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WINTER PREPAREDNESS IN J&K

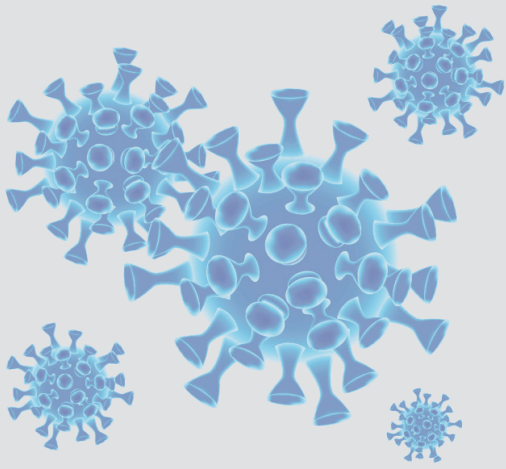
As soon as winter begins, people tend to change as well as improve their lifestyle behavior, which gives them a sense of preparedness and control to deal with the onslaughts of the harsh rainy and snowy weather. This was about how common people prepare for the winter season and how they respond to cold weather at individual levels. But this individual preparedness doesn't solve much of the situation as it's not a policy, it is just a temporary natural reaction to the prevailing circumstances.

And when it comes to public policy, winter preparedness is about how the government develops winter emergency plans every year to deal with harsh winters and ensure the availability of food, fuel, electricity, water and other basic amenities. And if this winter preparedness plan is shared publicly, the people will automatically gain confidence in the accuracy of such plans and abilities of the government. It should also be the responsibility of the government to not just provide early alerts and warnings of extreme weather patterns, but raise awareness among the masses about its potential impacts, and then at the same time have in place plans to respond to severe weather events.

Doing all this would do for starters as there remains a lot of hard work to do, though seems a very small intervention but it has the power to make a huge difference in people's lives. It is very important to mention that many of the aforementioned suggestions are already in the works, however, the scope and scale of the interventions needs to be expanded. We wish the government exceptional success with all the efforts that have been undertaken to deal with the harsh winter weather in Jammu and Kashmir.



Covid vaccination for children between 15-18 yrs



New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday announced that vaccination against COVID-19 for children between 15-18 years will start in the country from January 3, while “precaution dose” for healthcare and frontline workers begin from January 10.

In an address to the nation amid increasing Covid cases through the Omicron variant of the virus, he said the precaution dose will also be available for citizens above 60 years of age and with comorbidities on the advice of their doctor from January 10 next year as well.

The prime minister used the term precaution dose and did not call it booster dose as it has been generally referred to.

Modi said global experience shows that following all preventive measures at personal level is a big weapon to fight Covid as he asked people to be alert and take all precautionary measures but cautioned against any panic.

He said vaccination is also an important weapon to combat the pandemic.

This is the time to be careful, while engaging in festivities, he said.

“I would urge all of you not to panic, be careful and alert. Remember to mask up and keep washing hands,” Modi said.

Administration of nasal vaccine and world’s first DNA vaccine against Covid will soon start in India as well, he said.

Earlier, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) granted emergency use authorisation to Bharat Biotech’s Covaxin for children above 12 years with certain conditions, sources said on Saturday.

The Subject Expert Committee on COVID-19 of the CDSCO on October 12 after deliberating Bharat Biotech’s EUA application had recommended granting emergency use approval to Covaxin for use in the 12-18 years age group with certain conditions.

“The recommendations of the SEC were evaluated by another experts committee after which DCGI had sought additional data from the firm,” a source said.

The DCGI gave its approval Friday, the source said.



Global experience shows that following all preventive measures at personal level is a big weapon to fight Covid as he asked people to be alert and take all precautionary measures but cautioned against any panic.



LG inaugurates upgraded facility at paediatric cancer ward & children's play area at SMGS Hospital

KEY POINTS

We are building a strong well-developed public health care system that aims to ensure the highest possible level of health and well-being of people.

In the last 20 months, we have seen countless true heroes, hidden behind PPE kits and masks. They risked their own lives to save others.

Our doctors, nurses, para-medical staff, ambulance drivers, ASHA, Anganwadi workers, sanitation and other front line workers courageously fought against two waves of covid pandemic and continue to do so. I salute their spirit of selfless service”,



Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today inaugurated the upgraded facility at paediatric cancer ward & children's play area at SMGS Hospital, Jammu.

The Lt Governor observed that Sparkle Women Club is a living example of how selfless service can make a real contribution, a profound difference in our society. Those who choose to serve the disadvantaged unconditionally are doing greater service to humanity, the Lt Governor said.

The transformation of the paediatric cancer ward has been made possible by the Sparkle Women Club, a voluntary organization dedicated to public service, he added.

The Lt Governor said, “We are building a strong well-developed public health care system that aims to ensure the highest possible level of health and well-being of people”.

He appealed for the active participation of communities and healthcare workers in prevention efforts amid fears of third Covid wave.

The Lt Governor underlined that the biggest example of selfless service can be witnessed across the hospitals.

“In the last 20 months, we have seen countless true heroes, hidden behind PPE kits and masks. They risked their own lives to save others”, he added.

“Our doctors, nurses, para-medical staff, ambulance drivers, ASHA, Anganwadi workers, sanitation and other front line workers courageously fought against two waves of covid pandemic and continue to do so. I salute their spirit of selfless service”, said the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor observed that the last seven and half years have witnessed a revolution in the health sector of J&K which was never seen in the last 7 decades. The increased funding for the health sector of the UT has resulted in substantial improvement in J&K's health ranking,

he added.

The Lt Governor emphasized the role of



Our doctors, nurses, para-medical staff, ambulance drivers, ASHA, Anganwadi workers, sanitation and other front line workers courageously fought against two waves of covid pandemic and continue to do so. I salute their spirit of selfless service...

civil society members in the vaccination drive for 15 to 18 years age group commencing January 03, 2022, and booster dose for health care workers from January 10, 2022 as announced by Hon'ble Prime Minister in his address to the nation.

The Lt Governor also urged the NGOs and volunteers engaged in community service to come forward and complement the government's efforts in the fight against the drug menace.

Earlier, the Lt Governor took a round of various wards of the hospital and also interacted with the children.

J&K emerges leading performer in terms of 'incremental performance'

Jammu: Jammu & Kashmir has emerged as the leading performer in terms of incremental performance as per data released by NITI Aayog in the fourth Health Index report, an official press release informed Wednesday.

It said among the Union Territories, Delhi followed by Jammu & Kashmir, have shown the best incremental performance.

In incremental performance, J&K is ranked at number second position with a score of 9.55. In J&K, most of the indicators are in the improved/most improved/fully achieved category so far as the Incremental Performance from the Base Year (2018-19) to Reference Year (2019-20) is concerned, the press release said.

It said the Health and Medical Education department while giving information about the development said that a robust and acceptable mechanism is used for measuring performance by NITI Aayog.

Data is collected online through a portal maintained by NITI on agreed indicators. The data is then validated through an independent validation agency selected through a transparent bidding process. The importance of this annual tool is reemphasized by MoHFW's decision to link the index to incentives under National Health Mission. This has been instrumental in shifting the focus from budget spending and inputs to outputs and outcomes, the press release said.

According to the report, the health index comprises three domains –health outcomes, governance and information, and key inputs and processes.

In terms of overall health performance, the UT of J&K has moved one position up and is categorized as an aspirant and has substantial scope for improvement, the release added.

The report was released jointly by NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar, CEO Amitabh Kant, Additional Secretary Dr Rakesh Sarwal, and World Bank Senior Health Specialist Sheena Chhabra. The report has been developed by NITI Aayog, with technical assistance from the World Bank, and in close consultation with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).

It is pertinent to mention here that, the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir has shown a record improvement in last three years in key Maternal and Child health indicators as per the latest report of National Family Healthy Survey (NFHS-5) conducted by International Institute of Population Sciences, Mumbai.

"If we compare the achievements in key health indicators recorded in National Family Healthy Survey report (NFHS-5) 2019-20 with the NFHS-4 of 2015-16, J&K has recorded 22 points decrease in Neonatal Mortality Rate (NNMR) from 23.1 to 9.8, 16 points decrease in Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) from 32.4 to 16.3 and 19 points decrease in Under Five Mortality Rate (U5MR) from 37.6 to 18.5, which is unprecedented and is the reflection of health status of general population," the release added.

The report also indicated a positive change towards the girl child in Jammu & Kashmir and recorded improvement in Sex Ratio at birth from 923 to 976 females per 1000 males, it said.

J&K govt signs MoU with Apollo Hospitals for multi-specialty hospital in Jammu



Jammu: The Government of Jammu & Kashmir signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Apollo Hospitals for the establishment of a multi-specialty hospital in Jammu, an official press release informed Tuesday.

It said in presence of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the MoU was signed between Ranjan Prakash Thakur, Principal Secretary to J&K Government, Industries & Commerce Department and Dr. Preetha Reddy, Executive Vice-Chairperson, Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd.

Speaking on the occasion, LG Sinha observed the MoU is “another major milestone for J&K”.

“We have embarked on a new journey of development and socio-economic growth, which will take J&K UT to levels never seen before,” the LG said, adding that “with greater industry engagement and greater investment, J&K will grow from strength to strength in the years to come.”

Besides, providing best healthcare facilities, the venture will bring huge direct and indirect employment opportunities for the locals, Sinha said.

The LG said that J&K is the only UT/State in the country with universal health insurance coverage for up to Rs 5 lakh per family. “We are also having an extensive budget for the health sector.”

More healthcare projects and MoUs are in the pipeline to ensure best healthcare within the reach of every citizen of the UT, the LG added.

According to the press release, in the first phase, Apollo Hospitals will set up a 250-bed hospital in the region. Well-known for clinical excellence, Apollo has a robust presence across the healthcare ecosystem, providing high-quality, patient-focused medical care, it said.

Ranjan Prakash Thakur, Principal Secretary to J&K Government, Industries & Commerce Department spoke on the health facilities to be extended to the people of the UT through the MoU.

J&K is the only UT/State in the country with universal health insurance coverage for up to Rs 5 lakh per family. “We are also having an extensive budget for the health sector...”

**LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
MANOJ SINHA**

Dr. Preetha Reddy, Executive Vice-Chairperson, Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Limited shared the vision of the Apollo hospitals to establish state-of-the-art health facilities in the UT.

“We understand that the health sector creates vast job opportunities and this project will also generate more than 1000 direct employment. That is the responsibility which all of us collectively have set forth to discharge. Apart from this, it will also become the training centre not only for doctors, but also for the nurses, paramedics, technicians, and allied healthcare workers,” said Dr. Reddy.

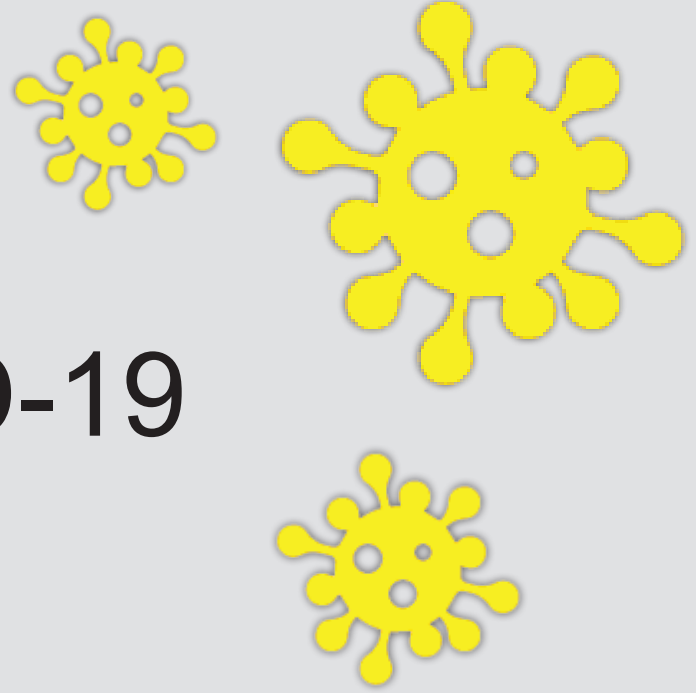
“Tomorrow when J&K would become a hub for healthcare tourism, people from rest of the world can also be treated here. In a way, this project will help us heal the world,” she added.

“We are committed to bring specialists in various healthcare sectors on board. Trained health personnel are required to efficiently look after the people in need of medical attention. We are happy to bring good standard of training, learning and skilling in the health sector to J&K.

“This is a very progressive step. We are thankful to Hon’ble Lt Governor for giving us this opportunity. I believe that it’s a giant leap of faith but it is a project which will put us on the global map,” Dr. Reddy said.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department; Vivek Bhardwaj, Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department; Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary, H&UDD; Anoo Malhotra, Director, I&C, Jammu, besides other senior officers were present during the MoU signing ceremony at Civil Secretariat, the press release said.

MHA issues fresh advisory for COVID-19 management



New Delhi: Amidst initial signs of surge in cases of COVID-19 as well as increased detection of Omicron variant in different parts of the country, the Centre on Monday issued a fresh advisory to all States and UTs to deal with the pandemic situation.

In the advisory, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla said States and Union Territories may consider imposing need-based local curbs and restrictions to control the crowd during the festive season.

Asking States and UTs not to let the guard down, he emphasised that there should be continued focus on the five-fold strategy — Test-Track-Treat-Vaccination and adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour to avoid the possibility of surge in COVID-19 cases, especially keeping in view the new Variant of Concern (VOC).

He asked the States and UTs to refer to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) order issued for ensuring implementation of the measures as conveyed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) on December 21.

“The country has witnessed an overall decline in active cases. However, the new variant, Omicron is reported to be at least three times more transmissible than the Delta VOC, and is posing a new challenge for the Covid containment measures,” the communication said.

In the countries with Omicron-driven surge, the home secretary said, the growth trajectory of cases has been very steep and in our country, 578 Omicron cases have already been reported in 19 States and UTs so far.

He said globally, Omicron cases have already been reported in 116 countries. Further, surge in cases is also being reported across various countries, especially in the US, the UK, Europe (France, Italy, Spain), Russia, South Africa, Vietnam, Australia, etc.

In the MoHFW advisory of December 21, Bhalla said a normative framework has been provided and with distinct presence of the Delta variant and detection of Omicron cases in many States, there is need for greater foresight, data analysis, dynamic decision making, and strict and prompt containment actions at the local and district levels, based on the assessment of the situation.

The home secretary said on December 23, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reviewed the status of COVID-19, Omicron VOC and preparedness of health systems across the country.

After review, the prime minister has directed that everyone should maintain a high level of vigil and alertness.

The State governments should ensure that the health systems in the States are strengthened to meet any challenge posed by the new variant, Bhalla said.

State governments and UT administrations should ensure that oxygen supply equipment are installed and are fully functional and the buffer stock of essential drugs maintained, he said.

The country has witnessed an overall decline in active cases. However, the new variant, Omicron is reported to be at least three times more transmissible than the Delta VOC, and is posing a new challenge for the Covid containment measures,

“I would like to reiterate that all the States and UTs must observe all precautions, and not let the guard down. Local and district administration, based on the normative framework and assessment of the situation, should promptly take appropriate containment measures. States may consider imposing need based, local curbs and restrictions, to control the crowd during the festive season,” he said.

Bhalla said the State enforcement machinery should strictly enforce the norms of Covid-appropriate behaviour.

With a view to discourage any misinformation in respect of the new VOC, which creates anxiety among the public, all States and UTs should proactively and regularly hold media briefings at the highest level to disseminate the right information to them,” he said.

The home secretary said States and UTs should also educate them about various preventive measures undertaken by them and also advise them to strictly follow Covid-appropriate behaviour.

“I would, therefore, urge you to issue necessary directions to the districts and all other local authorities concerned, to take necessary measures for prompt and effective management of COVID-19, strict compliance with various advisories issued by the MoHFW on the new VOC and strict enforcement of Covid-appropriate behaviour,” he said.

OMICRON

CASES REPORTED IN JAMMU

Trace & monitor int'l travelers through Air Suvidha portal: CS asks H&ME

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Wednesday reviewed the public health system preparedness for the new COVID-19 variant Omicron after detection of three cases here, an official spokesman said.

Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta chaired a meeting to review the public health system's preparedness for the new variant, which is reportedly three to four times more infectious than the Delta variant, the spokesman said.

Three cases of Omicron variant were reported in Jammu on Tuesday, all of whom are without any travel history and are now being monitored.

The Chief Secretary directed the district administration to enhance testing and contact-tracing for positive patients and closely trace the infection trajectory to establish micro-containment zones at an early stage, the spokesman said.

Additionally, he said all Deputy Commissioners were directed to ensure strict enforcement of COVID-appropriate behaviour, COVID-19 SOPs and protocols, and micro-containment zones, besides regulating large gatherings.

"Any breach on these accounts will lead to imposition of night curfews and further restrictions," Mehta added.

Moreover, the spokesman said divisional and district administrations were asked to establish buffer zones around the

declared micro-containment zones and monitor the spread of the disease to guide further actions.

"All line departments were directed to appoint one nodal officer for ensuring COVID-appropriate behaviour adherence across all government offices with a special focus on industries and transport," the spokesman said.

The Health department was asked to remain in a state of readiness by gearing up their manpower and machinery and firming up the inventory of oxygen supply and medicines, he said.

The Health and Medical Education department was asked to ensure proper functioning of COVID-related infrastructure, including COVID-19 dedicated hospitals, ventilators, oxygen supported beds and oxygen plants.

The department was also asked to monitor international travellers through the Air Suvidha portal and accordingly make COVID containment arrangements to regulate their testing, quarantine and treatment in respective cases, the spokesman said.

The National Health Mission was also asked to continue with the COVID-dedicated IEC campaign to generate mass awareness on various preventive measures and COVID-appropriate behaviour, besides completing the full vaccination of the remaining eligible population.

OMICRON THREAT

District admins to carry out analysis of Covid trend in their respective districts and identify reasons of surge in cases

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today reviewed the latest Covid-19 situation of the UT while chairing the meetings with Covid Task Force and DCs, SPs.

During the meetings, the Lt Governor observed that due to surge in cases of new variant Omicron worldwide, we need to have tough measures in place to prevent the contagion.

He directed the Civil & Police administrations across the UT to ensure that everyone follows Covid-appropriate behaviour.

The Lt Governor further asked the district administrations to carry out analysis of Covid trend in their respective districts and identify the reasons of surge to deploy effective strategies. He impressed upon the optimal utilization of RTPCR tests and accelerated vaccination drive as top priority.

The Lt Governor said that Health department will ensure that every patient gets the benefit of Sehat

Golden Card. "J&K administration's aim is to provide the best medical care to everyone without any strain on their finances," he maintained.

He issued instruction to the Deputy Commissioners of the districts with low number of Sehat Golden cards to ensure its saturation.

The Lt Governor asked the Divisional commissioners to keep a close vigil and continuously monitor the emerging situation.

Vivek Bhardwaj, Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department gave a detailed briefing on the analysis of Covid-19 situation, District-wise threat level, testing, contact tracing and vaccination across the UT, besides vaccine stock, weekly RTPCR testing, Covid Appropriate Behavior enforcements, report of Survey (Har Ghar Dastak) of TB Symptoms, and work done in BIS under AB PM-JAY & AB PM-JAY SEHAT.

JK ranks second in country for NCD screening



New Delhi: Jammu & Kashmir was adjudged as second best in terms of screening of Non Communicable Diseases in the country, an official press release informed.

It said, for this feat, an award was presented by Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar, Union Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare, to Mission Director, NHM, J&K, Yasin M. Choudhary and his team at a national-level event held to celebrate Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Day at New Delhi with a call for strong, equitable health systems that leave no one behind.

On the occasion Sub Centre-Health and Wellness Centre Sheikhpora, Block Shangus, Anantnag was also ranked the best Health & Wellness Centre, and awarded, the press release informed.

Mission Director, NHM, J&K, Yasin M Choudhary while giving details regarding the development, said that under Comprehensive Primary Health Care, the main focus is on universalization of health-care services by providing affordable, acceptable and quality services at doorstep of every citizen.

Non Communicable Diseases being the common cause of death among 30-years-plus population, its early detection and timely treatment is the major focus under Ayushman Bharat- Comprehensive Primary Health Care.

In this regard a special drive was launched for NCD Screening and Wellness activities under 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahatsov' from 16th November to 11th December, 2021, where all the Ayushman Bharat Health & Wellness Centres actively screened 30-plus population for hypertension, diabetes, and three leading cancers (oral, breast & cervical), he added.

A total of 3,09,541 persons were screened for hypertension 2,94,592 for diabetes, 2,51,758 for oral cancer, 1,26,564 for breast cancer and 42,866 for cervical cancer during the campaign, her informed.

The theme for UHC day this year is "Leave No One's Health Behind: Invest in Health Systems For All". The theme resonates with resolve to ensure that everyone in the country should have access to quality and affordable healthcare, closer to their homes. The event was organised by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in partnership with USAID-NISHTHA/Jhpiego.

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MISSION DIRECTOR, NHM, J&K, YASIN M. CHOUDHARY





CS stresses training modules for medical, paramedical staff to manage pediatric wards, ICUs

Jammu: The Chief Secretary Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta today chaired a meeting to review the public health response to COVID-19 and took stock of arrangements being made under the Emergency COVID Response and Health Response Plan (ECRP), Package II in Jammu and Kashmir to tackle any eventuality especially on account of the new Omicron variant.

Administrative Secretaries of the departments of Finance, Health & Medical Education, Home, Public Works (R&B), Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, besides Divisional Commissioners Kashmir/Jammu, Inspectors General of Police Kashmir/Jammu, all Deputy Commissioners and District SPs, MD National Health Mission and concerned HoDs participated in the meeting.

It was informed that the reported cases of COVID in Jammu and Kashmir are showing an uneven trend which is a cause of concern and is primarily being caused because of breach of COVID protocols.

According to an official press release, expressing concern over the recent developments, the Chief Secretary directed the district administrations to ensure COVID-appropriate behaviour, improve the rate of testing as per respective target, adherence to COVID SOPs, and ensure fool-proof containment measures in micro-containment zones.

The enforcement agencies were asked to strictly implement the COVID protocols and levy fines on habitual defaulters.

Additionally, the National Health Mission was asked to continue with the COVID-dedicated IEC campaign to generate mass awareness on various preventive measures and COVID-appropriate behaviour.

The Chief Secretary maintained that existing strategies must be recalibrated towards ensuring low rates of infection in districts, and case trajectory be closely monitored to keep the daily reported cases below 50.

The Health and Medical Education department was asked to conduct an equipment audit and regularly check the functionality of COVID-related infrastructure including COVID dedicated hospitals, ventilators, oxygen supported beds and oxygen plants. The department was directed to ensure the readiness of manpower and machinery and firm up the inventory of oxygen supply and medicines. It was asked to furnish weekly reports on all these parameters.

Under the ECRP II, the department was asked to augment the ICU-beds and related facilities to approximately 300 in each division including the DRDO ICUs with a special focus on the pediatric ICU beds.

The Chief Secretary mentioned the vulnerability of children to



COVID infection and urged the department to roll out suitable training modules for medical and paramedical staff to optimally manage pediatric wards and ICUs.

Dr. Mehta emphasized that to contain the COVID spread and mitigate the disease, the Health department must adopt a robust mechanism for proper training of medical teams on core principles of infection prevention and treatment; preparing the medical infrastructure and ensuring safe bio-medical waste management.

Further, the Health department was also asked to organize training on oxygen consumption and management for ICU staff and training to suitably operate various oxygen generation plants and related equipment.

Besides, the Deputy Commissioners were asked to monitor progress in enrolment of people under Ayushman Bharat- Sehat, distribution of golden health cards, expeditious coverage under 'Har Ghar Dastak', and various other priorities of different departments.



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प्रधानमंत्री आयुष्मान भारत योजना



12 new pvt hospitals empanelled under AM-PMJAY SEHAT in last 3 months

Srinagar: The State Health Agency (SHA) has empanelled 12 new private hospitals AM-PMJAY SEHAT in Jammu and Kashmir in the last three months, an official handout informed Thursday.

This addition of healthcare institutes in J&K is a step forward towards further expanding and building a strong network of hospitals and service capabilities in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the handout said.

It said the SHA is working hard towards streamlining medicare in the UT to ensure cashless service delivery to the beneficiaries under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana- SEHAT. The scheme provides health insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh per family per year to all the residents of the UT including serving and retired employees.

The new empanelled private hospitals included Khanams

Hospital Srinagar, Kashmir Athrout Srinagar, Safa Marwa Medical Centre Srinagar, Tehqeeq Diagnostic and Dialysis Centre Srinagar, My Healthcare Anantnag, Hakeem Sonallah Hospital Sopore Baramulla, Guru Hospital Sopore, Raksha Kidney Centre Jammu, Yudvir Nursing Home Jammu, Ankur Maitrika Jammu, Baba Nanak Medicity Jammu and New Life Hospital Samba.

Chief Executive Officer, AB-PMJAY, Yasin M Choudhary, while giving details in this regard said that Governing Council of SHA J&K recently approved the migration on Health Benefit Package (HBP 2.2) issued by National Health Authority wherein rates of various packages have been enhanced.

This will suffice the long-pending demand of private hospitals for enhancing the package rates and will boost the sustainability of private sector, he said.





Threat of pandemic not over yet; everyone must follow Covid protocols to prevent third wave: LG

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha Sunday said that Jammu and Kashmir has the highest budget allocation for health sector across the country.

Addressed the 39th Annual Day celebrations of Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Science (SKIMS), the LG said that SKIMS has played an indispensable role in the healthcare system of UT.

He also e-inaugurated and laid e-foundation stones of several projects on the occasion, an official press release informed.

While addressing the gathering through virtual mode, the LG also congratulated the administration, faculty, and students of SKIMS, and all those who were awarded for their exemplary work in the challenging times of COVID.

“I express gratitude to all the doctors, nurses, ward boys, ambulance drivers, and all other support staff who have worked selflessly during the two waves of COVID,” the LG said while lauding the invaluable contribution of countless health workers in the fight against the pandemic.

He said that “due to the collective efforts of everyone and the hard work of medical personnel, Jammu and Kashmir has emerged as a role model in the entire country in COVID management and vaccination”.

Underscoring the commitment of UT government to continuously strengthen the health system and to make healthcare more affordable and accessible to all, especially in rural areas, the LG observed that J&K has the highest share of 5 percent budget allocation in the health sector across the country.

“We are spending Rs 7,177 crore to strengthen the infrastructure of the health sector. In the last one year, 94 health projects have been completed by spending Rs 881 crore, substantially augmenting resources for citizens,” he added.

The LG also recalled the efforts of COVID warriors and the steps taken by the UT administration to ramp up the capacities of health infrastructure during the two waves of COVID.

“Our oxygen generation capacity has increased manifold to 1 lakh LPM from just 14,000 LPM last year, and to deal with any emergency, Covid Care Centers have also been kept functional in 4290 Panchayats, he added.

The efforts of the U T

government to augment the necessary arrangements and to make the facilities accessible to the patients and the common people, down to the level of Panchayats have been acknowledged in the report of NITI Aayog, observed the LG.

He expressed gratitude towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi “who has transformed the health sector of Jammu and Kashmir”.

Sinha observed that J&K used to have only three medical colleges but now there are seven new medical colleges, almost doubling the 600 MBBS seats to 1100 seats. In addition to it, J&K is the first in the country to have two AIIMS, two Cancer institutes, besides the number of health and wellness centres have increased to 1275 after the year 2019, from just 129, and 10 new nursing colleges for the UT have been given by the Prime Minister.

J&K has a unique health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat-SEHAT, under which every family is covered for Rs five lakh medical insurance, but before 2019 there was no government health insurance scheme in J&K, he added.

The LG concluded his address observing that the threat of corona pandemic is not over yet. “A new variant of COVID ‘Omicron’ has emerged and I urge everyone to follow laid down protocols to prevent the third wave,” he said.

Earlier, the LG dedicated to the patients the new Neuro Sciences ICU, Pulmonary ICU at Infectious Diseases Block, Obstetrics and Gynecology ICU, Geriatric Medicine Ward, State Cancer Institute OPD Complex, Waiting Hall Emergency Medicine, and Extension of Staff Canteen, New CSSD, besides laying e-foundation stones of new College of Paramedical Sciences, Advanced Pediatrics Centre, 1000 seated Auditorium, Construction of Library Block and Separate OPD Block, the press release informed.

Various HoDs and doctors were also felicitated on the occasion for their exemplary services.

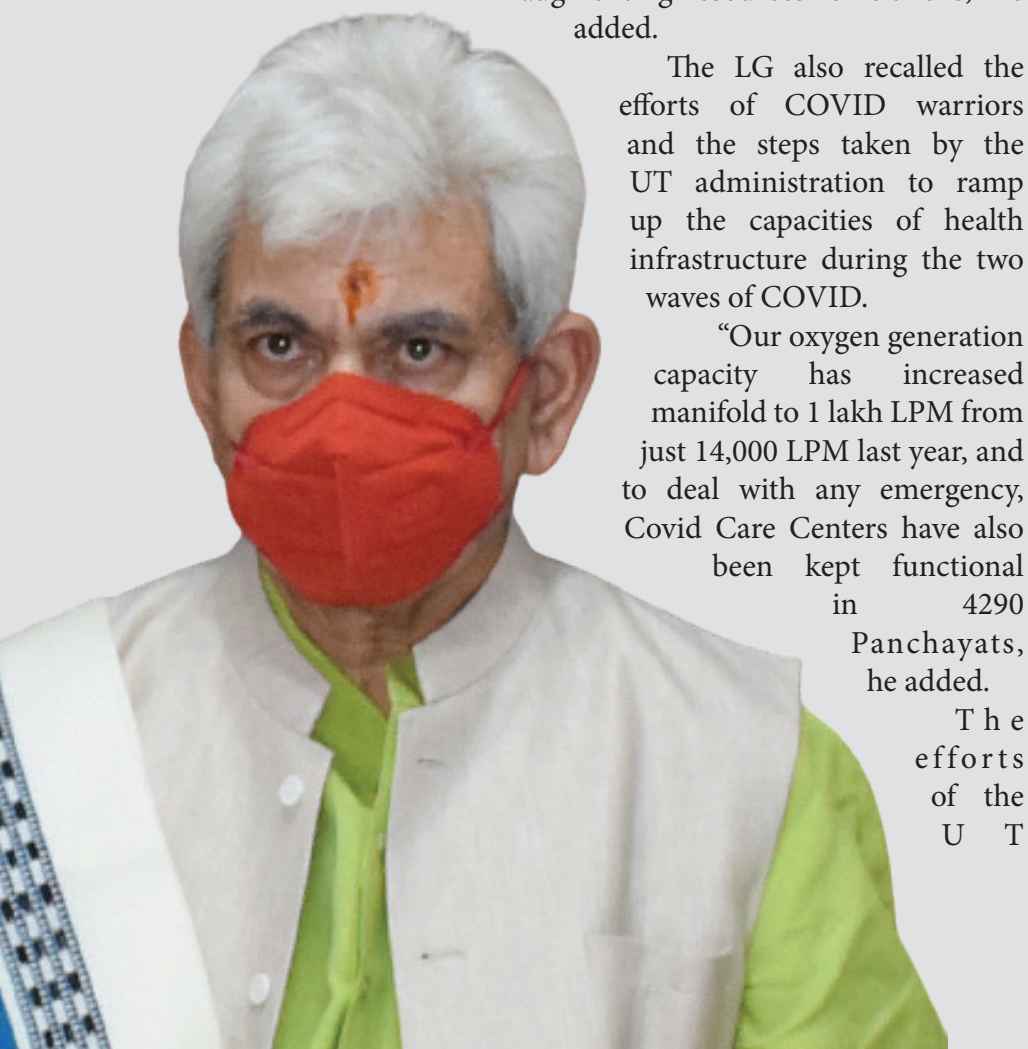
Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the LG said that the SKIMS is providing invaluable services to the citizens of UT and has always stood at front in case of any exigency. He added that the institute provides technologically sound and evidence-based health care services to the general public.

Dr. Randeep Guleria, Director AIIMS, New Delhi, in his speech highlighted the importance of the institute and said that in coming years it will be an institute of national repute.

Dr. Guleria while delivering a presentation on ‘Lessons learnt from COVID-19’ said that the pandemic has impacted every sector of society and it will stay and, therefore, we need to invest more in public health services and pandemic preparedness. He added that social-distancing and masks are still the best measures to contain spread of pandemic.

Director SKIMS, Dr. A.G Ahangar in his speech gave a detailed overview of the various health services provided by the institute to the general public.

Former Director SKIMS and Chairman Apex Advisory Committee COVID-19, Dr. M.S Khuroo, Deans, Faculty Members, Senior Doctors, Covid Warriors, Nursing Staff, Members of Support Staff of SKIMS were present on the occasion.



J&K to become country's fastest-growing region: LG



Kolkata: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, today held interactions with the Industry leaders at Kolkata and invited them to invest in the Union Territory of Jammu Kashmir.

The event organized by Jammu & Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO), Department of Industries and Commerce, J&K in association with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) included Industrialist/ Investors from Eastern India.

While discussing about the host of interventions made by the UT Government for creating a sustainable, balanced, progressive and competitive industrial ecosystem in the region, the Lt Governor made several important announcements on the occasion including the enhancement of the Industrial Development scheme outlay to meet the exceeded expectation of Investments in Jammu Kashmir.

“The proposed investment has already reached Rs. 31,000 Cr and is expected to cross Rs.51,000 Cr by the end of the financial year. Given the response received, the government is enhancing the scheme outlay to meet the demand,” he observed.

He further said that with the quantum jump witnessed in the proposals received for setting up business enterprises, the demand for land has correspondingly increased, and to meet the growing demand, Land Bank was being developed across the UT. He also announced that the UT government was coming up with the rules governing change of land use shortly to facilitate the setting up of business enterprises on private land.

“This will ensure the seamless establishment of business enterprises on private lands. Business enterprises coming up on private land shall be entitled to all the incentives as per extant policy and procedure,” the Lt Governor added.

Stating that due to the second wave of Covid and subsequent lockdown, several new industrial units have not been able to come into production within the specified timelines, Lt Governor said to redress the issue, the Government was mulling to give a one-time extension to such units, upto March 31, 2022 for coming into production.

The Lt Governor further said that J&K UT was on a mission to renovate, reinvent, and ready to take a quantum leap to become the fastest-growing region in the country, pushing the targets for economic growth and employment.

He further said that the aim of the government was to deepen the trust with the business conglomerate, build the industrial base and strengthen the socio-economic stability in JK.

“Under the guidance of Hon’ble Prime Minister and Hon’ble Home Minister, we worked out a blueprint to unlock investment flows and are in the process of developing a business culture, an industrial ecosystem in J&K that has been missing since Independence,” the Lt Governor noted.

Elaborating on the efforts being made by the UT Government to encourage new investment, and to nurture the existing industries, the Lt Governor said that J&K was one of the best destinations in the country for setting up new businesses as of now with the best incentives and improving infrastructure facilities.

“We are fulfilling all the crucial requirements of the industries including transparent policy of land allotment, private industrial estate development, ensuring ease of doing business, besides the administration has actively worked with solutions approach and

introduced around 160 new initiatives and reforms in a short period of time,” the Lt Governor observed.

He further said that promotion of industrial units, providing capital Incentive, a liberal capital Interest subvention, GST Linked Incentive, Ease of Doing Business, development of sector-specific Industrial Estates and Parks, Single Window system, are some of the reforms brought in by the government to unleash the potential of the industrial sector, the Lt Governor added.

The Single Window Portal is being made live with 120 online services. For keeping in sync, the J&K Single Window Portal is being integrated with National Single Window System shortly. Further, J&K shall be the first UT to implement all the 301 business reform action points under Ease of Doing Business initiative of DPIIT by 31st December, 2021, informed the Lt Governor.

Highlighting the immense possibilities presented by Jammu & Kashmir, the Lt Governor observed that the region offers abundant raw material for Agro & Food processing, manufacturing, land, labour, quick and competitive means of transportation. Besides, there is an ‘amazingly easy interface with the government’ through responsive governance & minimum government, in addition to being logistically the most attractive region with industrial land bank, sector-specific policy and international air cargo facility.

In addition, by December, 2022, the train will also reach Kashmir giving alternate all-weather connectivity to the valley, he added.

The Lt Governor further announced that the UT administration has a detailed “What you need” plan ready because we know that everybody wants a return on their investment sooner than later.

“This is the dawn of a new era for the growth, development, and overall well-being of the people of J&K. Barriers to trade and commerce have been removed. The people of J&K can now fully enjoy the rights and benefits enjoyed by all other citizens of India,” the Lt Governor observed.

Ranjan Prakash Thakur, Principal Secretary to J&K Government, Industries & Commerce Department and Ankita Kar, Managing Director, JKTPO elaborated on investment opportunities that J&K is offering to the Industries.

The Principal Secretary Industries invited industry members to visit J&K and witness the changes on the ground themselves and take benefit of the best industrial policy in the country.

“We are confident that such steps coupled with the Central Government’s and UT Administration’s efforts in J&K will soon create an environment for attracting industry to the UT,” said Subhasendu Chatterjee, Vice Chairman CII West Bengal State Council and Wholtime Director of Haldia Petrochemicals.

The interactive session facilitated prospective investors to have a dialogue on the immense investment opportunities presented by the verdant region.

A video of J&K encapsulating different developments in the UT in the last two years was also showcased on the occasion.

The event was attended by over 40 delegates and some prominent industry groups included Tata Steels, Haldia Petrochemicals, Anmol Feeds, Eveready Industries, KCT Industries, Herbalife Industries, Green Ply Industries, Titagarh Wagons, Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Limited.

J&K govt inks 39 MoUs of nearly Rs 19,000 cr with real estate investors

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Monday opened the union territory to the country's real estate investors by signing 39 MoUs worth nearly Rs 19,000 crore for the development of housing, hotel and commercial projects.

In presence of Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Housing & Urban Affairs Minister; Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor and Union MoS Dr. Jitendra Singh, 39 MoUs worth Rs 18,300 crore were signed today to foster growth and development in Jammu and Kashmir. It includes investments in the residential, commercial, infrastructure, and film sectors, an official press release informed.

During his address, the Union Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri said that Real Estate, being the second largest employer in the country will create innumerable opportunities for economic growth in J&K.

"The natural endowments in the UT of J&K and resilience of its people are second to none in the world which now need to be translated into economic development, prosperity and ease of living," said the Union Minister.

Terming the signing of the MoUs at J&K's first Real Estate Summit here as "historic", Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said it is a major step towards transformation of the UT.

"Last few years have seen tremendous change in terms of good governance, delivering development & transforming the infrastructure of the UT. Barriers to businesses in J&K have been removed. The UT of Jammu & Kashmir is now an attractive place to do business and invest," said the LG, while announcing that the next 'Real Estate Summit' will be organized in Srinagar on 21st and 22nd May, 2022.

"Development of local businesses is imperative in scripting the growth story of J&K. Besides national players in real estate, local developers of J&K will also be at the focus of this new dawn of development of real estate sector in the UT," he added.

The LG expressed his gratitude to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Union Minister for Housing & Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri for "revolutionizing the real estate sector in J&K".

"The multiplier effect of the first-ever Real Estate Summit in J&K will be felt across the entire UT in coming years," added the LG.

Highlighting the key features of the Model Tenancy Act which was adopted today by the government, the LG said that the Act has been prepared with the objective of balancing the interests and rights of both, the landlord and tenant, and to create an accountable and transparent ecosystem for renting the premises in an efficient manner.

"Owning a house is the dream for everyone and we are making a committed effort to bring it into reality. The launch of many portals including RERA portal, Housing Portal, integrated auction portal will facilitate a transparent and accountable framework in Real Estate Sector. Such initiatives will help both Developers and Homebuyers as one-stop portal for all their needs," said the LG.

"We have also launched three housing schemes today under which about 1000 EWS apartments (under PMAY) and another 150 MIG and HIG apartments are being launched. Many more would be launched in the coming months," he added.

The LG also said that the regressive land laws were amended providing relief to many sectors from farming to industries, education, real estate, hospitals and IT. "Several progressive policies and procedural reforms have been implemented on the ground. The best single-window clearance system and every possible support of the government will be ensured to facilitate the investors," he added.

"Recently, we have made changes in the Land Use Policy so that the companies eager to set up industries do not face the problem of land," said the LG.

"Despite being endowed with immense natural wealth, business opportunities and excellent human capital, the progress of the industries in J&K were stalled. Since, 5th August 2019, J&K is undergoing a massive transformation, and Industries from all over the country are seeing Jammu and Kashmir as their preferred destination for investments and business ventures," Sinha observed.

"Efforts of Hon'ble Prime Minister and Hon'ble Home Minister are yielding favorable results with the new Industrial Development Scheme attracting huge investments in J&K. Within a year, we have received the proposals for investment worth Rs 44,000 crore. By



March 2022, we will be able to bring an investment of Rs 60,000 crore to Jammu and Kashmir," said the LG.

In Jammu and Kashmir alone, Rs 1 lakh crore is being spent on highways, tunnels, and related infrastructure, due to which the nature of urban infrastructure will be completely transformed within two-three years, he added.

Union MoS (I/c), Ministry of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Atomic Energy & Space, Dr Jitendra Singh, in his address, said that J&K is now entering the mainstream journey of PM Modi's New India & the first-ever 'Real Estate Summit' today is one of the important links to connect it to mainstream India.

Speaking on the occasion, Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA), said that a "paradigm shift in terms of development has been witnessed in every sector in J&K. The real estate sector will create a plethora of opportunities for the people of the UT in terms of employment, investment etc."

Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K, during his address, said "Good connectivity, clean air, robust infrastructure, and lowest crime rate makes J&K an ideal investment destination".

Niranjan Hiranandani, Vice Chairman NAREDCO India noted that – Incentivization by the Central and the UT government will go a long way in accelerating the real estate growth in Jammu & Kashmir.

Signing of MoUs will help in exploring new opportunities in untapped locations which hold huge potential for future real estate development in the UT, said Rajan Bandelkar, President, NAREDCO.

In his welcome address, Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary, HUDD, J&K highlighted the growth potential of real estate in J&K.

On the occasion, the Government of J&K signed an MoU on skilling with the National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) under which NAREDCO will 10,000 thousand workers in various skills of the construction industry—electrical, plumbing, masonry, carpentry, and the likes.

A coffee table book capturing the true essence of the new J&K was also released.

The Real Estate Summit- 2021 is organized by the Department of Housing & Urban Development Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India.

The real estate companies that signed MoUs include Signature Global, Samyak Group, Raunak Group, Hiranandani Constructions and NBCC for housing projects. Chalet Hotels signed MoU for hospitality.

Raheja Developers, Goel Ganga, GHP Group and Shree Naman Group signed initial pacts for housing projects.

Chander Mohan Gupta, Mayor JMC; Junaid Azim Mattu, Mayor SMC; Surendra Kumar Bagde, Additional Secretary, MoHUA, Advisors to LG, Administrative Secretaries, Divisional Commissioners, senior officers, investors and real estate developers from across the country attended the summit at Convention Centre, the press release said.

KVIB generated 90,000 jobs across J&K in FY 2021-22: LG



Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today chaired a meeting to review the performance achieved under various schemes being implemented by the J&K Khadi and Village Industries Board, at the Civil Secretariat.

During the meeting, the LG also discussed the future course of action of KVIB and the Industries department to exploit the full potential of the micro industries sector, besides creating a host of employment opportunities for youths in rural areas, an official press release informed.

It said the LG called upon the functionaries of the Board to enhance the impact of demand-driven programmes for maximum benefits to the citizens, besides revising targets under different schemes as per the response received from public.

“It is our responsibility to make the Board a valuable contributor to the overall progress of the J&K UT,” he added.

It was informed that KVIB has recorded its highest-ever performance in job-creation under the Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP).

“In FY 2021-22, till 25th December, KVIB against the target of 26,000 jobs generated 90,000 jobs across J&K, providing impetus to Aatma-Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan & Vocal for Local,” the LG remarked.

He also noted that the UT administration is taking steps for the upgradation of products manufactured by KVIB Units.

“Our thrust is to support Cottage and Village industry, strengthening traditional art and creating sustainable employment for artisans,” he added.

The LG called for further strengthening the efforts to improve entrepreneurial ecosystem among women, weaker and marginalized section. He issued instructions for onboarding maximum nationalized banks for extending benefits under J&K Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP).

Explicit directions were also passed to ensure Aadhaar seeding of the beneficiaries, issuance of Artisan Credit Card to eligible beneficiaries, besides taking regular feedback from the beneficiaries of various schemes, the press release said.

The LG also instructed the officials for conducting an Information, Education & Communication campaign to reach out to the maximum population with the working of Khadi & Village Industries Board and the Industries department to showcase how the initiatives and schemes are transforming the lives of ordinary citizens.

Earlier, Dr Hina Shafi Bhat, VC, J&K Khadi & Village Industries Board, gave a detailed presentation on the programmes/schemes being implemented by the Board to provide continuous and sustainable employment to a large segment of traditional and prospective artisans, rural and urban unemployed youth for their

better livelihood, besides the future activities of J&K KVIB.

The meeting was also briefed about the efforts made by the KVIB for facilitating ex-Servicemen and ‘Veer Naris’.

Discussion was also held on establishment of Scheme of Funds for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI) Clusters; Khadi Plaza; besides implementation of J&K Urban Employment Generation Programme, and other important issues.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the LG; RK Chhibber, Chairman J&K Bank; Ranjan Prakash Thakur, Principal Secretary; Anoo Malhotra, Director Industries & Commerce Jammu, besides other concerned officers were present during the meeting.

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JKI to focus on export market: CS



New Delhi: In a major boost towards increasing JKI sales especially exports, Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, along with Principal Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Ranjan Prakash Thakur, today inaugurated Export Centre cum Liaison Office of JKI located at State Emporia Building, Baba Kharak Singh, New Delhi.

The facility, having a total floor area of 2700 square feet spread over two floors, will facilitate display cum sale of silk and wool products being manufactured by JKI besides would also be used for institutional sales and as a liaison office for exports, an official press release informed.

It said the Principal Secretary informed that

modernization of government Woollen Mills Bemina is under progress and expected to be completed by the end of January 2022 which besides helping in generation of revenue for JKI would also provide a market to the sheep-rearers of the UT.

Chief Secretary appreciated the efforts of management of JKI for becoming an economically viable entity and also for providing much needed market to the cocoon and sheep-rearers of J&K.

He directed the officers of JKI to undertake the branding of its Kashmir silk and wool products besides design support so that the products manufactured are according to market fashion and trends for optimum sale and export as well.

J&K received investment proposals worth Rs 31,000 crore: Govt to Rajya Sabha

New Delhi: Jammu and Kashmir has received investment proposals worth Rs 31,000 crore and has notified a new central sector scheme worth Rs 28,400 crore which is likely to provide employment to over 4.5 lakh people, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Wednesday.

MoS Home Nityanand Rai said Union Home Minister Amit Shah met several delegations, families of martyrs, members of civil society and Panchayati Raj institutions, the public in general besides interacting with about 50,000 members of 4,500 youth clubs during his visit to Jammu and Kashmir in October.

“The government has notified the new central sector scheme for industrial development of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, with an outlay of Rs 28,400 crore. This is likely to provide employment to over 4.5 lakh people while boosting the industrial development of Jammu and Kashmir,” he said in a written reply.

The government has received investment proposals

worth approximately Rs 31,000 crore, Rai said.

He said the Jammu and Kashmir government has approved a business revival package of Rs 1,352.99 crore on September 25, 2020.

Under the languishing project programme, 1,192 projects worth Rs 1,983.77 crore were completed, including five projects which were incomplete for more than 20 years, 15 projects for more than 15 years and 165 projects for more than 10 years.

The minister said the progress of projects being implemented in Jammu and Kashmir under the Prime Minister’s Development Package-2015 has been accelerated.

A total of 53 projects pertaining to 15 ministries are being implemented at a cost of Rs 58,477 crore in various sectors such as roads, power, health, education, tourism, agriculture, skill development, etc. out of which 21 projects have been completed or substantially completed and the remaining 32 projects are at an advanced stage of progress.



NITI Aayog to facilitate resolution of J&K Govt's issues pending with GoI

JAMMU: Terming the performance of J&K on all developmental indicators over the last two years as significant, Dr. V.K Saraswat, Member, NITI Aayog today urged the government functionaries to keep up the good work for further improving the lives of the people of J&K.

He made these remarks while reviewing the progress made by UT of J&K on various growth/development indicators over the last two years in a meeting with the Chief Secretary and the Administrative Secretaries of the J&K Government as well as the senior officers of the central ministries and NITI Aayog, an official spokesman said in a statement issued this evening.

He said that addressing the meeting, Dr. Saraswat stated that cooperative federalism is the bedrock of the fiscal federalism and NITI Aayog is committed to working with states and central ministries to enhance and equalise growth and development in the country.

“Strong districts and blocks will strengthen the States, which in turn will support the nation to grow strong and prosperous. The focus of the developmental initiatives, therefore, has to be on the districts and blocks,” he quoted Saraswat as saying.

Dr. Saraswat stated that NITI Aayog's developmental policy push is in line with 'Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas' mantra of the Prime Minister to remove developmental deficits and income inequalities across all the States and UTs in the country, said the spokesman.

The NITI Aayog member, as per the spokesman, said that the Prime Minister has identified agriculture and industry sectors as two important drivers of pushing GDP growth in the country and, therefore, focussed attention has to be trained on these sectors for improving productivity, wages, prospects and income in these sectors.

Dr. Saraswat announced that it's only when states grow their GSDPs that national GDP will grow, leading to more and more wealth creation, which will then be available for re-distribution amongst all the sections of the society, said the spokesman.

The spokesman said that the Chief Secretary, Dr Mehta in his speech stated that J&K today is not only one of the most transparent, but also one of the best governed UTs amongst all States/UTs in the country, adding, transparency and good governance, which has come about in the last two years, has provided the long deprived people of the UT the right to define their destiny, including efforts to fight corruption.

Dr. Mehta gave details of the recent reforms like BEAMS, PAYSYS, full verification of works, road connectivity in all villages, availability of 128 public services online, saturation of all individual beneficiary oriented schemes etc. and stated that these land mark steps will both facilitate ease of living and ease of doing business in J&K, said the spokesman.

He asked NITI Aayog to share the updated ranking on all developmental/ growth indicators, while further observing that the present rankings, which are dated by 2-3 years do not reflect the transformation J&K has undergone in the last two years and rather tend to paint a wrong picture, the spokesman further said. He said that while reviewing the issues of various departments of the J&K Government pending with the Central Ministries Dr. Saraswat asked the officials of the UT Government and Education Ministry to hold a meeting to resolve the issues relating to setting up of Kendriya Vidyalayas/Regional Institute of Education.

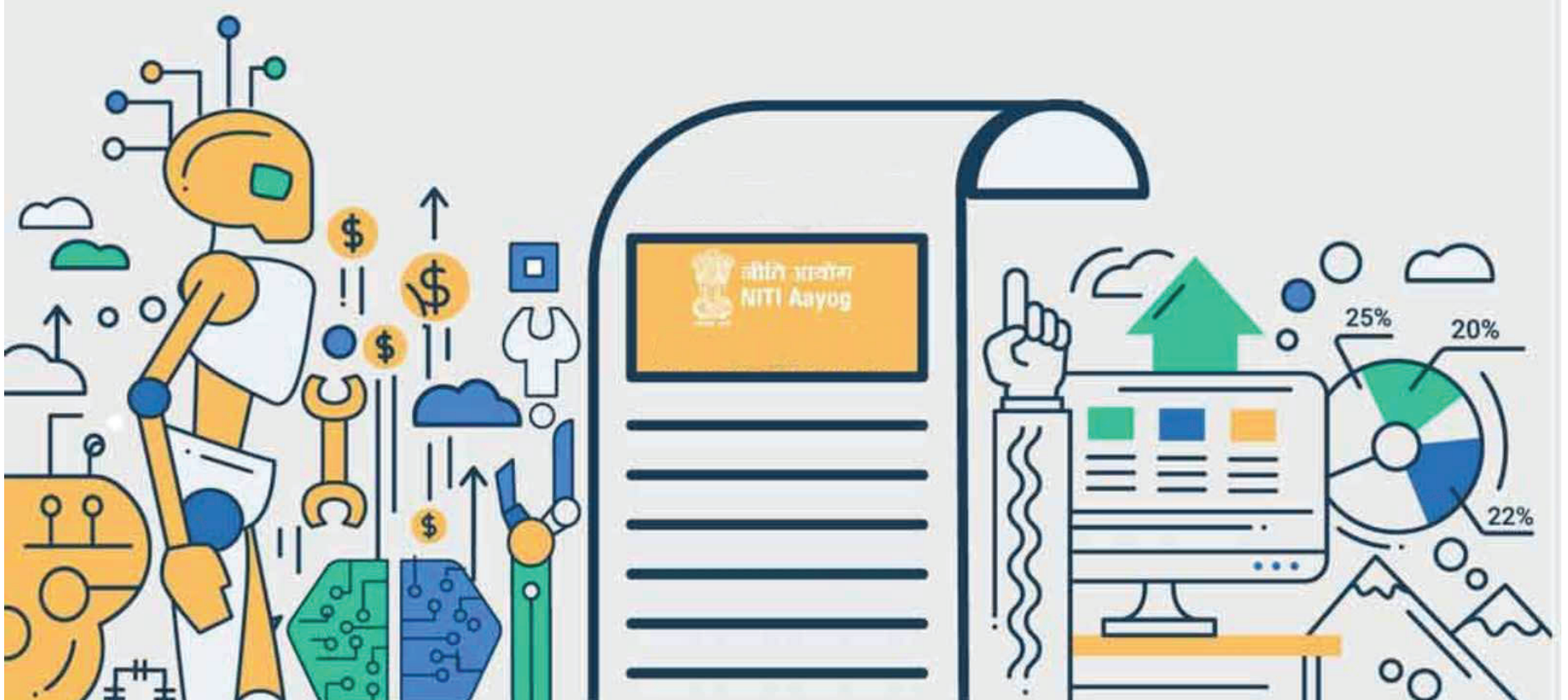
He advised Education Ministry to devise a framework of measuring learning outcomes in schools in J&K to help the government make the required reforms in the education sector.

The spokesman said that while terming Jammu-Poonch National Highway as an important arterial extension, Dr. Saraswat asked the officials of Ministry of Defence and PWD of the UT Government to hold consultations to promptly address all issues, including the issue relating to the transfer of army land located in the alignment of Jammu – Akhnoor section of the highway.

Member, NITI Aayog asked the Tourism Ministry to seriously consider sanction of 4 youth hostels in J&K, besides a winter sports university in the valley, as sports is an important activity in J&K, he said, adding, highlighting the financing issues under Swadesh Darshan scheme, Dr Mehta asked the officials of the Tourism Ministry to fund the tourism projects approved under PMDP from other schemes of the ministry.

Dr. Mehta said that J&K government is willing to invest in the construction of an airport in Kishtwar district, if the airlines evince interest in using the airport, thereby, making the investment a viable proposition.

While stating that there is a significant tribal population in J&K, Dr. Saraswat said that NITI Aayog will request the concerned Ministry to find a way to fund the various tribal projects in J&K, as funding under Finance Commissions now not available to UT, added the spokesman.





JKI to focus on export market: CS

Member NITI Aayog calls on Lt Governor

Jammu: Member NITI Aayog, Dr. V K Saraswat today called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and discussed various development related issues of J&K, here at Raj Bhavan.

An official communiqué said that Dr. Saraswat apprised the Lt Governor regarding setting up of Atal Tinkering Laboratories in the schools, capacity building of the officers for outcome monitoring, providing of transaction Advisors to Tourism and other departments for resolving pending issues of the UT with various Central Ministries.

He also apprised the Lt Governor about his meetings with the Chief Secretary and Administrative Secretaries of the various departments of the UT Administration where several schemes being run under the aegis of Central Ministries were discussed, said the communiqué.

The communiqué further said that the NITI Aayog member appreciated the efforts of the UT Administration regarding Education Quality Index and improvement of Health Index. He also apprised the Lt Governor that UT of J&K is the best performing in terms of own tax revenue generation under GSDP.

The Lt Governor expressed his gratitude towards NITI Aayog



headed by the Honorable Prime Minister, for giving dedicated focus on the holistic development of the UT of J&K. He also assured all possible help from UT administration in implementing the vision of NITI Aayog on the ground, said the communiqué.

AC approves establishment of Medi-cities in Pampore, Jammu

Gives nod to develop state-of-the-art medical facilities in J&K; approves up-gradation of Indira Gandhi Government Dental College, Jammu; clears decks for introduction of PG courses

Jammu: The Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, approved the proposal of Industries and Commerce Department to establish two medi-cities, one each at Sempora, Pampore and Miransahib, Jammu, an official press release informed Thursday.

Farooq Khan and Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisors to the LG, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the LG attended the meeting.

The decision aims at strengthening the health services in the Union territory and support recovery and disaster resilience in calamity prone areas by increasing government's capacity to promptly respond to emergency situations, the press release said.

It said the Medicity in Kashmir division will be established on an area of Sempora, Pampore in Pulwama district. The centrality of the place will act as a focal point for whole population of the Valley for specialized health services.

Similarly, Medicity in Jammu division will be established at Miransahib, Jammu. The land is ideally located close to the main city and can cater to the medical service requirements of the entire division,

the press release said.

Pertinently, setting up of new medical and higher education institutions in private sector is a part of the new Industrial Policy. The identified will be allotted transparently as per the J&K Industrial Land Allotment Policy, the press release said.

The AC also accorded the administrative approval to the construction of additional block of Indira Gandhi Government Dental College, Jammu at an estimated cost of Rs. 44.46 crore, an official press release said Thursday.

The construction of the new block will cater to the increased patient load by creating infrastructure for several clinical departments including hospital administration, emergency section, operation theatre, wards, prosthodontics & dental material department, pedodontics department, oral pathology, dental histology department, and community dentistry department, the press release said.

It said the enhanced infrastructure will also remove the deficiency pointed out by the team of Dental Council of India (DCI) during their visit to college in terms of in-sufficient building infrastructure for starting of PG Courses in the next session.

The decision is aimed at providing quality dental services to the public and introducing post graduate courses in dental care. It will also support the up-gradation of vital dental care services on modern grounds, the press release said.



Govt allows change of land use from agri to non-agri purposes

Jammu: In a significant decision, the Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha approved the regulations framed by the Board of Revenue for conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes, an official press release informed Thursday.

It said these regulations were necessitated after the legislative changes in the land revenue act post-reorganization of the erstwhile state.

Farooq Khan and Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisors to the LG, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the LG attended the meeting.

These regulations have been issued to regulate the uncontrolled conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes on the one hand and keeping the developmental aspirations of the UT and the people on the other hand, the press release said.

It said under the new regulations, the District Collector has been empowered to grant permission to the change in land use from agricultural to non-agricultural purposes in accordance with the procedure as to be notified by the Board of Revenue. The permission is to be granted within 30 days of filing of the application with a provision of deemed approval if no decisions are taken, the press release said.

The powers have been delegated to the District Collector to grant permission for land up to 12 ½ standard acres against a fee of 5 percent of the market value of the land notified under the Stamps Act.

The regulations empower the applicant to commence the non agriculture use on the permitted land within one year from the date of the order issued by the District Collector in this behalf. However, the land can be diverted and used only for the purpose specified in the permission.

Moreover, the regulations provide exemption from seeking the permission in cases of conversion for construction of residential house or farm-related buildings and storages with a ceiling of 400 Sq. mtrs (17 Marla).

The Assistant Commissioner (Revenue), Sub-Divisional Magistrate and Tehsildar concerned have been entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of these regulations within their respective areas of jurisdiction.

Besides, it will be the duty of every Agriculture Extension Officer to report cases of violation to the revenue officers and any neglect on this account can attract disciplinary action for dereliction of duty, the press release said.

It said the decision is aimed at ensuring production of sufficient quantity of food-grains, besides promoting orderly growth of industrial and services sector in this Union territory and creation of employment.

By this, the UT will be at par with the leading States of the country in allowing the conversion and reducing compliance burden under Business Reforms Action Plan (Ease of Doing Business) in an investor friendly eco-system, the press release said.



The decision is aimed at ensuring production of sufficient quantity of food-grains, besides promoting orderly growth of industrial and services sector in this Union territory and creation of employment.

After Lavender & Marigold, farmers cashing on Tagetes Minuta in Bhaderwah



Bhaderwah: After bringing purple revolution by growing exotic lavender, followed by large scale cultivation of marigold under the Aroma Mission, farmers in this sub-division of Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district have gone a step further and are reaping the benefits by utilizing another aromatic plant — Tagetes Minuta.

Popularly known as Southern Marigold or Stinking Roger, which grows wildly and in abundance in this picturesque valley, Tagetes Minuta has brought a new hope for the marginal farmers and labourers who used to stay idle in the Chenab valley region after the completion of harvesting season in November.

An award winning farmer and entrepreneur Touqeer Bagban of JK Aroma, who was instrumental in bringing the purple revolution to Bhaderwah by joining hands with CSIR under Aroma Mission, encouraged locals to collect wildly grown flowers from their surroundings and waste land after getting technical support and a go ahead from the scientists of IIIM to extract Aromatic oil from these flowers.

"I was surprised when during a workshop at Delhi, I came to know from the scientists of CSIR that the wild flowers which grow and spread like a weed in the entire Bhadarwah can be used to get essential oil," Bagban told PTI.

He said hundreds of poor farmers who traditionally remain jobless in winters due to harsh weather conditions are reaping the benefits by joining hands to fulfill Prime Minister's dream of becoming global leader in essential oils and make Jammu and Kashmir as "Bulgaria of India" under Aroma Mission 2.

Bagban said so far 100 quintals of flowers were collected by JK Aroma from Chinta, Manthala, Mathola, Duggi, Dandi, Thanhala, Basti, Bhala, Butla and Seri villages.

"At the beginning, I was a little apprehensive about the quality of oil extracted from the Tagetes Minuta but in the laboratory tests it turned out to be one of the best available in essential oil market," he said, adding "we managed to extract 250 liters of oil which costs almost double than the lavender oil."

Beside extracting oil from the plant, Bagban said "we have also

collected the seeds and hopefully next year, we will distribute free seeds among 300 farmers of Bhadarwah to grow the flower in their respective fields."

Dozens of farmers and labourers, majority of them women are a happier lot as they are earning between Rs 1,000 and 3,000 per day by collecting Tagetes Minuta flowers that too from their surroundings and waste land.

"Two years of corona has taken a toll on poor farmers and labourers like me, but this weed whom we hate the most came to our rescue at this difficult time and my family is earning from Rs 2,000 to Rs 3,000 a day since last one month by collecting the flowers that too from the vicinity of our home," Bachan Singh, a resident of village Butla, said.

Shweta Rani (19) of Mathola village had also joined other villagers in collecting the wild flowers and said she is thankful to the 'pungent weed' for coming to the rescue of her family.

"My father is a daily-wage labourer and has been facing a financial crisis ever since the outbreak of the pandemic last year. I was about to leave studies but I am happy about helping the family and also saving money to continue my studies," she said.

Some unemployed educated youth have also joined Aroma Mission to start and give a new dimension to their career.

"After completing my B tech in computer science, I was without a job for the last two years but the government's Aroma Mission 2 changed my life for good. By engaging and encouraging the farmers to collect Tagetes Minuta and selling it to the JK Aroma, I earned handsomely and now I want to venture into a full time business of aromatic plants," Inam-ul-Haq Wani, a resident of Bhaderwah, said.

Tagetes Minuta is a tall upright marigold plant from the genus Tagetes with small flowers, native to the southern half of South America.

Tagetes Minuta oil is used for chest infections, coughs and catarrh, dilating the bronchi, facilitating the flow of mucus and dislodging congestion and can be used in cases of skin infections. It also has a healing effect on wounds, cuts, calluses and bunions.

FFRC orders Srinagar private school to charge fee as per rates in Aug 2014

Srinagar, Dec 29: The Committee for Fixation and Regulation of Fee of Private Schools in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday directed a leading school here to charge fee from its students as per rates in August 2014 as the educational institute had failed to have its fee structure regulated.

In an order, FFRC chairperson, Justice Muzaffar Hussain Attar directed the management of Minto Circle Higher Secondary School in Aloochoi Bagh area of the city here to charge and collect fee as it stood in August 2014.

"The Principal/Chairman/Management of Minto Circle Higher Secondary School, Aloochoi Bagh, Srinagar, shall charge and collect all types of fee as it stood in August 2014 and students/parents shall pay the fee accordingly," the order read.

The FFRC also asked the school to display the fee structure including the tuition fee and annual fee, as it stood in August 2014, on its notice board within two days.

"Any breach of this order will result in penal action, as also, recommendation for de-affiliation of the school," the FFRC said.

The order came after parents of some of the students studying in the school complained to the committee about the school's fee structure.

The FFRC said the school has not at any point of time submitted its record for regulating its fee structure and has thus violated the mandate contained in the Supreme Court and High Court judgement and has shown non-compliance of the statute.

The J&K High Court in its judgement on June 01, 2015 has given liberty to managements of un-aided private schools to approach the Committee for fixation of fee structure of each class.

It was also provided that "till new fee structure is fixed by the Committee, the management shall collect all types of fee as in August 2014".



CS calls for improving information content on delivery of welfare progs

Jammu: Chief Secretary Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta Tuesday emphasized the need to connect with the people in the UT through provision of useful information about the welfare programmes of the government.

He made this observation while reviewing the functioning of the Information department in the meeting in which Principal Secretary, Information department; Director Information, Joint Director, Information, Jammu, and other senior officers.

According to an official press release, Dr. Mehta asked the department to focus on improving both the quality of the content and its delivery for effective dissemination of the various public welfare programmes.

“There is a need to create content in such language and form as facilitates quick and easy communication of the public welfare programmes to the people,” he observed.

Terming fake or misleading news as a big challenge, the Chief Secretary asked the department to institute a mechanism to rebut fake news on real-time basis.

Principal Secretary, Rohit Kansal informed that the grievances redressal system has been put in place in the department to ensure that the departmental response to the grievances in the media is carried out within the reasonable time, the press release said.

He further informed that the recently launched Film Policy has been widely appreciated and has been a big hit with the film-makers.

Earlier, Director Information while making a short presentation on the functioning of the department said that the department is strengthening the human and capacity issues to deal with the challenges of the new age/non-traditional media like FM channels, social media, etc.

He informed that the department has run various features stories on several personalities from J&K, who excelled in different fields such as Guinness World Record Holder Cyclist, Aadil Teeli; Tokyo Olympic Silver Medalist, Mira Bhai Chanu’s Coach Vijay Sharma, etc.

He also highlighted the role of the department in successfully covering the programmes like ‘Back to Village’ and ‘My Town, My Pride’.

The Chief Secretary asked the department to urgently realign

its focus and re-orient its organizational structure to better deal with the rapidly evolving media otherwise it may soon find itself behind the curve.

He advised the department to ensure that at least 10 content creators/resource personnel are available in the Secretariat and an appropriate number of them placed in all the districts offices in the UT.

“The department needs to focus on the people, and the tools required to enable the people to benefit from the developmental agenda of the government,” he said.

Dr. Mehta lamented that despite several important initiatives, there has not been commensurate coverage in the media.

He pointed out to the specific instances where “even improvement in J&K’s standing in the country on various developmental parameters has not received any coverage in the media.”

The Chief Secretary said that schemes like ‘Apki Zameen Apki Nigrani’, ‘Janta ki Bagidhari’ etc. have really empowered the people in the UT, but more and more people should use these schemes for their well-being and that can happen only if they are sensitized about them.

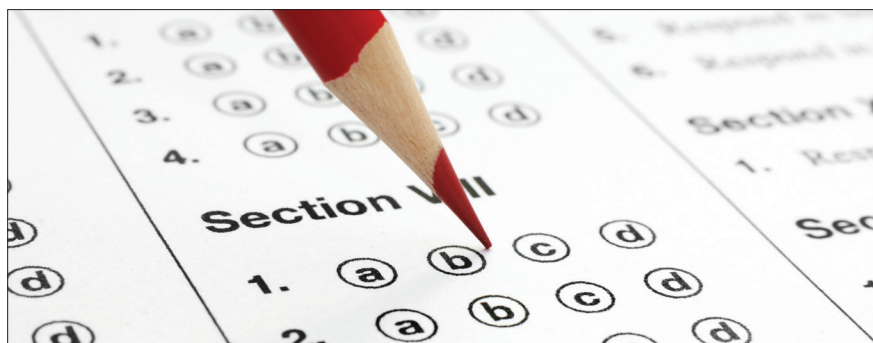
“J&K has made an improvement of 3.7 percent in good governance during the year 2020-21 and in NITI Aayog’s assessment, J&K’s GDP never dipped in the negative territory even at the height of Covid crisis, but this resilience in the economy has not received due attention,” he observed.

Dr. Mehta asked the department to create and run impact features, real-life news stories on daily basis in the media, highlighting the positive side of the welfare schemes/campaign rolled out by the government.

The Chief Secretary also asked the department to strengthen the grievances redressal system in consultation with all the departments so that the response of the departments to the grievances is carried in the media on real-time basis.

Dr. Mehta also advised the department to institute a system of obtaining feedback from its field functionaries about the various ongoing welfare programmes of the government so that efficacy and implementation of these programmes can be improved.

Entrance test must for admission across central varsities from 2022



New Delhi: The admission process in most of the central universities will change from the upcoming academic session as Central University Common Entrance Test (CUCET) will come into force for admission to all undergraduate courses in different central universities across the country.

The Union Education Ministry and the University Grants Commission (UGC) have informed central universities about the mandatory entrance test from next academic session, after which all central universities have started preparations for the CET. Delhi University (DU) has also made the CET mandatory for the academic session 2022-23.

These central universities have also passed proposals in their respective Academic and Executive Councils regarding the CET.

According to renowned educationist C.S. Kandpal, this is a new system and its efficacy can be tested on the basis of experience. It is not proper to comment on the merits and demerits of the new system as of now. Educational institutions must see this as a positive change, he added.

The entrance examinations can open new doors for students. If there are demerits in the system or in the conduct or in the process of examinations in future, there is always a chance to improve, Kandpal said.

According to DU Professor Hansraj Suman, class 12 marks will

not be completely neglected in the name of CUCET. Many central universities have approved CUCET in their academic council but class 12 board exam results will also be given importance.

The Union Education Ministry says that there has been a demand to implement the CUCET for a long time, but has come into effect now.

Hansraj Suman, also former member of DU Academic Council, said that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the process for awarding marks in class 12 board exams was misused by several schools which presented exaggerated performance of the students.

The DU Professor is also in favour of completely revamping the admission process in his varsity. However, he says that while doing so the interests of the students from the marginalised and economically weaker sections must be kept in mind.

According to Suman, the way the CET is being introduced, coaching centres will see its importance rising as a result of which students from economically weaker sections may be left behind.

Now from the next academic session, students will now have to pass the CET with good marks to seek admission in DU, he said.

Other central universities are also following the same admission policy. This means that from the next academic session 2022-23, admission in DU, Jamia Millia Islamia, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Banaras Hindu University, among other central universities, can be possible only through CET.

Under the present admission system, merit list is prepared on the basis of marks obtained in class 12 exams in most of the universities. Students fill the respective university forms on different dates to seek admissions. Unable to get admission in the university of their choice, students approach those universities and colleges where seats are vacant.

The UGC has said that the CET will be conducted from the academic session 2022-23 by the National Testing Agency.

“Active participation of people a prerequisite for good governance”

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has extended his greetings to the people on the “Good Governance Day”, celebrated every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of India’s former Prime Minister, Bharat Ratna, Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Paying tributes to Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Lt Governor described him as a people’s leader, revered Statesman, great social reformer, influential orator, and an able administrator who always believed in the policy of ‘India first’ and always acted to safeguard country’s national interest.

The former Prime Minister’s valuable contribution to the Indian polity, indomitable will, and determination towards the nation’s

development is unparalleled. His dedication to bring in reforms in governance, equitable development, and inclusive accelerated growth will remain a guiding light for generations to come, the Lt Governor observed.

Terming active participation of people a prerequisite for good governance, the Lt Governor called upon all stakeholders to complement Government’s efforts towards inclusive and sustainable development.

The Lt Governor said that the values and teaching of the great leader and social reformer would continue to guide us in making our nation a superpower of the world. The younger generation must carry the immortal flame of his legacy through constructive contribution to society.

He observed that treading on the path laid by the great leader, the UT Government is committed to fulfilling the dreams of an equitable, just, and prosperous society.

The Lt Governor also paid tributes and remembered Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya on his 160th Janam Jayanti.

“Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, a great educationist, reformer, politician, and founder of the Banaras Hindu University was a pioneer of India’s industrial revolution. He tirelessly worked for ensuring modern education to all, generating the spirit of women empowerment and industrial development in India”, the Lt Governor said in his message.

Mahamana promoted a harmonious blend of oriental and modern education, which has now been adopted in India’s New National Education Policy. He made an invaluable contribution to the Indian Renaissance, Nationalist Ideology, Public Awakening, Welfare, Justice and Freedom, and in the fields of Education and spirituality, the Lt Governor added.

Deaths due to road accidents cause of worry: LG

Chairs meeting on road safety, directs officers to identify reasons, and rectify them within 3 months



Jammu: Deaths due to road accident is indeed a cause of worry, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said Wednesday while chairing a high-level meeting on road safety here at the Civil Secretariat.

He said the government is making continuous efforts to make the public aware of road safety and is committed to enforce the rules and necessary interventions and facilities.

According to an official press release, Sinha directed the concerned officials to identify factors contributing to road accidents and take proactive measures, ensuring enforcement of safety laws in true spirit, and making improvements in the response system and spreading awareness on road safety.

The LG passed explicit directions to the officials to rectify black spots within three months.

“Traffic management has become more and more technology-driven. We need to make necessary technological interventions for highly effective road safety measures,” he said.

Training of traffic police, strengthening manpower, generating awareness amongst the people, especially in educational institutions, crackdown on drunk-driving and speed, roping in volunteers for road safety programs would be important steps to address the challenges, Sinha added.

Taking note of regular incidents of road accidents in particular areas, the LG asked the Health department to explore possibility of developing more trauma centres near accident-prone highways to help accident victims during the crucial golden hours.

The meeting was informed that the Health and Medical Education department has so far established eight Trauma Centres in various districts, the press release said.

The LG advised for replicating the effective traffic management models and collaborative efforts with different stakeholders to get the desired results on the ground.

He asked the concerned departments to explore the modalities and prepare a proposal for establishing integrated centres of Inspection & Certification and Licensing in highly accident-prone areas of the UT.

He further directed for conducting regular meetings of the District Road Safety Committees for comprehensive and multi-sectoral road safety strategies.

The LG also took a detailed assessment of the Action Taken Report on raising awareness about road safety, Road Safety Fund, strengthening of highway patrolling for prevention of accidents and fatalities, besides deployment of 136 Ambulances provided by MoRTH and operationalization of 102/108 Helpline Number.

Hirdesh Kumar, Commissioner Secretary, Transport department

briefed the meeting about initiatives taken by the government regarding road safety.

He also informed about the important aspects concerning road safety, including road safety action plan; functioning of road safety council, lead agency, and district road safety committees; category-wise cumulative registered vehicle population.

The meeting was briefed about the mechanism put in place for developing an intelligent traffic management system for Srinagar and Jammu cities under AMRUT scheme.

Discussions were also held on the Road Safety Audit of all existing roads; removal of encroachments, hoardings; fixing of road signages, speed limit, and other traffic calming measures; erection of crash barriers on the National Highway and other major roads; preparation of calendar for the training of Engineers in road safety; removal of unauthorised cuts on National Highways and other major roads and regulation of cross junctions.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the LG; Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance department; Vivek Bhardwaj, Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Medical Education department; Administrative Secretaries; Divisional Commissioners, besides senior officers of c and police administration attended the meeting, in person and through virtual mode, the press release informed.



Training of traffic police, strengthening manpower, generating awareness amongst the people, especially in educational institutions, crackdown on drunk-driving and speed, roping in volunteers for road safety programs would be important steps to address the challenges,



Saint Luke's Church in Srinagar thrown open after 30 years

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday inaugurated the reopening ceremony of over 100-yr-old St Luke's Church in Srinagar that has been fully renovated, conserved and opened for the Christian worshippers.

Addressing the gathering through virtual mode, the LG said that the reopening of St Luke's Church in Srinagar after restoration is a "historic occasion to celebrate and imbibe Lord Christ's message of sacrifice, service, redemption, love and compassion".

The LG said that the St Luke's Church built in 1896 on the southwest slope of Shankaracharya (Koh-e-Sulaiman) Hill, is a "unique symbol of J&K's composite culture".

The LG congratulated the citizens of J&K, especially the Christian community and all the artisans involved in the renovation and conservation, besides the officials associated with the Smart City program.

The restoration and conservation work of St Luke's Church has been carried out under the 'Smart City Project'. The up-gradation of the surrounding landscape has also been attended to including access to the Church, lighting and the allied components. The inside of the Church has also been redone with construction of Alter, wooden flooring, seating, window panes, access gate and porch.

The LG said that India is home to diverse religions and cultures for centuries. "But, despite much diversity, we are living in unity without any discrimination," he added.

The LG urged the people to inculcate the spirit of social harmony and strengthen the values of brotherhood, peace and selfless service.

"St. Luke's message of peace and harmony to all human beings is more relevant today than ever before. Today, while facing the challenges of Covid pandemic, the whole world is realizing that no nation or society can survive in isolation. Our dependence on each other, our connect with each other has increased substantially," the LG said.

On the occasion, the LG while remembering Dr.

Arthur Neve, said, "he served the people of J&K for three decades by establishing this Church as well as saving many lives as a doctor."

The LG also extended his warm wishes to the people for the upcoming Christmas festival.

"On the eve of Christmas, when we remember Jesus Christ, let us also reiterate our strong resolve to follow the path of truth, non-violence and universal brotherhood. Every person should sincerely play their part in promoting harmony in society," the LG said.

Special prayers were recited to mark the day, while a documentary on the history and restoration of the church was also showcased on the occasion.

The Christian community of Srinagar has expressed happiness at the government's initiative to renovate and reopen the Church ahead of Christmas.

St Luke's Church is a single-storey building constructed on a cruciform plan. The Church follows the Gothic Style of Architecture which is distinct from the other important monuments dotted in the landscape of Srinagar. Attached to the porch, there is a bell tower which is three-story in height, mounted by a high pitched CGI roof with dormer gables on each side.

Before the restoration works, the Church was lying in a dilapidated condition, with the structural members suffering major damage. The CGI roofing was completely damaged, the rainwater intrusion from the roof aggravated the decay of important components.

Initially, the structural integrity of the Church was analyzed by experts and the envisaged vision was to restore the Church in its original shape and character keeping intact the architectural glory of the Church.

Junaid Azim Mattu, Mayor SMC; Athar Aamir Khan, Commissioner, SMC, and CEO Srinagar Smart City; besides Chief Priest of St. Luke's Church, Father Eric, among others were present to witness the re-opening of the Church.



Technology great enabler; need to bridge digital divide, create balance for online tools & value-based offline education: LG

Launches AICTE's 'YourOneLife-YOL'

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Monday launched AICTE's Personal & Institutional Happiness Index App – "YourOneLife-YOL", at the Convention Center, Jammu.

The 'YourOneLife' is a "Made in India" app that will show the index of personal and institutional happiness and around 12000 Higher Educational Institutions and more than 50 lakh students will benefit from it, an official press release said.

Speaking on the occasion, the LG congratulated the educational institutions, students, Prof. Anil D. Sahasrabudhe, Chairman AICTE and the founding team of Yogesh Kochhar and Anoop Bansal, who are associated with AICTE.

He noted that consistent technological interventions and fast connectivity have revolutionized almost every aspect of human life. Today, there is hardly any area where the digital revolution has not reached, he added.

"Technology is a great enabler. We need to bridge the digital divide and create a fine balance for online tools and value-based offline education," Sinha observed.

He emphasized the need for creating a system where "digital and natural rivers do not compete but complement each other".

"As in the old days, the way civilization and markets developed on the banks of natural rivers, in the 21st century, we can see a complete civilization on the banks of the Digital River. All the technology companies and social media giants have become symbols of new civilization, power and mobility," he added.

Five years ago, no one could have imagined that all the public related services would be available sitting at home. Despite Covid, schools, universities, colleges were running with the help of software, the LG said.

He observed that new technology has created conveniences but it depends on how the user uses it. "More power has come in our hands. And it is very important to think how the young generation uses this power," he asserted.

As all the higher educational institutions belonging to All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) are preparing themselves for the post-Covid world, both externally and internally, the launch of 'YourOneLife' app is a significant step towards a stress-free campus and a stress-free student in this transitory period, the LG observed.

He also urged AICTE to consider institutionalizing the rankings of happiest colleges in the country, as it is done in America where 25 top performers are selected from different states.

"There is an ancient saying that happiness is the real wealth and if you are happy on campus then your performance will increase tremendously," said the LG.

The LG expressed gratitude to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi for laying special emphasis on maintaining an equal balance between technology and moral values in the New Education Policy and working tirelessly to make Yoga and fitness an integral part of our lives.

"Under his guidance, the reforms are being made in the education sector with a dedicated focus on training students in the technology of Industry 4.0 through Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, BlockChain, Big Data Analysis, 3D, Virtual Reality, Quality and Ethical Values Education," added the LG.

"An important thing has been recommended in the new education policy is that students should be educated according to their interest. Focus has been laid to inculcate the balance required



in studies and professional life in the daily routine of all students and professionals," he added.

The LG also said that the initiatives like 'Your One Life App' and New Education Policy is a combination of both digital and natural rivers which will emphasize on the holistic well being of all the students.

"Human capital is the biggest asset in the knowledge economy today. We must utilize our human capital for the progress of the country," the LG noted.

The LG thanked Prof Phoebe Koundouri from the University of Athens who is also the Co-Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Network, Europe for conveying her greetings and profound message and acknowledging the launch of the happiness app from Jammu and Kashmir.

He hoped that her support will be an inspiration for the "YourOneLife-YOL" team, motivating them to bring real joy to the lives of the students.

Prof. Anil D. Sahasrabudhe, Chairman, AICTE, speaking on the occasion highlighted the key features and benefits of the happiness app.

He said, "YourOneLife is a tool that collates, calibrates and celebrates happiness."

He also talked about the efforts of AICTE in improving technical education in various educational institutions across the country through capacity building of teachers, student interaction programs besides promoting universal human values.

Speaking on the occasion, the founder of the app, Yogesh Kochhar said, "This app will redefine 'USERS' and 'USAGE' and will show to the user in a fascinating manner, their own 'MINDMAP' and 'MINDSHARE'. It maps and manages the user's stress and happiness levels. We will be building a unique blockchain with all the users and institutions as our 'partners' and not mere 'users'."

Dr. Anshu Kataria, Chairman, Aryans Group of Colleges, Chandigarh & President, Federation of Self Financing Technical Institutions (FSFTI), besides a large number of students and people from different walks of life were present during the launch of the App.

Govt committed to provide quality transport facilities to public: LG

Takes ride in Olectra Greentech's electric bus in Jammu

Jammu: Asserting that the J&K government was committed to provide quality transport facilities to the public, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday took a ride in Olectra Greentech's electric bus from Raj Bhavan till Trikuta Nagar here, which is on a trial run to augment inter-city and intra-city transport facilities in the Union Territory.

The electric bus will be on trial run on different inter-city and intra-city routes to access its technical, mechanical stability and other practical aspects.

Assistant General Manager, Sales and Marketing, Olectra Greentech Ltd, Arun Kumar briefed the LG about the functioning, features and technical aspects of the bus during the ride.

According to an official press release, he apprised the LG that it is a seven metre Olectra K6 Electric Bus which has seating capacity of 24 passengers plus the driver, and a single charge range of 160 kilometres with 80 percent status of charge.

Kumar said the bus has many other modern features like GPS, public announcement system, air conditioner, smart ticketing, two USB ports per seat and emergency stop.

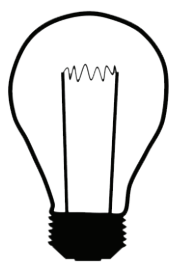
While enquiring about the performance of the bus, the LG suggested the representatives of the company keep proper luggage space to facilitate the passengers during their journey.

Asserting that the J&K government is committed to provide quality transport facilities to the public in the UT, Sinha said the unprecedented augmentation of the public transport system would boost revenue generation as more viable and lucrative routes will be included in the operational network of transportation.



During a meeting with the chairman of Olectra Greentech Ltd, the LG had asked him to send two electric buses on a trial basis, one each for Srinagar and Jammu.

Depending upon the trial outcome, the government will decide future course of action for inter-city and intra-city transport facilities and 150-200 e-buses would be introduced in the transport sector soon in a phased manner.



JKPCL to buy 200 MW solar power from SECI for next 25 years

AC approves decision to ensure 24X7 reliable electricity supply in J&K

Jammu: The Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, approved the purchase of 200 MW solar power through the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) to meet the growing power demand and promote the use of green and clean energy in Jammu and Kashmir, an official press release informed Friday.

Farooq Khan and Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisors to the Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K, and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

According to the press release, the decision will allow the purchase of renewable energy at an estimated cost of Rs 2.52 per kWh for the next 25 years, which is by far the lowest rate ever offered to J&K.

Accordingly, the Power Department was also given financial approval for Rs 110.37 crores per annum for purchasing the electricity from the SECI.

The envisaged purchase of additional power will help JKPCL to partially meet the Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO) as fixed by the

Ministry of Power, Government of India, besides ensuring enhanced power reliability due to diversity in the power bucket of Jammu and Kashmir.

The decision will also prioritize the generation and usage of renewable solar energy in consonance with the national endeavour of promoting green energy for a reduction in carbon footprints and mitigating global warming.

It is expected that with the addition of this power the JKPCL will be better placed to meet the increasing power demand which increased from 18091.386 MU during 2020-21 to 19500-2000 MU in the current financial year, the press release said.

The Power Development Department has been working towards ensuring 24X7 reliable electricity in major cities and towns in Jammu and Kashmir by augmenting assets both at Transmission and Distribution levels under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes (flagship programs). It is anticipated that with the completion of major ongoing flagship programs, the energy requirement will further grow and touch the 22000 MU mark, thus creating a demand for an additional, stable, and reliable supply of 300-500 MW power, the press release said.

Administrative Council approves transfer of state land for public purposes

Inter-Modal Station coming up at Katra for single point transportation through air, rail, road

Jammu: The Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, approved the proposal of Revenue Department to transfer various parcels of land for public purposes, an official press release informed Wednesday.

It said Farooq Khan and Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisors to the Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

The Administrative Council approved the transfer of land measuring 15 Kanal at village Majeen, Tehsil & District Jammu to Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB) on lease for 40 years. The Board will be constructing a Yatri Niwas and a Disaster Management Centre for better management of the Yatra aimed at boosting religious tourism in the Union territory, the press release informed.

It said the construction of these facilities will enhance the number of pilgrims visiting the holy cave and subsequently generate substantial indirect employment. It will also ensure compliance to the orders of the Supreme Court of India and the National Green Tribunal.

Approval was also given to the transfer of state land measuring 38 Kanal and 19 Marla at village Chak Jawala Tehsil Vijaypur, Samba to the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, for establishing the Composite Regional Centre (CRC) for Skill Development, Rehabilitation and Employment of persons with disability (DivyangJan) in Jammu district.

Once functional, the Center will provide multitude of services to the persons with disabilities in the field of education, employment, vocational training, research and manpower development, rehabilitation of Divyangs, and distribution of assistive aids through a team of experts, besides working on the principle of trans-disciplinary approach.

The Administrative Council further approved the transfer of land measuring 10 Kanal 11 Marla in favour of Health & Medical Education Department for establishing a 50-bedded integrated AYUSH Hospital in district Budgam.

Establishment of the AYUSH Hospital will promote the Indian System of Medicine (ISM) in the region, provide health care facilities and strengthen the healthcare infrastructure in the area. The ISM focuses both on preventive medicine as well as the medical treatments for various ailments to promote overall health and fitness, the press release said.

Moreover, a parcel of land measuring 28 Kanal at village Donipawa, Tehsil & District Anantnag was transferred to the School Education Department for establishing a Kendriya Vidyalaya.

Opening of the school will provide education avenues to the children and will enhance the standard of education in the area, the press release said.

Another parcel of land measuring 8 Kanal situated in village Ichgam, Tehsil & District Budgam was transferred to the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj for constructing the Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI) to provide skill development trainings to the youth and boost employment



generation.

The RSETI provides opportunities of learning diverse skill sets in multitude of trades including courses in driving, IT, plumbing, electrical, masonry, among others.

The Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department was also given 6 Kanal land for constructing office accommodation for the District Development Council, Baramulla.

The Administrative Council also sanctioned transfer of one Kanal of land at Langate to the Finance Department for construction of a Treasury building.

The AC also approved the proposal of the Housing and Urban Development Department to sign a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding between National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Ministry of Railways (MoR), and Government of Jammu and Kashmir (GoJK) for co-development of Inter-Modal Station (IMS) at Katra through Katra Development Authority (KDA).

Farooq Khan and Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisors to the Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

The approved IMS will be developed as a terminal infrastructure integrating various transportation modes of rail, road, air (helipad), bus, auto rickshaws, taxis and private vehicles at a single hub for seamless movement of people from one mode to another. The project will be completed in three years, an official handout informed.

It said the IMS at Katra will be developed in two phases. The public zone and subsequently commercial infrastructures will be developed under phase I and II, respectively.

The decision is aimed at minimizing the transit time and cost for commuters and potentially extend the duration of their stay in Jammu and Kashmir, the handout said, adding that the development of the IMS at Katra will also boost commercial development and economic activity which will significantly upscale the socio-economic profile of Katra and its adjoining areas.

For development of the infrastructure, a tripartite MoU will be signed which will regulate funding and promote coordination between various agencies for time bound execution of the project. The Chief Executive Officer, Katra Development Authority was authorized as the signatory on behalf of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir.



Establishment of the AYUSH Hospital will promote the Indian System of Medicine (ISM) in the region, provide health care facilities and strengthen the healthcare infrastructure in the area. The ISM focuses both on preventive medicine as well as the medical treatments for various ailments to promote overall health and fitness...

Land Passbooks to be issued in Jammu, Srinagar from January 15 next year

All districts to be covered under Land Passbook Scheme by August 15, 2022

Jammu: The Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta Saturday directed the Revenue department start issuing revenue passbooks to the people, containing information on all their legal land possessions, within one month, followed by its first trial run on 15th January and formal issuance by 26th January, 2022.

He issued these directions while chairing a meeting to review the functioning of the Revenue department.

The Financial Commissioner Revenue, Commissioner/Secretary, Revenue Department, Divisional Commissioners of Kashmir and Jammu along with concerned HoDs participated in the meeting.

According to an official handout, it was informed that under the Digital India Land Record Modernization Programme (DILRMP), the Revenue department has scanned 7,75,70,009 documents, 58,754 maps, and 760 Jamabandis. The scanned revenue record has been made available in the public domain under the 'Apni Zameen Apni Nigrani' initiative and various public viewing drives are currently underway for promoting public awareness and scrutiny.

Under the Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA), the department is creating survey infrastructure and GIS maps to reduce revenue-related disputes and court cases. The process also includes sensitization drives, making on-ground boundaries, laying out SOPs, and generation of property cards post-survey completion.

The Chief Secretary directed to digitize all Revenue land records of Jammu and Srinagar by 26th January 2022 and of all other districts by 15th August, 2022. The department was further directed to ensure end-to-end digitization of all its processes to provide online facilities to people for applying and receiving copies of revenue records through a web portal, besides ensuring that a copy of every government order is also available on the departmental website.

Moreover, the department was asked to integrate all its record on one platform, including land records, registration and attestation of mutations for allowing ease of access to the public.

"The one-stop portal must also provide for options to register

and track grievances/complaints and information on pending and under-trial cases throughout the revenue courts," Dr. Mehta maintained.

The department was further asked to shift all the processes to online mode by adopting the e-office model in its field offices for digitally linking the field functionaries including Patwaris and monitoring timelines of all processes on a real-time basis.

Regarding the encroachment of State and Departmental lands, the Chief Secretary directed the submission of time series data on periodical encroachments showing decadal growth of such encroachments over 1990-2000-2010-2020; within one month.

The enforcement agencies were directed to undertake extensive anti-encroachment drives and start eviction from the high-value commercial areas in the first instance. The agencies were asked to take immediate action against reported cases of illegal trespassing and prevent further encroachments. Further, it was asked to immediately bio-fence all retrieved land to prevent its further encroachment.

The Chief Secretary directed the Revenue department to evolve a mechanism of issuing revenue passbooks to the people, containing information on all their legal land possessions within one month, followed by its first trial run on 15th January and formal issuance by 26th January 2022.

The process will be completed in the districts of Jammu and Srinagar by 31st March, 2022 and in all other districts by 15th August, 2022, the official handout said.

Dr. Mehta emphasized the need to connect revenue records with Mobile and Aadhaar numbers of owners as a measure to check benami properties as well as prevent the sale/encroachment of properties without the knowledge of owners. He asked the Revenue department to issue SMS alerts to the registered accounts at every stage of the transaction/process to prevent unauthorized land transactions by implementing Real-Time Land Transaction Communication System.

The department was also asked to obtain legacy data from the High Court and make timely entries in the revenue record with time-bound reconciliation of all records.

Lt Guv discusses modalities for introducing electric buses in J&K

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday discussed the modalities for introducing electric buses for cleaner, better inter-city and intra-city transport facilities in the Union Territory.

Chairing a preliminary meeting with Chairman and Managing Director of Olectra Greentech Ltd K V Pradeep here, the Lt Governor said the government aims to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, promote greener, sustainable mobility solutions.

Sinha said electric vehicles are the future of transport as they are eco-friendly, ideal for the urban environment and contribute to reducing pollution levels.

The chairman of Olectra Greentech Ltd, an electric vehicle manufacturing company, gave a presentation and briefed the Lt governor about the company which has, so far, deployed around 600 electric buses across India and has 2,500 buses under manufacturing process, an official spokesperson said.

Sinha asked the chairman to send two electric buses on a trial basis, one each for Srinagar and Jammu. Depending upon the trial outcome, the government will decide future course of action for inter-city and intra-city transport facilities.

"The government is committed to explore all the possibilities to transform Jammu and Srinagar into modern, sustainable, and economically vibrant cities, and make Jammu and Srinagar, the superlative smart cities of the country," Sinha said.

The central government has launched the second phase of the FAME-II scheme for promoting electric vehicles. The scheme provides incentives and subsidies for manufacturing as well as purchase of electric vehicles.

The spokesperson said the government plans to introduce 150-200 e-buses to facilitate safer, greener and reliable transportation for the public.

Orphanages, women & children's homes, NGOs, hospitals come under increased scrutiny

CS directs SWD to do 5 year audit of all orphanages, ashrams

Jammu: Chief Secretary Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta Thursday chaired a high level meeting to review the progress made in nabbing the culprits involved in alleged adoption and sale of Covid orphans in Pampore, besides the administrative measures taken by the Social Welfare Department and the law-enforcement agencies to prevent such incidents in future.

Administrative Secretary, Home, Special Director General, CID, Administrative Secretaries of Social Welfare and Law Departments, two Divisional commissioners and DIG, Central Kashmir Range and other senior officers attended the meeting, an official press release informed.

While informing that two persons have been arrested, DIG CKR informed that the investigation under a DSP rank officer is going on and it is expected that in about a week's time, the department will be able to get to the bottom of the case.

Asserting that the trafficking of children and women is an inhuman practice and is absolutely unacceptable, the Chief Secretary stressed that there should be zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and forced labour and added that the government will pull out all stops in ridding the UT of this menace.



and trusts and orphanages and asked the Social Welfare Department to coordinate the synergised departmental response in the matter.

Secretary, Social Welfare Department informed that the matter has been taken up with IGP Kashmir to ensure immediate legal action under the relevant laws.

It was further informed that child welfare committees have been asked to meet Covid orphans identified by the department and submit a report to the department.

Dr Mehta directed Social Welfare Department to conduct audit of the human resource and the accounts of these centres for the last five years, the press release said.

He asked the Social Welfare Department to obtain the report regarding the welfare of Covid orphans from the field and share it with his office by Thursday evening.

The Chief Secretary also asked the Home department to ensure that every such centre was inspected by the nearest police station in the UT and a report shared by them with the Home department by evening. Giving details of the NGOs dealing with child and women welfare in the UT, Director I&C, Jammu informed that there are around 6000 such NGOs registered in J&K.

It was further informed that post reorganisation of the J&K State into UTs of J&K and Ladakh, the department has begun the process of re-registering these societies under the central act.

So far less than 1000 societies have been re-registered and their details are also available on Darpan portal.

Dr Mehta also advised the I&C department to share the list of all NGOs operating in the space with SWD and Police department.

He also directed that the SWD should get the verification of 6000 NGOs done in concert with district administration and PRIs within a month and share the findings with the government.

The Chief Secretary asked the I&C department to put all those NGOs, which have not re-registered, on notice stating that if they do not re-register within 15 days, they will no longer be allowed to operate.

He also directed I&C department to share the details of those NGOs which don't re-register with the district and divisional administration so that appropriate law-enforcement action is initiated against them.

The Chief Secretary asked the SWD to take steps in consultation with health department to verify all the children hospitals/gynecological sections/neonatal sections of the hospitals in the UT within next 15 days.

Dr Mehta directed Law department to seek details of the trusts operating in the space for the last 10 years from the judiciary for purpose of their verification.

The Chief Secretary laid emphasis on tracking cases of child/women trafficking in the cyber domain and asked the Home department to ensure proper cyber surveillance through anti-trafficking units of the Police department in both the divisions.

Stating that begging and trafficking syndicates can't be allowed to have a free run in J&K, he directed to maintain special watch on placement agencies, organisations scouting young girls and boys for talent hunt programmes, beauty pageants, escort services, etc., so that incidents of child and women trafficking do not happen in future.

...begging and trafficking syndicates can't be allowed to have a free run in J&K, he directed to maintain special watch on placement agencies, organisations scouting young girls and boys for talent hunt programmes, beauty pageants, escort services, etc., so that incidents of child and women trafficking do not happen in future.

He also stated that "human trafficking almost always has a narco/drug dimension, which has been seen to have linkages with terrorism in the UT".

Expressing concern at the incident, Dr Mehta directed that joint teams of Social Welfare, Education department, Magistrates from DC office and police be set up to verify the records of 'nari ashrams' (women's homes), 'bal ashrams' (children's home), NGOs

J&K admin sanctions ex gratia payment of Rs 50,000 to kin of COVID-19 victims

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has sanctioned ex gratia payment of Rs 50,000 to the dependents of COVID-19 victims and directed all deputy commissioners to set up a robust yet simple mechanism for its disbursement.

Jammu and Kashmir has recorded 4,476 Covid-related deaths — 2,291 in Kashmir and 2,185 in Jammu — since the pandemic began last year.

In an order issued by the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, Nazim Zia Khan, Secretary to Lieutenant Governor, said the implementation of the scheme would commence immediately and it will cover all residents who died due to COVID-19.

Sanction is accorded to the adoption of the scheme for granting claim to the next of kin of COVID-19 victims in pursuance of the guidelines issued by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in compliance with the Supreme Court order, Khan said.

According to the order, the eligibility of a case under the scheme would be verified through the database created by the Health and Medical Education Department and duly certified by the designated medical authority.

“Wide publicity shall be given to the

scheme by the concerned deputy commissioners (chairman of District Disaster Management Authority), Health and Medical Education Department to ensure saturation of the scheme within a period of two months,” the order said.

It asked all deputy commissioners to set up a robust yet simple mechanism for the disbursement of the ex gratia assistance.

“All deputy commissioners shall issue an appropriate order for the constitution of a district-level committee (DLC) for redressal of any grievance(s) with regard to the certification of the Covid death,” it added.

Khan said the committee would comprise of additional deputy commissioner of the concerned district, principal of government medical college or chief medical officer of the district and medical superintendent of the district hospital or government medical college.

The district-level grievance committee will be responsible for verifying the authenticity of the COVID-19 death as per the central government guidelines, proposing necessary remedial measures, including amending the COVID-19 death certificate, and detailing appropriate administrative resources to verify facts in accordance with the guidelines issued for Covid-related deaths.

