

Envoys Brought To Endorse Centre's Normalcy Claims: NC

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR : The National Conference on Thursday said it was "disappointed" with the way the government brought envoys from various countries to Jammu and Kashmir to "endorse" its "claims of normalcy" in the union territory.

The party alleged that the envoys have been brought to the valley on a "guided tour", where access has been limited to "handpicked individuals who toe the government line".

"The National Conference is disappointed with the way foreign envoys have been brought to the valley to endorse the Centre's claims of normalcy," it said.

Envoys from 15 countries, including US Ambassador to India Kenneth I Juster, arrived here on Thursday on a two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir, the first visit by diplomats since August last year when the state's special status was revoked and it was downgraded to a union territory.

"The NC wishes to ask these envoys that if the situation in Jammu and Kashmir is 'normal', then why are scores of people, including three former chief ministers, under detention for almost 160 days and why have the people been denied access to the internet for over 5 months?" a statement issued by the party



said. The party described the visit of envoys from 15 countries to Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday as a "repeat visit" of the European Members of Parliament to the erstwhile state earlier.

The NC said while these visits may provide "short lived propaganda victories", true normalcy will only be achieved when all detainees are released, communications and internet restored and "genuine" political activity resumed.

"While the rest of the country is told that peaceful dissent is the cornerstone of democracy, this right does not seem to extend to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Are the people of J and K expected to live without the fundamental rights accorded to other Indian citizens?" it said.

Officials said envoys of several countries had requested the government for a visit to Kashmir to get a first-hand account of the situation in the Valley following the August 5 decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 and bifurcate it into union territories, Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

This is the second visit of a foreign delegation to Jammu and Kashmir since August 5. Earlier, Delhi-based think tank International Institute for Non-Aligned Studies took 23 EU MPs on a two-day visit to assess the situation in the union territory.

The government had distanced itself from the visit with Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy informing Parliament that the European parliamentarians were on a "private visit".

Govt Trying To Normalise Its Clampdown: PDP

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR : The People's Democratic Party (PDP) on Thursday said the visit of envoys of various countries to Jammu and Kashmir was an attempt by the government to "normalise its clampdown" in the Valley, during the Centre to allow the dignitaries to meet the detained political leaders.

"Today that @PMOIndia lets a 2nd batch of envoys to 'see' the situation in #Kashmir, it only seems like an attempt to normalize the Govts own clampdown. The dare is on @PMOIndia will they ever let these Foreign Envoys meet political detainees who are jailed since 160 days now?" the PDP said on its official Twitter handle.

Envoys from 15 countries, including US Ambassador to India Kenneth I Juster, arrived in

Srinagar on Thursday on a two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir, the first visit by diplomats since August last year when the state's special status was revoked and it was downgraded to a union territory. The envoys, who are here as part of the government's diplomatic, met some political leaders, including former PDP leader Syed Altaf Bukhari, soon after their arrival.

The PDP, commenting on a meeting of break-away leaders of the party led by Bukhari with Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu earlier this week, said the government "jails those who aided its democracy and strings up puppets who are ready to bargain at the cheapest price".

"The government should understand that those who really love Kashmiri soil are not for sale!" it said.

MEA Says Criticism Of Envoys Visit Unfounded

NEW DELHI: The External Affairs Ministry on Thursday said the objective of the visit by foreign envoys to Jammu and Kashmir was for them to see first hand efforts to normalise the situation there and termed the criticism that it was a guided tour unfounded.

Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said a similar visit to Kashmir can be organised in future including by EU envoys.

The team of 15 envoys which included the US Ambassador to India Kenneth Juster arrived in Srinagar on Thursday on a two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir; the first visit by diplomats since August last year when the state's special status was revoked and it was down-

sized to a union territory. Kumar said that the visit was facilitated by the government and the envoys met security officials, political leaders, civil society groups and media. The objective of the visit is to see first hand efforts to normalise the situation in Kashmir, he said. The visit to J&K was organised considering prevailing situation, he said.

Asked about political leaders who met the group, Kumar said the visit by the envoys to Kashmir is not yet over.

The EU envoys wanted to visit Kashmir in a group and the government did not extend invite to all, he said.

The criticism that this is a guided tour is unfounded, he said.

Stop Political Tourism, Congress Tells Govt

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Thursday accused the government of "adopting double standards" by organising "guided tours" to Jammu and Kashmir for foreign envoys, but not allowing Indian politicians to visit there.

The party launched a broadside against the government hours after envoys from 15 countries including United States Ambassador to India Kenneth Juster arrived in Srinagar on a two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir, the first by diplomats since August last year when the state's special status was revoked and it was downgraded to two union territories.

"The government is adopting double standards by allowing foreign envoys to visit Jammu and Kashmir, but not Indian politicians," senior Congress leader Jai Ram Ramesh said at a press conference.

He, however, clarified that the Congress party was not opposed to such a visit, but

Indian politicians should also be allowed to visit there.

Ramesh said this was the second such attempt by the government, after the one planned for delegates of EU Parliamentarians on October 29 last year.

At that time after facing criticism, the government had to say that it was an informal visit and not an official one, the Congress leader said.

"We do not oppose this visit of foreign envoys. But when our own politicians are not allowed to go to Jammu and Kashmir to meet people there, what is the purpose of taking foreign envoys there?" he posed.

Ramesh said three former chief ministers of Jammu and Kashmir were still under house arrest and one ex-CM, who was also the leader of opposition in the Rajya Sabha -- Ghulam Nabi Azad -- had to seek the permission from the Supreme Court to visit the Union territory.

When a Parliamentary delegation, opposition leaders, former Congress president and CPI(M) general secretary, could not go to Jammu and Kashmir, then what was the purpose of taking foreign envoys there, Ramesh asked.

"We demand that the government allows unfettered access to Jammu and Kashmir to all politicians and not resort to guided tours for envoys," he said.

Ramesh said the Congress wants that meaningful political activities start in Jammu and Kashmir immediately and "political tourism" for foreign envoys stops. "It is important to stop such guided tours."

"In the last five months, no meaningful political activity has taken place in Jammu and Kashmir. The Congress party wants that meaningful political activities start in Jammu and Kashmir immediately. Political tourism of taking envoys to Jammu and Kashmir should stop," Ramesh said.

DIAL-EMMA

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- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BIJHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

- Sgr-Jammu highway - (Closed)
- Mughal Road - (Closed)
- Srinagar-Leh - (Closed)

This Day in History

- 1475 - Stephen III of Moldavia defeats the Ottoman Empire at the Battle of Vaslui.
- 1514 - Complutensian New Testament in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek & Latin finished
- 1861 - US forts & property seized by Mississippi
- 1861 - Florida secedes from the Union (US Civil War)
- 1906 - The British and French begin consultations on military and naval issues
- 1912 - World's 1st flying boat's maiden flight, (Glenn Curtiss in NY)
- 1914 - Yuan Shih-k'ai, president of the new Chinese republic, dissolves parliament and prepares a constitution of his own design; he will set himself up as dictator, preparatory to an attempt to make himself emperor
- 1916 - Russian offensive in Caucasus
- 1916 - In retaliation for President Woodrow Wilson's recognition of the Carranza government, members of Pancho Villa's revolutionary army take 17 US mining engineers from a train and shoot 16 of them in cold blood
- 1917 - The Allied Governments respond to US President Woodrow Wilson's December 1916 note, giving their terms for ending the war
- 1923 - Last US troops leave Rhineland (Germany)
- 1923 - Lithuania seizes & annexes country of Mermel
- 1925 - Allies refuse to evacuate the Cologne area of Germany as agreed
- 1928 - Soviet Union orders exile of Leon Trotsky
- 1944 - British troops conquer Maungdaw, Burma
- 1946 - UN General Assembly meets for 1st time in London
- 1951 - UN headquarters opens in Manhattan NY
- 1954 - A Comet jet airliner crashes in the Mediterranean; 35 people are missing
- 1966 - India & Pakistan sign Tashkent Declaration peace accord
- 1968 - US Surveyor 7 lands near lunar crater Tycho
- 1969 - USSR's Venera 6 launched for parachute landing on Venus
- 1972 - Sheikh Mujibur Rahman arrives in Dacca, East-Pakistan
- 1978 - Soyuz 27 carrying 2 cosmonauts to Salyut 6 space station, launched
- 1984 - US re-establishes full diplomatic relations with Vatican after almost 117 years
- 1986 - NASA's STS-61-C mission scrubbed T-9m because of bad weather at Florida's Kennedy Space Center
- 1990 - China lifts martial law (imposed after Tiananmen Square massacre)
- 1994 - Uzbekistan & Kazakhstan agrees to abolish trade tariffs.
- 1996 - King Hussein of Jordan visits Israel
- 1997 - 1st Comet of 1997 Discovered: Comet 1997 A1



HIJRI CALENDAR

14
JUMADA AL-AWWAL
1441

PRAYERS

FAJR
6:08
ZUHR
12:37
ASR
4:01
MAGRIB
5:45
ISHA
7:08

From KO Archives

Nazla bar uzw-e-za'eef

Drastic 11-hr power cut in valley ordered

Observer News Service

SRINGAAR : The power development department (PDD) today revised its curtailment schedule to deliver yet another rude shock to the valley consumers by reducing availability of the direly essential commodity to a little over 12 hours per twenty-four hours. Depending upon the whims and caprices of its underlings to en-force irritating unscheduled cuts, power supply would now be something like the proverbial 'once in a blue moon'.

According to the revised schedule effective from today, load shedding will be enforced during mornings, evenings, day and night. During a week, there will be three evening cuts of 4.5 hours each from 5.30 to 10; four night cuts of 6.5 hours each from 11 p.m. to 5.30 a.m. and two morning cuts of two hours each from 5.30 to 7.30. A day cut of five hours will be enforced in two groups all of seven days. The total duration of the 'night-mare' aggregates to 78 and a half hours, or 11 hours and 13 minutes a day. Power supply to essential services like hospitals, water supply, telecommunications, besides the security force camps and VIP installations, as usual, will be unaffected. According to the chief engineer, maintenance and rural electrification, Qazi Muhammad Syed, supply to the organised industrial units at Khonmoh, Rangreth, Zainakot, Bagh-e-Ali Mardan Khan and other places would be main-tained.

Sources told Kashmir Ob-server the recent northern grid failure which had plunged several northern states into dark-ness, disrupted essential supplies and services and, on top of it all, embarrassed the centre, served as an immediate provocation for the drastic measure. The northern grid authorities attributed the failure to over-drawal of energy by all the states in the northern region. Obviously, as the Persian saying, Nazla bar uzw-e-za'eef (wrath on the weak), goes, the axe fell on Jammu and Kashmir On Thursday evening, the northern grid authorities directed the deputy general manager of the Power Grid Corporation of India based at Wagoor station to switch off the 220-KV Wagoor, Zainakot transmission line to stop valley's power imports to the extent of 240 megawatts. Similar steps are understood to have been taken in Jammu region.

Following the massive brakes from northern grid, sources said, the valley's im-ports have been more than halved, from 400 mw to a mere 160 mw. With the generation of around 40 mw from local power stations - Uri, lower Jhelum, Upper Sindh, phase I and II, and Ganderbal - the total avail-ability adds up to 200 mw against the peak requirement of 700 to 750 mw. Caught in a desperate situation, the PDD authorities are going to come down heavily against defaulters. The chief engineer asked the consumers to clear their arrears to avoid disconnection. Power supply to Zainakot-based central public peptor Hindustan Machine Tools was cut off today. Supply to various flour mills and units owing more than Rs one lakh in tariff is being snapped early. Qazi said power supply to various central and state gov-ernment departments in the red would also be stopped im-mediately

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 10 January, 2001)

Hemophilia patients suffer in absence of drugs and staff at SMHS

SRINAGAR: Kashmir valley's lone Hemophilia Center located at Shri Mahraja Hari Singh (SMHS) hospital here in Srinagar is grappling with inadequate drugs and staff. The situation has left hundreds of hemophilia patients in anguish.

Hemophilia is a rare genetic disorder that keeps blood from clotting and leads to excessive

internal and external bleeding.

Sources told Kashmir News Trust that 327 patients are currently suffering from hemophilia disease in Kashmir valley. The incidence of hemophilia in J&K is one per 10,000.

The lack of space at hemophilia center has irked the staff. The patients are only able to get some treatment within

just two rooms of the center.

The doctors and para-medical staff lamented over the lack of infrastructure and poor facilities. "Due to space crunch we are unable to treat patients properly. Government should either construct new building for hemophilia center or expand the old center," said a hospital employee wishing

anonymity. Another employee lamented that in absence of basic facilities many patients have stopped visiting the center.

The misery of patients does not end here but there is also shortage of drugs at the center which has put the life of patients at stake. The patients are without anti-hemophilia drugs

like factor VII and IX, feiba and wanvili brand factor. As per sources, the hemophilia center is facing the shortage of drugs since many months. "Every time I come here with an intention to get good treatment but unfortunately I return upset because the basic drugs are unavailable here," said a patient Ghulam Hassan from Budgam.

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT DISTRICT HOSPITAL PULWAMA

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