

JTFRP, RMSI organize workshop on Multi Hazard Risk Assessment for J&K

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, Mar 14: Jhelum and Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP) and RMSI Private Limited today organized a day long workshop on Multi Hazard Risk Assessment for Jammu and Kashmir at SKICC here.

The speakers emphasized the need to increase public awareness about disaster mitigation besides increasing their capacity to respond promptly and effectively to a crisis or emergency.

The workshop was attended by Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole, Chief Executive Officer, JKERA/JTFRP, Dr Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz, DIG Central Kashmir, Sujit Kumar, Deputy Commissioners of various districts and heads of other departments while Secretary DMRRR Nazim Zai Khan, Deepak Singh from World Bank and other officers participated online.

The workshop brought together participants from disaster management authorities, ERA, Irrigation and Flood

Control, Kashmir University, National Institute of Technology Srinagar, Police, Fire and Emergency and other allied departments on a single platform so that a coordinated mechanism is evolved to reduce the social and economic fallouts of a disaster. It further focused on an enhanced cooperation and sharing of best practices among the disaster management agencies and experts in the region for better utilization of mitigation planning strategy in disaster management.

While delivering the inaugural address, Chief Executive Officer, Economic Reconstruction Agency, Dr Syed Abid Rasheed Shah said that JK is a multi disaster prone area and the aim of the workshop is to generate awareness about the ways to minimize the social and economic impacts of a disaster.

He said that purpose of the workshop is to change the mindset from relief, rescue, and rehabilitation to preparation, prevention and mitigation. He said that the government aims to turn the focus from post disaster management to pre disaster risk mitigation to prevent loss of lives

and minimize the economic impacts of a disaster.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole said that there is a need for coordination among all departments and increasing interactions in schools.

Secretary DMRRR, Nazim Zai Khan said that we need to enlarge the scope of workshops to involve more and more people to generate awareness about disasters and sensitizing people about the SOPs to be followed at the occurrence of a natural disaster.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz said that the unpredictable nature of disasters poses a challenge but with the community participation and the technological advancements we can be better prepared to mitigate the disasters.

Emphasizing the need for better coordination at the time of disasters, DIG Central Kashmir, Sujit Kumar, said that we need to create awareness among the people at an early age to strengthen community participation.

Deepak Singh representing the World Bank said that mitigation is a continuous exercise and all stakeholders need to work on a constant basis.

While highlighting the critical findings for UT of J&K, it was given out that the combined Average Annual Loss for flood and earthquake hazards for the UT of J&K is Rs 1,774 crore with the major loss driver being residential buildings. The loss numbers show that the UT of J&K is more vulnerable to earthquake and flood hazards, though landslide events also occur frequently in many parts of the UT.

The Average Annual Loss (AAL) due to earthquakes for J&K is Rs 1,488.44 crore, which is about 0.15% of the total exposure value.

Advisor Khan discusses policy for Fair Price Shops allotment, regulation

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 14: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Khan, today emphasized the need for putting in place a comprehensive policy for allotment of Fair Price Shops (FPS) at par with other States and Union Territories to bring added transparency in the existing system besides improving FPS viability.

Advisor stated this while chairing a meeting of Food, Civil Services and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Department to discuss modalities regarding formulation of policy for establishment of new Fair Price Shops (FPS) and subsequent regulations thereof in the Union Territory.

Commissioner Secretary FCS&CA, Zubair Ahmad; Director FCS&CA Kashmir, senior officers from FCS&CA Jammu and other concerned attended the meeting in person and through online mode.

Spelling out the broad contours of the policy, he said that the new document will also provide a sound legal mechanism to regulate and strengthen the PDS in Jammu and Kashmir keeping in view the norms of the Targeted Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2015, of Government of India.

A threadbare discussion was held over the issues with respect to allotment of Ration Depots being envisioned in the new policy.

The meeting was held in the backdrop of receiving various inputs and suggestions from stakeholders, especially from ration dealers. It discussed the enhancing of souls and ration card holders from the existing cap to the revised one for the new FPS.

Advisor suggested that special provisions should be incorporated for the areas

where no private person would be coming to open FPS in the area. He asked the concerned to examine the flexibility in certain rules for the areas where there are physical barriers like hilly terrains, rivers, etc.

While highlighting the importance of this exercise, Advisor Khan said that after the policy would be put in place, it will not only ensure smooth flow of the Public Distribution System but will also help in increasing the income of people who are or will be running these FPS.

He said the new policy will replace the age-old ration distribution with little dependency on government run ration Depots.

The meeting also discussed the provisions in the policy like issuance or renewal of licenses, wastage and guidelines to address it, advance communication to ration dealers, etc.

Navin grants Rs 1 cr for lavender cultivation in Chenab valley

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 14: Principal Secretary, Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare, Navin Kumar Choudhary, today announced a grant of Rs 1 crore for undertaking lavender cultivation in twin districts of Doda and Kishtwar.

He fixed a target for officers of the department to cultivate about 10000 kanal of land under cultivation of this cash crop.

Principal Secretary was speaking virtually to participants of the workshop organized on the scope of "Lavender Cultivation its Viability and Entrepreneurship" in Doda and Kishtwar by J&K Advisory Board for Development of Kisans in collaboration with Department of Agriculture and Floriculture.

Navin asked the officers to divert their focus from traditional crops like rice, wheat and maize to cash crops like lavender, turmeric and medicinal plants. He said that these crops have great potential in terms of increasing returns for the growers.

He asked the farmers to optimally utilize the knowledge gained in this workshop to take a great leap in turning their fortunes. He assured them that the administration would extend every support to enhance their knowledge in the field of agriculture for increasing their production manifold. He asked them to take benefit of various government schemes like PARVAZ to increase their income.

He asked the scientists of SKUAST and IIMM to dedicate a team for assistance of farmers in these far flung districts. He asked them to provide them every sort of handholding for having a bumper crop at the end of the season. He also directed the Agriculture Department to organize these cultivators into an FPO and provide them the refrigerated van on full time basis for transportation of this crop to Jammu and Srinagar. He asked the Director Agriculture, Jammu, to devise a plan for stationing a senior Agricultural officer at the Bhadrawah for the benefit of growers.

On the occasion, the growers also took up their issues with the Principal Secretary and urged upon him to intervene for successful branding and marketing of their produce. They also demanded a large industrial unit and a laboratory for value addition of the crop in their area.

Principal Secretary exhorted upon the officers to look into all the requirements necessary for making this crop a viable entrepreneurship activity in the area. He asked them to make arrangements for the farmers as per their demand by utilizing the above amount provided by the department for taking cultivation of this crop to the next level.

The workshop was attended by Secretary, Kisan Board; Directors of Agriculture and Floriculture, Jammu, scientists from Indian Institute of Integrated Medicines (IIIM) and SKUAST and experts from Palampur (HP) along with growers from these 2 districts of the UT.

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ABVP protests against no fresh recruitment till promotion of all

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 14: Continuing its fight against the SAC (State Administrative Council) and SCERT decisions on no fresh recruitment till adjustment of all RRETs and 100 percent promotion of Masters as Lecturers, ABVP today held a strong protest demonstration on Jammu University campus.

Shouting slogans, the protesting ABVP activists were demand-

ing 80 percent direct recruitment of Teachers as well as Lectures and 20 percent through departmental promotions. They were also demanding re-advertisement of SCERT 2021 Recruitment notification with deletion of teaching experience eligibility.

A large number of Jammu University students participated in the protest march on the campus.

Talking to the media persons during protest demonstration, State Secretary of ABVP J&K, Mukesh Manhas announced that the fight would continue against the anti-youth decisions of SAC and SCERT. "These decisions are totally against the career of educated unemployed youth of Jammu and Kashmir and we will never tolerate the same," he added.

Rannik Sharma, State Joint Secretary ABVP Jammu Kashmir also addressed the

unemployed youth of Jammu and Kashmir. "We are not against the Teachers and Lectures; we want intermediate solutions from the Government," he added.

Ramesh Singh also addresses to media and said that the Government was playing with the career of the students and scholars and ABVP would never tolerate such kind of anti youth decisions.

Chahat Jamwal, a student of Jammu University said that such kind of false and anti youth policies are responsible for the degradation of quality education in Jammu and Kashmir.

Others, who spoke on the occasion, included Bindya Sharma, Hari Om, Dheeraj Sharma, Piyush Khajuria, Komal Parihar, Arvind Kumar, Shubham Amar, Parateek Raina, Palak Sambaly, Ashu Rajput, Neha, Sharmila Choudhary, Shaikat Ali, Zakir Hussain, Neha, Vijay Kumar and Sandeep Singh.

Director Funds visits Rajouri, Poonch, addresses grievances

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 14: Director Funds Organization Jammu Sukhwant Kour conducted extensive tour of Rajouri and Poonch and Kathua districts to data etc were received in the offices. Many of these grievances were addressed on spot while for others, the subscribers were advised to follow the correct procedure/submit the documents so that their cases are settled at the earliest.

The subscribers were also made aware about the various services being provided by the Funds Organization for their convenience. It was informed that Funds Organization is providing SMS service through which subscribers can know their subscription for the month.

To avail this service, the subscribers have to get their mobile number registered with the concerned District Fund Office. The subscribers can also login to the official website of the department jkfunds.nic.in to know their credits and debits for the last five years. However due to lack of awareness, the subscribers are not availing these online services, and personally visiting the offices for this information.

Director Funds Sukhwant Kour listening to grievances in Rajouri on Monday

As per the instructions of the J&K Government, Funds organization organized grievance/awareness camps in all the District Fund Offices across the UT of Jammu and Kashmir. Many grievances of the existing GPF subscribers as well as the retired employees regarding payment of 2nd installment to the NPS subscribers, final payment of SLI policy, draws of non-refundable subscription amount, correction of GP Computer Codes in the CPIS

Locals demand concrete bridge over Tawi river

Excelsior Correspondent
UDHAMPUR, Mar 14: Despite loss of precious lives in flash floods, the district administration has failed to construct a concrete bridge over Tawi river and road at village Jig and Chaj in Chenani tehsil.

Irked over the insensitive attitude of the administration, locals of the village held a protest today. Amid raising of slogans against the Udhampur district administration, the protestors demanded construction of a concrete bridge over Tawi river to avoid loss of precious lives.

"Over the years, many people have lost their lives while crossing this Tawi river during rains," the residents said, adding that the villagers use temporary wooden bridges but it's too risky while nothing has been done on their long pending demand of construction of a concrete bridge.

About 500 families live in these two Panchayats but on rainy

DB restrains from making recovery of VAT from Tata Steel

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 14: Division Bench of the High Court comprising Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice Sindhu Sharma has restrained the Government from making recovery of Value Added Tax (VAT) from Tata Steel Limited.

The direction has been passed in a petition filed by Tata Steel Limited whereby challenge has been thrown to the proceedings for recovery of dues of Value Added Tax (VAT) under the Jammu and Kashmir Value Added Tax Act, 2005 in terms of the notice of demand dated 10.03.2020 pursuant to the assessment order dated 10.03.2020 passed by Assessing Officer, Commercial Taxes Circle 'J', Jammu, and all consequential proceedings thereto including the order dated 28.10.2020 issued by the Senior Audit Officer and order dated 12.07.2021 issued by the Assessing Authority, Commercial Taxes Circle 'J', Jammu.

Senior Advocate Pranav Kohli assisted by Advocates Sanjeet Ranjan and Rahul Sharma appearing for the petitioner submitted that after the resolution plan prepared by the resolution professionals and approved by the Committee of the creditors has been accepted and approved by

the National Company Law Tribunal on 15.05.2018, in exercise of powers under Section 31 of the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, 2016, no claim or demand by any operational creditors which includes the Central Government and the State Government or any local authority can be raised in respect of any dues including the statutory dues in respect of the period prior to the effective date of the approved resolution.

Senior Advocate Kohli placed reliance upon the three judges bench decision of the Supreme Court in case titled 'Ghanashyam Mishra and Sons Private Limited through the Authorized Signatory Versus Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company Limited through the Director and others'.

After hearing both the sides, the DB observed, "we are prima facie satisfied that the respondents cannot recover any amount as claimed through the impugned notice and the consequential proceedings. The Advocate General is, therefore, allowed two weeks' time to file response to this writ petition", adding "until further order no coercive steps shall be taken against the petitioner for recovery or realizing any amount pursuant to the impugned notice of demand and the consequential proceedings thereto".



ABVP leading protest march against SAC & SCERT decision.

Concern over transfer of package employees to vulnerable areas

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 14: Former MLC and spokesperson of BJP JK UT, Girdhari Lal Raina expressed pain and concern over unfair and prejudiced deployment of employees recruited under PM's special package belonging to the minority Hindu community to vulnerable areas from security point of view in Kashmir Valley.

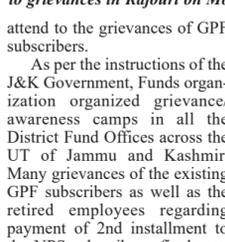
Raina explained that in past few days almost every displaced employee working in Kashmir Division in the Department of School Education has been relocated citing irrational reasons. Most obnoxious and clearly biased is the deployment order issued by the ZEO Qazigund zone of the Education Department on 11-3-2022 deploying some 107 teachers of her zone to 'claimed' needy schools, stressed GL Raina. One hundred out of these 107 teachers mentioned in the Annexure to the order belong to the reli-

gious minority community and were recruited under PM's package, he added.

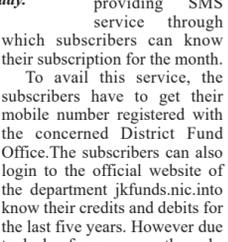
There is visibly a pattern to this deployment across Valley, he added. Former MLC said that the order not only is intimidating in tune but also ignores the general guidelines of placing employees belonging to religious minority communities at non-vulnerable places. The order seems to be issued with a purpose.

Security is concern that can be ignored by only insensitive officers who are bent upon causing harm to these vulnerable employees or with the intention to force them flee Valley for security, he observed.

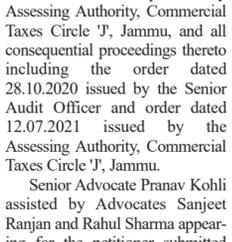
"I need not to emphasise the fact that Kashmir Valley is again witnessing attacks on soft targets by terrorists. Observing self-restraint, I stop by pointing out that these officers will be held responsible for any harm caused to these vulnerable employees", he added.



Director Funds Sukhwant Kour listening to grievances in Rajouri on Monday.



A man walking over wooden logs clubbed together to cross Tawi river. -Excelsior/K Kumar



JU VC presenting a memento to ADGP Danish Rana during an event by Udhampur Campus on Monday.

It's dissection not delimitation, party to submit detailed objections: Cong

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 14: Congress has strongly reacted to the final draft of delimitation and said it is dissection not delimitation, totally ignoring the ground realities and parameters.

Reacting to the final draft report, the JKPC has strongly rejected most of the recommendations as against the settled norms, public convenience, physical features on the ground as the commission appears to have done only paper work ignoring ground situations.

JKPC chief spokesperson Ravinder Sharma has said that in view of large reactions, the commission was expected to revisit and review it's draft before putting it in public domain but it has not heard the voice of people from different areas in public domain.

The Commission has least bothered for the aspirations, public convenience and ground realities of connectivity and communications while dissecting the several assembly constituencies besides creating Anantnag-Rajouri- Poonch constituency, against the topographical geographical and ground situations.

The party shall submit it's detailed objections after getting feedback from the ground leaders and general public from each assembly constituencies, he added urging the people for struggle against grave injustice to different regions and areas.

He cited the example of Sunderbani, Nowshera, Kalakote which have been dissected arbitrarily against all physical features, geographical and administrative norms.

employees. They demanded that it should be increased from Rs 300 to Rs 1000 per month at par with Centre and UTs.

They further urged upon the LG's Administration to regularize the services of daily rated workers and casual Labourers and also clear their pending wages. They said the employees and pensioners will strongly oppose the proposed modification in SRO-43. They said it is the right of the families of the Government employees and the same should not be snatched. They also demanded restoration of old Pension Scheme in J&K.



Damaged barrack at District Jail Bhadrawah. -Excelsior/Tilak Raj.

Enhance Medical allowance: LPGEF

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Mar 14: All J&K Low Paid Government Employees Federation (LPGEF) has demanded enhancement of Medical allowance of the employees and pensioners.

In a meeting of the Federation held here today under the leadership of Abdul Hafiz Wani and Jagdish Raj Sharma, the members expressed strong resentment over the delay being caused by the UT Administration in increasing the Medical allowance of the

Hospital Doda for specialized treatment.

Special Police Officer Suraj Kumar suffered minor injuries and was discharged after first aid, the officials said.

"We were in our barrack and were about to leave for lunch when we heard a deafening sound from the corner of the hall followed by a massive fire", one of the injured policemen, Nazir Ahmad, said.

Ahmad said they had just returned from duty to offer mid-day prayers when the incident took place.

Initially, they were shifted to Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Bhadrawah and later referred to GMC Doda, the officials said, adding they have suffered 30 to 40 per cent burn injuries.

The SSP said the condition of all the injured was stated to be 'stable'.

Gas cylinder explodes inside jail, 4 cops hurt

Excelsior Correspondent
BHADERWAH, Mar 14: Four police personnel suffered burns when a cooking gas cylinder exploded inside jail in Bhadrawah here today.

The 5-kg LPG cylinder exploded inside a barrack, housing police guards, at District Jail Bhadrawah, injuring four policemen, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Doda Abdul Qayoom said.

He said the barrack suffered damage in the fire which was immediately brought under control.

Police officials said the incident occurred around 2.35 pm and three of the injured Selection Grade Constables (SgCts) Nazir Ahmad, Mohd Musa and constable Raju Sharma were referred to Government Medical College

Drug peddler arrested, 35.5 grams heroin recovered

Excelsior Correspondent
UDHAMPUR, Mar 14: Udhampur Police today arrested a drug peddler and recovered contraband heroin like narcotic substance from his possession.

The accused, identified as Romi Kumar, son of Bhushan Dass of Press Mohr, near Bahu Fort, Jammu was apprehended near PHC Tikri by a Police patrolling party, led by SHO Rehambal, Inspector Nishant Gupta and assisted by IC PP Tikri PSI Abdul Satar under the supervision of DySP Hqrs. Udhampur Sahil Mahajan.

On frisking of accused, Police recovered 35.50 grams of contraband heroin like narcotic substance.

In this regard, case FIR number 48/2022 under relevant sections of law has been registered in PS Rehambal and further investigation into matter case been taken up.

Drug peddler arrested, 35.5 grams heroin recovered

Excelsior Correspondent
RAMBAN, Mar 14: Batote Police arrested an absconder, who was evading his arrest from the past 15 years.

As per police sources, on specific information a team from Police Station Batote led by SHO Inspector Sudhir Sadotra under the supervision of Pardeep Singh Sen, DySP Headquarters Ramban and Mohita Sharma SP Ramban conducted raid and apprehended an absconder, who was at large since 2007.

The accused was identified as Manzoor Ahmad, son of Khan Mohammad of Kushwah Kokernag, District Anantnag.

He was wanted in a case registered under FIR Number 20/2007 under Sections 188 RPC and 56, 146 and 196 Motor Vehicles Act with Police Station Batote.

Further investigation into the case is going on.

Absconder arrested after 15 yrs

Excelsior Correspondent
These villages also produce vegetables, fruit, milk, cheese and Kalari etc but on rainy days, it becomes difficult to take these items to the market. Further, it is very risky for the students to cross over the Nallah to reach their school.

Locals, namely Baldev Raj, Noor Alam, Rano Devi, and Jito said that the construction of the bridge over the Tawi and road was the responsibility of district administration but it failed to do the needful for the people.

A social worker Rupal Chand said: "We lodged several complaints with the concerned department but they always turned deaf ears to our pleas."

Tributes paid to Martyr DySP

Excelsior Correspondent
POONCH, Mar 14: District Police Poonch paid rich tributes to Shaheed Manjeet Singh-DySP, who bravely laid down his life while fighting militants at Bus Stand Poonch today.

His contributions in fighting militancy during his tenure in Poonch were remembered and wreaths were also laid on the statue of the martyrs near Bus Stand Poonch by police personnel and huge gathering from the civil society.

Another function was also held in DPO Poonch where floral tributes were also paid at Shaheed Sathal of the martyrs and "Ardas" was also held for eternal peace to the departed soul.

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