

# 'Transform universities into economic growth centres' LG chairs first meeting of J&K Higher Education Council

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Oct 19: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today chaired the first meeting of J&K Higher Education Council at Raj Bhawan Auditorium.

The Lt Governor stressed on the need to develop a pragmatic roadmap to enhance the potential of human resources and progres-

Science, Bengaluru; Dr. Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, Principal ICSC, Srinagar and Dr. Vishal Sharma, Principal GDC Bani attended the meeting and gave their valuable suggestions on the reforms and necessary interventions required for improving quality of learning & teaching in the Higher Education sector of the UT.

The meeting held a threadbare discussion on the implemen-

Education ecosystem of J&K.

Discussions were also held on the role of higher education in implementation of Gati Shakti, policy formation, vision 2047; conducting teacher-student exchange programmes; mapping & sharing of resources, collaborations and MoUs with International Institutions; adopting best practices; encouraging climate change study; identifying gaps and preparing actions plans accordingly.

The meeting further discussed encouraging students' participation, especially girls in sports, cultural and other such activities.

Rohit Kansal, Principal Secretary to the Government, Higher Education Department presented a detailed overview of the Higher Education sector in the UT, roadmap for institutional accreditations and future readiness of the department.

tation of National Education Policy (NEP)- 2020 in the Colleges and Universities across J&K UT; improving accountability & responsiveness in the system; encouraging research, innovation, skill development, capacity building, competitiveness; enhancing employability; integrating technology for transforming Education; Multidisciplinary Education, Flexibility & Student Mobility and increasing access through Digital Learning.

The Lt Governor said our aim is to create global cadre of skilled youth and Colleges, Universities need to make them competitive and also bridge the employable skill gap. He also sought valuable suggestions from the members of the council for better utilization of the education budget.

The Lt Governor said the Government will ensure effective implementation of the recommendations of the Council. He appreciated the efforts of Dr. Dinesh Singh, eminent educationist & former Vice Chancellor, Delhi University; Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu; Prof. Nilofar Khan, VC, University of Kashmir; Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, VC, IUST; Prof. Akbar Masood, VC BGSBU; Prof. Najma Akhtar, VC, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi; Prof. G. Rangarajan, Director, Indian Institute of



Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha chairing a meeting at Srinagar.

sively transform J&K's universities into economic growth centres.

"Our Higher Education ecosystem needs to re-align itself to meet the needs of the present-day challenges and be fully geared to participate in the development taking place in different sectors of the Union Territory", said the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor advised for expanding collaborations with other stakeholders, especially in the sectors like agriculture and tourism.

Increased technological input in agriculture is the need of the hour. Universities need to closely work with this sector, facilitate mechanization and undertake value-added tasks for economic connectivity and prosperity of the villages, said the Lt Governor.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Dr. Dinesh Singh, Former Vice Chancellor, Delhi University; Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu; Prof. Nilofar Khan, VC, University of Kashmir; Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, VC, IUST; Prof. Akbar Masood, VC BGSBU; Prof. Najma Akhtar, VC, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi; Prof. G. Rangarajan, Director, Indian Institute of

# We want to change narrative, perception on Kashmir: Batra

Irfan Trambo

SRINAGAR, Oct 19: The Co-Founder, Kumaon Literary Festival, Asha Batra, today said that the main objective of the festival being held in Kashmir is to change Kashmir narrative and the perception of people outside.

He spoke exclusively to Excelsior on the sidelines of the two days festival being held at

side, which is attractive, have not been able to do that and at the same time, the people who want to come here, have got several doubts in their minds. Through festivals like this, we want to change the perception of people outside and that's why we are here. The narrative of Kashmir has to change because we have been for a long seeing Kashmir through a particular prism and if that continues any longer, it will annihilate this beautiful place.

Q: Is it about providing a platform to talk freely?  
Asha Batra: Yes. People need a medium where they can talk; no doubt there is a side of this place that is disturbing but keeping that aside, there is a lot that is beautiful and needs to be talked about. If we focus more on the other side, then I think that the disturbing side will automatically get side-lined. All we want is to talk about culture; we want to connect people and don't want to make them fight. Apart from that, we are aiming to create learning opportunities for the youngsters, which are a must, and now that we are here, we will get to see the interest, people will reach out to us and after that, we will bring along the authors and will try to conduct workshops for them. All we want to do is make people write their stories and have a moment of catharsis; to let it all out.

Q: Were people willing to

visit Kashmir for KLF?

Asha Batra: This has happened for the first time and those we approached for the literary festival, they were prompt and responded positively. They were eager to come. It is also true that there has been a factor of fear which has been keeping people away and that is what needs to be worked on because in the end, humans have got the basic foundations of love and if this foundation has been corroded over the time, there is a need for taking the necessary measures to clean it up, and that is what we are intending to.

Q: How do you see Kashmir these days, any changes?  
Asha Batra: I feel things are changing in Kashmir; Kashmir is, in a way changing as a whole. People are tired and everyone now wants to come out of it; out of what they have been witnessing for decades because that is what has been shaping up the mindset of people. It is a beautiful place. People are very nice, but there sure is something in between which creates barriers: the difference in perception. We see them through a different prism and they too see us differently, but that will be set right with time, with love, and with understanding. At the same time, it is also true that there has been a one-sided portrayal of the stories in Kashmir because the media has the power of doing what it wants to, but things are changing due to social media, it has become more democratic. Things are becoming clearer.



Asha Batra, Co-Founder of Kumaon Literary Festival at SKICC in Srinagar on Wednesday.

SKICC in Srinagar.

Q: What is the Kumaon Literary Festival?  
Asha Batra: Kumaon Literary Festival (KLF) is a travelling literary festival that goes to places across India. We focus more on places that do not have mainstream literary festivals so that people get a space to talk. We come along with authors who meet and train budding authors.

Q: What is the objective of the festival being held in Kashmir?  
Asha Batra: When we talk of Kashmir, certain things come to our minds that instil fear. People who want to write about the other



# CS directs banks to saturate self-employment in J&K by end of November

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Oct 19: Government is committed to bring down the unemployment in J&K and the financial sector needs to put in a place an actionable mechanism to saturate the self-employment in J&K by the end of November 2022.

This was stated by the Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta while chairing the 8th Union Territory Level Bankers' Committee meeting to review achievements of banks and financial institutions operating in Jammu and Kashmir for the half year ended September 2022.

He said banks now need to move towards sustainable, equitable and outcome based banking for sustained gains.

Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo, Principal Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, Prashant Goyal, MD& CEO, J&K Bank (Convener J&K UTLCB) Baldev Prakash, Administrative Secretaries of various departments, Chief General Manager, NABARD, Dr. A. K. Sood and other senior functionaries of the Government, RBI, NABARD, Banks, line departments, insurance companies were also present on the occasion. Joint Secretary, Department of Financial Services, Gol Pankaj Sharma, District Development Commissioners of all districts of J&K and Lead District Managers joined the meeting virtually.

In his opening remarks, the Chief Secretary, Dr. Mehta stated that employment generation is the major challenge of the Government and it is the collective responsibility of all stakeholders to address the issue.

"Banks need to come forward and provide financial assistance to the unemployed youth for achieving the gainful employment. We need to show empathy towards the unemployed youth in guiding them towards the path of prosperity and self-sufficiency through various credit facilities tailored in accordance to their entrepreneurial aspirations. We have to create an environment where youth have to think beyond Government jobs and strengthen avenues to self-employ-

ment," he said.

Earlier in his welcome address MD & CEO J&K Bank (Convener J&K UTLCB) Baldev Prakash assured J&K Government that banks operating in J&K will extend all possible support for implementing the programmes and schemes aimed at entrepreneurial development, employment generation and poverty alleviation in Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

While appreciating banks for 100% coverage of the unbanked villages by opening of banking touch points under National Strategy for Financial Inclusion Programme, Dr Mehta impressed upon the banks to cover remaining one village under roadmap of opening banking outlets in villages having population over 5000 expeditiously. He directed banks to expedite the roll out of brick and mortar branches in 10 identified villages with population over 3000.

Dr Mehta impressed upon the Banks to take advantage of the B2V4 programme commencing from October 27, 2022 for disseminating the information on various products/ schemes to the grass root level and identifying the prospective aspirants.

He urged for upsurge in credit off take under Mission Youth saying, "I am of the belief that Mission Youth Schemes are the most attractive schemes and more youth need to be covered under the scheme." He said self employment schemes need to be targeted in a focussed manner on SC/ST/OBC sections of the society for inclusive growth.

Chief Secretary impressed upon banks to desist from seeking collaterals for the loans where it is not required under norms and operate within the ambit of the RBI norms/Gol schemes in the course of processing of loan requests.

Earlier General Manager J&K Bank, Syed Rais Maqbool while making presentation on the financial achievements of various banks in different sectors during the first two quarters of Financial year 2022-23 informed that banks in J&K have achieved 44% of the Target under Annual Credit Plan by disbursing credit of Rs 22,541.45 crore to 7,46,141 beneficiaries. Agriculture and MSME sectors have performed well in the priority sector lending.

# AAP protests against civilian killings in Kashmir

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Oct 19: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) today hit roads against civil killings in



AAP leaders and volunteers during a protest at Lal Chowk in Srinagar.

Kashmir valley and held a protest demonstration at Lal Chowk over failure of BJP Government in providing secure and peaceful atmosphere in Jammu and Kashmir.

The protest held at Lal Chowk

\* Watch video on [www.excelsiornews.com](http://www.excelsiornews.com)

which was led by AAP provincial president Kashmir Dr Ghulam Mustafa along with media coordination committee in-charge Dr Nawab Nasir. General secretary Kashmir province Dr Touseef, vice president Kashmir province Nazir Yattoo, chairman State political strategy and policy Nasir Kochak, state spokesperson Riyaz Majid, district presidents from across Kashmir province and volunteers participated in the Party.

The protesters raised slogans against J&K LG administration

and BJP Government accusing it of gross failure on all fronts in the Union Territory, especially on security front due to which security situation in the UT is getting

grim with each passing day. Addressing the protesters, Dr Ghulam Mustafa said that J&K is a sensitive region and needs proper administrative handling but BJP Government has completely failed the region and has put it in a state of security concerned situation besides administrative and governance deficit.

Dr Ghulam said that a number of civilian killings that have taken place in J&K in recent times clearly expose the failure of the Government. He said loss of precious human lives is highly condemnable and unfortunate.

Dr Nawab said that killing of every single human is unfortunate and sad with words fall less to condemn this inhumane act. He said Government should immediately take remedial measures towards security situation and to prevent civil killings in J&K.

# 'Gujarat model' emulated by other States: Dr Jitendra

Excelsior Correspondent

AHMEDABAD, Oct 19: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Science & Technology, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, DoPT, Administrative Reforms, Public Grievances, Pensions, Space and Atomic Energy, Dr Jitendra Singh today said, "Gujarat model" of develop-

ment and governance is being emulated by every State of the country and India has emerged as a bright economic spot under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi despite recessionary trends in the world economy.

He said, according to IMF, while nations around the globe grapple with the volatile slowdown in terms of economic growth, India under Modi is doing better and is in a relatively bright spot compared to other countries.

Dr Jitendra Singh was addressing a series of public meetings at Khambhat, Daheda, Vataman Chowki, Simej and Dholkha during the ongoing "Gujarat Gaurav Yatra" on Wednesday.

Dr Jitendra Singh also referred to the inauguration of an iconic foot-over bridge between Ellis Bridge and Sardar Bridge built near Sabarmati River front by Modi recently and said that Ahmedabad's

country was dedicated to the nation by PM Modi, more than seventy-one years after it was conceived by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in 1946. He said, this feat was achieved despite several opposition and roadblocks by Urban Naxals and Environmentalists. The Minister said, a multi-purpose project with irrigation, power and drinking water benefits, the dam serving the people of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat.

Dr Jitendra Singh also referred to the inauguration of an iconic foot-over bridge between Ellis Bridge and Sardar Bridge built near Sabarmati River front by Modi recently and said that Ahmedabad's

famous tourist hotspot completed a decade. He said, for enhancing the experience of the local people to spend time in the open, the second phase of Sabarmati Riverfront Development will be completed by 2027, with assets of public infrastructure like lower promenade, roads, street lights, etc., and will create more green spaces as per modern demands.

Dr Jitendra Singh listed a number of achievements like UNESCO declaring Ahmedabad as India's first World Heritage City, and Modi's recent declaration of Modhera, a village in Mehsana district of Gujarat, as India's first solar-powered village, or the inauguration of World's first Nano Urea (Liquid) Plant constructed at IFCCO, Kalol in June, 2022.

Gaurav Yatra was launched by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president, JP Nadda last week from the temple town of Bahucharaji in Mehsana district in Gujarat. It will conclude at Mandvi in Kutch on October 20.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Gaurav Yatra in Gujarat will have a special focus on connecting with tribal voters across the State as one of the routes is supposed to cover the tribal areas from Unai in Navsari district of South Gujarat to Ambaji in Banaskantha district of North Gujarat.

This year, besides the Gaurav Yatra, a LED Rath is already being rolled out to showcase the BJP government's schemes and raise awareness about them. The rath is covering all the 182 assembly constituencies in the State, just like the Gujarat Gaurav Yatra.

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# Democratic Azad Party workers convention held

Excelsior Correspondent

UDHAMPUR, Oct 19: One-day workers' convention of Democratic Azad Party was organized here today under the leadership of Ashwani Khajuria and Brij Mohan Sharma.

A number of senior leaders and workers participated in the meeting and showed full hearted support for Ghulam Nabi Azad's party. The

\* Watch video on [www.excelsiornews.com](http://www.excelsiornews.com)

members of recently formed Central Zone Committee of DAP, led by former Deputy Chief Minister Tara Chand, former Minister R S Chib, former Minister Dr Manohar Lal, Ex MLA Balwan Singh, Advocate M K Bhardwaj, Corporator Gaurav Chopra, Sobat Ali and senior leader Vicky Mahajan interacted with workers, leaders and delegates of Udhampur's East & West constituencies as well as Chennai Constituency.

Tara Chand urged the people to put their maximum efforts in uniting different sections of the society for better future of this northern

most region of the country.

"Peace is essential for any development and we all need to pool our resources to ensure that J&K remains peaceful in all forms," said the Chairman of the central zone of DAP. He added that



DAP leaders during one day workers convention at Udhampur on Wednesday.

despite challenges being faced by citizens from outside forces to disturb peace in J&K, the situation demands that people unite and defeat such machinations from such elements and forces.

"All communities and sections of society need to unite in the interest of peace, which can only ensure progress and development in Jammu and Kashmir," the former Deputy Chief Minister said.

He said DAP has embarked

upon to unite all sections of society, both in Jammu and Kashmir divisions and work in unison for overall progress and prosperity of the people.

"Leaders and activists from DAP under the overall guidance of Ghulam Nabi Azad feel privileged to move to the nook and corner of J&K to get the feel of the people so as to raise their genuine issues before the right quarters," he said.

"Our agenda is to restore Statehood, secure land and jobs rights of the local people, bring all sections of people together and take up their issues for harmony, betterment, prosperity and progress," he added.

Others who also addressed the workers & delegates, included Shri Raj, Sanjeev Dubey, Gautam, Ashok Sharma, Neeraj Thappa, Kuldeep Singh, Pawan Kumar, Amar Singh, Rajan Sabharwal, Mohd Latif and Majid Hussain.

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