

Now even non-domicile can file J&K related RTI: Dr Jitendra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh, who is also Minister Incharge DoPT to which the Central Information Commission is affiliated, disclosed on Friday that consequent to the passing of J&K Reorganisation Act 2019, the J&K Right to Information Act 2009 and the Rules there under have since been repealed and the Central Right to Information Act 2005 and the Rules there under were enforced from 31.10.2019.

As a consequence to this, the difference now is that, unlike in the past, even a non-Domicile or a non-State subject of Jammu & Kashmir is entitled to file RTI related to UT issues or agencies.

Addressing the 14th Special General Body Meeting of National Federation of Information Commissions of India (NFICI) at CIC Bhawan here, Dr Jitendra Singh lauded the Central Information Commission for achieving consistent decline in pendency with corresponding rise in disposal of the Right To Information (RTI) appeals. He said, he was pleased to note that the pendency reduced from about 40,000 cases last year to around 27,000 cases at present, while the disposal of cases increased from 17017 in 2020-21 to 28901 in 2021-22.

The Union Minister said, ever since the Modi Government came to power



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh addressing 14th Special General Body Meeting of National Federation of Information Commissions of India (NFICI), at CIC Bhawan, Munirka, New Delhi on Friday.

in 2014, Transparency, Accountability and Citizen-Centricity became the hallmark of the Governance Model. He said that in the last eight years, every conscious decision was taken to strengthen the Independence and Resources of the Information Commissions.

The Minister noted that empowered citizens are an important pillar of democracy and the Central Information Commission will continue to work for empowering the people through information.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, transparency and accountability are very essential for democratic and participative governance and all steps will be taken to fulfil the aspirations and expectations of the people of India.

He said, today all major decisions and information are in public domain and we have achieved transparency with credibility, which is the hallmark of the Modi Government.

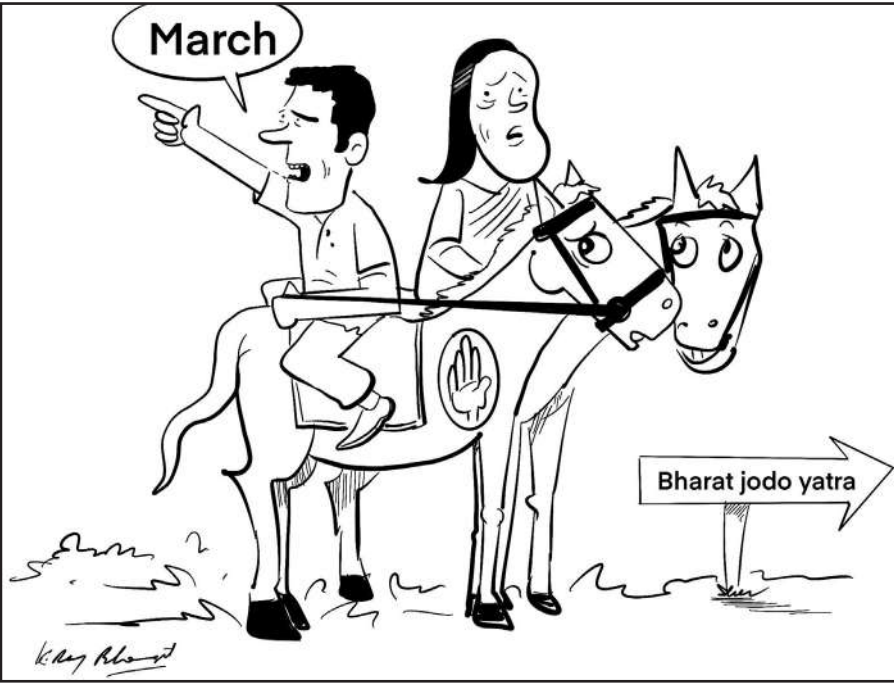
Dr Singh said, the unprecedented pandemic posed a serious challenge to many Information Commissions including the Central Information Commission, but earnest efforts were made by CIC and SICs to dispose RTI second appeals and complaints and some Commissions even exceeded pre-Pandemic figures of disposal during certain periods. He also mentioned that June 2020 saw higher disposal of cases in CIC in comparison to the pre-pandemic year of 2019. The Minister said, this became possible due to the innovative approach of shifting into virtual mode (audio-video) for hearing

and disposal of cases.

Dr Jitendra also pointed out that it was during the challenging times of pandemic in May, 2020, the Central Information Commission started entertaining, hearing and disposing of RTIs from the newly created Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, through virtual means. He said, applicants from J&K and Ladakh were allowed to file RTI applications from home and even for appeals to the CIC.

Dr Singh referred to a number of new initiatives taken under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to improve the functioning of the Central Information Commission and to ensure prompt disposal of RTI appeals. The Minister also noted that it was during the Modi government that a 24 hours' portal service was introduced for e-filing of the RTI applications during any part of the day or night and from any part of the country or abroad. It was during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tenure, he said, that the office of Central Information Commissioner was shifted to its own exclusive office complex.

19 States are taking part in today's 14th Special General Body Meeting of National Federation of Information Commissions of India (NFICI) at CIC Bhawan in ensuring proper administration of the RTI regime as well as speedy disposal of cases thus reducing pendency.



IkkJutt Jammu protests against evolving dangerous situation for minorities in Bhadarwah

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Cadres of IkkJutt Jammu under the direction of its President Ankur Sharma assembled today at Press Club Jammu under the leadership of its Youth President IkkJutt Jammu to protest against the evolving situation in Bhadarwah.

The party cadres shouted slogans and criticised the Govt for creating an ecosystem where radical elements standing from religious institutions are openly abusing Hindu Gods and Goddesses, mother Cow and issuing life threats to individuals.

Quoting Ankur Sharma through his tweet on the issue Ajay Singh Saini said, "Abusing Hindu Gods, Mother Cow & issuing death threats naming individuals from Bhaderwah Masjid amidst a cheering Muslim crowd speaks volumes about the Militarised Character of the Indoctrinated Masses. Merely an FIR won't suffice. We need to demolish Jihadi Infrastructure".

The protesting members of IkkJutt Jammu party



IkkJutt Jammu activists raising slogans during a protest.

stressed the need to taking head on against the infrastructure of radicalisation and indoctrination. Govt lackadaisical attitude on the issue is creating a situation which may later prove fatal for the Hindu Sikh minorities of J&K. Our party President is repeatedly getting SoS calls from people of Kishtwar and they are asking questions like: Are we living in Pakistan? Is J&K an Islamic State how will Non Muslims survive in Kishtwar? Why is the Govt throwing us to the wolves? Should we migrate?

Describing separation of Jammu from Kashmir as a separate state coupled with division of Kashmir into two Union Territories as the ultimate solution to problems on J&K, IkkJutt Cadres appealed Jammu province's general public to strengthen their hands in the ensuing fight for their survival and existence.

Others who participated in the protest include Suresh Sharma, Manik Jamwal, Rahul Sharma, Virender Abrol, Arvind Kotwal, Sorav Chib, Reshab Singh, Prince, Janu Sharma and Sanjeev.

CCI urges people to maintain brotherhood, communal harmony & tranquility



President CCI Jammu, Arun Gupta addressing a press conference.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CCI), Jammu, raised serious concern over the prevailing situation in the Bhadarwah town.

Addressing media persons here on Friday, Arun Gupta, President CCI Jammu, said that the situation in Bhadarwah is grave.

"A well-planned conspiracy was hatched by some unscrupulous elements to divide the people and make them fight (against) each other to destroy century old communal harmony and brotherhood of people of the town," he said.

Arun Gupta mentioned that the recent selective innocent

killings and incident of vandalizing Shri Vasuki Nag Ji Temple at Kailash Kund in Bhaderwah is not the only one as there are certain elements who want to vitiate the peaceful environment by repeatedly doing such acts which are totally unacceptable.

Arun Gupta appealed to both the communities of Bhadarwah town to play their crucial role in combating growing tendencies of intolerance and hate, saying societal renaissance holds key to bind communities and regions together, especially in a diverse state like Jammu and Kashmir.

He asked them to remain vigilant from the anti-nation-

al elements who are trying to create wedge between the communities for their vested interests. He asked people of Bhadarwah town to come forward and expose such elements who are enemy of peace, prosperity and tranquility.

Arun Gupta appealed to the LG's administration to act stringently against the culprits as such repeated incident has the potential to escalate communal tension.

Among others who were present in the press conference include Anil Gupta, Sr. Vice President, Rajeev Gupta, Jr. Vice President, Gaurav Gupta, Secretary General, Rajesh Gupta, Secretary and Rajesh Gupta, Treasurer.

Jammu's pluralistic ethos will defeat hatemongers: Rana

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Cautioning against machinations of straining the time tested inclusive and pluralistic ethos of Jammu, senior BJP leader and former MLA Devender Singh Rana on Friday called for identifying, exposing and isolating the elements inimical to peace and tranquility.

Jammu's tryst with harmony is strong enough to withstand the vicious onslaught of hate mongers, Rana said while interacting with the people at Palpad during his visit to the area.



Prominent BJP leader Devender Singh Rana addressing public meeting.

He said pluralistic Jammu's ethos of inclusiveness and harmony is the strong citadel against forces who want to disturb the secular fabric of the region.

Rana said the people, irrespective of region and religion, are sagacious enough to see through the attempts of dividing the society and resolute enough to thwart the designs of peace-breakers by maintaining unity and brotherhood.

Glowing tributes paid to Prof Bhim Singh

Follow Bhim Singh's ideal of Haq & Insaaf: Speakers urge youth

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Glowing tributes were paid to Sher-e-Duggar Prof. Bhim Singh Chairman J&K National Panthers Party in a Shradhanjali Samaroh here on Friday. People from various walks of life including politicians, social activists, lawyers, traders, students paid floral tributes to Late Prof. Bhim Singh, a great visionary, statesman and internationally renowned human rights activist.

Prominent among those who paid tributes to Prof. Bhim Singh were former Minister & senior BJP leader Ajaatshatru Singh, Advocate Sheikh Shakil, former Minister G S Charak, Spiritual leader Sahil Maharaj, JPPF Vice President M S Katoch, Bar Association Jammu General Secretary Surjeet Singh Andotra, Team Jammu Chairman Zorawar Jamwal, Senior Advocate Balbir Singh Manhas, RTI Activist Balwinder Singh, Ex-VC Central University Ashok Aima, Minority Cell President Desh Rattan, ex-MLA Faqir Chand, J&K Teacher Union Chairman Ganesh Khajuria,



Dignitaries paying tributes to Sher-e-Duggar Prof. Bhim Singh Chairman JKNNP in a Shradhanjali Samaroh.

J&K Plus 2 Lecturer Forum Chairman R S Slathia, Young Lawyers Association president Rohit Sharma, Ajaat Jamwal president JK Unity Foundation, Atul Sudan, President JJSF and senior AAP leader, J&K Dharmarth Trust General Secretary Gopal Parthasarathi Sharma, Mohinder Pal Pandu, Anil Rakwal, president Maharaja Gulab Singh Brigade.

Dogra Kranti Dal president Balwant Singh Mankotia in his opening remarks

spoke about life & struggle of Prof. Bhim Singh born in a small & far flung village Bugthrian of Ramnagar in district Udhampur who did his Barrister at Law from London, World Peace tour on motorcycle covering 136 countries, his friendship with Saddam Hussain, Yassar Arafat and his numerous encounters with enemies of Indian Nation at International conferences, seminars and other forums.

Speakers on the occasion highlighted the contributions of Prof. Bhim Singh for Indian Nation, people of erstwhile Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir especially people of Jammu. They said that Prof. Bhim Singh was not only a legal luminary but a humanist, die hard fighter, selfless politician and a human being par excellence. His forays into Supreme Court and international fora were alike path breaking. Speakers highlighted the qualities of head and heart of Prof. Bhim Singh. They said that contributions of Prof. Singh should be chronicled and his ideals and teachings, his fight for "Haq and Insaaf" of the common and oppressed masses should lead the future younger generations. Atul Sudan conducted the programme while Capt. Anil Gaur presented the vote of thanks. Prominent among others present were Pankaj Slathia, Paramveer Singh Rinku, Hari Singh Jalmeria, PK Ganju, Bansil Lal Sharma, Gagan Pratap Singh, Advocate Virender Thakur, Advocate Ashok Bhagat, S Daljit Singh and Samar Slathia.

GMC Jammu organises awareness lecture on 'Yoga for Mind'

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: As a part of ongoing celebrations of Yoga Mahotsav, a lecture on 'Yoga for Mind' was organized at the NMNC Hall of GMC, Jammu.

Dr Shashi Sudan Sharma, Principal and Dean, Medicine was the Chief Guest on the occasion. In her address, she said that in the present times almost everyone faces stress in daily life but the health care workers during the last three years have faced much more stressful situations than the common citizen in the society. She further said that a fit mind in a fit body can serve the ailing humanity in the best possible manner to achieve the overall objective of holistic health



Dr. Shashi Sudan Sharma, Principal and Dean, Medicine presenting bouquet to Dr Arvind Jasrotia, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Law and Registrar, JU.

which is the concept followed in our country for thousands of years. Dr Arvind Jasrotia, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Law and Registrar, University of Jammu, who is well known for his special passion for Yoga and Vedanta, delivered a soulful

and enlightening lecture on the subject. Prof. Jasrotia said that the cultural and spiritual heritage of India is both vast as well as rich covering all aspects of human life. The source of such heritage lies in the Upanishads. The ancient

Indian mystics, having realized the innate divinity, infinitude, luminosity and blissfulness of the self, revealed fundamental principles of this perennial philosophy to the seekers of truth who had gone to them with questions of deep spiritual import about the nature of life itself. Quoting extensively from Swami Vivekananda and Upanishads, he said that spiritual humanism expounded by these sacred teachings are intensely practical deriving its strength from the divinity that pervades all. People should develop the spirit of humanism gradually until it unfurls and blossoms into a divine. He cited verses for the 'Mundkopanishad

and Mandukya Upanishad' and discussed the three states of consciousness and how the waking, dreaming and deep sleep appear in one pure consciousness and at what stage the world appears as reflection of one's own real self. He also referred to the concept of gross, subtle and causal bodies and ways to transcend them. He said that when we become one with the pure consciousness then whole world appears as manifestation of the same self and action performed in the world becomes yoga. He also briefly touched the yoga of the Bhagvad gita. Dr Rakesh Bahl, Professor, Department of Community Medicine compared the programme.



Traders and BJP leaders paying tributes to Rajesh Gupta.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A large number of traders under the banner of Traders Federation Ware House Nehru Market on Friday paid floral tributes to former MLA Rajesh Gupta in a function

held at Ware House Jammu.

Traders expressed grief over Gupta's demise at a young age and called him a dynamic leader who tirelessly worked for public welfare.

BJP JK UT President Ravinder Raina, Dy. Mayor Purnima Sharma, Ex-Dy CM Kavinder Gupta, Former Minister Sat Sharma, former MoS Priya Sethi, former MLC Vikram Randhawa, BJP JK UT Vice President Yudhvir Sethi and family members of Late Rajesh Gupta also attended the Shradhanjali Sabha and paid floral tributes to Late Rajesh Gupta.

Munish Mahajan, Senior Vice President, Abhimanyu Gupta, Vice President, Sham Lal Langer, General Secretary, Vishal Gupta, Secretary, Amit Gupta, Cashier of Federation and a large number of traders were present in the Shradhanjali Sabha.