

Jora takes stock of development activities in Srinagar City

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, May 31: As a part of beautification and cleanliness drive in Srinagar City, the Minister for Urban Development and Urban Local Bodies, Nawang Rigzin Jora today conducted a surprise visit to civil line areas of Srinagar City, including Regal Chowk, Lal Chowk, Sher-i-Kashmir Park, Polo View and the Bund along the river Jhelum.

The Minister took stock of various developmental activities at different places including, Abdullah Bridge, Lambant lane and other adjoining localities in the city. During inspection of the bund project, the Minister issued immediate instructions for clearing the wild grass from both sides of the river Jhelum immediately. He also called for further improving the sanitation of the bund area in view of heavy flow of tourists and locals. He directed the concerned officers to ensure regular monitoring of sanitation at the focal points.

Mr. Jora also interacted with locals, shopkeepers and discussed with them various issues related to further improvement and beautification of both sides of the bund of the river Jhelum and sanitation of the Srinagar City. He obtained the feedback for making the summer capital more beautiful and neat and clean so that the visitors carry

along a good message about the Srinagar city.

The Minister also inspected advertisement panels installed by SMC at different locations and directed the SMC authorities to further improve their designs to make them more attractive and add to the beauty of the City. The banners and advertisement hoardings should be erected in such a way that they do not create hazard for the people, said Mr. Jora.

Earlier, the Minister chaired a meeting of the officers of SMC during his maiden visit to Ward Office Lal Chowk at Shar-i-Kashmir Park, where he was briefed by the Commissioner SMC about the present status of drainage, sanitation and other developmental issues including functioning of street lights, traffic signals restoration work on footpaths for walkers and construction of State of Arts and other modern amenities providing to the people of the city. He was told that 72 dewatering Stations are presently functional in Srinagar city under State Drainage Division.

The Minister was apprised that two hopper vehicles followed by two compacting machines have been pressed into service for lifting the garbage from shop to shop. This is in addition to one sucker machine and one water tanker, which have been put in place to cater the concerned area.



Junior Engineers raising slogans during protest at Jammu on Friday. -Excelsior/Rakesh

JEs hold protest demonstration

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, May 31: Demanding strict action against the culprits involved in manhandling a Junior Engineer in Talab Tillo few days back, All J&K Diploma Engineers Association held a protest demonstration at Power Development Department (PDD) complex, Canal Road against the Police Department.

Amid slogans, the JEs engaged with Power Development Department (PDD), Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department and Road and Building (R&B) Department under the banner of All J&K Diploma Engineers Association assembled at PDD complex against manhandling of JE of PDD Sub-Division Canal Road at Talab Tillo.

Addressing the gathering, Arunesh Sharma, President, All J&K Diploma Engineers Association said that despite registering of FIR at police post Talab Tillo falling under the jurisdiction of Nawabad police station on May 26, no arrest has been made so far.

Condemning the delaying

tactics of Police Department, Sharma said that the police is trying to shield the culprits.

"If no action will be taken against the culprits by tomorrow, then the association will launch agitation at district levels and for any untoward incident, the Police Department will be wholly responsible.

Among others present were Sachin Tikku, Nitu Dingra, Anita Devi, Surinder, Avinash Sharma, Pankaj Goswami, Balbir Singh and other JEs from various departments.

Meanwhile, J&K Electrical Engineering Graduates Association led by its general secretary Rannik Singh met District Development Commissioner (DDC) and apprised him about manhandling of a Junior Engineer and other field staff at Tirath Nagar, Talab Tillo.

DDC assured proper security cover to the field staff including providing police escort and also assured strict action against the miscreants, who indulge in such practices.



Chief General Manager, SBI, Chandigarh Circle, N K Chari, handing over the keys of ambulance to chairman, Rotary Eye Club, D N Sharma.

SBI donates ambulance to Rotary Eye Club

Excelsior Correspondent
UDHAMPUR, May 31: State Bank of India (SBI), Udhampur under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) today donated an ambulance to Rotary Eye and General Welfare Foundation, Udhampur.

The Chief General Manager, SBI, Chandigarh Circle, N K Chari handed over the keys of Ambulance to the chairman, Rotary Eye Club, D N Sharma in the presence of A K Jain, DGM, Jammu Module and C J Tikku, RM Region III, Jammu, in a function organized at Bank's Udhampur office.

Speaking on the occasion, Chari said that SBI has been actively taking part in such social initiatives under its Corporate Social

Responsibilities since its inception and this venture is part of it whereby State Bank of India is donating such Ambulances to the organizations working for deprived sections of society.

The programme was also attended by B L Saini, chief manager, SBI Udhampur, Rajendra Sanson, secretary general, Rotary Eye Club, Udhampur, K K Khajuria, Manager, SBI Udhampur and K K Sharma, director, R-SETI, Udhampur.

The Chairman, Rotary Club, Mr D N Sharma highlighted various social welfare activities rendered by the Rotary Eye and General Welfare Foundation, Udhampur and thanked the State Bank for its kind and noble initiative.

Govt conscious of difficulties of far-flung areas: Sham

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, May 31: With an aim to bring people of rural and far-flung areas closer to Government and address their problems at their door steps, Minister for PHE, Irrigation and Flood & Control Sham Lal Sharma convened meeting with senior citizens at Akhnoor.

Various deputations and individual of Akhnoor town and adjoining areas met the Minister and apprised of the problems of their respective areas. The demands projected by the Ward No.1 to 13 of Akhnoor town included, replacement of old water pipes, repair of lanes and drains, upgradation of roads with black-topping, toilet complex, uninterrupted power and water supply.

The Minister said Akhnoor town has witnessed massive development in every sector and was also receiving priority attention in the policy planning of various schemes in sector of PHE, R&B, Health, Irrigation, Tourism, Employment and Education.

Describing public utilities as essential ingredient in development process, Mr. Sham said that the co-relation of various schemes under different departments is imperative to re-address developmental needs of the growing population in the town, adding that a comprehensive plan for channelizing river Chenab is under progress for optimum use of Chenab water.

Listing the measures taken by the Government for improving the socio-economic condition of the people of Akhnoor tehsil, the Minister said work on B.S.C Nursing College, Ayurvedic College, 200 bedded Hospital, Mini Secretariat and Maharaja Gulab Singh ji Photo Library is in full swing and with the completion of these prestigious projects the people of Akhnoor would be facilitated to a great extent.

Responding to the demands, the Minister said that the Government is conscious of the difficulties of the people of far-flung and backward areas. He said these areas are being given focused attention and many special schemes and development projects have been devised to match their requirements and needs.

He sought cooperation of people pertaining to local panchayat representatives in the effort of the Government in this regard. He said with the completion of all such projects and programmes the local population would be empowered socially and economically.

Earlier, the Minister also paid obeisance at Ballala-da-Bagh at Akhnoor and prayed for peace, progress and prosperity of the State.

Among others, SDM, Akhnoor, S.N. Jamwal, SE Irrigation, Executive Engineer PHE, I&FC, Sectoral officers, sarpanchs, panchs were present.

HC's directive to State on grievances of remote village's inhabitants

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, May 31: State High Court today directed the State to consider the grievances of residents of village Daranga in Bhaderwah tehsil and take appropriate decision within eight weeks.

The direction was passed in a petition filed by the residents of village Daranga Panchayat Dradhu, who submitted that in terms of Notification SRO 102 dated March 30, 2007 their area has been made part of Kursari Dranga Panchayat without following the procedure established by law and without calling any objection from the petitioners.

"The entire process of delimitation has been done with the sole object to divide the SC community from their brotherhood as well as to refrain the inhabitants from getting benefit of interlinked schemes of developmental works", Advocates W S Nargal and Priyesh Sharma appearing for the petitioners submitted, adding "due to the arbitrary exercise of power on the part of Government, the petitioners are facing many hardships in their day-to-day life".

They further submitted that there is no provision under the Panchayati Raj Act which gives power to the Government to segregate or annex the part of a village/hamlet from one Halqa Panchayat to another Halqa Panchayat more particularly in a situation when the hamlet has already been declared as SC reserved ward and by doing so the

headquarter of the Panchayat has been changed arbitrarily and without any justifiable cause.

Deputy AG Z S Watali appearing for the respondents submitted that before issuing the Notification the publication was given to the proposed change but no objection was filed.

After hearing both the sides, Justice Muzaffar Hussain Attar said, "the issue primarily falls within the domain of State. The policy decision of the State can be interfered with only when it falls foul of the provisions contained in Part-III of the Constitution of India. Such decision can be called in question on the grounds of malafides also".

"However, in order to see that the petitioners don't continue to nourish grievance against the action of respondents this petition along with all CMAs is disposed of and it is provided that the competent authority will afford an opportunity of hearing to the petitioners", the High Court said, adding "in case the competent authority enters into satisfaction in respect of grievance of the petitioners then it will be at liberty to review the earlier order/notification and pass fresh order in accordance with law".

The competent authority will be at liberty to maintain the earlier Notification in respect of the petitioners' village if on examination the facts so warrant, the High Court said and directed the respondents to consider and take decision preferably within 8 weeks from the date the copy of the order is served upon them.

CRPF jawan acquitted in NDPS case

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, May 31: Principal Sessions Judge Ramban, Md Akram Chowdhary has acquitted CRPF personal Hardev Singh, who was facing trial in NDPS case as the prosecution miserably failed to prove the case.

According to the police case, the CRPF jawan was arrested along with poppy on January 10, 2009 by Banihal Police. After investigation of the case chargesheet was laid against Hardev Singh, son of Bagleer Singh, resident of Ransih Kalan.

After hearing both the sides, Principal Sessions Judge observed, "prosecution has failed miserably to prove the case as the recovery and seizure of the con-

triband was doubtful and the mandatory provision of NDPS Act under Section 42(1) of NDPS Act has been observed in breach which is fatal for the prosecution case".

"In this backdrop of the matter, it can be safely concluded that the prosecution has not succeeded to prove the case by leading any cogent and credible evidence", the court said and held that the prosecution has failed to prove its case to bring home the charge against the accused for the commission of offence punishable under Section 8/15 NDPS Act.

With these observations, the prosecution case was dismissed and accused acquitted of the charges.

Harshdev urges Governor to check violation of Municipal Act

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, May 31: Harshdev Singh, NPP MLA and its chairman has lambasted the State Government for delay in holding of Urban Local Bodies elections in Jammu and Kashmir and thus depriving the State of Central funding worth hundreds of crores.

In a statement, Harshdev said that the State Government has not only failed to conduct time bound elections of the Urban Local Bodies but also committed gross violations of legal provisions of Municipal

Act and Municipal Corporation Acts in the process.

Section 14 of Municipal Act categorically provides that elections to constitute a municipality shall be completed before the expiry of its duration of five years and this has not been done by the Government thus creating a legal infirmity in exercise of its powers under the said laws, he explained and sought intervention of Governor to check further violations of legal provisions and ensure that the people were not deprived of their genuine democratic rights.

Vikar for effective mechanism to check transmission losses

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, May 31: Minister of State for Technical Education, Power, Information and Rural Development, Vikar Rasool today directed the officers to ensure that the necessary mechanism is put in place to ensure that the losses incurred due to transmission and damage to transformers are checked.

The Minister was chairing a review meeting of the Power Development Department (PDD), here today.

Principal Secretary, PDD, A. K. Mehta, Development Commissioner, Power, Syed Asgar Ali, Chief Engineers, Director, TTIC, SEs, XE's and other officers of the department were present in the meeting.

Mr. Vikar directed the officers to ensure that the damage to transformers is checked and they should conduct regular visits to different areas so as to get the first hand information about the load and the number of consumers getting power from the particular transformer.

He said that they should also get the requisite information about the number of un-registered consumers and also ensure that the revenue collection from

different areas is increased as per the actual load.

The Minister also asked the officers to ensure strict enforcement of ban on the high voltage bulbs in different municipal areas and cities and replace them with CFLs so that a considerable amount of power can be saved. He said that the Government has already issued the necessary orders in this regard.

The Minister also asked the officers to put in place the necessary safety measures in order to reduce the rate of deaths taking place due to electrocution and maintained that regular inspections should also be conducted in various electric installations so that the accidents taking place are curtailed. He also directed the officers to ensure that the rotation of the field staff is done at regular intervals so that the complaints, if any, emanating from different quarters are taken care of.

The Minister also called for the strict adherence to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) being signed between the Department and the officers at the ground level so that the functioning is streamlined and the revenue collection improves.



JMC Commissioner, K L Khajuria taking stock of sanitary conditions at Chand Nagar on Friday.

JMC Commissioner takes stock of sanitary conditions

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, May 31: Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), accompanied by other officials visited Chand Nagar area here today and took stock of the sanitary conditions in wake of forthcoming rainy season.

His visit came after a meeting with the chairman, Citizens Action For Accountability (CAFA), Bansil Lal Gupta, few days back in which the latter put forward the sanitation related problems being faced by the inhabitants of the area.

The problems highlighted in the meeting were poor sanitation, non functioning of street lights and out of order drainage system.

The JMC Commissioner issued on the spot directions to concerned officers who were

accompanying him for the early settlement of the genuine problems of the inhabitants of the area.

He directed the officials to repair the non-functioning street lights and install new lights where there is a need for them. He also directed to shift water cooler installed at Saheed Bhagat Singh Chowk to JDA Parking opposite to Jewel Cinema immediately so that cleanliness of area could be maintained.

Khajuria also directed for installation of water cooler at JP Chowk near traffic booth.

The prominent among others who were present on the occasion include Dr Tarun Singh, Lalita Sharma, Rajinder Mehra, Mohit Gupta, Swaran Singh, Anil Mahajan, Baldev Raj, S Avtar Singh, Krishan Singh etc.

4 LPG cylinders explode like 'bombs' Property worth lakhs gutted in major fire

Excelsior Correspondent
MENDHAR, May 31: Property worth over sixty lakhs was destroyed in a major fire which broke into the three hous-

cousin Qazam Hussain, son of Khadam Hussain Shah and Mazoom Hussain Shah, son of Waqar Hussain Shah, residents of Pathana Teer. One of the house was three-storey. The



Three houses completely destroyed in major fire incident at Pathana Teer in Mendhar on Friday. -Excelsior/ Nazki

es located at Pathana Teer village in tehsil Mendhar of district Poonch this afternoon.

The incident took place at around 3 pm today, apparently due to short circuit. After this the fire spread to the two adjoining houses of both the cousins. 18 members of all the three families ran to safety. The villagers rushed towards the burning houses and tried to douse the flames but could not save the property.

The fire victims have been identified as Master Nissar Hussain Shah, son of Tasveer Hussain Shah (ASI), his

animals of the families were in the fields when the incident took place. Four LPG cylinders exploded like bombs during fire and created panic in the entire area. However, non one was hurt in the incident.

The police party also reached there after some time. It has taken cognizance of the matter, however, no civil officer from the administration visited the site till late this evening. The families have turned shelter less and taken refuge in the other houses in the village as they have lost everything in fire.

Rs 80 cr spent under MGNREGA during April-May: Sagar

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, May 31: Indicating remarkable beginning of Central Government's flagship programme MGNREGA during the first two months of the current fiscal, the State has witnessed huge progress in its implementation. An amount of Rs 80 crore has been spent during this short period thereby generating 70 lakh mandays for the deserving beneficiaries across the State.

This information was given at a review meeting of the Rural Development Department which held here on Friday morning under the chairmanship of Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Ali Mohammad Sagar.

Commissioner Secretary RDD, Farooq Ahmad Peer, Director, RDD, Mir Altaf Ahmad, Director Rural Sanitation, Bashir Ahmad, Director Panchayati Raj, Baseer Khan, Director Social Audit, Dr. A. G Sofi, Member Secretary MGNREGA, Pawan Rathore, CEO, IWMP, Mr. Shah and other senior officers of the department were present.

The Minister directed the officers to ensure that the funds earmarked under this important scheme are utilized optimally so that the benefits percolate down to the targeted populace. He said that the programme has

been instrumental in changing the socio-economic profile of the people living in rural and far-flung areas throughout the country and all out efforts should be made to avail full benefits by the deserving people in the State. He directed the officers to ensure that the payments under the scheme are disbursed within the prescribed time period.

Mr. Sagar also asked the officers to identify certain villages which can be dovetailed with IWMP and MGNREGA so that the execution of both the schemes is speeded up. He directed the concerned to identify these villages in consultation with the local representatives of the areas.

Minister also directed the Director Rural Sanitation to speed up the execution of Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan Scheme across the State so that a pollution free environment is ensured in the rural areas. He said that the quantum of assistance under the scheme has been increased, which would ensure that more rural households get benefitted from it.

Mr. Sagar also directed the Director Panchayati Raj to effectively monitor the status of implementation of devolution of powers to the Panchayati Raj institutions so that the proper feedback is ensured on regular basis.

NC's Grievances Cell to meet people at district headquarters

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, May 31: To reach out to the people at far off and remote places, the Grievances Cell of the National Conference, Provincial Wing, Jammu will be holding public hearings at the district headquarters across the Jammu region starting from middle of June. The objective is to play the role of a bridge between Government and the people for seeking redressal of various individual and area specific problems.

The intensified mass-contact drive is part of the Chief Minister and Working President, National Conference, Omar Abdullah's declaration that 2013 will be the year of reaching out to the masses across the State.

The mechanism of the Grievances Cell had been put in place after the successful interactive sessions between the people and the Ministers belonging to National Conference at the party headquarters in Jammu during February this year. The Ministers met a large number of people from various parts of the state besides various organizations of trade, commerce, transport, tourism, education and other disciplines, heard their problems and took on the spot decisions to redress these.

Encouraged by the success of these interactions, the Provincial President Devender Singh Rana had constituted a two-member cell to listen to the problems of the people. The problems thereof, brought to the notice of the Grievance Cell are taken up with the concerned for action.

The Grievances Cell, set up three months ago, at the Provincial Headquarters at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhavan, has been listening to the problems of the people on week days between 10 AM and 5 PM. So far its inception nearly 4,300 persons and various associations/organisations have registered their grievances at the Cell, which have been processed for appropriate response from the concerned quarters. On an average 50 people have been meeting National Conference leaders, Anil Dhar and Iqbal Wani, who are heading the Cell.



JU Class IV employees protesting in front of Vice-Chancellor's office on Friday.

JU class IV employees' strike enters 19th day

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, May 31: On the 19th day of their ongoing token strike, launched under the banner of Non Gazetted Employees Union, the Jammu University Class-IV, Casual Labourers and Safai Karamcharis took out a protest rally on the campus and suspended work for four hours.

The protesting employees were raising slogans against the JU authorities for keeping the criminal silence over their issue of regularization and other demands. The rally culminated near the Vice-Chancellor's office where a dharna was staged.

Addressing the protesting employees, president of Non Gazetted Employees Union Krishan Chand rued negative response of JU authorities towards their demands despite best possible cooperation of Class IV employees and Casual Labourers to the University administration in hours of need.

General Secretary of NGEU Vijay Kumar Sharma urged the Vice Chancellor and Chancellor to regularize these Class-IV and Casual Labourers in accordance with the seniority as there was enough number of posts lying vacant in Jammu University.

All the NGEU executive members resolved to spearhead their agitation until and unless their demands are conceded by the authorities.

Clarification

Apologies to the news item captioned 'Summer vacations in subordinate courts', the date of commencement of the vacations was wrongly mentioned as June 6 instead of June 10 due to typographical mistake.

As per the notification, issued by Registrar General Suresh Kumar Sharma, the fifteen-day summer vacations shall be observed with effect from June 10 to June 24.

The error is regretted.