

!! Continuations from Page 1 !!

Kashmir to be...

the work on Srinagar-Jammu National Highway would be completed in next 2-3 years bringing in much respite for the people of the UT, he added.

He also advocated introducing eco-friendly measures in transport sector.

While speaking on the occasion, Lt Governor said that these NH projects would catalyze overall socio-economic development in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The projects include Strengthening and Upgradation of 43 km existing carriageway on Baramulla-Gulmarg Section of NH-701A, Construction of new double lane bypass from Donipawa via Ashajipora connecting NH-244 & NH-44, Construction & Upgradation of existing 28 km stretch from Vailoo to Donipawa on Khellani Khanabal Section of NH-244, besides the construction of much-awaited Ring Road around Srinagar city.

The Lt Governor said that Jammu and Kashmir has undergone tremendous changes in terms of infrastructure development during the last few years.

"My sincere gratitude to PM Narendra Modi Ji, who has brought qualitative change in people's lives since 2014. From National Highways to rural roads, the infrastructure has become stronger than ever", added the Lt Governor.

"Till 2014, there were only 7 National Highways in the erstwhile Jammu Kashmir including Ladakh. In 2021, the number of National Highways has increased to 11 in J&K alone. In 2015, PM had announced road infra projects worth Rs 40,900 crores for J&K, out of which work on projects of about Rs 38,000 crores is already underway", the Lt Governor observed.

Thanking Nitin Gadkari for the speedy execution of National Highway projects, the Lt Governor said that the Minister has always been proactive and has created a record for the fastest road construction work in the country.

Today roads are being built at a much faster pace than ever before. This year a target of 8000 km of macadamisation has been set by the UT Administration. And with this kind of approach, Jammu and Kashmir today has the distinction of being the third-best in terms of road construction, said the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor observed that with liberal funding and special interest of Prime Minister and Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways in the development of Jammu and Kashmir, 11 tunnel projects have been approved for J&K in one year only. Four tunnels will be built on Chenani-Kishtwar highway at a cost of Rs 10,000 crores. To modernize Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, tunnels at a cost of Rs 4000 crores, besides 5 flyovers worth Rs 3000 crore will be built in J&K, reducing the travel time and traffic congestion substantially. By December 2022, Kashmir will be connected to Kanyakumari by train, said the Lt Governor.

Enumerating the achievements during the last one year, the Lt Governor said that under the guidance of Prime Minister, right from the development of health infrastructure to roads, education, and employment, industry, and handicrafts promotion, agriculture to food processing, Jammu and Kashmir has shown visible progress in every field and with huge potential, the UT is emerging as a vibrant economy, ready to stand with the developed states. 'We have taken new strides in every field, with empowerment of people and an inclusive approach, we are treading the path of a new, developed, peaceful Jammu and Kashmir', the Lt Governor added.

General (Retd.) V.K. Singh, Union Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways, also spoke on the occasion and extended every possible support from the Union Ministry to strengthen the road connectivity in the UT.

Manoj Kumar, Member Projects, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), in his welcome address gave a detailed briefing of the several NHAI projects being executed in the UT.

Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Government, Public Works (R&B) Department presented the vote of thanks.

Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Member Parliament; Hasnain Masoodi Member Parliament; Safina Baig, DDC Chairperson; Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Pandurang K Pole, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; officials of NHAI, senior officers of UT Administration; prominent citizens from all walks of life were present on the occasion at SKICC.

Gadkari to visit...

portal. The Minister will also visit the Zojila through east and west ends.

Prior to the Minister's visit a press briefing was held on Monday at Sonamarg. Addressing the media persons Executive Director National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL) Brigadier Gurjeet Singh Kambo gave the detailed information about the two tunnel projects.

Kambo said that the Zojila tunnel project will provide all weather connectivity to Union Territory of Ladakh. He assured that work on the Zojila Tunnel is in full capacity and NHIDCL is geared up to continue the work in winter months. He stressed for putting in every effort in place to complete the project well before the schedule date.

Kambo expressed his satisfaction on the work progress and said that the Zojila tunnel is of a significant importance to the development and tourism for both UTs of J&K and Ladakh as it will provide round the year connectivity to Ladakh region.

Pertinent to mention that, once completed the Zojila tunnel will be India's longest road tunnel and Asia's longest bi-directional tunnel. Several bridges are being constructed along this route and a connecting tunnel from Z-Morh in the National Highway-1 to Zojila tunnel will be constructed in the Zojila Ghat between Sonamarg and Kargil. The entire work is divided into two divisions in the 33 km span.

The project site of Zojila tunnel is located at existing highway (NH-01) starting from Sonamarg (UT of J&K) and ending at Minimarg (UT of Ladakh) at an elevation ranging from 2700m to 3300m. The present site location falls into seismic zone IV and all precautionary measures have been provisioned to safeguard the tunnels, he added.

Ministerial panels set...

started work on moving towards a "simpler rate structure in GST" by reviewing the current rate slabs, including special rates and merger of rate slabs.

The Group of Ministers (GoM) on rate rationalisation would also review items under inverted duty structure to help minimise refund payout, and review the supply of goods and services exempt under GST with an objective to expand the tax base and eliminate breaking of input tax credit (ITC) chain.

The 7-member panel, which would submit a report in two months, would be headed by Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and include West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra, Kerala Finance Minister K N Balagopal, Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tarkishore Prasad.

Under GST a four-rate structure that exempts or imposes a low rate of tax 5 per cent on essential items and top rate of 28 per cent on cars is levied. The other slabs of tax are 12 and 18 per cent. Besides, a cess is imposed on the highest slab of 28 per cent on luxury, demerit and sin goods.

There have been demands for merging the 12 and 18 per cent slab as also take out certain items from the exempt category to balance the impact of slab rationalisation on revenue.

With regard to inverted duty structure, the GST Council has already corrected the rate anomaly in case of mobile handset, footwear and textiles. The ministerial panel would now look at representations of inverted duty structure and recommend suitable rates to eliminate any such cases where final goods attract a lower GST than the tax levied on its inputs.

The GoM on GST system reforms would identify potential sources of evasion and suggest changes in business processes and IT systems to plug revenue leakage.

The eight-member panel, headed by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, would include Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, Tamil Nadu Finance Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan and Chhattisgarh Finance Minister T S Singh Deo.

The panel, which would give its recommendation to the council from time to time, would review IT tools and interface available with taxmen and suggest ways to make them more effective, identify possible use of data analysis towards better tax compliance and suggest ways of better coordination between central and state tax officers. The decision to set up these two GoMs was taken by the GST Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, on September 17.

50 trains affected...

India, particularly in the north. Protesters blocked highways and arterial roads, and squatted on tracks in several places from the morning as the shutdown called by the Samyukt Kisan Morecha, an umbrella body of 40 farmer unions, got underway. The blockade was lifted at 4 pm.

"More than 20 locations in Delhi, Ambala, and Ferozepur divisions had been blocked. About 50 trains were affected due to this. All train movement is normal now since 4:30 pm," a spokesperson for the Northern Railway said.

Officials said the Delhi-Amritsar Shahn-e-Punjab, New Delhi-Moga Express, Old Delhi-Pathankot Express, Vande Bharat Express from New Delhi to Katra, and Amritsar Shatabdi are some of the trains that have been affected.

The blockade started at 6 am and continued till 4 pm.

In the North-Western Railway zone, rail traffic on the Rewari-Bhiwani, Bhiwani-Rohat, Bhiwani-Hisar and Hanumangarh-Sadulpur-Sriganganagar-Fatuhai sections were affected due to the shutdown.

According to Lt. Shashi Kiran, Chief Public Relations Officer, North-Western Railway, the Bathinda-Lalgarh special train service as well as the Sriganganagar

Ambala special train service were cancelled due to the bandh.

Partially cancelled train services include the Jaipur-Daulatpur Chowk Special train service which left Jaipur on Monday but will operate only till Dhulikot.

The Daulatpur Chowk-Jaipur Special will leave Ambala on Monday. It will run partially between Daulatpur Chowk-Ambala stations.

Other partially operated services included the Tilakbridge-Sri Ganganagar Special train service which will operate from Rewari in place of Tilak Bridge, the Rewari-Jodhpur Special train which operated from Sadulpur instead of Rewari and the Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Bikaner Special train service which left Delhi Sarai on Monday but will operate up to Sri Ganganagar.

Terrorist killed, 3...

the Border Security Force has recovered a huge cache of arms, ammunition, narcotics and fake Indian currency from the International Border in Jammu district, officials said.

The recovery was made during a search operation along the IB in the Akhnoor sector when a bag containing the contrabands was found hidden in bushes, a BSF spokesperson said.

On opening the bag, it was found having four pistols, eight magazines, 100 rounds of ammunition, one packet of narcotics weighing about one kg along with fake Indian currency worth Rs 2,75,000, he said.

This consignment was likely to be delivered to anti-national elements of the area but the BSF foiled their nefarious attempts by seizing the consignment, he added.

People of Kashmir...

of Kashmir are happy, they have understood the game of the separatists. Nobody is with them (separatists) now. We should pray that things remain peaceful," Lt Gen. Pandey said.

Earlier, the corps commander inaugurated the digital classrooms in 10 Army Goodwill Schools in Kashmir.

"With the inception and impact of technology in all spheres of life, the Indian Army has also incorporated innovative changes in the existing learning and teaching techniques in Army Goodwill Schools.

"In one such endeavour, the Indian Army, in collaboration with the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL), undertook a project to upgrade and digitise the classrooms in 10 Army Goodwill Schools of Kashmir Division in the districts of Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora and Anantnag," officials at the function said.

They said the project included converting 128 classrooms into smart classes, which will revolutionise the teaching process.

The project, which cost Rs 3.1 crore, was funded by the PGCIL through their CSR (corporate social responsibility) initiative and was executed by iDreams Limited, Gurugram.

The work on the project commenced in March 2020. However, due to COVID-19, it was halted from April to September last year and the digitisation of all classrooms was finally completed by December.

The key aspects of classrooms 2.0 are an enjoyable learning process, improved student engagement, attractive graphics, better instructional materials and ability to cater to all learning styles.

"Sixteen Army Goodwill Schools out of a total of 28 have been digitised till date. We hope to digitise the remaining 12 also, so that all the children studying in these schools of the Kashmir valley can enjoy the benefits of the latest teaching techniques," the officials said.

China installs new...

forced PLA to go for forward deployment and boost infrastructure," said one of the people.

They said the new deployments are appearing to be affecting the morale of the Chinese troops as they were not used to operate in such difficult terrain.

The new container-based accommodations were built in addition to the additional military camps that the Chinese military had set up following the escalation in tension between the two sides last year.

The people said India is also ramping up construction of tunnels, bridges roads and other critical infrastructure in eastern Ladakh and other areas along the nearly 3,500-km LAC.

They said China is also significantly enhancing its airbases and air defence units near the LAC in eastern Ladakh.

The border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5 last year following a violent clash in the Pangong lake area and both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry.

The border row escalated after the Galwan Valley clashes on June 15 last year.

Twenty Indian Army personnel laid down their lives in the clashes that marked the most serious military conflicts between the two sides in decades.

In February, China officially acknowledged that five Chinese military officers and soldiers were killed in the clashes with the Indian Army though it is widely believed that the death toll was higher.

As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process in Gogra area last month.

In February, the two sides completed the withdrawal of troops and weapons from the north and south banks of the Pangong lake in line with an agreement on disengagement.

Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the LAC in the sensitive sector.

Security of Vaishno...

Choudhary also directed the police to conduct checking of the hotels and other residential accommodations on regular basis besides calling for revisiting the list of Over-ground workers and monitoring of social media to curb the new pattern of radicalization, the spokesman said.

117 new COVID...

officials said here on Monday. Official sources told that the school was opened for the first day today after which a team of health department visited the institution and conducted target sampling of the students.

Chief medical officer Rajouri, Dr Shamim told that during sampling at least 32 students were found Covid-19 positive and they have been isolated.

J&K will reap...

taking stock of the implementation of the central schemes under his ministry.

The abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35A was in the interest of the people of Jammu and Kashmir as it was the biggest hurdle for outside investors to buy land and set up their units in the Union Territory.

After the government's daring move, the people will invest in J&K and generate jobs for local youths who will stay away from the militancy which will soon meet its death, the minister told reporters on the sidelines of a function.

He said the BJP-led government had no benefit from the abrogation of Article 370 but for the people of J&K, it has paved the way for large scale development and the people would reap its benefits slowly and silently in coming times.

The government stands with the people of Jammu and Kashmir and is going to help the UT to reach new heights of development, the minister said.

He added that his ministry would lend all its support to the Lt Governor-led J&K administration to ensure that all the centrally sponsored schemes reach the public.

Asked about National Conference president Farooq Abdullah's suggestion to the Centre to hold dialogue with the Taliban government in Afghanistan, he said he (Abdullah) is a respected senior leader of J&K who was also former chief minister and former Union minister but we do not support his statement.

Taliban is a terrorist group which has forcibly taken over Afghanistan. I feel it is not good to support them and they should be removed from there as people are facing injustice and human rights violations under their rule, the minister said.

On AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi reported remark that the political condition of Muslims in Uttar Pradesh is like that of a 'band party' at a wedding despite constituting 19 per cent of the state's population, he said Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government is taking everyone along under the slogan of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas' without any discrimination.

He (Owaisi) is wrong in saying that Muslims do not have any leader in UP. Yogi Adityanath, who is the chief minister of UP, is there to take care of everyone including Muslims who should not pay heed to the provocative slogans and support the BJP and NDA for the overall welfare of the society, he said.

Asked about his comment on the reported statement of senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh that divisive mentality is being taught in schools backed by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Athawale said he is a big leader and a former chief minister but his statement is far from the truth.

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat is considering Muslims as their own, while the BJP has Muslim minority morecha's across the country. We are all Indians and there is no difference among us, he said.

Responding to another question about some congress leaders drawing a parallel between the Taliban and the BJP, he said such comparisons are completely wrong.

The centrally sponsored schemes of the BJP-led government are meant for everyone, irrespective of their religion. The BJP government is taking care of the Muslim community which is evident from the statement of UP chief minister that not a single case of the communal riot was reported during his four-and-a-half-year rule.

He expressed faith in the trade union leader Tanveer Hussain who joined the party

recently and said his party which follows the ideology of the Babasaheb (Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar) would grow under his leadership.

The minister assured all possible help to the daily wagers who are seeking regularisation of their services and labourers in getting jobs.

Getting aid not...

only be on restricted grounds," said a bench of Justices S K Kaul and M M Sundresh.

Therefore, even in a case where a policy decision is made to withdraw the aid, an institution cannot question it as a matter of right. Maybe, such a challenge would still be available to an institution, when a grant is given to one institution as against the other institution which is similarly placed.

The top court said if an institution does not want to accept and comply with the conditions accompanying such aid, it is well open to it to decline the grant and move on its own way.

On the contrary, an institution can never be allowed to say that the grant of aid should be on its own terms, the bench said.

The apex court's observations came while allowing Uttar Pradesh's appeal challenging the Allahabad High Court verdict holding that Regulation 101 framed under The Intermediate Education Act, 1921 is unconstitutional.

The top court said that once it is held that right to get an aid is not a fundamental right, the challenge to a decision made in implementing it, shall only be on restricted grounds.