

Zulfkar reviews progress on development projects, CM's commitments

Excelsior Correspondent

RAJOURI, Feb 12: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs & Tribal Affairs, Chowdhary Zulfkar Ali took a detailed review of progress on major development projects besides taking stock of action taken on implementation of Chief Minister's commitments made in Public Outreach Programme at Rajouri in respect of Darhal constituency.

The meeting was attended by Vice Chairman State Advisory Board for Development of Gujjar Bakewals Gulzar Khatana, Controller LMD R K Katoch, Director Tribal Affairs Mohd Rafi, Secretary State Advisory Board for Development of Gujjar Bakewals Mukhtar Ahmad, Addl DC A S Chib, Addl DC Koteranka Shafiq Ahmad, SSP Yougal Manhas, ExEn Sadiq Wani, Nisar Khan and Zubair Choudhary

besides district officers. The Minister exhorted for early start of work on projects under CM's commitments including construction of approach road to Ujhan Bridge, community halls at Panihad, Peeri and Dalheri, construction of Kewal Morh-Kundan Bagla, Hiltrad-Barid-arhal, Gurah Sarka-ri-Panjnara, Topa-Madhoon, Chowkian-Sarotha, Jamola-Hanjeeli, Draj-Dannatop, Lower Samote-Galidraman and Palma-BGSBU road, PHC at Morha Koteranka and Dalheri, building for PHC Panjnara, upgradation of schools and health institutions apart from a number of commitments for improving water and electricity supply system, road infrastructure and other basic amenities of life.

Zulfkar directed the concerned officers to immediately take up work for timely execution. He directed ExEn PWD to take up work on Palma-Chowkian-

BGSBU road and prepare project DPR for bridge under CRF. He also asked the concerned to expedite construction of missing link Gadyog-Cheekha Khet-Khwas-Dalheri as it will provide alternate entrance to Koteranka. It was decided that DDC Rajouri will issue an order for inclusion of Bainamal and Sada in CD Block Khawas from present Koteranka block. Decision was also taken for construction of a community hall at Dalheri by Rural Development Department within a month time.

Chief Education Officer was asked to furnish feasibility reports for setting up of new schools and upgradation in Darhal constituency as per public aspirations whereas CEO Rajouri Development Authority was directed for preparing detailed project report for connecting seven lakes of Pir Panjal and development of tourism infrastructure there.

Zulfkar also asked the district administration to formulate an interdepartmental committee to be headed by Assistant Commissioner Development for monitoring the implementation of Tribal Model Village projects. The committee will be mandated to ensure interdepartmental coordination, monitoring of quality of works besides ensuring timely completion.

Earlier, the Minister reviewed in detail the ongoing work on Patli Qila Ecopark. He was informed that Rs. 5 crore DPR has been submitted to Finance Department for funding to develop eco-park with state of art facilities.

Priya inaugurates 4-day Peer Kho Shivratri Mela

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: Minister of State for Education, Tourism and Culture, Priya Sethi today inaugurated the annual four-day Peer Kho Shivratri Mela in presence of MLA, Rajesh Gupta and Mahant Peer Kho, Peer Ravi Nath at Peer Kho.

ADC Arun Manhas, Deputy Director, Tourism Sushil Kumar Atri besides prominent citizens from all walks of life and senior officers of different departments were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the Government is committed to work towards development of tourism in the State, adding that concerted efforts are being made to develop Peer Kho as a major religious tourist destination in the region. She said the festival is one of the major tourist attractions of Jammu city and visiting devotees as well as tourists should have best experience during the festivities.

Lauding culture and other concerned departments for the preparations being made for the mela, the Minister said that such events will promote religious tourism besides boosting the economy of the area.

The Minister hoped that the festival will usher the State in the era of peace and prosperity.

Ethnic food stalls, fun rides and cultural programmes based on Shiv Parvati theme like Tandav, Shiv Barat, Shiv-Kali and Bhajans devoted to Lord Shiva will be the main attractions of the annual mela.

Various social organizations and the travel and trade organisations will be participating during

the event. Earlier, the Minister visited Aap Shambhu Temple and took stock of the arrangements being put in place by different departments for the Mahashivratri festival.

The Minister asked Tourism, PHE, JMC, Health, Traffic, Police and other concerned departments to ensure the availability of all facilities for smooth and hassle free celebration of the festival.

She directed the JMC to maintain proper cleanliness in and outside the temple and ensure installation of dust bins there. She directed the concerned officers to ensure proper lighting arrangements and adequate drinking water facilities with uninterrupted supply for the devotees.

Priya asked the Health Department to make sure that medical facilities along with the ambulance are available during the festival.

Priya asked the concerned officers to prepare a list of people installing stalls and lingers to keep a track of their whereabouts. She also took stock of the installation of CCTV cameras in the premises of the Temple.

The Minister paid obeisance at the shrine and prayed for the peace and prosperity of the State.

Dr Jitendra makes announcement of Maternity Leave for 'surrogate' mothers

Excelsior Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Feb 12: In a landmark announcement with far-reaching social and economic implications, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER),

Pertinent to mention that only last year the Modi Government had doubled the duration of the maternity leave for female Government employees from 12 to 24 weeks, but the surrogate mothers were not entitled to this facility.

Another significant



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh addressing a press conference at North Block, New Delhi on Monday.

MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today declared the Government decision of granting Maternity Leave for "surrogate" mothers, who happen to be Government employees, on the same lines and of the same duration as available to child-bearing mothers.

announcement made by Dr Jitendra Singh pertains to the entitlement of a "divorced daughter" for family pension even though the divorce judgment has not been passed before the death of the pensioner parent, but the divorce case has been filed.

Addressing a press conference at North Block here today, Dr Jitendra Singh described in detail the contours and the spirit behind this announcement. He said, while the Modi Government, in the last nearly four years, had strived to bring gender neutrality and gender justice for all sections of society, the decisions announced today were

also inspired by the spirit to live up to this objective. He said, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, in his Budget presented recently, had sought to acknowledge the issues pertaining to salaried class, elder citizens / pensioners, and to that extent also, the DoPT /ARPG decisions announced today would be a step further to achieve this goal.

Describing the decision of granting maternity leave to surrogate mothers as a futuristic one, Dr Jitendra Singh said, "we cannot remain oblivious of the emerging trends in the society". With increasing number of working women opting to become surrogate mothers, he said, it is in the fitness of things to provide for them the same facility and provision as provided to the mother who actually delivers the child.

The decision regarding the divorced daughters of a Government pensioner, Dr Jitendra Singh said, is motivated by in extreme sense of sensitivity, with the motive to redeem the plight of many a hapless divorced women who are abandoned by the family of their in-laws and at the same time, have nothing to fall back upon from the parental side.

Union Secretary DoPT Ajay Mittal, Union Secretary ARPG K.V. Eapen and other senior officers from the Ministry of Personnel were present during the press conference.

Rajesh Gupta inaugurates Sulabh Toilet Complex

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: A Deluxe Sulabh Toilet Complex having five W.C.s, two bath rooms, three urinals & Care Taker Room amounting to Rs. 13.00 lakh near river Tawi Front Park Vikram Chowk, was inaugurated by

Rajesh Gupta informed about the sanitation activities being carried by Sulabh International. He said that Sulabh International Social Service Organization is working in 28 States in India. Organization has constructed 10,500 public toilets which are being maintained on pay and use basis. Organization

has also constructed 13 lakh individual toilets (Sulabh Shauchalayas) and it is working since 1970 in the field of sanitation. Padma Bhushan, Dr. Binde-shwar Pathak, a social reformer is the Founder of the Organisation, he

added. Rajesh Gupta appreciated the work done by Sulabh International throughout the country.

He said that some more Deluxe Sulabh Toilets will be constructed in Jammu in future to make Jammu Open Defecation Free (ODF). In the meeting Joint Commissioner (W) JMC, AEE JMC, JE JMC, senior BJP leaders, Police, Administration & Sulabh volunteers were present there. The meeting was ended with vote of thanks.



MLA, Jammu East, Rajesh Gupta inaugurating Sulabh Toilet Complex at Tawi Front Park Jammu on Monday.

Rajesh Gupta, MLA Jammu East here, today.

This toilet complex has been constructed and will be maintained by Sulabh International Social Service Organisation on pay & use basis for 30 years. In the meeting, Anil Kumar Singh Hony. Controller Sulabh International Social Service Organisation J&K read the welcome address.

Addressing the meeting,

DB directives in PIL regarding security of court complex

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: In a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by Summit Nayar seeking security of court complex, Division Bench of State High Court comprising Chief Justice Badar Durrez Ahmed and Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur has directed the Registrar General to prepare a proposal for release of funds by the Government for various works.

After hearing Advocate General Jehangir Iqbal Ganai with Senior AAGs SS Nanda and WS Nargal for the State, the DB observed, "insofar as the maintenance and the cleaning work of the

High Court complex is concerned, the Registrar General shall prepare a proposal for release of funds by the Government based on the estimate submitted by Jammu Municipal Corporation", adding "thereafter, the same be presented to the Government for sanction and once it is done, the tendering process can be initiated".

DB also issued directions for filing appropriate affidavits indicating the status of the proposals regarding wall-fencing, lighting system, fire safety measures, issuance of smart card for registered walkers, multiple gates in court complex, gate pass system and X-ray baggage scanner.

BPEd, MPED students continue protest for shifting Director

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: The ongoing protest by BPEd and MPED students against Director Sports and Physical Education, Jammu University, entered into 7th consecutive day on today.

The agitating students boycotted their classes and assembled on the university campus. They raised slogans for shifting the incumbent Director and marched towards the University gate where they held a strong demonstration. They accused the Director of adopting egoistic behaviour and implementing wrong policies in department. They wanted to further intensify their agitation if the Director is not shifted immediately.

The protesting students also blocked the road in front of University main gate. They announced to continue the stir till the University authorities order shifting of the Director.

A number of students, who are activists of All India Students Federation, Jammu, also approached

the Governor house for highlighting their grievances. However, they could not meet the Governor, who is out of station.

Accident victim succumbs

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: A victim of road accident today succumbed to his injuries here at Government Medical College and Hospital (GMCH).

According to a police spokesperson, an unknown man of age about 65 years was shifted here at GMCH with serious injuries on February 8 after he was hit by an unknown vehicle near Home Guard police gate.

However, the man succumbed to his injuries today at about 2.30 PM. The body of the deceased was shifted to mortuary room of the hospital for identification/ post mortem. The concerned police had taken cognizance of the matter.

ICcCR & HRM organizes panel discussion on 'Import-Export Climate'

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: International Centre for Cross Cultural Research and Human Resource Management (ICcCR & HRM), University of Jammu, today organized a panel discussion in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), Jammu on the theme of 'International Import-Export Climate'.

The resource persons for the programme were Sujiv Jain, Managing Director, Karamhans

their employability. He also suggested various schemes of the Government that are instrumental for the establishment of Start-ups.

The discussion was taken over by Suvidha Jain, who shared her personal experience of taking up her family entrepreneurial venture and discussed the challenges in terms of especially matching traditional management to contemporary business decision making. She discussed the relevance of unlocking the current consumer behav-



Students of ICcCR & HRM with Resource Persons after panel discussion at JU on Monday.

Foods Pvt Ltd, Jammu and Suvidha Jain, Karamhans Foods Pvt. Ltd., Jammu.

The broad objective of the panel discussion was to educate students about the thrust areas of entrepreneurship and allied exporting opportunities ranging from food processing to agriculture so that they can build upon the entrepreneurial competencies that are sector specific.

Speaking on the occasion, Sujiv Jain explained State's exporting potential with regard to diverse specialisations that are part of State's multicultural and diverse heritage and resources it possesses. He stressed the need for management professionals to define their ideas and put them on ground and seek experiential learning, with a view to enhance

ior patterns and understanding the shift to meet market demands. She explained that it is significant to beat the bottlenecks and explore innovative methods of doing business. She also mentioned the importance of acknowledging and endorsing the digital model of business, as they are clientele centric and cost effective.

Professor Deepak Raj Gupta, Director, ICcCR & HRM, JU, explained the significance of bringing in the appropriate competencies and skills as well as the passion to take up new ideas to ensure success in entrepreneurial and start-up ventures

The discussion was attended by the students, scholars, faculty members and representatives from CII, Jammu.

Clerical Staff Association highlights cadre issues

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: A meeting of departmental representatives of Jammu Kashmir Ladakh All Departmental Clerical Staff Association was held here under the leadership of Nazir Ahmed Bhat, president J&K Commercial Tax Department.

Jeelani Naik, general secretary (JKLADCSA) Kashmir division and Basharat Mir, district president Pulwama were special invitees in the meeting wherein the participants held threadbare discussion upon issues of the cadre and showed great resentment upon various pending issues, especially pay disparity of Clerical cadre and SRO 272 of 2008, unnecessary delay of DPCs of Clerical cadre at Ho level, etc. The representatives felt that SRO 272 of 2008 is spreading like life consuming disease and had created gulf among members of the cadre.

They also sought progress report from Jeelani Naik general secretary JKLADCSA Kashmir division and other active representatives of Jammu division, regarding core issue of clerical disparity. In response Jeelani Naik and others produced detailed report before the cadre upon all issues, including Pay Disparity of Clerical Cadre, SAC training etc and assured that

Finance Minister was keen to resolve pay disparity issue as announced by him. He hoped that formal orders to this effect may get issued within days.

They further clarified that they had raised the SAC training issue before the Government strongly and were hopeful that SAC training of Junior and Senior Assistant may get resolved soon by General Administration and Department in time bound manner, keeping in view of the stagnation of clerical cadre working out side Secretariat. The matter of delaying tactics adopted by HoDs regarding DPCs of clerical cadre was viewed seriously and it was assured that it will be brought into notice of higher ups for immediate intervene as they had already took it in two departments i.e. Education and Fund Organization and accordingly other departments will be pushed before the Government.

During the meeting, election of District Unit Jammu was held. Gurmeet Singh (president Irrigation Deptt) was elected as District president Jammu, Ranbir Singh (vice president PWD) as district vice president District and Waseem Ahmed (publicity secretary Commercial Tax Department) as Secretary of District Unit Jammu.

Natrang's 'In Her Shoes' outshines in Kalaghoda Festival

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: Natrang created history today for being the first group from the State of Jammu and Kashmir which presented its play 'In Her Shoes' under the direction of Aarushi Thakur Rana in the Kalaghoda Festival Mumbai.

The play received standing ovation and was loudest with thunder applause at Baba Dhanukar Hall, Orion House, in Kalaghoda Art Festival. The play is inspired by a true psychological case study which is written by Nupur Sandhu, a Serenity Surrender Therapist.

"In Her Shoes" is a story of a well educated, graceful young girl, from an affluent family. She has everything what a girl of her age would dream of. She is the first child of the house, loved by all. But still she is continuously fighting with the demons of her thoughts that are beyond her control.

Every girls time comes, which every girls looks forward to, getting married all her buried fears just comes up, incidences which she thought are now past had actually not passed. All the emotions she felt during those not called for incidences, situations got hooked into her sub conscious mind and

few from the time of her unawareness also. Saachi fighting with her demons of her thoughts felt drained and loses all her confidence, due to her thoughts, her PCOS disorder and get into blaming everyone in her life for even her emotional and physical abuse. She was slowly stepping into self pity mode.

That is the time when Serenity Surrender Therapy helps her to understand self through her hooked blocks and heals her wounds and bruises her soul was carrying and affecting her present life. Due to this therapy, she was able to remove her self-created chains..... and move forward in her life as a free spirit, ready to fly high and touch the sky.

Natrang artists who performed in the play were Anam Malik, Aarushi Thakur Rana, Vrinda Sharma, Nupur Sandhu, Agam Kaur, Sanket Bhagat, Ashish Parihar, Goutam Sharma, Shivam Sharma, Sushant Singh Charak, Manoj Kumar Lalotra, Ajay Kumar Lalotra, Brijesh Avtar Sharma, Akash Bhat, Aadesh Dhar and Rahul Gupta.

The lights were designed and operated by Shivam Singh and the music was rendered by Bhisham Gupta.

All-new MINI Countryman unveiled at Auto Expo

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: The all-new MINI Countryman was unveiled today at the Auto Expo 2018.

Locally-produced at BMW Group Plant Chennai, the all-new MINI Countryman will be available

in three variants: two petrol variants - MINI Countryman Cooper S and MINI Countryman Cooper S JCW Inspired as well as one diesel variant - MINI Countryman Cooper SD. Deliveries will begin from June 2018 onwards and ex-showroom prices will be announced accordingly.

Henrik Wilhelm Meyer, Head of MINI, Region Asia, Pacific, South Africa and Importer Regions said, "The second-generation MINI Countryman represents a more distinctive and mature proposition of an ultimate all-rounder with ample space for you and your family. The all-new MINI Countryman is built for adventure and can turn any weekend into an expedition."

Vikram Pawah, president, BMW Group India, said, "MINI is the perfect fit for urban environment and has become a trailblazer success in the premium small car segment in India. The second-generation all-new MINI Countryman offers a unique combination of functionality, everyday practicality and long-distance suitability."

MINI Countryman Cooper S JCW Inspired equipped with John Cooper Works aerodynamic kit, rear roof spoiler and impressive 18-inch JCW thrill spoke

alloy wheels. The car is equipped with premium features such as the 'Leather Cross Punch' Sport Seats, Harmon Kardon Hi-Fi Speaker System, MINI Find Mate and the MINI Wired Package.

MINI Countryman Cooper SD features the Cooper SD engine for



Vikram Pawah, president, BMW Group India, posing with all-new MINI Countryman.

the first time in India that delivers 190 hp and 400 nm torque. With superior handling, no city corner or hill climb is a challenge. The Panorama Glass Roof and Electric Seat Adjustment with memory further adds convenience and driving fun.

MINI Countryman Cooper S offers more premium technology and design features than ever before. With the Automatic Tail Gate, Cruise Control, LED Headlight, Fog Light, Multifunction steering wheel, Centre armrest in front and rear and the Radio MINI Boost 6.5" as standard, the all-new MINI Countryman comes ready for any adventure.

The all-new MINI Countryman is available in five colours: Island Blue, Light White, Chili Red, Melting Silver and Thunder Grey as well as British Racing Green offered exclusively for the MINI Countryman Cooper S JCW Inspired.

Geelani demands ban on liquor in J&K

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Feb 12: Hardline Hurriyat Conference chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani today demanded a blanket ban on use and sale of liquor in Jammu and Kashmir while citing prohibition in other states.

Geelani appealed to religious scholars to launch a sustained campaign against the use of liquor and make people aware about its ill effects on health, society and family relations.

"It is encouraging that people in the State are raising their voice against this evil," Geelani said in a statement, adding "we hope everybody will play their role to eradicate this evil from society."

Referring to a private member's bill on prohibition in the Assembly, the Hurriyat leader expressed surprise that the legislators had claimed that a ban on

sale of liquor will hit revenue generation and cited the experience of other India states which have banned alcohol.

"The other four states of India, which have completely banned the sale of liquor, do not complain of any loss of revenue and even nobody is dying from hunger or poverty," he said.

Bihar, Gujarat and Nagaland have banned alcohol while Kerala to had introduced partial prohibition.

Geelani said "liquor is mother of all evils and does not only cause cancer like diseases but also disturbs the social fabric by giving birth to many social evils".

"Consumption of alcohol destroys the sacred and holy relations of the society and it has become a major cause of domestic violence," he claimed. (PTI)

Anganwari workers, helpers stage protest to highlight demands

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: Anganwari workers and helpers of the ICDS projects of State Social Welfare Department held a strong protest demonstration in front of MAM Stadium, here today.

A large number of ICDS women workers deployed at various Anganwari Centres in the region led by J&K National Trade Union Front leader Mohd Gafoor Dar assembled in front of MAM Stadium this morning at around 11 am and held a protest.

They were demanding their regularization and enhancement of honorarium and raised slogans against ICDS authorities for ignoring their demands. They pointed out that there are about 60,000 Anganwari workers and helpers in the State, who are working on the meager salary while their counter parts in Delhi, Harayana and Punjab are getting Rs 10,000 and Rs 6000 (helpers) per month.

"In view of rising prices of every commodity, the Anganwari workers and helpers of the State are facing lot of problems but the State

Government never bothered to enhance their wages for the last 10 years", they added.

While addressing the protesting employees of ICDS, Gafoor Dar, criticized the Government for its anti-worker policies. He said when the Government is claiming to regularize over 60,000 workers, this class of ICDS has been ignored. He demanded that all those workers who have completed 10 years in service be regularized, their wages be enhanced and honorarium of the workers pending for the last 8 months be released.

He further demanded fixation of final seniority list of Anganwari workers and conduct of DPC without any delay, implementation of new pension schemes in favour of workers and helpers, keeping provision of gratuity at the time of retirement at the age of 65, implementation of free Group Insurance scheme, release of money for mobile charges and MPR on line expenses including two pairs of uniforms and cancellation of illegal and unfair promotion orders of Anganwari workers as supervisors.



Uttar Pradesh Governor, Rana Naik presenting Second Prize to Salal Power Station for outstanding implementation of official language during 2016-17 in Northern Region - I.