April 28 from 7 am to 12 noon.

Similarly, the power supply to Nanak Nagar and adjoining areas will remain affected on April 29 from 7 am to 11 am.

Congress takes out massive road-show in Jammu Bhalla appeals people from different walks of life to vote for Congress

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Congress on last date of campaign for Jammu-Reasi Parliamentary seat today took out massive road show in favour of party candidate Raman Bhalla led by Bharat Singh Solanki Incharge J&K, JKPC President Vikar Rasool Wani, Choudhary Lal Singh, Vice Presidents Yogesh Sawhney, Ved Mahajan Rajnish Sharma Mian, Parnav Sagotra, Adv. Saha Mohd. District President Th Mannohan Singh, SC Cell, Sewa Dal, Minority Cell, Mahila Cell, Youth Cell, OBC Cell, thousands of worker's supporters.

The impressive rally passed through RS Pura Jammu South Constituency, Jammu East Constituency, Jammu West Constituency starting from Satwari Chowk, Jewel Chowk via Fortune Inn Riviera, Vivekanand Chowk, Gummat Bazar, Indira Chowk, MLA Hostel to GMC Chowk, Shakuntala Chowk, Rehari Chungi, New Plot Children Hospital, Amphalla Chowk, CPO Chowk, Kachi Chawni, Parade Ground,



Senior Congress leaders during election rally at Jammu.

Shalamar Chowk, Hari Market, Residency Road and finally culminated at party's Jammu headquarter at Shahidi Chowk.

Speaking on the occasion, Wani said opposition bloc INDIA will win all five seats in the Union territory in the upcoming parliamentary polls. Wani said the BJP would face a resounding defeat in the elections just like they lost the Kargil council polls.

Bhalla in his address said appealed people from different walks of life, particularly youth to become part of the party. He said Congress offers a platform for all well meaning peoples to encour-

age them and play their role in party's vision of political resolution and good governance.

He said Congress by way of its pro-people policies is the only viable regional alternative for the people of the State.

He said that Congress Party stands guarantee to the equitable development of all the three regions and the people. It will continue to serve the people to the best of its ability.

Ch Lal Singh in his address said that Congress is the only party which can guarantee communal harmony, safety and all-round development. He asked the

people to vote in favour of Bhalla for prosperity of region.

"I am lucky to be part of a party which has played a great role in taking the country to great heights," Singh said.

He praised National Conference president Farooq Abdullah for reaching a seat-sharing agreement with his party and urged NC workers to support Bhalla in bringing change in the country which, he said, was inevitable.

"I appeal to voters to cast their votes on the merit of the candidates without getting misled by propaganda, slogans and promises. We should not repeat the mistake of 2014," he said, assuring that the Congress will fulfill its promises.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, on Wednesday chaired a meeting to review healthcare arrangements being put in place for the upcoming Shri Amarnathji Yatra, 2024.

During the meeting, the Administrative Secretary directed the officials to collaborate closely with Shri Amarnath Shrine Board, Health Department and security forces to ensure coordinated healthcare services for the Yatris.

The Secretary instructed the officials to finalize all necessary arrangements before the Yatra begins. He highlighted the importance of having both portable and fixed oxygen supplies at all health centers established along the Yatra route. Further, he instructed Director Health Services, Kashmir, to expedite establishment of a 100-bedded hospital by ONGC and arrange the required



Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah chairing a meeting.

human resources for the hospital. He also stressed the need to make sure that all essential medicines and medical equipment are readily available for the pilgrims.

The Secretary emphasized the importance of facilitating a seamless and hassle-free Yatra experience for the pilgrims. He directed for ensuring that requisite healthcare staff should be readily available at all healthcare institutions, especially on high-ways and critical points along the Yatra route. He called for implementation of a quick and reliable emergency response system at all levels and instructed the officials to ensure

deployment of ambulances along the Yatra route. He asked for keeping the 102 and 108 Ambulance systems on alert during the Yatra.

The Director Health Services Kashmir provided an overview of the planned healthcare arrangements for the Yatra. He informed that a total of 55 medical centers will be set up, including 06 base hospitals with 100 bedded hospital each at Baltal & Chandanwari, 11 medical aid centers, 12 emergency aid centers, 26 oxygen booths, and 15 on-route facilities. He further stated that 17 on-route facilities will be kept on standby to address any emergencies.

The Director also shared that they have planned to deploy a total of 1415 healthcare staff for the Yatra, including 173 specialists, 244 medical officers, and 998 paramedics. Out of these, 754 will be sourced from J&K, and 661 will be requested from the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

The Deputy Director Health Services, Jammu (Nodal Officer for Amarnath Yatra Jammu Division) provided the details of medical arrangements on Yatra routes from Lakhampur to Banihal. He informed that 15 emergency rooms will be made operational to tackle any

emergency during the Yatra, 53 health centres will be ready for providing medical care facilities to Yatris from Lakhampur to Lamber ground Banihal. More than 60 ambulances including 20 ALS ambulances shall be utilized during Yatra. Apart from this, the services of 15 Doctors and 60 Paramedics of Jammu Division will be placed at the disposal of Director Health Services, Kashmir for Amarnath Yatra-2024. The medical teams will also be deployed at Yatri Niwas Bhagwati Nagar Jammu and Yatri Niwas Chanderkote, Ramban to provide 24x7 medical care facilities to Amarnath Yatris.

The meeting was attended by senior officials from the Health & Medical Education Department, Director Health Services Kashmir and Deputy Director Health Services, Jammu, Chief Engineer, R&B, South Kashmir, and Chief Medical Officers of J&K.

Secretary IT reviews security audit of government websites

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Commissioner Secretary, Information Technology, Prerna Puri, on Wednesday convened a meeting with all departmental nodal officers to review progress on conduct of Security Audit in respect of departmental websites and applications.

The Commissioner Secretary enjoined upon all the Administrative Departments to ensure security audit of their departmental websites/applications through CERT-In empanelled agencies by 30th April, 2024. She also asked for expeditious com-



pletion of auditing process within the stipulated timelines.

During the meeting, a hand-holding and training session was also conducted by JaKeGA for all nodal officers in view of directives

issued by GAD regarding use of DSC or Aadhaar based e-sign/e-Hastaakshar in e-office.

The use of DSC aims to achieve the objective of adopting a digital working environment, reducing dependencies on physical documents, practicing proper security measures to ensure security in cyber space and preventing the unauthorized access to government files in the e-office.

Among others the meeting was attended by Additional Secretaries, ITD, Departmental Nodal Officers and project team (s) of JaKeGA.

Has Roshni Scheme-ACT No XII of 2001 been unfairly treated disreputing even All Administration & J&K Legislature ?

DAYA SAGAR

Ghulam Nabi Azad, the then Chief Minister of J&K State had said while addressing a public meeting at R.S. Pura on 25 September 2007 that 21 Lakh kanal land is being given to poor farmers at a price of Rs.100 per kanal. Surely that lands were under encroachments and figure had been quoted by the then Chief Minister as had been worked out by revenue department for information of Chief Minister. The then Government and J&K Legislature had accordingly operated upon the Jammu and Kashmir State Lands (Vesting of Ownership to the Occupants) act, 2001 Act No. XII of 2001 and made the required changes by further amending the Act and the rules in 2007 where under it was decided to give ownership rights of the occupied lands at the cost of Rs. Zero per Kanal to occupants where the land was being used for cultivation with the conditions that (a) the land use in respect of agricultural land shall not be changed after the ownership is vested (b) the land in question should have been in cultivation at

least for three years on the date of application (c) no transfer of Agricultural land other than by inheritance shall be permitted for 10 years from the date of conferment of ownership rights. The then Congress Government had equated the governments action with the "Land to Tiller" scheme of erstwhile Government headed by Sheikh Mohd Abdullah in 1950s (Big Landed Estates Abolition Act, SVT, 2007 (1950 A. D.) (Act No. XVII of 2007). To other occupants {"Occupant" means a person who is in actual physical possession of any State land on the commencement of the Jammu and Kashmir State Lands (Vesting of Ownership to the Occupants) (Amendment) Act, 2004, personally or through an authorized agent; } the ownership rights were given on cost as fixed by committee. So under the Act of 2001 as amended through 2007 not only a few urban influential people from trade or from administration or political arena thousands of families / individuals from among the permanent residents of J&K state were going to be covered. All ownership rights of lands that had

A Look through the Mist Part-I

been given upto 2013, the Jammu and Kashmir State Lands (Vesting of Ownership to the Occupants) ACT, 2001 Act No. XII of 2001 with amendments as made by Act No. XVI of 2004 w.e.f. 21-05-2004 & by Act III of 2007 wef 20th November, 2006 and the Governors Act of 28 -112018 had been held void by the order of J&K High Court as Pronounced on: 09 .10.2020 in IA No. 48/2014 & CM Nos. 4036, 4065 of 2020 in PIL No.19/2011 Prf S.K Bhalla Petitioner(s)/Appellant(s) Vs State of J&K and others (Respondents). Though late senior J&K leader, President of Democratic Azad party and ex J&K Chief Minister Ghulam Nazi Azad who surely well knew the units of the J&K Permanent Resident Community, including thousands of small cultivators and even some residential lease holders even of the times of 1950s/1960s who had been affected by

the developments in 2020 Oct has been saying while addressing public meetings like the one in R.S. Pura as reported by PTI on 23 -12-2023 that he would restore the Roshni scheme if his party is voted to power in Jammu and Kashmir saying "My priority is to get back the Roshni scheme since it was largely benefiting people. Its abolition has dented the economic prosperity of the people." How meaningful it would have been had Mr. Azad / his then Party would have become a party when the Jammu and Kashmir State Lands (Vesting of Ownership to the Occupants) Act, 2001 Act No. XII of 2001 was made to tie with already going on PIL on encroachments in J&K High court may more information about the cases pertaining to Roshni scheme would have come before the court and the status would not have been like the one where the repute of J&K Legislature/J&K Administration/J&K Revenue department / thousands of genuine unauthorized small occupants / lease holders would not have been unduly maligned since may be before J&K High Court the scheme / Legislature was

not well defended in 2020. Why should Ghulam Nabi Azad waid for getting into government, he can still find legal remedies in facts that thousands of affected beneficiaries were not made party in the case..

In 2001 it was estimated that govt lands under unauthorized occupations may be around 20,00000 kanals and that would given to occupants where from about Rs.250000 Cr would be available for financing power projects but with the changed objects of the government it was estimated during 2007 that around 17 Lakh kanal was agriculture land so on that basis the estimated amount that could be realised was surely to be reduced by around Rs.21080 Cr making the estimated recoveries to fall from Rs.250000 Cr to below Rs.4000 Cr even if all 20 Lakh Kanal land (nearly 3 Lakh Kanal non Agri and 17 Lakh Agri lands) were transferred to occupants where as in terms of CAG report tabled in J&K Legislative Assembly in March 2014 only 3,48,160 kanals Kanals of land {nearly 0.08 Lakh Kanal non Agri land

(6949 kanals residential use, 990 kanals commercial use, 130 kanals lands in urban areas/ town out of 0.08 Lakh kanal) and 3,40,091 kanals Agri land } out of 20 Lakh Kanal had been cleared in seven years (from 2007 to 2013) by Revenue Department for giving ownership rights to those occupying government lands. No doubt there could be a few cases where wrong or favoured identification of occupant / category of land might have been done but that cannot be attributed in general as wrong intentions of all the officers of revenue department / Administration and even the Legislature as have been the general comments / observations from segments on the framers of the said Act / the Administration implementing the said Act on ground / or the beneficiaries of the said Act and more so naming the Act in 2020 as Rs. 250000 Cr land seam after a Judgement of J&K High Court in a PIL. To be continued

(The writer is Sr Journalist and social activist)