

Rural development begins in J&K after 2014: Sukhnandan

Rs 20 cr CRF road work resumed, defunct Tubewell flushed after 3 years



Senior BJP leader Ch Sukhnandan Kumar after starting flushing work of defunct Tubewell at Kangar Panchayat Upper Bhalwal in Nagrota constituency.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, former Minister and Senior BJP leader Ch Sukhnandan Kumar said that Babu ji had said country's soul resides in villages. Thus, if you've to make this country complete and independent, you'll have to do it for the villages.

The development in rural J&K began when PM Modi came to power in 2014, said Sukhnandan after starting the flushing work of defunct Tubewell at Kangar Panchayat Upper Bhalwal in Nagrota constituency.

Sukhnandan also got resumed the work at Jaswan Panchayat in Marh constituency under Rs 20 crores CRF road scheme which was closed due to corona epidemic. This project has been started under languishing works scheme.

Rural development is essential for making the country independent in the real sense and our soul resides in villages, Sukhnandan said while highlighting PM Modi-led BJP government's work towards rural development.

"The aspect of rural

development is to make villages convenient. For this, remote connectivity of villages is necessary. There was no electricity in the village, BJP gave it to them," Choudhary Sukhnandan said.

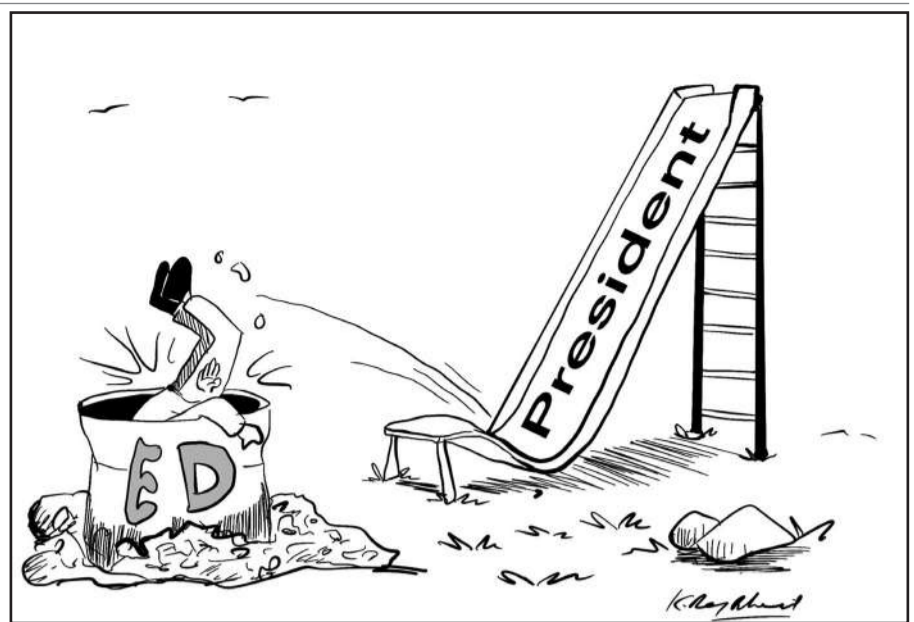
In an attack on Congress, Sukhnandan asked Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi 'What did you do for the poor for the last 58 years.' "Rahul baba is always criticising Narendra Modi. My question to him is, 'Your four generations ruled, you ruled for 58 years, what did you do for the poor?' Modi government gave

houses to the needy and provided toilets and electricity. Congress worked to eradicate the poor in the name of poverty alleviation, BJP and Modi government worked to eradicate poverty," the former minister Sukhnandan said. Villagers also raised slogans in favour of BJP and Ch Sukhnandan Zindabad.. Zindabad. Senior citizens also welcomed Ch Sukhnandan Kumar for sparing time to come to their village and address their issues related to water scarcity. The tubewell was defunct for the last three years and no

one was coming here to address our problem.

Elaborating further the Centre government's efforts for development, Sukhnandan said that Modi has asked for maximising the reach and utilisation of government schemes in rural areas that no one is left out, and promised that there would be no shortage of funds to develop villages. He also called for an end to the silo-approach among agencies working in rural India and asked officials to work harder to help bring more start-ups to villages.

Others who attended the function include Sarpanch Mohamed Ameen Kangar Panchayat, DDC member Balbir Lal Sarpanches Mulakh Raj, Narinder Singh, Capt Rattan Singh, Secretary Langleh Biradari, Anita Langleh, Executive Member Kissan Morcha, Sham Lal, District General Secretary and other prominent residents of the adjoining areas.



Chugh condemns attack on Kabul Gurdwara, demands security for minorities

STATE TIMES NEWS

CHANDIGARH: BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh on Saturday strongly condemned attack on a Gurdwara near Kabul in which two persons were killed.

Chugh regretted that the entire premises of Gurdwara Dashmesh Pita Sahib was set on fire between cross battle security forces with militants.



He said about 25-30 Afghan Hindus and Sikhs were present in Gurdwara for

their morning prayers. The security guard of the Gurdwara is said to be among those killed.

Chugh demanded that the Afghanistan government must provide adequate security to minorities and their worship places and said that it was highly reprehensible that due to internal strife minorities have been living in fear and uncertainty.

J&K Bank Chief calls on Dr Jitendra

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: MD & CEO Jammu & Kashmir Bank, Baldev Prakash, who has recently taken over his current assignment, called on Union Minister, Dr Jitendra Singh and presented a brief about his personal profile as well as current new initiatives envisaged for the J&K Bank.

Welcoming him into his new role, Dr Jitendra Singh said, J&K Bank has a rich legacy, having been founded even before the independence of India. It is, therefore, in the best interest of upholding the respectability of banking services as well as citizens' benefits that the bank is managed with the highest professional norms, he said.

The Union Minister said, in recent times, J&K bank had been, on certain occasions, in the news for wrong reasons. He said, it is, therefore, the responsibility of all the stakeholders to restore the Bank to its earlier credibility. For this purpose, he said, it is important that the banking officials conduct themselves with the



Recently appointed MD & CEO Jammu & Kashmir Bank, Baldev Prakash calling on Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh, at New Delhi on Saturday.

highest integrity and at the same time the outside or extraneous influences also resist from interfering in the working of the Bank.

Dr Jitendra appreciated the role of J&K Bank in facilitating the implementation of new Industrial Policy in the Union Territory.

He said, with increasing investments from outside the UT, the bank management

will have to present its most friendly face which should encourage the investors from far and wide to invest, with the confidence of "ease of doing business".

Baldev Prakash thanked Dr Jitendra. He said, he will try to do his best and at the same time requested the Minister to keep providing him with his advice and inputs from time to time.

Industrial associations seek exemption from Power tariff hike, measures to save existing units

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In an unprecedented move, the heads of all associations related to industries and commerce after long time have come on a single platform to initiate a decisive campaign to save the industrial units of Jammu region.

In this regard a joint meeting of heads of various industrial associations was held here on Saturday at the Chamber House in which Arun Gupta President CCI Jammu, Rajesh Jain Chairman of Federation of Industries, Lalit Mahajan President Bari Brahmama Industries Association and Vijay Aggarwal President Association of Industries Samba participated.

The first issue is that pertaining to the demand for exempting industrial sector from proposed power tariff increase and second one is that of extension of validity of Provisional registration of industrial units.



Industrial Associations Presidents and CCI office bearers during a meeting at Jammu.

Arun Gupta raised serious concern over the proposal of hike in power tariff by JPDCCL.

He said that the proposed hike shall not only hit the existing industrial units below the belt but would also send bad signal to the upcoming investors in J&K for which the government is making relentless efforts.

Rajesh Jain said that the Apex Project Clearance Committee in its meeting held on December 8, 2021 granted extension in the validity of provisional registration upto June 30, 2022 to the units which had not

commenced production within the stipulated time.

He added that such industrial units are in the process of commencement of production but due to certain unavoidable circumstances including non-sanctioning of loan, delay in supply of machinery by the supplier, non issuance of certificate from PCB, non-sanctioning of power, etc they are not in a position to commence their production before June 30, 2022.

He appealed to the government to take effective steps by extending the validity of provisional registration of

the aforesaid industrial units by at least one year.

Lalit Mahajan said that on one hand the Govt is asking multinational companies to invest in Jammu and Kashmir while on the other hand it is not thinking seriously about the existing industries that are suffering due to multiple factors especially that of shortage of power that has created a crisis situation out of which it is almost impossible to come out without Govt's active support and augmentative measures.

He said that the Govt should frame power policies

which are industries friendly, failing which the PM's dream of enormous investments in J&K will get defeated.

Vijay Aggarwal said that the Industrialists are highly irked by the Anti-Existing Industries stance of the Govt as its successive steps or initiatives taken during the past two years seem to be devoid of any help and assistance to the already existing industrial units in Jammu and Kashmir.

He accused the Govt of deliberately not paying heed to the concerns of existing industrial units for the reasons best known to the Union Territory Administration.

Those who were present in the meeting include Gaurav Gupta, Secretary General CCI, Rajesh Gupta, Secretary, Rajesh Gupta, Treasurer, Jagdish Langer, Rahul Bansal, S.B. Abrol, Ravnish Gulati, Virender Jain, Vishal Gupta and Malhotra.

Agnipath agitation 'Copybook' of farmers' agitation initiated by opposition: Kavinder

Slams opposition for making hue & cry over scheme

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Kavinder Gupta has termed the ongoing agitation a carbon copy of the 'toolkit' of farmers' agitation which is evident from the fact that most of the protest demonstrations are being organized by the political parties especially those in opposition with students rarely seen in these protests.

In a statement issued to media here on Saturday, the former Dy Chief Minister stated that it is really surprising to find that the Union Govt's initiative to expand the avenues of employment for the youth of the nation are being opposed by those who could



be the would be beneficiaries of the unique Agnipath Scheme.

He said that it is most probably first time in the history of the world that a meticulously tailored scheme on the basis of a symbiotic relationship that on one hand ensures the best disciplined future for the nation's youth while on the other hand it aims at

making the defence forces of the nation par excellent with the latest state of art digital technology being utilized to ensure precision based strategies to defend the nation by carrying the offensives against the enemies with no room at all with a miss situation.

Kavinder said that the campaign against Agnipath is being carried out at the behest of the opposition to create law and order situation within their nation which is quite shameful.

While the Home Minister as well as the governments of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana besides others have already elaborated about the scheme clarifying all the misconceptions, the

hue and cry raised by the agitators and their lords, rather handlers is absolutely unjustified, he added.

The former Dy Chief Minister said that the paltry number of youth being exploited by the opposition should themselves go through the details of the scheme and see its enormous benefits. They must realize that they are citizens of the largest democracy of the world and a democratic form can't be run by the rioters and the government will never work at the mercy of rioters and arsonists. He said that in a democratic set up there are peaceful means to express resentment. Those aggrieved have the option to

approach judiciary or else make use of ballot accordingly at the time of elections. They must realize that in a democracy ballot and not rioting or arson is the solution. In fact by resorting to rioting and arson they will only get booked under law and spoil their future prospects.

Besides, the senior BJP leader also lauded the decision of Modi Government to enhance the age limit of candidates for recruitment under the Agnipath scheme from 21 to 23 years. He appealed to the agitating youth not to fall in the trap of those misleading them and stop violence and vandalization before it is too late.

Fashion Communication student supports Reasi women in promotion of local handicraft

STATE TIMES NEWS

REASI: Mehak Sirohi, a fashion communication student from Symbiosis Institute of Design, Pune, has been awarded for her contribution towards the promotion of the local handicraft of Chabhari and Binna and supporting the women of the Nahri Pehehaan cluster in their endeavors to uplift this forgotten art.

She was presented a certificate by the Deputy Commissioner, Babila Rakwal for her efforts and participation in the initiative which was started by the UMEED scheme under the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihood Mission (JKRLM).

Over the course of a week, Mehak visited the artisans and helped them in expanding their craft by suggesting design solutions and ideas,



DC Reasi, Babila Rakwal presenting certificate to Mehak Sirohi, a fashion communication student from SID Pune.

creating a social media presence for their brand, Chabhari, giving them media exposure and reach, and empowering them to continue working on this beautiful age-old craft and reviving their Dogra culture with just as much passion and zeal.

Though she was here for a college project on the history of crafts in India, choosing

her home state and witnessing the efforts and work of these women, made her believe that she made absolutely the right decision.

With the assurance of returning soon, Mehak Sirohi promised to promote and support the traditional handicrafts of Jammu and Kashmir back in Pune as well as in the rest of the country.

Poor frequency of train services causing hardships for women passengers, tourists

SHAKEELA ANDRABI

SRINAGAR: Commuters using Banihal-Baramulla rail services are facing several hardships due to less frequency of trains. The service in Kashmir Valley was resumed in March last year after remaining suspended for around 11 months due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Former Railway minister Piyush Goel had once claimed that the resumption of train service would enhance ease of movement and give a major boost to the tourism sector. But the ground reality is quite different, as railway authorities have not resumed full operation.

According to officials, "We are trying to increase number of train services according to graded manner. Already 50 per cent trains are running and more will be added gradually."

Currently, only five trains which are fully reserved are in operation and daily commuters including tourists are facing several hardships. It is pertinent to mention here, when COVID lockdown was announced, all rail services were cancelled and after eleven months, rail service from Banihal to Srinagar resumed with some mandatory protocol. Many passengers, including women

and tourists, demanded that the frequency of trains be increased to avoid the rush hour. Maintaining social distancing norms inside compartments after the resumption of services is a challenge for railway authority, as COVID cases are once again on the rise. Railway police personnel and other officials can be seen making futile attempts to control surge of passengers at stations, especially at Anantnag, Srinagar and other sections.

In Srinagar -Baramulla section, trains are relatively less congested. Crowds were witnessed at several places, including Badgam,

Awantipora and Nowgam Srinagar.

Considering the needs of the commuters, the railway should gradually increase the services as country is witnessing an increase in COVID-19 once again. However, in morning and evening hours, the trains are crowded with women passengers, which can further result into increase in COVID-19 cases. "As women passengers are not allotted any time slots in morning or afternoon, the maximum number of women are dependent on local bus services while returning from their work place. Hence, the long gap between trains leads to

crowds, especially for local women passengers. "I travel from Srinagar to Anantnag daily during peak morning and evening hours. Rail service is not running with full frequency and no new or special train has been inducted yet as well as gap between trains are of two to three hours, which causes more rush, especially during peak hours," said Sumaira Maqbool from Srinagar. "Crowd leads to violation of social distancing and other safety precautions. Hence, increasing frequency will reduce risk following safety norms while traveling," said Sara Akhter, another commuter from Anantnag.

UT Admn ignoring interests of people, tourists in Srinagar: Sawhney

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Former Minister J&K and senior Congress leader Yogesh Sawhney on Saturday condemned J&K UT government for fixing timings of Chashm-e-Shahi garden between 10 AM and 5 PM. Criticizing the policy, he said that while all gardens will remain open till 8 PM, the Chashm-e-Shahi gardens will be closed for public at 5 PM merely for bureaucratic convenience. "Restrictions on visiting hours have never existed before, even during peak of terrorism in the region. Today, the place attracts tourists in massive numbers and yet LG administration has placed this barrier. Chashm-e-Shahi is a beautiful cultural spot as one of the Mughal gardens built back in 1632. However, after 5 PM people are not allowed to enter," he said.



Sawhney further added that it is result of bureaucrats misusing their powers for their own benefit and convenience. "The timings have been set keeping in mind that bureaucrats and officials aren't disturbed. It is a very wrong step as far as people are concerned and the LG administration should rethink on this immediately and change the timings. Surprisingly, not even during the worst of times were visiting hours shortened to this extent and there is no sensible reason why they should be this way now. People should have access to the gardens and allowed to enjoy the same within a reasonable span during a day," said Sawhney. Demanding that Government must extend visiting hours for public to Chashm-e-Shahi garden, Sawhney said that bureaucrats should not be allowed to misuse their powers for their convenience.