

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Collective efforts for...

accomplishments by team J&K, the Lt Governor said. "In today's felicitation, we have honoured not only a set of team leaders, but also the entire community, group of service providers, workers, who effectively handled every challenge. They are source of our strength and pride," the Lt Governor added. He said the selfless volunteers from across the country with soaring idealism, rooted in the age-old concept of Seva, were our silent workforce, who ensured the needs of devotees are taken care of.

"The collective and coordinated efforts for successful conduct of Yatra are also the reflection of Aspirational J&K," the Lt Governor said. The Lt Governor also expressed gratitude towards the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah for the continuous support and guidance for the successful conduct of the Yatra.

This was the longest ever pilgrimage of Shri Amarnath ji in which 4.45 lakh devotees performed Puja and darshan at the holy cave. It is also the highest number in the last 10 years.

Team Jammu Kashmir is the driving force of the unprecedented growth. I am witnessing a new work culture, devoted, disciplined and determined. It motivates us to aim higher and work hard to realize the aspirations of the society, the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor suggested for identifying the officers from all the line departments who are willing to serve the devotees of Shri Amarnathji Yatra and that their deployment on the Yatra duty can be ensured.

4.5 lakh devotees will be the ambassadors of Jammu Kashmir who will carry the saga of transformation, tales of peace and prosperity of Jammu Kashmir to their respective states and UTs. It will encourage more tourists to visit Jammu Kashmir and give a fresh impetus to the tourism sector, the Lt Governor said.

It was informed that impeccable arrangements were put in place by various agencies and Government organisations on both the Yatra Tracks. Yatris were facilitated with E-KYC, RFID and prepaid system for availing the services easily.

More than 50 medical facilities, 440 clinical beds and 26 oxygen booths were created along the yatra route and health of devotees was given the top priority. Optical fibre cables were laid on both routes by Telecom providers along with many other facilities.

Yatri feedback through Rapid Assessment System (RAS) was put in place and daily real time feedback from pilgrims on both the axis was collected. 95 percent pilgrims had rated the services as 'Good'.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; R K Goyal, Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department; Shaleen Kabra, Additional Chief Secretary Jal Shakti Department; Dilbag Singh, DGP; Sh RR Swain, DG CID; Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai, GOC, 15 Corps; P. Mittal Air Commodore; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor and CEO SASB; senior officers of Civil, Police Administration, J&K, CAPFs, Army and Shrine Board attended the felicitation ceremony.

Swami Avdheshanand Giri Ji Maharaj and other members of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board were also present.

Article 370: SC...

supporter of secessionist forces. The moment bench re-assembled in the post-lunch session, Justice Kaul pointed to Sibal that lawyers for respondents (those supporting abrogation of Article 370) have submitted that what Lone allegedly said was "not in sync".

Sibal said, "I'm not concerned with that. If he has said it, in what circumstances, is it recorded, you ask him for an affidavit. I won't stand for him in this court, if he doesn't file an affidavit."

The CJI then told the senior lawyer that Lone will have to file an affidavit that he unconditionally accepts the sovereignty of India and that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India.

"How can he say otherwise? He is a member of Parliament. And if he has said it, at my level, I deprecate it. I personally don't subscribe to what he has said," Sibal said.

Mehta said it is one thing that Sibal deprecates it and asked whether Lone, a litigant, file an affidavit to say that "he does not support terrorism and secessionism. No citizen can have any objection in filing that."

The CJI then told Sibal, "When he invokes the jurisdiction of our court under Article 32 of the Constitution, we take it that he necessarily abides by the Constitution. We want to have it from him in the affidavit that he unconditionally accepts that J&K is an integral part of India and that he abides by and owes allegiance to the Constitution of India."

Sibal said the alleged incident is of the J-K assembly session in 2018 and there were other people also who were present.

"I was not aware of it until this morning, when someone pointed it out to me. Let's not go into all these. There was a Speaker of the assembly from BJP who asked him to say something. He was asked to say something which people ask other people to say on the streets of this country. Why do we need to go into all this? Let's focus on our legal issue," Sibal said without elaborating further.

The bench then told Sibal to ask Lone to file a short affidavit by Tuesday, and said it likes to hear different voices and has heard people from Srinagar and other parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

"We will hear you (Sibal) for Mr. Lone as well. There's no difficulty. He has come to our court, we're duty bound to hear his submissions. All that we want to say here is that we welcome everyone here. We heard people from across the political spectrum in J&K. We like to hear different voices," the CJI said.

Attorney General R Venkataramani said a person seeking to enforce his fundamental rights should have faith in the Constitution.

Sibal then continued with his legal submission in his rejoinder arguments and said he has at the outset stated they have not challenged the sovereignty of India and insisted that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India.

The top court heard arguments of counsel for intervenors, who are defending the Centre's August 5, 2019 decision to abrogate Article 370 that accorded special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Among those who advanced their arguments included KM Nataraj and Vikramjeet Banerjee (both Additional Solicitor General), senior advocate V Giri and others.

The bench made it clear that Tuesday will be the last day for hearing submissions on Article 370.

The intervenors had told the apex court on September 1 that the decision to abro-

gate provisions of Article 370 was not made by the political executive alone and Indian Parliament was taken into confidence.

Several petitions challenging the abrogation of Article 370 and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which split the erstwhile state into two union territories - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh - were referred to a Constitution bench in 2019.

Jammu records over...

in Jammu on Saturday and Sunday, they said. They said several of these patients have been admitted to hospitals and more than 100 have been discharged.

"This is a viral infection, we have to understand how it happens. First of all we need to understand that not everybody requires hospitalization, the majority of cases are self-limiting and they get better in a short while.

"However, people feel that this is a very dangerous disease. This misconception needs to be removed", Head of department (HoD), Microbiology, Government Medical College (GMC) hospital Dr Sandeep Dogra told PTI.

Allaying fears about a potential shortage of platelets for dengue patients, hospital authorities state that they have adequate facilities and sufficient stock of platelets.

"In dengue when there is a shortage of platelets, people panic that they aren't available, but there's no need to panic. We always have sufficient and adequate stock of platelets. The platelets that we make from whole blood, are called 'random donor platelets', they too are available and we also have Apheresis platelets", Head of Department (HoD), Blood bank, GMC, Dr Meena Sidhu told PTI.

"We always keep platelets in ready supply, because the shelf life of platelets is five days, after which they get spoiled. So there is some problem sometimes but even then we have 5-6 units always ready to transfuse platelets when required. Besides this we have given directions to our emergency staff to properly treat dengue cases", Medical Superintendent, Govt Hospital, Gandhinagar, Dr Pravin Yograj said.

Doctors at the hospital assured the public that they won't allow any such deaths to occur. "I have two messages, one, don't let dengue happen to you, and secondly, if you get it don't panic, we have enough facilities to treat. And I assure that we won't let deaths happen because of dengue, we will fight with all our might", he said.

Terrorist killed, 2...

evening. Due to the darkness, the security forces are exercising caution and not moving inside the house to find out the fate of the second terrorist, who is also believed to have been killed, they said.

The identity and group affiliation of the terrorists would be known once the operation is over, they added.

The border district of Poonch along with nearby Rajouri has witnessed several encounters this year, resulting in the killing of around 20 terrorists and 10 security personnel.

Most of the terrorists were killed while attempting to sneak into India from across the border, according to officials.

India should reconsider...

not vice versa. I believe that if China is going to continue to do this, then India must also revisit its One China policy," he told reporters.

China, a G20 member, and Pakistan had objected to the decision to hold G20 events in Kashmir, which they call "disputed". China also disputes India's sovereignty over Arunachal Pradesh. India has consistently dismissed such claims by China and Pakistan.

When asked about the issue, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had in an exclusive interview to PTI late last week said, "Such a question would be valid if we had refrained from conducting meetings in those venues. Ours is such a vast, beautiful and diverse nation. When G20 meetings are happening, isn't it natural that meetings will be held in every part of our country."

India held the third G-20 working group meeting on tourism for three days from May 22 in Srinagar. Delegates from all G20 countries, barring China, visited the picturesque Valley for the event. A large number of delegates had also visited Arunachal Pradesh in March for a G-20 event.

Dismissing Chinese claims, India had then said that it was free to hold meetings on its own territory.

By the time India's G20 presidency term ends, Modi had said, over 220 meetings would have taken place across 60 cities in all 28 states and eight Union territories, and added that over one lakh participants from around 125 nationalities would witness the skills of Indians.

Upgradation of Khellani...

Article 370 the entire J&K has witnessed a dawn of peace, prosperity and development".

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi led BJP government is committed to bring incredible changes in J&K and the people of the Union Territory. He said the government will leave no stone unturned to uplift the local economy.

Customer feedback always...

further said, "Since we recognize that our Bank's success is intertwined with the success of our customers, therefore customer-delight remains at the heart of our plans and achievements. And customer feedback always encourages us to do better."

"Today, your presence has made these interactions lively and will have long lasting impact on how we move ahead about our customer service, digital infrastructure and customer-friendly innovations. However, we continue to invest in enhancing customer experience, streamlining processes, and offering solutions to meet the evolving needs of our clients; our latest Mpay Delight Plus - mobile banking application - is a step in that direction", he added.

The Bank's Executive Director Sudhir Gupta presided over one such customer-meet at Zonal Office Jammu Cluster -2. "Banks have become the most vital institutions for every healthy and progressing society not only for financial intermediation but also for realizing its economic potential. And this kind of candid interaction between the customers and bankers is critical for health of banks, businesses and the society at large", he said adding that the Bank will continue the process in future to strengthen its bond further with the customers across the country.

Meanwhile, welcoming the participants at their respective places, the Bank's General Managers, Divisional Heads, Zonal Heads and Cluster Heads apprised the participants about the Bank's historic performance in annual results of FY 2022-23, consistent progress in Q1 of current financial year, persistent upswing in the Bank's share price, and highlighted the need for continuity in Bank-customer communication. The Bank's management emphasized upon the importance of feedback

for achieving excellence and bringing improvements and innovations in the Bank's functioning leading ultimately to the greater good of customers and the institution.

Lauding the Bank for its 3rd Bank-wide customer-outreach, the participants welcomed the move aimed at making Bank's services better. They urged the Bank to carry forward its conversations with the customers for better mutual connect and understanding.

Present in the meet at CHQ, MD Hattrick Babar Choudhary termed such customer-meets a welcome step. "These customer meets are a welcome step. It has bridged the gap between the customers and management and provided a platform for us customers to put forth their feedback and suggestions in front of bank management. We are happy to see the Bank's progress in recent times. It gives us real happiness to see our bank clock historic profits and bolster its digital infrastructure. Such meets should become a regular feature", he said.

Summing up his experience about the Bank, Roop Krishen Kokroo - a pensioner from Jammu - praised a lot about the bank's services. "Being among the earliest of Bank's customers, I have always found J&K Bank's products and services well up to mark with other competitors. I feel happy to be here as a bank's satisfied customer."

"The Bank's performance is improving and so are its products and services. Occasions like these provide the much needed platform for exchange of views and an opportunity to listen and empathize with each other's perception", said a client attending one such meet in Bengaluru.

Pertinently, the meetings started with power-point presentation providing an overview of the Bank, its business share in UTs of J&K, Ladakh and Rest of the country, its distinctions, its performance, recent customer-friendly initiatives, its grievance redressal structure and remedial measures that Bank takes for addressing customer grievances while ensuring zero waiting time for their registration.

Around 3000 valuable customers attended 28 such meetings that were also conducted simultaneously at Cluster and Zonal levels of the Bank across the country.

Machail Mata Yatra...

The Shree Machail Mata Yatra has experienced a remarkable surge in attendance this year, with a staggering increase from around 58,000 arrivals in 2022 to 1.94 lakh this year, an official spokesperson said.

"This meteoric rise can be attributed to a myriad of factors, primarily the foolproof arrangements, augmentation of boarding facilities by the administration, coupled with the seamless execution of the pilgrimage's schedule," the spokesperson said.

"The Yatra's new-found popularity and its remarkable growth in turnover underline the enduring spiritual significance it holds for countless devotees, drawing them in increasing numbers," he added.

The doors of the Himalayan temple are every year opened on the auspicious Baisakhi festival in April.

The Shree Machail Mata Yatra commenced officially on July 25, witnessing a substantial influx of devotees right from the outset, the official said.

One of the notable accomplishments was the provision of accommodation at the Yatri Bhawan in Gulabgarh, capable of hosting 2,000 pilgrims simultaneously, he added.

A tent city surrounding the temple and local homestays became a significant attraction this year, beckoning pilgrims with open arms.

Kishtwar Deputy Commissioner Devansh Yadav oversaw the arrangements, ensuring seamless coordination with local, civil and police administrations besides other departments, army personnel, and teams of the Border Road Organisation, the official said.

This comprehensive approach catered to the needs of the Yatris while unlocking the region's tourism potential as well, he added.

The Machail Yatra of 2023 would conclude on September 5, officials said.

No scope of...

vastly improved the public delivery of services and the development in Srinagar has been due to it.

"Digital is empowering people and digitalisation is ensuring that there is no corruption. Digital is the way forward and digital is also the way to make J-K future ready. Whatever development you are seeing in Srinagar - we are making Srinagar digital and future ready," he told reporters.

He asserted that the development in Srinagar was because of digitalisation.

"Srinagar has never been like this before as Dal Lake, Lal Chowk and Polo View market have been improved and this has been possible only because of digitalisation. We have unleashed the power of digital and it has led to the power of huge improvement in the way public delivery (of services) happens," he added.

Asked about the rising unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir, Mehta said people were basing their comments on unverified data.

"Those unaware of the data keep making unverified statements. Self employment in 2022-2023 and in 2021 -2022 has been three lakhs in each year. That means six lakh self employment. Four years earlier, these numbers were only 40,000. The difference between these numbers is in the intentions," he added.

Owais Mukhtar from the Jammu and Kashmir Bank said the mission of the bank is to digitise all the accounts in J-K.

"We have already achieved 80 percent digitisation in our accounts which means 80 percent of the population banking with J-K Bank have digital mode - ATM card, mobile banking or e-banking. Our mission this week is to take this percentage to 90 percent and in coming months we are targeting at 100 percent of digitisation of these accounts," Mushtaq said.

Kishtwar SSP reviews...

to thwart any malicious intentions of anti-national elements. Poswal also called for adopting a public-centric approach in maintaining law and order.

Chairperson PNGRB calls...

the licenses to set up CNG stations and to connect homes. PNGRB is also envisaging a gas pipeline from Jammu to Srinagar.

The Lt Governor assured the PNGRB leadership of due consideration of the issues and suggestions to preserve the clean environment of the UT through the increased use of natural gas and to offer more fuel choices to the people of UT.

It was informed by PNGRB that Jammu area has already been largely covered by natural gas.

Gajendra Singh, Member, Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board was also present.

Art 370: President J&K HC Bar Association Jammu presents stand of Jammu Bar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: President of the J&K High Court Bar Association Jammu, Senior Advocate Vikram Sharma on Monday advanced his arguments in Supreme Court on behalf of the Association supporting the abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A.

Senior Advocate Vikram Sharma vehemently argued in support of the abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A and questioned those who raised voices like referendum during the course of hearing in the Apex Court.

Senior Advocate Vikram Sharma further pointed out that it is strange that even after 76 years of Independence the Identity and nationality of those who accepted the Constitution of India is being debated when the people of Jammu are nationalist and believe in the Constitution of India.

While buttressing his arguments, Senior Advocate Vikram Sharma submitted that Right to life means Right to live with dignity as held by Supreme Court in Maneka

Gandhi's case.

Putting a question mark on the very identity of us Indians and our pride in Indian nationality, as per Mr. Sharma, hits Article 21 and therefore to read any conditionality in accession and seeking a restoration of Art. 370 would be unconstitutional.

Senior Advocate Vikram Sharma in his brief submissions extended full support to the decision of the Parliament to abrogate Article 370 and 35-A of the Constitution of India. The bench headed by CJI gave patient hearing to Senior Advocate Vikram Sharma.

Advocate General D. C Raina was sitting besides Senior Advocate Vikram Sharma.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Sunday revoked the suspension of a lecturer who was removed from his post days after he appeared in the Supreme Court as a party against the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution.

A political science teacher at Government Higher Secondary School, Jawahar Nagar

Baru starts pending work in Ward 41

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: BJP Senior leader, the JMC Councillor Sanjay Kumar Baru along with BJP District President Parmod Kapahi and Mandal President Keshav Chopra kick started the pending work of restoration of Anand Vihar lane in the presence of local BJP leaders and prominent residents in ward no. 41.

While speaking on the occasion, Sanjay Baru said that construction of deep drain and laying of paver tiles in one-half of the lane was completed few months back and remaining work to complete the lane was initiated today which will be completed in the next few days. He said that



JMC Councillor Sanjay Kumar Baru inaugurating civic work.

every effort is made to ensure that all the works started in the ward are completed in the shortest time but sometimes the weather conditions forces to abandon the work for few weeks.

Sanjay Baru said that the ongoing work is part of the

project costing rupees 44 lakh. He also directed the concerned departmental officials not to compromise on quality and quantity of the material used for development works. He said that the elected representatives of the BJP in their respective JMC wards are in reg-

ular touch with the local population and seeking their suggestions for the proper implementation of the welfare schemes as well as the development projects. Sanjay Baru, while speaking with the local residents, asked them to keep eye on the development works in their area and not hesitate to point out any lapse in the works. Parmod Kapahi, Keshav Chopra, Jaideep Singh Samyal, Brijesh Gupta, Jatin Sethi, Ashok Wazir, Krishan Sharma, Rakesh Sharma, Jatinder Khajuria, Lokesh Bhagat, Atul Chopra, Manni, Kewal Sharma, Aman Sharma and local residents were present on the occasion.

matter related to the abrogation of Article 370, which accorded a special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir and was revoked by the Centre on August 5, 2019.

"Consequent on withdrawal of order number 251-JK (Edu) of August 25 (Order of suspension and subsequent attachment to Jammu), Zahoor Ahmed Bhat, senior lec-

turer, political science, is hereby relieved from the office today," said Vikas Dhar Bhagati, Personnel Officer, Directorate of School Education, Jammu in an official order. The order directed Bhat to report to his original place of posting for further duties. On August 28, the Supreme Court had asked Attorney General R Venkataramani and Solicitor General

Tushar Mehta to look into the issue of Bhat's suspension. As soon as the court resumed its hearing, senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Rajeev Dhavan told the five-judge Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud that Bhat was suspended from his job by the Jammu and Kashmir administration after having argued before the top court.