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Will change dev...

Kashmir and Ladakh will be around Rs 1.4 lakh crore, the road transport and highways minister said.

The Union minister for road transport and highways also said all the projects undertaken by the BJP-led central government should be completed before the 2024 general elections.

He said there will be no compromise on the quality of the construction.

Gadkari also said that in the past two years, the Modi government has been able to do the same amount of work related to road projects in Jammu and Kashmir that earlier took 50 years.

"I have told them (executing agency) to complete the work on Zojila tunnel by December 2023 so that Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) inaugurates it before January 26 (2024). The deadline of 2023 is also because we have the (Lok Sabha) polls in 2024," Gadkari told reporters at a press conference at the tunnel site here.

He said that after the completion of the Z-Morh tunnel, the local tourism economy will get a boost.

Gadkari noted that tourism is the sector where 49 per cent of capital expenditure happens on the employment generation.

About the Zojila tunnel, he said it will not only be the longest bi-directional tunnel in Asia but also the world's highest tunnel at the height of 11,575 feet above the ground.

Saying that there was no such word as impossible in his dictionary, Gadkari said he was sure the fresh deadline would be met on the treacherous landscape.

The Union minister said after the completion of both the tunnel projects, the travel on Srinagar-Leh and Manali-Leh highways would be a lot easier.

"This will be a heaven...This highway is a lifeline for the people (here) and these tunnels will ease their sufferings. The aim is to increase the economic growth, employment potential and promote handloom and handicrafts," he said.

The travel time on these routes will be substantially reduced after the completion of the projects, he added.

The travel time on Zojila pass is 3.5 hours currently but through the tunnel, the journey can be completed within 15 minutes, he said.

"Not only for the people here, the tunnels will also bring ease for the pilgrims of the annual Amarnath Yatra here," he said.

He also said the ministry will study whether a second tube can be added to the project and was also seeing how to further ease the journey to the Holy Cave of Amarnath.

Asked whether the speed of construction work of the Z-Morh tunnel increased after Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh became Union territories, Gadkari said, "These issues are for you to evaluate (ye sab baaten apke adhyan aur chintan ke liye hai)."

The project cost of the Z-Morh tunnel is Rs 2,300 crore.

The 6.5-km-long Z-Morh tunnel project is under the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL).

For the Z-Morh tunnel, there is a five-km approach road and the tunnel is 6.5-km long and is bi-directional. It also has an escape tunnel for emergencies.

Gadkari also said he has directed the officials of National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) to take a beautification project on the Srinagar-Leh and Srinagar-Jammu highways.

He also announced that he will try to organise a conference of travel companies from across the country especially Maharashtra around the tunnel sites.

"It will help bring in tourism to the place," he said.

Gadkari also said the ministry was studying a proposal to construct a rope-way from Sonamarg to Thajwas glacier and seven lakes to increase the tourism potential in the area.

On a question about the construction works on the Srinagar-Jammu national highway which remains cut off due to landslides every now and then, Gadkari said there have been some problems, but those are being taken care of.

"The consultant on that has failed and we are taking action. More funds have been allotted and we have changed the designs, and the work on it will be completed in the next two years," he added.

He assured that after the two years, the travel time between Srinagar and Jammu will be about three hours.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, PK Pole, IGP Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, DDC Chairperson Ganderbal, Nuzhat Ishfaq, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Kritika Jyotsna and officers/ Officials of NHIDCL were also present on the occasion.

Earlier, Ladakh Lt Governor Radha Krishna Mathur and Chairman and Chief Executive Councillor LAHDC, Kargil Feroz Ahmad Khan along senior officers of local administration and National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) received Gadkari on his arrival at the eastern portal of the Zojila tunnel.

J&K Govt constitutes...

regulation of poplars in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir," read an order issued by Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Commissioners/Secretary, General Administration Department.

As per order, the Poplar Commission will be headed by Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF) as its Chairman while Regional Director, Social Forestry Department, Kashmir will be its Member Secretary.

Other Members of Commission include Principal Chief Conservator of Forests/Director, Social Forestry Department, J&K; Chief Conservator of Forests, Jammu; Chief Conservator of Forests, Kashmir; Dean, College of Forestry, SKAUST Kashmir; Dean, College of Forestry, SKAUST, Jammu; Director, Forest Research Institute, J&K or his/her representative; Director, Himalayan Forest Research Institute, Shimla or his/her representative (Research Expert); General Secretary, South Kashmir Wood Supplies Union; President, Pencil Slats / Block Manufacturing Association, Kashmir; Dr. R.C. Dhiman, Expert; Aasifah Padroo, Addl. Advocate General, J&K High Court, Srinagar (Legal Expert); Nadeem Qadri, NGO, Environment Lawyer; Two Farmers/Nursery Growers Associated with cultivation/production of Poplar (representing South and North Kashmir to be nominated by POCF/ Director, Social Forestry Department; and Special Secretary (Technical), Forest, Ecology & Environment Department.

"The Commission shall advise the government on various aspects of introduction, cultivation, utilization and regulations of Poplars in Jammu and Kashmir," the order stated and added "It shall formulate a policy on poplar cultivation as directed by High Court in response to PIL No.834/2015 e/w OWP No.2383/2018 vide Order dated March 26, 2019."

56 SDRF personnel...

resulted in promotion of 56 SDRF personnel to their next rank.

The notice added that among 56 personnel, one has been promoted to the rank of Sub-inspector, ten as ASIs, five as Head Constables and forty as Selection Grade

Constables. DGP-cum-Commandant General, HG/CD & SDRF, J&K has congratulated the promoted officials and encouraged them to perform with similar zeal and enthusiasm in future.

Anti-infiltration operation...

life be spared. As is the ethos of the Indian Army, after taking due precautions, he was taken into custody alive," the official said.

The apprehended infiltrator has given his identity as 19-year-old Ali Babar Parra, resident of Okara district in Pakistan's Punjab province.

"He has admitted to be a member or Lashkar-e-Toiba and was trained in Muzaffarabad," he added.

He has revealed that he was trained for three weeks at Khyber camp, Ghadiwala in Muzaffarabad in 2019, the officer said.

He was recalled this year for some important task and was told by his handlers that he has to drop supplies at Pattan. But when we went through the recoveries and modus operandi, it shows that they had come here for some kind of a strike which went beyond the drop of supplies, the official said.

The Army official said the infiltration attempt was made along the Salamabad Nala, which was the same route used for the 2016 suicide attack on the Uri garrison.

"The infiltrating column was supported by the Pakistani side with three porters bringing supplies till the LoC," he said.

The official said movement of such large number of people cannot take place without active complicity of the Pakistan Army deployed on the other side.

Major General Vats said there has been an increased movement at the launch pad across the LoC.

"This shows the desperation of Pakistan that when they see peace in Kashmir, they send in terrorists to disturb peace by sensational strike.Seven terrorists have been neutralised in as many days while one has been nabbed alive," he added.

J&K records 95...

the infection and were discharged from hospitals on Wednesday, raising the recovery count to 20,431, they said.

All the five new cases were reported in Leh, the officials said.

A total of 1,050 samples in Ladakh, comprising 583 from Leh and 477 from Kargil, tested negative for the coronavirus in the last 24 hours, they said.

The count of active COVID-19 cases stands at 144 and four in Leh and Kargil districts of the UT, respectively.

Centre extends nationwide...

continued focus on the five-fold strategy i.e. Test-Track-Treat-Vaccination and adherence to COVID-appropriate behaviour, to safely navigate through the festive season and avoid the possibility of a surge in COVID-19 cases.

He said the state governments and UT administrations should continue with their vaccination programme with a focus to accelerate vaccination of eligible age groups and prioritisation of the second dose to eligible beneficiaries.

The home secretary urged the chief secretaries to issue directions to the district and all other local authorities concerned to take necessary measures as advised in the union health ministry advisory for prompt and effective management of COVID-19.

"I would also advise that orders issued by the respective state governments and UT administrations or district authorities in this regard should be widely disseminated to the public and to the field functionaries for their proper implementation," he said.

The number of fresh coronavirus cases was recorded at below 20,000 (18,795) in India after 201 days on Tuesday, taking the country's COVID-19 tally to 3,36,97,581, while the number of active cases declined to 2,92,206, the lowest in 192 days, according to the Union health ministry.

A total of 18,795 fresh COVID-19 cases were registered in a span of 24 hours, while the death toll due to the viral disease climbed to 4,47,373 with 179 more fatalities, the lowest in 193 days, according to the ministry's data updated at 8 AM.

38 Tehsildars transferred...

Posting on repatriation from UT of Ladakh as Tehsildar Jammu; Major Singh, Tehsildar Paddar as Tehsildar Bhagwah District Doda; Rohit Kumar Jr.JKAS awaiting orders of posting, as Tehsildar Paddar; Mohammad Mubashir Bhat Jr JKAS, Tehsildar Karnah as HQA in the office of IGR J&K; Rafiq Ahmed Khan, Jr JKAS, HQA in the office of IGR J&K as HQA in the office of DC Budgam; Syed Eyad Qadri Jr. JKAS, awaiting orders of posting, as Tehsildar Karnah; Javid Ahmed Sheikh Jr. JKAS, Tehsildar Banihal as Tehsildar Tangmarg; Nisar Rasool, Jr. JKAS, Tehsildar Tangmarag as Tehsildar Marwah District Kishtwar; Imtiaz Ahmed Jr. JKAS, Tehsildar Pargwal as Tehsildar Banihal; Manjeet Singh Jr. JKAS, awaiting orders of posting, as Tehsildar Pargwal; Showkat Hayat Mattoo, JKAS, Tehsildar Chowki Choura as Tehsildar Bhaderwah; Raman Jandial, Jr. JKAS awaiting orders of posting, as Tehsildar Chowki Chowra; Yasir Arafat Chowdhry, JKAS, Tehsildar Dudu Basantgarh has been transferred and posted in the office of Financial Commissioner (Revenue), J&K.

Karanjeet Singh, Jr. JKAS awaiting orders of posting has been posted as Tehsildar Dudu Basantgarh; Chander Shekhar Sharma Jr. JKAS, Tehsildar Thathri as HQA in the office of Deputy Commissioner, Kishtwar; Sahil Randhawa Jr. JKAS, awaiting orders of posting, as Tehsildar Thathri; Mohd. Farooq Khan, Jr. JKAS, Tehsildar Maira Mandrian as Tehsildar Rafiabadi, District Baramulla; Manta Sudershan, Jr. JKAS, awaiting orders of posting, as Tehsildar Maira Mandrian; Farooq Hussain Butt, Tehsildar, HQA in the office of DC Jammu as Tehsildar Rangarh, District Samba; Anit Upadaya, Tehsildar Bhalwal as Tehsildar Khari District Ramban; Ashok Kumar Chakravarty, Tehsildar Khari as Tehsildar Bhalwal; Gourav Sharma, Tehsildar Kathua as Tehsildar Mendhar District Poonch; Vikram Kumar, Jr. JKAS, Tehsildar Mendhar as Tehsildar Kathua; Sumit Kohli, Jr. JKAS, awaiting orders of posting, as Tehsildar, Kotranka, District Rajouri; Suresh Singh, Jr. JKAS, awaiting orders of posting, as Tehsildar Bhomag, District Reasi; Paramdeep Singh, Jr. JKAS, awaiting orders of posting, as Tehsildar Latti, District Udhampur; and Vipin Kumar, Jr. JKAS, awaiting orders of posting has been posted as Tehsildar Pancheri, District Udhampur.

Sacking employees on...

including links to militancy and separatism.

Six government employees, including two policemen, were dismissed from service on September 22 for their alleged links to terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir.

Asked about the sacking of employees on the grounds that they were appointed without following the laid down procedure, the former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said the previous governments gave jobs to the people so that they could earn a living. "It is not as if we had taken money or there was corruption (in recruitment). We gave jobs to people so that they earn a living. Now, if they are sacking them, what will their children do? How will they meet everyday needs?" Abdullah said. In response to a question, the Lok Sabha member from Srinagar said he has not received any information about the next meeting of the delimitation commission

for Jammu and Kashmir.

"As a Member of Parliament, I have to sit in the delimitation commission but so far I have not received any information," he added.

Asked about restoration of statehood and special constitutional status to Jammu and Kashmir, Abdullah said "We want to do it in a Gandhian way".

"The case is before the Supreme Court. There has been no hearing. What can we do? We can't throw stones. We want to do it the Gandhian way," he said.

No need for...

has been rendered infructuous by subsequent developments that have taken place since it was filed on May 27, 2021, during the second ways of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a matter of policy, walk-in registrations have been permitted. Hence, no directions are necessary for the petition under Article 32 of the Constitution. The petition is disposed of," the bench said, in its order.

Similarly, the bench also termed as infructuous the prayer of another PIL filed by advocate G S Mani, seeking direction to Centre and all States and UTs to ensure that proper medical treatment and facilities are being provided to non-COVID-19 patients like heart patients, pregnant women, having the disease with Kidney, Liver and lungs and patients waiting for major and minor medical operations and surgery during the lockdown period.

The bench told Mani that he has filed his petition in May this year and now that lockdown is over, his plea has also become infructuous.

"The first prayer has been rendered infructuous since the lockdown has ended. The second prayer is overbroad since a general direction to enforce fundamental rights has been sought. In the circumstances, the petition is disposed of since no directions are necessary at this stage," the bench said, in its order.

The top court, however, granted him liberty to approach the court in case of any necessity in the future.

Mani in his plea has claimed that due to the COVID-19 lockdown situation patients are struggling to get proper medical treatment and they are not getting admission, proper medical treatment, and facilities in government and private hospitals in all the States and UTs due to heavy rush in COVID ward.

Many hospitals have stopped their emergency ward treatment and postponed major surgeries. Many non-COVID patients need regular treatment and care, he said in his plea.

Shah Faesal IAS...

in Kashmir valley before 2019. Not only that the style in which Shah Faesal submitted his resignation and the way he appeared before the Indian and international media after submitting his resignation / after 5th August 2019 also raises questions on Selection Procedures & Standards being adopted by UPSC (India), receiving and handling of trainees by Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration Mussoorie worth upholding the Mission statement of Academy & working of DoPT (Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions GOI).

Selection of Shah Faesal has been made by UPSC for IAS cadre of services the member of which service in the prevailing conventions qualifies for almost all superior services (apex) of GOI/ State governments for posting as Administrative Secretary to Government of India/ any State Government for any Administrative Department including Cabinet Secretariat/ Defence /Home /Power/ Chief Secretary in a State (one may very very rarely find an IPS officer even as Home Secretary GOI or an Indian Engineering Service Officer even as Power Secretary GOI and like) and hence the manner in which the said officer has conducted his self surely raises questions on Selection Procedures & Standards being adopted by UPSC (India) atleast for assessing the suitability and integrity of the applicant w.r.t national and community commitment standards during the personal interview as otherwise even a simple graduate from any stream is qualified to apply, many engineers / doctors choose the subjects for UPSC civil service exam that they have never studied and even clear written exam with top merits . Similarly Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration Mussoorie too has the responsibility for reading and polishing the personality of the recruited trainee officer worth the "mission" under which an IAS officer has in a way to deliver the ultimate in a democratic set up. And more so DoPT (Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions GOI) has to keep a regular watch on the conduct, convictions, beliefs& understandings of the recruited officer for his/her advancement in career and in the present case the officer has remained on active duty even in a state like J&K for nine years before he lodged very very serious / damaging allegations on Government of India and Indian leadership.

So keeping in view the status in the services of the union that the IAS cadre has been so far given may be after a expert review is conducted need is felt for conducting the selection process of the IAS recruits independent of the present civil service exam that the UPSC conducts.

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Petrol, diesel prices...

since state-owned Indian Oil Corp (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL) on September 24 resumed daily price revisions, ending the pause in rates that had effected since September 5.

In four price increases since September 24, diesel rates have gone up by 95 paise per litre. This negates three-fourths of the Rs 1.25 a litre cut in prices that happened between July 18 and September 5.

Before this, diesel price was last increased on July 15. The last increase in petrol rate was on July 17.

International crude oil prices have reached a nearly three-year high as global output disruptions have forced energy companies to draw more crude oil out of their stockpiles.

Accordingly, US crude oil inventory levels are also nearing a three-year low. "Global demand for crude oil has been increasing consistently with the easing of pandemic restrictions and improving vaccination rates. On the supply side, OPEC+ alliance has been slow in easing output restrictions, contributing to the tightened supply in the market," a source said.

Additionally, hurricanes Ida and Nicholas have impacted crude oil production in the US Gulf of Mexico region, when they hit in late August and September, respectively. As per both IEA and OPEC, global demand is expected to outpace supply due to which international oil prices will likely remain firm in the near to mid-term. A simultaneous rally in natural gas is also likely to drive demand for alternate fuels.

When international oil rates fell in July and August, retail prices of petrol and diesel in the Delhi market were reduced by Rs 0.65 and Rs 1.25 per litre.

Prior to that, the petrol price was increased by Rs 11.44 a litre between May 4 and July 17. Diesel rate had gone up by Rs 9.14 during this period.

The price hike during this period pushed petrol prices above the Rs 100-a-litre mark in more than half of the country, while diesel crossed that level in at least three states. India is dependent on imports to meet nearly 85 per cent of its oil needs and so benchmarks local fuel rates to international oil prices.

DG, IMPARD conducts online training

session for civil servants of Maldives

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Director General, J&K Institute of Management, Public Administration and Rural Development (IMPARD), Saurabh Bhagat on Tuesday conducted an online training session on "Motivation for Mid-career Bureaucrats" for the civil servants of Maldives.

The session is part of "Capacity Building Programme in Field Administration for the Civil Servants of Maldives" and is being sponsored by Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

During the session, DG IMPARD, explained to the Trainee Officers of Maldives that Motivation is the set of forces that cause people to behave in certain ways. He added that the goal of managers is to maximize desired behaviours and minimize undesired behaviours.

The DG said that an organization can contribute its maximum towards welfare of the State and people even if resources available with it may not be too many.

He highlighted that what is needed is the capability to do the required job and the desire to do the job adding that the desire to do the required job is Motivation. During the training session, DG IMPARD also shared his field experiences with the trainee officers. He also expressed thanks and gratitude to Government of Maldives for organizing this important Training Programme for the civil servant of Maldives. Saurabh Bhaghat on the occasion also said that today's session was conducted with an objective to increase outreach and collaboration between J&K IMPARD and other institutions of the country and outside. The training session was attended by 30 bureaucrats from various Departments of Government of Maldives and was organized by the Government of Maldives in collaboration with National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) and Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy for Administration (LBSNAA).

