

Amit Shah to address Northeast meeting at Shillong: Dr Jitendra

Excelsior Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Jan 19 : Home Minister Amit Shah will address the 69th Plenary Meeting of the North Eastern Council (NEC) scheduled to be held at Shillong, Meghalaya on the 23th and 24th of this month.

This was disclosed here today by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh after he convened a meeting of the senior officers of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) and the North Eastern Council (NEC) to finalize the arrangements and the agenda for the two-day meet, which will be attended by the Governors and Chief Ministers of all the eight States of the North Eastern Region, the Chief Secretaries and Senior officers of all the North Eastern States as well as senior officers representing key Ministries and Departments of the Central Government. Officers of the North Eastern Council from Shillong joined the meeting online.

It was also informed that while Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah will Chair the Plenary Session, DoNER Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh will be the Co-Chair.

North Eastern Council, which



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh convening a meeting of senior officers of the Ministry of Northeast, at DoNER headquarters at Vigyan Bhawan complex, New Delhi on Tuesday.

has its headquarters at Shillong, was founded in 1972 and is one of the premier and earliest organizations dedicated to the planning and execution of infrastructure and other projects in the region. The North Eastern Council also coordinates in improving the capacity-building as well as project management and fund spending by the States. Attracting investment in the North Eastern region, facilitating entrepreneurship and giving impetus to innovative areas like Bamboo, Oil Palm and Horticulture are a part of the mandate of this premier organization.

Briefing about the scheduled meeting, Dr. Jitendra Singh said, the presence of Home Minister Amit Shah will not only add to the grace and stature of North Eastern Council (NEC) but will also enable several on-the-spot decisions. He said, Amit Shah has vast experience of the North Eastern region and has travelled every nook and corner in each of the eight North Eastern States, and

therefore, his insightful inputs and advice have given great impetus to the outcomes and performance of the North Eastern Council.

During the two-day session there will be presentations from the Ministry of DoNER, NEC, the State Governments as well as selected Central Ministries on various developmental initiatives and future plans for the North East Region. The Plenary is expected to deliberate on the progress of ongoing projects, confirmation of the proceedings of the 68th Plenary meeting, outlays by Central Ministries in the North Eastern Region and plans for the period beyond March 2021 during the term of the Fifteenth Finance Commission.

In this regard, Dr. Jitendra Singh held a meeting with senior officers of MDONER and NEC at Vigyan Bhawan complex, New Delhi to review the preparedness and modalities for the 69th Plenary Session at Shillong.

LG greets people on Guru Gobind Singh Ji's Jayanti

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 19: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has greeted the people on the eve of the Birth Anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Sikh Guru.

In a message of felicitations, the Lt Governor observed that Guru Gobind Singh Ji was a great spiritual master, a warrior, poet, and philosopher, who throughout his life stood up against injustice and strived for establishing a society based on equality, brotherhood, and love.

"The values underlying the teachings of the great Guru and his valour transcends time and continues to inspire generations", he added.

The Lt Governor expressed hope that the precious teachings of Guru Gobind Singh Ji would always keep us on the path of righteousness and wisdom, guiding our endeavors to establish a just social order furthering peace, prosperity and strengthening the bond of communal harmony in the region.

The Lt Governor prayed for sustained peace and progress in the UT and the well-being of the people of J&K.

Three NC panchs join Apni Party in south Kashmir

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Jan 19: Three National Conference (NC) panchayati members resigned from the party and joined the Apni Party (AP) in south Kashmir district of Anantnag today.

A spokesman of the AP claimed that three members from NC Nazir Ahmad, Shameema Akhter and Ahmad Gani and several other political workers joined the party at Vailnagbal Ashmuqam in Anantnag.

The new entrants to the Apni Party were welcomed by party General Secretary Rafi Ahmad Mir.

"The party welcomes everyone who is sincere and committed to work for the welfare of the common people. We have always reiterated our stand that we focus on politics of truth and as everyone knows it is the truth that prevails.

I welcome these Panchayati members into the party fold alongwith other respected political workers," Mir said.

On this occasion, the new entrants expressed their commitment to the party principles and avowed to further strengthen the party at the grassroots levels, in their respective areas.



Secretary RDD Sheetal Nanda chairing a meeting at Jammu.

Sheetal discusses promotion of menstrual hygiene, sanitary napkins

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 19: Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Sheetal Nanda, today convened a meeting to discuss promotion of menstrual hygiene and sanitary napkins among girls and women.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Mission Director, JKRLM, Mission Director, ICDS, Additional Mission Director, JKRLM, Jammu, Assistant Commissioner Development, Jammu, District Panchayat Officer, Jammu, Block Development Officer, Block Bhalwal, Jammu, Block Programmer Manager, Bhalwal, Jammu.

It was informed in the meeting that the members of various Self-Help Groups (SHGs) of UMEED scheme have made eco-friendly, hygienic and reusable sanitary

pads for rural women of the UT which will be supplied to panchayats. These sanitary pads being made on pilot basis by Shakti, a Cluster Level Federation (CLF) of Bhalwal block of Jammu district, from cloth and banana fibre, are environment and health friendly.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary, Sheetal Nanda said that while regular disposable sanitary pads contribute to plastic waste and pose environmental hazards, "these eco-friendly, affordable, reusable and hygienic sanitary napkins will greatly help in combating such challenges." The initiative will also create employment opportunities among rural women, she added.

She added that wide awareness should be raised through Gram Sabhas and schools and other platforms among the rural women regarding menstrual hygiene.

Ladakh UT admn allows sale of poultry products

Excelsior Correspondent

LEH, Jan 19: UT administration has allowed the sale of poultry products and issued an order not to impose a ban on poultry product sourced from non-infected areas and states.

As per the second advisory/information issued by Ravinder Kumar, Secretary, Animal/Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries Department, the UT administration has directed District Administration (Leh/Kargil) and Directorate of Animal Husbandry, UT Ladakh, to keep continuous monitoring and surveillance on the situation from time to time.

Keeping in view the outbreak of Avian Influenza in neighbouring States of UT Ladakh, the administration had notified a ban on the import of live birds, including poultry and unprocessed poultry meat for any purpose, into UT Ladakh. The UT admn, in the advisory, says that ban should be imposed only within a radius of 10 km of the infected zone.

The UT admn issued the advisory in the wake of the absence of any report of human infection due to consumption of poultry products such as egg and chicken. The advisory further says that there has been no scientific report all over the globe that the infection of H5N1 or any other strain of Avian Influenza viruses spread through processed products.

'Kashmir Mera Ghar' hits stands Protest rallies, seminars, demonstrations mark observance of 31st Holocaust Day by KPs

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 19: Protest rallies, holding of seminars and webinars, wearing black badges and staging demonstrations marked the observance of 31st Holocaust Day by displaced Kashmiri Pandits today.

Panun Kashmir (PK) commemorated Kashmir Hindu Holocaust Day today in Press Club here. The event was part of a month-long Holocaust commemoration being observed online through conversation in exile, victim testimonies, contributions of artists in exile.

Recounting the struggle of last 31 years, Dr Agnishekhar, convener P K narrated the hardships the activists of organisation in particular and the entire community in general faced in keeping the struggle of resilience alive amidst all odds. Dr Agnishekhar highlighted the gruesome genocide which took place in Valley leading to Holocaust of entire Kashmiri Hindu Community from Valley stating that the activists of Panun Kashmir over last 31 years ensured the walls and cries of resilience reach every nook and corner of the world. Discussing at length the role of activists in keeping the struggle alive, Dr Agnishekhar expressed satisfaction that despite all odds, and an apathetic state response, our community has been able to survive the Holocaust and worst Genocide inflicted.

Speaking on the occasion Surennder Bharati Ambar, Ex MLC, termed the exodus of Hindus from Valley in 1989-90 as the a stigma on a democratic secular republic which must be addressed by the consolidated will of Indian State. Termining the displacement and Holocaust as unfortunate, he stressed that the genocide of Kashmiri Hindus must be addressed and justice accorded to victims of genocide.

Senior community leader P L Badgami while speaking on the occasion termed the Holocaust of Kashmiri Hindus as a Black Spot on entire Indian State. He called upon the politicians, and policy makers to stop treating the genocide and Holocaust of displaced Kashmiri Hindus through cosmetic measures.

In the concluding remarks, Dr Ajay Churungoo, Chairman, PK expressed regret that Indian State continues to ignore and trample over aspiration of exiled Hindu community of Kashmir and this day, 19 January stands as a testimony to this fact. Dr Ajay Churungoo stated that Indian State continues to be on the suicidal path of waging a war on the Indian nation, and Kashmiri Hindus were caught in the fault lines, adding that Indian State can no longer afford to incentivize separations or half separatism in the hope bind Kashmir to national main stream. Dr Churungoo appealed the masses to understand the gravity of genocide perpetrated on the Hinduism of Kashmir historically, adding that the struggle of Hindus even after facing perpetual genocide epitomizes the resilience and renaissance.

Daya Krishen Koul, vice chairman, PK moderated the programme. The commemoration was attended by Capt (ret'd) S K Tickoo, Sheela Handoo, Kiran Wattal, Raj Nath Raina and many learned dignitaries.

The activists of Youth All India Kashmiri Samaj (YAIKS) and Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora (GKPD), wearing black batches held a massive scooter rally here on Holocaust Day under the leadership of R. K Bhat, president YAIKS and North India Head GKPD. The scooter rally started

DC sanctions Rs 30 lakh relief for fire-affected families

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Jan 19: District Administration Srinagar has sanctioned relief and compensation in favour of families affected by recent fire incidents.

Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Shahid Choudhary sanctioned the amount for immediate relief to affected families. Additional Deputy Commissioner Dr Syed Hanief Balkhi, Joint Director Planning Mohammad Yaseen Lone, ACR Rour ur Rehman and concerned Tehsilddars were present in the meeting.

In eight different fire incidents 23 structures were damaged and 44 families affected in Gandarpora, Navakadal, Zadibal, Allochiabagh, Habbakadal, Wattalkadal, Nadpora, Chhanpora and Panthachowk. The district administration rushed immediate assistance to affected families which included Rs 3 lakh cash assistance, 175 mattresses, 180 blankets, and 200 bed sheets apart from kitchen sets and other household requirements.

Meanwhile, after assessment of losses an assistance of Rs 30 lakh was sanctioned by Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar in favour of affected families which included Rs 1 lakh each for restoration of damaged structures, Rs 3000-4000 assistance for kitchen items, Rs 5000 cash assistance, Rs 10,000-



KPs protesting in front of UNO office Jammu on Tuesday.

—Excelsior/Rakesh

from Muthi Migrant Camp and after passing through various markets of Jammu city, Jewel Chowk, Vikram Chowk and finally at U.N.O office Gandhi Nagar. A memorandum was also submitted by the protesting activists at U.N.O office highlighting the mass exodus and plight of community.

While paying tributes to martyrs, R. K Bhat said 19th January is the Blackest Day in the history of human civilization. The community will never forget this day, when in the year 1990, the most civilized and peace loving people were thrown out of Valley with only fault of upholding the National Tricolor. He said many people of the community made their supreme sacrifices for this great nation but unfortunately still after three decades KPs are out of their homes and hearths and are refugees in their own country. The successive Governments have mis-

erably failed to rehabilitate them in their own Motherland (Reshwar). Others who addressed the gathering includes Sanjay Ganjoo, Sanjeev Koul, Manoj Handoo, Rakesh Fotedar, Vimal Raina, Ashwani Kak, Sanjay Raina, Vinod Bhat, Ajay Pandit and others.

All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference (ASKPC) observed 31st exodus day at its office complex Durga Nagar where participants while recalling 19th January 1990 when lakhs of Kashmiri Pandits were forced to leave Kashmir by Muslim Jihad as they wanted to make Kashmir, Pandits free. These Jihad created havoc in the minds of peace loving community with killings, looting houses, burning properties and what not.

The speakers who spoke on the occasion were S K Wangmo President, Vijay Bakaya, ex MLC, K K Khosa, president K P Sabha, Senior Advocate, Kashmiri Lal, Bhat, Bhat, Ravinder Razdan and Bharat Bushan Gosani, Predaman Krihan Raina compared the Programme.

The speakers laid stress and asked Kashmiri Pandit community to struggle cohesively till the government rehabilitates Kashmiri Pandits back in Kashmir. These leaders assured the community that their struggle of 31 years would never go waist and definitely that would yield fruit. Each speaker laid emphasis on the events which took place during the midnight of 18-19th January, 1990 when lakhs of Muslims from mosques issued declarations that the Kashmiri Pandits were Kafirs and asked them to leave Kashmir

Participants in the programme paid tributes to their martyrs who were brutally assassinated by Islamic Jihad at different times since the inception of Islam in Kashmir.

Others who participated in the Programme were Sataish Bhan, S K Raina, Veena Gurtoo, Suneel Bhat, R L Koul, Shuban Pandit, Jawhar Lal Pandit, Ashok Dhar, Kuldeep Pandita, Sanjay Pandita, Bimal Wattoo, Rattan Lal Pandita (Sarpanch), S K Bhat, Subash

Chatta, Bushan Bhan, M L Bhat, Ravi Raina, Sanjay Bhat, Ravinder Bhan, Sanjay Bhat, Uday Raina and Lalit Kumar Wangmo.

Jagti Tenement Committee (JTC) and Soan Kashmir Front (SKF) observed the Holocaust Day, at Jagti township. The members of the organization protested under the leadership of it's president, Shadi Lal Pandita and waved black flags.

Pandita said that since 1985 the Kashmiri Hindus have been suffering due to brutal murders, rapes, discrimination, property loot and later the community was forced for mass migration on January 19-1990 therefore January 19 every year is observed as Holocaust Day.

He said today is the one hundred ten day(110 days) of JTC and SKF protest but the Government has not bothered to talk to us and listen our problems.

On the occasion of Holocaust Day Panun Kashmir led by Virender Raina took a pledge to rededicate itself for the cause of separate homeland in Kashmir. It said 1990, 19 January was the darkest night in the annals of Kashmiri Pandit history who had to leave Kashmir for the seventh time. Virender Raina, president PK, Kamal Bhagati, Upinder Koul its general secretaries, Sameer Bhat, Vimla Churungoo, Ashok Churungoo, R K Bhan, Kewal Krishan and Kanwal Pandita paid tributes to martyrs.

Another programme was held by PK led by Vijay Bhat in which the demand for early return and rehabilitation was made by the activists. Vijay Bhat while reiterating the homeland demand said nothing short of it will be acceptable to the community.

AIMCCC also observed Holocaust Day. In this connection a programme was held at Jagti township. The speakers on the occasion said, that nothing has changed during last 31 years of exile, "We lost our culture, homes, homeland, property, including agriculture and horticulture land, shrines, business and every thing. The programme was led by AIMCCC president Desh Rattan.

Kashmiri Pandit Conference (KPC) which observed the day as Black Day said it was a terrific day when KPs were forced to leave the Valley. Addressing the programme, KPC chief, Kundan Kashmiri said on this day the situation was pathetic and Government seemed to be non-existent at that time and has gone into hiding.

Curfew was imposed as a first measure to restore some semblance of law and order, but it failed to have a deterrent effect, he added.

He urged the Government to correct the misdoings towards the community by tormentors to appraise the nation about dangers posed to its unity and integrity and expose the secular fabrics of so-called secularists and Jihadi elements.

Kashmiri Khatri Hindu Maha and Yavak Sabha, Displaced Kashmiri Unemployed Youth Union along with its members to mark the Holocaust Day staged a strong demonstration on the 31st anniversary of their mass exodus from the Kashmir Valley and also observed two minute silence to remember the carnage of Kashmiri Hindus and paid rich tributes to martyrs of the minority Kashmiri Hindu community in

Jagti Nagrota here. Protest demonstration was led by its president Er Ramesh Chander Mahajan, and large number of members came out from different localities of the Jammu to register their protest with banners and placards in their hands and raised up slogans for justice.

Various KP organizations this year in continuation with month-long online Holocaust campaign launched by Panun Kashmir, 'Youth 4 Panun Kashmir' along with, ReHinge Kashmir, Roots in Kashmir and other key KP organizations like Kashmiri Samiti Delhi and Kashmiri Pandit Cultural Society, UK and KOAC, Canada who have come together to organize programs to observed the Holocaust Day.

These organizations said this day witnessed unprecedented terrorization of the Kashmiri Hindus in their aboriginal land. The community was hounded out from their homes and has been languishing in exile from their homeland for last 30 years. On this day, the community reflects on the genocide they have been enduring – remembering all those who perished in the holocaust, reliving the pain, and continue to, experience; celebrate the resilience that has ensured the community survival in exile; and reaffirming the resolve to return to their homeland.

Among various programmes organised Nishkasan ka Dard – tomorrow 10 PM, a program where the community comes together and observes a night vigil staying in tents. They transport themselves back to the night of 19th January 1990 and re-live a bit of the pain that the community endured during those times.

Meanwhile RMK Arts & Research Foundation released a video song with participation of young talent artist of the community on Holocaust Day. Kashmir Mera Ghar is written by young talented Rapper Ankush Saproo and sung by Meeru Raina a young singer. It has been produced by Meetu Thaploo and directed by Akash Balwal while music has been given by Kuldeep Saproo.

Special Programme was organised by Radio Sharda on Holocaust Day today in which the poets, intellectuals and writers participated and recalled the tragedy suffered by the community in 1990. The programme was organised by Pir Panchal led by its president Ramesh Hangloo. He said the day is a black spot on the democracy as lakhs of minority Hindus who were most peace loving were forced to flee from Valley under a big game plan by Jihadis and Pakistan.

Homage was paid to martyrs on the occasion of Holocaust Day at Sharda Colony, Patoli Brahmana. In his address Dr Ramesh Bhat urged the Government of India to announce Commission of Inquiry to look into the reasons for exodus of KPs and also bring justice to those who committed crimes against humanity and were still roaming free.

Kashmiri Pandits of Delhi NCR held a sit in protest at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi on Holocaust Day today. Observing the COVID norms the protestors recalled the dark night of January 19 in 1990 when the community was thrown out of the Valley. The protest was led by Ravinder Raina head of Save Sharda Committee Kashmir who urged the Government to take the concrete steps in consultation with the community on its safe return and rehabilitation in Valley.

Reconciliation, Return and Rehabilitation of Migrants led by Satish Mahaldar also observed the Holocaust Day today and expressed the hope that return and rehabilitation of Pandits will be treated by Government as priority. He also demanded that while exercising delimitation process the names of Kashmiri Pandits names who were forced to leave the Valley be incorporated to restore the denied democratic rights to them.

LIC employees observe Nationalisation Day

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 19: LIC employees under the banner of Northern Zone Insurance Employees' Association led by Divisional Secretary, Pawan Gupta today observed 65th Nationalised Day of LIC at Jammu.

On this occasion, LIC employees organised a rally with flags, banners and placards indicating achievements of LIC; consisting of large number of members of the Association including Joint Secretary, Romesh Chand, Treasurer, Raj Kumar Sharma, vice president-Dinesh Kumar Sharma, Rajesh Kumar, Alkiya Sharma, Priya Sharma, Ruchi Jarmwal, Nanak Chand, Shibhan Raina, Kishore Lal, Raj Kumar and others.

Speaking on the occasion, Pawan Gupta congratulated all the members on this occasion of 65th anniversary of Nationalisation Day of LIC and said that after a prolonged struggle of All India Insurance Employees' Association, the Government of India nationalised the life insurance business in India by an Ordinance issued on January 19,

1956. Then on June 19, 1956, LIC Act 1956 was passed in the Parliament and ultimately LIC of India came into existence on 1st September 1956.

LIC had 5 zonal offices, 33 divisional offices and 212 branch offices, apart from its corporate office in the year 1956 and today LIC functions with 2048 fully computerized branch offices, 113 divisional offices, 8 zonal offices, 1381 satellite offices and the Corporate office.

LIC today has 30 crore individual policy holders and 11 crore policyholders in group schemes. It has 31 lakh crore of assets and it has played a big role in national development by investing in social and infrastructure programmes of the Government. Due to hard and honest work of LIC employees, it has earned a considerable goodwill among people of India; and thus it has reached to the top as far its market share, business, and contribution in national economy in concerned. While strongly opposing proposed IPO in LIC, employees on this occasion resolved to fight tooth and nail to protect LIC and against any move of its privatisation.

Higher Edu Deptt signs MoU with ICSI for up-skilling of J&K youth

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Jan 19: In yet another major initiative, the Department of Higher Education has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) for up-skilling of students.

Commissioner Secretary, Higher Education Department Talat Parvez, while highlighting the significance of the MoU, informed that the department has taken various initiatives to ensure that the workforce of tomorrow has future ready skills, adding "the youth need to be motivated to develop a quality of self development and self entrepreneurship".

He further informed that the new initiatives of Higher Education Department which are in sync with New Industrial Policy of the J&K and the National Education Policy introduced recently will in the longer run make huge impact on the skilling of the youth.

"The ever-increasing unemployment of graduates from higher education sector is a serious concern for all of us. In order to make higher education more meaningful and employment generating, the department has embarked on a path of up skilling the undergraduates across J&K, by embedding skill courses in the curriculum, or offering them as Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Degrees while they graduate from the institutions of higher learning", he further said, adding "many sectors like agriculture, horticulture, fashion technology, IT, paramedical, pharmacy, nursing, food technology, chartered accountant, etc have been identified where skill training will be given to the undergraduates so that the pass outs have a dual degree, one the normal undergraduate degree and other a



Dignitaries during signing of MoU.

skill degree".

To realize this goal, the institutions/training partners with expertise in a particular sector skill will act as mentors to guide the hub and spoke to colleges in developing their curriculum and infrastructure as per NSQF (National Skill Qualification Framework) standards so that the degrees are acceptable nationally and internationally.

Director Colleges Jammu and Kashmir, Professor M Y Peerzada, underscored the importance of skill development programs which greatly help in developing industrial, entrepreneurial and social skills in students as per the requirements of market. He said that the department is working on developing existing faculty in various skills and Principals have been empowered to take the services of any faculty across the country having expertise in the selected skill.

President ICSI, CS Ashish Garg, in his remarks, stated that the corporate world is in dire need of youth with problem solving skills. He assured that his institution will extend all support for successful implementation of MoU for larger benefit of students of Jammu & Kashmir.

Pertinently, the Department of Higher Education has signed MoUs with partner institutions like SKUAST (K), IIHM, SKIMS, Institute of Music and Fine Arts, JK

Academy of Art Culture and Languages, IUUST, Central University Kashmir, University of Kashmir and National Institute of Fashion Technology.

The areas of collaboration are imparting skill to the undergraduates in the domains of IT and ITES, Food Technology, Hospitality and Catering, Pharmacy, Paramedical, Fashion Technology, Mass Communication and Journalism, Company Secretary and Cost Accountancy.

About 13 MoUs have so far been signed with different institutions for skill enhancement and one MoU with My transform for placements.

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Among others, the meeting was attended by Mission Director, JKRLM, Mission Director, ICDS, Additional Mission Director, JKRLM, Jammu, Assistant Commissioner Development, Jammu, District Panchayat Officer, Jammu, Block Development Officer, Block Bhalwal, Jammu, Block Programmer Manager, Bhalwal, Jammu.

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