

Sakeena Ito interacts with Himachal Pradesh's Education Minister at Srinagar

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JUNE 25

Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health & Medical Education, Sakeena Ito, today held a detailed interaction with the Education Minister of Himachal Pradesh, Rohit Thakur at Srinagar, focusing on the exchange of ideas, best practices and innovative reforms aimed at further strengthening the education sectors of both regions.

During the meeting, the two Ministers engaged in comprehensive discussions on various aspects of school and higher education sectors, including elementary education, including academic excellence, digital learning, teacher capacity building, skill development and educational infrastructure.

Speaking on the occasion, Sakeena Ito highlighted the significant strides made by Jammu and Kashmir in the education sector in last around two years. She informed that the Government is committed to ensuring quality, inclusive and equitable education through modernization of educational institutions, expansion of digital learning facilities, strengthening of teacher training programmes and promotion of skill-based education.

The Minister highlighted that the school education department achieved significant achievements in last around two years, with results improving for both 10th and 12th classes. She reiterated that the govern-



ment is focused on creating a robust academic ecosystem aligned with national priorities and global standards.

The Minister also shared details regarding ongoing initiatives to improve educational access in remote and far-flung areas, enhance learning outcomes, encourage innovation and research, and provide greater opportunities for students through technology-enabled education. She emphasized that education remains the cornerstone for empowering youth and accelerating socio-economic development across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Himachal Pradesh Education Minister briefed the gathering about various reforms undertaken by the state government to strengthen school education, improve academic standards and expand access to quality learning opportunities across rural and mountainous regions. The Minister highlighted Himachal Pradesh's achievements in literacy, community participation in education and efforts towards improving educational outcomes through innovative teaching practices.

Both Ministers expressed satisfaction over the con-

structive dialogue and agreed to enhance cooperation and knowledge-sharing between Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh in areas of mutual interest. They emphasized that collaborative efforts and exchange of best practices would contribute significantly towards building a future-ready education system capable of meeting the aspirations of students and preparing them for emerging global opportunities.

Senior officers of the school education department of both the governments were present during the interaction.

Country passing through worst kind of undeclared emergency for 12 years under BJP: Congress

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Congress has said that generations to come will remember the worst kind of undeclared emergency under Narinder Modi led BJP government for the past over 12 years if its rule in the country.

Blaming BJP for living in the past and for misleading the present & future generations about historical role and sacrifices of Congress in the pre & post Independence periods, It said BJP is exploiting the short spell of declared emergency period, more than fifty years ago, which was much better than 12 years of undeclared emergency and dictatorial rule of BJP under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, Congress said.

Hitting out at BJP for resorting to diversionary tactics in order to hide the

gross failures of the government, on all fronts especially when our youth and students are frustrated a lot & ending their lives, due to failures and wrong policies of Modi government, the BJP is engaged in blame game, instead of finding solutions to the problems faced by the country.

Since it came to power, in 2014, BJP indulged in all sorts of anti-democratic and undemocratic means, authoritarian and dictatorial policies to weaken the democratic values and constitutional norms in the country, the Senior Congress leaders said in a joint statement.

All sorts of unfair and frouny means are used to crush the voices of dissent and opposition, the two signs of any healthy democracy. The elected governments are toppled by unleashing ED, IT, CBI and encouraging "Aaya

Ram, Gya Ram" culture, the elections are rigged, the law relating to selections of CEC & ECs is changed through majority in Parliament and all who oppose or expose the BJP government are put behind Bars.

The constitutional institutions have been weakened and they are not acting independently, impartially and in a fair and transparent manner, as a result people are suffering.

Since India is the largest democracy in the world, the freedom and democracy was earned after lot of sufferings and sacrifices by crores of countrymen and its strong foundations were laid by Congress party under the leadership of Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru and down the line by almost all governments, in their own with the exception of Modi-Shah led BJP regime when the democracy is under

great stress and strain, as evident in the latest ranking of India in world rating of liberal democracies where India has slipped down to rank 100 out of 179 countries.

BJP should explain the authoritarian & ruthless behavior in government instead of diverting attention of the people and youth from its failures and hiding from problems faced by them, said JKPC Working President Shri Raman Bhalla, Former Minister Mula Ram, Ex MP Ch Lal Singh, Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Sharma Former ministers Yogesh Sawhney, GM Saroori, Abdul Majeed Wani, Yash pal Kundal, Raman Matto, MLA Itikhar Ahmed Ex legislators Ved Mahajan, Th Balbir Singh, Smt Indu Pawar, Naresh Gupta, Ashok Dogra Krishan Bhagat, Kanta Andotra, Subash Gupta and others.

DE&CC Srinagar organizes Job Fair at GPC Gogjibagh

SRINAGAR, JUNE 25: District Employment & Counselling Centre (DE&CC), Srinagar today organized a District-Level Job Fair at Kashmir Government Polytechnic College (GPC), Gogjibagh, Srinagar.

The event was graced by MLA Lal Chowk, Ahsan Pardesi, as the Chief Guest.

The Job Fair witnessed an overwhelming response from the youth, with around 400 job seekers participating in the event. A total of 15 reputed private companies from diverse sectors participated and offered employment opportunities to aspiring candidates.

In addition to the participating companies, six line departments established awareness and facilitation stalls to disseminate information regarding various



government schemes and livelihood initiatives. A dedicated Mission YUVA Stall was also installed at the venue, which attracted considerable attention and witnessed significant footfall from youth interested in self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

During his visit, MLA Lal Chowk, Ahsan Pardesi, toured all the stalls and interacted with representa-

tives of the participating companies, line departments, Mission YUVA officials, and job seekers. He appreciated the efforts of the Employment Department in organizing the Job Fair and stressed the need for conducting more such programmes in the future to provide enhanced employment opportunities and career guidance to the youth. He observed that such initiatives play a vital

role in bridging the gap between employers and job seekers and contribute significantly towards youth empowerment and economic development.

The Job Fair provided an effective platform for direct interaction between employers and job seekers.

Following screening and interviews conducted during the event, 37 candidates were shortlisted by the participating companies for further stages of selection and placement.

The programme concluded successfully with enthusiastic participation from employers, government departments, and job seekers, reaffirming the commitment of the Employment Department towards employment generation and youth empowerment in the district.

DC Shopian directs stronger action against drug trafficking and substance abuse

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Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, today chaired the monthly District Level NCORD meeting to review the progress of anti-drug abuse initiatives and strengthen measures for curbing drug trafficking and substance abuse in the district.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the performance of enforcement departments and the implementation of decisions taken in previous NCORD meetings.

He stressed the need for intensified efforts to identify drug peddlers, dismantle supply networks and strengthen inter-departmental coordination to effectively combat the drug menace.

Reviewing enforcement measures, the meeting was informed that 31 FIRs have been registered against poppy cultivators, while 18 driving licences of persons involved in NDPS-related offences have been suspended. It was further informed that one medical shop has been sealed for violations under the relevant



provisions.

The meeting was also informed that out of 27 kilometres of road identified for wild cannabis growth, four kilometres have been cleared through joint action by the Police, Excise Department and the Sub-Divisional Administration.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the Police, Revenue, Excise, PMGSY, R&B, Education and Irrigation Departments to launch coordinated drives for the removal of wild cannabis, particularly in the vicinity of schools, water bodies, along roads and canals across the district. He em-

phasised on counselling services be further strengthened at Addiction Treatment Facility at DH Shopian to ensure sustained de-addiction support for victims of substance abuse.

The DC also directed concerned departments to intensify facilitation of registration of recovered victims under various self-employment and livelihood schemes so that they can be rehabilitated economically and reintegrated into society through sustainable means of livelihood.

Emphasising preventive measures, the DC directed

the tehsildars to identify suitable land for development of playgrounds in pending panchayats to promote constructive youth engagement.

He also instructed the concerned departments to activate Youth Clubs across all panchayats and involve religious leaders, community elders and civil society organisations in strengthening awareness and prevention efforts against drug abuse.

The meeting also reviewed the progress of activities being carried out under the ongoing 100-day Nasha Mukta Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan and directed all departments to further intensify awareness campaigns to ensure wider impact of the campaign.

Among others, the meeting was attended by SSP Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmad Chaudhary; ADC Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; ACR Shopian, Shakoor Ahmad; SDM Zainapora, Bilal Ahmad; SE, R&B, DIO and officers from Health, Education, Excise, MVD, Drug Control, Irrigation, Social Welfare, Tehsildars and other concerned departments.

DC Kulgam reviews arrangements for Yom-e-Ashura at Shahoo, Sachen

KULGAM, JUNE 25: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today visited Shahoo and Sachen areas to review the arrangements being put in place for the smooth and peaceful observance of Yom-e-Ashura.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the arrangements related to drinking water supply, sanitation, electricity, healthcare facilities, and traffic manage-



ment to ensure the convenience of mourners.

Interacting with officers

and local representatives, the DC directed all concerned departments to en-

sure the timely provision of all essential services and maintain close coordination for the smooth conduct of the religious observance.

He emphasized that all necessary arrangements should be put in place well in advance to facilitate the peaceful, dignified, and hassle-free observance of Yom-e-Ashura and instructed officers to remain available on the ground to promptly address any issues that may arise.

Emergency was darkest assault on Democracy, sacrifices of Democracy warriors must never be forgotten: Sat

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Jammu & Kashmir BJP, led by its President and MP (Rajya Sabha) Sat Sharma, observed "Samvidhan Hatya Diwas" at the party headquarters, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, to remember the horrors of Emergency period, and to honour and felicitate the brave democracy warriors who suffered imprisonment, persecution, and hardships during the Emergency imposed by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on June 25, 1975.

The observance of "Samvidhan Hatya Diwas", commemorated darkest chapter in India's democratic history when constitutional institutions were undermined, fundamental rights were suspended, press freedom was crushed, and thousands of political activists, journalists, social workers, and nationalist voices were jailed for opposing authoritarian rule.

A special exhibition showcasing rare photographs and historical records of the Emergency period was inaugurated on the occasion. The exhibition vividly depicted the excesses committed during the 21-month Emergency, the struggle of democracy defenders, and the sacrifices made to restore constitutional governance and civil liberties in the country.

Senior BJP leader Ashok Khajuria, General Secretary Baldev Singh Billawaria, senior leader Adv. Chander Mohan



Sharma, and other party leaders participated in the programme. BJP Library Incharge Prof. Kulbhushan Mohtra coordinated the event.

The prominent democracy warriors felicitated on the occasion included Ashok Khajuria, Adv. Chander Mohan Sharma, Surinder Sharma, Arun Gupta, Lal Chand, Satya Paul Sharma, Jagdish Langer, Satish Sethi, Puran Sharma, Satpal Singh Rathore, Dr. Om Parkash Gupta, Sunil Gupta, Bharat Bhushan Gupta, Shamsher Singh, Ajay Bharti, Rajan Sharma, Dev Dutt, Shaminder Kumar Sharma, Raman Gupta, and Rajesh Mahajan.

Sat Sharma, addressing on the occasion, described the Emergency as a direct assault on the spirit of the Constitution and democratic values. He said that the nation witnessed unprecedented censorship, suppression of dissent, arbitrary arrests, and misuse of state machinery during the period. He recalled how renowned artists, journalists, intellectuals, and public figures faced persecution for refusing to submit

before authoritarian dictates. Films such as 'Aandhi' were banned, while eminent personalities including Kishore Kumar and others faced punitive actions for not aligning with the ruling establishment.

"The Emergency was a direct attack on the soul of Indian democracy. The men and women who endured imprisonment and torture but refused to bow before dictatorship remain shining examples of courage, conviction, and patriotism for future generations," Sat Sharma said.

He further assured the democracy warriors that he would raise the issue of pension and welfare measures for "Loktantra Senanis" at appropriate forums so that their contribution towards safeguarding democracy receives the recognition it truly deserves.

Ashok Khajuria said that the struggle to protect democracy is continuous and eternal. He emphasized that democratic values can survive only when citizens remain vigilant against authoritarian tendencies and stand firm on

principles despite personal hardships.

Adv. Chander Mohan Sharma elaborated on the grave consequences of the Emergency and highlighted how constitutional safeguards were undermined through concentrated political power. He appealed to the younger generation to study this period of history and understand the price paid by countless patriots to preserve democratic freedoms.

Several democracy warriors who were honoured during the programme also shared their personal experiences of imprisonment, harassment, and resistance during the Emergency. They stated that the greatest reward for their sacrifices is witnessing a vibrant democratic India where citizens can freely express their opinions and participate in the democratic process without fear.

As a mark of respect and gratitude, all the honoured democracy warriors were felicitated with shawls and books in recognition of their invaluable contribution to the defence of democracy and constitutional governance in India.