

# Dr Jitendra holds interaction with young StartUps, calls for wider awareness

Excelsior Correspondent

NEW DELHI, May 12 : Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh visiting the different pavilions at National Technology Week Expo at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on Friday.

(Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today held a two hour long interaction with young StartUps from different backgrounds, during which he called for a wider awareness, particularly among parents and elders.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has accorded high priority to StartUps, taking personal interest in the matter, he said, during a visit to the National Technology Week exhibition at Pragati Maidan, here today.

Dr Jitendra Singh spent more than two hours visiting the stalls put up by the CSIR, Department of Biotechnology, ISRO, Department of Atomic Energy, DRDO and a host of other Departments/PSUs and private

industry. The Minister showed keen interest in the exhibits put up on display by a large number of StartUps.

Before 2014 there were just 350-400 StartUps, in 2016 PM

exhibition over the weekend, Dr Jitendra Singh said, "Let them come in droves and see for themselves how India, at the call of PM Modi, is headed on the path to rapid progress in the 21st century," he said, adding, "Children in Class 6-7 are in their formative years, and by the time they pass out of school, their inherent skills are exploited to help them realise their dream projects."

The celebration of National Technology Day was started by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1999 to honour Indian scientists, engineers and technologists, who worked for India's scientific and technological advancement and ensured the successful conduct of Pokhran tests in May 1998. Since then, National Technology Day is observed every year on May 11.

The National Technology Week celebration was inaugurated by the Prime Minister at Pragati Maidan on 11th May 2023. Participants/ exhibitors from 12 Ministries of Government of India are showcasing wide range of scientific innovations in Hall No.4 & 5A, Pragati Maidan, Delhi.

The theme of this event is "School to Start Up Igniting Young Minds to Innovate", wherein students from schools across India engaged with Atal Tinkering Labs (under Atal Innovation Mission of Govt. of India), are participating and showcasing technological innovation in Hall No.4, Pragati Maidan, Delhi.

It is celebrated with a new and different theme every year. This year's theme is "School to StartUps- Igniting Young Minds to Innovate". The CBSE has advised to celebrate National Technology Week 2023.



LG during meeting with DDC chairperson.

# Chairperson DDC Baramulla, KCCI delegation call on LG

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR/JAMMU, May 12: Safina Baig, DDC Chairperson, Baramulla called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan, today.

The DDC Chairperson discussed with the Lt Governor various issues of public importance and development of the district. She also raised the issue concerning the cost of Haj pilgrimage this year.

A delegation of Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry led by its President Javid Ahmad Tenga also called on the Lt Governor and apprised him about

Foundation Trust called on the Lt Governor at Raj Bhawan Jammu and apprised him about the peepal sapling plantation drive and other environmental initiatives of his organisation.

Renowned Broadcaster and Director (Retd.) All India Radio Jammu Vijay Kumar Sambhal, popularly known as Rangeeley Thakur in the field of music, submitted a memorandum of demands regarding promotion of art & music in the UT. He also expressed his gratitude towards the UT administration for giving due attention to the field of Arts.

The Lt Governor also released a book titled "Words Whispered in the Dark" authored by Bindya Raina Tikoo. The Lt Governor congratulated the author on the occasion and wished her success in the future endeavours.

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various concerning issues of the business community.

The Lt Governor assured the members of the delegation that the issues projected by them would be looked into meticulously for their early redressal.

Later, Pritam Singh, Founder President, Peepal Saves People

# Jammu DDC Chairpersons call on Tarun Chugh

Excelsior Correspondent

NEW DELHI, May 12: A delegation of DDC chairpersons from Jammu today called on BJP national general secretary, Tarun Chugh here and said that the Modi Government has ushered in a new era of development in J&K which has given a new vision to the UT.

They said that the Modi Government has initiated several development projects which will benefit the people of Jammu & Kashmir for the decades to come.

Speaking on the occasion, Chugh said that the people of Jammu & Kashmir have high hopes from the leadership of PM Modi. He said that there has been a positive change in Jammu & Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370; and today there is mutual development of both peace and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir. The proof of peace is that DDC and BCC elections were successfully held there for the very first time and 280 representatives were elected.

He said that with these meas-



DDC Chairpersons and members during a meeting with BJP general secretary, Tarun Chugh at New Delhi on Friday.

ures, local people got faith in democracy, that's why today the development plans are reaching the ground.

Chugh also listened carefully to various development issues raised by the public representatives from Jammu & Kashmir and said that he would be more than happy to pursue these plans for the betterment of the people of J&K.

Later in a statement he said that there was a good discussion in the meeting on the Panchayat level, the lowest unit in democracy and the DDC representative group. He said that these are the same representatives who work to make

the country's plans accessible to the common people on the ground.

Many representatives including DDC Chairman Jammu, Bharat Bhushan, Dhanantar Singh Kotwal, Colonel Mahan Singh, DDC chairman Kathua, Keshu Dutt, Raghunandan Singh and Sandeep Singh Manhas were included in this group of people's representatives.

## JUTA seeks early notification on enhancement of superannuation age

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, May 12: Jammu University Teachers' Association (JUTA) has sought early notification regarding enhancement of age of superannuation of the university teachers in Jammu and Kashmir, as announced by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha.

In a meeting held in the University of Jammu, JUTA office bearers discussed various issues related to the teachers and expressed a deep sense of gratitude to the Lieutenant Governor for announcing the enhancement of the age of superannuation of the faculty of all Universities in Jammu and Kashmir from 62 years to 65 years on November 23, 2022, which was a long pending demand of the JUTA.

Observing that the announcement was made as per UGC Regulations - 2018 published in the Gazette of India, JUTA urged the LG to order issuance of notification regarding the enhancement of age of superannuation as the delay is causing substantial loss to many superannuating faculty members of the Universities of J&K UT as well as academics at large.

JUTA also reiterated the demand of earned leave accumulation and encashment of 300 days for University teachers as per UGC Regulations-2018. Whereas, UGC provides for earned leave encashment of 300 days, the University of Jammu restricts the accumulation and encashment of earned leave to 120 days only, placing teachers at a huge financial loss, JUTA said.

The meeting was attended by Prof Pankaj Srivastava (President JUTA), Dr Manoj Bhat (Vice President) Dr Ravinder Singh (Secretary), Dr Yudhbir Singh (Joint Secretary) and Dr Sushant Panda (Treasurer).

# Cleaning of Dal's interiors, shoreline ahead of G20 event progressing steadily

Irfan Trambo

SRINAGAR, May 12: In preparation for the upcoming G20 event here, dedicated efforts are underway to ensure the pristine condition of Dal Lake and its surroundings, while with the deployment of nearly 500 labourers and various machines, the task of cleaning the lake and its shores, is progressing steadily.

The residents, known as Dal dwellers, have also expressed their satisfaction with the ongoing cleaning initiatives that have contributed to the overall improvement of the lake's appearance.

The authorities have intensified their cleaning efforts, particularly focusing on the extraction of lilies and enhancing the natural beauty of Dal Lake.

Dr Bashir Ahmad Bhat, VC, Lake Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA), explained the measures being taken, stating: "Considering the upcoming G20 tourism group meeting to be held on the lake's banks, we have intensified the cleaning operations. The work is being carried out in multiple shifts, and additional machinery has been employed to expedite the process."

He further emphasized the meticulous cleaning of the shoreline, involving the dedicated efforts of the labourers to



Workers busy in cleaning Dal lake on Friday.

- Excelsior/Shakeel

complete the task promptly. "We aim to enhance the lake's appeal for tourists, and this year will witness a remarkable transformation of Dal Lake as a whole," he added.

Besides the visible areas of the lake and its shorelines, the LCMA has also focused on the interior portions of Dal Lake, clearing navigation channels. The ongoing work in this regard is aimed at ensuring smooth movement within the lake.

The officials noted the availability of nine harvesters, along with the deployment of 8-10 weed grabbers, which have been working diligently in double shifts to achieve maximum efficiency. Additionally, dredging operations near the shorelines are actively underway, further enhancing the overall productivity of the cleaning process.

The LCMA has meticulously programmed clusters of aerators to create visually stunning formations within the lake. These formations, officials said, including high jets, mist formations, and trumpet formations, accompanied by captivating colour changes, are designed to provide breathtaking visual experiences for visitors.

The efforts to beautify Dal Lake are well underway, ensuring an enchanting ambience for the G20 tourism group meeting scheduled at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) from May 22 to May 24.

The Dal dwellers, expressing their contentment, shared their appreciation for the extensive cleaning work carried out by the LCMA, particularly the clearing of internal navigational channels.

## Visitors get chance to come face to face

# Kaman Sethu gives Uri tourism potential

URI, May 12:

Like a bridge over troubled water, the Kaman Sethu stretches from India to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), giving the town of Uri tourism potential and offering visitors a chance to come face to face with contemporary history and the heroes who made it happen.

The small town of Uri, about 70 km from Srinagar, has long been in the line of enemy fire with soldiers controlling access to the 220-ft Kaman Bridge that connects Kashmir valley to PoK, just across the small river treated as the Line of Control between India and Pakistan.

But with tourists being able to walk up to the bridge, also called Aman Sethu (Bridge of Peace), things have changed.

Tourists, say locals, started coming to the town after the Bollywood film "Uri", based on India's surgical strike after an attack by four Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists in September 2018 left 18 soldiers dead. The situation was tense at the time and the film was shot in Serbia.

The change since is visible. The number of visitors have been steadily rising since the bridge opened for tourists end of March. About 3,000 people visit each day and there is a view from the other side too.

Civilians on the other side can be seen taking selfies against the bridge under the strict vigil of Pakistani army snipers.

The gates were locked after India suspended the bus service between Kashmir and PoK in February 2019 when 40 CRPF jawans were killed in a suicide attack by JeM in Pulwama.

Locals employed at the tourist facilitation centre, set up with the help of the army, greet tourists eager to visit the Kaman post, about 18 km from the main town.

"There are many scenic spots on the way with breathtaking landscapes that enthrall tourists. We hope the move by the Indian Army to open the bridge will go a long way in boosting the economy of this area," said Imran Ashraf, who mans the facilitation centre.

After checking for documents, including a pass from the local

police station, visitors head to the Khalin-Da-Khas Nalla, the river flowing between the two sides of Kashmir.

"We inform tourists about the dos and don'ts before they embark on their journey to the famous bridge. Many Uri residents also make the trip because they haven't seen it."

According to Lt Gen Amardeep Singh Aujla, who heads the Army's XV Corps, the decision to give the general public access to the bridge was taken so "people should know where our heroes gave their today for our tomorrow".

Aujla was the one who opened the lock and walked on the bridge, from end to end. A path near the bridge, named Veerpath, has busts of Indian war heroes.

"After all, I have every right to walk on every inch of my territory," Aujla said after his walk on the bridge. It had been damaged during an earthquake in 2005 when a mountain on the Pakistani side caved in and rebuilt by engineers of the Indian Army.

Three local guides, dressed in black and white, greet people and

recount the history of the area, particularly the 1947-48 war through the heroes who played stellar roles.

Civilian heroes commemorated near the bridge include Zuma Mohamed, a civil porter of the 4th battalion of Kumaon regiment who was awarded the Vir Chakra for his service during the war, and Maqbool Sherwani, a National Conference worker who had helped stave off an attack by giving wrong directions to the Pakistan army disguised as 'raiders' and stopped them from moving towards Srinagar.

Besides, there are busts of Maj Somnath Sharma, who was awarded the highest military honour, Param Vir Chakra, for his service to the nation in the war, and Brig Rajinder Singh and Lt Col Dewan Ranjit Rai who were awarded the Mahavir Chakra.

A huge 'Akhand Bharat Varsh' painting, carved out of stones showing Afghanistan, Pakistan as one, faces Pakistan army posts located across the LOC.

The army has also created an artificial bunker with toy guns and bullet proof vests for children.

As the buzz slowly builds up, Mehak Khurshid is among those who walked the bridge. She is a resident of Salamabad, somewhere between Uri and the Kaman post. "We had heard a lot of stories about Zuma Mohammed and Maqbool Sherwani. But today after seeing their busts, my heart fills with pride that our local heroes have been honoured by the army."

She is looking forward to more jobs and economic prosperity.

"Many hotels will open up and restaurants will come up. I am keeping my fingers crossed and hope that this becomes one of the favourite tourist destinations," she said.

According to Fayaz Ahmed, a village sarpanch, opening up of the Kaman post is the first stepping stone to success of the area. "Now I hope that other areas in the region which include some religious places will be thrown open for the public."

The Kaman Sethu in this corner of Kashmir Valley was obviously not on the radar when Simon and Garfunkel wrote their popular song. But this bridge, it certainly is a "bridge over troubled water". (PTI)

# PIL seeking proper student-teacher ratio DB directs authorities to file necessary report

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, May 12: In a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by All Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh Teacher Federation seeking proper student-teacher ratio in the schools, a Division Bench of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court comprising Chief Justice N. Kishwar Singh and Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi has directed authorities to file necessary report/detailed affidavits.

After hearing Senior Advocate Pranav Kohli for the PIL, the DB observed, "after the filing of this petition, in 2019 there was change of circumstances post abrogation/reorganization of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir and creation of Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh".

"Since the issue involves the condition of schools in the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, this Bench is of the view that in addition to Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Union Territory of Ladakh may also be impleaded as party respondent. Accordingly, Union Territory of Ladakh represented through its Commissioner/Secretary, Department of Education, Ladakh, is impleaded as respondent", the DB said and issued notice to Vishal Sharma, Deputy Solicitor General of

India. "Senior Additional Advocate General S S Nanda has submitted a report dated 31.03.2023. However on perusal of the same it appears that the authorities concerned have not specified the timeline of the completion of the projects, which have been undertaken, are likely to be completed", the DB said, adding "we would like to know the timeline within which the works are likely to be completed".

"Though in the report the student-teacher ratio in Elementary, High School and Secondary Schools in both rural as well as in urban areas has been spelt out, however, no information has been given as to in which schools the ratio has been implemented", the DB said, adding "the administration would be required to ascertain whether the ratio, worked out by the authorities concerned, had been actually implemented or not with respect to Elementary, High Schools and Secondary Schools".

DB directed that S S Nanda, Senior Additional Advocate General Vishal Sharma, Deputy Solicitor General, appearing for the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh will do the needful by informing the concerned authorities and shall file necessary report/ detailed affidavits.

# DGP sanctions Rs 1 cr welfare loan, special welfare relief

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, May 12: Continuing its efforts to provide enhanced welfare measures to the Police personnel, the Director General of Police, Dilbag Singh has sanctioned a welfare loan of over Rs one crore in favour of 82 serving police personnel.

He has also sanctioned special welfare relief in favour of NoK of five deceased police personnel/SPO.

Under an order, Rupees one lakh fifty thousand each has been sanctioned in favour of 35 Police personnel for the purpose of the marriage of their sons and daughters. Similarly, Rs one lakh each has been sanctioned in favour of 35 Police personnel for the purpose of their own marriage.

Ten Police personnel have been provided a welfare loan of Rs one lakh fifty thousand each for higher/professional education of their wards. In addition to this, Rs 50,000 each has been sanctioned in favour of two Police personnel for 'Mundan' and 'Circumcision' of their respective wards.

The welfare loan sanctioned to the Police personnel is refundable and is recovered in monthly installments from their salaries without any interest. The amount has been sanctioned out of the Central Police Welfare Fund (CPWF).

Pertinent to mention that Police headquarters during the financial year 2022 to 2023 has sanctioned Rs 21.09 crore. During April and May of this year, PHQ has sanctioned a welfare loan of Rs 2.67 crore so far.

Meanwhile, the DGP has also sanctioned a special welfare relief of Rs 22 lakh each in favour of

NoK of SI Ferooz Ahmad, HCs Qamar Din and Irshad Ali and Constable Mohammad Ishfaq. He also sanctioned a welfare relief of Rs six lakh in favour of NoK of deceased SPO Samson Masih.



SKUAST-Jammu VC & TNAU VC displaying copies of MoU signed between the two universities on Friday.

# SKUAST-J signs MoU with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, May 12: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology-Jammu and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore today signed Memorandum of Understanding to primarily foster academic and research co-operation between the two Institutions for exchange of students for Sandwich / Twinning Post Graduate Degree Programme.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Nazir Ahmed Ganai, Vice Chancellor SKUAST Jammu, briefed that scope of MoU shall be widened to the areas of Joint Research Programmes, conferences, seminars, workshops in areas of common interest and faculty exchange programmes also.

Prof Ganai explained that under Exchange of Students for Sandwich / Twinning Post-graduate degree Programmes, both

Kiran Watal complemented the District Development Commissioner, Ganderbal for action on war footing assuring that all facilities shall be ready in all respects within next 12 days & the works shall start from tomorrow only. B.L.Bhat, Chairman, SRMA - VK, Nagdandi cleared that Ashram Management is geared up to serve around 20,000 devotees during its Bhandara Programme from May 26 May 30.

Kuldeep Raina, president, Manzgam pressed for immediate adequate water supply to Ashthapan, arrangement and supply of blankets for yatris and sanitation arrangements through Kulgam Municipality. President, Tripur Sundri Khanbarni Devsar wanted adequate water supply and uninterrupted electric supply for Ashthapan, timely supply of gas and other essential services and adequate security for yatris. Relief Commissioner informed that three buses with 19 seats and truck stands allotted to Advance Bhandara Nagdandi party and for other Ashthapana also buses as per requirements shall be provided in full. President Tikker Ashthapan, Ramesh Trakru stressed for adequate security, health care, water-power supply, sanitation and fire services for the Ashthapan. Dr Ramesh Bhat requested for provision of tents and other essentials for participants in the Zeshit Ashtami Hawan at Logripora.

Divisional Commissioner advised all District Development Commissioners to ensure that all arrangements are complete at earliest so that the yatris do not face problems on any account.

Those who participated included M K Yogi, Dr T.K.Bhat, Ashwani Bhat, Kamal Ganjoo, Satish Pandita, Moti Lal, Bitu Ji, Ramesh Padroo, Ajay Bhat, R L Koul, Kundan Lal Raina, Avtar Krishen.

# J&K reports 18 new COVID cases

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, May 12: Jammu and Kashmir today reported 18 new COVID-19 positive cases, all from Jammu division.

As per the reports, 12 COVID cases were reported from Jammu district, 4 from Udhampur and 2 cases from Ramban district. A total of 2,398 COVID tests were conducted in the Union Territory in last 24 hours. The number of active COVID cases in the UT as on date is 116, 55 in Jammu division and 61 in Kashmir valley whereas 11 COVID patients recovered today, 6 from Jammu division and 5 from Kashmir.

The highest number of 29 active cases is in Jammu district, 21 in Baramulla, 10 each in Shopian and Udhampur, 9 in Anantnag, 7 in Pulwama, 6 cases in Doda, 4 cases each in Budgam, Ganderbal and Samba, 3 each in Baniptora and Ramban, 2 in Srinagar and 1 case each in Kulgam, Rajouri, Kathua and Poonch districts.

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