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Govt committed to...

Education which is working continuously on the lines of the New National Education Policy.

On the issue of infrastructural delays and approvals, and the need for climatic specific construction techniques highlighted by Viekey Mattoo, the Lt Governor said that since last August, a total of 21,943 projects have been completed and with the incorporation of many best practices, a new era of Accelerated Project Finalization and Approval has been ushered in J&K. These decisions are based on adoption of innovative techniques in the project execution, discussions with the stakeholders and engaging with the best minds of the fields and are aimed at reforming and streamlining the process of infrastructural development in JK.

To the ideas of Muzamil Mir and Tanveer of Bandipora, and Sumit Puri of Jammu, all talking about the need for streamlining and speeding up the process of recruitment of youth, the Lt Governor added that the Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Council has recently constituted the Accelerated Recruitment Committee that has been set up and instructed to fast track the pace of recruitments which suffered on account of the pandemic. He also focused on the aims, objectives, and gains of the Mission Youth under which a new program has been launched to develop 75 tourist villages and provide financial assistance of Rs. 10 Lakh to the Self Help Groups of youth. Also, the roadmap of initiative like BACK TO VILLAGE, HAUSLA, TEJASWINI, UMEED, SAATH were also laid out, all of which aim at creating an ecosystem of women entrepreneurs in the UT so that a system of true financial independence can be established.

Mentioning Joginder Bhandari who had passionately written on engaging the local youth in the big power projects, the Lt Governor assured that no outsider will be given jobs in posts where the local youth are qualified and that the overall mechanism is always created to cater to the needs of local people in the best possible way.

The Lt Governor lauded Deepak Suri and Aamir Nazir whose suggestions complement government's commitment to promote electric vehicles and create a sustainable future for the masses. On the suggestions of Ehsan Qudsi and Shahid Ahmad Bhat for the need to provide crop specific suggestions and training to the horticulturists, the Lt Governor outlined the detailed plan of the administration whereby phase wise training is being provided to the horticulturists, instructions have been provided to Krishivigyan Kendras to solve regional problems of farmers and information facility is provided to the farmers by means of the database prepared by the Agriculture and Horticulture department in collaboration with districts and Krishivigyan Kendras.

The Lt Governor also shared the suggestions of Priyanka Sharma from Kishtwar and Virender Thakur from Doda, both of whom have shared a detailed outline on the promotion of tourist circuits in their respective districts. He also lauded Rhitik Jamwal who wrote extensively on creating a Green Jammu Kashmir drive in the schools. Concluding his address, the Lt Governor added that a strong sense of responsibility amongst the people of Jammu and Kashmir is bound to take our land to the pinnacle of success and he wishes to see all of us become equal partners and companions in this glorious odyssey.

Smuggler held with...

information about possible smuggling of the forest produce.

Upon noticing police, Yousaf tried to flee but was chased and arrested, the spokesperson said. He has been booked under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and Forest Act and further investigation is on.

Govt yet to take...

Besides, the marathon collegium meetings on Thursday and Friday have led to recommendations of transfer of five high court chief justices, including Tripura High Court Chief Justice Akil Kureshi, and 28 other high courts judges.

The combined sanctioned strength of the 25 high courts of the country is 1,098 judges. As on September 1, there were 465 vacancies, according data put in public domain by the Law Ministry.

COVID guidelines: Govt...

situation pertaining to the spread of COVID-19 in the Jammu and Kashmir, particularly focusing on total weekly new cases, total positivity rate, bed occupancy, case fatality rate, vaccination coverage of total targeted population and extent of compliance of COVID Appropriate Behaviour (CAB).

It was decided that the maximum number of people permitted to attend any indoor or outdoor gathering shall be strictly restricted to 25. However, in case the positivity rate is below 0.2 and weekly caseload 250, gathering shall be permitted to enhanced limit of 50 for vaccinated persons.

There shall be no weekend curfew in any district, the SEC said.

As regards the educational institutions, class for 10th and 12th standard shall be permitted with limited in-person teaching not exceeding 50 per cent on a given day for vaccinated students and staff. Consent shall be obtained from the parents of all students who are willing to attend the school. The school premises should be thoroughly sensitized. Proper screening regarding vaccination should be done on the school gate. If students or teachers or other school staff shows symptoms of cough, cold or fever, they will not be allowed to enter the school. The Head of the school must ensure that the guidelines related to social distancing and COVID protocol are strictly followed. SEC said the coaching centre or civil services, engineering, NEET shall be permitted with limited in person teaching for fully vaccinated staff and students, subject to condition that the head of the centre shall ensure the guidelines related to social distancing and COVID protocol are adhered to.

12,716 candidates appear...

for the Entrance Examination at Jammu and Srinagar like security, uninterrupted supply of electricity and other measures with the active support of concerned Departments.

According to the BOPEE, the total number of candidates who had applied for the aforementioned courses were 14014 out of them 3892 were from the Jammu Division and 10122 were from Kashmir Division. In order to facilitate the candidates with due consideration to SOP's of COVID-19, Six Centers (06) were established at Jammu for 3982 candidates and Twenty One Centers (21) at Srinagar for 10122 candidates. Out of the total number of 3892 candidates, 3260 were present at Jammu and out of 10122 candidates, 9456 were present at Srinagar. Hence, the total percentage of attendance is 90.74 which is the highest ever recorded amongst all other Common Entrance Tests conducted by the BOPEE.

With 278 pc...

Secretary also directed that grievance redressal mechanism should be made more prompt and all the grievances received through other means apart from social media platforms too must be integrated with the call centre. He also said that regular monitoring of progress of the call centre should be done regarding the complaints received and their disposal and MIS reports of complaints should be forwarded to his office on monthly basis and regular monitoring should be done at other levels.

He said that with unprecedented investment in infrastructure improvement in the past 2 years, PDD had made much progress in terms of power supply to the customers. Emphasizing that the credibility and strength of the department lies in transparency, the Principal Secretary said that consumers should be actively involved and made part of the system and data regarding billing, curtailments, power consumption should be shared with them. He also added that repeatedly damaged transformers should be flagged and the public should be informed about the reasons for the damage. He also said that DISCOMS should migrate to e-support services for utilizing the tracking mechanism of transformers in order to have quick repairs and replacements.

Regarding the asset mapping, it was given out in the meeting that asset mapping of 647 feeders has been completed and marking of assets like poles and substations is complete. Each asset is coded to indicate inventory origin and destination of supply. Principal Secretary directed that asset mapping of feeders has to be updated and upgraded on a continuous basis.

Maintaining that all the websites of JKPDD have to be compliant and consistent with government standards he said that all the websites of PDD should be parented to the main website. He further added that consumer oriented services should be available across all the websites of PDD and all should be cross linked.

Regarding the completion of various projects like SCADA, he said that it is a prestigious project and has to be completed within the stipulated time frame.

He directed the officers to work out a perspective plan for upgradation of IT systems and phase it out based on the need and vulnerability of existing systems and

processes. He also directed them to make solid use of e-support as it is a one stop shop for all DISCOMS related activities.

Principal Secretary was informed that several measures have been taken up to improve the power supply besides timely generation and delivery of power bills and it was assured that the same will be further improved. The meeting also informed that the works taken up under various projects and schemes are at different stages of completion and are being regularly monitored to complete them within the stipulated time frame.

The meeting was attended by Chairman JPDCL, Jagmohan Sharma, MD KPDCL, Basharat Qayoom, Technical Secretary, Bashir Ahmad Dar, Chief Engineers of Kashmir Power Corporations Ajiaz Dar, Yousuf Baba and senior officers of both Jammu and Kashmir divisions.

J&K reports 168...

The overall tally of COVID cases in the Union Territory stands at 20,702.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic last year, Ladakh has registered 207 COVID-related deaths -- 149 in Leh and 58 in Kargil.

The officials said a total of 4,640 people, including travellers coming by air and road, were subjected to COVID-19 screening on Saturday and all of them were found negative.

There was no change in the testing pattern that remained the same despite 71 people, mostly students, testing positive for the infection a day earlier, they said.

The Leh administration ordered closure of all government and private schools for 15 days from September 18 to October 2 after several students were found infected by the virus during a special drive at Druk Padma Karpo School in Shey.

No COVID-related death was reported from the UT on Saturday. At present, there are 106 active cases in Leh and three in Kargil.

A total of 20,386 people have recovered from COVID-19 till now here.

Won't hesitate to...

important milestones, institutions or roads in the UT will be named after those personnel of police or other forces who have laid down their lives for the nation.

The committee concerned has made a decision and the process will start from September 30. There cannot be a much better way to honour the sacrifices of those people who have given their blood for saving J-K and the country. Many people have sacrificed their lives and I assure that the government will take care of the health, education and basic facilities of their families and children, he said.

Sinha said while it was true that the situation in the UT has changed, there has been a huge change in the policy as well.

There was a time when attempts were made to buy peace, but, I think, that time is over now and everyone should understand that this administration works on the sole aim of establishing peace and both the civil administration as well as the police are working on this policy. This is a huge difference that has happened in the recent past, he said.

The L-G said J-K Police has worked for safeguarding the peace and sovereignty of the country and has performed its duty towards the nation along with other colleagues from J-K despite various difficulties.

I thank you for your sacrifices and for being alert to maintain the internal security, he added.

It is commendable the way J-K Police is working with restraint and courage, and with love towards the motherland, he said.

It is not an easy job to maintain law and order, fight terrorism and also work for the interests of the people, he said.

Sinha said J-K Police is also fighting drug abuse and is trying to bring those youth who abuse drugs into the mainstream.

I appeal to the youth to desist from it and channelize their energy into something good for themselves, their families, society and J-K, he added.

Referring to the spike in COVID-19 cases in Srinagar, Sinha appealed to the people to follow guidelines and get vaccinated.

Today, we see 50 per cent of the total COVID-19 positive cases are coming from Srinagar. I...request the people of Srinagar to follow SoPs in spirit, otherwise we will go back to where we were last year, the L-G said.

Sinha said sporting events have the power to effect a change much more than any other event and compared to other states, J-K is spending more on sports.

"We are spending double the amount that is being spent on sports in the country's largest state of Uttar Pradesh. Our budget, for 1.25 crore population, on sports and education is only Rs 75 crore less than Maharashtra whose population is 12 crore.

So, we are spending more on sports and education than other states. Our sports infrastructure is behind none. We have a stadium and an indoor stadium in every district and for that I am thankful to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said.

Prominent among others present on the occasion were Junaid Azim Mattu Mayor SMC; Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar and Baseer Khan, Advisors to Lt Governor; Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Dilbag Singh, DGP; R. R. Swain, Special DG; S.J.M. Gillani, ADGP Armed; Pandurang K. Pole, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir; Vijay Kumar, IGP Kashmir, besides senior officers of Civil and Police were also present.

Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi, Member, Central Waqf Council, and Chairperson, Waqf Development Committee, Ministry of Minority Affairs, GoI also graced the occasion.

Earlier, Director General of Police J&K Dilbag Singh flagged off the race in presence of ADGP Armed J&K S.J.M. Gillani and other senior officers of J&K Police near environment Park Srinagar at 6:30 AM.

On the sidelines of the flag off ceremony, the DGP while speaking to the media congratulated the ADGP Armed J&K and his team for organizing this successful mega event.

He appreciated the cyclists from different age groups including girls and young kids for their participation in the event.

He said that such events are not only important for our health but also contribute in strengthening mutual bonds and competitiveness. He informed that J&K Police has more such events lined up which would be organized in near future.

He said that Cycle Race (Pedal for Peace) event was open for all and was organized in seven different categories viz Senior (Men) above 17 years (ATB) Professional Cyclists, Senior (Men) above 17 years (MTB) Cyclists, Girls above 14 years (MTB) Cyclists, Jr. Boys under 17 years (MTB) Cyclists, Sub-Junior (Boys) under 14 years (MTB) Cyclists, Sub-Junior (Girls) under 14 years (MTB) Cyclists and veterans took part in the event.

The DGP said that the prize money would be given for the three each winners in all seven categories besides consolation prizes would be given to the junior kids for their participation.

The first three winners amongst ATB professional Cyclists (senior Men above 17 years) who were presented cash prize of Rs 50,000, Rs 30,000 and Rs 20,000 were Waheed Ahmad, Mohd Adil Tali and Adil Tali respectively.

The first five winners amongst senior men above 17 years MTB Cyclists who were presented cash prize of Rs 20,000, Rs 15,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 5000 and Rs 3000 were Parvez, Mashooq Maqbool, Anish Dubey, Akash Bhat and Manav Radha respectively.

The first five winners amongst girls above 14 years MTB Cyclists who were presented cash prize of Rs 25,000, Rs 20,000, Rs 15,000, Rs 10,000 and Rs 5000 were Leakzes Angno, Hurmah Shah, Sara Naqash, Rubab Ali Punjabi and Zoboya Tariq respectively.

The first five winners amongst Jr. Boys under 17 years MTB Cyclists who were presented cash prize of Rs 20,000, Rs 15,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 5000 and Rs 3000 include Subha-ul-Mehraj, Moin Nabi, Shabir Ahmed, Adnan Bashir and Mir Bahzat Nawaz respectively.

The first five winners amongst Sub-Jr. Boys under 14 years MTB Cyclists who were presented cash prize of Rs 15,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 5,000, Rs 3000 and Rs 2000 were Hashim-ul-Nabi, Jehangir Ahmed, Yasin Furkan, Tajammul Rasid and Kamran Majeed respectively and the five winners who secured sixth to tenth position in the said category and were presented cash prize of Rs 1000/- each include Wasif Sadiq, Maroof Shafi, Saif Mohd, Basit Abas and Raheem Ashraf.

The first five winners amongst Sub-Jr. Girls under 14 years MTB Cyclists who were presented cash prize of Rs 15,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 5,000, Rs 3000 & Rs 2000 were Nibla Khan, Yumna Parvez, Farhan Ahad, Adiba Jaan and Mehak Ashraf respectively and the five winners who secured sixth to tenth position in the said category and were presented cash prize of Rs 1000 each were Syed Hania Kashani, Arameen Khan, Muntaha Javaid, Anush Khurshed and Heeba.

The first five winners amongst Men above 45 years MTB Cyclists who were presented cash prize of Rs 30,000, Rs 15,000 and Rs 10,000 were Faheem Ali Punjab, Dr. Sheikh Tariq and Mir Rasheed respectively.

PDP to fight...

situation has improved. They are feeling suffocated while they (BJP) are trying to portray that everything is alright, she said.

Referring to the one-day strike call given by Jammu Chamber of Commerce and Industry against for September 22 against alleged attempts to finish local trade by allowing big corporate chains to open their outlets, she said those who the BJP claimed were in support of the abrogation of Article 370 are going on a protest strike.

At least they are registering their protest but in Kashmir, the people cannot even

do this. They are forced to open their shops if they resort to strike, the PDP leader said.

They are only concerned about the commission which they use to buy opposition MLAs to bring down an elected government, she alleged.

Asked about the removal of the national flag from a building at Kotrana in Rajouri district during her visit, she said, I do not have any information. Ask the police about this.

In response to a question about the visit of 70 union ministers to different parts of Jammu and Kashmir and their remarks that Article 370 was a hurdle in the development of the Union Territory, Mehbooba said, It is nothing but a photo opportunity to portray that the situation is normal. But if the situation is normal, why are District Development Council (DDC) members kept in hotels and other buildings under security and not allowed to move freely.

They should go to Uttar Pradesh to campaign for the next assembly elections. They should go there to find out the reasons for dumping of bodies in the sacred river Ganga and the condition of the people, Mehbooba said.

About the slow pace of work on various projects in Jammu, She said, Nothing is happening in Jammu and Kashmir. Many of these projects were sanctioned during the previous government.

She alleged that the corruption in Jammu and Kashmir is at an all-time high with all government departments affected, while the poor people are facing starvation in the backdrop of rising prices of essential commodities and fuel.

Accusing the BJP of playing politics over the issues of Taliban, Afghanistan and Pakistan to garner votes, Mehbooba alleged that the seven-year-rule of the saffron party has brought miseries to the people of the country and left Jammu and Kashmir destroyed.

She claimed that it is not Hindus but the democracy and India which are in danger under the BJP rule, which has undone all the good work of the past 70 years of the Congress and started selling national resources and raising the prices of essentials to fill its coffers to buy or intimidate opposition legislators.

The former chief minister taunted her critics and said the mere mention of Taliban or the party's vision of self-rule makes her anti-national and triggers debates and discussions even as the focus should have been the ongoing agitation of the farmers, inflation and other issues of public importance.

Jammu and Kashmir is in trouble and so is the entire country they say Hindus are in danger but they are not in danger and in fact it is India and the democracy which are in danger because of them (BJP), Mehbooba said addressing a rally organised by the youth wing of her party here.

Mehbooba reached Jammu late on Saturday after a five-day tour of Poonch and Rajouri districts, facing a small protest by a group of Rashtriya Bajrang Dal activists whose attempt to stop her cavalcade near Dogra Chowk in the city was foiled by police.

Mehbooba said the BJP is watching what she is saying to trigger a debate in media.

Explaining self-rule, she said Jammu and Kashmir is holding a strategic position and can be a gateway to central Asia if all the cross-border traditional routes are opened and all the neighbouring countries allowed to open bank branches which will generate employment.