

CCI, FoI delegation calls on LG Sinha, highlight various issues related to traders

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A joint delegation of Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Jammu, and Federation of Industries on Tuesday called on Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and submitted a charter of demands highlighting the issues and demands of the industrialists and traders of the region.

During the meeting, Arun Gupta, President CCI Jammu appreciated the efforts of Lt Governor for giving his valuable time, bringing J&K on industrial map of the country and making all efforts to bring investment from outside the state for the betterment of the youth of the Union Territory.

Rajesh Jain, President FOI Jammu apprised the Lt Governor that the existing industry is feeling neglect as the same is providing employment to the local youth with very small investment while upcoming industry shall fetch more incentives and provide less employment.

Arun Gupta said the "JPDCI has proposed hike in power tariff to the tune of approximately 70% and fixed charges to the tune of 50%. Such big hike has never been seen in the country by the any utility provider. The proposed power hike shall not only hit the existing indus-



Joint delegation of CCI Jammu and FoI calling on Lt Governor Manoj Sinha.

try but also send bad signal to the upcoming investors for which government is putting all its efforts."

Arun Gupta also raised the issue of extension of validity of Provisional registration of industrial units.

"The Apex Project Clearance Committee in its meeting held on 8/12/2021 granted extension in the validity of provisional registration upto June 30, 2022 to the units which had not commenced production within the stipulated time. Such industrial units are in the process of commencement of production but due to certain unavoidable circumstances including non-sanc-

tioning 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".

Arun Gupta and Rajesh Jain urged the Lt Governor to take effective steps by extending the validity of provisional registration of the aforesaid industrial units by at least one year. They also raised various issues viz marketing support for local Micro/Small units/ manufacturers ; ownership rights of lease hold industrial land to entrepreneurs ; delay in filing of refund claim ; circle

rates for industry; removal of negative list; extension of Central Package 2021 to existing industries under substantial expansion; Lease Deed of Sabzi Mandi/Fruit Mandi/Bahu Plaza; simplification of registration/renewal of hotels/lodges and guest houses; grant of benefits of industry to hotels/lodges; simplification of renewal system of hotels/lodges; VAT Amnesty Scheme; Power Amnesty Scheme; Ownership rights for Warehouse; Development of Transport Nagar; etc.

The Lt Governor gave a patient hearing to the visiting delegation of Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Jammu and assured that he will pass necessary directions to the concerned Principal Secretary for early consideration of the demands. He said that industrial sector is the back bone of the Union Territory and necessary steps will be taken for the welfare of traders' community. The delegation comprised of Anil Gupta, Sr. Vice President, Sh. Rajeev Gupta, Jr. Vice President, Gaurav Gupta, Secretary General, Rajesh Gupta, Secretary, Rajesh Gupta, Treasurer, Lalit Mahajan, Sh. Vijay Aggarwal, Jatinder, S.B. Abrol, Varinder Jain, Tarun Singla and Viraj Malhotra.



Major bike/scooty lifter gang busted; 20 two-wheelers recovered; five arrested



Bike lifters in police custody at Jammu.

Lakhanpur corridor turned into major Facilitation Centre for smooth transit of Amarnath pilgrims

STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: The Lakhanpur corridor, the touchdown point for Amarnath Yatris entering Jammu & Kashmir via road has been turned into a Major Facilitation Centre by District Administration Kathua.

The gateway of Jammu & Kashmir has been revamped into a multi-facility centre for smooth transit of Amarnath Yatris for their next phase of journey towards Jammu base camp.

The reception centre has been set up for providing point to point information to the Yatris, who can also have food, drinking water, and resting facilities besides availing toilet facilities at Lakhanpur corridor.

A data centre has been established for proper record of the Yatris, who are already registered and need to undergo mandatory eKYC for issuance of RPID tags.

An arcade of stalls of government departments depicting local art and craft of Jammu & Kashmir, besides exhibits of AYUSH, Horticulture, Agriculture, NLRM SHGs have also been displayed for Sale.

Food stalls of different types are also established where devotees can get a taste of local delicacies.

Digital Screens installed by the Tourism department are catching the attention of visitors where the complete tourism profile of Jammu and Kashmir is being portrayed. Also, a Cultural stall by the Information Department is witnessing huge participation of enthusiastic devotees who are enjoying the popular devotional numbers.

A 24x7 Information help desk has also been set up to provide proper Yatra related information to the visitors.

A dedicated Health Centre has been established at Lakhanpur equipped with emergency medical services along with Covid testing facil-



ties to meet up any contingencies.

On the occasion, DC Kathua Rahul Pandey said that Lakhanpur is all set to host the Yatris coming from different parts of the country. He said that elaborate arrangements have been made for smooth entry and transit of Amarnath Yatris. "The devotees can avail amenities besides RPID tagging facility established at Lakhanpur for the facilitation of pre-registered Yatris" he informed. The DC said that the district administration has also made a contingency plan to

accommodate Yatris in wake of an emergency. He said as many as 31 Lodgement centres have been made operational which are equipped with all facilities required for a pleasant stay of Yatris. He said teams of district administration are on continuous watch for giving quality food, providing Sanitation facilities and security to the Yatris. He also said that the District Administration along with police, paramilitary & other security forces have made sufficient security arrangements to ensure smooth conduct of the yatra.

BJP's experiments cost too much to people of J&K: Bhalla

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Claiming that people were "disturbed over the change in BJP's attitude after getting a clear mandate", JKPCC Working President Raman Bhalla on Tuesday said that the public would teach a lesson to the BJP in J&K Assembly elections due later this year.

"It will lick dust in the coming J&K assembly polls," Bhalla said while interacting with people of Rajiv Nagar as a part of his door to door campaign to mobilize public opinion against wrong policies of BJP Govt.

Bhalla alleged that BJP has failed to fulfill the promises made during elections campaign.

"BJP is full of arrogance over



the majority that it got and has not fulfilled even a single promise that it made to people of J&K. People have now come to know its reality," he said.

He said that people of Jammu and Kashmir are also eagerly awaiting for the next available opportunity to teach BJP and its allies a lesson for letting them down and not fulfilling promises made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

He said that people of J&K are also eagerly awaiting for the next available opportunity to teach BJP and its allies a lesson for letting them down and not fulfilling promises made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Everyone knows what happened in J&K after giving them mandate, people are now realizing that they have committed a mistake by giving

majority to BJP," he said.

He said that people of Jammu and Kashmir are also eagerly awaiting for the next available opportunity to teach BJP and its allies a lesson for letting them down and not fulfilling promises made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Explained: Why must Kashmir be converted into two Chandigarh-type UTs

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On June 18, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh suggested that the first-ever elections to the 90-member J&K UT assembly could be held by the end of this year, leading to the end of over 4-year-old central rule. He made this statement in Jammu itself while speaking at a function organised to mark 200 years of the coronation of Maharaja Gulab Singh, who founded State of J&K in March 1846. What exactly did the Defence Minister say? He, inter-alia, said: "Mujhe Lagta Hai Ki Is Saal Ke Ant Tak Ho Sakta Hai Ki Chunavi Prakriya Bhi Prarambh Ho. Iski Prabhal Sambhavna Hai (I think the electoral exercise may also commence by the end of this year. There is a strong possibility".

The Kashmiri parties, including National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), took cognisance of the Defence Minister's statement and gave their constituencies in Kashmir and parts of Jammu province, particularly Ramban, Kishtwar, Doda, Poonch and Rajouri districts, to under-

stand that the proposed elections were very vital for Kashmir and that they would jointly contest elections not on the planks of development- Bijli, Sadak and Paani - but on the sentiments plank.

"It (People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration) jointly contesting the election) is more or less a done deal," a senior NC leader was quoted as saying. "This election is not about development, it is not about Bijli, Sadak, and Paani (bread-and-butter issues). It is to send a message that we are united. It is the fight for identity, a fight for existence. It will be an election fought on sentiments," he reportedly said. He also reportedly said that "a joint front of the PAGD and the Congress was unlikely and any alliance with the grand old party would only be tactical". PDP also made an almost identical statement. "There is a realisation among the (Kashmiri) political parties that this election is not for power," it reportedly said.

PAGD consists of NC, PDP, CPI-M, CPI and ANC and it was formed in 2020. Congress was also present when PAGD was formed at the Gupkar residence of NC president Farooq Abdullah with Farooq Abdullah as chairman of the conglomerate and PDP chief

Mehbooba Mufti as its vice-chairperson.

It would be only in order to point out that other Kashmiri parties, GA Mir-led Congress, JK Apni Party of Altaf Bukhari and People's Conference of Sajid Lone, too, have umpteen times indicated that their immediate objective was to restore the pre-2019 position in J&K. Even former J&K CM Ghulam Nabi Azad, who currently is not in the good books of AICC acting chief Sonia Gandhi, has on occasions more than once reiterated that he would feel contented only after the Union Government restored Article 35A and Article 370, re-united Jammu with J&K and the whole state as it existed on August 15, 1947 granted full state status. Sonia Gandhi's right hand man and former Union Minister and JKPCC chief Saif-ud-Din Soz, too, has been reiterating day in and day out what the PAGD leaders have been saying since two years.

Should the Narendra Modi Government hold elections in J&K UT? Or, should it segregate Jammu province from Kashmir, bifurcate Kashmir to set up a separate homeland for the internally-displaced Kashmiri Hindus invested with the Chandigarh-type UT to enable them to lead peaceful and secure life and help the nation protect and promote

further the paramount national interests in this strategically crucial region and grant similar status to the remaining Kashmiri?

India is a democratic nation and democracy sans elections is a sham democracy. Indeed, it would be an evil day if the people of any part of the country are denied the right to elect representatives through whom they want themselves to be represented in the assembly. Unfortunately, however, things in Kashmir are not inspiring. This is evident from the statements emanating regularly from the Gupkar Road and elsewhere in Srinagar and statements being made by the Gupkar and other Kashmiri leaders in the Jammu province's mountainous areas where the Hindu-Muslim population is almost evenly balanced or where the Hindus and Sikhs constitute a microscopic minority. Take, for example, Poonch district and parts of Ramtan district. What the NC and PDP said in the wake of the Defence Minister's election-related statement should clinch the whole issue and establish that the idea of elections in the whole J&K UT is fraught with dangerous ramifications.

That the nation just can't afford elections in the whole J&K UT and that the retransfer of the state power to Kashmir, especially retransfer of departments of home, revenue, finance, law and forest, would undo in no time what the Modi Government did on August 5-6, 2019 to break the backbone of terrorists, separatists and pro-Pakistan elements in and out of the administrative set-up and only help them further aggravate the situation in Kashmir and parts of Jammu province.

It's not a secret that the vested interests in Kashmir misused the finance department to fleece Indian exchequer and enrich themselves and also help many undesirables; exploited the home department to the hilt to help subversives, secessionists and terrorists; used the revenue and forest departments to change demography of Kashmir and parts of Jammu province and cold-desert Ladakh and help certain elements to loot, plunder and occupy over 24 Lakh Kanal state land and lakhs of Kanal of forest land, especially in Jammu province; and exploited the department of law to help secessionists, terrorists and pro-Pakistan elements in Kashmir and elsewhere escape legal action or action under sedition laws. Suffice it to say that the vested inter-

ests in Kashmir used these five departments to further their nefarious agenda, grievously hurt the paramount national interest and make the lives of the minorities a veritable hell.

This is the whole situation. Statesmanship requires the Modi Government to take a serious cognisance of what the Kashmiri parties said about the poll planks they would use to arouse passions in Kashmir and parts of Jammu province to achieve their short and long-term objectives.

Clearly, the Modi Government has to abandon the idea of polls in the whole J&K UT and exercise the second option: segregation of Jammu province from Kashmir and conversion of Kashmir into two Chandigarh-type UTs, one each for the minority internally-displaced Kashmiri Hindus and the majority community.

It's hoped the Modi Government would appreciate the ground realities as they exist in Jammu province and Kashmir Valley and render the dangerous tools in Kashmir ineffective by retaining control over the state power. The situation in Kashmir is extraordinary and only an extraordinary approach can tackle the extraordinary situation.