

# Congress practised divisive politics in J&K, BJP ensured justice for all: Dr Jitendra

## STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI/JAMMU: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh delivered a strong critique of the Congress party and its ally, the National Conference (NC), accusing them of engaging in divisive politics in Jammu & Kashmir.

Dr. Singh, who holds multiple portfolios including Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, asserted that the BJP has consistently worked to ensure justice for all, in stark contrast to the Congress-NC alliance, which he described as a "marriage of convenience."

He accused Congress of being unable to take a clear stance on key national issues, particularly the

restoration of Article 370, which the National Conference openly advocates.

Dr. Singh challenged Congress to clarify its position, suggesting that the party's silence on the matter reveals a fundamental contradiction in its approach.

He emphasized that the people of Jammu & Kashmir would not accept this "two-faced" approach.

Dr. Singh highlighted the BJP's achievements, particularly the rev-

ocation of Article 370, a longstanding promise that Congress had failed to fulfill.

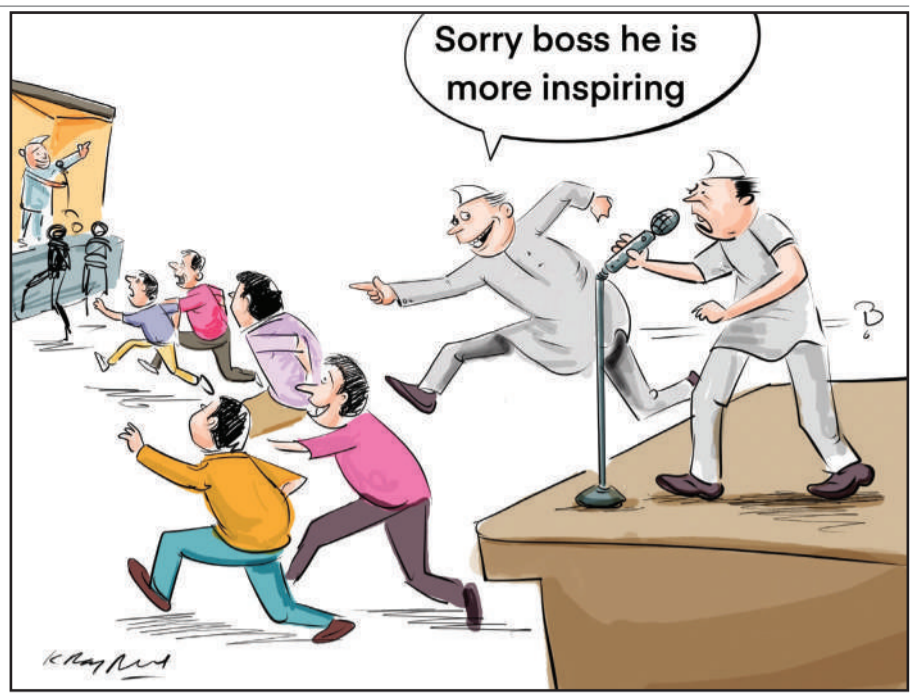
He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for bringing peace and justice to the region, making it safe for leaders like Rahul Gandhi to freely walk the streets of Srinagar—a situation unimaginable during previous Congress-led governments.

The Minister also spoke on the BJP's strength to contest elections independently, unlike Congress,

which he claimed relies on "old, recycled alliances."

He stressed the BJP's commitment to principles over power, referencing the party's decision to end its alliance with the PDP when compromises on principles became apparent. When asked about the potential for a Hindu Chief Minister, Dr. Singh emphasized that the BJP's candidate would come from the party, irrespective of religion or caste.

Dr. Singh's statements underscored his confidence in the BJP's continued leadership under Prime Minister Modi and his belief in the party's democratic processes and commitment to justice for all in Jammu & Kashmir.



## Article 370 Abrogation marks new era for women's rights in J&K: Sham Lal



Women delegation congratulating Sham Lal Sharma, former Minister for nomination of candidate from Jammu North.

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a significant show of support, a delegation of women from Jammu on Friday welcomed the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) decision to nominate Sham Lal Sharma, State Vice President and former Minister, as the candidate from the Jammu North assembly constituency. The enthusiastic welcome highlighted the growing support for the BJP's commitment to women's rights and empowerment under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Speaking on the occasion, Sham Lal Sharma expressed his gratitude for the overwhelming support from the women of Jammu. He emphasized that since the formation of the government under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the

security, dignity, and participation of women have been key focus areas. He stated, "The BJP government has taken historic steps to ensure the upliftment and empowerment of women across the country, and this will continue to be a priority in Jammu and Kashmir as well." Referring to the recent legislative developments, Sharma highlighted the passing of the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam' (Women's Reservation Bill) in the Lok Sabha. "This Bill, the first to be passed after the Lok Sabha shifted to the new Parliament building, reflects the government's unwavering commitment to enhancing women's representation and participation in the political process," he noted.

The Bill was passed by a majority of the total member-

ship of the House and by no less than two-thirds of the members present and voting, a clear indicator of its widespread support.

Sham Sharma criticized the previous governments in Jammu and Kashmir for their negligence towards women's rights. "Women in Jammu and Kashmir have historically been among the most disadvantaged sections. They were not only denied their constitutional rights, but their existing rights were also gradually eroded. Women who married outside Jammu and Kashmir were deprived of property rights," he said. However, Sharma acknowledged that significant changes have taken place since the abrogation of Article 370. "Today, women in Jammu and Kashmir have the right to buy real estate and transfer property to their children, irrespective of whom they marry. Additionally, a recent provision in the domicile laws now allows the spouse of a native woman, who is a domicile holder in the Union Territory, to obtain domicile status. This is a significant step forward in ensuring equality and justice for women in Jammu and Kashmir," Sharma added.

## DC Jammu seeks explanation from absentee health staff



DC Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya inspecting the working of Tehsil Office, Govt Health & Wellness Centre Pargwal.

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Deputy Commissioner, Sachin Kumar Vaishya on Friday conducted a surprise inspection of the Tehsil Office and the Government Health & Wellness Centre Pargwal.

Additional District Development Commissioner Sher Singh accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the inspection tour.

At the Tehsil Office, the Deputy Commissioner scrutinised the Service Plus portal and evaluated the office's adherence to Public Service Guarantee Act, PSQA guidelines. He reviewed both pending and resolved applications, interviewed staff on routine matters and examined record

maintenance practices. The DC also addressed several contentious local Revenue Department matters during his visit.

Following the Tehsil office inspection, the DC visited the Health & Wellness Centre Pargwal. There, he checked staff attendance, gathered feedback from patients and assessed the medical facilities and prescription practices.

During the course of inspection at the Health & Wellness Centre, it was observed that five medical staff members were found absent. Consequently, the Deputy Commissioner has called for written explanations from the concerned staff regarding their absence.

## Beekeeping emerging as new, sweet opportunity for aspiring entrepreneurs

### MASROOR AHMAD

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir is emerging as one of the most promising regions in India for commercial beekeeping and honey production, according to Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI).

With its vast natural resources, diverse flora, and favourable climatic conditions suitable for both stationary and migratory beekeeping, J&K offers aspiring entrepreneurs a sweet business opportunity that is ripe for the taking. With increasing demand for honey and honey-based products, both domestically and internationally, Jammu and Kashmir appears to be a fertile ground for a new breed of entrepreneurial beekeepers.

Despite its inherent advantages, the JKEDI report reveals that J&K currently imports over Rs. 8.5 million worth of honey annually from other states. This is primarily because the immense potential for beekeeping in the region has not been fully utilized. The report estimates that while the Kashmir Valley alone has the potential to support 250,000 bee colonies, only 25,000 are currently registered.

"The potential market size for honey in Kashmir is a staggering Rs. 77 crore or 770 metric tonnes. However, local production in the Valley is just around 250 metric tonnes annually, with only 75 metric tonnes being processed locally," said officials.

This supply-demand gap presents a lucrative opportunity for entrepreneurs to tap



into the growing market for premium Kashmiri honey, which has a major competitive advantage over other regions due to its high quality and distinct flavor profile.

One of the key attractions of beekeeping is the relatively low start-up costs involved. According to the JKEDI report, an apiary with 20 bee colonies can be established with an initial investment of around Rs. 1-2 lakh, covering the costs of hives, bees, smokers, protective gear, and other essential equipment.

"Beekeeping requires minimal land and offers quick returns on investment," said Mohammed Ashraf, a beekeeper from Pulwama. "With the right practices, it is a sweet business opportunity," he added.

While honey is the primary product, beekeeping also offers opportunities for product diversification into secondary products such as beeswax, candles, lip balms, and cosmetics. This can further increase revenue streams and profitability for entrepreneurs.

"The demand for quality honey, especially the Kashmir brand, is huge and increasing across the country," said a beekeeper, adding that "Additionally,

the chances of product diversification into bee wax, cosmetics, and candles are high, making beekeeping an attractive business proposition."

While beekeeping offers significant opportunities, the JKEDI report cautions that the trade is not without its challenges. Extreme weather conditions, diseases, and attacks from mites and other insects can pose significant threats, potentially destroying entire colonies if not managed properly.

To mitigate these risks and ensure success, the report advises aspiring beekeepers to seek guidance from experts and experienced beekeepers before setting up their venture. It also recommends approaching relevant government departments, such as the Department of Agriculture in Kashmir, for expert advice and information on available financial schemes and support services. With increasing demand for honey and honey-based products, both domestically and internationally, Jammu and Kashmir appears to be a fertile ground for a new breed of entrepreneurial beekeepers to establish sustainable apiaries and tap into this sweet and lucrative market opportunity.

## Incomplete works of Ex-MLA Rajesh Gupta will get priority: Yudhvir



Jammu East BJP candidate Yudhvir Sethi alongwith MLA Rajesh Gupta's family.

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: BJP candidate from Jammu East Yudhvir Sethi on Friday visited the house of ex-MLA Rajesh Gupta, who breadth his last before completing his term, and had been very popular and people friendly leader. The demise of Rajesh Gupta, left many projects incomplete, which Yudhvir Sethi assured to Mrs Rajesh Gupta

and public of the area that he will complete all those works which were started in public interest. "These works will get priority in the near future which shall be my tribute to the departed leader," said Yudhvir Sethi.

Mrs Rajesh Gupta expressed her pleasure on the visit of Yudhvir Sethi and assured all her support in favour of Yudhvir Sethi.

## BJP freed our youth from day to day violence & shut downs: Darakhshan

### STATE TIMES NEWS

SHOPIAN: BJP National Executive Member & senior party leader Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi on Friday attended three election rallies in Shopian Assembly constituency and sought support and votes for the Bharatiya Janata Party candidate Javid Qadri.

Many youth joined the party and reiterated their commitment for BJP. Addressing the rallies Dr Andrabi said that Shopian was turned into a highly affected district in South Kashmir so far as the law and order situation is concerned, but now it was soothing to find the youth of this fertile area fighting to realise their dreams of a very developed, self reliant and peaceful future.

"I want to tell those dynasts who say that BJP did nothing for J&K, that BJP freed our youth from



Senior BJP leader, Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi touring Shopian for campaign for BJP Candidate Javid Qadri.

day to day violence & shut downs. Our youth are not killed anymore in this part which was a routine in their years of rule. We have saved the precious lives of your youth and have an open vision of development of J&K as the leader of all territories within our country", said Darakhshan.

She said that while the dynasts and the old lot of J&K politicians still try to lure and mislead people on hollow slogans and parochial

ideas, BJP has a pure equitable developmental plan for J&K. She slammed INDI Alliance partners and supporters for creating a hypothetical environment in India that Constitution was in danger under BJP but we proved them wrong.

"Democracy is in the spirit of India and no one can harm it or hijack it. BJP does not believe in Emergency like governance like the opposition flock," she said.

## Sahai calls on JMC Commissioner, submits memorandum

### STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A delegation led by Rahul Sahai, Chairman of the PHDCCI Jammu, met with Devansh Yadav, Commissioner of Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), to discuss the overall development of Jammu City.

The delegation, including Anil Sharma, Samar Dev Charak, Ashish Jain, Raj Dua, and Shantanu Gupta, presented a memorandum outlining several key suggestions for enhancing the city's infrastructure and services.

Rahul Sahai congratulated Yadav on his new role, expressing confidence in his leadership to elevate JMC's success. The delegation proposed a range of initiatives aimed at improving city management and resident welfare.

Sahai suggested implementing an app-based system for automated waste collection, forming a JMC Advisory Panel with retired engineers and prominent citizens for valuable guidance, and establishing a robust



PHDCCI delegation members meeting with Devansh Yadav, Commissioner JMC.

customer care system with real-time apps and toll-free numbers to address public grievances swiftly.

Additionally, the delegation recommended reviewing ongoing Jammu Smart City projects due to issues like footpath installations narrowing streets in areas such as Gandhi Nagar.

They proposed a public session to showcase completed projects for transparency. They also advised organizing educational sessions on RERA guidelines for the public and expanding e-bus routes to connect with key industrial zones and local employment centers.

The Tawi Lake Project requires urgent attention, especially in managing nal-

lahs to prevent water quality issues. To improve sanitation compliance, they suggested implementing a challan mechanism for defaulters. Concerns were raised about Transport Nagar, which suffers from poor sanitation, encroachments, and inadequate street lighting. An anti-encroachment drive, improved lighting, and better public toilet facilities were recommended.

The delegation also highlighted the water crisis in

Trikuta Nagar due to outdated infrastructure, urging the planning of a new pumping station. They emphasized the need for public awareness of drain and road construction plans, particularly in the absence of corporators, through local newspapers.

The PHDCCI delegation thanked Yadav for considering their suggestions and expressed optimism that his leadership would bring significant improvements to Jammu.

## Advisor Bhatnagar chairs 44th BoDs meet of JKSCST, BCDC

### STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar on Friday chaired the 44th Board of Directors (BoDs) meeting of Jammu and Kashmir Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes Development Corporation (JKSCST&BCDC). The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary Social Welfare Department, Special Secretary Tribal Affairs Department, Managing Director (JKSCST&BCDC), Additional

Secretary Planning, Development & Monitoring Department and representatives of other concerned departments.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held upon the achievements for the year 2023-24 & 2024-25 till date, annual Action Plan under Direct Financing Scheme for the year 2024-25 and recovery of loan from the beneficiaries for the year 23-24 & 2024-25 till date. While chairing the meeting, Advisor called upon the officers to set revised targets for each district.

The Advisor asked the MD to fix

monthly targets of each employee of the corporation and regularly monitor their performance. He also said that the loan recovery process should be reviewed on quarterly basis and appropriate measures need to be devised for recovery of loans from beneficiaries who are not paying their dues regularly. While expressing his displeasure over the lack of outreach activities, Advisor directed the officers to increase business activities and raise awareness camps, loan melas and attend block divas in their respective districts so as to attract the

target population. He also directed the officers to rigorously pursue the case for online portal facilities for applicants regarding loans, repayments and full automation of offices and the same should be completed within the specified time period. During the meeting, MD JKSCST&BCDC gave a detailed presentation on the district wise/ Division wise/Apex Corporation wise Recovery details of the Corporation, recovery details against target fixed, details of disbursement among many other things.

## CS for mapping every CSS to assess funding

### STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, on Friday chaired a meeting of Administrative heads of all the Departments to take stock of the budget expenditure made and the position of revenue receipts registered by each of the Departments till date.

Dulloo, during this meeting, impressed upon the administrative Departments to improve their capital expenditure without waiting for onset of last quarter of the financial year. He asked for maintaining the pace so as to make best use of the funds released to them by the Finance Department.

He also took this occasion to maintain that the UT is unable to access all of the available schemes in the central sector. He enjoined upon the Finance Department to map all the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and central sector schemes



Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo chairing a meeting.

so that the utility of each of them is assessed and funding availed under them.

The Chief Secretary also instructed for regular submission of Utilization Certificates (UCs) by the Departments with respect to expenditure of released funds under different CSS so that next tranches are released by the respective Ministries on time. He asked for availing whole designated amounts.

In his presentation, the Principal Secretary, Finance, Santosh D. Vaidya gave

detailed overview of the fiscal improvements made by the UT over previous years. He also gave outline of the budget releases and expenditure along with that of CSS implemented by different departments.

It was given out in the meeting that several steps were taken by the administration during past fiscals to streamline the expenditure besides augmentation of resources in the UT.

It was revealed that the steps like improved GST return compliance, improved billing, e-stamping, excise auction, introduction of GeM, e-tendering, smart meters, aadhar seeding/verification of beneficiaries, improved fiscal discipline has led to substantial results.

Regarding this year's budget status it was given out that Revenue Expenditure of Rs 36,678 Cr and Capital Expenditure of Rs 3,680 Cr has been registered during the ensuing financial year against the Revenue Receipts of Rs31277 Cr and Capital Receipts of Rs 9,081 Cr.