



JAMMU AND KASHMIR APNI PARTY
JOURNEY OF A COMMON MAN

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“Those who desire to treat politics and morals separately will never understand anything of either.”
-Jean Jacques Rousseau

I agree with this thought. The culture of politics must be in reconciliation with the imperatives of honesty. Given the lacerated political history of Jammu and Kashmir marked by a series of unpleasant events, the people of J&K particularly the youth find themselves alienated from the mainstream with a huge trust deficit in the entire political system.

From governance deficit to lack of clear political line of action, the growing political vacuum has pushed the youth into a state of melancholy. I believe that if an honest political approach is adopted with a vision of pragmatism built on principles of courage then it will be the victory of the people. With the courage to speak the truth irrespective of its consequences; we can together lay foundations of a strong democratically inclusive society.

The toughest test for practising such politics of honesty and conviction comes in defending ideas that are unpopular in the public but right in their essence.

I believe political parties should not garner public support by exploiting their sentiments instead we all should sow seeds of unconventional politics marked by a culture of tolerance, mutual respect, and inclusiveness. I am just like any other common man in Jammu and Kashmir who aspires to make this historic State a peaceful, vibrant and prosperous region where people can lead a life with dignity and honour.

So I could always feel the need among the people who yearn for an honest and dedicated political platform that is accessible to a common man. A political organization, where decisions are to be taken democratically keeping in view the interests of the people and not for the convenience of a few. These ideas laid the foundation of the principles of Apni Party, which is determined and committed to the socio-economic and political empowerment of the people at the grassroots level.

I, on behalf of my Party pledge to speak the truth. We will always raise and pursue the issues which matter to a common man and will strive for a resolution of grievances of all the sections of the society irrespective of their political ideology, affiliations and outlook. Our motive will be to restore the pristine glory of Jammu and Kashmir and its people.

Vision

Jammu Kashmir Apni Party envisions transforming the politics of J&K by undertaking a journey of clean and transparent politics also while taking into consideration J&K's history, values and belief system. The party aims to facilitate and nurture a conducive environment, forging unity among different sections of the people to redress issues of public concern and bringing prosperity to their lives.

Apni Party was founded to honour the common man's resolve to democratically address the overgrowing problems faced by the people. We believe in working on a value system backed with principles of integrity and honesty at the most basic levels in the society and then addressing the public grievances through assured solutions.

The Party envisions that with the support of the people of J&K, the common man's day-to-day aspirations can be fulfilled honourably. We want J&K to become economically self-reliant and politically empowered wherein youth will be the harbingers of this change. Through our collective political actions, we aim to deliver, revering peoples' sentiments, aspirations and dreams for a better J&K, where all the regions and sub-regions live in an atmosphere of sustainable peace and prosperity.

Mission

Recounting J&K's rich diversity and culture, JKAP with its proactive leadership has continuously been engaged in redressing issues of common masses at various levels.

Apni Party has been strongly articulating the sentiments of the people while understanding regional aspirations. We firmly believe in understanding the issues more closely and working with the people on the ground. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have been the victims of divisive politics and the inaction of the people at the helm of affairs. The endless exploitation and lack of understanding exhibited by the power corridors have been a motivating factor for us to accelerate our pursuit of serving the people. JKAP will work in close association with all the sections of the society to understand and evolve the applicable solutions to their problems.

The Party will accord dignity to the electorate irrespective of their political ideologies and affiliations and ensure that the party's policy and functions are shaped up at the grassroots level.

Political Philosophy

The founding principle of the Apni Party is that a strong political voice has a critical role to play in improving the quality of governance. In particular, people's capacity to express and exercise their views has the potential to shape the processes of governance, making them more participatory and representative, especially of those who have been previously excluded or marginalised based on political thought, ethnicity, geography, or other considerations. By raising public demands for accountability and transparency, a strong political voice can bring the change in government priorities. Public participation will ensure and encourage consensus building on key issues of public concern. Otherwise, the political decisions taken in isolation result in alienating the people from the political process at large. The Party immediately recognises the following issues as its mission, as also enunciated in its founding declaration on March 8, 2020

1. Practicing unconventional politics
2. Dignified return of Kashmiri Pandits
3. Justice delivery to the youth of J&K
4. Women empowerment
5. Providing people with a credible political platform

Declaration of the Apni Party was read on the 8th of March 2020 in Srinagar on eve of International Women's Day and on the same day the Party was dedicated to the service of the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

Post-August 2019, the political developments in the state of Jammu and Kashmir led to the bifurcation of the State into two union territories besides abrogation of its special constitutional position. This was a big setback for the people of Jammu and Kashmir as the decision of the Parliament was contrary to their aspirations. During this time, many socio-political challenges emerged that needed a strong, informed and committed leadership to speak up and mitigate the sufferings of the people.

With hundreds of youth detained in jails within and outside J&K, the common sentiment across J&K was to find a credible political platform that could bring the people out of the socio-economic and political quagmire. While it is the founding principle of the Apni Party to achieve the restoration of the state's special constitutional provisions through a strong legal recourse in the Supreme Court of India, we believe in protecting the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and meeting their aspirations.

Proprietary demands unison of thought and filling up the political vacuum for providing succour to the people. Apni Party was hence founded with leaders of experience, prominent socio-political activists and people from professional backgrounds. Understanding the recent political history of Jammu and Kashmir since the year 1947, the common thread leading to the political instability and social tensions in the region could be traced back to the vacillating and insincere political approach of the political parties and their leadership.

The lack of courage and political will of the political parties to address public issues like corruption, nepotism, favouritism and effective governance alienated the youth from the political process and this has collectively led to the overgrowing trust deficit among the people. While there is a constitutional and moral responsibility on the incumbent government to respond to the aspirations of the people of J&K, the vacuum in the regional political spectrum also demanded a fresh, sincere and pro-people approach. The immediate challenges posed by the abrogation of the special status of J&K was that the people feared probable demographic changes and snatching of rights over lands and jobs.

Amid this atmosphere of uncertainty, the regional political parties were expected to rise to occasion and voice the concerns of the people. But the regional political parties were seen only batting for the release of their leadership and were seen mute spectators to the problems and sufferings caused to the people especially the ordinary families whose loved ones were languishing in jails within and outside J&K. The feudalistic and self-centred outlook of the political parties failed to address the growing insecurities and apprehensions of the people filled with cynicism. Soon after the formation of the Party, a 24-member delegation of Apni Party headed by Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari called on the Prime Minister and Home Minister of the country.

The delegation demanded the restoration of the Statehood, protection of rights over land and jobs, restoration of 4G mobile internet services and release of all political detainees including the youth, former Chief Ministers and other political leaders. The delegation also called on the Union Home Minister, wherein the minister allayed fears of demographic changes in Jammu and Kashmir, the release of political prisoners and also assured for early restoration of statehood. The home minister made it clear that there was no question on the issue of any demographic change taking place in Jammu and Kashmir. Apni Party President also raised various other issues, including autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir Bank, age relaxation of youths from union territory appearing in the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) exams, relief and revival of horticulture and agriculture, besides the tourism sectors.

Upholding Inner Party Democracy

As political parties are the most crucial actors in a democracy, functioning with greater transparency and efficiency becomes imperative. Apni Party functions in a result-oriented manner with value-based inner-party democracy. The appointments to various organizational posts in the party are made in the spirit of the Party's constitution. The nominations and elections to various posts are made after a thorough consultative mechanism with the leadership and the cadre. The term of the President of the Party is also restricted, thus allowing a democratic choice of leaders to assume charge of the apex positions in the party. It has been ensured that the lack of transparency and accountability in the inner functioning of the political parties poses serious consequences for the overall health of the political system in J&K. Therefore Apni Party is based on the idea of unconventional politics.

Since March 08, 2020, the party leadership has raised multiple public issues with the leadership of the country including the Prime Minister, Home Minister and the J&K's Lt. Governor to mitigate the sufferings of the people. It is thought that being silent on the rights of the people was not a way forward and this conspiracy of silence adopted by the political parties in J&K only worsened the situation resulting in the disempowerment of people. The challenges emerging from the Coronavirus pandemic are not only wreaking destruction on public health but disrupting democracy and governance worldwide.

In this situation our estimated public outreach was deeply affected and disseminating the party's programme to the people was also hampered. In absence of an opposition and with an unelected government at the helm, we thought it appropriate to prevent any discriminatory and arbitrary decisions that would further erode the aspirations of people and thus the political voice of people needed to be strengthened. Given the severity of the crisis, Apni Party stepped up to safeguard the interests of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The actions of the political parties and their effects upon the public faith calls for a careful examination.

Today's youth need real viable opportunities to take part in the political process and contribute to practical solutions. We believe that when allowed to voice their opinions and assume a meaningful role in political decision making, young people demonstrate their willingness and ability to foster positive, lasting change. Over a while, people started reposing their faith and trust in us and we were able to raise public issues with the government and some of them received positive consideration. This journey has only begun and we have taken the mantle to give voice to the genuine concerns of the people. The brief overview of the timeline of events manifests that Apni Party since its inception has voiced the concerns of the people and the people of Jammu and Kashmir are the best judges to acknowledge this positive political change

Overview of Public Demands

Restoration of Statehood

This is the first and foremost demand of the People of Jammu and Kashmir who are eagerly waiting for its fulfillment. Statehood is a reference to the glorious past and a privilege for solidification of the idea of pluralism and respectful coexistence in Jammu and Kashmir like any other State in our country. For keeping up this spirit and allowing a cultural mosaic to continue, restoration of this privileged status including establishment of a Legislative Council should be done as per the commitment made on the floor of Parliament.

Domicile Rights over Land and Jobs

The constitutional and legal decisions taken on August 5, 2019 have been viewed by a significant number of the population of J&K as something like “stripping them off from the rights over their land and other rightful holdings.” While our party has been vehemently demanding Domicile Rights on land and jobs for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, the recent Domicile order issued by the union government vis-à-vis the rights of residents of J&K on jobs reflects a casual approach. Being a government issued order and not a law made by the Parliament, the new gazette notification regarding Domicile rule for J&K residents is not immune to any judicial review. Our demand is that those residents of J&K who have already a valid Permanent Resident Certificate should not be asked for domicile certificates both for possession of land and immovable property or for applying to any government jobs. We also demand threadbare discussions with all stakeholders of Jammu and Kashmir to be held at an appropriate time to remove anomalies in the recently issued Domicile rules for J&K.

Amendment to domicile order Jammu Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari welcomed the government of India's move for amending the new domicile order and reserving all Groups of jobs both in non-Gazetted and Gazetted services for the residents of J&K on April 4, 2020. The JKAP president avowed to continue his party's struggle till the other hostile sections in the law like, mandatory tenure for non natives to reside in J&K and cut off dates to qualify for the domicile are not rectified as per the demands of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Bukhari appealed all the political parties to rise to the occasion and jointly fight for the rights of residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

Youth Employment Policy

Youth in J&K are extremely alienated due to multiple reasons. This alienation makes most of them an easy fodder for those elements who want to foment trouble in the region. We cannot afford loss of another generation which otherwise can be addressed with a meaningful engagement with the youth and their aspirations. Need of the hour is that a comprehensive youth employment policy is framed and implemented in letter and spirit. There is an alarming rise in the unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir and ways and means can be explored that this pressing problem is addressed through roping in multinational companies across the country and in the overseas gulf countries which can absorb a major chunk of J&K's qualified and skilled youth.

Disengagement of Junior Staff Nurses

The issue of paramedical staff amid COVID Crisis was raised where disengagement of junior staff nurses by the Government Medical College Kathua, who were recruited by the J&K government under SRO-24 was raised by the Party Reacting sharply to disengagement of junior staff nurses by the Government Medical College Kathua, who were recruited by the J&K government under SRO-24 in January last year, Bukhari urged the Lieutenant Governor G.C Murmu to personally intervene into the matter and order immediate revocation of the termination order number 01 of GMCK of 2020 dated April 3, 2020

Shifting of the stranded people of J&K in view of the COVID-19 lockdown.

The JKAP president demanded Lieutenant Governor G.C Murmu to allow entry of the residents of J&K who are presently stranded at Madhopur-Pathankote and Lakhanpur entry points. There were around 4500 people of J&K who were stranded at these entry points despite completing their quarantine period and testing negative for the Coronavirus. The Party president informed the Lieutenant Governor that the Rabi crop season in Kashmir and the apple growers would get badly affected as the labourers required are stuck in different states due to restriction of their movement. Even most of the stranded students also belong to the farming community and they also extend a helping hand to their families in this season.

Evacuation of J&K students from SAARC countries

Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party urged the government of India to evacuate J&K students stranded in various South and Central Asian countries due to COVID-19 lockdown. Grippled in fear and panic, there were over 600 Kashmiri students who were reportedly stranded in Bangladesh. This number was excluding those students who study in different countries across the sub continent. Estimatedly round 7,000 to 8,000 students from different districts of Jammu and Kashmir study in different medical colleges across Bangladesh since past decade. Many of such students, especially girl students had been unfortunately pushed back on the India-Bangladesh border and confined to their hostels where there is no staff available to help them out, during this unprecedented crisis. The Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party solicited personal intervention of the Union Home Minister to facilitate the evacuation of all stranded students of J&K who helplessly waiting for an early return to their homes since the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

The J&K Bank Employee Welfare

The Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited had taken an un-favourable decision deeply affecting the livelihood of 2800 employees were their salary was withheld without any reasonable justification, Apni Party demanded the government not to interfere in the functioning of the Autonomous Body and demanded the J&K Bank Chairman to release the pending salaries of these employees. Following this demand, the J&K Bank made an admission before the Hon'ble court of law as the matter was petitioned by the aggrieved employees, that the bank will be releasing the pending salaries to the employees' concern.

Asset Distribution Among the UTs of J&K and Ladakh

Following the bifurcation of the erstwhile State of Jammu & Kashmir into two Union territories of J&K and Ladakh, the public asset distribution was being done in an unjustified manner. The spread of population and the utility of these public assets have to be read in light of public welfare, Apni Party demanded that a fair system of assets distribution and that the decisions should not be resulting in injustice with the people of Jammu & Kashmir. The Governor assured for ending this disparity in asset distribution.

Job Protection

Following the bifurcation of the erstwhile State of Jammu & Kashmir into Two Union Territories of J&K & Ladakh, and abrogation of J&K's Special Constitutions Position, there were reasonable apprehensions among the local population with regards to the protection of their land and jobs. Since Jammu & Kashmir is a young population where, as per the government estimate over 65% of the population is youth, the political parties needed to rise against all odds and voice the concerns of the people of Jammu & Kashmir without any fear or pressure. Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari who made his political debut in the year 2014 earned the trust of the people by being an able administrator who relates to the suffering of a common man, adopting an honest and upfront political approach Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari called on the Union Home Minister in New Delhi and demanded protection of jobs and lands for the people of Jammu & Kashmir. A frivolous notification was issued by the Union Government wherein the recruitment process to various government posts was outlined there was no specific job protection accorded to the residents of J&K, immediately after issuance of this notification Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari sought amended in the notification. The Union Government by virtue of a fresh notification amended the previous order and accorded the protection of jobs to the residents of Jammu & Kashmir.

PROPERTY TAX

Following the implementation of the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganization Act 2019, various Central Laws were extended to Jammu & Kashmir, one such Municipal Law was to impose Property Tax in areas falling under the Urban Local Bodies.

The Government amended the Local Laws to empower the Urban Local Bodies to levy tax from the people concerning the properties they hold. Jammu & Kashmir Apni Party understanding the common sentiment repeatedly pursued the Lt. Governor that, given the economic and social profile of Jammu & Kashmir proposal of any such tax imposition would be gross injustice with the people of Jammu & Kashmir. The party leadership put forth this demand formally before the Lt. Governor, hoping that the matter would be put to rest in the interest of the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

SRO 202

SRO 202 being a draconian law in nature denied equal opportunities to the in-service government employees and the aspirants of various government posts. The implementation of this illogical and arbitrary order had only resulted in jeopardizing the career prospects of the young people of Jammu & Kashmir, immediately upon laying foundations of a political party dedicated to the youth of Jammu & Kashmir, President of Apni Party Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari fought for the revocation of SRO 202 at all levels. The matter was taken up with the Government of India. From the first meeting of party delegation with the Prime Minister in New Delhi and through their periodic meetings with the Lt. Governor, Apni Party was at the forefront to voice the concerns of the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

SRO 103

Another such order that came into force was SRO 103, the nature of SRO 103 was inherently defeating the protection that was accorded to the aspirants of Jammu & Kashmir combined competitive Examinations (CCE), therefore the flexibility in age accorded to the CCE aspirants was unduly snatched from them. There was no reason to reduce the age limit of civil services aspirants to 32 when the upper age limit in the rest of the country even exceeds 38 and 40. Apni Party being vocal about public issues found itself duty-bound to raise the issue. President of Apni Party, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, called on the Lt. Governor of J&K on 9th of January 2020, demanding revocation of SRO 103. He appealed to the government to roll back this new amendment and provide a respite to the resenting KAS aspirants who currently are in a condition of extreme distress.

Impartial probe into the disappearance of Rajouri labourers

Following the disturbing events in the Jammu & Kashmir wherein three labourers from District Rajouri of Jammu province lost contact with their families since July 17. The Lt. Governor led government in J&K is expected to order and pursue a serious, impartial and transparent investigation that leaves no stone unturned in finding out what happened to these three poor labourers. The truth behind their missing must be unearthed as quickly as possible," the Party demanded. The JKAP president hoped that the government will assign the probe to some sitting judge who can lead the investigations while considering all the factors. Apni Party President, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, demanded the LT Governor to address the issue and order an impartial probe so that the truth could be brought to the fore. He termed that a crystal clear fact-finding into the matter can be a small step towards addressing the deep trust deficit in Jammu & Kashmir.

RELEASE OF POLITICAL DETAINEES

Following the abrogation of the State's Special Status and preventive restrictions imposed in Jammu & Kashmir resulted in the detention of youth activities, lawyers, and mainstream politicians. Hundreds of people were detained in jails outside and within Jammu & Kashmir. The political parties adopted silence on the matter. Apni Party pledged to fight for the rights of the people of Jammu & Kashmir. The premier political parties of Jammu & Kashmir only raised the demand to release their leaders but nobody spoke about the common political worker. Apni Party made a sincere beginning to demand the release of a common youth who was suffering in gallows outside Jammu & Kashmir, nobody was seen calling for justice for the detainees without any high political profile. One of the factors giving birth to a sincere political voice, in the shape of a political party, Apni Party was formed by distinguished leaders hailing across the length and breadth of Jammu & Kashmir. It was recognised as a moral duty to fight injustice. Apni Party called on the Prime Minister of India, the Union Home Minister and the Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir demanding the release of all youths as well as former Chief Ministers and other mainstream leaders.

4G MOBILE INTERNET

The unwarranted communication clampdown deprived the people of Jammu & Kashmir of their basic rights. The Government restored the telephone and mobile services gradually, but in our view, the action of withholding high-speed mobile data services was totally against the essence of the law. It has resulted in deeply disturbing the people of Jammu & Kashmir. Upon the formation of the party, we demanded the restoration of 4G mobile internet service at all levels with the government.

WITHDRAWAL OF CASES AGAINST THE YOUTH

In Jammu & Kashmir particularly in Kashmir Province hundreds of youth were detained under different FIRs. Most of such FIRs were believed to be on flimsy grounds, without any basis. Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party is of the firm belief that regardless of the background of the FIRs, the youth should be allowed to re-integrate in the mainstream society with honour and dignity. This is only possible if the government of the day adopts a reformatory approach and not punitive. The iron fist policy towards the youth of J&K results only in further alienation, therefore a pragmatic approach would be to help such youth to allow them to make a sincere new beginning in life. After all, they belong to Jammu & Kashmir and they can surely contribute to society as responsible citizens. Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party has endeavoured to advocate their release, at a most crucial juncture, where voicing the concerns of their families was morally incumbent upon us.

J&K Bank's Functional Autonomy

The Jammu & Kashmir Bank is not an ordinary financial institution, it is a repository of trust which inspires the confidence of people's economic interests. Lately, the unwarranted interference of the Anti Corruption Burea in the functioning of the bank has caused irretrievable damage to the overall credibility of this iconic financial institution. The bank was seen quashing the selection list of candidates who had applied for various posts, two years after the bank conducted the examinations. This arbitrary and supremely illogical decision took a toll on aspirations of lacs of candidates, breaching their constitutional rights and creating a shadow of doubt that J&K Bank was no more an autonomous financial institution. Apni Party demanded the LT Governor to review the J&K Bank's functional autonomy.

Implementation of Forest Rights Act

There is a section of society in Jammu & Kashmir belonging to the Gujjar & Bakarwal Communities who have been facing marginalization since years. These communities residing in the upper reaches of J&K were driven out of the forest areas at many locations both in Jammu & Kashmir provinces. It was highly questionable that upon extension of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Right) Act 2007 to J&K, the landless tribals expected a guarantee of their right. However, the unknown delay in implementation of the Forest Right Act only resulted in further exploitation. Apni Party delegation during their meeting with the Prime Minister of India demanded the Government of India to fulfil its commitment with the tribal and socio-economically marginalized communities to implement the Forest Rights Act in J&K.

Revival of Developmental Activities.

Most of the ongoing development activities including the projects launched under CRF came to halt since, August 2019. Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party demanded that developing public infrastructure and services was important as the deficit in development will broadly result in effecting the healthcare system, education and overall wellbeing of the people. The J&K Apni Party demanded liberal funding of all development projects.

Security of Political Activists

After August 2019, many political killings took place. A political worker irrespective of his/her party affiliation felt insecure and the front row political activist faced problems when their security was withdrawn by the government. The lack of security to the political workers and activist from various political parties resulted in a big halt to the political process as the people felt unsafe. The party believed that without political worker and activist, no political process can take place. Apni Party demanded to provide and restore security to all political leaders and vulnerable workers.

Rights of Locals on Geology and Mining Activities.

The quarrying activities in J&K were halted since 2019 putting lakhs of families associated with this business in an uncertain situation. The ban on extraction and lifting of raw-material resulted in a sharp price hike in construction material.

Apni Party demanded the Lt. Governor to grant mining rights to the locals through short term permit basis. Since the first claim on the local resources rightfully belongs to the natives of Jammu & Kashmir, Apni Party demanded the Government to allow the locals to extract raw-material as lakhs of local families are dependent on this activity directly or indirectly.

Unemployment

Jammu & Kashmir is among the top-ranking regions in the unemployment index in the country. The process of recruitment to various posts has been very slow with the result majority of such post remained to be vacant. The Jammu & Kashmir Apni Party also recognizes the need for employment generation to the displaced educated Kashmiri Pandit Youths, the party demanded the government to fast track recruitments to various government posts so that the educated youth of the J&K who want to pursue administrative jobs will find opportunities for the same.

CAT Bench in J&K

The change in Status of Jammu & Kashmir from being a State into a Union Territory came with administrative effects. The dispute resolution process concerning recruitment and condition of service matters of persons working in the Government came under the control of the Central Administrative Tribunal. The jurisdiction of which was extended to Jammu & Kashmir with its Bench designated in Chandigarh. Jammu & Kashmir, the Apni Party demanded the Union Home Minister for establishing two Circuit Benches in J&K at Jammu & Srinagar separately given the terrain and climatic conditions of the region. The party believed that access to justice should be open to all.

Fertilizers, Agro Chemicals in Essential Commodities

Apni Party urged the government of J&K to include production, supply and distribution of fertilizers and agrochemicals in the list of essential commodities and services notified by the government for farmers, fruit growers and orchardists of Jammu and Kashmir. Given restrictions on public movement and other services, the farming community and fruit growers in Jammu and Kashmir were suffering for want of fertilizers and agro chemicals which are direly needed in this season.

Regularization of need-based, casual labourers Jammu and Kashmir

Apni Party demanded immediate regularization of need based and casual labourers working in different government departments for the last over a decade. The party urged the government to frame a comprehensive policy in this regard and till then all pending wages of casual labourers, daily rated workers, need based, contractual and contingency paid employees be released forthwith. Thousands of casual labourers, daily wagers and contingency paid employees working in different departments in J&K for the last over 15 years are awaiting their regularization. The party leadership urged Lieutenant Governor G.C Murmu to look into this critical humanitarian issue that is yet to be resolved despite repeated assurances by the successive governments in J&K. Apni Party demanded the release of pending wages and application of the Minimum Wages Act till their regularization.

Separate Stimulus for J&K's Economy

The industrial sector, trade and commerce activities in Jammu and Kashmir have come to a grinding halt since August 5, 2019. Whatever was left in the trade and other business activity was crushed by COVID lockdown. Be it Agriculture, Horticulture, Tourism and Hotel industry, all the mainstay of J&K economy is under severe depression since August last year. COVID pandemic had further squeezed all these economic sectors which can only be revived by a serious intervention of the government of India. The party demanded the government to go for interest subvention for the years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 to agriculture, horticulture, tourism, hotel, and other industrial and business sectors of J&K and provide soft loans to them at least upto 30 per cent of their investments, while also stressing on release of payment to MSME unit holder across Jammu and Kashmir.

Merger of different engineering wings in PWD

The decision to subsume engineering wings of various departments into Public Works Department is detrimental to the working of the department. The J&K government should have consulted all the stakeholders for threadbare deliberations before arriving at any such arbitrary decision. No blueprint was put before the State Administrative Council by the bureaucrats. Even no feedback was sought from the technical staff and other stakeholders who are bound to get affected after the merger of their departments into PWD. The amalgamation of all the engineering wings in the PWD department will create too much confusion and many issues related to seniority, pay disparity, and other employee welfare measures would crop up subsequently. Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari vehemently opposed the J&K government decision.

Application of SRO-202 on in-service recruits

Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari urged the Lt. Governor to intervene into the speedy clearance of the antecedents of MBBS doctors who have returned last year after completing their degrees from different medical colleges of Pakistan. The application of SRO-202 on the in-service candidates who have opted for different services after going through the direct recruitment of Service Selection Board is sheer injustice. These candidates have been unjustifiably categorized under SRO-202. Their salaries stand nominal devoid of any increment or allowances for two more years while they have already completed their probation period and have gained much higher grade pay in their receptive departments. The Party demanded to the Lt. Governor to intervene personally into the genuine grievance of the MBBS students who have completed their degrees from different medical colleges of Pakistan but are being pushed from pillar to post for clearance of their verification.

New Industrial Policy Apni Party

President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari demanded that all the industrial unit holders of Jammu and Kashmir who have started their ventures since 2019 should be made eligible to avail benefits under the new industrial policy. The Clause 7.5 which underlines incentives related to Capital Investment, Capital Interest Subvention and GST linked benefits is totally unjust and discriminatory in nature. The government should modify this Clause and bring all the industrial unit holders since 2019 under its ambit in order to make this scheme a success. Jammu and Kashmir has been witness to a turbulent period in 2019 coupled with an environment of pandemic and subsequent lockdown which brought the whole commercial activities to a standstill. No separate yardsticks should be applied for effective implementation of this landmark central industrial developmental scheme which is aimed to revive the industrial sector in J&K. Regrettably the exclusion of Industrial Units set-up during 2019-20 is grossly in contradiction with the objectives laid down in the newly formulated industrial policy.

GAD's re-advertisement order

The modified version of SRO 202 by virtue of which, the probation period of fresh recruits in government sector has been reduced from five to two years should be applied to all those candidates who have already applied for the government posts and are held up at various stages of recruitment process since 2015. The government decision to withdraw and re-advertise its posts is highly detrimental to careers of lakhs of youth in J&K who have already applied for jobs since 2015 and are awaiting written tests and interviews. The GAD's re-advertisement order dated June 19, 2020 is bereft of any logic and reason as most of the candidates who have already applied for government jobs in response to the advertisements issued since 2015 and are by now over aged have been rendered ineligible for the fresh recruitment processes. Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party president demanded for complete revocation of SRO 202.

Discrimination against minorities

For the first in the history of Jammu and Kashmir that not a single member has been nominated from the Sikh or Scheduled Tribes to the PSC, thus giving no representation to these communities in the apex recruitment body. The Government reconstituted the PSC after nominating six members to it. But the communities like Sikhs and STs have completely been ignored which is brazenly against the affirmative obligation of the government to prevent any discrimination with the rights of members of minorities to equality before the law. Stressing on effective participation of minorities in public life, the Apni Party demanded that the government should take measures to boost the confidence of ethnic minorities by giving them a chance to serve in all statutory bodies in the State

Career of 20,000 Medical Assistants

Around 20,000 medical assistants in J&K are well trained in pharmacy who were eligible for pharmacy licenses under JK Pharmacy Act prior to August 4, 2019 but have now been excluded by the pharmacy council of India Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari urged the union government to safeguard the careers of over 20,000 medical assistants of J&K by bringing them within the ambit of Central Pharmacy Act. It was demanded the government of India should go for a one-time relaxation for those medical assistants who have completed their training prior to August 4, 2019 and chalk out a policy for their absorption in the government sector.

Bifurcation of Civil Secretariat

Retaining half of the administrative departments in Jammu civil secretariat and shifting few departments to Srinagar capital that too after a huge delay, is a cruel joke with the people of J&K. This decision is not only bound to create chaos and confusion among the people but will also lead to anarchy within the administration, while demanding immediate withdrawal of this order. While the temporary deferment of the scheduled Darbar Move from Jammu to Srinagar was understandable because of the COVID crisis, but bifurcation of the administrative departments this year reflects some nefarious designs being implemented which will prove detrimental not only to the interests of people of J&K but to the whole of the country.

The Party urged Lieutenant Governor G.C Murmu to take an immediate call on this important issue and order shifting of Darbar with all administrative departments besides his own Raj Bhavan office to Srinagar without any further delay.

New Media Policy

The new media policy squeezes the spirit of the fourth estate under the garb of a policy that has apparently been drafted without consulting the editors' bodies or association of accredited journalists in J&K. Instead of allowing the media including print, online and electronic platforms to highlight the miseries of people and point out the lacunas in the governance system, the government seems to be threatening them of dire consequences for playing the role of a watchdog.

Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party urged the J&K government to go for a review of the proposed media policy in consultation with representatives of the media fraternity.

Examination centre for AIBE aspirants at Srinagar

Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Saturday urged the Bar Council of India to establish its examination centre at Srinagar so as to enable the law professionals to appear in the upcoming All India Bar Examination (AIBE) without any difficulties. The inclement weather has already wreaked havoc here and it will save the travel charges of hundreds of aspirants who desire to appear in AIBE examination if an exclusive examination centre is set up at Srinagar.

Implementation of SRO-425

The non-migrant Pandit families who are on hunger strike for the last nine-days in the premises of Ganpatyar temple in Srinagar, are protesting the J&K government's inaction for the last many years despite clear cut orders from the union government and the Hon'ble High Court of Jammu and Kashmir. The Party demanded the Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha to order a time bound probe in delayed implementation of SRO-425 by virtue of which around 500 jobs were to be provided to the educated unemployed youth of Kashmiri non-migrant Pandit families. The Parliamentary Committee Report has highlighted the worsening economic conditions of the non migrant Pandit families which need an immediate intervention of the Lt. Governor.

Repatriation of J&K employees

Hundreds of employees working in various departments like higher education, school education, health, PDD, finance, planning, home, PWD, PHE and National Health Mission who belong to both divisions of J&K are suffering immensely because of challenging socio-environmental conditions in Ladakh. Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party demanded immediate repatriation of J&K employees who continue to be posted in Ladakh Union Territory despite submitting their options for postings to the general administration department within the stipulated period.

The Party urged Lieutenant Governor G.C Murmu to take an immediate call on this important issue and order shifting of Darbar with all administrative departments besides his own Raj Bhavan office to Srinagar without any further delay.

Delimitation Process on Merit

The Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party sought a fair process of delimitation based on merit stating that there should be no scope for any changes to be made in boundaries and description of the constituencies without any rationalization.

Interest subvention in J&K

Jammu Kashmir Apni Party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari demanded interest subvention to provide a sigh of relief to the stressed and ailing economic sectors of Jammu and Kashmir. He demanded that in view of the dying economic activity due to COVID-19 Pandemic, the union finance ministry should announce an extended moratorium of one year on term loans and the cut of date for Jammu and Kashmir should be 31-07-2020 on all type of loan accounts. All borrowers must be covered in loan restructuring so that their accounts are not declared as NPAs. There should be at least two quarter moratorium on all type of loans and all repayment obligations should be suspended for this period. It was demanded that the government should take the major stakeholders of J&K into confidence while chalking out the loan restructuring process and demanded more incentives for whole entrepreneurial community including for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that have been the worst hit by the government imposed lockdown in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Freight subsidy on fruits

Apni Party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari welcomed the Government of India's decision to provide 50 percent transportation subsidy for air transportation for notified fruits and vegetables from Himalayan states to any place in the country. He demanded that the fruits like Cherry, Plum and Peach be covered under the freight subsidy scheme applied to Jammu and Kashmir.

Exclusive quota for Hajj aspirants aged 70 and above

Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari urged the government of India to revisit the new Hajj guidelines which has limited the age of pilgrims to travel to 65 years besides hiking the cost of Hajj pilgrimage by over one Lakh rupees. Thousands of Hajj aspirants in Jammu and Kashmir who could not embark on the holy trip last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic would be deprived this year also because of the strict Hajj guidelines issued by the ministry of external affairs.

Arbitrary transfer of JK Bank shareholding to UT of Ladakh

Transferring around 8.23 per cent shareholding of Jammu and Kashmir Bank to the Union Territory of Ladakh. The government of India should have taken all the stakeholders on board while apportioning of the assets and liabilities of Jammu and Kashmir. The administrative diktat as unilateral and arbitrary in nature. J&K Bank is a prized possession of the residents of Jammu and Kashmir whose asset division is being unfortunately carried out without taking the actual stakeholders on board. The J&K bank has remained the spine of our economy for decades. It has grown and flourished because of the support of locals who have always put their unflinching faith and trust into it. Similarly, he said that the government has unfairly transferred assets of the J&K House Chanakyapuri to the UT of Ladakh resulting into discrimination with the residents of J&K. The decision with regard to transfer of JK House assets was also unfair for the reasons that the population of the UT of J&K is much larger than the population of UT of Ladakh. Besides, the number of employees is also many times more in J&K than Ladakh. Apni Party President urged the Lt. Governor led J&K government to halt the trend of capricious decision making and put serious efforts to win the trust and confidence of the locals in the region while respecting their wishes and aspirations.

New Recruitment under SRO 202

The new recruitment rules notified on June 4, 2020 the administration has incorporated SRO-202 clauses which are not only obsolete but brazenly unconstitutional. The five-year probation instead of two years with denial of increments is totally against the right to equality enjoyed by all other citizens across the country except for the residents of J&K Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari demanded those employees who have completed two years of probation on the date of the promulgation of Jammu and Kashmir Re-organisation Act 2019 should be regularized forthwith and the cases of those employees who will be completing two years of probation on any future date may be taken up for such consideration as per the recommendations of the Hanjura Law Commission.

Hassle-Free Connectivity

The frequent closure of Jammu-Srinagar National Highway has been a source of perpetual distress for the people of the region. Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party demanded a viable and long term solution to this problem.

Selective enforcement of central laws

With the extension of central laws to Jammu and Kashmir, the Union Home Minister had assured the Parliament that the interests of the Scheduled Tribe - ST communities will be safeguarded. A law in this direction accorded protection to the ST community, which was applicable in the whole country but was not applied to Jammu and Kashmir. The Party demanded the application of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006 in Jammu and Kashmir and address the issue accordingly. Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party also sought personal intervention of the Union Home Minister towards settling the problems faced by daily wagers, ITI skilled labourers, daily rated workers, UPSC aspirants, the functioning of PSC, the welfare of Gujjars, Pahari speaking communities, nomads, the welfare of refugees, agriculture, horticulture, damages to farmers, orchardists, pending liabilities of contractors and administrative inertia

Employment Package for the KP Migrants

A special package was announced in the year 2009 for providing employment in the Valley to displaced Educated Pandit Youths. The Process of recruitment has been slow and many of the posts proposed to be filled up remain vacant. It is urged that the recruitments be put on a fast track.

Revival of Tourism and its allied industrial sector

The revival of tourism and allied industries including hotels, handicrafts, tour operators, houseboat owners, Shikara owners is critical to the revival of the economy of Jammu & Kashmir. In this regard, interest subvention needs to be looked into from August 2019 upto March 2022 to support the industry. Moratorium for existing term loans for 2 years and extension of repayment period by 10 years, on case by case basis should be allowed. Soft loans for new tourism projects must also be considered for boosting investment. In order to promote new investment, a dedicated tourism policy needs to be put in place along with the creation of tourism clusters/villages in different regions of Jammu & Kashmir. Eco-tourism needs to be promoted along with focus on homestays to promote cultural tourism. The grant/extension of "industry status" along with all the benefits of the Industrial Policy to tourism and allied industry will also be a major push to the overall development of this critical sector.

Hon'ble Return of Kashmiri Pandits

Kashmiri Pandits are an inseparable part of Jammu & Kashmir's pluralistic ethos. Unfortunately, living like refugees in their own country, they have been demanding rehabilitation with dignity. The central government should make special efforts to ensure that Kashmiri Pandits return to the land of their ancestors with full dignity and an assured livelihood. The policy in this regard needs to be framed in such a way that their return does not create any divisions with the Kashmiri society. For formulation and implementation of such a policy the other communities in J&K need to be kept on board

Reviving Agriculture and Horticulture Sectors

Though many "packages" have been announced by the State and Central governments from time to time for the upliftment of Agriculture and Horticulture sectors, yet absence of a practicable mechanism to support the growers and farmers is missing. J&K being an agriculture state needs a holistic agriculture and horticulture policy, which should include well-established Crop Insurance Schemes and Minimum Support Price. For this purpose, the Central government has to interact directly with the growers and seek their feedback for putting in place an accountable system, involving horticulture and agriculture departments. Introduction of schemes specific to orchard rejuvenation and high density plantation for apples is the need of the hour to increase the overall productivity in the long run. A special focus on the establishment and promotion of nurseries for root stock and graft buds for the high density trees. This is in line with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision to double farm level income by 2022 in India.

To start with, first of all the horticulture sector should be compensated for the losses due to snowfall, which was the worst since 30 years. We will have to subsidize the transport cost also. Market intervention scheme introduced last year was an utter failure. It should be planned well in advance and we should see that payments are made immediately on receipt of consignment. Similarly, under the Government of India's flagship programme Pradhan Mantri Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (PMANBS), all the left out perishable fruits and vegetables of J&K. This way, lakhs of orchardists, farmers and vegetable growers across Jammu and Kashmir who deal with fruits and vegetables other than Tomato, Onions and Potatoes would get vast benefits extended under the centrally sponsored scheme primarily with regard to protection from making distress sale due to COVID-19 lockdown and reduction in their post-harvest losses.

Moreover, the loans which the farmers have taken under KCC should be waived off because the damage to orchards and farms and the produce is too costly a burden they have to endure

Resolutions of Importance

Key issues adopted as resolution by the Party as the party pledges to strive for restoration of Statehood, Domicile Laws, early elections, 4G internet, package for economic revival and upgradation of healthcare infrastructure on August 27, 2020.

Early hearing in a petition challenging abrogation of Art 370, 35-A:

The meeting resolved to file an application before the Honb'le Supreme Court seeking the listing and an early hearing in a petition filed by one of the JKAP leaders challenging abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35-A. This task was assigned to party senior leader Jagmohan Singh Raina, one of the first few petitioners who had approached the Supreme Court on the subject.

Restoration of Statehood: The meeting resolved that any further delay in restoration of Statehood by the Government of India will add to the already existing hopelessness and alienation among the people of J&K. The meeting resolved that it is incumbent upon the Government of India to rise to the occasion and address the political aspirations of people, sooner the better. The party leadership also resolved that the party will further strengthen and speed up its efforts in pursuit of this goal.

Delimitation Commission: The meeting resolved that no arbitrary increase in assembly or parliamentary segments by the Delimitation Commission acceptable and the party will to put forth its viewpoint based on suggestions and objections, if any, before the Commission at an appropriate time. Early Elections in J&K: It was resolved that there should be no justification for further delay in elections in J&K which has no substitute in a democratic set up.

Restoration of 4G mobile internet: The meeting resolved for an immediate restoration of 4G mobile internet services in J&K and solicited the personal intervention of the union home minister into the matter. Revival of Tourism and its allied industrial sector: It was resolved that the Government of India should formulate a special package for the revival of tourism and allied industrial sectors including hotels, handicrafts, tour operators, houseboat owners and Shikara owners which is critical to the revival of the distressed economy of Jammu and Kashmir. Reviving Agriculture and Horticulture Sectors: The meeting resolved for a practicable mechanism including an economic package to support the growers and farmers which is missing in both Agriculture and Horticulture Sectors in J&K.

Revival of Tourism and its allied industrial sector: It was resolved that the Government of India should formulate a special package for the revival of tourism and allied industrial sectors including hotels, handicrafts, tour operators, houseboat owners and Shikara owners which is critical to the revival of the distressed economy of Jammu and Kashmir.

Reviving Agriculture and Horticulture Sectors: The meeting resolved for a practicable mechanism including an economic package to support the growers and farmers which is missing in both Agriculture and Horticulture Sectors in J&K. **Addressing Unemployment:** The meeting resolved that it will pursue formulation of a comprehensive job policy to address the mounting unemployment problem in J&K and ensure a dignified livelihood for the educated unemployed youth in government and private sectors. **Augmentation of Healthcare Infrastructure in view of COVID-19:** The meeting resolved to strive for the modern healthcare infrastructure in all government hospitals especially at district and sub district levels across Jammu and Kashmir in light of the requirements for battle against COVID-19.

Establishing separate CAT Bench at Srinagar: The meeting resolved to continue its struggle for a separate bench of the Central Administrative Tribunal at Srinagar.

Removal of SRO 202: The meeting resolved that it will continue to press for complete revocation of SRO 202 as the draconian provisions of this SRO are highly detrimental to the interest of employees and unemployed educated youth of J&K.

Ensuring rights of locals on geology and mining activities in J&K: The meeting resolved for a comprehensive policy for quarrying and mining activities in J&K in view of the legal rights of locals on the natural resources.

Construction of Concrete Bunkers: The meeting resolved to continuously pursue construction of concrete bunkers for hapless people living near border areas across J&K who bear the brunt of border skirmishes.

National Highway and Regional Connectivity within J&K: It was resolved that the government of India should order immediate completion of Jammu-Srinagar National highway project besides improving Mughal Road and other regional road connectivity links.

JAMMU and KASHMIR

APNI PARTY

JAMMU AND KASHMIR APNI PARTY
WEB EDITION