

Advisor Khan Visits Shopian, Listens To People's Grievances

SHOPIAN: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Khan today visited South Kashmir's Shopian district to listen to issues and grievances of people there.

The Advisor conducted a public grievances redressal camp wherein hundreds of deputations and individuals from far-flung areas of the district projected their demands.

District Development Commissioner Shopian, Choudhary Mohammad Yasin was also present on the occasion.

The deputations included representatives of Fruit Growers Association, Contractors Association, ST Tribe members, Pahari speaking deputation of village Shadab and Karewa, District Development Forum Shopian, Cold Store Unit holders Aglar, Civil

Society members, Pandit Association, Sqay Association, Transporters Union and deputations from Dev Pora, Zaina Pora, Wachi etc.

They projected various issues including completion of Fruit Mandi Aglar, establishment of pesticides and soil testing laboratory, priority of Fruit Trucks on National Highway, compensation of damaged orchards, construction of Bridges, road connectivity, uninterrupted electricity, construction of lanes and drains, installation of street lights, maintenance of public parks, Gujjar hostel, removal of encroachments, drug de-addiction centre, playgrounds, potable drinking water, upgradation of schools, boundaries for temples, blood bank, rehabilitation of vendors, addressing long

pending demands of contractors, settlement of SRO cases, Scholarships for tribal students, power connection to cold store units, road connectivity and protection of river bunds.

On the occasion, Advisor Khan gave a patient hearing to the issues and demands projected during the camp and assured the deputations and individuals that all of their genuine issues would be looked into and addressed on priority.

The Advisor also issued on the spot directions in some cases to the concerned officers to address projected issues in a time-bound manner.

Later, Advisor Khan chaired a meeting to review the progress of ongoing developmental works being carried out in the

district. A detailed report of all ongoing and under construction works was presented to the Advisor.

Khan appreciated the district administration for developmental works completed so far and impressed upon the officers to complete all the under construction works within the stipulated time frame. He also exhorted the officers to work with added dedication and zeal.

Senior Superintendent of Police Shopian, Director General Social Welfare Kashmir, Director Floriculture, Additional Registrar Cooperative Kashmir, Deputy Labour Commissioner Kashmir, Additional Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Joint Director Employment and other concerned were present in the meeting.

Dc Anantnag Reviews Implementation Of Jal Jeevan Mission

ANANTNAG:District Development Commissioner (DDC) Anantnag, Khalid Jahangir reviewed the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in the district, in a meeting held here today.

The DDC asked the concerned officers to complete the basic survey of households with and without piped water at block and Panchayat level by January 15.

It was given out that action

plan for implementation of JJM will be formulated only after the successful completion of basic survey. It was also given out that under mission, retrofitting of the closed schemes and construction of new schemes for water shortage areas will be taken up to ensure full coverage.

The DDC emphasized for involvement of all the field functionaries of concerned departments for accurate and 100

percent survey of the households with & without piped water within the stipulated time frame, so that the action plan for the successful implementation of the said scheme is devised accordingly.

SE Hydraulics Circle Anantnag, ACD, BDOs, Executive Engineers of PHE Divisions Qazigund and Bijbehara, and District Panchayat Officer and other concerned attended the meeting.

THE DDC ASKED THE CONCERNED OFFICERS TO COMPLETE the basic survey of households with and without piped water at block and Panchayat level by January 15.

CS calls for protecting forests for future generations

JAMMU: A Passing out Ceremony of Foresters and Forest Guards of Soil Conservation Training School Miran Sahib Jammu and Forest Guard Training School Doomi, Akhnoor was today held, here at the Convention Center.

In all, 158 trainees have passed out after successfully completing their entry level training course.

Chief Secretary, BVR Subrahmanyam was the Chief Guest and the Commissioner Secretary, Forests, Environment and Ecology Department Sarita Chauhan was the

Guest of Honour at the ceremony.

The Passing out Ceremony started with the presentation of ceremonial Guard of Honour to the Chief Guest by the personnel of Forest Protection Force.

Addressing the passing out trainees, the Chief Secretary congratulated them on successful completion of their training.

Chief Secretary emphasized on sustainable development and management of Forests for future generations. He appreciated the department for recording in-

crease of forest cover in Jammu and Kashmir, recently reported by the Govt. of India.

Chief Secretary impressed upon the frontline officers to strive for conservation and management of Forests by planning and management of non-timber forest products, firewood, fodder and increasing tree cover outside forests. Underlining the role of frontline staff and officers for the protection of Wildlife, he said "everyone's effort is required as coordinated and integrated approach can only

make a difference."

Chief Secretary appreciated that the CAMPA works are now being carried out in a scientific manner, which is evident from the increasing forest cover. He also hailed the achievements of on-going Green J&K Drive and advised to make it an annual feature with involvement of all the departments.

During his address, Chief Secretary acknowledged the challenges faced by the field staff of the forest department while performing

their duties and also talked about the adverse impact of changing climate on all the sectors of economy, including forests.

Commissioner Secretary, Sarita Chauhan, in her address, highlighted the multifunctional role of forests for soil and water conservation as well as for environment protection. She discussed the important role of frontline staff in meeting the objectives of J&K Forest Policy and stressed upon improving the curriculum and faculty structure for effective training.

This would prepare the frontline staff to face new challenges in forest sector, she maintained.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests J&K, Dr. Mohit Gera emphasized on strengthening and upgrading the Forestry Training Schools with modern infrastructure and use of advanced technologies as teaching aids.

Earlier, The Chief Conservator of Forests, T. Rabi Kumar, delivered welcome address.

Conservator of Forests, Working Plan Circle, Irfan Ali

Shah, presented the course report and declared the results of four batches of Foresters and Forest Guards trainees of Soil Conservation Training School Miran Sahib Jammu and Forest Guard Training School Doomi, Akhnoor.

After the passing out ceremony, outstanding Foresters and Forest Guard Trainees were conferred with prizes and awards for their excellent performance in academics and extracurricular activities.

.....from front page

16 Diplomats In Kashmir

diplomats in this afternoon.

Sources added that the around 20 Civil Society members also met the delegation separately who briefed the about the situation post abrogation of Article 370.

Besides the US, the delegation includes diplomats from Bangladesh, Vietnam, Norway, Maldives, South Korea, Morocco, and Nigeria. They return to Delhi on Friday.

Brazil's envoy Andre Aranha Correa do Lago was also scheduled to visit Jammu and Kashmir. However, he backed out because of his preoccupation here, the officials said on Wednesday.

Envoys from the European Union (EU) countries are understood to have conveyed that they will visit the union territory on a different date and are also believed to have stressed on meeting the three former chief ministers -- Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti -- who are under detention.

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 two 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, a Delhi-based think tank 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".

EU Diplomats Reject Invitation

sources denied any suggestion that EU envoys had pulled out due to restrictions in the programme, saying the government was unable to accommodate all 28 countries on this trip," The Hindu said.

In October of last year, a group of European Parliament members had visited Kashmir. Nearly 30 EU MPs, drawn mainly from extreme right-wing parties, were the first international delegation to visit strife torn Kashmir since a security clampdown was imposed on August 5 last year. While the Indian government projected the visit as a sign of easing restrictions, the European parliament and European Union hierarchy were not involved, raising some diplomatic doubts.

The lockdown in Kashmir has crossed 150 days with the security and communication clampdown now in its fifth month.

With international pressure mounting to restore freedoms, Indian authorities claim they have 'eased' some restrictions, such as lifting roadblocks and restoring landlines and some mobile phone services. The scenario for 12.5 million Kashmiris, however, is far from normal.

Army Chief Visits Siachen

zeal and also assured them the full support of the country as well as the Army, in carrying out their duties.

At the Siachen Base Camp, the Army Chief laid a wreath at the iconic Siachen War Memorial in honour of all the soldiers who have died in the line of duty.

The Army Chief was accompanied by Lieutenant General YK Joshi, Chief of Staff, HQ North-

ern Command and Lieutenant General Harinder Singh, General Officer Commanding, 'Fire & Fury' Corps.

Supreme Court To Deliver Verdict

in the region and it would have been "foolish" if the government would not have taken preventive steps to secure the lives of citizens.

Provisions of Article 370, which gave special status to the erstwhile state of J&K, were abrogated by the Centre on August 5 last year.

Kashmir Valley Reels Under

mechanics and auto-drivers is a common sight in the city, where the night temperature dipped and settled at minus 3 degree, against minus 0.4 degree recorded on Wednesday.

The spokesperson said the skies will be mainly clear to partly cloudy during the next 24 hours in Srinagar, where the maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 8 degree and minus 4 degree, respectively.

The night temperature at world famous ski resort of Gulmarg, where ski slopes are covered under several feet of snow, dipped about 6 degree from Wednesday and settled minus 13.6 degree, which is several degree below normal. Sun played hide and seek though ice cold winds continued in Gulmarg, where tourists, including adventure lovers, were out on the ski slopes enjoying different snow related activities.

The mercury at would famous health resort of Pahalgam, about 100 km from here in south Kashmir, dipped about 11 degrees from Wednesday and settled at minus 13.7 degree, making it the coldest place in the valley.

Kupwara in north Kashmir, tourist resort of Kokernag and Qazigund, gateway to the valley, also witnessed a dip in the night temperature, which settled at minus 6.1 degree, minus 6.2 degree and minus 4.4 degree, respectively.

Banihal Highway Reopens

Srinagar-Leh highway open throughout the year. However, due to heavy snowfall and threat of avalanches and slippery road conditions due to below freezing temperature, the highway remained closed.

The historic 86-km-long Mughal road, connecting Shopian in south Kashmir with Rajouri and Poonch in Jammu region, and Anantnag-Kishtwar road also remained closed for the past 30 days. There is no possibility of reopening of the road before April-May.

Traffic on the Srinagar-Jammu highway was suspended for the second consecutive day on Wednesday following fresh landslides. Even though there was no fresh snowfall and rain since on Tuesday, there were fresh landslides and shooting stones at several places.

However, the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) put into service sophisticated machines and cleared the landslides and snow last evening, when stranded vehicles were allowed to move towards Kashmir.

Class 10th Results Out, 75 Percent

said. Officials said that 48905 students qualified in Class 10th examinations, adding that 16412 didn't qualify.

It is worth to mention here that the results amid the internet gag in the Valley was declared

through SMS, Gazettes. The students would otherwise check their result on internet, but, this time, the situation was different as the authorities in absence of internet services resorted to manual procedure and declared result through SMS and Gazettes.

Pertinently, the examination for Class 10th started in October ending and culminated in mid-November.

The examination was held even as the students had not completed the syllabus due to the closure of educational institutions across the Valley. The educational institutions remained closed for over three months due to uncertainty that gripped Kashmir following the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status (Article 370) and bifurcation of erstwhile State into two Union Territories—Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh on August 5, last year. (KNO)

JK Begins Implementing Central

Right to Information Act, 2009 and application of the Right to Information Act, 2005 (Central Act) to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir by Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019, all the Public Authorities are mandated to appoint Public Information Officers and First Appellate Authorities in terms of the Central Act, Accordingly, all the Public Authorities in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir shall appoint Public Information Officers and First Appellate Authorities in all administrative units/offices, in terms of Right to Information Act, 2005," reads the order issued by GAD Secretary Farooq Ahmad Lone.

The re-organization of Jammu and Kashmir led to repeal of more than 150 laws including Jammu and Kashmir Right to Information Act-2009, which was enacted during NC- Congress regime headed by Omar Abdullah.

It is worthwhile to mention here that J&K government had constituted a committee to examine applicability of central RTI Act in the UT.

In its recommendations, the committee has suggested opening of branch office of Central Information Commission reasoning that Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is spread over vast area in comparison to other Union Territories. (KNO)

Sena Supports Woman Who Held

a "dirtier example of irresponsibility". In remarks laced with sarcasm, an editorial in Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana' said the placard "shocked the opposition leaders and awakened the nationalist sentiment in them."

"They attacked Chief Minister Thackeray and asked how this anti-national activity can happen right under his nose. The allegation was so frivolous that the opposition leaders made a mockery of themselves," it said.

"This is not good for the state...we are worried for the opposition," the Shiv Sena tauntingly said.

After the placard with "Free Kashmir" message was seen at the protest at Gateway of India here against the JNU violence, Fadnavis had asked what exactly was the protest for and if Chief Minister Thackeray will tolerate this "anti-India campaign" right under his nose.

The Sena said Mehke Prabhu, a Maharashtra, came out before TV channels after her placard kicked up a row and gave her side of the story, saying her intention was about freeing Kashmir from communication restrictions faced by people there.

"A Mumbai Marathi woman could understand the pain of Kashmiris. The opposition feels this is sedition. There can't be a dirtier example of irresponsibility," it said.

"If the opposition and its supporters feel expressing yourself fearlessly is sedition, it is not good for them (opposition) and the country. The opposition has fallen flat on its face after Mehke Prabhu's clarification," the Marathi publication said.

It also asked former chief minister Fadnavis to exercise caution and restrain, and respect his current post as leader of opposition (LoP) in the Assembly.

"We understand his pain. He should apply balm on his wounds and stay quiet for sometime," it quipped.

The Sena said the opposition BJP "needs counselling" as it has become "directionless" since Fadnavis became LoP.

Everyday, the Fadnavis-led opposition feels the state government will collapse and they would return to power, the Shiv Sena said.

"The opposition raises flimsy issues in an attempt to corner the Uddhav Thackeray-led government. But nothing of this sort will happen. In fact, the three parties (Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress- allies in the state government) will come closer and become stronger," it asserted.

The Shiv Sena asked the BJP to organise a counselling workshop on "duties and responsibilities of opposition" at Rambhau Mhalgi Prabhodini, a RSS-affiliated research institute located in neighbouring Thane district.

It also took a dim view of BJP leader Chandrasekhar Bawankule asking Congress' Vijay Wadetiwar to join the saffron party, amid speculations that the latter was upset with the portfolio allocated to him in the Thackeray-led state government.

"This is too much. Did Bawankule quit the BJP and join the Congress after he was denied ticket in the Assembly polls (held in October last year)?" the Sena asked.

Maharashtra cannot afford loss of face and trust of the opposition parties, it added.

Kashmir Rail Line

engineering marvel," Gupta said. The massive arch-shaped structure, being constructed in hostile terrain, have used over 5,462 tonnes of steel will be 359 metres above the river bed, he added.

Designed to withstand wind speeds of up to 260 km per hour, the 1.315-km-long "engineering marvel" will connect Bakkal (Katra) and Kauri (Srinagar).

The bridge forms a crucial link in the 111-km stretch between Katra and Banihal, which is part of the Udhampur- Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project.

Once completed, it will surpass the record of the Beipan river Shuibai railway bridge (275 m) in China.

The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project is highly essential to provide an alternative and a reliable transportation system to Jammu and Kashmir to join Kashmir Valley to the Indian Railways network, Gupta said.

He added that in view of the importance of this project in providing seamless and hassle-free connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir, the project was declared as national project in 2002.

Baig Says Mehbooba Provoked Delhi

of the state (JK) into union territories," Baig, who is one of the founding members of the PDP and former deputy chief minister, told reporters here.

He added the "threatening statement" to New Delhi should not have been made.

"If Jammu and Kashmir has to live together and if we have to bat for our rights, we have to talk with decency and humility," the PDP leader said.

Baig criticized the "provocative" statement of Mufti and said one cannot "threaten" the top leadership in New Delhi to see one's grievances being heard.

"We cannot get anything by browbeating and threatening Modi ji, home minister or NSA. As citizens of India, we should put before them our grievances and our problems with humility," he added.

"We believe in that approach. It was a provocative statement and it should not have been made," Baig said.

Mufti has been critical of the Centre over the revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370.

In August last year when the Centre announced abrogation of Article 370 provisions and bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir into union territories -- J and K and Ladakh, Mufti had said India failed Kashmir in keeping its promises.

Heart Attack Kills BSF Trooper

Mate was a farmer, but as per his father's wish, he joined the BSF in 2006, family sources said. His service bond ended last year, but it was extended for four years, they said.

He is survived by mother Mhalsabai Mate, wife Manisha (30), son Pratik (11) and brother Bhagirath. (PTI)

Govt Approves Road Accident Victim Fund

Public Sector Undertaking, etc. He added that 0.5 percent of the cost of vehicle would be charged towards the fund as a onetime contribution at the time of registration of vehicle.

The order issued by the Transport department reads that Corpus Fund with a minimum balance of Rs 1 crore only shall be created in the Transport Department and funds should be provided by the Finance Department.

Regarding the utilisation of the fund, Dr Samon said that it will be specially used for payment of ex-gratia relief to the victims of road accidents in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

A committee will be formed to grant the relief to the dependents with Administrative Secretary Transport as Chairman, Transport Commissioner, representative of Finance Department as members and Additional Secretary (Technical) Road safety council as Member Secretary of the committee, the order reads.

The order reads that Rs 1 Lakh will be provided to the dependents in case of death of a person, Rs 75,000 in case of permanent disability, Rs 50,000 in case of grievous injuries and Rs 10 thousand for minor injuries.

"The relief sanctioned by the appropriate authority shall be in addition to any other relief, if any, to be sanctioned by the Government or by any other authority under any law for the time being in force. These rules shall be applicable to Hit and Run cases also. In addition to the passenger victims, these rules shall be applicable to road users/ pedestrians also," it reads.

Pakistani Woman Comes Back

it said. "Her body had been shifted to the morgue and we had started giving her a funeral bath when a woman present in the room noticed her limbs moving. We then hurriedly checked her pulse to find out that she was still breathing," Rasheeda's daughter-in-law Shabana was quoted as saying by the report.

The woman is now undergoing treatment at the same public hospital.