



Advisor R R Bhatnagar chairing a meeting on Monday.

Advisor Bhatnagar reviews arrangements for implementation of COVID-19 vaccination plan

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 4: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar today chaired a meeting to review the arrangements for smooth implementation of COVID-19 vaccination plan in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Financial Commissioner Health and Medical Education, Atal Dulloo; Mission Director NHM, Bhupinder Kumar; Managing Director JK Medical Supplies Corporation, Dr. Yashpal Sharma; Director Health Services Jammu, Dr. Renu Sharma and other concerned officials of the department while as State Immunization Officer, Dr. Qazi Haroon and other officials participated in the meeting through video conferencing.

Speaking during the meeting, Advisor Bhatnagar directed the officials for effective planning beforehand, and compile the database of potential vaccinators, prioritized groups of beneficiaries to be administered the vaccine in its initial stages well in advance so that no bottlenecks are faced during vaccination drives.

Regarding the transportation and handling of the vaccines, Advisor directed the officials that

robust mechanism should be put in place for smooth transportation of vaccines. He asked them to prioritize the transportation arrangements for hilly as well as snow bound areas.

To effectively deliver the vaccines at the grass-root level, Advisor Bhatnagar impressed upon the officers that inter-sectoral convergence between the frontline workers of various departments including health, social welfare, school education, rural development, and housing and urban development is must for the successful implementation of COVID-19 vaccination plan.

Highlighting the need for maintaining an open and transparent communication with the public to curb misinformation and rumours, the Advisor asked the officials to launch Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities on mass scale so that timely and effective information reaches out to public.

He also asked the department to develop a robust database to assess auxiliary requirements such as additional cold chain equipment and waste bags for bio-medical waste management and prepare plans for cold chain installation sites.

Financial Commissioner,

Navin for restructuring of JCCB, adoption of automation in banking protocols

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 4: Principal Secretary Cooperatives, Animal Husbandry and Agriculture departments, Navin Kumar Choudhary, today chaired the 7th Board of Directors meeting of Jammu Central Cooperative Bank (JCCB).

The meeting was attended by board members including Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Sanjeev Verma; Director Accounts and Treasuries, Jammu,



Principal Secretary APD Navin K Choudhary chairing a meeting on Monday.

Neeraj Gupta Bakshi; Director Agriculture, Jammu, Inderjeet; Senior Additional Advocate General, Seema Khajuria Shekher and other senior Government and bank officers.

Navin, who is also Chairman of the bank, directed the newly appointed Managing Director to conduct a comprehensive review of structure of the bank including its ITS and initiate steps for its restructuring, wherever required. He asked him to board the bank fully on automatic system like Core Banking System (CBS) and other PFMS platforms.

Principal Secretary asked the bank to analyse the banking structure so that branches which are not making any profit or having low business prospects should be relocated or amalgamated into the nearest bank branch. He further asked the bank to look for human resource needs of the bank so that the necessary staff is recruited

accordingly. He directed the officers to look for recruiting agency preferably IBPS for making the essential recruitments.

Chairman asked the bank to formulate a robust lending and Human Resource policy in line with other leading banks working here. He asked the bank to train its staff in modern techniques and technology being adopted in banking and hire new staff having updated skills and qualification so that the bank is run on professional lines.

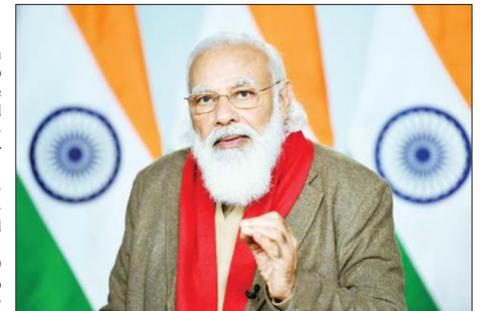
Navin urged the bank to create an asset inventory of the bank so that the same are put to good use and revenue is generated for the bank. He directed the officers to frame a list of its NPAs and start vigorous drives for recovery.

The Board also directed the bank to look after their court cases properly by hiring the services of professional lawyers. It asked the bank to file replies to the cases at appropriate time so that no adverse orders are passed by the court of law.

The Board also asked the bank to fully tap the business opportunity offered by the government and look for ways and means to disburse Rs 100 crore loan among government owned JKIDFC so that a good chunk of profit is earned. The board asked the bank to use the opportunity of recapitalization to be extended to bank meritoriously.

'Country proud of scientists, technicians' World's biggest COVID vaccination programme set to begin: PM

NEW DELHI, Jan 4:



Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivering the inaugural address at the National Metrology Conclave, through video conference in New Delhi on Monday.

The world's biggest inoculation drive against coronavirus is set to begin in the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said today, a day after India's drugs regulator approved two vaccines for restricted emergency use.

Lauding the scientists and technicians for the 'Made in India' vaccines, he said the country is proud of them.

"World's biggest COVID-19 vaccination programme is set to begin in India. For this, the country is proud of the contributions of its scientists and technicians," Modi said.

India's drugs regulator on Sunday approved Oxford COVID-19 vaccine Covishield, manufactured by the Serum Institute, and indigenously developed Covaxin of Bharat Biotech for restricted emergency use in the country, paving the way for a massive inoculation drive.

Addressing scientists at the National Metrology Conclave, Modi also said that it must be ensured that 'Made in India' products not only have a global demand but also global acceptance.

"Quality is as much important as quantity, our standards should rise with our scale in our quest for 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'," he stressed.

The Prime Minister said in any progressive society, research is key and effective and its effects are commercial and social. They also help widen approach and thinking. "We do not want to fill the world with Indian products, but we must win the hearts of every customer of Indian products in every corner of the world," he said.

Quality of services in our country and products, both public or pri-

would help the industry to make quality products in sectors like heavy metals, pesticides, pharma and textiles by drafting a 'Certified Reference Material System'.

The Prime Minister pointed out that historically any country has progressed in direct correlation to its effort to promote science. He termed this 'value creation cycle' of Science, Technology and Industry.

He said scientific invention creates technology and this leads to industry development. Industry, in turn, invests further in science for new research.

"This value creation cycle of science to mass creation has become all the more important in today's world when the country is moving forward with the goal of 'Aatmanirbhar' India. CSIR will have to play its role in this," he said.

Modi also dedicated the National Atomic Time Scale and Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya Pranali to the nation and laid the foundation stone of the National Environmental Standards Laboratory through video conference.

The conclave was organised by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL), New Delhi, on its 75th year of inception. The NPL is one of the oldest laboratories in the country.

The NPL has adopted an international practice for production of Indian Certified Reference Material (CRMs) Trademarked as Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya.

Describing the NPL as India's timekeeper, Modi said it also has the responsibility to change the future of India.

He urged the institute to come forward and play an important role in keeping with new standards and benchmarks to proceed towards forging a self-reliant India.

Modi said metrology also sets the foundation for any scientific achievement and no research can proceed without measurements.

"Even our achievement has to be measured on some scale. The credibility of the country in the world will be dependent on the reliability of its metrology. Metrology is like a mirror showing us our standing in the world, the scope for improvement," he said.

Talking about the the Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya, he said this



DCC(U) president Yogesh Sawhney chairing a meeting in Jammu on Monday.

Due to 4G ban, massive taxes, J&K suffers badly under BJP: Sawhney

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 4: The Congress Party has said that due to ban on 4G internet services, imposition of massive taxes on public through Urban Local Bodies, road/passenger taxes, raising of many Toll Plazas and massive hike in electricity bills, the people of J&K are immensely suffering while local BJP leaders have maintained criminal silence.

In a meeting of District Congress Committee Jammu Urban held here today under the chairmanship of former minister Yogesh Sawhney, PCC gen secy and incharge DCC, Jammu (U), strongly condemned the BJP led administration for causing a majority of problems for Jammu. The District Congress leaders reviewed possible solutions and plans for future undertakings by the Congress party in Jammu.

They discussed various issues about the governance of Jammu region and planned to raise and seek redressal of major issues such as the imposition of user tax on shopkeepers by Municipal authorities, farmers' issues, continuing ban on 4G internet services in J&K and unfair school charges among others.

Sawhney said that party has decided on continuing with the issues of the farmers, protesting at the Singhu border. It was also decided that the Congress in Jammu will highlight the issue of

issuance of high electricity bills, both private and commercial, which put a huge financial burden on the public during the pandemic, in a bid to work out some sort of solution to help people through this.

Another issue that will be taken up by the party in the coming month will be the arbitrary user charges imposed by the Municipal Corporation on shops and shopkeepers, by use of an irregular pick-and-choose system. He said that these charges haven't been properly worked out and should be reviewed.

Sawhney expressed concerns over long ban on 4G internet service which has hampered the educational process for thousands of students across the UT, as online education is the only viable option in the days of the pandemic.

He criticised that despite the ongoing struggle with online education because of the absence of 4G internet, schools have been demanding full fees from their students, while at the same time, often denying full salaries to its staff and teachers.

Prominent among those who attended included Madan Lal Malanger, Dr Rmakant Khajuria, Sanjeev Panda, Rajender Singh, Rajesh Sharma, Chander Shekhar, Atul Sharma, Anand Gandotra, Manmohan Sharma, Pawan Sharma, Rickey Dalotra, Harjeet Singh and Markes Gill.



Ex-MLC Dr Shehnaz Ganai addressing a public meeting at Arai in Mandi on Monday.

Mandi people extend full cooperation to Dr Shehnaz

Excelsior Correspondent

POONCH, Jan 4: Former MLC, Dr Shehnaz Ganai, who had excellently performed in the recent DDC election as an independent candidate from block Mandi, held first public meeting at Arai village where she was accorded warm welcome by locals of the area.

A large number of workers from all the three Panchayats of village Arai attended this function and reiterated their commitment to stand by her in future also with the same enthusiasm. She had come here giving special thanks to the people of Arai for expressing their confidence in her during recent elections.

Speakers on the occasion said that it is not important that who had won or lost the election, but they are proud that a broad vision personality- Dr Shehnaz Ganai is their leader. They further said that we salute to the efforts of Dr Ganai who had provided a number of ambulances for the benefit of helpless and destitute people at various places of Poonch which is now benefiting every individual of the area.

They said the credit of reconstruction of GA Ganai Memorial Sub District Hospital Mandi and Higher Secondary School, Sawjian goes to Dr Shehnaz. They added that they were lucky enough to have a visionary leader like Dr Shehnaz who can take up and resolve the public issues to the higher authorities in an efficient manner. And there is no such example in whole Pir Panjal region likes her.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Shehnaz extended gratitude to the people and said that the enthusiasm with which people openly expressed support in her favour is quite exemplary. She told the public that the spirit with which she has been working for them shall be maintained as usual as their enthusiasm with zeal and zest during recent elections has inspired her a lot.

Ford introduces 2021 EcoSport Titanium trim with sunroof

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 4: Ford India today announced a new variant lineup of its popular compact SUV, EcoSport, with sunroof on the Titanium trim across dealerships. It is available at Rs 7,99,000 for petrol and Rs



8,69,000 for diesel variants.

"In the tradition of bringing what consumers want and value, we are happy to bolster the EcoSport lineup and make every variant compelling in terms of features and value," Vinay Raina, executive director marketing, sales and service, Ford India, said.

"With the new lineup, we have not just addressed the customer feedback on making sunroof and key features more accessible but also left scope to add more unique features in future," he said.

The new lineup is available in BS-VI petrol and diesel powertrains and is equipped with Ford's 1.5 litre TDCI diesel engine that delivers 100 PS power and 215 Nm of Torque. The three-cylinder 1.5-litre Ti-VCT petrol engine delivers 122 PS of power and 149 Nm of torque.

Customers can choose from the five-speed manual gearbox that is offered with both the engines. The petrol-powered variant of the EcoSport is also available with a six-speed, torque convertor automatic.

The 2021 Ford EcoSport comes equipped with up to six airbags, a SYNC 3 infotainment system, an 8-inch touchscreen, and Apple CarPlay and Android Auto compatibility on the top-of-the-line EcoSport S variant. Most variants have a 9-inch touchscreen-based infotainment system and embedded navigation and the driver assistance features like automatic HID headlamps, daytime running lights, electrochromic mirror, and rain-sensing wipers, push-button start and other intuitive features.

Low intensity quake hits Kashmir

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Jan 4: A low intensity earthquake, measuring 3.5 on the Richter scale, hit Kashmir valley today.

An official said the quake occurred in the Valley at 1058 hrs today, the tremors of which were felt in most parts of North and some areas in Central Kashmir.

He said the epicentre of the earthquake was located in Bandipora in North Kashmir, adding the co-ordinates of the

earthquake are latitude 34.28 degrees north and longitude 74.52 degrees east. "The earthquake occurred at a depth of 5 km," he said, adding that there is no report of any casualty or damage to property.

Earthquakes have caused massive damage in Kashmir valley in the past as it is located in a highly sensitive seismological region. In 2005, an earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale caused massive damage on both the sides of the Line of Control (LoC) in J&K.

Students protest for mass promotion

Excelsior Correspondent

MENDHAR, Jan 4: Demanding mass promotion of 1st, 3rd and 5th semester candidates, students of Government Degree College Mendhar today



Students of GDC Mendhar protesting for mass promotion.

protested and held a strong demonstration.

Led by the Student Union president Dilshad Qadri, they raised slogans in support of their demand and appealed Jammu University Vice-Chancellor to order mass promotion of 1st, 3rd and 5th semester students.

Dilshad Qadri said the students of Under Graduate (UG) who already have passed their semester 6th are unable to go for further studies due to their backlog of semester 1st 3rd and 5th. "The backlog examination

could not be conducted by University due to COVID-19 and the career of students is at stake. The university has already granted mass promotion of 2nd, 4th and 6th semester students. No mass promotion can hamper students' future," he explained.

Casual labourers, daily wagers to resume strike after Jan 15

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 4: Casual labourers and daily rated workers of all the Government departments in J&K have warned to resume their indefinite strike if their demand of regularization and release of wages as promised by Lt Governor M K Sinha in presence



Representatives of Daily Wagers & Casual Labour Unions addressing a joint press conference in Jammu.

of BJP State president Ravinder Raina and MP Jugal Kishore Sharma was not addressed.

In a joint press conference here today heads of various unions and associations of these workers, under the banner of All Department Casual Labourers United Front (Jammu Province), disclosed that on November 11, 2020 a delegation of United Front along with BJP J&K Unit president Ravinder Raina and MP Jammu-Poonch Constituency, Jugal Kishore Sharma met the Lt Governor, Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan Jammu after 48 days long

strike.

The representatives of daily wagers briefed LG about the issues to the workers engaged for the last 15-20 years. The BJP leaders also projected the issue in detail. Sinha after listening assured that a committee will be framed within days and after the completion DDC elections the regularization process will start. On the assurance of the LG the agitation was also suspended.

The United leaders appealed to the Lt Governor to honour his commitment and initiate process of regularization of the daily rated/casual workers and provide relief to over

61,000 families in J&K UT.

They further warned that if their issues were not resolved by January 15, they will resume their indefinite strike/ agitation at Press Club of Jammu. They claimed that BJP leaders and the Administration was forcing them to adopt agitational path as they are feeling cheated again.

Prominent among those addressing conference included Akhil Sharma-PDD, Ravi Hans and Bhanu Partap from PHE, Rajan Sharma-Agri, Basant Singh -Floriculture and Parshotam - Estates Deptt.



Apni Party leaders and new entrants posing for group photograph.

Apni Party emerges as political alternative for people of J&K: Bakaya, Malhotra

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 4: Apni Party has emerged as the best political alternative for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, said Ex-MLC and General Secretary Apni Party Vijay Bakaya and General Secretary Vikram Malhotra.

They stated this during a programme in which over two dozen youth including BJP leader from West Assembly Constituency today joined Apni Party.

Among those who joined Apni Party include Vikram Singh (BJP), Parveen Singh, Rohit Sharma, Mohammad Ameen, Parshotam Malhotra, Kewal Sharma, Balbir Singh, Parnar Kumar, Sunil Kumar, Tajinder Singh, Pankaj Gupta, Vishal Singh, Rakesh Kumar, Varun Anthal, Ram Lal, Rajinder Singh, Balbir Singh, Sohail Suri, Shobab Ali, Hamit Ali and others.

Bakaya said that the party was confident that they would spread the message that Apni Party is the best alternative to the mainstream regional parties because it shuns emotional and hollow slogans and focuses on development of the people of the UT without making

promises that cannot be fulfilled.

He said that the Apni Party is committed to getting Statehood restored and has been raising its voice for protection of rights on land and jobs for the people of the UT.

He hoped more and more people would join the party and make it into a formidable force before the Assembly elections.

Speaking on the occasion, Vikram Malhotra said that youth have specially pinned their hopes with Apni Party for its ideology and developmental approach.

"The BJP and other like-minded political parties in Kashmir as well as in Jammu have played with the future of the youth. The Apni Party has emerged as an option for the hopeless youth of Jammu who have been disappointed with the arrogance of the ruling political party," said Malhotra.

Prominent among those who were present on the occasion included Media Coordinator Raqeem Ahmed Khan, Ajaz Kazmi, Gourav Kapoor, Janmeet Singh Bali, Vaibhav Mattoo, Vishal Zutshi, RK Lalotra, Gohar Rasheed Wani, Ashraf Choudhary and others.

Modi Govt plugged corruption through DBT mode: Balbir

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 4: Balbir Ram Rattan, Spokesperson, Jammu and Kashmir, BJP said that the Modi Government has plugged corruption through DBT mode.

"People of the country still remember the statement of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi publicly accepting the deep rooted corruption prevailing in the system. But now the things are not same and Narendra Modi Government has brought drastic changes in the system, which has plugged the menace of corruption in monetary transactions," he said in a statement, issued here today.

It may be recalled that Rajiv Gandhi, during a visit in 1985 to drought-affected Kalahandi district in Odisha had said that every rupee sent from the Centre, only 15 paise reached the intended beneficiary.

Balbir said that whatever Rajiv Gandhi had stated was seen on ground because of the role of middlemen and commission agents, who had a fix percent of share in every matter which involved money.

"When BJP formed its Government at the Centre in 2014, Narendra Modi, after taking over as Prime Minister, had given an assurance to the countrymen of good governance with no space

for corruption and middlemen. The PM has fulfilled his slogan of 'Naa Khayunga Naa Khaane Dunga' and it is in this direction that corruption has become a talk of the past," he said and claimed that today, if Centre sends rupee one, it reaches to the beneficiary in total with no cut of commission or bribe. It has been possible after adopting Direct Bank Transfer (DBT) mode by Modi Government. Now money directly reaches into the bank account of the beneficiary, he explained.

The BJP Spokesperson said that the Centre has sanctioned rupees 5.5 lakh per family as compensation in favour of refugees from West Pakistan and PoK and thousands among them have received full payments, without any deduction or commission. Similarly, he added, each instalment of rupees two thousand for a farmer is getting directly transferred in the account through DBT.

"There are numerous such instances, where total transparency is visible because of the commitment of the Narendra Modi Government which has rooted out corruption at all levels and in all matters, including the much talked about Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)," he said.