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Centre augmenting Oxygen Plants, COVID infrastructure in Northeast: Dr Jitendra

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Union Minister of (Independent Charge) State Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh on Monday said that Ministry of DoNER is taking proactive steps in augmenting and supplementing Oxygen Plants and other COVID related infrastructure in all the North-Eastern States.

In a high level on-line review meeting with senior officials of the Ministry of North East (DoNER) and North Eastern Council (NEC) held today, the Minister was informed that an oxygen plant was set up in Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh with financial support provided by the Ministry and efforts are on to set up many more plants in remote and farflung areas of other States.

The Ministry is also actively considering the proposal of Arunachal Government for five mobile oxygen vans at a cost of Rs 5 crore.

Dr Jitendra expressed satisfaction that the united fund of Rs.25 crore given to North Eastern States last March for gap funding to fight the



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh holding a high level online meeting with senior officials of the Ministry of North East (DoNER) and North Eastern Council (NEC) to review COVID related measures in the North Eastern States

at New Delhi on Monday. COVID-19 outbreak effectively has proved a boon for many states for purchase of vital health equipment in many hospitals.

He however added that there is no

shortage of oxygen in any of the North Eastern States and some of them are having surplus stock due to timely supply last year.

In addition, the DoNER Minister also recalled that last year in the early days of lockdown-1, the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DonER) has stepped in preemptively and placed an amount of Rs. 25 Cr at the disposal of North Eastern States for preparatory steps to tackle the pandemic, even though at that time the North Eastern States had not been that much affected so far and many of the States like Sikkim and Manipur were absolutely Corona-free at that time. He said, the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), besides undertaking infrastructural works are concerned, also comes to the aid of North Eastern States in the event of any natural or unnatural calamity.

He cited the example of the earthquake that struck Assam and Arunachal Pradesh last year and the DoNER Ministry immediately took up the responsibility of coordinating between the respective State governments and the Centre, despite the fact that many of the Ministry offi-

cials were down with COVID and he was himself also hospitalised for the same.

The Minister also expressed happiness on being informed that for the second consecutive year, 100 percent budget of the Ministry of DoNER has been spent for the current financial year well in advance before the end of the fiscal.

Dr Jitendra also recalled that soon after the declaration of the Lockdown in March 2020, decision was taken on the intervention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that Air Cargo flights carrying essential supplies will be operated on priority in the North Eastern Region as well as other distant regions including the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, and the Island territories.

The Minister added that this time also all measures are being taken to help the North-Eastern States on priority basis.

Dr Jitendra said that he is in regular touch with all the North Eastern States for any exigency and informed that the Ministry undertook coordination activities on a large scale during the recent earthquake in Assam.

Ration shortage due to supply chain Full Court Reference held to condole demise of senior members breakdown: TFWHNM

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: An online Full Court Reference was held here on Monday to condole the demise of two senior members of J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu, namely Rashpal Singh Jamwal and Narinder Prakash Kotwal, Advocates, who left for

heavenly abode recently. Chief Justice and Judges of Jammu wing of the High Court, Advocate General, D.C.Raina, Chairman of the Presidium of J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu, Surinder Singh, Solicitor Additional General of India at Jammu, members of Bar, officers of the High Court Registry, Judicial Officers and members of the bereaved families joined the Full Court Reference.

Chief Justice, in his reference speech, spoke about the tall stature of Rashpal and Singh Jamwal Narinder Prakash Kotwal and their commitment

of J&K HC Bar Association towards their professional duties. He recalled the wide respect and affection received by both of them from the members of Bar and all concerned with the profession of law He also highlighted their devotion,

Deepak Gupta, President of the Federation said while addressing a press conference on Monday that the lockdown was imposed last year as well and for a long period, but there was no shortage of ration but this time wholesale grain Mandis were not allowed to open in lockdown. On the other side retail gro-

cery shops remained open from $6{:}00~\mathrm{AM}$ to $10{:}00~\mathrm{AM}$ people also bought and commodities essential beyond their requirement just because of apprehensions of lockdown extension. This was the main reason for the shortage



Federation President, Deepak Gupta talking to reporters.

"Retailers did not get supplies for four continuous days and that is why we are facing shortage," he said. Deepak Gupta said that a

day after the Lieutenant Manoj Governor Sinha Market appealed to Associations to voluntarily stagger schedules to reduce crowds, Traders Federation Ware House-Nehru Market Jammu curtailed its market's working hours from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

Federation was the first to announce weekend lockdown from April 24 for four weeks. "We were supposed to open

our shops from Monday but the administration did not allow us to open shops," he said

He appealed the LG and Divisional Commissioner Jammu to allow the wholesale grain Mandis to operate five days in a week so that the proper supply chain of essential commodities can be maintained.

Munish Mahajan, Sr. Vc. President. Abhimanyu Gupta, Jr. Vc. President, Sham Lal Langer, General Secretary, Vishal Gupta, Secretary and Amit Gupta, Cashier were also present.



Bhalla hits out at centre's 'unpreparedness' amid COVID-19 second wave

that the country had faced.

Under the circumstances,

cash-strapped state govern-

ments did their best to

mobilise doctors, nurses,

health workers, testing kits,

hospital beds, ventilators,

oxygen cylinders, etc., to fight

He alleged that the Centre

had failed to rapidly scale up

the production and supply of

the two approved vaccines in

India by providing sufficient

funds and other concessions.

Demanding that as a pre-

liminary measure, Bhalla

said that the Centre should

free "all equipments, instru-

ments, medicines and sup-

port required to prevent and

treat Covid-19" of the

mandatory 12% GST imposi-

"Even basic equipment like

Oxymeters and life saving

critical equipment like venti-

lators are subjected to 20%

GST. In the current state of

affairs, this is inhuman and

The current COVID-19

BJP worker, he keeps trying to

reach every ward and every

lane as far as possible to pro-

vide relief to them by giving

Billawaria said that all the

areas of Gandhi Nagar

untenable," he said.

the pandemic.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Former Minister and senior Congress leader Raman Bhalla amidst allround criticism of the Centre's alleged unpreparedness to contain what is now almost a tidal wave of fresh COVID-19 cases hit out at the Narendra Modi-led Centre for restricting the autonomy of the states at a time when they are required to take emergency measures to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

"India's first case of COVID-19 was detected on 30-01-2020. India's first vaccine shot was administered on 16-01-2021. Between the two dates. and thereafter. there is a saga of tragedy, incompetence and colossal mismanagement," he said.

What transpired was the gross unpreparedness and avoidable adhocism on part of the Modi government in foreseeing, evaluating and managing the crisis," he alleged . He added that the constructive suggestions of the opposition are met with attacks by none other than union minis-No Thinking, No ters. Planning", attacking the Centre of stoking emotions to deal with the pandemic but refraining from taking concrete steps to handle the crisis. At every step, the central government's response was totally inadequate. Worse, the central government did not release sufficient funds to the state governments to fight the worst medical emergency

wave is worrying and people need to take all precautions and follow protocols, Bhalla said.

"In the past one year, speedy action was not taken to combat the COVID-19 pandemic in a planned manner. The fight was not fought with joint efforts of everyone. "Now, the novel coronavirus has returned after changing its form, due to which the situation has become grim. Now, we have to take benefit of our past experience, and soon control the phase-2 of COVID-19, so that its spread can be curtailed. It is good that anti-COVID vaccine is available now, and the vaccination has to be effectively done," Bhalla said.

Bhalla further claimed that government is mostly talking about 'stringent measures' 'saving lives from COVID-19', all in such terms that only scholars with the government at the helm of affairs can speak or understand. People understand differently.

For example, people understand that it is beyond the capacity of the government to provide vaccines to all, which the government tried to conceal by saying 'vaccination isn't open to all but only to those who need it". People think, if there is "vaccine hesitancy", provide the doses to those who are willing or want it. The government said the "aim is not to inculcate all those who want to get vaccinated".

Billawaria starts construction work of lane at Ward 56

tion.

STATE TIMES NEWS JAMMU: BJP leader Baldev Singh Billawaria kick started the construction work of lane

necessary so that people do not face any problem regarding infrastructure in their areas. He stated that Gandh Nagar constituency is moving towards achieving the status of a Model Constituency. He said that the pace of development work will not stop due to Coronavirus and public works will be done in a time bound manner. He said that development is the mantra of the Modi government and we are committed to get every development done in Gandhi Nagar constituency. Jugal Kishore. Rajiv Sharma, Ashok Kaul, Durga Chaudhary, Kuku were present on the occasion.

STATE TIMES NEWS

zeal and readiness to work

for welfare of Bar. Advocate General and Chairman High Court Bar Association, Jammu, spoke

about the life journey and achievements of the departed members of the Bar and remembered their excellence in professional commitments and their contribution to the cause of the profession. They prayed for eternal peace to the departed souls and strength to the bereaved families to bear this

irreparable loss. Full Court Reference closed with standing of participants in silence for one minute in the memory of departed souls and the court work remained suspended for rest of the day.

Federation Ware House-Nehru Market (TFWHNM) on Monday blamed JK UT administration for the short-

Traders

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU:

age of food grains in Jammu and other districts of UT. Federation said that the supply chain breakdown during this lockdown caused shortage of ration in Jammu and other districts.

Passport Office Jammu on Monday unveiled the first edition of annual Hindi magazine "Tavisha".

Rashmi Ranjan Swain, Director General of Police (CID) J&K released the maiden edition of the magazine.

Intimating this, Regional Passport Officer (RPO) N.K Shil said that officials of the office worked hard and made valuable contributions in compiling and accomplishing the first edition of the Hindi magazine themselves

Prime objective is to promote the use of Hindi in official and private work.

Besides, display of literary creative work of staff

Regional Passport Office unveils first edition of

Hindi magazine 'Tavisha'

DGP (CID) J&K, Rashmi Ranjan Swain and RPO N.K Shil releasing annual Hindi magazine Tavisha.

and their family, focus is also on to brief readers regarding basic passport application procedures, he said.

Shil praised the efforts and exercise undertaken especially by co-ordinators

viz Gaurav and Diwakar for the successful compilation and accomplishment of the publishing job.

Also appreciating the employees for their creative work, valuable contributions and active participazeal and enthusiasm. said that he would keep his effort to continue this special supplement in future in order to enrich staff aesthetic value.

tions with a great degree of

He also expressed hope that such publication of Hindi magazine and collective participation by the staff will help encourage and promote usage of Hindi as a language in daily professional and personal lives. While inaugurating, Swain lauded the efforts of passport officials for their artistic work and valuable passport making messages depicted in the magazine.

Among the others, few staff of PO Jammu and CID were present on the inaugural ceremony.

drain at ward 56 of Gandhi Nagar constituency by following the rules of social distance with the goal of Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas Sabka Vishwas of the Modi's Government.

This work which was started in Gangyal Sector 3 will improve the area's problem.

On this occasion, Billawaria said that the central government of BJP is with the common man at every step and the ground effect of the work that the central government has done in the last 6 years has started to show.

The citation for which has been dedicated to the public by creating a nursing college in Gangyal. With this, he also said that a big hospital in Gangyal is also being ready; it



BJP leader Baldev Singh Billawaria interacting with residents.

work.

will be soon and dedicated to the public He said that no prime minis-

ter has done as much for India's development as PM Modi has in his six years. He said that the Modi government at the Center is continuously

Assembly are given priority working to provide better faciland development works are ities to the people and as a taken on priority wherever

Prof Seema takes charge as HoD Pharmacology, GMC STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Prof Seema Gupta took over the charge of Professor & Head of the Department of Pharmacology, Government Medical College, Jammu on Monday on account of elevation of Dr. Brij Mohan Gupta, Principal, Govt. Medical College, Rajouri.

Dr Seema Gupta is a alumni of this prestigious institute Govt. Medical College, Jammu and graduated in the year 1992.

She joined Department of Pharmacology in 1997 and passed out as postgraduate in 2000. She worked as Demonstrator for four and a half years joined and faculty/Lecturer in 2005.March Subsequently, she was promoted as Professor in

She has many research publications and book chapters to her credit. Besides being the popular

teacher among graduate/postgraduate, Dr Seema is known for her dedication and her discipline and has always believed to work as a team. On asked, she said her priority shall be to contribute in different capacities in current covid pandemic and continue to take the department to further heights of excellence with regard to education and research.

Prof Seema Gupta taking over

charge of Professor & HoD

Pharmacology. GMC

Declare journalists as frontline warriors: Congress to LG

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress on Monday urged the Lt Governor do declare the journalists as frontline COVID warriors on the occasion of world Press Freedom Day today.

JKPCC Chief spokesperson Ravinder Sharma urged the Lt Governor of Jammu and Kashmir UT to declare the journalists as frontline warriors of COVID in order to cover them under the risk insurance and other government relief in the grim COVID situation.

Several state governments have already declared them as frontline warriors and covered their risk.

Lauding the journalists who are taking great risk to cover the very serious situation of COVID-02 and are doing service to humanity and highlighting the shortcomings in the system to come to the rescue of suffering people, Sharma said this could be best way to remember and celebrate the Press Freedom Day.

Navin reviews progress on implementation of APEDA, AFC project Agriculture Jammu, strategy for setting up agriproducts of J&K. He

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Principal Secretary. Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Department, Navin Kumar Choudhary on Monday chaired a meeting to discuss the implementation of project; 'Developing Export Oriented Agri and Horti- Enterprises for Enhancing Farmers' Income in Pristine Himalayan Region of Jammu & Kashmir' aimed to boost exports of agriculture and horticulture products of Jammu & Kashmir.

Director Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Dr Tarun Bajaj, Secretary APEDA. Dr Sudhanshu. Managing Director Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC), B Ganeshan. Director

Director Agriculture Director Kashmir. Horticulture Jammu and Director Horticulture Kashmir participated in the meeting through video conferencing. The meeting discussed

implementation of the project; Developing Export Oriented Agri & Horti-Enterprises for Enhancing Farmers' Income in Pristine Himalayan Region of Jammu & Kashmir', being implemented by APEDA with AFC. Under the project, production, processing and marketing of selected agriculture and horticulture products of J&K would be done to boost the local economv.

During the meeting, the Principal Secretary was informed through a powerpoint presentation about the

export zones for apple and walnut besides promotion of key crops of J&K like saffron, basmati and cherry. The project has been designed to promote and market these products in

international markets like the Middle East, Australia, Singapore and United States.

Under the project, the proposal constitutes setting up of five to six storage, packaging and processing clusters through convergence. The project would also ensure scientific measures like soil-water testing and residual analysis in addition to logistics and exports integration.

On the ocassion, the Principal Secretary lauded the proposal and shared his experience with respect to various agri-horticulture informed that a 400 hectare high density plantation for apples has been created and an additional 1000 hectare land is to be added towards such plantation in the subsequent years.

During the meeting, the Principal Secretary highlighted about the high market potential of various crops of Jammu & Kashmir besides those selected under the project initially.

Choudharv Navin remarked that gucchi mushrooms have recently been granted GI tag and there is ample need to promote it among premium consumers of the world. He also mentioned about the rich variety of organic mushrooms and honey and called for their promotion. The Principal Secretary

highlighted about the exotic mushk buji rice, trout fish of Kashmir valley and said that the department is working on increasing trout production by two-three times this year. He also highlight-

> be a milk surplus region, adding that there is a need to process milk into high value products like cheese.

The Principal Secretary sought APEDA's support in speedily providing GI tags to other specialties of Jammu & Kashmir like zeera and praised the aromatic bas-Kashmiri chilly.

mati rice of RS Pura and said that more farmers need to cultivate the crop through organic methods. He said that Farmers Producers Organisations need to be formed for systematic testing, certification and promo-

tion of such product. Navin Choudhary also ed that next year J&K would

2019.