

Preserve traditional life-sustaining system, maintain ecological integrity in J&K: LG

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday strongly batted for preserving traditional life-sustaining system and maintaining ecological integrity and said regeneration of natural resources is a prerequisite for economic development.

Sinha, who is on a two-day visit to Kishtwar district, launched a plantation drive organised by National Hydro Electric Power Corporation (NHEPC) at Dulhasti and said region's progress is inherently linked to environmental resources.

"We must preserve our traditional life-sustaining system and maintain ecological integrity. Protection, restoration and regeneration of natural resources are prerequisite for economic development," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also chaired a meeting with the senior officials of



LG Manoj Sinha planting a sapling at Dal Hasti Power Station, Kishtwar.

Hydroelectric Power Projects (HEP). He directed the HEP authorities and executing agencies to complete the projects having national importance within

deadline. Sinha also directed the authorities to enhance the skill of local youths so they can be given employment in the ongoing projects.

During the meeting, the authorities apprised the Lt Governor about various bottlenecks in the smooth functioning of projects, an official statement said.

The Lt Governor, along with Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor planted Apple seedlings at Chenab Bhawan, NHEPC Dulhasti Power Station.

Mukesh Singh, ADGP Jammu; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Dr Devansh Yadav, Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar; besides Deepak Sehgal, Executive Director, Region-Jammu and M K Kashyap, Group General Manager (In-Charge), Dulhasti Power Station and other senior officials were present on the occasion.



Dr Jitendra launches 'Science, Technology Dashboard' for countrywide monitoring



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh speaking after launching Science & Technology Dashboard of Govt of India, at Prithvi Bhawan, New Delhi on Thursday.

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Union Minister, Dr Jitendra Singh on Thursday launched Science & Technology Dashboard of Govt of India, for countrywide monitoring and feedback to ensure effective implementation of projects, schemes, scholarships and fellowships funded by the Department of Science & Technology (DST).

The Minister said, through the Dashboard, details of each of the schemes and programmes for any group in every State can be accessed on a real time basis and remedial measures, if any, can be taken promptly.

He said, impact analysis of the schemes and scholarships both age wise and gender wise for SC/ST/OBCs and General Castes is embedded in the Dashboard for suggesting reformative measures to states, if any.

Harping on the idea of greater integration, Dr Jitendra said, DST Dashboard is a good beginning and efforts would be made in future for a Common Dashboard for all Science Ministries and Departments.

The Minister informed that in the last five years, over Rs 20,000 crore were disbursed by DST to 2,768 Agencies in 35 States/UTs and every single minute detail is available on the Dashboard.

Dr Jitendra said, Dashboard is an institutional mechanism of the DST to drive the process of building, harnessing as well as augmenting and monitoring the statistical and data analytical capabilities of the Department.

He said, this is in compliance to the directives of NITI Aayog issued in February 2021. The Minister, however, pointed out that DST had

established a similar setup - Data Management Cell with the same objectives in January, 2019.

Dr Jitendra said, Data & Strategy Units (DSUs) creates different dashboards for different target groups and these dashboards have helped DST in taking evidence-based decisions. Many special calls have been taken on programmes seeing the gaps in the outreach of the programmes and in many programmes mid-course corrections have been prompted based on the data analysis done through dashboards, the Minister added.

The most important outcome of these dashboards is that the Department is made aware of the outputs and outcomes of the decisions taken, projects funded or scholarship/fellowship awarded on a regular basis and in a user-friendly manner.

PRI reps, delegations, Senior Citizens Forum call on LG



A delegation presenting memorandum to LG Manoj Sinha at Doda.

STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: During his day long visit to Doda several public delegations met Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and apprised him of the various developmental issues and demands of the people.

Prominent among the delegations included the District Development Council, Municipal Council, BDC Chairpersons, former Legislators, Political leaders, members of Civil Society, members of Gujjar-Bakerval com-

munity, Bar Association, and Senior Citizens Forum.

The delegations raised demands pertaining to health, education & sports facilities, strengthening of road network & power infrastructure, filling of vacant posts in various departments, solid waste management, promotion of handloom and handicraft, tourism, heli services and gandola projects for giving impetus to tourism in the district.

The Lt Governor gave a patient hearing to all the issues

put forth by the members of the visiting delegations. He assured them that appropriate steps would be taken by the UT administration on all genuine issues with alacrity.

The Lt Governor further observed that the UT Government is working with the goal of equitable and holistic development of all the regions of Jammu Kashmir and special focus is being laid on the development and prosperity of far flung and remote areas.

Commissioner State Taxes meets traders, industrial associations at Baramulla

STATE TIMES NEWS

BARAMULLA: The Department of State Taxes organized an interactive session for Trade and Industrial Federations of North Kashmir here on Thursday. Commissioner State Taxes, Dr Rashmi Singh, who chaired the interactive session, elaborated on achievements of GST regime highlighting the increase in revenue collections and compliance. He enjoined upon all bodies to enhance registration of tax payers and ensure compliances under filing of GST returns. Among other State Taxes Officers, various stakeholders and representatives of trade and industry participated in the meeting. The session was also attended by Deputy Commissioner, State Taxes Enforcement and Recovery, Shakeel Maqbool, who apprised regarding functioning of CGST set up in Kashmir. The Trade bodies and Industrialists thanked the department for organizing such sessions whereby they could clarify many operational issues, get all relevant updates and also offer their suggestions for the policy domain in order to facilitate trade further. On the occasion, the issues and suggestions given by the stakeholders were discussed by the concerned officers. The issues requiring immediate redressal were resolved by the Commissioner and those pertaining to policy matters were taken note of. Commissioner also stressed upon the stakeholders to come up with specific instances so that the issues can be taken up for quick redressal. Additional Commissioner, State Taxes Kashmir; Manzoor Ahmad Bhat, presented welcome address while Assistant Commissioner State Taxes (Technical), Waseem Raja, gave a technical presentation on the occasion. Assistant Commissioner State Taxes Enforcement North, Shanavaz Bukhari, informed that the session has been organized to provide a common platform for government and businessmen to share relevant information.

BJP transformed country's political landscape by taking every segment along: Rana

STATE TIMES NEWS

CHAMBA: Maintaining that the BJP has transformed the country's political landscape by taking every segment of Indian society along, party's Co-Prabhar for Himachal Pradesh elections Devender Singh Rana today said this has left the rudderless opposition gasping and intriguing to divide the nation on caste and communal lines. "BJP's nationalistic character and inclusive essence is the only Mantra to make India a Vishwaguru with Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Piyas, Sabka Vishwas", Mr Rana said while addressing the BJP Scheduled Caste Convention at Chamba this afternoon. Devender Rana said that Indian politics has entered into a new era of bond-



Senior BJP leader, Devender Singh Rana addressing a public gathering at Chamba.

ing with social barriers crashing and 'nation first' philosophy becoming the way of life and guiding force to ensure progression of the country in every sphere. In this journey of New India, every segment of the society is working towards strengthening the hands of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to carry forward his mission of nation building. Rana

referred to the great initiatives taken over the years, saying these have resulted in the emergence of an Adivasi from the Scheduled Tribe Category rise as President of this great nation. The scenario is no different in every state of the country. In Himachal Pradesh, out of the total 6 MPs of BJP, two belong to the Scheduled Caste community.

Empowerment of the weaker sections has been the core of the BJP philosophy, he added.

The Co-Prabhar expressed his satisfaction over every segment of the party working with a sense of devotion to ensure the BJP's splendid victory in the upcoming assembly elections. He shared his assessment about the mood of the people and said he was confident about all the five seats in the Chamba belt being won by the BJP. This is because of the progressive policies and implementation of various central and state sponsored schemes by the BJP government in the past five years. He said the mission of empowering the people and ensuring holistic development of the state will continue under the double engine government.

Reiterating the commitment of the BJP towards the welfare of every section, Devender Rana decried the Congress for its abject failure in the social and economic upliftment of Scheduled Castes, who they considered just a vote bank to get power. He said the Scheduled Castes are looking only towards the BJP for their welfare because of its track record. In the coming elections also, BJP will get more support than before, he asserted.

The Co-Prabhar referred to the resolve of the people of Himachal Pradesh in breaking all the political traditions by returning the BJP to govern with a huge margin of seats. A strong and stable government is all round development irrespective of caste, creed or religion.

LG Mathur inaugurates National Meet on Right to Information Act

STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, RK Mathur, on Thursday inaugurated the National Meet on Right to Information (RTI) Act organised by the Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE) in Leh.

He released the SCOPE film on PSEs in pursuit of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat and launched the webpage (<https://ladakh.nic.in/departments/>) for suo-motu disclosure of information under RTI Act Section 4(1)(b) for Ladakh.

Chief Information Commissioner (CIC), YK Sinha, was the Guest of Honour for the event. Officials from Ladakh,



LG Ladakh, RK Mathur being presented a memento during an event.

Chief Executives, Directors, Executive Directors, CPIOs, PIOs, nodal officers and executives from more than 30 CPSEs are taking part in the three-day event. LG Mathur called SCOPE a moral force and appreciated them for choosing Ladakh

for the National Meet on RTI Act to build the capacities of government officials from the region on the RTI Act along with the officials from PSEs from other parts of the country. He termed RTI Act as leading towards the light from the darkness.

Calling the number of RTIs filed by its employees and others as the parameter of the performance of a PSE, LG Mathur stated that the filing of more RTI queries by its employees shows the inefficiency of a PSE. He stressed the importance of understanding the RTI Act and learning its nuances, enable them to handle and reply to the queries effectively and efficiently. Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) YK Sinha shared the efforts being made to bring down the number of pending RTI cases and further strengthen and implement the Act effectively throughout the country. He emphasised the need for adopting innovative methods to

resolve RTI cases at the earliest. Programme Director, SCOPE, OP Khorwal, highlighted the programme perspective and various initiatives taken by SCOPE to build the capacities of representatives of PSEs to enable them to address issues faced by them in implementing the RTI Act, etc. Earlier, Director General SCOPE, Atul Sobti welcomed the guests while Vice-Chairman, SCOPE, Pradip Kumar Das, gave the vote of thanks. Former Information Commissioner, MM Ansari; Advisor Umang Narula; Commissioner/Secretary, Ajeet Kumar Sahu and Secretary Mehboob Ali Khan were present in the event.

Flesh trade thriving in several Spa-centres, hotels with banquets in Jammu



Jammu is hogging a lot many tags, with some for wrong reasons. The City of Temples, as it boasted its identity years ago, is ironically fast traversing towards becoming a den of prostitution with certain Spa-centres and hotels with banquets encouraging and facilitating flesh trade. The modus operandi is bewildering and startling. The banquets are booked for performing marriage ceremonies. Here

begins the vicious circle of 'sex trade'. According to sources, some hotels with banquets, after getting booked for marriage functions, keep some rooms reserved for their exclusive use, notwithstanding the fact that these rooms are actually shown booked by the hosts. Once the marriage functions take off, the unscrupulous hotel managements lure their clientele of providing girls in 'safe environs' by making the use of the rooms not physically allotted to hosts of the marriage functions. Since guests keep coming and going from the marriage functions, nobody can nurture an iota of suspicion about the 'so-called guests' actually

indulging in 'flesh trade' in such rooms. The clientele happily pay the charges as per demand in view of the 'assured safety' since there is no apprehension of police raids or anybody suspecting anything like 'flesh trade' going on in hotel-cum-banquet halls. The flesh trade under the guise of 'social functions' are not restricted to marriage season only as the people have lately become 'party savvy' and on one pretext or the other, keep on holding functions and hosting parties, which gives a big boost to the 'flesh trade' in the City. The menace of hotel-cum-banquet halls being used for flesh trade has unfolded yet another but

a big challenge. Before embarking on curbing this menace, the police is required to be doubly sure about the 'fishy things' happening alongside the genuine marriage functions, keeping in view the sensitivity of the social gatherings. Sources said the police have lately discovered such a modus operandi of some hotel-cum-banquet halls and are drawing strategies to tackle the menace effectively while maintaining the privacy and sanctity of social functions. This has unnerved the unscrupulous management who find themselves caught in a catch-22 situation. Number of Spa centers, offering sexual services in the garb of massages, is equally increasing

rapidly in the winter capital. These centers operate through various modes of social media and 'mouth of word'. Erotic messages are flashed to the prospective clients to lure them. In certain cases photos of the 'sex workers' are also shared with the 'trusted-clients'. Such has been the power of the 'word of mouth' that the desirous clients just call few designated numbers and get detailed information before deciding, which one to visit. On arrival, the client has to choose the service-provider, part with a nice tip and commission to the facilitator. Some Spa-centers reportedly provide their service at homes also.