

LG reviews dev activities in Ganderbal

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday chaired a meeting to review the development progress of district Ganderbal.

The Lt Governor took stock of ongoing works and implementation of Central and UT Schemes in Ganderbal District.

Private players are key stakeholders in the economic growth of any region, the Lt Governor observed. He asked the district administration to facilitate the potential investors through the Industry Help Centre and provide assistance to the locals in setting up Cold storage facilities.

On the progress under various youth-oriented and employment generation schemes, the Lt Governor directed the officers to ensure that the



Lt Governor Manoj Sinha chairing a meeting to review development progress of district Ganderbal.

youth of the district are engaged with the self-employment and livelihood generation schemes and programmes of the government.

A comprehensive District Employment Plan should be implemented, he said.

Tourism is an important sector for the economic growth of the local people. Every possibility should

be explored to make Sonamarg accessible to tourists throughout the year, the Lt Governor said.

He said the effective implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Program and promotion of Cooperatives will prove to be a key factor in bringing prosperity in the lives of farming families.

The Lt Governor appraised the functioning and activities being conducted at the Atal Tinkering labs in the district and directed for extension of necessary support to students.

The Lt Governor directed the administration and health functionaries to chalk out an action plan and work on a mission mode for Tuberculosis-

free Ganderbal. He also issued directions for the successful implementation of Ayushman Bhav Campaign and PM Vishwakarma Scheme.

Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shyambir gave an overview of the development activities and progress registered under various schemes and programmes including Kisan Sampark Abhiyaan, ODOP Ganderbal (Willow wicker), District Industries Centre Ganderbal etc.

The meeting was attended by Nuzhat Ishfaq, DDC Chairperson Ganderbal; Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Vijay Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir and other senior officers.



J&K witnesses huge transformation under PM Modi: Slathia

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Former minister and Pradesh Vice President Surjeet Singh Slathia on Tuesday said Jammu and Kashmir has undergone a huge transformation in the wake of progressive initiatives taken during the past four years with large scale investments pouring in for various sectors of infrastructural development.

"Rapid industrialization and infrastructure upgradation is the preamble for Naya Jammu and Kashmir under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi", Slathia said while addressing public meetings at Gangwal and Kunjwani in the run up to scheduled elections to ULBs and civic bodies, adding that this vision is being realised with sincerity of purpose.

Slathia said the BJP's focus has been to usher Jammu and Kashmir to a new phase of progress and development with restoration of complete normalcy and peace remaining a focal point. The BJP is committed to address the issues of the youth, the marginalized and weaker sections besides women, he said while asserting that the party has been ensuring to remove the disparity between regions and



Former minister S.S Slathia addressing public meeting.

sub regions with regard to allocation of funds for development and opportunities to flourish.

Slathia said the BJP has paved way for the people to have access to all the privileges, rights and facilities available to their fellow citizens across the country after repealing Article 370. This is something which was not known in this part of the country due to wrong policies adopted over the decades by the successive governments. He sought continued support of the people to the BJP, saying this will help in expediting the development to new heights besides assuaging people's aspirations.

Describing the grassroots level democratic institutions as key to improving civic facilities and the other utili-

ties, Slathia called for massive public participation in the elections to streamline the process of decision making as per aspirations of the people. This is a huge opportunity to shape the destiny of cities, urban and rural areas by empowering the people in a big way, he added.

Prominent among those present on the occasion included Baldev Singh Billawaria Deputy Mayor JMC, Ex MLC Vikram Randhawa, Rekha Mahajan District President BJP Jammu, Pawan Singh Convenor ULB J&K, Ayodhya Gupta Prabhari Jammu South R.S.Pura, Ranjodh Singh Nalwa President Minority Morcha, Naresh Singh and Ranjit Singh Mandal President Kunjwani.

JKEEGA announces 48-hour work boycott on Sept 25

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Electrical Engineering Graduates Association (JKEEGA) has declared a 48-hour work boycott protest, commencing on 25th September.

This move comes in response to the persistent lack of progress on key issues previously highlighted in a protest leave notice served on 24th August 2023.

The General Council meeting held on 9th September unanimously resolved to implement a 48-hour protest leave program starting on 25th September.

This decision stems from the government's failure to address the significant delay in filling vacant positions across the department's hierarchy, severely affecting the morale of its officers and hindering the delivery of public services and grievance redressal.

The situation has worsened over the past two months, as salaries have not been disbursed on time, leaving all 21,000 Power Development Department (PDD) employees without their August salaries.

During a press conference held at the Press Club today, JKEEGA's President, Sachin Tickoo, highlighted the ongoing neglect by the authorities within the Power Development Department.

Tickoo emphasized that more than



JKEEGA President, Sachin Tickoo addressing a press conference on Tuesday.

750 vacancies exist in the engineering cadre, with crucial positions such as Director, Executive Director, Chief Engineers, Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers, Assistant Engineers, and Junior Engineers remaining unfilled. This has led to a situation where multiple responsibilities are being shouldered by individual employees, disrupting service delivery.

Furthermore, the promotion process across all cadres has been stalled for months, adversely affecting officers' careers and creating cumulative issues down the line. For instance, the promotion of L.K. Bhat, Executive Chief Engineer, was recommended by the administrative department in March but has been pending for over three months. This

backlog of promotions is causing severe repercussions within the department.

The situation is compounded by the overburdening of employees due to additional charges. Chief Engineer (Distribution) Kashmir has been assigned the additional charge of Chief Engineer (Transmission) Kashmir, which is unreasonable. Similarly, Superintending Engineer Kathua has been given additional charge of Superintending Engineer Jammu, despite this issue being previously highlighted.

In response to these pressing issues, JKEEGA has served a notice to the administration. The General Council of JKEEGA, representing both Jammu and Kashmir regions, has resolved that engineers of the

J&K Power Development Department will submit a joint protest leave application on 25th and 26th September 2023. They will gather at POD Complex Gladni Jammu and Bemina, Srinagar on 25th September to register a peaceful protest and abstain from work for 48 hours. Additionally, engineers with assigned additional charges will submit a joint representation to the government requesting relief from these additional responsibilities for the effective functioning of the department and Power Corporations.

Various employee leaders from the Power Development Department, including Lalit Sharma, Diploma Engineers Association; Tarun Gupta, Provincial Power Employees Union; Ashiq Hussain, Lineman and Workers Union; ID Singh, Clinical Employees Federation; Gurmeet Singh, Bishan Singh, PEEU; Akhil Kumar, PTDJ, and other Workers' Unions have extended their unconditional support to JKEEGA's call for a complete 48-hour protest and work abstention.

JKEEGA appealed to the Lieutenant Governor of J&K to intervene and direct the competent authorities to approve the proposals for promotion and regularization of eligible employees before the specified date.

Mayor JMC, Dr Karan call on Lt Governor

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Rajinder Sharma, Mayor, Jammu Municipal Corporation on Tuesday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan. The Mayor discussed with the Lt Governor various important matters pertaining to Jammu Municipal Corporation. Dr. Karan Singh, former Union Minister and Member of Parliament also called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. Later, Masarat Kar, President Municipal Council Sopore called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. She was accompanied by Touseef Raina, youth leader from Sopore.



Mayor Rajinder Sharma calling on Lt Governor Manoj Sinha.

MoFPI-IIM Jammu to hold Regional Conference on Sept 29

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a groundbreaking move towards enhancing agricultural incomes and promoting millets, Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) in collaboration with Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu & DICCI, convened a high-level meeting at IIM Jammu permanent Campus, Jagti under the leadership of IIM Jammu Director, Prof. B.S. Sahay.

The meeting brought together key stakeholders, including Gaurav Gupta from Theta Foundation for Development, along with several eminent dignitaries from industry, industry bodies and experts.

The primary objective of this



Dignitaries after the meeting at Jammu on Tuesday.

momentous gathering was to plan a Regional Conference dedicated to the promotion of Millets and FPOs in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Scheduled for September 29, 2023, at Hotel Radisson Blu, Jammu, the conference is

expected to provide a stage for fostering exchange and collaboration opportunities within the realm of millets. The conference will witness the distinguished presence of eminent personalities from the field of administration, industry, and Farmer's collectives. Milind P.

Kamble, Founder of DICCI and Chairman of the Board of Governors of IIM Jammu will also grace the occasion.

The meeting was attended by Aagam Jain, General Secretary, Laghu Udyog Authority, Arun Manas, J&K State Agro-Indo Development Corporation Ltd (Online), C.M. Sharma, LEAD Network, Dr. Jyoti Kachroo, IN-charge Incubation, SKUAST, Kamal Kaul and TS Reen, from Federation of Industries, Manik Batra,

Bhupesh Gupta and Amit Khajuria of ASSOCHAM, Kanav Padha, Jammu and Kashmir Angle Network, Gagan Jain from Nutraj, Abhimanyu from Jai Organics, Cndr Kesavan Baskaran (R), Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), IIM Jammu and Dr. Vivek Sharma, Chief Innovation Officer, IIM Jammu. Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, mentioned that "As we embark on this transformative journey to promote millets and empower

Farmers in association with Govt. of India and DICCI, we recognize the immense potential these initiatives hold for our region and beyond. Millets are not only nutritious but also ecologically sustainable, offering a solution to both food security and environmental challenges. With the upcoming Regional Conference, we aim to shine a global spotlight on millets as the world's emerging smart food and create a collaborative platform that fosters innovation and partnership."

Cong expresses concern over 'rising militancy' in Rajouri-Poonch belt



Congress Working President Raman Bhalla talking to reporters at Jammu on Tuesday.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir unit of Congress on Tuesday expressed concern over the "rising militancy" in Rajouri and Poonch and demanded the setting up of security check posts and strengthening of Village Defence Guards (VDGs) in the twin border districts.

At least 26 terrorists and 11 security personnel were killed this year in a series of encounters along the Line of Control (LoC) and in other areas in the two districts, where seven civilians were also killed in targeted attacks by terrorists. "We are concerned over the spike in militancy related incidents in

the twin districts of Rajouri and Poonch due to fresh infiltration of terrorists. The Lt Governor-led administration should step up vigil, deploy security forces and strengthen village defence mechanisms in all remote and vulnerable areas," Congress Working President Raman Bhalla said. Flanked by former minister Shabir Ahmad Khan and MLC Ravinder Sharma, Bhalla told reporters here that residents of Narla and Sajali area of Kalakote in Rajouri are frightened after the recent encounter. "Timely information by local resident Preen Lal about the presence of two terrorists averted a Dhangri-style

attack in Narla," he said, referring to the killing of seven civilians by terrorists in Rajouri village on January 1.

"Lal was in terrorists' captivity for over three hours and his phone and contact numbers were noted by them before he managed to escape. People fear retaliation by terrorists in the absence of an Army post and adequate number of VDG members," he said.

Bhalla said Congress has already sent a communication to Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, urging him to strengthen the village defence mechanism in all remote and far flung areas of the twin border districts.

Sharma, who is also the chief spokesperson of the PCC, said he visited Kalakote villages a couple of days ago and witnessed fear and a sense of insecurity amongst the local population.

Sharma said he failed to notice any security presence in the area. "The government claims of deployment of forces and strengthening of village defence mechanisms with sophisticated weapons is not visible on ground," he said.

Govt approves welfare boost for LIC employees, agents

STATE TIMES NEWS

MUMBAI: Over 1 lakh employees and nearly 13 lakh agents of the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) will have something to cheer, as the Finance Ministry on Tuesday approved welfare measures, including enhancing the family pension and gratuity limit.

Ministry of Finance raised the gratuity limit for the agents of the insurer from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.

Another important change is the eligibility of reappointed agents to receive renewal commissions.

Previously, LIC agents were ineligible for renewal commission on any business completed under the old agency. This modification aims to provide enhanced financial stability to reappointed agents.

Furthermore, the term insurance cover for the agents has been extended from the existing range of Rs 3,000-10,000 to Rs

25,000-1,50,000.

This expansion of coverage will benefit the families of deceased agents, providing them with more substantial welfare support.

In addition, the welfare measures include the introduction of a uniform rate of 30 per cent for family pensions, ensuring equitable benefits for the families of LIC employees.

"More than 13 lakh agents and more than 1 lakh regular employees, who play a pivotal role in the growth of LIC and deepening of insurance penetration in India, will benefit from these welfare measures," said the release.

Siddhartha Mohanty, Chairperson, LIC of India thanked the Finance Minister for extending the benefits of Agents and employees of Life Insurance Corporation of India. This move will boost the morale of LIC employees and agents of the Corporation, he said.

Spiritual preachers, women must start campaigns against drug abuse to prevent youth from self-destruction: Zorawar

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Making a fervent appeal to the women and spiritual preachers to come forward and join hands in making drug awareness campaign as mass movement here in Jammu and Kashmir, especially, in Jammu Province, BJP leader and Chairman, Team Jammu, Zorawar Singh Jamwal said that drug mafia is making all attempts to trap younger generation including School and College going students in their evil net there by spoiling the future of nation.

While addressing a large gathering of women and spiritual preachers during a religious function "Shrimad Bhagwat Katha" organized at Baba Sidhgoria Temple in Paloura here, organized by Mahatma Kuldeep Singh Maharaj, Zorawar said that its volunteers will leave no stone unturned to take on its fight against drugs to all nook and corner of Jammu region. "School going children and College youth need to be involved in a big way for spreading the message at the grass root level. And for that, mothers have to take the lead to make aware their wards about the ill and dead effects of drug abuse," highlighted Jamwal and made a passionate appeal to women and



Chairman Team Jammu, Zorawar Singh Jamwal speaking at a programme in Jammu on Tuesday.

spiritual preachers to join hands and take the responsibilities in their respected localities to strictly counter suspicious activities of drug peddlers.

Team Jammu chief, said, "Time has come for the women who being wife, sister and mother to start proactive campaigns with a spirit of love and compassion that will surely help in preventing self-destruction of those who have fallen prey to drug-addiction. The time is giving alarming bells to come out from homes and reach out to vulnerable segments in a big way." Jamwal said that, "Women have to shoulder the responsibility of inculcating the practice of Sanatan in their siblings since childhood, which would enlighten them about good and bad from their tender age and would

help them making a bright future."

City SP, North, Kulbir Handa expressed views on the glaring issue of Drug Abuse, which is affecting the youth, both boys and girls and underscored the duty of parents and especially mothers who have a very considerable role in shaping the future of younger generation. He also cautioned the city residents to have watch in their respective localities about the suspicious movements of unscrupulous elements who are spreading drugs among youth and wherever such activity is detected, people must inform local police for strict action.

SHO Janipur, Inspector Sikander Singh Chauhan informed the gathering the steps taken by police to curb the drug menace.