

Congress demanded only ‘Home Rule’, not independence till 1930: Dr Jitendra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: In a powerful and unflinching address during the launch of the book "History That India Ignored" authored by veteran journalist and ANI Chairman Prem Prakash, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh delivered a scathing critique of the Congress Party's selective reading of India's freedom struggle, asserting that it was never at the forefront of the freedom movement and that the Congress party had demanded only "Home Rule" under Governor General appointed by the British empire, not complete independence, until as late as 1930.

Speaking at the event organised by Prabha Khaitan Foundation, Dr. Jitendra stated unequivocally "The Congress Party was, until 1930, content with being a loyalist club demanding Home Rule. It was only the countrywide public outrage after the hanging of Bhagat Singh and his comrades in 1931 that forced them to shift stance."

Dr. Jitendra did not mince words as he laid bare historical truths long buried under layers of curated narratives. Citing incidents from Prem Prakash's deeply-researched book, he pointed out the Congress Party's shameful indifference to martyrs like Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad, and Madan Lal Dhillon.

"When Madan Lal Dhillon killed Curzon Wyllie in 1909 in London, the Congress not



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh speaking after releasing the book "History That India Ignored" authored by the ANI chief Prem Prakash, at India International Centre, New Delhi.

only disowned him but passed a resolution against him. Even his own family denounced him. The only one who stood by Dhillon was Veer Savarkar who risked arrest and went to see him in jail," he said.

Dr. Jitendra read the book cover-to-cover ahead of its launch and praised it for its unbiased, archival-based storytelling, unlike many history texts that glorify select figures while erasing true revolutionaries.

"Prem Prakash ji's account is rare. Despite decades in journalism, not a single paragraph in this book reflects any bias. He has painstakingly brought out the real heroes-those left unsung by mainstream history," said Dr. Jitendra .

Quoting from the book, Dr. Jitendra highlighted that the Congress Party, founded by a retired British civil servant A.O. Hume, was "a club of retired civil servants and emerging Indian elite" demanding home rule - not a freedom party body by any

measure.

"It was set up as a soft instrument of the British, to maintain control even as they prepared to leave," he remarked.

Rejecting the long-peddled myth that Congress alone won India its freedom, Dr. Jitendra pointed to several pivotal events that actually forced the British to quit India. Chief among them were the historic INA Trials of Prem Sahgal, Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon, and Shah Nawaz Khan, which ignited mass outrage and public mobilization across the country. He also underlined the powerful impact of the Naval Ratings Revolt in Bombay and Karachi, where uniformed Indian soldiers rose in defiance against British rule.

Adding to the pressure was the crippling economic and military toll of World War II, which left the British Empire drained of resources and unable to maintain its colonial grip. But above all, Dr. Jitendra stressed the decisive role played by Subhas

Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army (INA), whose military challenge shook the very foundations of British rule in India and signaled that the end of the Empire was near.

Dr. Singh challenged yet another colonial-era myth by asserting that the 1806 Vellore Mutiny-sparked by religious persecution of Indian soldiers-was the true beginning of India's armed resistance, not 1857. He also recalled the Barrackpore mutiny and the heroic act of Mangal Pandey in 1857, stating these were sparked by British insensitivity to Indian culture, religion, and dignity.

Speaking emotionally about the Partition, especially the double Partition of Jammu & Kashmir, Dr. Jitendra Singh blamed it squarely on the personal ambitions of a few Congress leaders. He said, "The unilateral ceasefire ordered by Nehru, which gave away a part of Kashmir that is today PoJK, was the first of many strategic blunders. Article 370 only compounded that pain."

He condemned the Indus Water Treaty, calling it another example of Congress's appeasement policy, "We gave away the major rivers to Pakistan and kept the minor ones. India continues to pay for that mistake."

Dr. Jitendra lamented how great patriots like Syama Prasad Mookerjee-one of the youngest Vice Chancellors of Calcutta University and a key figure in the freedom struggle-have been virtually erased

from public memory due to biased historical writing. He slammed the Two-Nation Theory as a "self-serving British construct" backed by Indian collaborators, and recalled that even Radeliffe, the man who drew the border, admitted in a letter to his stepson that he had committed a terrible, unforgettable wrong.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Singh emphasized that Prem Prakash's book sets a new benchmark for journalism and historiography.

"This is how history should be written-truthfully, fearlessly, and with the intent to inform, not manipulate. The contemporary journalist has a duty to record without bias, just like Prem Prakash ji has done."

Triennial Election at 42nd AGM of SKK

Jandial re-elected President, Vaid Gen Secy; Brig (Dr) Rakesh Khajuria Vice President

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: At the 42nd AGM of the J&K Samaj Kalyan Kendra, Jammu (SKK) held here on Monday, K B Jandial was re-elected as its President and J K Vaid General Secretary unanimously for the next three years. This is Jandial's 4th term as President and Vaid's 7th term as General Secretary.

Brig (Dr) Rakesh Khajuria (R), nephew of the founder of the SKK late Dr. R R Khajuria, was unanimously elected as the Vice President while H N Raina and M N Sharma were re-elected as Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

On the demise of the Patron for life and the Founder, DR R R Khajuria, the AGM appointed his younger brother and former President, Inderjeet Khajuria as Patron for Life by amending the Bye-laws.

The Triennial election was conducted by the Election Commissioner/ Returning Officer B B Magotra. The proposal for the Office Bearers for the next tenure of three years was presented by Prem Gupta, Advisor SKK and was accepted by the members unanimously. This well-known NGO is dedicated to the welfare of divyang (Deaf & Dumb) which was established on May 22, 1980 by late Dr. R R Khajuria, a veterinarian & former MD of Jammu Milk Supply Scheme, popularly called as Vinobha Bhawe of Jammu. He had penchant for welfare of the physically challenged and other under privileged children especially deaf & dumb for whom he opened a school which was inaugurated by Begum Sheikh Abdullah in March 1981 as Pre-primary school in a small accommodation of



J&K Samaj Kalyan Kendra, Jammu members during Triennial Election at 42nd AGM.

a temple which has grown into a full-fledged Higher Secondary School exclusively for hearing handicapped with usual strength of 120 students. The School has sign language trained teaching faculty.

At the AGM, two very senior office bearers Er Vijay Bhagotra, Sr. Vice President and M L Sharma have retired from their positions due to health conditions. They were honoured with mementos, recalling their laudable contributions for the NGO and the divyang. Sharma is a founder member and was Vice President for the last 15 years while Er Bhagotra became Sr. Vice President in October 2010. Both have been associated with several other charitable Societies and contributed immensely for welfare of downtrodden and religious bodies.

The AGM approved the release of a three percent installment of DA to its staff from 1st April 2025.

Earlier, the General Secretary Vaid in his report to AGM, gave a detailed account of the growth of this institution from a room in a temple to higher secondary school and said that this journey has been quite rough but we managed to survive, and reached to a point where

our divyang are showing, on regular basis, academic excellence with distinctions in Board examinations every year which made the SKK fraternity proud. He paid glowing tributes to the memory of the founder, late Dr. Khajuria and recalled his association with him and said his contributions for underprivileged sections of the society.

The President, Jandial listed out the activities of the year and said that for the first time, a contingent of 38 deaf & dumb students participated in this year's Republic Day State Level function where they through sign language presented the national Anthem synchronizing their actions with the tune played by a police band before the Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha.

These divyang were extremely happy by participating in the main function. He said while the SKK is awarding cash prizes to the class toppers of BOSE examinations, it has decided to award similar cash awards from this year to the senior teachers for the distinctions obtained by the students in their subjects.

Expressing gratitude to the Chairman of the SMVDSB, Manoj Sinha, Dr Ashok Bhan, member of the Board and the CEO Ansul

Garg for their financial support to overcome SKK's fiscal distress and hoped that patronage to the Divyang would continue in future as well. He however regretted that despite commitment made at the meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, the alternate land to the school has not yet been allotted. This issue has been pending for the last 30 years. He appealed to the members of SKK, whose number has increased to 124 with 72 Life Members, to donate money in our bank accounts for running the school smoothly. He specially thanked Justice Permod Kohli and Manmohan Wahi for their liberal contribution of Rs. 50,000 each last year.

On the suggestion of Dr Ashok Bhan, the President said that the ITI will be approached to consider special vocational courses for these divyang to facilitate their placement in the private sector or launch their own Start-up.

The Treasurer M D Sharma presented the audited accounts of the year 2024-25. Earlier, the Secretary H N Raina welcomed the members to the 42rd AGM and apprised the functioning of the society & School.

Khatana slams NC Govt for tourism neglect, assures support to trekking sector

Visits Sonamarg, interacts with trekking bodies, urges bureaucratic reforms

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SONAMARG: Rajya Sabha MP and senior BJP leader Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana strongly criticized the National Conference government for its failure to promote tourism in Jammu and Kashmir, especially in iconic destinations such as Sonamarg, Pahalgam, and other trekking circuits.

Speaking at a large public gathering organized by President of BJP NGO Cell J&K, Khatana highlighted the distress faced by local youth who had taken bank loans to invest in tourism-related infrastructure.

"After the Pahalgam terror incident, tourist arrivals dropped drastically, and now these youth are struggling to repay their bank instalments," he said.

Various trekking associations met the BJP leader and apprised him of the growing concerns around permission restrictions at popular trekking routes including Thajiwars Glacier, Naranag, Great Lakes Trek, and Zero Point Trek. They shared that many of them had taken advance bookings from international tourists and invested in equipment but were now facing severe operational challenges.

Khatana assured the stakeholders that their issues would be raised at the appropriate forums. "I am here to take firsthand feedback on the state of tourism infrastructure, the law and



Rajya Sabha MP and senior BJP leader Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana with trekkers.

order situation, and to hear the voice of the last person in the queue," he said.

He appealed to tourists from across the country and abroad to visit Kashmir and enjoy its unique hospitality and natural beauty. "There is no comparison to the charm of Kashmir. It is safe, welcoming, and unmatched in beauty," he added.

During his two-day visit, Khatana engaged in multiple activities including the flag-off of sanitation drives, inspection of trekking exhibitions, press briefings, and interactions with over a dozen tourism and trekking associations.

He also criticized certain bureaucratic attitudes, stating, "Some officials still operate in a pre-Article 370 abro-

gation mindset. Files are being shuffled from table to table while people's issues remain pending. Such inefficiency will not be tolerated." Prominent personalities who accompanied the BJP MP included Dr. Ali (senior BJP leader), Faraz Ahmed Bhat, Mushtaq Ahmed (President, Snow Bike & Tour Guide Association), Riaz Ahmed, Mukhtyar Bilal (CEO, Sonamarg Development Authority), Dr. Nazir Ahmed (Administration, Kangan) and several other officials and local stakeholders.

Khatana urged the J&K administration to address genuine public grievances with dedication and to extend full support to the tourism and trekking sectors-seen as vital lifelines for Kashmir's youth and others.

General Body Meeting of Shia Federation held

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MENDHAR: A General Body Meeting of the Shia Federation, a prominent non-political, socio-religious welfare organization of Jammu province, was convened on Monday in Mendhar. The gathering saw participation from representatives of 35 Anjumans in the presence of dozens of independent observer from across the province and was presided over by renowned religious scholar and preacher, Molana Syed Zakir Hussain Jafri.

The meeting focused on two major agenda items approval of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution and formation of an Ad-Hoc Committee.

The General Body unanimously passed a set of constitutional amendments to the Federation's charter, which had been in effect since 2007. The body also resolved to constitute an ad-hoc committee to manage the Federation's affairs for a three-month period. This interim arrangement will remain in place until fresh elections are held under the revised constitutional framework.

A significant development



Religious scholar and preacher, Molana Syed Zakir Hussain Jafri talking to reporters.

during the session was the successful passage of a vote of no confidence against the current President, Ashiq Hussain Khan.

The motion, initiated by 10 Anjumans and passed unanimously by all 35 Anjumans of the General Body present on the occasion, marked a strong expression of disapproval.

Members criticized Khan for attempting to retain his position through nomination, bypassing the formation of an election commission and neglecting the democratic processes defined in the Federation's constitution.

Additionally, a unanimous resolution was passed requesting Khan to immedi-

ately cease using the Federation's name in any personal or public capacity-including on public platforms, news channels, and social media. Members urged him to refrain from any actions that might create divisions within the community.

As part of the transitional process, the General Body unanimously elected Syed Nazir Hussain Shah as Chairman of the ad-hoc committee. Shah, known for his administrative capabilities, will oversee the organization's operations and facilitate the upcoming elections during his three-month tenure.

The Presidents of Anjuman

e Jafria Poonch, Anjuman e Jafria Gulpur, Anjuman Tanzeel Ul Momineen Mandi, Anjuman e Kazmia Qasba, Anjuman e Jafria Degwar, Anjuman Aal e Mohammad Sathra, Anjuman e Jafria Surankote, Anjuman e Jafria Moh. Sadat Nagar, Anjuman Ansar ul Mehdi Surankote, Anjuman e Jafria Sangla, Anjuman Hussaini Lapara, Anjuman Haideri Sanai, Anjuman e Hussaini Banola Salwah, Anjuman Saneye Batool Salwah, Anjuman e Haideri Mendhar, Anjuman Azaadran e Hussain Mendhar, Anjuman e Kazmia Rellam, Anjuman e Imamia Kasyote, Itrat Society Gursai Mohri, Anjuman Maasumia Hundi

Gursai, Anjuman Sajjadiya Bai Dhara Gursai, Anjuman Mehdi Aakhir ul Zaman Khankah, Anjuman Imam Mehdi Chottey Shah Mendhar, Anjuman Imamia Jammu, Anjuman Haideri New Plot Jammu, Anjuman Imamia Chanderkot, Anjuman e Kazmia Kaini Chajila, Anjuman Gulshan e Zahra Gali Sayedan, Anjuman Kazmia Gohlad, Anjuman Pasdaraan-e-Abbas Dhair which constitutes the electoral College of the Federation were present in the meeting. Besides five other Anjumans participated in the meeting on virtual mode.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Syed Munir Hussain Shah, President of the host Anjuman.

During his address, he briefed the participants about the formation of the Federation, recalling his role as one of its founding members. He emphasized that the entire exercise undertaken by the General Body was aimed at unifying the community and promoting its welfare and growth in all aspects of life.

JMC Com reviews arrangements for Amarnathji Yatra at lodgement centres across Jammu City

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), Dr. Devansh Yadav, who is also Chief Executive Officer Jammu Smart City Limited on Monday conducted an extensive inspection of the lodgement centres set up for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY-2025) pilgrims across Jammu city.

During the visit, the Commissioner assessed arrangements at prominent lodgement centres including Shri Ram Mandir (Purani Mandi), Geeta Bhawan Parade, Mahajan Sabha, Shalimar Road, Trikuta Complex, Yatri Niwas at Bhagwati Nagar, among other designated facilities established for the comfort and convenience of the pilgrims arriving for the annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra.

Dr. Yadav reviewed in detail the infrastructure and services put in place at each centre, including accommodation, sanitation, food, drinking water,



JMC Commissioner, Dr. Devansh Yadav inspecting lodgement centres for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra pilgrims.

provision of power supply and medical support. He emphasized that timely and efficient provisioning of all essential services must be ensured.

Issuing directions to the concerned departments, the Commissioner stressed on providing clean lodging spaces, hygienic food, clean potable drinking water, proper sleeping arrangements and well-maintained sanitation facilities to all pilgrims.

Dr. Yadav also informed that Information,

Education and Communication (IEC) activities will be carried out at the lodgement centres to sensitize the devotees about hygiene and sanitation practices.

Joint Commissioner (Health & Sanitation) Abdul Sattar, Executive Engineer (Projects) Lokesh Gupta, Executive Engineer (Division 1) Rajesh Kumar, Executive Engineer, Electrical Simarpal Singh and other officials of JMC accompanied the Commissioner during the tour.