


SCHOOL INNOVATION COUNCIL

School Innovation Council (SIC), an initiative taken by the Ministry of Education's Innovation Cell (MIC) was launched on July 1, 2022 and has been introduced to all schools of all the states including Rajasthan. It is a council of teachers, students, and experts from industry and academia to conduct round the year activities for students and teachers on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, monitored through the SIC portal of the MIC, to record the influence at the ground level. SIC will enable mindset change, awareness, and training on Ideation, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, design thinking, Intellectual Property Rights, start-up finance, and HR among teachers and students. It will also enable the ranking system for schools on the level of innovation-oriented activities.

To implement the SIC council in all schools across the nation, SIC portal has been developed where schools can register themselves. All registered schools are encouraged to perform innovation-related activities as per the SIC Calendar Activities that includes Leadership talk, motivation sessions, webinars, sessions, awareness, boot camps inviting innovative ideas from the student, developing the prototype, and national level exhibition of the best prototypes etc. NEP 2020 envisages the education system to include a 'light but tight' regulatory framework to ensure integrity, transparency, and resource efficiency of the educational system through audit and public disclosure while encouraging innovation and out-of-the-box ideas through autonomy, good governance, and empowerment. Besides, NEP has a provision for School Complex Management Committees for more robust and improved governance, monitoring, oversight, innovations and initiatives by local stakeholders.

In order to strengthen the mentoring capacity of teachers for cultivating and handholding innovative and ingenious ideas from students, the School Innovation Ambassador Training program (SIATP) was launched through online Mode. Under SIATP, teachers undergo 72 hours of training, and those who qualify all the five modules i.e. 1. Design Thinking & Innovation; 2. Idea generation & Idea hand-holding; 3. Finance/Sales/HR; 4. Intellectual Property Rights(IPR); 5. Entrepreneurship and Prototype/Product Development; with a minimum 50 per cent as passing marks are recognized as "Innovation Ambassadors" which makes them competent to nurture the young school students on Ideation, IPR, product development, design thinking, problem-solving, critical thinking and skills of entrepreneurship.



OFF 'D' CUFF

Boost your hormones to live long and healthy

Mrs Avantika, 45 years female noticed that her weight was increasing slowly for last 4-6 months without any significant change in lifestyle and diet. She also felt that she was becoming irritable and tired with irregular sleep and irregular menstruation. She will skip menstruation one month and then next month it will be normal. Sexual drive was low as desire was sometimes high and sometimes low. Sexual intercourse was not same as earlier as it was becoming painful and uncomfortable. She was also facing hot flushes and night sweats and mood swings. She was anxious and worried. She felt that there was no joy left in life. She started avoiding going out of house and meeting family and friends. She was changed. She was even scared that what was happening to her. She was referred by her doctor to internal medicine specialist and he did few tests and found that she was entering in the life phase of menopause which causes hormonal imbalances. She was having menopause and her symptoms were due to hormonal imbalance of menopause. She was told to accept it and live normally as every female passes through this phase. It took sometime but she accepted the truth of life and welcomed the menopause. Now she is a cheerful and happy lady.

Hypothalamus – Pituitary gland complex

The hypothalamus and the pituitary gland are closely linked anatomically and functionally. The hypothalamus is a small structure situated below the main brain, it extends downwards into the pituitary stem. Pituitary gland has two lobes, anterior and posterior. It consists of nerve-cell grouped into nuclei, with nerve-fibres running to it from other parts of the brain and nerve-fibres running from it down the stalk of the pituitary gland into the posterior lobe of the gland.

Anterior lobe of pituitary gland produces growth hormone (GH), thyrotrophic

Decentralization of powers in J&K-the Palli way

■ SOURABH SHARMA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi picked up an unexceptional hamlet of Palli in Jammu and Kashmir's border district of Samba to celebrate Panchayati Raj Diwas on Sunday, 24 April 2022 with thousands of Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) members and also transferred Rs 44.70 Crore to 322 Panchayats spread across the length and breadth of India. It was Narendra Modi's first ever visit to the newly carved-out Union Territory of J&K post abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, which were highly discriminatory in nature and never empowered people at grassroots level. The crowd that had started accumulating at the venue since early morning included people from all walks of life, especially the Sarpanchs and Panchs, who travelled from far-off places of Jammu and Kashmir despite all odds, threats of terrorists and growing pressure from those who never empowered their institutions, as they wanted to hear the Prime Minister speak about decentralisation of powers, and the Prime Minister clearly sent a message that the future of J&K lies in the development of villages through Gram Panchayats, Mandal Parishads and Zila Parishads. The opposition, as usual, was left cribbing and complaining as to why the Prime Minister didn't mention about elections in J&K. The message from Narendra Modi was loud and clear to those who, during the past 70 years didn't let the three-tier system of governance persist in J&K and instead continued with single line administration to enjoy brute powers, that the priority of the Union Government was to strengthen institutions at grass-root level where people could become part of the decision-making institutions and develop their villages at par with any other place of India. Having denied Jammu and Kashmir their right to have vibrant institutions like Panchayats, local bodies, municipal councils or municipal corporations, this is for the first time that the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution of India are being extended to the Union Territory (UT), which in turn will empower people at grassroot level and make them believe that villages

and small towns besides cities can be developed with the three-tier system of governance in a much better manner than what the erstwhile state had been practising.

Presence of about eleven thousand Panchayat representatives at Prime Minister's address at Palli established that Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing a sea change where people at grassroot level are getting their due share after decades. This was also indicative of the fact that the wheel of democracy, set rolling by the Prime Minister in J&K, is not going to stop and all the institutions will be strengthened. Heading Palli towards being a carbon neutral village by establishing a 500 Kilowatt solar power plant in record three weeks' time, Prime Minister again recognised that actual and good governance at grassroot level can change the fate of people entirely. To send a message across the length and breadth of the nation, especially in villages, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also mentioned about the 75 Amrit Sarowars coming up in each district. At a time when massive modernisation is turning cities and even villages into concrete jungles, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave a proposal of saving water bodies, rejuvenating existing ones and constructing new ones to help conserve water, which in turn will help the locals as well as animals and birds while balancing the biodiversity. Such sensitivity should be replicated wherever possible and all water bodies must be restored to their lost glories in J&K before it is too late.

The Prime Minister also chose to announce that the youth of Jammu and Kashmir will not face what their previous generations had suffered, which means that the days of terrorism are numbered, development is taking place, infrastructure that's being built on war footing is going to change the way J&K moves, foreign and domestic investment to the tune of Rs 38,000 crore is going to create jobs and open up new vistas and most importantly, an order is being brought in the system of governance, which had gone haywire during all previous regimes. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also silenced those who wanted to

know what avenues and investments or developments took place in J&K post abrogation of Article 370.

The very first thing that the Modi government at the Centre ensured in J&K was to start, execute and dedicate public projects in record time. Unlike the past when projects of national importance used to take decades to complete, time bound completion of projects have given a fillip to J&K's economy, with which it is able to pick up pace at par with the rest of India.

An 850-megawatt power project on Chenab river in Kishtwar coming up at a whopping cost of around Rs 5,300 crore and another 540-megawatt Kwar hydro-electric project costing Rs 4,500 crore were also inaugurated by the Prime Minister and their completion in record time will not only enable J&K to have surplus power but it will also be able to export it to other states through the Northern Grid.

One of the best projects that the Prime Minister inaugurated was the highway from Katra to Delhi, which when completed will give a fillip to travel and trade to the extent that Jammu and Kashmir will be transformed into a mega city having footprints of traders, business houses and investors from rest of the world. Another project, the 8.4 Km long Banihal-Qazigund tunnel thrown open for the public, will not only reduce the long distance of 16 Km by one and a half hours but the region will also get all-weather connectivity. J&K had never ever seen completion of such mega projects in record time. Earlier the projects used to be inaugurated and left in lurch, but this is because of the vision of Narendra Modi and his monitoring mechanism that people are getting infrastructure built and dedicated to them in record time. Instead of naming any other political outfit, hostile neighbours or wrongs being practised by opposition leaders to misguide youngsters, the Prime Minister cherry-picked developmental issues, strengthening of Panchayats and involvement of elected representatives in decision-making institutions, only to render all such people redundant rather irrelevant.

His focus was on involving people into

making Jammu and Kashmir, especially its villages, self-reliant so that a phased movement of youngsters from villages to cities is stopped and ample opportunities are provided to them at their doorsteps. This is something that Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also mentioned in his speech and said that the country, including the Union Territory of J&K, will now progress by leaps and bounds through Gram Panchayats - the very basic village-governing institutions in India that constitute a strong democratic structure at the grassroots level and act as village cabinets.

The solar plant constructed with the help of local villagers and inaugurated by the Prime Minister is one such example that is going to change the fate of 340 houses which will get clean energy and become model Panchayat for the rest of the country.

Union Minister in PMO Dr Jitendra Singh also echoed in the same voice, establishing that strengthening of the Panchayati Raj System is actually called 'Self Rule' which the redundant-lying political outfits keep reiterating in J&K but as per their own terms.

Self-rule, according to these politicians of NC, PDP or Congress actually means giving powers to a selected few families in J&K, but what Narendra Modi is doing by empowering Panchayats and local self-governing institutions is in fact a system of good governance of the people, by the people and for the people, which popularly is called Democracy, and those who don't believe in it are the enemies of people. Any good opposition, while criticising the ruling government on issue-based subjects, will not ignore infrastructural projects worth Rs 20,000 crore, Ratle and Kwar Hydroelectric projects, 500 KW solar power plant at Palli, Banihal-Qazigund Road Tunnel, Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway, Jan Aushadi Kendras in Jammu and Kashmir by which Narendra Modi has demonstrated what 'Sabka Prayas' actually means. Despite all this, if someone is colour blind to these developments then one must leave the decision to the general public, which knows who is working for them and who wants to exploit them.

Scrapping of Article 370 made PRIs vibrant

■ DEEPAK PANDOH

Till August 5, 2019, Panchayati Raj Institutions in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) existed on papers only. It was only after the abrogation of J&K's so-called special status and its transition into a Union Territory that these institutions started functioning on the ground. The erstwhile political regimes in J&K were never that inclined towards empowering grass root democratic institutions. From 1978 to 2011, Panchayat elections in J&K were held only once by the then Farooq Abdullah's government in 2001-02. With poor voter turnout and less than 30 per cent of members getting elected in Kashmir. Then these were again conducted after a gap of nine years in 2011 by the then government led by Omar Abdullah. But these polls proved to be a cosmetic exercise as the then National Conference-Congress regime didn't make any sincere attempt to empower the Sarpanchs and Panchs.

After the five-year term of the Panchayats ended in 2016, elections were deferred as the government led by Mehbooba Mufti kept on postponing the panchayat polls citing security reasons. In June 2018, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) pulled out from the Mehbooba-led regime in J&K as her government failed to uphold the spirit of nationalism and implement the people-centric policies. On August 15, 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Independence Day speech, announced that the Panchayat polls will be held in J&K in a few months. After his announcement, the Panchayat elections were conducted in J&K in November and December in 2018. More than 75 per cent people exercised their franchise in these elections. It was nearly after seven years that people got a chance to elect their representatives in rural J&K.

Panchayati Raj Institutions have become an integral part of J&K's governance system and Panchayat Representatives have become the voice of people.

The Centre released Rs 800 crore in four installments between March and August 2019, ahead of its move to abrogate Article 370, a temporary provision in the Indian Constitution, and after August 5, 2019, Rs 1,200 crore more were released. In toto, Panchayats were given Rs 2,000 crore to work on the schemes aimed at benefiting a common man in J&K. The distribution

of the money depended on the area and the population of the village. The village Panchayats received anything between Rs 80 lakh to Rs one crore to begin with and since then funds have been flowing.

For the first time since Independence, elected grassroots representatives were given a formal protocol to unfurl the National Flag on Republic and Independence Days. The Panchayats were given powers to conduct social audits, address grievances and generate resources. Posts for Panchayat Accounts Assistants and Panchayat Secretaries were advertised and filled. Each Panchayat representative has been provided with an insurance cover of Rs 25 lakh in case of death in any terrorism-related incident. During the past three years two hundred new buildings of Panchayat ghars have been approved for construction in J&K. Nearly 200 Panchayat ghars stand renovated. The Back to Village programme organized by J&K government led to officers visiting the Panchayats and helped the village heads to execute the works that were identified by the local populace. Around 19,000 loan cases worth Rs 372 crore were identified for financing during the Back to Village programmes. As many as 15,200 loan cases, including 4,600 of women entrepreneurs, were sanctioned during the initiative.

The steps that have been taken to empower Panchayati Raj Institutions have changed the very idea of development in the rural areas and people are reaping the benefits of J&K getting merged into the Union of India completely. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led regime has delivered what it had promised. On August 5, 2019, Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah in their speeches in Parliament had vowed to change the destinies of J&K people and had termed the move to scrap Article 370 as breaking of a new dawn in J&K.

After abrogation of Article 370, the new dawn has broken out and sun has been shining in the depressed Himalayan region that faced Pakistan sponsored terrorism for three decades.

In past three years, Panchayats have become one of the most powerful institutions in the Union Territory.

Panchayat representatives despite facing threats and intimidations from terrorists have remained steadfast in their resolve to carry forward the mission of empowering

a common man and provide him with all the benefits of the centrally sponsored schemes.

J&K government is working hard to achieve the targets of the 100-point program of centrally sponsored schemes through Gram Swaraj, which includes Kisan Credit Card, Soil Health Card, PM Kisan, Crop Insurance Scheme, Aadhaar enrollment, Jan Dhan Yojana, Atal Pension Yojana, Samagra Shiksha, One Nation One Ration Card, Banking, Jan Bhagidari, DBT, Har Gaon Hariyali, PM-KISAN, My School My Pride Golden Health Card, Jal Jeevan Mission, Youth Club, Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojna, Bharat Net, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Rural Haat, old age pension, sports ground in every panchayat, etc. The implementation of these important welfare schemes of the PM Modi led government are aimed at empowering the rural population in a limited time.

In 2020, the grass-root democracy was strengthened further in Jammu and Kashmir by holding the maiden District Development Council (DDC) elections. These polls were a big leap towards inclusive development which is now evident at the ground level that reiterates the government's mantra of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas' and in the principle of justice for all, appeasement to none. Elections to 280 DDC seats, 14 in each of the 20 districts, were held in eight phases in the Himalayan region from November 28 to December 19 in 2020. A new political culture has been set in J&K that is based on 'equality for all' without discrimination at every level, especially in governance.

Till DDC elections were held Jammu Kashmir had two tiers of Panchayats, one at the village level and the other at the district level. The block was the second level in J&K. However, in October 2020, the Ministry of Home Affairs amended the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989 paving way for direct elections of Sarpanchs, Panchs and DDC members. The three-tier system in J&K was completed after the successful election of the DDC, as well as Block Development Councils (BDCs).

Initiatives for Skill Education: 1,500 girl students from J&K Colleges to get scholarships in Data Science & AI

■ SURESH VERMA

Almost 1,500 girl students from degree colleges across Jammu and Kashmir will be awarded scholarships to help them undertake high-quality and tech-driven online skilling programmes in cutting edge technologies like Digital Marketing and Data Science with Artificial Intelligence. A proposal to this effect was jointly agreed upon by the Higher Education Department J&K and the upGrad Foundation - the philanthropic and not-for-profit division of Edtech company upGrad. The upGrad Foundation will be supporting this initiative through its 100 per cent fee waiver for tech driven programmes to help deserving and shortlisted female learners through its social impact initiative - Vidya Shakti Scholarships. However, the initiative will not be confined only to online courses and scholarships but will aim to deliver an all-encompassing education experience with added benefits like one-on-one mentoring and guidance through webinars and talks. It will also offer strong placement support in the form of internships and job opportunities facilitated by the upGrad Foundation for enabling positive career outcomes for the learners. The initiative will educate and empower female learners coming from underserved sections and marginalised backgrounds and connect them with role models to guide and inspire them to follow in their footsteps. It will also provide 70 per cent scholarship for reputed PG courses in Management and Executive PG programme in Human Resource Management. While access to Higher Education and focus on skills are among the major goals of the National Education Policy 2020, substantially increasing the number of youths with relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship will also significantly contribute towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2030.

With females being hit the hardest by the pandemic, the girl students especially in remote areas were facing challenges in terms of higher education and employment. The support of the upGrad Foundation in getting women learners to access the mainstream job market through digitization and upskilling will be a tremendous boost. The said initiative is initially being introduced in 16 colleges but can be expanded later on. This is one of the many initiatives of the Higher Education Department to improve access to quality education, skills and knowledge to remote and distant areas and especially to girl children. The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Rohtak is already running an Entrepreneurial Internship programme focused on women learners for Jammu and Kashmir. The department too is also promoting skilling initiatives on a large scale and has integrated skill education seamlessly with mainstream education. Add on skill courses will now be offered as 30 credit integrated courses in 12+ 18 format wherein 12 credits will be either embedded or as add on component while as 18 credits will be offered as Skill training by respective Sector Skill Councils under the certification of NSDC. Infrastructure in the HEIs has been created in a Skill development infrastructure in the Higher Educational Institutions of J&K has been created in a Hub and Spoke Model with 15 Hub and 75 Spoke centers stand already established with a seed money of Rs. 10 crore. The domains offered include Electronics, Computers & IT, Horticulture, Agriculture, Pharmacy, Paramedical, Food Science Technology, Fashion Technology, Epiculture, Sericulture, Veterinary Sciences, Financial Management, Engineering, etc. The department is also planning to set up 15 centres for Innovation and Incubation to encourage start ups and help incubate promising ideas. It is also setting up Research and Innovation hubs in colleges and designating universities as mentor institutions to create an ecosystem of research and innovation.