

!! Continuations from Page 1 !!

J&K, Sikkim sign...

Lt Governor added, Sikkim being the first organic state in India has the expertise on organic production technologies and certification. The collaboration will immensely help J&K to provide solutions and policy prescription for the organic farmers in the UT, observed the Lt Governor.

He said that the exchange of knowledge, best practices, and technical interventions will go a long way in promoting Social & Ecological Sustainability and Economic Sustainability in Agriculture, Horticulture and allied sectors.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor highlighted the efforts of the UT Government to bring Agricultural reforms and provide maximum benefits to the farming community.

Outlining the focus of the UT government on agriculture sector during the last two years, he said that government support and credit facilities have been significantly enhanced and special attention is being paid to improve the productivity of small and marginal farmers, as also of Kandi areas of Jammu Division.

Agriculture Universities in the UT are playing a major role in promoting reforms and supporting diversification in the field of agriculture and horticulture, providing solutions, extending handholding to the farmers to meet the future requirements, the Lt Governor observed.

Underscoring that Agriculture is the mainstay of J&K's economy and 70% of the population is dependent on it, the Lt Governor said, in this year's budget, an amount of Rs 2835 crore has been allocated for agriculture and Rs 646 crore for horticulture sector; besides for the development of dairy and sheep sector, Rs 392 crore has been allocated separately so that positive changes can be made in the lives of the farmers and progress of villages can be given a new direction altogether.

Loi Nath Sharma, Minister of Agriculture, Sikkim, expressed gratitude to the J&K Government, Sikkim Government and all the stakeholders for taking a significant step towards the holistic development of agriculture and horticulture sector.

Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, J&K while speaking on the occasion, highlighted the significance of the tripartite agreement, besides efforts of the government to promote Saffron cultivation.

Professor Avinash Khare, Vice Chancellor, Sikkim University also shared his views on opening up new avenues and exploring possibilities of diversification in cultivation of saffron and other temperate crops.

Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal, Director, Department of Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Kashmir presented the Vote of Thanks.

A PowerPoint presentation on Study and Cultivation of Saffron in Sikkim - An outreach programme of Sikkim University was also presented on the occasion.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice-Chancellor, SKUAST Kashmir; Shabnam Kamil, Secretary, Agriculture Production and Farmers' Welfare Department, besides HoDs, senior officials of J&K administration, Sikkim Government and Sikkim University were present on the occasion.

ASI martyred, 2...

condition is stated to be stable. The officials said a cordon and search operation has been launched in the area to nab the attackers.

"ASI Mushtaq Ahmad #sucumbed to his injuries & attained #martyrdom. We pay rich #tribute to the #martyr for his supreme #sacrifice made in the line of duty. Other two injured personnel are being treated. Further details shall follow," the Kashmir Zone Police wrote on Twitter.

In order to pay honour and respect to martyr ASI Mushtaq Ahmad, a wreath laying ceremony was held at District Police Lines, Srinagar.

Officers of Police/CAFs and Civil Administration led by ADGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar laid floral wreaths on the mortal remains & paid rich tributes to the martyr for his supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

On the occasion, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir P.K. Pole, DIG CKR Srinagar Sujit Kumar, DIG CRPF (North) Dr. R.K. Rana, SSP Srinagar Rakesh Balwal, Commandant 49th BN CRPF, all Zonal SsP and other officers & officials of Police/SF also paid rich floral tributes to the martyr.

"We pay our rich tributes to the martyr for his supreme sacrifice made in the line of duty and stand by his family at this crucial juncture," ADGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar said.

Political parties and their leaders condemned the attack.

"Deeply saddened to hear about the militant attack on @JmuKmrPolice personnel deployed in Srinagar in which ASI Mushtaq Ahmed lost his life in the line of duty & two others were injured. My condolences to the family of ASI Mushtaq & prayers for the swift recovery of the injured," National Conference Vice President and former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah wrote on Twitter.

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti described the attack as gruesome.

"Deeply saddened about the gruesome attack on police personnel in Lal Bazar. My condolences to ASI Mushtaq Ahmed's family in this hour of grief & prayers for the two policemen critically injured," Mufti, also a former chief minister, tweeted.

People's Conference president Sajad Gani Lone condemned the militant attack.

"Yet again terror on the prowl. Distressing news of fatality of a brave police officer. My heartfelt sympathies with the family of the deceased. Praying for swift recovery of the injured police personnel, the PC chief said.

CPI(M) leader M Y Tarigami said, "Deeply pained to hear about the killing of ASI Mushtaq Ahmad in a militant attack in Lal Bazar, Srinagar. My heart goes out to the family of slain official. I wish speedy recovery to injured cops."

Govt watchful of price situation; pointed attack on inflation to continue: FM

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: With consumer price inflation remaining high, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said the government is watchful of the price situation and will continue the pointed attack on inflation.

Her remarks came hours after official data showed that retail inflation in June eased to 7.01 per cent in June. The print was lower than 7.04 per cent recorded in May but still higher than RBI's comfort level of 6 per cent.

"As RBI has estimated, till the start of the second half of the (fiscal) year, both

RBI and government will

have to be mindful," she told reporters here.

India's fiscal year is from April to March and second half would be from October.

"We will have to be mindful and watchful how the price movement is," she said. "I will keep monitoring (prices) item by item for anything that goes haywire.

This pointed attack on inflation will need to continue." The finance minister also said a favourable monsoon will lead to good production and rural demand.

The government has taken several steps in the past to cool down prices. These include reducing excise duty on petrol and diesel, ban-

ning wheat exports, allowing duty free import of certain crude edible oil and revising duty structure on steel and steel products.

Besides, the government asked edible oil manufacturers to reduce rate Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of edible oils by Rs 15 per litre amid a fall in global prices.

Last week, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the price situation will gradually improve in the second half of the current fiscal and the central bank would continue to take monetary measures to anchor inflation with a view to achieving strong and sustainable growth.

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