

# Former Ministers, Legislators call on Lt Governor

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 5: Former Ministers; former Legislators and public deputations called on Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha at the Raj Bhavan here today and congratulated the UT Administration for the successful conduct of DDC elections.

A delegation of the National Conference, led by its Provincial

undemocratic means. The delegation also expressed concern over the Laweypora incident and brutal assassination of Satpal Nischal, a gold smith in heart of the Srinagar city and sought judicial probe into these incidents. They called for measures to instil sense of security and trust among the people.

The senior leaders also called for inter-regional, intra-regional

Koli community. Similarly, former Minister, Sukhnaandan Choudhary apprised the Lt Governor about various issues related to agriculture and welfare issues of people who have given their land for establishing pump sets, tube-wells and for other agricultural purposes.

Meanwhile, a delegation led by former MLC, Vibodh Gupta also met with the Lt Governor and congratulated him for the recently held DDC elections.



Lt Governor interacting with NC delegation on Tuesday.

President Devender Singh Rana, drew Lt Governor's attention to the attempts being made to mutilate the mandate of the people by encouraging horse-trading of the recently elected Councillors, saying this is not good for democracy.

The delegation comprised former Ministers Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, Surjeet Singh Sialthia, Syed Mushtaq Ahmed Shah Bukhari, besides former legislators Javed Rana, S. Tarlochan Singh Wazir, Rattan Lal Gupta and Sheikh Bashir Ahmed.

"Peoples' mandate has to be respected", the delegation said, adding that this is actually the message sent out by the electors, loud and clear. They lauded the efforts of the Lt Governor in ensuring peaceful conduct of the polls and said the promise of upholding democratic values has to be kept by foiling the machinations of reversing the will of the people. This is imperative for the larger interests of democracy, the senior leaders said.

They also referred to the impressive turn-out in elections despite weather vagaries and said this reflects peoples' unflinching faith in democracy and the democratic institutions. They said the deep yearning of the people in becoming part of decision making is healthy sign of democracy and this spirit is required to be upheld by foiling the attempts of reversing the popular will by

and inter-faith community people to people dialogue in order to defeat the designs of the elements creating polarisation and divide in the society. Jammu and Kashmir has been known for peaceful co-existence of the people and no attempt of vitiating this atmosphere should be allowed. The dialogue between a cross section of people will help promote better understanding and harmony as respecting each others' sentiments is imperative for healthy societal growth.

The Lt. Governor assured the delegation that the administration will play a non-partisan role in the establishment of the DDCs. He also assured transparent and fair conduct of enquiry in the two incidents referred by the National Conference delegation.

A public delegation led by Chairman, Jammu & Kashmir National Panthers Party and former Minister, Harsh Dev Singh submitted a memorandum of demands and development issues of district Udhampur, particularly, Basantgarh and other remote areas pertaining to Ayurvedic Dispensaries in Khaned and Rai Chak; provision of staff in NTPHC Dudu; staff for HS Dudu and HSS Garh Samnabhanj; strengthening of road network and development of Rasli Garderan as ST Model Village.

The former Minister also projected welfare issues of people belonging to Gaddi, Sippi and



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh being briefed by new Director General of BRO, Lt General Rajeev Chaudhary about the road and bridge projects in Jammu & Kashmir and Northeast, at New Delhi on Tuesday.

## Chattergala tunnel to connect Kathua with Doda: Dr Jitendra

Excelsior Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Jan 5 : The proposed Chattergala tunnel will connect district Kathua with district Doda enroute the new Highway via Basohli-Bani through Chattergala to touch Bhandarwah and Doda. This is going to be a historic landmark project providing all-weather alternate road connectivity between the two distant regions and reducing the travel time from Doda to Lakhanpur to just around four hours.

This was stated here today by Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh after he was briefed by the new Director General, Border Road Organisation (BRO), Lt General Rajeev Chaudhary about the ongoing and proposed road and bridge projects in Jammu & Kashmir and North East. In his presentation, Gen Choudhary said that Jammu & Kashmir and particularly Udhampur-Kathua-Doda Lok Sabha constituency had witnessed unprecedented progress in road and bridge construction in the last 5 to 6 years and about a dozen BRO bridges have come up in this single Lok Sabha constituency itself, the notable among which are Atal Setu at Basohli and Devika Bridge at Udhampur.

As for the Chattergala Project, the Minister was informed that it was going to be a 6.8 Km long tunnel for which the Feasibility Survey has already been conducted by BRO. The tunnel is likely to take about 4 years for completion after the execution work starts and its construction cost is around Rs. 3,000 crore.

Impressing upon the BRO Chief to expedite the process as fast as possible, Dr. Jitendra Singh said, Chattergala is going to be a revolutionary game changer, particularly for the districts Kathua and Doda. He said, this will not only generate revenue but also job generation. Moreover, the all-weather road connectivity will bring ease of business, shorten the travel time and also provide a unique opportunity for places like Bani and Bhandarwah to emerge as tourist destinations of national repute, he added.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said, the demand for the tunnel at Chattergala had been pending for several years, but somehow not taken up by earlier governments because of their different priorities.

The other important BRO projects that came up during the review meeting included construction of road from Bhagwa to Lal-Darman to Masal-Dushnan in district Doda, Chkramore-Maharajpur-Rajbagh-Haria Chak road in district Kathua and upgradation of Phatala to Jakhani road in district Udhampur. Gen Choudhary also gave Dr. Jitendra Singh a brief about a dozen BRO road and bridge projects coming in his Lok Sabha constituency.

About the Northeast, Dr. Jitendra Singh received an update, particularly about road projects funded by the North Eastern Council (NEC) under the aegis of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) in Mizoram and two other BRO projects in Manipur.

# Advisors review post snowfall scenario in J&K

\* Direct timely restoration of essential services

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 5: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan, today held an extensive video conference with the District Administrations of Jammu and Kashmir divisions asking them to work 24x7 and with unflinching commitment to ensure that 100% power supply is restored and roads are cleared of snow across the entire Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Managing Director, KPDCCL, Mohammad Aijaz Asad and Chief Engineer (Distribution) Kashmir, Aijaz Ahmad Dar.

Deputy Commissioners of Kashmir division and Ramban district, Chief Engineer KPDCCL, Chief Engineer PWD (R&B) Kashmir, Chief Engineer PHE Kashmir, Chief Engineer (Mechanical) Kashmir and other officers attended the meeting through video conferencing.

Advisor took a detailed district wise review of the power scenario, road connectivity, water supply, essential supplies, disaster management, road clearance, food supplies, petroleum products and other issues. He emphasized on provision of all basic services to the people in particular power, water, road connectivity, food and petroleum products without any interruption.

He directed the DCs that the response teams in their respective districts should be kept on alert and keep informing the control room about the situation on half hourly basis. He directed them to keep the disaster centres ready in full capacity so as to cater to the emergency situations. He directed the officers to keep a close eye on the upper reaches which are avalanche prone and keep making continuous announcements required for the safety of people. He also said that evacuation teams should be kept ready to cater to any exigencies adding that the DCs and other officers should take feedback from the Panchayati Raj Representatives in restoration of

essential services. Advisor asked the DCs and heads of the departments to highlight any additional support needed to mitigate the crisis.

Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, also closely monitored the situation with the Chief Engineers of R&B, Mechanical and Jal Shakti departments of both Jammu and Kashmir divisions to review the post snowfall situation.

Advisor Bhatnagar impressed upon the officers to work 24x7 with commitment and proficiency to ensure that 100 per cent roads are cleared of snow across the Kashmir Valley and snow bound areas of Jammu division.

He also directed the officials that men and machinery already stationed near inter-district roads, connecting arteries and roads leading to hospitals and other emergency services should be pressed into services for

timely clearance of snow. He further stressed upon the officers that the snow on major roads and highways should be cleared at the earliest so that required services do not get disrupted in view of the heavy snowfall.

Advisor directed the Chief Engineers to maintain coordination among their respective departments during snow clearance operations and other restoration works. He asked them to keep greater synergy with other agencies like SMC, UEED, Urban Local Bodies and others besides maintaining regular coordination with district level teams for smooth flow of services.

He also asked the officers to be in the field so as to infuse motivation among subordinate officers and employees besides involving Panchayat Raj Representatives in restoration of essential services in view of heavy snowfall.



Disha Gupta, Aditya, Vivek

## 3 from Jammu selected for Civil Services

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 5: Disha Gupta of Gandhi Nagar Jammu, Aditya Sangotra of Panchari Udhampur and Vivek Pathak of Kathua have been declared selected for Civil Services in the UPSC Reserve list.

Disha Gupta, daughter of Pardeep Kumar Gupta and Suman Gupta, resident of Gandhi Nagar Jammu, has 21st rank in the list of 89 candidates declared selected. She is KAS Probationer and presently undergoing training at IMPA Jammu. She had secured 6th rank in the J&K Administrative Services-2018.

Aditya Sangotra, son of Mastan Singh and Ganga Devi, resident of Panchari, Udhampur, has secured 32nd rank in the UPSC Reserve list and he is presently serving as Inspector in J&K Excise and Taxation Department. He studied at Govt Middle School Panchari, Brahmrishi Bawra Shanti Vidya Peeth Udhampur

and then did BE Mechanical from University of Pune.

Vivek Pathak, son of Vijay Pathak of Kathua, has secured 48th rank in the UPSC Reserve list. Presently, he is pursuing Ph D in Sociology from JNU.

It may be recalled that the result of Civil Services (Main) Examination, 2019 was declared on August 4, 2020 recommending 829 candidates in order of merit for appointment to IAS, IFS, IPS and Central Services Group A and Group B against 927 vacancies. The Commission, in accordance with the rule 16(4) and (4) of the Civil Services Examination Rules, was also maintaining a consolidated Reserve List in order of merit below the last recommended candidate under respective categories.

As sought by the Department of Personnel & Training, the Commission has now recommended 89 candidates to fill up the remaining posts based on the Civil Services Examination, 2019.

## SSIA demands incentives for micro units

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 5: Small Scale Industries Association (SSIA) here today has demanded a special package of incentives to micro units claiming that these units are on verge of closure.

SSIA president, Jatinder Aul and general secretary, Anil Modi demanded intervention of Lt. Governor, Manoj Sinha to initiate immediate steps to help such units.

Chairing a meeting of executive committee of SSIA, Aul said they have sent a memorandum to the Lt. Governor listing problems faced by micro units and sought their redressal on urgent basis.

Seeking 100 per cent GST (SGST+IGST) exemption to existing micro units, he said earlier, the incentive of 100 per cent VAT remission was available to micro sector which is withdrawn in GST regime.

"Now, only SGST is refunded on value addition only and after depositing GST which is released after lengthy process of documentation," Aul maintained adding that exemption of 100 per cent GST (IGST) to micro units would help promoting their export to compete in

national market.

SSIA president further said that in every industrial package most of the incentives are given to fresh units perhaps to attract new investment in industrial sector but the existing ones are always left high and dry. "Jammu has about 90 per cent micro industrial units which hardly get 10 per cent incentives while 90 per cent incentives go to other 10 per cent units," he further said.

Among other demands of SSIA was 100 per cent transport subsidy for sale of goods outside J&K, waiving off of 3-year turnover clause incorporated in government tenders for micro units and simplifying of registration process for allowing additional line of activity by existing micro units.

Still more demands of SSIA included permission for trading of related items or other items by micro units in their unit premises to make them financially viable.

Aul urged upon the Lt. Governor to give urgent attention to micro industrial sector as it is imperative to help making the existing micro units financially viable as they constitute the foundation of any industrial policy.

SSIA vice president, Deepak Gupta; Sanjay Chopra, Parveen Jain and Ved Sharma were also present in the meeting.

## Power shut down

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 5: In order to carry out various upgradation/repair works, the power supply to Janglote-II and PHE feeders fed from 66/11 KV (2x5) MVA R/Stn. Kharoth shall remain affected on January 07, 08, 10, 12 and 14 from 10 am to 03 pm.



IG BSF Jammu NS Jamwal inaugurating Adm Block at a BOP in RS Pura area of Jammu Sector.

## IG BSF inaugurates Adm Blocks at BOPs

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 5: In a continuous bid to provide safe and comfortable living conditions to BSF troops, NS Jamwal, IG BSF Jammu inaugurated 5 Administrative Blocks at various BOPs in RS Pura area of Jammu Sector.

Surjit Singh, DIG, SHQ BSF, Jammu and Commandants of BSF Battalions, along with jawans were present during this event.

On this occasion NS Jamwal, IG BSF Jammu said that the initiatives have been taken by BSF for the speedy implementation of increasing the capacity of BOPs and these new Administrative Blocks will certainly enhance BSF

efficiency and provide comfortable life for its troops. He also added that these constructions are done to improve the living conditions of those BSF jawans at the border, who round the clock and throughout the year stay away from their families to maintain the sanctity of Indian borders.

Frontier Jammu is fully committed to provide better living conditions to its troops deployed on the International Border and enhance the satisfaction level, IG added.

Border Security Force, first line of defence and the world's largest border guarding force has been at the forefront in keeping the border peaceful and to maintain the sanctity of International Boundary.

## 'Re-conduct JK Bank exam for those who missed' Few inches of snow debunks claims of admn in Valley: Bukhari

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Jan 5: Apni Party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari today decried the preparedness of the administration that was caught napping in the wake of fresh snowfall across Kashmir division.

"Not to talk about snow clearance on roads or ensuring smooth supply of water and electricity; the administration has now debunked its own claims by ordering rationing of fuel across Kashmir division," Bukhari observed.

He said the order may be precautionary in nature but the divisional administration has created scare among people and raised a big question mark on its stock positions for tackling the winter exigencies in Kashmir.

"Snowfall is nothing new to Kashmir. But we have always witnessed that a few inches of snow buries tall claims of the administration that always boasts about its advanced preparations before the advancement of winters," Bukhari remarked, while expressing deep concern

over the plight of people in snowbound areas which are cut-off from the main town across Kashmir division.

He said there has been incessant snowfall since the last few days but the is yet to clear the major and link roads so as to enable the commuters a hassle free movement. "Not to talk of the rural areas or upper reaches, even many localities in the Srinagar city are inaccessible and reeling under perpetual darkness. There is scarcity of drinking water in many districts which has aggravated the situation," Bukhari remarked.

He said that the electricity is playing hide and seek with the consumers and there are reports of shortage of ration, fuel and essential food commodities at many places especially in North and South Kashmir regions.

Bukhari said the plight of people living in far off places is more worrisome. "The Government should immediately take stock of the situation and ensure people all effective and basic amenities in towns and far off places in Jammu and Kashmir," he demanded.

Apni Party president urged the administration to clear the snow from all roads and arterial links besides addressing the frequent curtailment of electricity supply and shortage of water supply that has further aggravated the condition of people in Kashmir.

He said the Government should make proper arrangements to facilitate easy access to the critical patients including pregnant women to the nearby hospitals across Kashmir division. "The Health Department should press into service all its men and machinery including ambulance services to ferry critical patients to the nearby hospitals without any procedural wrangling," he demanded.

Bukhari further demanded re-examination for the Banking Associates aspirants who failed to reach the examination centres across Kashmir division due to heavy snowfall.

In a statement Bukhari urged the Lt Governor Manoj Sinha to intervene into the matter and get the JK Bank recruitment examination rescheduled for those aspirants who were stranded because of the inclement weather and could not appear at the examination centres.

## Tourism players offer free food, lodging to stranded tourists in Kashmir

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Jan 5: The tourism players in Valley are offering free food and accommodation to the tourists who had reached Kashmir but could not leave as the flights were cancelled.

The continuous snowfall for the last two days has left Kashmir out of bounds as the air, road connectivity remains cut off leaving several tourists who were in Kashmir on the New Year's Eve stranded in several places.

Hotellers, as well as the travel agents told Excelsior that they understand the situation of the many of tourists who might not be having enough money to stay in Kashmir for few more days and keeping that in view they are offering a helping hand.

Under the circumstances, while the Tourism Department has already issued helplines for the stranded tourists, many other stakeholders have gone an extra mile and have offered the tourists to stay at their homes and hotels if they want.

Officials of the Tourism Department said that they have offered

the helpline numbers through various mediums and that the stranded tourists can use the assets of the J&K Tourism Development Corporation.

Director, Tourism Department, Nisar Ahmad Wani, told Excelsior that the department has kept ready a good number of rooms at different locations. He said that the Department has reserved 15 rooms at Hotel Heamal, 15 more at TRC and 7 rooms at Yemberzal Guest House, TRC in Srinagar.

"Such tourists must get in touch with the department and they will be provided with the necessary assistance and that they can use the JKTDC's hotels till there is an improvement in the weather; apart from that we have made arrangements for those who might be stranded in Pahalgam and Gulmarg," he said.

Farooq Ahmad Kuthoo President, Travel Agents Association of Kashmir (TAAK) told Excelsior that they are in touch with such tourists and are doing everything possible.

"We must offer a helping hand to the stranded tourists who are our guests and for that, we have offered

them to stay at our homes, while many other hoteliers have offered their hotels to the stranded tourists in Gulmarg as well as in Srinagar," he said.

The members of the Association are also helping the Tourism Department in finding out such tourists who are stuck due to the cancellation of their flights amid snowfall.

Notably, many tourists were enjoying their trip in Kashmir on New Year and were scheduled to leave, however, due to the snowfall that started on January 3rd resulted in the cancellation of their flights.

A hotelier in Srinagar told Excelsior that there are several tourists stranded even in Srinagar while there were many who had to come but could not as the flights were cancelled.

"We have several such tourists with us right now whose flights were cancelled; we have given them the helpline numbers of the Tourism department while as we are also trying to help in whatever way possible," Wahid Malik of hotel New Park in Boulevard told Excelsior.