

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Administration sensitive to...

civil society members and the youth to discharge their collective responsibility in realizing the developmental goals for a glorious future.

"India is moving ahead with new thinking and new resolve. We have touched the moon. Now, we should set big goals. Now, we should work with new speed and scale and dedicate ourselves in building a progressive society and realize the vision of Smart Cities, Smart Towns and Smart Villages," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor commended the endeavour of District Administration for honouring Acharya Abhinav Gupta by creating infrastructure, facilities and beautification works of the Bairam Cave at Beerwah.

It is a wonderful example of 'Vikas bhi, Virasat bhi' and multi-dimensional approach will help developing Beerwah as a major tourist destination, he said.

Nazir Ahmad Khan, Chairman, District Development Council, Budgam expressed gratitude to the Lt Governor led UT Administration for taking development to the grassroots level.

The projects inaugurated by Lt Governor today include Public and Children Parks around Charar-e-Sharief Shrine; Renovation/Beautification Works for Bairam Hill Cave at Beerwah, Budgam; Jogger's Park at MC Chadoora; Water Supply Scheme, Harinoo and New Type Primary Health Centre, Choon.

The projects worth Rs 41 crore for which the foundation stones were laid are Transit Accommodation at Kakammaran, Budgam; New Bus Adda Chadoora; Modernization of DC Office Complex; Water Supply Scheme, Gundipora, Beerwah and Construction of 19 new Panchayat Ghars across Budgam.

The Lt Governor also distributed Sports kits to youth of Budgam and smart-phones and smart kits to specially-abled children.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Sh Vijay Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Budgam, PRI members, youth and large number of people from Budgam attended the ceremony at Raj Bhawan Auditorium.

Three killed as...

driver Kewal Sharma, son of Ramesh Kumar, resident of Kathar, Jammu; Sandeep Singh, son of Sansar Singh, resident of Raundomel and identity of the third deceased is yet to be ascertained. At the same time, the identity of the injured in this accident has been told as Ravi Kumar, son of Jagdish Kumar resident Mang. Police have registered a case in this regard and the cause of the accident is being investigated.

Sinha performs Pujan...

The holy Mace will be taken to the Shri Amarnathji cave on August 26 following the traditional practice of Chhari Mubarak Yatara.

Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, CEO, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board; Vijay Kumar, ADGP Kashmir; Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, senior officers were present.

CCI calls for...

Highway is completely restored and the damaged roads are repaired and made fully operational, the toll tax collection has been kept in abeyance.



CCI President Arun Gupta briefing media in Jammu.

"We had also requested the Lieutenant Governor to give appointment to discuss these issues," he said, adding that the members expressed their anger over the installation of Smart Meters and functioning at Toll Plaza at Sarore and were of the opinion that 'Jammu Bandh' is the only solution to get the demands and various issues resolved.

The members with one voice extended full support to Jammu Bandh, he added.

Arun Gupta apprised the members that he had already taken up the issues regarding excess billing after installation of smart meters and has also voiced that installation of smart meters should be stopped immediately as the digital meters were functioning properly and smoothly.

The office bearers present in the meeting and press conference included Anil Gupta, Sr. Vice President, Rajeev Gupta, Jr. Vice President, Rajesh Gupta, Secretary and Rajesh Gupta, Treasurer.

Prominent among those present in the meeting include Deepak Gupta, President Trader Federation Warehouse, Yash Pal Gupta, President Retailers Federation, Anan Sharma, President Tanker Association, Murari Lal Balgotra, Chairman Dhaba Union, Neeraj Gupta, President Hardware, Paint & Sanitary Dealer Association, Krishan Lal Gupta, Chairman, Rajinder Bazar Trader Association, Prem Sharma, General Secretary Jammu Chemist Association, Sanjay Gupta, President Raghunath Bazar Association, Rajan Gupta, President JPDA, Ashish Gupta, General Secretary, Kanak Mandi Traders Association, Pawan Gupta, President All-Jammu, Hotel and Lodges Association, Janak Raj Gupta, President, Brick Kiln Owner Association, Arjun Gupta, Pujya Kapoor, Gian Sharma, Rajesh Dewan, Rajesh Raina, Ramesh Tak, Madhu Sharma, Sushant Gupta, Suraj Parkash, Rajeev Langer; Davinder Mahajan, Jatinder Pinky Jain, Vishal Gupta, Sanjay Jain, Anil Gupta, Manmohan Singh, Rajender Parsad, Anil Gupta, Narinder Gupta, Surinder Mahajan, Davinder Sharma, Kamal Gupta and Ashwani Gupta.

CS directs NHAI...

connectivity from Jammu to Kathua, efforts being made to reduce the travel time from Jammu to Kathua and to restore the Tarnah Bridge.

Thereafter, the Chief Secretary sought details of the stretches of the NH-44 which were majorly affected due to monsoon as also the ongoing works and reviewed the actions being taken to ease the travel of the commuters on these stretches.

On the issue of Tarnah Bridge, it was acknowledged that the break-down of the bridge was natural calamity which has increased the travel time substantially. The Chief Secretary was assured by NHAI that work to restore the bridge was going on war-footing basis despite the challenges being posed by the frequent flash-floods.

In this regard, the Chief Secretary directed NHAI to ensure that the causeway is ready for LMV traffic within a week's time. On the issue of poor condition of road being reported along certain stretches, the Chief Secretary asked NHAI to ensure that all service roads are black-topped, made pot-hole free within a week's time so as to provide smooth alternate connectivity to the commuters in view of the ongoing works.

On the issue of Thandikhui toll plaza, the NHAI assured that facility of monthly passes at Rs 300 to commuters residing within 20 kms of toll plaza and paid commercial monthly passes for Rs 2700 allowing for 50 trips shall be provided to everyone in a hassle free manner for the convenience of the public in general.

The Chief Secretary further directed Divisional Commissioner, RO (NHAI) and Deputy Commissioner(s) concerned to undertake a joint visit along the NH-44 tomorrow to assess the present condition of the road connectivity along the NH-44 from Jammu to Lakhampur and suggest immediate necessary measures to alleviate the issues being faced by the commuters and to reduce the travel time. Based on the assessment made during the visit, the matter shall again be reviewed tomorrow.

J&K Govt accords...

of J&K having a separate family and doesn't have land in his own name or in the name of any of his family members or is not entitled to inherit 5 marla or more land.

"The Deputy Commissioner concerned shall lease out 05 marla of state land to the landless PMAY (G) beneficiaries who are figuring in the Permanent Waiting List 2018-19, surveyed by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, and are otherwise eligible for housing Assistance under PMAY(G)/Awas plus," it stated and added, "The land shall be granted on lease basis in terms of the Jammu and Kashmir Land Grants Act of 1960 and the Rules made thereunder. The land in respect of these beneficiaries shall be granted on lease on payment of a token amount of Rs 100 per Marla as a one-time premium and a nominal amount of Rs 01 per marla per annum as ground rent, in relaxation of Jammu and Kashmir Land Grant Rules, 2022."

It further stated that lease shall be for a period of 40 years, extendable further for a period of another 40 years, subject to the fulfillment of all codal formalities/norms. However, if a person fails to build house on allotted land within a period of two years, such lease shall be cancelled forthwith.

The Assistant Commissioner (Development) of the Rural Development Department of the district concerned shall verify the case(s) and place an indent before the Deputy Commissioner along with the complete particulars of the beneficiaries, including Aadhaar, it stated.

"Deputy Commissioner shall forward the case(s) to Tehsildar concerned for inquiry, who shall identify the state land and verify the particulars of the beneficiaries, including their status of being landless. In case the beneficiary has shifted from another district, a report from the concerned district, where he was previously residing, shall also be obtained to ascertain his status of being landless. The Tehsildar shall submit the case(s), complete in all respects, to the Deputy Commissioner concerned for lease with the Copy of Jamabandi, Copy of Girdawari, Copy of 'Batima / Shajra Kat, Copy of Ration Card, Affidavit of the beneficiary that he is landless and the land identified for him is acceptable to him for construction of PMAY (G) house if sanctioned on the said land and Statement of Lambardar & Chowkidar; the order stated.

"Deputy Commissioner shall lease the state land to the beneficiaries after further inquiry as deemed necessary. The grant of land on lease shall not be construed as permission for construction, and the lessee shall seek permission from the competent authority for the construction of the house. The lessee shall use the land only for the purpose for which it is granted and shall start construction of the house within three months (03) from the date of the lease, failing which land shall stand resumed to the Government without any compensation," it further stated and added, "The lessee shall not sub-let/sub-lease/alienate/transfer the leased land, and any contravention shall terminate the lease, and the land shall stand resumed to the Government without any compensation."

Tehsildar concerned shall execute the lease agreement with the lessee as per the Form-I annexed herewith. The database shall also be maintained in the office of the Deputy Commissioner of all such leases on a monthly basis, which shall be submitted to the Government by the Deputy Commissioner, it added.

Respecting LAC essential...

intensify efforts at expeditious disengagement and deescalation, the foreign secretary added.

Kwatra said Modi had conversations with BRICS leaders on the sidelines of the summit of the grouping in Johannesburg.

The ties between India and China came under severe strain following the eastern Ladakh border standoff that began in May, 2020.

The Indian and Chinese troops are locked in the standoff in certain friction points in eastern Ladakh even as the two sides completed disengagement from several areas following extensive diplomatic and military talks.

BRICS rejects 'double...

UN framework. The summit was chaired by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. Russian President Vladimir Putin joined it through video conference.

"We are committed to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the cross-border movement of terrorists, and terrorism financing networks and safe havens," the declaration said.

"We reiterate that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group," it said.

The BRICS leaders reaffirmed their "unwavering commitment" to contribute further to the global efforts of preventing and countering the threat of terrorism on the basis of respect for international law, in particular the Charter of the UN, and human rights.

The declaration said the states have the primary responsibility in combating terrorism with the UN continuing to play central and coordinating role in this area.

"We also stress the need for a comprehensive and balanced approach of the whole international community to effectively curb the terrorist activities, which pose a serious threat, including in the present-day pandemic environment," it said.

"We reject double standards in countering terrorism and extremism conducive to terrorism," it added.

"We call for an expeditious finalization and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism within the UN framework and for launching multilateral negotiations on an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism, at the Conference of Disarmament," the declaration said.

It said the leaders welcomed the activities of the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Working Group and its five subgroups based upon the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Action Plan.

"We express strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations whenever, wherever and by whomsoever committed. We recognize the threat emanating from terrorism, extremism conducive to terrorism and radicalisation," it noted.

"We look forward to further deepening counter-terrorism cooperation," the declaration said.

J&K Police Sl...

committee established a prima facie case of criminal conspiracy involving JKSSB officials, M/s Merit Trac Bengaluru, beneficiaries of the recruitment, and other accused parties. Charges have been framed under sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy), 420 (cheating), 201 (causing disappearance of evidence), 411 (dishonestly receiving stolen property), 408 (criminal breach of trust), and other relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

The investigation revealed that the examination was conducted by the JKSSB for the first time, with the exam date initially set for October 21, 2021. The number of vacancies was later increased from 800 to 1200, leading to the exam being conducted on March 27, 2022. However, the results were subsequently cancelled by the Government of J&K on July 8, 2022, leading to the CBI investigation. CJM Jammu Anjum Ara, after hearing arguments from both the CBI's public prosecutor Vijay Dogra and the battery of lawyers representing the accused individuals, concluded that there was sufficient evidence to prima facie establish the charges.

Accordingly, she charged the accused with the commission of the aforementioned offenses under the IPC. This development marks a significant step in the ongoing investigation into the alleged recruitment scam.

Arms Licence Scam...

the respondents to fulfil their obligations in accordance with the court's orders. DSGI Vishal Sharma also appeared on behalf of DoPT, GOI, indicating the central government's involvement in the matter.

Recognizing the public interest implications of the case, the Division Bench instructed the Registry to reschedule the PIL for September 20, 2023, when the matter will be revisited. The delay in this high-profile case continues to draw attention, raising questions about the efficacy of the legal and administrative processes involved.

No 'constitutional fraud'...

assembly" which existed in clause 2 of Article 370 was replaced with the word "legislative assembly" on August 5, 2019, the day the provisions of Article 370 were done away with.

"You will have to argue how it was not a constituent assembly but a legislative assembly in its original form. You will have to answer how it will square up with clause 2 of Article 370 which specifically says the constituent assembly formed for the purpose of framing the constitution of that state...because, there is a textual answer which may militate against your line of approach," CJI Chandrachud told Mehta.

The Solicitor General said he will try to satisfy the conscience of the court and explain the procedure adopted and how it was constitutionally permissible.

The relevant provision of Article 370, before its reading down in 2019, said: "Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this Article, the President may, by public notification, declare that this article shall cease to be operative or shall be operative only with such exceptions and modifications and from such date as he may specify: Provided that the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly of the State referred to in clause (2) shall be necessary before the President issues such a notification."

On August 5, 2019, the newly inserted Article 367(4)(d) amended Article 370(3) by replacing the expression "Constituent Assembly of the State" with the "Legislative Assembly of the State".

"I will show how Article 370 worked till 2019. Some of the things are really shocking and I want the court to know about it. Because, practically two constitutional organs-state government and the President- in consultation with each other, can amend any part of the Constitution, whichever way they want and apply it to Jammu and Kashmir," Mehta said.

As an example, Mehta said the preamble of the Indian Constitution was made applicable to Jammu and Kashmir by way of Constitution Order under Article 370(1)(b) in 1954.

"Thereafter 42nd amendment took place in 1976 and the words 'socialist' and 'secular' came to be added in the Indian Constitution but that was not made applicable (to J-K) till August 5, 2019. The Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir was not having either the term 'socialist' or 'secular,'" Mehta said, adding he will show the "devastating effect" Article 370 could have had if it were not repealed.

"This court has rightly flagged that end may not justify the means but I will justify the means also. They are constitutionally permissible," Mehta said.

The CJI asked the Centre to furnish a list of states out of the 562 princely states

which existing with India without signing any merger agreement besides original papers existing with the Department of State under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Solicitor General countered the argument of the petitioners that Article 370 was a special feature and it was a privilege given to the people of Jammu and Kashmir which could never be taken away, and said there were several similarly situated princely states, which put certain conditions for integration but eventually subsumed themselves with the Union because of Article 1 of the Constitution.

The bench prima facie agreed with the submissions of Mehta and said the only difference was that princely states like Kathiawar, Saurashtra and Baroda did not follow the Article 370 route but still were integrated with India.

"For J-K the Constitution decided to go to Article 370 and for other states there was no provision like Article 370. They merged and they were integrated completely. They accepted List 1, they accepted List 3 and they accepted the ultimate powers of the legislature of dominion of India," the bench said.

The CJI said many of these states came into the Union of their own volition.

"We take it as voluntary but there may have been little bit of persuasion, there may have been politics involved. This is because of genius like Sardar Patel and there is no doubt about it. But the fact, however, remains is that in so far as J-K is concerned, it bucked that trend and went through the Article 370 route," CJI Chandrachud added.

Mehta also countered the argument of petitioners that instrument of merger was a necessary attribute for complete integration otherwise there existed a kind of internal sovereignty.

"This court may recall that J-K never signed instrument of merger but then many states did not sign instrument of merger. But, from the date on which Constitution of India came into force and Article 1 came into force, they became integral part of India," he said.

He also questioned the argument of the petitioners that although J-K gave up its external sovereignty, there existed internal sovereignty with the erstwhile state.

"In my view, the petitioners are confusing internal sovereignty with autonomy. External sovereignty nobody can dispute it is with UOI (Union of India) and internal sovereignty in the facts of our case and the constitutional structure which we have accepted, would mean autonomy of a federating unit. This autonomy exists with every state," Mehta submitted.

The CJI agreed with the submission and said, "Yes, this is there with every institution. This exists with every autonomous institution. Like we have autonomous authority to decide the constitutional issue, so we can't say that internal sovereignty vests with us. We are an independent autonomous institution under the Constitution."

The hearing remained inconclusive and will resume on August 28.

Several petitions challenging abrogation of the provisions of Article 370 and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which split the erstwhile state into two union territories - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh - were referred to a Constitution bench in 2019.

Deadline for use...

wages to those enrolled under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

The initial deadline for the mandatory adoption of ABPS mode was February 1, which was later extended to March 31, then till June 30, and eventually till August 31.

However, officials in the rural development ministry said the deadline will not be extended any further as over 90 per cent of active workers' accounts have already been linked with Aadhaar.

According to a statement issued by the ministry in June, out of the total 14.28 crore active beneficiaries, Aadhaar number has been seeded with 13.75 crore.

A total of 12.17 crore Aadhaar numbers have been authenticated and 77.81 per cent were found eligible for ABPS at that time, as per the ministry.

In May 2023, about 88 per cent of the wage payment were made through ABPS.

The ministry had also said that the data of job cards issued to beneficiaries of MGNREGS cannot be deleted on the basis of the reason that the worker is not eligible for ABPS.

According to a written reply by rural development minister Giriraj Singh in Parliament during the recently-concluded monsoon session, bank accounts of around 1.13 crore MGNREGS workers, or around eight per cent of the total active workers under the scheme, are yet to be seeded with Aadhaar.

North-eastern states are lagging behind in the process, with accounts of more than 42 per cent workers in Assam, around 23 per cent in Arunachal Pradesh, over 70 per cent in Meghalaya, and 37 per cent in Nagaland not being seeded with Aadhaar numbers.

ABPS as an alternative payment mode along with the direct account transfer mode has been in use under MNRREGS since 2017.

Ministry officials said that states have been asked to organise camps and follow up with beneficiaries to achieve 100 per cent ABPS adoption.

Rahul Gandhi holds...

in poll-bound Kargil before returning to Delhi, senior Congress leader and former legislator Asgar Ali Karbalai said.

The election to 26 seats of the 30-member Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Kargil, is slated for September 10 and the counting of votes will be held four days later.

After an overnight stay at Padam in Zaskar Tehsil of Kargil, the 53-year-old Gandhi reached Kargil town late this afternoon, riding on his motorcycle. He was accorded a warm welcome by a massive crowd who chanted slogans in praise of "Bharat Jodo" and the Congress leader.

Later, he interacted with the youngsters for one-hour from 5 pm at a special programme organised by the local Congress unit, Karbalai told PTI.

He said more than 1,000 youths turned up and highlighted their problems including joblessness.

Gandhi assured them that he and his party members would become their voice in Parliament and ensure justice with them.

Gandhi talked about the party's victory in Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh assembly elections and also exuded confidence about the party's win in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections as well as state polls later this year, Karbalai said.

He termed the interaction between Gandhi and the youth a "historic moment" and said the people of Kargil were all praise for the efforts of the Congress leader to safeguard democracy and secularism in the country by exposing "divisive forces and hatemongers".

"Gandhi's visit has nothing to do with the local elections in Kargil. He is not here to campaign for the party candidates. He has a larger goal to remove hatred and spread love," Karbalai said.

Earlier, Gandhi shared several pictures about his journey from Zaskar to Kargil including the one with a group of security personnel on the foothills of a mountain with a captain "on our frontiers stand the brave children of Bharat Mata ready to take on any challenge for her sake. A look into their eyes, a heartfelt conversation, or a glimpse into their lives is enough to leave you inspired for a lifetime".

Rotary Club holds medical camp

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: Rotary Eye & General Welfare Foundation in coloration with Rotary Club



People participating in camp at Udhampur.

Udhampur and KLSM Rotary Eye & ENT Hospital Udhampur organised free consultation for all the patients to celebrate the successful landing of Chandryan-3 on Moon under the leadership of Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi.

A team of doctors led by Eye Dept by Dr. Ankur Goel, Dr. Sumeru Raina, Dr. Sharika Ganjoo and Dr. Abhishek Padha examined 200 patients and provided free consultation including 40 patients in ENT by Dr. Kanav Baigra and 10 patients were examined of Dental by Dr. Anu Gupta and Dr. Meenakshi Thakur. On this occasion Halwa was distributed to all patients and staff of hospital. Rtn. DN Sharma Chairman & Rtn Kamal Gupta Secy Gen, Rtn Col. Hargovind Singh President Rotary Club Udhampur, Rtn Rajindra Sanson, Rtn Rajeev Gupta, Rtn Puran Lal Sharma, Rtn D.N. Bhakhri, Rtn SS Kerni and staff of the Rotary Hospital were present on this occasion. All doctors congratulated team of Scientists of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for creating amazing history as it became the first country to land on the South Pole of lunar surface for this great achievement.