

Dr Jitendra announces gratuity benefits even for employees under 'Unified Pension Scheme'

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh on Tuesday outlined the transformational journey of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions over the past 11 years, highlighting a series of reforms aimed at simplifying governance, empowering citizens, and humanising administration. On the occasion, the Minister also made the important announcement that even those Central government employees who are covered under the "Unified Pension Scheme" will now be eligible for retirement and death gratuity benefits, as per the provisions of the Central Civil Service (Payment of Gratuity under National Pension System) Rules, 2021.

Responding to this long-pending demand by a large section of government employees, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh said, the move addresses a significant demand of government staff and brings parity in retirement benefits. He said, the new provision reflects the government's commitment to ensure social security for all categories of employees under the National Pension System.

Speaking at a commemorative event at National Media Centre here, the Minister categorised the Ministry's work into four major areas that reflected the changing face of governance under the Modi Government.



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, flanked by Secretary DoPT Rachna Shah, Secretary Administrative Reforms V. Srinivasan and other senior officers, releasing a book based on 11 years of Governance Reforms by the Modi Government at National Media Centre, New Delhi on Wednesday.

"For the first time since Independence, a government has taken pride in doing away with redundant rules rather than creating new ones," Dr. Jitendra Singh said, citing the repeal of over 1,600 outdated provisions-many of them colonial-era legacies-as a strong message of trust in citizens, particularly India's youth. The decision to make job interviews non-evaluative for certain categories, announced from the Red Fort by the Prime Minister and implemented nationwide by January 2016, was flagged as a key move towards fairness and transparency in recruitment.

Dr. Jitendra underscored that several of the Ministry's reforms went beyond administrative convenience and carried broader socio-cultural messages. "We are here to punish the racketeers, not the students," the Minister said, emphasising the government's intent to move from suspicion to support in public policy. These changes, he said, helped build a new narrative for governance where intent is not presumed guilty and trust becomes a foundational value. Human-centric reforms formed the third pillar of the Ministry's efforts, with Dr. Jitendra recounting how several changes were driven by direct experiences of insensitivity in existing rules. The introduction of the digital life certificate for pensioners, reforms in family pension norms to include

divorced and separated daughters, and extending maternity leave to stillbirth cases were some of the examples he shared. "We combined human concern with technology to create solutions that respect the dignity of individuals," he said, recalling how over 19,000 long-pending promotions were expedited to bring relief to officials who had served without timely career progression. These measures, he said, reflected an approach that viewed policy through the lens of empathy.

Highlighting innovation as the fourth key area, the Minister said that several governance reforms have been infused with out-of-the-box thinking and technological adaptability. The establishment of the Capacity Building Commission and rollout of the iGOT-Karmayogi platform were

mentioned as game-changers in preparing civil servants for real-world challenges. "We have moved from red tape to real-time, from file-pushing to feedback-based policy," Dr. Jitendra Singh concluded, noting that these reforms mark a significant shift in the governance ethos of New India.

During the press conference, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra also released a set of key publications and digital initiatives that reflect the Ministry's continued focus on transparency, accountability, and service delivery. These included the 11-year achievement booklets of DoPT, DARPG, and DoPPW, offering a comprehensive overview of reforms and milestones across the three departments. The Minister also unveiled the Guidelines for the Special Campaign for Family Pensioners' Grievances, a Compendium of Circulars covering the period from August 2024 to June 2025, and a set of circulars related to the Central Civil Services (Union Public Service) rules.

In a move to strengthen capacity building within the system, Dr. Jitendra Singh virtually launched the Sevottam Training Modules, aimed at institutionalising excellence in public service delivery.



IMCSD Interns interact with Jt Dir Information



Joint Director Information Jammu, Deepak Dubey with IMCSD Interns.

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: As part of the ongoing Summer Media Internship Programme 2025-26, a group of student interns from the Institute of Mass Communication and Skill Development (IMCSD) on Wednesday visited the Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), J&K Government, at Bahu Plaza, Jammu.

The interns, comprising students from Government MAM College and Government College for Women (GCW), Bhagwati Nagar, engaged in a meaningful interaction with the Joint Director Information Jammu, Deepak Dubey.

The session aimed at familiarizing the aspiring media professionals with the functioning of DIPR and its crucial role in disseminating government information to the public in a transparent and responsible manner.

The interns were accompanied by the senior journalist and IMCSD executive mem-

ber Vicky Verma, who coordinated the visit as part of the institute's hands-on field exposure programme.

During the interaction, the Joint Director offered valuable insights into the operational structure of the department, highlighting its multifaceted responsibilities including public outreach, media coordination, press release dissemination, government publicity campaigns and publication of official content.

The students were also briefed on how the department uses various platforms including print, electronic and digital to ensure that accurate and verified information reaches the masses. A significant part of the discussion was dedicated to the emerging challenge of fake news and misinformation in the digital age.

The Joint Director emphasized the importance of fact-checking, ethical journalism and the critical role that government agencies, jour-

nalists and media students must play in countering the spread of misleading content. He encouraged the interns to develop a habit of verifying sources while upholding journalistic integrity in their future careers.

The interns expressed keen interest in understanding how government-public communication is managed and asked thoughtful questions related to media strategy, crisis communication and the use of social media for public information.

The interactive nature of the session ensured an enriching learning experience for the budding media professionals.

Vicky Verma expressed gratitude to the Joint Director for providing the interns with an insightful exposure to the department's operations. He said such interactions are crucial in bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world media practices.

IGP Jammu Zone reviews SANJY-2025 readiness, visits National Highway sector in Ramban

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: As part of the ongoing preparations for the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY)-2025, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Jammu Zone, Bhim Sen Tuti, on Wednesday conducted a detailed on-site inspection of Lambar ground in district Ramban, a key halt and transit point along the Yatra route.

The visit aimed to assess the preparedness of the security apparatus, civil infrastructure, and inter-agency coordination required to ensure the safe and smooth passage of Yatris through this vital sector.

During the inspection, the IGP also reviewed the avail-



IGP Jammu Zone, Bhim Sen Tuti chairing a meeting.

ability of critical civil infrastructure at Lambar Ground, including tentage, drinking water, sanitation, and power backup facilities to ensure a comfortable stopover for pilgrims.

He emphasized the importance of joint drills, intelli-

gence-based planning, and public-friendly policing to boost pilgrim confidence.

Officers were directed to proactively identify and plug gaps through timely inspections and inter-agency coordination, and to maintain a high standard of prepared-

ness throughout the Yatra period.

The IGP also chaired a comprehensive review meeting at PCR Ramban, attended by DIG DKR Range, Shridhar Patil; SSP Ramban, Kulbir Singh; other officers of the J&K Police; and representatives from other security forces.

The discussions centred around security deployment patterns, convoy regulation, emergency medical services, and disaster response mechanisms. Specific attention was given to surveillance systems, force deployment in vulnerable areas, and functionality of communication networks to maintain uninterrupted coordination during the

Yatra. In addition, Tuti also inspected the National Highway sector, taking stock of ongoing construction and repair work to ensure readiness of the route ahead of the Yatra.

He was joined by SSP National Highway Ramban, Adil Hamid, during this segment of the visit.

The IGP evaluated the traffic management plans to facilitate timely convoy movement through high-risk stretches and directed officers to ensure round-the-clock operational readiness, particularly in light of the region's susceptibility to landslides and unpredictable weather conditions.

Mizoram creates history by inking Bhashini MoU with GoI to bridge linguistic gaps



Amit Sharma, Secretary to the Government of Mizoram and Cooperation Departments and Amitabh Nag, CEO Bhashini Division, MeitY, GoI after signing MoU.

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: A historical Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was inked between Government of Mizoram through Amit Sharma, Secretary to the Government of Mizoram, Information & Communications Technology (ICT) and Cooperation Departments and Amitabh Nag, Chief Executive Officer, Bhashini Division, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, in the presence of Chief Secretary Mizoram Khilli Ram Meena and Additional Secretary, MeitY Abhishek Singh today at the Conference Hall of Electronics Niketan, MeitY, New Delhi.

With this important and historical milestone for Mizoram which was achieved today, through the introduction of multi-linguistic AI-based model of Bhashini in the state of Mizoram, the Government

working and even the general public, shall get highly benefitted with the usage of this platform for live conversion of text-to-text, text-to-speech, speech-to-text and even, speech-to-speech from Mizo language to any other popular Indian language like English or Hindi and vice-versa.

Secretary ICT Mizoram expressed deep gratitude to the MeitY, Government of India for taking special initiative to bring Mizoram, amongst all states in North Eastern Region (NER), in this Artificial Intelligence based multi-linguistic fold and help this much-needed cause of public here, who are largely conversant with Mizo language only.

Also, Chief Secretary Mizoram Khilli Ram Meena, who visited MeitY for Bhashini-signing ceremony today, mentioned that this partnership with Bhashini will make digital governance truly accessible to every Mizo citizen.

He further said that by preserving Mizo language while embracing technology, we are building a more inclusive digital future for Mizoram.

While sharing his views, Amit Sharma said that Bhashini's multilingual technology will transform how we serve our citizens. This collaboration shall ensure that tribal communities of Mizoram can access digital services in their native language, making governance more inclusive and culturally sensitive.

Additional Secretary MeitY, at this historical occasion said that Bhashini's implementation as an AI-driven Large Language Model (LLM) should be done strongly through organization of a big Workshop in Mizoram soon, led by Chief Minister & all Ministers of Mizoram and inclusion of colleges and schools through Hackathons, Quiz Competitions, etc in a Mission Mode manner for next few months so that Bhashini's maximum usage could improve its accuracy-levels in times to come.

The ceremony got concluded with the exchange of MoU and related documents between the Government of Mizoram and Bhashini team with a resolve to partner together in usage of AI-driven Bhashini Rajyam platform in all Government and Public platforms in a big way for its sustained usage by Mizos in the times to come.

STATE TIMES NEWS
BALTAL: Director General (DG), Rural Sanitation, J&K, Anoo Malhotra on Wednesday conducted an extensive tour of Baltal base camp to assess the sanitation facilities being put in place along the axis for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY), 2025.

Accompanied by district officials of Ganderbal, including the ACP and BDOs, she visited various camps along the route starting from the Baltal Base Camp through Domail and Rail Pathri, up to the end of the track to review the sanitation arrangements for the Yatra.

The Director General on the way took stock of

DG Rural Sanitation visits Baltal, reviews preparations for Shri Amarnathji Yatra-2025 QR code-based feedback system put in place at toilet points



DG Rural Sanitation, J&K, Anoo Malhotra during visit to Baltal base camp.

arrangements of men and machinery along the axis.

She directed the agencies involved in the sanitation and waste management to speed up the process and ensure quality services to the pilgrims.

The DG Rural Sanitation emphasized that the department remains fully

committed to ensuring best facilities and services for the pilgrims.

During her visit, Malhotra reviewed installation and functionality of various sanitation infrastructures including the toilets, washrooms, dustbins, drainage for grey water disposal, segregation of wet waste site,

plastic waste management site and other sanitation facilities along the Baltal axis.

She stressed the importance of maintaining highest standards of cleanliness and called for implementation of a zero-landfill policy along the entire pilgrimage routes.

Pertinent to mention here that toilets and baths are to be installed along both the Pahalgam and Baltal axis and on yatra route.

She issued specific directions for effective grey water management, including construction of adequate soak pits and drainage systems to prevent water logging and ensure environmentally sustainable waste disposal practices.

Directing the officials to adopt a pilgrim-centric approach and ensure that all necessary arrangements are made promptly for the convenience and well-being of devotees, Malhotra called for immediate redressal of complaints, especially those related to hygiene, through a real-time response system.

She further informed that a QR code-based feedback system has been introduced at toilet points to enable pilgrims report cleanliness status, provide feedback and support centralized tracking for improving service delivery.

She interacted with the field staff, sanitation workers and ground-level officers.

J&K Bank signs DDF agreement with JPDCL

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Reinforcing its significant role in financial oversight, J&K Bank has executed the Direct Debit Facility (DDF) Agreement with Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDCL). The agreement, developed in collaboration with REC Power Development and Consultancy Ltd (RECPDCL), underscores the Bank's commitment to ensuring seamless financial operations and transaction security in high-value infrastructure projects.

As Direct Debit Account Agent, the Bank will oversee structured payment



MD JPDCL Ch Mohd Yasin, GM & Divisional Head (Jammu) Sunit Kumar, and GM (Smart Metering - RECPDCL) Mukul Aggarwal after signing MoU.

mechanisms for the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project, facilitating automated disbursements, financial transparency, and compliance adherence. Through this initia-

the agreement took place between Managing Director (JPDCL) Chowdhary Mohammad Yasin, General Manager & Divisional Head (Jammu) Sunit Kumar, and GM (Smart Metering - RECPDCL) Mukul Aggarwal during an event attended by senior officers including Chief Manager Atul Sethi, FA & VAO (JPDCL) Pawan Sharma, and DGM (Tech) Rishab Jain. Their presence highlighted the collective commitment toward ensuring financial accountability and operational excellence in the implementation of smart metering technology.

The formal signing of

development, Divisional Head (Jammu) Sunit Kumar said, "J&K Bank remains at the forefront of financial discipline and governance.

By streamlining automated payments and reinforcing accountability, we ensure that critical infrastructure projects operate with precision and efficiency.

This agreement exemplifies our leadership in financial management and operational security."

With this agreement, the Bank further cements its reputation as the premier financial institution driving structured payments across large-scale utility projects.

Commented on the