

Brought CAA To Correct Historical Injustice, Says PM Modi

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said the citizenship law was brought to "correct a historical injustice and fulfil a promise to minorities in the neighbouring countries".



Speaking at a rally of the National Cadet Corps in Delhi, he spoke of the injustices made during partition, when a "line was drawn across a piece of paper". At the time, he said, "those who governed an independent India accepted partition".

Nehru-Liaquat pact spoke about protecting minorities, Gandhiji wished the same. The government has introduced CAA to fulfil a promise India made," he added.

Attacking political opponents who are opposing the Citizenship Amendment Act, he said they are motivated by "votebank politics". Without naming anyone, he said such people are "negating atrocities". "Some are acting to be the

voice of Dalits, they are the same people who ignore atrocities against Dalits in Pakistan, they forget that most of persecuted who have left Pakistan and come to India are Dalits," he said. The opposition, he also said, is spreading propaganda that the government's decisions have "affected my reputation in the entire world". "These rumormongers must understand that I don't work for my reputation, but for India's repute," he said.

His words come in the backdrop of the six resolutions moved in the parliament of the European Union on the Citizenship Amendment Act, which expresses concern that it would create the "largest statelessness crisis in the world". India has also slipped 10 spots in the Democracy Index of the Economist Intelligence Unit, which cited the citizenship law and the five-month-long restrictions in Jammu and Kashmir.

Parts Of Kulgam Shut Against The Killing Of Local Militant Thousands participate in funeral

SRINAGAR: A complete shutdown was observed in some parts of South Kashmir's Kulgam district on Tuesday against the killing of a 20 year old local militant in a gun battle with the government forces that had

erupted yesterday in Arwani area of Bijbehara. Reports said that all the shops and business establishments remained closed in parts of Kulgam including Qaimoh and Khudwani. Shahid Ahmed Ahangar, a

20 year old militant from Qaimoh Ghat area of Kulgam was killed in Arwani area. He had joined militant ranks some 10 days ago. Eyewitnesses told Kashmir News Trust that thousands of

people amid rains and snowfall, participated in his funeral procession. He was laid to rest amid pro-freedom slogans.

Security had been beefed across district to maintain law and order. Reports said that

Sand extractors stage protest: 'Contract was allowed to outside company when internet was shut in Kashmir'

SRINAGAR: Scores of sand extractors from Kashmir capital Srinagar Tuesday staged a protest accusing government of snatching their livelihood by handing over the sand extraction contract to an outside company. Scores of sand extractors who assembled in Press Enclave Srinagar alleged that Geology and Mining Department invited tenders at a time when there was communication clampdown in Kashmir.

"Inviting tenders in absence of internet in Kashmir deprived us from participating in the bid. The department after violating all the norms has allotted the extraction contract to an Amritsar based company. The sand extractors' right from Panzina to Lashan area have become jobless due to callous attitude of Geology and Mining Department," the protesters told Kashmir News Trust.

They alleged that the high-handed attitude of some officials has hit hard those people

who are entitled to extract sand. They also expressed their concern over the problems faced by the thousands of people who relied on the sand extraction industry to earn a livelihood. "We used to extract sand without any hindrance but now the authorities handed over the sand extraction contract to outsiders. The authorities have snatched our livelihood," said the protesters.

Pertinently, a tussle is going on between Irrigation and Flood Control Department and Geology and Mining Department after the former came to know that a non-local company equipped with latest machinery has been permitted to extract sand from the River Jehlum in Kashmir Valley. I&FC believes, the use of machinery for extraction purpose may pose a serious threat to the embankments of the river- the latest example is the breach that occurred near Shivpora and Sonawar areas of city.

From Front page...

DSP's Arrest Fallout: CRPF Scans

obtaining data from all available sources and they have been asked to be kept on "active mode" for some more time. "No security grid should be allowed to be weakened by such episodes. So, all forces have to keep an internal watch," he said on the arrest of DSP Singh.

"All forces should maintain vigilance so that there is no such type of subversion or some sort of intrusion within the force..." the DG told reporters here.

JK Police had arrested Singh at Mir Bazar in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district along with Hizbul Mujahideen militants Naveed Baba and Altaf, besides a lawyer on January 11.

Maheshwari said that somebody from a security force trying to collaborate with adversaries is a "serious matter". However, he added that a lone incident cannot be used to "brand" the entire force which has done onerous work in the past.

"An isolated incident should not be taken as branding of any particular force. The JK Police has tremendous contributions in normalising the situation (in Kashmir)," the DG said at a force camp here.

One incident should not be used to cast "aspersions on the dignity of the force, on the strength of the force, and therefore I don't buy this is theory that there can be more such elements, but yes it is a matter of concern and all should see that these things don't occur," said the DG, a 1984-batch IPS officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre who took over the reins of the force on January 15.

"We are further strengthening our systems... which were already in place," he said referring to the vigilance and intelligence checks conducted on their personnel in Kashmir valley and other places.

"When something happens in neighbourhood, then it is common sense to do it (check against subversive elements) quickly again," he added.

The Central Reserve Police Force has deployed close to 70,000 personnel in Kashmir Valley for counter-militancy and law and order duties.

It is the country's largest Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) with 3.25 lakh personnel in its ranks and is categorised as the lead national internal security force.

Fresh Snowfall Breaks Cold Wave

activities," a hotelier said. Srinagar was the only place in the region where the night temperature settled above freezing point. But, people woke up to a chilly Tuesday morning due to overcast conditions in the city, which received light drizzle followed by fresh snowfall as the day progressed, resulting in further dip in the temperature. The mercury in the city remained constant about 0.6 degree, which is about 3 degree above normal.

World famous health resort of Pahalgam, about 100 km from here in south Kashmir, received light snowfall in the wee hours on Tuesday, resulting in dip in the day temperature. But, the night temperature at the health resort improved about 7 degree and settled at minus 3.8 degree due to overcast conditions.

The upper reaches in Pahalgam, including Chandanwari, received very light snowfall. Amarnath cave shrine and its periphery, besides Sheshnag, Mahagung, Pisso top and Panjterni, also received light to moderate snowfall.

Many other parts of north, south and central Kashmir also received fresh snowfall. Many places on Srinagar-Jammu national highway, including Qazigund, gateway to the valley, Jawahir Tunnel also received about 5 to 6 inches of fresh snowfall. The mercury at Qazigund, Kupwara in north Kashmir and tourist resort of Kokernag settled at minus 0.6 degree, minus 2.2 degree and minus 1.3 degree, respectively.

Banihal Highway Closed

lashed landslides prone area between Ramban and Ramsu since early this morning. "All vehicles which had left different parts of the Jammu region have been stopped at Nagrota and Udhampur," he said.

The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has started snow clearance operation, he said, adding but continued snowing was hampering the operation. "Once a green signal is received from traffic officials and NHAI, traffic will be resumed from Jammu to Srinagar," he added.

Frequent closure of the highway due to snow, landslides, shooting stones often leads to shortage of essentials, including fresh vegetables, meat, chicken and LPG cylinders in the valley, which is entirely dependent upon imports from different northern states. Prices of essentials also go up when highway gets closed.

The 434-km-long Srinagar-Leh highway, the only road connecting Union Territory (UT) Ladakh with Kashmir, and 98-km-long Mughal road, linking Shopian in south Kashmir with Rajouri and Poonch in Jammu region, and Anantnag-Kishtwar road which remained closed for the past 49 days on Tuesday due to accumulation of snow and slippery conditions.

Coronavirus Alert: J&K Admin Orders

2019-nCoV has been spreading in China, and has now reached several other countries claiming many lives.

Duloo said that adequate measures are being made to identify passengers with symptoms of the disease and directed the officers to make arrangements to isolate any suspected case to curb the spread of the virus.

He said that an advisory will be issued to all the Deputy Commissioners of Jammu and Kashmir to step up their preparedness to tackle any suspected cases. The advisory includes designating of rapid response teams, enhanced surveillance, capacity for laboratory diagnosis, and earmarking isolation wards.

It said that isolation wards will be established at Government Medical Colleges of Jammu and Srinagar, SK Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura and other districts where a special team of doctors and paramedics will be constituted and trained accordingly.

In the meeting, directions were issued for activating Multi-disciplinary Research Units (MRUs) at Government Medical College Jammu and Srinagar and the samples of the suspected cases to be drawn immediately and sent to the National Institute of Biomedical, Pune for confirmation.

Emphasizing the need for adopting preventive measures, Duloo directed for Information Education and Communication (IEC) strategy to be adopted so that people are educated about the preventive measures to be taken. He said that preventive measures are a key to success to contain the virus and asked for generating mass awareness through print and electronic media, hoardings at prominent places like hospital premises, airports and railway stations to detect the suspected cases with fever, cough, cold malaise etc.

The government also plans for distribution of pamphlets to be provided to the tourists coming from such destinations which are affected by the virus. It also said that awareness regarding personal hygiene, screening and detection cases at the community level will be started through ASHA workers.

The Financial Commissioner also directed the officers that sizable inventory of personal protection equipments, N-95 masks and other logistical arrangements be kept in place and buffer stock be also maintained.

Officer on Special Duty to Financial Commissioner, Dr Shafiqat Khan has been designated as nodal officer to coordinate with the Government of India and various health care institutions in JK to monitor all the activities regarding the spread of the disease. The meeting was attended by Director Health Services, Jammu, Dr Renu Sharma;

Director New Medical Colleges J&K, Dr Yashpal Sharma; Principal, Government Medical College, Jammu, Dr Sunanda Raina; Joint Director (Planning) H&ME, Madan Lal; and other officers.

Director Health Services Kashmir, Dr Samir Mattoo; Director SKIMS, Dr AG Ahangar; Principal, Government Medical College, Srinagar, Dr Parvaiz Shah and other Kashmir based officers attended the meeting through video conferencing.

Bukhari Denies Forming New

meetings are often convened". "These meetings are aimed at reviving the emerging political situation and should not be misconstrued as formation of any political party."

Earlier this month, Bukhari led a group of former legislators which met Murmu in Jammu and presented a memorandum with a list of demands for restoring political activity in Jammu and Kashmir.

Bukhari stressed that Jammu and Kashmir cannot perpetually "mourn" the abrogation of Article 370.

In an exclusive interview with IANS, Bukhari had said the time has come to look beyond Article 370 and explore other achievable options for Jammu and Kashmir.

"The pain of loss of Article 370 will never go, but we have to come out of it," he said. "Life goes on; we must try for things that we can get."

He said the way forward is domicile rights for residents and restoration of the statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

Situation Along LoC, Hinterland

Chief of Defence Staff created. Aligning the Army headquarters with them to create further jointness will be my priorities" Lt Gen Saini, who took charge as the new vice chief of Indian Army on Tuesday, said.

Saini, who was the Southern Command chief so far is an alumnus of Sainik School, Kapurthala and the National Defence Academy (NDA).

He was commissioned into the Jat Regiment in June 1981.

Lt Gen Saini has also been weapons instructor at the National Security Guards (NSG) Training Centre, a senior directing staff at the National Defence College in New Delhi and the Commandant of the Indian Military Academy.

He also served as the Deputy Chief Military Personnel Officer in UN Mission in Iraq-Kuwait, attended an exercise on peace-keeping conducted by the Global Peace Operations initiative in Mongolia and a counter-terrorism exercise in Australia.

Conferred with the Chief of Army Staff's Commendation, Army Commander's Commendation, the Yudh Seva Medal (YSM), the Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM), and the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) during his career, Saini also said terrorist launch pads have been reoccupied and their camps are active across the LoC, but India's armed forces were ready to take them on.

Top Army Officer Visits Police Hqs

to eliminate militancy in Jammu and Kashmir.

Lt Gen Singh, General Officer-Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command, is retiring from service on January 31 and will be replaced by Lt Gen Y K Joshi.

Lt Gen Joshi is currently serving as the Chief of Staff of the Northern Command which takes care of the overall security scenario along the border with Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir as well as with China in Ladakh.

"The GOC-in-C visited Jammu Kashmir Police Headquarters, where he interacted with Director General of Police Dilbag Singh and other senior officers," a police spokesman said. Lt Gen Singh complimented the DGP and his entire team for the outstanding work be-

ing done for peace and welfare of the people in the Union territory, he added.

"Police personnel have always remained on the forefront while dealing with anti-militancy activities and there exists great synergy and coordination with the Army and the Central Armed Police Forces, and the counterinsurgency grid is moving like a well-oiled machine," Lt Gen Singh said, adding that the police have a huge role to play in maintaining peace and eliminating militants in the Union Territory.

The Army commander expressed his gratitude to the DGP for providing the opportunity to interact with the officers and wished the entire force good luck. He also extended good wishes to the families of the police personnel, the spokesman said.

The DGP thanked the Army commander for his cooperation and support in maintenance of public order and the security environment, and said Lt Gen Singh was a wonderful team leader and it was a privilege to work with him.

BJP Mocks Omar's Beard,

long white beard surfaced on social media and went viral.

Omar was seen smiling with snow in the backdrop. The photo has a retro touch to it. According to sources the photograph was genuine. The National Conference leader, who has been in detention since August 5, when Article 370 was abrogated in the state, appears to have not shaved since.

In October, a different photo of Omar had surfaced, in which he was sporting a smaller beard.

Preparations In Full Swing

successful conduct of the Investment Summit.

Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) is the nodal agency for conducting the summit.

Several Committees such as Empowered Committee, Hospitality Committee, Venue Management Committee, Traffic & Security Committee, transport Committee, Cultural Committee, City Beautification Committees, Media and Publicity Committee, Sight Seeing Committee, Exhibition Committee etc with specific role and responsibilities, headed by Administrative Secretaries, are also being constituted. These Committees will work for desired outcomes.

Another top government official described the summit as a mega event for the Union Territory government. "Road-shows on the Summit are also being planned in next month. The Mega event will see strategic sectoral sessions, round table deliberations, technical presentations, partnerships, one-to-one business meetings and signing of memorandum of understanding," he said.

He said that it will present immense opportunities to develop contacts between the local and outside business community and will provide not only primary employment but also generate secondary and ancillary employment opportunities for youth.

"Participating trade and industry organizations will have an opportunity to know first-hand about the business friendly policies of the government and identify business opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir," he maintained.

Official said the Confederation of Indian Industry has been selected as the national partner, while Earnest Young, PricewaterhouseCoopers and Expro have been selected as knowledge, media and event partner.

Quoting sources KNS reported that thousands of kanals of land have been identified so far and it will be open for outside investors soon.

Sources said that most of the companies which have shown interest to setup their businesses in Kashmir are from Maharashtra. There are companies in food processing, agri-business and manufacturing from Pune, Mumbai and other parts of the country. Sources said that around 16,000 kanals of

state land has been earmarked in regions of Jammu and Kashmir.

It is to mention here that the government had issued directions to all district commissioners, both in Jammu and Kashmir, to submit details about the state land available in their jurisdictions.

Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu has already said that the first-ever Jammu and Kashmir global investors summit will be held in the region in April.

Speaking at a pre-investors' global summit in Delhi, Murmu had said that sectoral seminars will be organised and the main events will be held in Srinagar.

While underscoring the importance of the event for J&K, the Chief Secretary has also said it will provide the newly-formed Union Territory a platform to showcase its strengths, strategies and potential in the investment sector.

The Chief Secretary has also said the Summit will kick start industrial development in J&K at par with other states and propel the UT as the preferred investment destination among the domestic and global investors.

VDC Members Demand Wages

Ramban, Reasi, Poonch and Rajouri districts, took out a rally here to protest against the pending salaries.

They were raising slogans and calling for the intervention of Lieutenant Governor GC Murmu and advisor Farooq Khan into the issue.

"This is our second protest rally in Jammu. If the government fails to grant us salaries immediately, we will surrender our weapons in respective districts with police lines," Lal told reporters here.

He said if anything "untoward" happens with people living in rural, remote and mountainous villages, "which we protect", the responsibility will be of the government.

"Since 2015-16, we have not been getting salaries, but even then we have been performing security duties to protect villages from militants in Jammu hills and also take part in anti-militancy operations with police and army. Is it our crime?" he asked.

Another VDC member Vijay Kumar said VDCs are not getting salaries for the past several months and it has forced them to come here and hold protest.

"We demand immediate grant of our salaries, which have not been released to us for the past several months. While wages of Special Police Officers have been increased to Rs 18,000 from Rs 5,000, that of VDC members have been withheld," he said.

As many as 4,125 VDCs exist in Jammu and Kashmir and their work is to ensure safety and security of the identified villages along the borders as well as in interior areas and infrastructural installations in and around them.

The VDCs were set up in the mid-1990s with an aim to strengthen the security of those living in remote and mountainous areas of Doda, Kishtwar, Ramba, Rajouri, Reasi, Kathua and Poonch districts.

SDA Removes Encroachments In City

The move, official spokesperson said was conducted in view of traffic pressure and non-availability of road infrastructure on the city roads where footpaths have been occupied illegally by vendors causing hindrance to smooth flow of traffic.

Anantnag Shuts Over Militant's Killing

establishments were closed and traffic was off the roads since early this morning in Arwani, Khudwani, Redwani and adjoining areas in Anantnag.

A militant, identified as Shahid Ahmad, a resident of Khudwani, was killed and a soldier injured in an encounter which ensued after a patrol party was attack at Arwani in Anantnag on Monday evening.